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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 2 May 2018

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WEDNESDAY, 2 MAY 2018

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Cystic Fibrosis Month



Mr SPEAKER: May is Cystic Fibrosis Month. To mark this event, today members have been given rose pins to recognise Cystic Fibrosis Month and to raise awareness of this currently incurable disease. Cystic fibrosis is the most common life-threatening recessive genetic condition affecting Australian children and young adults.

On average, every four days an Australian baby is born with cystic fibrosis, a debilitating genetic disorder that mostly affects the lungs but also affects the digestive system. As I mentioned, there is currently no cure. The treatment can be oppressive. A person with cystic fibrosis may consume up to 60 capsules daily to help digest food and may need to do up to four hours of airway clearance physiotherapy each day.

As part of Cystic Fibrosis Month the national fundraising initiative 65 Roses is being held across the nation. I urge all members to support the 65 Roses fundraising drive during Cystic Fibrosis Month.

SPEAKER'S RULINGS

Anticipation Rule



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, yesterday evening the application of the anticipation rule became an issue in the adjournment debate. It has also been considered in terms of its application to questions and answers to questions with and without notice, petitions and petition responses. I seek leave to incorporate a ruling I have circulated on the application of the anticipation rule to these proceedings.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—APPLICATION OF ANTICIPATION RULE TO DEBATE, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AND PETITIONS AND RESPONSES

Standing Order 231 (1) provides that a member may not anticipate the discussion of any subject which appears on the Notice Paper. Standing Order 231(2) provides that in determining whether any such discussion is out of order the Speaker shall have regard to the probability of the matter anticipated being brought before the House within a reasonable time and the degree to which debate of that matter is likely to be anticipated. Standing Order 231(3) makes it clear that the rule does not apply to the annual appropriation Bills.

Debate in the House

With respect to debate in the House the rule is applied strictly. As Speaker McGrady pointed out in his ruling on 23 November 2005 (Record of Proceedings p4190), Standing order 231(2) safeguards members' rights as it ensures that the Speaker may, despite the likelihood of anticipation, allow a matter to be debated if a matter on the Notice Paper such as a bill remains on the Notice Paper too long without debate. Thus, if the bill is not dealt with within a reasonable time, the Speaker may allow debate, questions and motions to be moved.

Questions

The rule also applies to questions and answers both without and on notice. Short references to current bills are allowed if it is a reference only. For example, it is permissible for a minister to simply say something like: "these issues are being addressed in the (named) bill currently before the House". But there should be no detailed examination of the bill in the answer.

Petitions and responses

The Parliament's petition process is an important democratic process allowing Queenslanders to raise grievances and seek redress from the House.

The rule in Standing Order 231 is directed to members and not petitioners and thus the anticipation rule has never been applied to petitions. Petitions on particular issues are often circulated or posted as e-petitions on the parliament's website before issues those matters come before the House in the form of a bill. Petitioners may also be unaware of relevant bills before the House. On occasions petitions may be regarded as submissions to the House on particular issues or bills.

With respect to ministerial responses to petitions, particularly petitions dealing with issues of law reform, I intend to allow some lenience and scope in the application of the anticipation rule and allow ministers to refer to current bills before the House.

To not allow ministers to refer to proposals for law reform provided for in bills currently before the House could unnecessarily hamper ministers in their attempt to provide fulsome and accurate answers to genuine grievances raised in petitions. However, this does not mean that ministers can debate current bills in detail—the references to current bills should be minimal and sufficient to address the petitioners' grievance.

Petitions, Authentication of Facts



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I table correspondence relating to the authentication of facts contained in e-petition No. 2888-18. I seek leave to incorporate a ruling I have circulated on the e-petition.

Tabled paper: Bundle of correspondence regarding alleged misleading facts stated in e-petition 2888-18 [578].

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—E-PETITION No. 2888-18

On 9 March 2018 e-petition No. 2888-18 titled 'Stop the Noosa Slaughterhouse and Veal Industry' was posted to the Parliament's petitions webpage. On 18 April 2018, the Clerk received correspondence from Noosa Council complaining that the grievance in the e-petition contained facts which were inaccurate, namely that Noosa Council awarded a grant to Country Noosa to reopen the Eumundi Slaughterhouse to create "a bird to beast abattoir" while developing a local veal industry.

On 19 April 2018, the Clerk wrote to the principal petitioner to request they authenticate the facts stated in the e-petition. A response was received on behalf of the principal petitioner on 20 April 2018 in which they argued that the statement was not inaccurate or is not inaccurate to a degree warranting the removal of the e-petition.

I have considered the evidence provided by the principal petitioner with respect to statements made in the media and on social media by the grant recipient suggest the grant will go towards research regarding a yearling beef industry and that part of that project is to introduce alternative funding for and reopening an existing abattoir at Eumundi.

I do not consider that the statements in the e-petition are scandalous or misleading nor that the e-petition breaches any other Standing Order.

Accordingly, I will allow the e-petition to stand and a ministerial response to be tabled and provided to the principal petitioner in due course. I note that the Council in its complaint did not clarify the purpose for which the Economic Development grant was provided. This matter may be clarified by the minister in their response.

Comments by Member for Mermaid Beach



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 22 March 2018 I received correspondence from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services complaining about statements made by the member for Mermaid Beach during the address-in-reply debate on 20 March 2018. I do not intend to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

I seek leave to incorporate the ruling I have circulated on the alleged intimidation, personal reflections and unparliamentary language.

Leave granted.

Tabled paper: Correspondence, dated 22 March 2018, from the Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Hon. Mark Ryan, complaining about statements made by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Ray Stevens MP, during his contribution to the debate on the Address-in-Reply [579].

Tabled paper: Correspondence, dated 29 March 2018, from the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Ray Stevens MP, responding to allegations raised by the Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Hon. Mark Ryan, regarding statements made during his contribution to the debate on the Address-in-Reply [580].

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! This is not an invitation to revisit the matter.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION OF A MEMBER, PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

On 22 March 2018, I received correspondence from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services complaining about statements made by the Member for Mermaid Beach during the Address in Reply debate on 20 March 2018.

The minister said that he found the statements to be not only offensive, but also threatening and menacing.

I provided the Member for Mermaid Beach the opportunity to respond. The member pointed out that the minister did not take action under Standing Order 234 to ask for any matters to be withdrawn at the time of the speech. The member also denied threatening, menacing or insulting the member personally.

I have considered this matter in detail, including perusal of the broadcast. I do not believe that the minister has established that the words spoken by the member amounted to or could amount to an attempt to threaten or intimidate the minister and I do not, therefore, intend to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee.


I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

There were personal reflections about which the minister could have taken objection and asked the member to withdraw under Standing Order 234. But the minister failed to do so, despite I understand his being in the House at the time. The opportunity for a withdrawal of personal reflections is transitory, objection has to be taken at the time.

There were aspects of the member's speech which in my view contained unparliamentary language. Unparliamentary language, however, is dealt with as a matter of order, which is under the Speaker's jurisdiction, rather than a matter of privilege, which may be referred to the Ethics Committee (see Speaker Simpson, 7 June 2013 Record of Proceedings p2185).

There are precedents for Speakers requiring withdrawals for unparliamentary language in the days following such language (see Speaker Simpson 28 November 2012 Record of Proceedings p2937 and 10 September 2014 Record of Proceedings p3115). However, in this instance I do not think the unparliamentary language significant enough to warrant a late withdrawal so long after the event.

Safer Waterways Bill, Requirement for Message from Governor

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I seek leave to incorporate a ruling I have circulated on the Safer Waterways Bill 2018.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—SAFER WATERWAYS BILL AND NO REQUIREMENT FOR MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

The Safer Waterways Bill 2018 (the bill) was introduced by the Member for Hill on 21 March 2018.

I note that this bill is substantially similar to a bill of the same name that the Member for Hill introduced in the last parliament.

I refer to Speaker Wellington's ruling on the Safer Waterways Bill 2017 and guidance on the requirements of section 68 of the Constitution of Queensland 2001 and standing order 174 with respect to the requirement for a message to accompany a bill.

On 14 June 2017, at page 1565, Speaker Wellington found that the Safer Waterways Bill 2017 did not require a message. This was because there was no existing appropriation for the purpose of a Crocodile Management Authority and the bill did not confer any authority to pay an amount from consolidated revenue or extend the objects and purposes or alter the destination of an existing appropriation.

I note the relevant provisions of the 2017 bill are replicated in the 2018 Safer Waterways Bill.

With respect to the current bill, I concur with Speaker Wellington that while there would no doubt be cost implications if the establishment of the Authority was implemented, such costs would appear to be incidental to and not caused by the clauses. That is, the clauses of the bill alone do not confer an authority to pay an amount from consolidated revenue, nor do they potentially have the effect of extending the objects or purposes or of altering the destination of an existing appropriation.

Accordingly, I rule that the Safer Waterways Bill does not have an appropriation element and accordingly does not require a message for the Governor in terms of section 68 of the Constitution of Queensland Act 2001 or standing order 174.

PETITIONS

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

Southern Downs Regional Council, Deamalgamation

From 5,698 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that de-amalgamation of the Southern Downs Regional Council occurs prior to the next statutory council elections [\[581, 582\]](#).

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

Prince Charles Hospital, Parking

Mr Mander, from 219 petitioners, requesting the House to evaluate the need for additional car and motorcycle parking requirements at the Prince Charles Hospital taking into account any planned development and to make the evaluation publicly available [\[583\]](#).

Kearneys Spring, Donahue and Ruthven Streets, Traffic Lights

Mr Janetzki, from 92 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the construction of traffic lights on the corner of Donahue and Ruthven Streets, Kearneys Spring [\[584\]](#).


Glenvale State School

Mr Janetzki, from 463 petitioners, requesting the House to construct additional car parks, restructure school access, provide footpaths that connect to the school and any other infrastructure that ensures the safety and wellbeing of the Glenvale State School Community [\[585\]](#).

Petitions received.

NOTICE OF MOTION


Early Childhood Education and Care Services, Federal Funding

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.35 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House calls upon the federal government to provide long-term funding certainty in next week's federal budget for the early childhood sector to ensure a great start for all Queensland children.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Domestic and Family Violence


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.35 am): May is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month—a time to remember those we have lost, remember those left behind and make it clear as a community that we will not tolerate this violence. On Friday I joined newsreaders in a show of support for a new bystander awareness campaign 'Do Something', and on Sunday my Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Di Farmer, launched this campaign. I thank Queensland's media outlets for embracing our new bystander campaign. We do not want people to be bystanders. We do not want people to turn a blind eye. I implore people today to check on their neighbours, check on their friends, check on their family members and ask, 'Is everything okay?'

Sadly, every week in Australia at least one woman is killed by her partner. One in four children is exposed to domestic and family violence. These are harrowing statistics. This evening I will pay my respects to Queenslanders who have died at the hands of a violent partner or other family member and launch a new video, created by the Red Rose Foundation, at the national day of remembrance for domestic and family violence candlelight vigil. I do hope that, as a sign of bipartisanship, the Leader of the Opposition will join me at tonight's very important event.

We will continue our work to prevent violence and support those living with violence by improving our laws, support services and culture. My government has allocated \$323.1 million over six years to drive a comprehensive program of reform. We have introduced a permanent specialist domestic and family violence court at Southport and specialist court approaches in Beenleigh and Townsville, with circuit courts to Mount Isa and Palm Island. We have also commenced a program to change community attitudes and behaviours towards domestic and family violence. The latest campaign, launched last week, focuses on bystanders and seeks to inform, influence and inspire bystanders to help victims. This campaign builds on the youth campaign launched last year, 'Stop the Hurting: End Domestic Violence'. These campaigns acknowledge that we all have a role to play when it comes to preventing domestic and family violence in our community.

It is important to recognise the hard work of those who are part of the crucial initiatives that are driving change and supporting those affected by this violence. At this time we remember and we renew our commitment to work towards a Queensland free from domestic and family violence.

Natural Disasters, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): On this the second day of May, I believe that we can finally say with some confidence that the 2018 cyclone season is now well and truly behind us. Through late March and into April a series of severe weather events impacted families and communities, particularly through the north of our state. Tropical Cyclone Nora menaced communities down the western length of Cape York before making landfall near Pormpuraaw, cutting power to some of the most remote and isolated communities in our state. In the following days Nora's trail brought intense rainfall that extended from the north tropical coast to the lower Burdekin, with Port Douglas receiving some 595 millimetres of rain in 24 hours and swiftwater rescues being conducted at caravan parks on the northern outskirts of Cairns. I know that the Minister for Emergency Services and I were personally briefed on the bravery of some of our officers who went down to help overnight—in the darkness—to rescue people who had been trapped in their caravans by trees. I pay my respects to all the hardworking emergency services staff we have across our state and acknowledge the extraordinary work they do.


Roads were cut from the cape to Kuranda and as far south as the Bruce Highway near Ingham. I was able to visit Cairns to be briefed on these matters. I was also able to travel to Pormpuraaw and Kowanyama to meet with local communities and Indigenous leaders as they recovered in Nora's

aftermath. At the same time, ex-Tropical Cyclone Iris was lurking in the Coral Sea. For about three weeks Iris traversed up and down off the Queensland coast, causing flights to Hamilton Island to be suspended and halting ferries in the Whitsundays and cargo operations from Hay Point, Abbot Point and Mackay.

All of this occurred in the days leading up to the start of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, testing the protocols that had been practised for so long by Queensland's emergency services—managing a natural disaster and the biggest event ever to be held in Queensland all at the same time. Once again I want to pay tribute to all of our agencies who did a tremendous job not just working on the Commonwealth Games but dealing with these impending natural disasters across our state.

I also want to thank all of my ministers who participated in many meetings at Kedron, especially in the disaster management room. We also did phone hook-ups from the Gold Coast during this time. I am very proud of the leadership that we have not just in this cabinet but across our Public Service and across our state. The mayors were all involved as well. I believe that each and every year we get better and better prepared at not only dealing with natural disasters but also handling the aftermath. Thanks to all those Queenslanders who serve our communities and keep our communities safe in our state.

Cross River Rail

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.41 am): Queenslanders are becoming used to being disappointed by the Turnbull LNP government which continually invests in other states like New South Wales and Victoria but gives Queensland a raw deal.

Cross River Rail is a transformative project. It is a nation-building project. It will deliver more trains more often. It will double the capacity across the South-East Queensland network, making it much easier and quicker for people right across South-East Queensland to get around and it will bust congestion.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, please cease your interjections.

Ms TRAD: It is disappointing that the Turnbull LNP government has not yet decided to invest in this transformational project, choosing instead to fund projects in Victoria and New South Wales that far outweigh the investment provided in Queensland. The Turnbull government is spending more than \$6 billion on Snowy Hydro 2.0. It is investing billions in WestConnex in Sydney and more than \$5 billion for a second airport in Western Sydney.

The federal government has withheld support from the Cross River Rail project in part based on a flawed Infrastructure Australia report that has been widely criticised and ridiculed for basic inaccuracies. Meanwhile, the federal government has announced \$5 billion in funding to support a rail link in Victoria that has no completed business case and does not even have a finalised route. I understand that the Victorian government had not even asked for the funding. In fact, when I spoke to the Victorian Treasurer he was very grateful for the funding, but they are scratching their heads around the timing and the urgency for the \$5 billion in funding.

Ms Palaszczuk: There's an election around the corner.

Ms TRAD: I will take that interjection from the Premier. There must be a federal election around the corner.

Next week's federal budget is a test for the Turnbull LNP government. Will they back Queensland and invest in critical projects like Cross River Rail or will they continue to ignore our state? Cross River Rail will be one of Queensland's most important job-generating projects, supporting economic growth and employment now during construction and well beyond its completion. It will unlock and drive economic growth and jobs across our fast-growing South-East Queensland region.


During the five-year construction period Cross River Rail will support on average 1,500 jobs each and every year and up to 3,000 jobs in the most intensive year of construction. Every dollar invested in the project will return \$1.41 in economic benefits back to the state, and the total benefits of the project will exceed costs by more than \$1.9 billion. Cross River Rail will also support new rail connections—important new rail connections—and increase rail services to key growth areas like the Sunshine Coast, Ripley Valley and Flagstone.

Queensland cannot afford to wait for the Turnbull government. We could not afford to wait for the Turnbull government to come to its senses, so we have fully funded Cross River Rail and we are getting on with delivering it. Let me make it clear: that does not mean that the Turnbull government should be

let off the hook. Queenslanders pay their fair share of taxes to the federal government. We expect the federal government to invest that money back into our state. That being said, I welcome the announcement from the federal Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, that a future Labor federal government will invest \$2.24 billion in Cross River Rail, a commitment that recognises the national significance of the project.

It is not too late for the Turnbull LNP government to get on board. I call on the federal government to make a significant investment in Cross River Rail in next week's budget. It is a project essential to the future of transport in the fastest growing region in our state and to provide Queensland with the support it deserves, which is no more support than what is currently being enjoyed by other states like New South Wales and Victoria.

Flu Vaccinations

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.45 am): Now is the time for Queenslanders to roll up their sleeves and get their annual flu vaccinations. That is exactly what I am going to do today here at parliament. Already this year more than 3,900 cases of influenza have been confirmed across the state. That is 360 more than this time last year. Last year, as we know, was bad—56,000 Queenslanders caught the flu in the worst flu season on record. We can all play our part to reduce the risk of getting the flu and passing it on to our families and colleagues by getting our flu shots. I am a bit embarrassed to admit this but last year I was one of those Queenslanders who did not get their flu shot.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr MILES: It is true. I was not the health minister at the time, I would emphasise.

Opposition members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! The minister has made a confession. Let us leave it at that.

Dr MILES: Mr Speaker, it gets worse. I was one of those Queenslanders who got so sick that an ambulance had to take me to hospital. I am embarrassed to admit this because it all could have been avoided. Flu viruses change and mutate frequently, which is why it is so important for Queenslanders to get vaccinated every year. Now is the perfect time to get vaccinated. The weather is getting colder and people are starting to sniffle. Getting your vaccine before the end of May will protect you through the worst of the season.

Eligible Queenslanders can now access the government funded vaccine from their local providers. This includes the new Palaszczuk government initiative to provide free vaccinations for all children aged six months to less than five years. As every parent knows, young children are super spreaders, and they are more likely to experience serious complications from influenza because their immune systems are still developing and they lack previous exposure. Last year about 550 children under five were admitted to public hospitals with influenza.

Another group of people who should be getting their flu shots is pregnant women. I was appalled to read recently that anti-vaxxers were telling pregnant women not to get the flu shot. One of the worst things that can happen if you are pregnant is getting the flu. The government funded vaccine is available to anyone over 65 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but for everyone else it is really not that expensive. Please go to your GP or your pharmacy and get one. It is a small cost to ensure the best protection for this year's flu season.

Solar Energy

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.49 am): I am pleased to report to the House that clean energy jobs are coming to Gladstone. Last month with the member for Gladstone I was pleased to announce our preferred tenderer to transform 1,250 hectares of under-utilised state owned land in the Gladstone state development area at Aldoga into one of the largest solar farms in the Southern Hemisphere. Under that deal, Acciona Energy will develop, finance, construct and operate a \$500 million energy project through a 30-year lease with the Queensland government. This project will support up to 240 construction jobs and 10 ongoing jobs. When complete, this 265-megawatt project will generate enough power for up to 122,000 homes. That is around five times the number of households in Gladstone.


The Aldoga solar project will not only harvest the sun's energy and feed it into the state electricity grid but also support local businesses and local jobs. As part of the agreement for lease, Acciona Energy will establish a community benefit fund to provide grants to local community organisations. Between \$50,000 and \$120,000 per year will be put into the fund, representing between \$1.5 million to \$3.6 million over the 30-year lease. This will go to local clubs, associations and community groups in the region.

Five large-scale solar projects have begun operating in Queensland in the last 18 months, bringing the total operational capacity of renewable energy in Queensland to more than 780 megawatts. Another 23 large-scale projects totalling 2,200 megawatts are currently financially committed or under construction, creating almost 3,600 jobs during construction and boosting investment by up to \$4.2 billion.

We expect construction on the Aldoga solar project to commence next year, with electricity generation beginning in 2020. This is what happens when there is a government that provides certainty in energy policy. Our target is to reach 50 per cent renewable energy in this state by 2030. That target is driving a pipeline of private sector investment. That target is supporting jobs in regional Queensland where they are needed.

What do we get from the Turnbull government? We get total policy confusion. They have expressed their preference that we abandon our renewable energy target in favour of a national scheme. We will not turn away from \$4 billion in renewable construction jobs and energy capacity for our state. The Leader of the Opposition should pick up the phone and tell the federal energy minister, who also happens to be the minister for the Great Barrier Reef, to back renewables and to back renewable energy jobs in Queensland.

Jobs; Unparliamentary Language, Apology


 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (9.51 am): Above all else, the Palaszczuk government is committed to creating jobs—jobs for the future here in Queensland. We need look no further than Queensland's thriving innovation sector. New data released today shows that Advance Queensland has now supported more than 2,600 innovators and has created around 11,000 jobs across our state. This is an increase of more than 1,500 jobs from the September data last year.

Our government's Advance Queensland strategy is working. It is diversifying our economy, supporting start-ups and turning new ideas into a reality. This means real jobs. Excitingly, the rest of the world is quickly tuning into the fact that Queensland is the place to be. Startup Muster's latest report shows that Queensland has more than 20 per cent of Australia's start-ups—even more than Victoria. These jobs are in industries that will sustain Queensland's jobs growth into the future—jobs with businesses like Underwood's Go1.com, a company that provides people with on-the-job training through mobile phone applications. This company received \$178,000 in funding through Advance Queensland's Ignite Ideas program and benefited greatly as a result. In fact, they started with a staff of around 19 and are now employing more than 50 people in Queensland.

Currently, Queensland start-ups and small and medium sized businesses can apply for funding under the fourth round of Advance Queensland's Ignite Ideas program which is open for applications until 9 May. While I am on my feet, it was brought to my attention this morning that I used a word yesterday that was unparliamentary. I would like to withdraw it and apologise to the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you for that, Minister.


Wotton v State of Queensland

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.53 am): I can update the House today on the Wotton v State of Queensland case, being the Palm Island class action case. As per the 2016 Federal Court ruling, the parties have now agreed on a settlement scheme and an apology subject to the court's approval.

In December 2016 in the Federal Court Justice Mortimer found in favour of Lex, Cecilia and Agnes Wotton and ruled that the conduct of certain QPS officers in 2004 contravened section 9(1) of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and that the actions of certain police were found to be unlawful. The parties have now agreed on a \$30 million settlement scheme for 447 claimants including interest, applicants' legal costs and administrative costs, and the delivery of an apology. This does not include the original three claimants who already had orders made in their favour.

This agreement is still subject to court approval and I cannot pre-empt that formal ratification. Lawyers for the Palm Island community have now been directed to hold two public meetings this month in Townsville and Palm Island to explain details of the proposed settlement to claimants. The application for approval of the settlement will be heard on 15 June in Townsville, but assuming the court approves the settlement I know that all parties involved hope it will provide some measure of closure and a way forward for the community of Palm Island. The Palaszczuk government looks forward to continuing to work closely with the community as we move forward together.

Domestic and Family Violence

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.55 am): I rise to speak about Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month and the important role we must all play if we are to achieve the goal of ending domestic and family violence in Queensland. On Sunday I was proud to follow the Premier's lead to stand alongside the wonderful Kay McGrath and her colleagues across major media outlets to launch the Palaszczuk government's #dosomething campaign. More than ever before we are bringing home the message that tackling domestic and family violence is everybody's business and the #dosomething campaign is about bringing everybody on board to stop the damage being inflicted in homes throughout the state. I want to thank and congratulate all of the media organisations which have made such a strong commitment to being part of this campaign.

Domestic violence is the scourge of every Queensland community. It knows no boundaries of income, education, race, gender, age or geography. It happens everywhere. Recent statistics tell us that one in six women and one in 16 men over the age of 15 have suffered physical or sexual abuse at the hands of an intimate partner. That means that on almost every street, at almost every workplace and in almost every sporting club there is somebody who has faced this kind of violence.

The Palaszczuk government has led the way by changing legislation, by massively boosting services to help survivors, by building the first government built shelters in more than 20 years and by rolling out domestic violence high-risk teams in areas of highest need across the state. That includes services which support Bribie Island. I heard the member for Pumicestone express her concern that there are no domestic violence services there. I can assure her and this House that we have allocated more than \$2.6 million in the last year for domestic violence services based in Caboolture which support the people of Pumicestone and have called for submissions for a women's shelter in the Caboolture area which will also support her electorate. I am very happy to discuss those with her at any time.

We lead the nation in legislating for paid domestic violence leave for our staff, and we are seeing major employers such as Rio Tinto, Hesta, Telstra and many others follow suit as well as putting in place services and support to help affected staff. Our high-risk teams are in place in Logan, Mount Isa, Cherbourg, Brisbane, Cairns and Ipswich, and they are already making a difference in those communities.

These teams are a collaboration with police, child safety, health, housing and non-government domestic violence services on the highest risk DV cases. We need every Queenslanders to know that they can make a critical difference. In every domestic related homicide last year there was at least one bystander who heard something or knew something but did not say anything. We do not want people to be vigilantes, but if we can encourage all to do something—to make that call to police or to ask that person if they are okay—then lives will be saved. I ask every member of this parliament to come on board as part of this campaign to spread the word in their local communities. Domestic violence is everyone's business and we can all make a difference.

National Road Safety Week; Bike Week

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.59 am): This week marks a very important event—National Road Safety Week—and I am glad to see so many members wearing their yellow ribbons today in support of road safety. Each year, over 1,200 people are killed and more than 30,000 are seriously injured on Australian roads. The impact of road trauma on our community is enormous. Every serious road crash has ongoing and devastating effects for families, communities and our economy, and most of these tragedies are preventable.

Supporting National Road Safety Week draws attention to our ambitious vision of zero road trauma, and it also provides the opportunity to challenge Queenslanders to take responsibility for road safety. Key landmarks like the Story Bridge, the Sir Leo Hielscher Bridges, the Victoria Bridge and our


Parliament House will be lit yellow to symbolise our commitment to driving so others survive and to remember people who have been affected by road crashes. The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to improving road safety. We have been working with stakeholders like the RACQ and other community peak bodies, including through delivering five Safer Roads, Safer Queensland Forums, three Co-Lab young driver events and a Citizens' Taskforce.

We are delivering more than \$158 million in road safety infrastructure funding in 2017-18 alone; our Community Road Safety Grants scheme which encourages grassroots programs, and I remind members that the 2018 round is currently open for applications; our Cooperative and Automated Vehicle Initiative which is investing in the latest and most promising technology; and our flashing school zone signs, with 100 school zones going in each and every year.

Yesterday I announced a huge \$112 million in road safety funding under our High Risk Roads safety package. This significant funding allocation will deliver safety treatments on six of Queensland's most dangerous sections of road. The six roads to receive funding are Gladstone Benaraby Road; Mount Glorious Road and Samford-Mount Glorious Road; Burpengary-Caboolture Road and Beerburum Road; the Captain Cook Highway; Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road; and the South MacLean section of the Mount Lindesay Highway. This important road safety initiative will not only make some of Queensland's most dangerous roads safer but also create 306 direct jobs across Queensland during the life of these projects.

I note too that, in addition to National Road Safety Week, this week is also Bike Week, so I encourage all members to take this important message back to their constituents. We all have a role to play in ensuring the safety of our most vulnerable road users—pedestrians, bicycle riders and motorcycle riders—and making our roads safer for everybody in our community.

Waste and Resource Recovery

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerie—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (10.02 am): We stand at a crossroads when it comes to the waste and resource recovery industry in Australia. The decision by China to tighten controls on recycling has presented challenges for all levels of government around the country, including Queensland. There are some who are attempting to present this as a South-East Queensland issue, but I can assure members that it is having an impact right across our state.


Inside these challenges are enormous opportunities to build a thriving resource recovery industry, create jobs and leave a positive environmental legacy for generations of Queenslanders to come. That is why the Palaszczuk government is moving quickly to develop a comprehensive waste strategy to pursue initiatives on recycling and waste recovery and explore more innovative ways to use waste. We are currently designing a comprehensive strategy, underpinned by a waste levy, to encourage investment and innovation in the industry. The Chief Executive Officer of the Local Government Association of Queensland, Greg Hallam, has welcomed the state government's commitment to address this issue. Mr Hallam said—

Local councils across Queensland are hurting, and we will work quickly and collaboratively with the Government to ensure the best possible strategies are put in place.

Over the past month, I have visited waste recovery centres around the state—including Gladstone, Townsville and Cairns—and the message I have heard from local councils and industry is that we must act now, and that is precisely what we are doing. Last week, I attended two key events to discuss the current situation facing Queensland when it comes to our waste and resource recovery industry. On Thursday, I attended the waste and recycling industry Queensland forum in Bundaberg that brought together industry, state government, local government and international experts to explore ways to change the way we think about waste and opportunities to develop the industry. On Friday, I attended the Meeting of Environment Ministers in Melbourne.

I have been advocating for the federal government to step up and show leadership on a national solution around the waste and recycling industry. While the federal government did not come to the meeting with a financial plan, it was encouraging to see them commit to updating the national waste strategy to include circular economy principles by the end of the year. The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering a comprehensive waste strategy for Queensland, and we will deliver on our commitment.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Personnel


 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.04 am): Like all Queenslanders, I am in awe of the amazing heroes working in our emergency services. I agree wholeheartedly with the Premier's statements this morning about the recent floods and cyclones. In recent months, we have witnessed the terrible devastation and heartache caused by Queensland's severe weather. We have seen communities working together and our magnificent Fire and Emergency Services personnel putting their own safety at risk to protect the lives and property of Queenslanders. That is why this government is determined to ensure that QFES personnel have every tool and support they need to continue their world renowned work. It was this government which allocated record funding of \$675 million for QFES in 2017-18, including budgeted staffing for 3,280 full-time-equivalent personnel.

We have budgeted for extra fire appliances and communications equipment throughout the state. We have budgeted for a new Accelerated Rural Fire Service Fleet Program. We have budgeted for upgrades to auxiliary fire stations across our state. On top of this, the Premier promised during the election campaign to invest another \$29.5 million over the next four years to boost our Queensland Fire and Emergency Services numbers. This equates to an additional 100 firefighters and 12 communications officers across the state. These new officers will be deployed across Queensland, including in regional areas. This means more swiftwater rescue technicians to save people from floodwaters, more firefighters for property fires and road crash rescues and more fire communications officers to provide the critical coordination required to ensure all emergency services officers work together in their response efforts.

QFES will implement the government's election commitment by recruiting an additional 25 full-time firefighters this calendar year and another 25 firefighters each calendar year for the next three years. We are growing our ranks and everyone is welcome to apply, even members of this House. Members can start training at any time—just get to work on the beep test, the push-ups, the mechanical reasoning, the aptitude and the like. Firefighting is one of the most trusted professions in this country. On that scale of the most trusted professionals, firefighters are way up the top—and I do not need to remind members of where politicians are.

I can also advise that the QFES commissioner will determine the recruitment program for the 12 full-time fire communications officers. The QFES commissioner, Katarina Carroll, has very much welcomed the promise of extra resources for the service. There will be extensive discussions within QFES over the coming weeks and months about where these additional resources will be best placed in Queensland to serve the community. Queensland is often at the mercy of extreme weather events. This government understands just how vital it is that our entire state has the highly skilled Fire and Emergency Services personnel required to respond swiftly and effectively if and when disaster strikes.

Agriculture Ministers' Forum, Biosecurity

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.07 am): Last Friday, I represented Queensland for my first Agriculture Ministers' Forum, or AGMIN as it is better known, and Queensland was the setting for this forum. I took the opportunity to raise serious concerns with my colleagues. From Far North Queensland bananas to Central Queensland beef and from Kalei apples to Bundaberg macadamias, we are truly blessed here in the Sunshine State to have world-class food and fibre producers—

Opposition members interjected.

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


Mr FURNER:—and we know that they have great potential to grow. This potential is very clearly outlined in the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2018 snapshot that I released during the Commonwealth Games. I also made it clear in our discussions that some things need to change. Biosecurity issues, along with drought, are the main constrictors for the growth of Queensland's agriculture and have massive flow-on effects to the retail and service industries. The Palaszczuk government takes our biosecurity obligations very seriously. That is why we invested more than \$120 million into enhancing our biosecurity capabilities in the last budget. That is also why I launched Queensland's Biosecurity Strategy for the next five years at a flower farm in Gatton earlier this month.

The strategy provides a six-point plan to ensure that any incursion is responded to in a quick yet organised fashion. We are the front-line state as you would know, Mr Speaker, when it comes to incursions of pests and diseases into Australia. I must commend the Biosecurity Queensland staff for the commendable work they do in this area.

We want the federal government to get serious about biosecurity and ensure that Queensland is not left to pick up the bill for yet another federal biosecurity failure at the borders. This approach will continue to inform our discussions with the Commonwealth on biosecurity whether the issue is red imported fire ants, carp or, especially, white spot disease. The fact of the matter is that biosecurity is everyone's business. Another key area of discussion was access to markets and drought policy reform.

My fellow agriculture ministers held some fruitful discussions on effective fruit fly management and related barriers to premium markets. We also received updates on the Trans Pacific Partnership and also other free trade agreements. Like the Premier, I will also fight to ensure that our producers are getting a chance to get into new and emerging markets. Let us hope that this year's Commonwealth budget can support this aim. There is clearly more work to be done to support our food and fibre producers, but under a Palaszczuk government we know this is getting done.

Local Government Managers Australia, Queensland Awards for Excellence

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.10 am): Last month I was honoured to attend the Local Government Managers Australia, or LGMA, Queensland Awards for Excellence. What a breath of fresh air it was—good people, great ideas and impressive work. There was innovation and collaboration to burn. This is stuff that should be making headlines for local government right across Queensland.

One of Queensland's smallest councils as well as Queensland's largest council were among those recognised for their dedication, service and initiative across eight categories. Our councils work tirelessly for their communities with little fanfare, so it is fitting to acknowledge those that have exceeded expectations and the officers who have done all of the work. Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council is one of our smallest local government areas in population but it won big, taking out the award for Innovation for its emergency management and community forum. It was one of the highlights of the night to watch Eileen Deemal-Hall, the CEO of Wujal Wujal, receive the award and to see how much the recognition meant to her and to her council.


Mackay Regional Council was another to be recognised with the Teamwork award for securing the opening concert of Sir Elton John's *Once in a Lifetime* tour last year and, more importantly, capitalising on it to deliver a festival of events around the concert. I was fortunate to personally present the collaboration award to the Central Highlands Regional Council and its partnership with the Central Highlands Development Corporation for its exciting Accelerate Agribusiness project involving forums, documentaries and fine dining.

In the south-east, Brisbane City Council was the 2018 winner of the excellence in Workplace Wellbeing category for its wellness programs. All eight award winners typify the enormous strength and resourcefulness of local government in Queensland and show just what can be achieved regardless of size or remoteness.

Let us celebrate the best in local government and get behind those councils that will represent our great state in the national awards for excellence in local government. I wish all the awardees all the best for their progress in the national awards. Honourable members should know that Queensland is definitely fighting above its weight.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders, the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations be permitted to move at 4.25 pm today the motion of which the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations gave notice earlier today, with time limits for speeches and debate as follows:

- five minutes for each member; and
- total debate time before question put, 30 minutes.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Reports



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.13 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House—

1. condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government for its arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy;
2. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to immediately publish:
 - (a) all ministerial records in the mangocube6@yahoo.co.uk account;
 - (b) the State Archivist's report into Minister Bailey's deletion of ministerial records;
 - (c) the Ethical Standards Unit report into fraud at Cavendish Road State High School under the member for Mansfield—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members!

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier. Members, this is a notice of motion. The motion will be debated later today. I ask you to hear the Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It goes on—

- (d) the youth detention report;
- (e) the report into systemic failings in the Queensland mental health system leading to the killing of a man;
- (f) the list of proposed youth bail house addresses;
- (g) the unwashed department of child safety performance data under former minister Fentiman;
- (h) the Cross River Rail, Nullinga Dam and Sunshine Coast rail business cases;
- (i) all Child Death Case Review Panel reports under the Palaszczuk government;
- (j) the \$165,000 KPMG report into Public Service efficiency;
- (k) details of the deferred royalty framework offered to Adani for the Carmichael coalmine;
- (l) the cost and details of the inducement provided to the producers of *Thor: Ragnarok* and *Dora the Explorer*; and
- (m) every other report that the Palaszczuk Labor government—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. Leader of the House, Minister for State Development, Minister for Innovation and Premier. I am speaking and I have called the House to order.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The motion continues—

- (m) every other report that the Palaszczuk Labor government has relied on cabinet privilege to hide from Queenslanders; and—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, there will be an opportunity to debate the motion. This is a notice of motion. I will not say that again. Any further interjections will be met with warnings.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It continues—

3. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to end its culture of secrecy and to be honest with the people of Queensland.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burnett, you are warned under standing orders. I was on my feet. I will not repeat myself today, members. You will listen to the chair and when I call the House to order you will come to order.


Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would ask for your ruling or consideration in relation to that question regarding anticipation. That question was so broad, covering just about every element of government activities, that it may be possible that members opposite have ensured they cannot put any questions to the government in question time due to anticipation.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. Regarding your point of order, Leader of the House, I will listen carefully to each question as it is put. Your point that it is a broad motion is correct. However, that broadness will need to be applied to each question and we will deal with them as they come. Question time will conclude today at 11.18 am.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Independent Public Schools

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.18 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. Why did the Premier not tell Queenslanders at the last election about Labor's plans to pay back the Teachers' Union and scrap independent schools?

Ms PALASZCZUK: There are no plans.

Independent Public Schools, Review

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question without notice is to the Premier—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Education, the question is being asked. You are warned under standing orders. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question without notice is to the Premier. After Labor's secret review of independent public schools was exposed, the chair of the Brisbane State High School council in the Deputy Premier's electorate said that scrapping independent public schools would be a 'real retrograde step'. I ask the Premier: why did the government not notify the 250 independent public schools that their school was under review?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. As I said, there are no plans.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. My question was clear—

Mr SPEAKER: There is no right of reply. The Premier has answered the question, she sat down and that is her contribution.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will wait for silence. I call the member for Lytton.

Anti-Cyberbullying Task Force

Ms PEASE: My question without notice is addressed to the Premier and I ask: will the Premier please update the House on the Anti-Cyberbullying Task Force?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Lytton for the question. We know that the issue of cyberbullying is confronting people right across our state. It is relevant to parents and students across our state and in fact across our nation. I want to pay tribute to the members of the task force. As we know, this is a bipartisan task force. I note that the member for Mansfield and the member for Coomera have done joint advertisements encouraging people to participate in workshops that are going to be conducted across the state. Overnight we once again heard the very sad story of how young Dolly, a gorgeous 14-year-old, tragically lost her life. Our hearts go out to the family. The whole point of this task force to stop cyberbullying is to prevent any more tragedies in our state. We know that this is a national issue and one that I have raised at COAG.

The task force held its first public forum in Rockhampton on 26 April, and by all reports it went extremely well. This month there will be 11 others across the state, and I would encourage members of this House to attend those forums and encourage parents and students to go along as well. They will be held in Townsville, Toowoomba, Roma, Caboolture, Maryborough, Mount Isa, Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. The idea of the forums is to hear any ideas to prevent and reduce the cyberbullying of young people and to support anyone affected by this terrible modern scourge. We know that thousands of students have been touched by this. In fact, in 2017 yourtown responded to 959 cases of cyberbullying nationally—151 from Queensland—and another 3,000 cases of concern about online activity, including 496 from Queensland.

My message to all parents out there is that we are on your side. We want to help tackle these issues. Queensland is once again leading the way on an issue that impacts children and students. The best advice that I have heard is from very experienced teachers, who say that parents need to talk to

their children. Sit down with them and ask them flat out, 'Are you being bullied or do you know someone who is bullying?' We need to make sure that these conversations happen; that is the first step. If you are a victim of bullying, know that we are on your side as well.

Once again let me say how proud I am that this task force, which is led by Madonna King, is happening. Consultations are underway throughout Queensland and I would ask members to please get involved. This is a bipartisan task force, and together as parliamentarians we can make a difference.

Independent Public Schools, Review

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Premier. Premier, is there a review or is there not a review of independent public schools in Queensland?

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, before you answer I ask the member to rephrase the question and to ask that question through the chair.

Mr MANDER: I apologise, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Premier through you, Mr Speaker, and I ask: Premier, is there a review or is there not a review of independent public schools in this state?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, the government has no plans to close down independent schools in this state, so let us put that on the record. What I can report is that we did an evaluation of independent schools to ensure we get value for money, and there is nothing wrong with that. The federal funding for independent schools runs out at the end of this year.

Ms Grace: No, it was last year.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am sorry, it ran out last year and we are funding it. Let us be very clear: what are those opposite doing about talking to their federal counterparts about independent schools? Absolutely nothing. What we do know is that Trevor Evans, the federal member for Brisbane, is inviting people to come along to hear the new leadership team from the LNP with regard to their deliberations and their plans for the Queensland budget. What would they be deliberating about with regard to the state budget? Why are they not talking to Trevor Evans about lobbying Malcolm Turnbull to get Queensland's fair share of funding for independent schools in this state? Rather than the state having to do it all, what about the federal government—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I am having difficulty hearing the Premier's answer. If you interject please keep your noise levels down and make sure that your interjections are relevant, or I will warn you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In conclusion, we look forward to hearing about the deliberations at Trevor Evans' luncheon to meet the new leadership team.

A government member: How much are tickets?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do not know. Perhaps they can share with us how much a ticket is. I do not think you would be getting value for money. I wonder if it will be disclosed as a political donation. We still have not seen that \$100,000—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question was about whether a review was being undertaken. The Premier is not being relevant at all in her answer to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, have you finished your contribution?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier has finished her contribution.

Federal Budget

Ms McMILLAN: My question without notice is of the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on Queensland's priorities for next week's federal budget?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Wouldn't we like to see Queensland get our fair share of funding out of the federal budget from Canberra! We would love to see that more than anything. Obviously there is a hint of a federal election in the air this year, because we see Malcolm Turnbull rushing to get funding out the door for Victoria and New South Wales—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. I remind the Premier that the government moved a ministerial motion this morning about education, a great start for Queensland children and the federal government's budget being handed down next week. I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that the Premier is anticipating her own minister's motion debate this evening.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, the point of order relates to the ministerial motion that was put forward by the Minister for Education this morning.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am not talking about education.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I ask that you pay attention to the motion and ensure that your answer does not anticipate debate. Leader of the House, do you have a point of order?

Mrs D'ATH: On the point of order raised by the Manager of Opposition Business: the motion put forward by the Minister for Education earlier today specifically goes to the early childhood sector, not the broader education sector.

Mr SPEAKER: As I have just guided the Premier, I am sure the Premier's response will ensure that it is not anticipating that motion.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much for your guidance, Mr Speaker, but obviously the Manager of Opposition Business had trouble listening to the question because it was about the federal budget. I am not talking about early childhood; I am talking about other issues of the federal budget. Let us talk about health. Let us talk about how Queensland still has not received our back pay from 2016-17 that is owed by Malcolm Turnbull and Scott Morrison to Queensland. Where is that? If there is anything that the opposition should do today it is get on the phone to Malcolm Turnbull and say, 'We need the health funding for Queensland.' I have written to Malcolm Turnbull because I will stand up for fair health in this state and our fair share.

When it comes to infrastructure, we want our fair share of infrastructure from Canberra as well. We do not want to see it all being put into New South Wales and Victoria, because we pay our taxes as well. On that point, we want our share of the GST as well. The Treasurer has already spoken this morning and said that once again we are getting robbed by Canberra and not getting our fair share of GST funding. When it comes to remote Indigenous housing, let me say this: the federal government must provide funding in next week's budget to continue the legacy that has been in place for 50 years to continue the funding of remote Indigenous housing in this state. Will the opposition stand up for housing in this state which creates local jobs as well?

If those opposite are having that little briefing with Trevor Evans, perhaps they can start getting him to also lobby Canberra to make sure that Queensland gets its fair share. There is zero from the federal government when it comes to Cross River Rail. That is what we were given—zero—yet Malcolm Turnbull gives money to Victoria without even a business case for a major infrastructure project. That is what we are up against. Hopefully at the next election people will see that Bill Shorten and Labor will deliver a fairer share for Queensland.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the next questioner, I want to make a general statement to the House. I am increasingly hearing running commentary by members. The member on their feet has the call. Whilst I will allow a robustness to question time, I will not put up with sniping comments continuing to come from across the chamber. If you have something to say, get the call or get a blog.

Independent Public Schools, Review

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Education. The minister has revealed that Potential Plus solutions has been engaged to conduct the review of independent public schools. Will the minister release the full details of this review, including the cost, whether it was awarded via open tender and the terms of reference?

Ms GRACE: I really do thank the member for Broadwater for the question because I would love to put this straight. It has been built into the framework of independent public schools and it has been on the website since August 2016 that, at the end of the funding period, which ended in 2017—and the federal government has now walked away from that and Queensland has picked up the funding for independent public schools—there would be an evaluation on how the program is working. That is a very sensible policy approach to money being spent in schools to provide the best education for our children.

Last night independent public schools were seen by the member for Kawana as a vision of the Liberal Party, but the discussions started under the Gillard government which was looking at empowering local schools to give principals greater authority on their election platform. It was borne out of that and then the Turnbull government came to office and continued the discussion.

This has been on the website since August 2016. There is no smoke and mirrors here. This is in documents that those on the other side signed when they signed up to the funding from the federal government, which has been evaluating the IPS—independent public schools—every year since it has been in government. We have determined that we will now hold—because it was due at the end of 2017 under the previous minister, who did an excellent job in Education—a review and evaluate this independently and we have appointed Potential Plus to do this evaluation, as is required under the framework agreement. It will conduct an extensive evaluation. It will consult with all stakeholders such as parents and teachers. Let me say that there is no plan to end independent public schools.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I rise to a point of order. The minister has established there is a review, which is great, but my question was about the cost—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, it is not a chance—

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is about relevance, Mr Speaker. I asked for the cost and whether it was awarded via open tender, not a history lesson.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! There is a point of order being asked of the chair. I am hearing the point of order and I will rule accordingly. I do not need the guidance of any members with regard to the point of order. Member, as I said, it is not a chance to restate the question but your point of order relates to relevance. I have been listening carefully to the minister's response. I believe the minister is being relevant.

Ms GRACE: Potential Plus solutions was engaged through a competitive tender process. It was out there open for people to tender and it was awarded to Potential Plus, which I am sure will do a great job. As I was saying, it will consult extensively and if there are very good things in relation to independent public schools we want to embrace them, because this side of the House wants the best education for our children.

This is about evaluating a program to see what it delivers. Not only do we have no plan to cease it, which has been misleading by the member for Kawana; we want to embrace it and extend it, because under those opposite it was 120 schools and we ended with 250 schools under IPS. If there were any secret plans about the effectiveness of IPS, they were from those opposite. We will look at the figures and the evaluation and determine the future of IPS.

Jobs

Mrs GILBERT: My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on jobs growth in Queensland, including in my electorate of Mackay?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Mackay for her question. I know that the member for Mackay has been working incredibly hard putting the interests of her community to the government and making sure that Mackay gets a good and fair deal when it comes to employment programs and economic inputs from this government to create jobs, and it has absolutely been working. I am very proud to announce to the House that Mackay has the lowest unemployment rate in the state and the highest participation rate in Queensland. The latest data from the ABS Labour Force Survey again demonstrates that the Palaszczuk Labor government is getting on with the job of delivering jobs, jobs, jobs for Queensland.

Since we were elected 160,000 jobs have been created in Queensland and almost 90 per cent of those have been in the private sector. That is 4,000 Queenslanders every single month getting a job in our state while at the same time we are seeing the participation rate increase and we are seeing more people move to Queensland because of the jobs growth rate as well as our affordability.

When Malcolm Turnbull and Scott Morrison get up to crow about the number of jobs being created in Australia, they are doing that off the back of the hard work of the Palaszczuk Labor government—20 per cent of the national population is in our state but we are generating 30 per cent of the jobs nationally. That is what you get from a Labor government. Let us compare what we have done in the past three years to those opposite. We have created 160,000 jobs, many full-time jobs. How many jobs were created under their watch? Some 30,000 jobs in three years. It turns out that you cannot create jobs, you cannot grow an economy when you sack 14,000 people and talk down the economy.

Ms Palaszczuk: Absolute genius.

Ms TRAD: Absolute genius. I take that interjection from the Premier. If those opposite are so interested in information being released to the public, maybe they should release all of the cabinet documents relating to the sacking of 14,000 public servants.

I remember during the 2012 state election Campbell Newman got up and said, 'No public servant has anything to fear from my government.' It turned out that he was not telling the truth. Who sat around the CBRC table with him? The current Leader of the Opposition. I call on them to release all of the cabinet documents relating to the sacking of workers.

Genderbread Person Program

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Education. I table a media report evidencing that the genderbread program teaches kids that their gender is fluid and can change at any time of the day depending on what they want to be and is being taught in Queensland schools. Will the minister rule out teaching kids to shift genders and get this sinister and destructive social engineering program out of our schools today?

Tabled paper. Media article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 17 April 2018, titled 'Brisbane state high school using banned gender tool', and copy of document titled 'The Genderbread Person v3.3 by it's pronounced METRO' [586].

Ms GRACE: I could not thank the member for Kawana more for his question. We want to achieve in schools a supportive, inclusive environment. We want schools that are safe learning environments for all our students regardless of their gender, race, ability, appearance and sexual identity. Every day state schools respond to the individual needs of their students by creating those inclusive and supportive communities to ensure that students can access a quality education. There are many students in schools today who do not identify as cisgender. As alarming as that may be to those opposite, that is the reality. It was interesting to note that, last night, the member for Kawana said—

The LNP believe that local school communities, parents, teachers and principals know what is best for the children at their school. We want to give them the ability to make those decisions without interference.

Mitchelton State High School is an independent public school that is making local decisions in relation to sensitive issues for the students at that school. I ask those opposite: which is it? Do they allow them to make decisions in relation to those students or do they want to interfere in how they deliver it?

When it comes to this issue, there are no mandated materials in schools. There was no green light given for the use of this material. There is no ban on materials for use in relation to schools. This is but one tool that one school has used in relation to this matter—and it is an independent public school at that.

When we hear the Leader of the Opposition using words such as 'indoctrinate', 'gender identity can change a dozen times a day'—what rot—'brainwashing', 'confused', 'bizarre gender theories' and 'this is disgusting' she puts the plight of students who do not identify as cisgender back 100 years. It is disgusting that that is said for all those parents like me who have children who do not identify as cisgender. This is a disgusting display in a public space. It should be done in a respectful and proper manner.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Manager of Opposition Business, I could hear both of you interjecting quite loudly. You are both warned under the standing orders. There is a general warning to all members that we will listen to the question in silence. Before we hear the question, I would like to acknowledge that we have students from Woolloowin State School in the gallery today from the electorate of Clayfield.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games

Ms SCANLON: My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. I refer to media reports today that quote legal advice requested by the LNP to not stage the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. Minister, please advise the House what the implications would have been for the Gold Coast had the games been taken away?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, before answering, I ask the member that she rephrase that question and ask that question through the chair.

Ms SCANLON: I ask that the minister please advise the House what the implications would have been for the Gold Coast had the games been taken away?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question and I thank the one Gold Coast member in this House who will fight for the Gold Coast. What a welcome addition Meaghan Scanlon is to the Queensland parliament. It is so wonderful to have a Gold Coast member who each and every day wakes up in the morning to deliver better resources, infrastructure and major events for the Gold Coast. It is a welcome breath of fresh air. I thank the member.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Ms JONES: Absolutely. I take that interjection from the Premier. The member for Gaven backed the Commonwealth Games 100 per cent from day one. In fact, the member talks fondly about when she was a school-aged child in 2009 when we made the announcement that we would bid for the games. The member remembers being excited about it, because she is a born and bred Gold Coaster and she will fight for the Gold Coast. If only we had more people in this House from the Gold Coast who stood up for the Gold Coast.

A government member interjected.

Ms JONES: We are working on it. We are coming. Today, after the denials of those from the LNP, we see that the *Gold Coast Bulletin* has in its possession legal advice commissioned by the LNP to scrap the Commonwealth Games.

Ms Palaszczuk: Release it.

Ms JONES: Once again, I take that interjection from the Premier. In the vein of the comments by the Leader of the Opposition this morning, I call on those opposite to stop their arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy and immediately publish the legal advice. I call on the member for Currumbin to do the right thing, to be honest with the people of the Gold Coast and release the legal advice that was sought during the term of the LNP government. Please note that the member for Currumbin is shaking her head.

The LNP wants to keep secret the legal advice that it commissioned to axe the Commonwealth Games from the Gold Coast. The members opposite should hang their heads in shame. All I am asking is that they come clean to the people who voted for them. It is not a very big ask. It is time they stopped denying what the *Gold Coast Bulletin* knows—that the Newman government sought legal advice to scrap the games. I understand from reading the paper that the LNP, if it could not scrap it altogether, looked—

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Ms JONES: Straw man. I take that interjection from the member for Surfers Paradise. Do the members opposite deny that legal advice was sought? I call on the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Currumbin to stand up in this parliament and deny that legal advice was sought during their term in government to cut the Commonwealth Games. They can raise a matter of privilege. They could use parliamentary procedures. Come honest and clean with the people of the Gold Coast.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Order! As a general statement to the members to my right and ministers, could you please ensure that your comments are being made through the chair and not refer to those opposite as 'you'.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Airbnb

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Premier. Premier, why did the government allow a Housing Commission tenant in Mudgeeraba to use Airbnb to rent out a government funded property for \$100 per night during the Commonwealth Games?

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: I am going to rule that question out of order. I have repeatedly asked that questions be asked through the chair. That question was asked directly to the Premier.

Mr LANGBROEK: I rise to a point of order. I wonder if you could give us a ruling as to your definition of 'asking through the chair', when the member will have said, 'Mr Speaker, my question is to the Premier,' and then asked the question without using the first person. I am confused.

Mr SPEAKER: You have been here long enough to know that if the question starts with the word 'minister' or 'Premier' and the question is asked, it is asked in the first person. It is a pretty clear ruling.

Waste Policy

Ms HOWARD: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister please outline how the government is using the planning system to ensure that people in Ipswich are not adversely affected by the waste policy?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. How we control the dumping of waste in South-East Queensland is a critically important issue for her community. The biggest single policy measure to be applied by the government and, in fact, the parliament, is a waste levy applicable to Queensland. As honourable members will know, until we can apply that levy, in early April I acted to use my reserve powers as planning minister to issue a notice to Ipswich City Council to place more intense scrutiny on waste facilities. That is the first time this power has been used under the new planning act.

The temporary local planning instrument provides interim protection for the residents surrounding the Swanbank and New Chum industrial areas. I want to thank the member for Ipswich, the member for Ipswich West, the member for Jordan and the member for Bundamba for their strong advocacy for their communities to protect their communities from a fundamental policy failure by the Newman LNP. There has not been enough scrutiny of the members of the opposition, including the Leader of the Opposition when she was the assistant treasurer sitting around the CBRC table when the decision was made to remove the waste levy. What we saw was one of the most serious public policy failures in Queensland in a generation.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr DICK: Those opposite might like the waste trucks coming to Queensland. I tell you someone who would have stopped it and that is Terry Mackenroth. He was a real member for Chatsworth. The member for Chatsworth wants to decry the levy. Only the LNP would think it is appropriate for South-East Queensland to become the dumping ground for Australia. It would only be the LNP that would think it is better for New South Wales waste companies to travel all the way from Sydney to dump waste in South-East Queensland rather than dump it in New South Wales. That was the consequence of the LNP's decision to let the dump trucks come to Queensland and let us become the waste dumping ground for Australia.

There is one party that will stop that: the Australian Labor Party. There is one government that will stop it: the Palaszczuk Labor government. I call on all new members of the LNP to reflect on the public policy failure caused by the Leader of the Opposition, the deputy leader and those members of the front bench when they were in government. They might think it is appropriate, but I am sure the new members do not. It is about time the LNP started standing up for Queensland, started standing up for Ipswich, the West Moreton region and those other parts of Queensland, and started supporting new waste industries. We will not let Queensland be a dumping ground. Labor will stop it.

Public Housing, Airbnb

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier advise why the government allowed a Housing Commission tenant in Mudgeeraba to use Airbnb to rent out a government funded property for \$100 a night during the Commonwealth Games?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Burleigh for asking a question about someone in Mudgeeraba because the member for Mudgeeraba could not get the question right.

Mr HART: I rise to a point of order. The Premier should remember that I am the shadow minister for housing. That is why I am asking the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right! I am still giving a ruling. I would appreciate it if you would hear my ruling.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Now I know he is the shadow minister for housing. I am now aware.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Do you want to hear the answer or not? My understanding is that that would be against the tenancy terms of the public housing tenant. I will get more details about that. There will be an investigation. That is a breach of the tenancy rules. If the member could give me more details, I

am happy to give that to our minister for housing to conduct a thorough investigation. People who go into public housing know the rules that they are to abide by. If that is a breach then action will be taken. We know how much people value having a roof over their head.

Whilst I am on my feet talking about housing, it is my government that is committing more than \$1.8 billion over the next 10 years to build the housing that is needed across our state. Recently in my electorate Minister de Brenni and I welcomed people into their new homes in the new Ross McKay housing development, named after a great local champion of our community. The people who are living in that housing were so proud to have a roof over their head. They proudly took us through their units. They were proud to show the start that my government is helping them to get. I do not want to see people breach those rules. We are more than happy to investigate that situation.

Domestic and Family Violence, Legal Support

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Leader of the House. Will the Attorney-General please outline the importance of legal support in helping women affected by domestic and family violence?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. I know he values the work that our community legal centres and our legal services provide in our local communities and also the importance of investing in support services and legal advice when it comes to domestic and family violence, as I am sure every member of this House does.

Back in 2015 the Commonwealth government announced \$100 million for a women's safety package to take action against family violence and provide legal support and assistance to some of the most vulnerable women impacted by domestic violence. We welcomed this announcement. This funding was from 2015 through to 2019. It has seen \$4 million provided to legal services in this state: to North Queensland Women's Legal Service, which does an incredible job and I had the opportunity to meet with them recently, and also the Women's Legal Service Queensland, which received funding to provide specialist domestic violence units in Brisbane and the Gold Coast. This is critical. Recently when I met and talked to representatives of the North Queensland Women's Legal Service they said that this additional funding meant that they could go beyond just legal support and assistance to more wraparound services to support those women coming in who are victims of domestic and family violence.

Our concern is that this funding expires in June 2019. Members might wonder why we are talking about this now. The reality is that, if next week's federal budget does not show funding beyond 2019, these services, just as we had happen last year with the community legal centres, will have it left to the last minute to find out whether they have continuing funding. What happens when the Commonwealth does that? These organisations will find themselves in a situation where they are putting off staff, they are stopping services and they have staff leaving because they have to pay their bills. Staff need job certainty going forward. When they cannot be told whether they have a job in four or six weeks time they cannot afford to stick around.

In North Queensland, that would affect not just the delivery of services. The North Queensland Women's Legal Service has three staff members who provide those services. It would mean a loss of around \$350,000 a year. They received \$1.4 million over that period. Therefore, we need the Commonwealth to step up and give a guarantee next week—not next year, but next week—that this funding will continue beyond 2019. We do not want to risk seeing the same thing that happened to our community legal centres last year when we lost services and clients were turned away. Those clients were vulnerable women and victims of domestic violence and they were sent away. The Commonwealth needs to stand up and guarantee the funding—

(Time expired)

Electricity Prices

Mr ANDREW: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. It has been brought to my attention that Canegrowers has released a report that states that over the past three years Queenslanders have paid \$9 billion for electricity from the state's publicly owned electricity networks, which is 47 cents in the dollar. We also have issues with the stranding of assets such as Teemburra Dam in my electorate, which is used at four per cent because of the prices. I ask: what pressure is the Queensland government placing on the energy providers to significantly reduce the costs of electricity to our sugar industry growers by way of setting Queensland network prices at efficient levels?

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the minister to answer the question, while I appreciate that it is your first question, member, I warn you about lengthy preambles. You need to seek some advice in terms of the length of that preamble.

Dr LYNHAM: I sincerely thank the member for asking a question about energy that allows me to respond. I have heard nothing from the shadow energy minister about the good work that the Queensland government is doing on energy pricing. Firstly, I will answer the question directly about Canegrowers.

Canegrowers are moving from transitional tariffs into other business tariffs. Transitional tariffs such as 62, 65 and 66 are due to be phased out on 1 July 2020. We have kept those transitional tariffs stable. The member is advising the House that from 2011, right through your period of government, the traditional tariffs had increased to a more cost-reflective tariff.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I ask that you direct your comments through the chair. I have already provided a warning today.

Dr LYNHAM: When those opposite were in government the transitional tariffs also increased, but we have maintained those transitional tariffs on a steady keel. Tariffs 62, 65 and 66 will all be phased out on 1 July 2020. I advise the honourable member that many canegrowers will be better off now under a business tariff. I ask them to please contact their electricity retailer right now, because a lot of them—some 40 per cent of them—would be better off under a business tariff, rather than on the transitional tariff going through.

I turn to what we are doing for electricity prices in Queensland. We have the lowest wholesale power prices on the eastern seaboard. Network charges are coming down. Retail competition is coming down. The retail competition that we see in South-East Queensland, due to our uniform tariff policy, is reflected in regional Queensland, so the people of regional Queensland are not missing out on the retail competition we have here.

We recycle revenue from our generators back through our Affordable Revenue Plan, and isn't that paying dividends! Not only is there the \$50 rebate that people in Queensland will receive on their next electricity account; we are capping electricity prices so that they do not rise above inflation. Under the Energy Savvy Families program, in regional Queensland 10,000 low-income families are benefitting from smart metres, saving on their energy costs. Under the Easy Pay Rewards scheme, there is a \$75 rebate to families and a \$120 rebate for businesses only in regional Queensland. Under the Energy Savers Plus program, farmers can have a free audit of their farms to see how they can save energy and the government will contribute \$20,000 to those energy-saving measures. We are doing well with our electricity pricing for all Queensland, especially regional Queensland.

(Time expired)

Housing, Indigenous Communities

Ms LUI: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport. Will the minister advise the House on how the Palaszczuk government is working to secure the future of housing construction in Queensland's remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and whether he is aware of any alternative policy approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Cook for the question. More than anyone else in this House, the member for Cook knows about the importance of the delivery of housing in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Of course, all members of this House are well aware that for more than half a century Australian governments have joined with the Queensland government to deliver housing in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In 42 working days, the Commonwealth contribution to that half-a-century program ends.

That means there are 42 working days left for the 850 jobs supported through the program across the state. Of those jobs, 523 are taken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the communities, and I can report to the House that 97 of those are apprentices. We are talking about economies with scarce opportunities for jobs and no other way of funding housing. Time is running out for Prime Minister Turnbull to recommit to this agreement, because, if he does not, in 42 days those jobs will go and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders will start to become homeless.

Today, we have heard a lot about reports. Here is a report for the opposition, commissioned by the Commonwealth, that says in no uncertain terms to continue the investment, continue the building and continue to close the gap. Over the past 12 months I have written directly and repeatedly to the federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs. I travelled to Canberra with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

mayors to lobby the minister and other ministers. We made it clear to the Prime Minister that he would be the first Prime Minister in 50 years to turn his back on remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. I have stood in this House and repeatedly called on the opposition leader to make contact with the Prime Minister, the federal Indigenous affairs minister and their Canberra mates in the LNP to ask them not to walk away from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

The Deputy Premier, our Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, also has made repeated public pleas to the Queensland LNP to call on their mates in Canberra and recommit to the program. She wrote to the Prime Minister on 28 February. In this House, our Premier has repeatedly called on the opposition to reach out to the Prime Minister. Our Premier and this government have committed \$1 billion to the continuation of that program over the next 10 years.

What have we heard from those opposite? Have we heard anything useful from the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, the member for Moggill? We have heard nothing! What has the shadow minister for employment and training, the member for Maroochydore, had to say about those 850 jobs and the apprenticeships? Nothing! What have we seen from the opposition leader who has an Aboriginal community in her electorate? We have seen nothing! In this pre-budget week, all we have heard is negativity—negativity about the Commonwealth Games, negativity about—

(Time expired)

Public Housing

Mr POWELL: My question without notice is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. I table a guest review of an Airbnb running out of a public housing property in Mudgeeraba. With the minister having scrapped the LNP's sensible three-strikes policy for tenants, will the minister advise what the consequences are for someone using public housing for profit?

Tabled paper: Copy of AirBnB review by Rauf, dated April 2018 [\[587\]](#).

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the minister to answer, member for Cooper, I could hear you interjecting during the question. I have asked that questions be heard in silence. You are warned under standing orders.

Mr de BRENNI: I appreciate the opportunity to answer this question. The policy of this government is quite clear: the subletting of department properties is prohibited. For the benefit of the members of the opposition, I can state that the department does not permit a tenant to sublet a department property, no matter how they do it—whether it is Airbnb or whatever. The State Tenancy Agreement advises that 'the tenant may transfer all or a part of the tenant's interest under this agreement ... only if the lessor agrees in writing' to the transfer or subletting. It goes on to state—and this is the kicker—that the department will not agree to any subletting of the property.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: If the members opposite want to talk about housing on the Gold Coast, let us talk about housing on the Gold Coast. Under their government how many houses were built on the Gold Coast? Fewer than six houses were built. Under this government 187 new public housing homes will be built for vulnerable Queenslanders on the Gold Coast. The comparison is fewer than six and 187. If those opposite want to talk about innovations like Airbnb—

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, you have asked the question.

Mr de BRENNI: I want to remind the House about the demand that was made by the former member for Moggill. He insisted that vulnerable housing tenants—in fact, elderly housing tenants—enforce Airbnb in their own homes. He said that they must have people move into their homes. It was an LNP enforced and unwanted Airbnb program. Those vulnerable Queenslanders will never forget the fear, shock and panic caused by the Newman government and the members opposite.

A government member: That is your record on housing.

Mr de BRENNI: That is right. It is quite clear that subletting is prohibited. It is a breach of the tenancy agreement. It is only Labor governments that will stand up for vulnerable Queenslanders and provide social housing. As the Premier has indicated, a \$1.8 billion—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order relates to relevance. As asked, what are the consequences of someone breaching that tenancy agreement?

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you for the point of order. There is still time on the clock for the minister to round out the answer. To date the minister has been relevant to parts of the question. I ask the minister to ensure that he is relevant.

Mr de BRENNI: For all of the over 70,000 properties that this government administers on behalf of the state for vulnerable Queenslanders the rules are quite clear. Subletting is a breach of the tenancy agreement. As the Premier has indicated, if tenancy agreements are breached for whatever reason then an investigation will be undertaken and we will respond in appropriate terms. Here we have an opposition that is calling on this government to make people homeless. That is what this is about. He wants to find a vulnerable person living in social housing—

Ms Trad: Sack them first.

Mr de BRENNI: Sack them and then make them homeless. That is what they want. They wanted to kick them out of their homes and enforce Airbnb. They built fewer than six homes on the Gold Coast because they have no empathy for people doing it tough.

Port of Townsville

Mr STEWART: My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on how the Port of Townsville expansion project is progressing?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Townsville for his question. He is a very strong advocate for Townsville city. The Port of Townsville is a critical part of the supply chain in Townsville and North Queensland. What we saw at the beginning of the last term was a dire situation in Townsville with the Clive Palmer nickel refinery, which is well known.

I am very pleased to advise the House today that the Port of Townsville is expecting a record number of containerised cargo movements this financial year. An estimated 80,000 containers are expected to be imported and exported by 30 June this year—an increase of around 60 per cent on the previous financial year. This also means that the port is on track to improve on the previous record trade milestone by around 20,000 containers. Containers moving through the Port of Townsville carry a diverse range of cargo.

One of the key factors is the importation in huge numbers this financial year of solar project cargo. This is part of the large scale renewable boom going on in North Queensland. This is something I am very familiar with from my previous role. What we are seeing is a commitment in Townsville by the Palaszczuk government on the stadium, on the pipe duplication, on Riverway Drive, on Townsville Ring Road stage 4 completion and on Townsville Ring Road stage 5. There is money on the table. We have done berth 4 at the Port of Townsville, which was opened recently. That was \$40 million committed to Port of Townsville.

As identified in the Townsville City Deal, the channel widening project is fundamental to the economic future of North Queensland and to locking in this recovery and growth in Townsville. Labour force figures released last week show that Townsville continues to lead the state in reducing unemployment, with the jobless rate now at 8.5 per cent—a 2.8 percentage fall year on year.

Unfortunately, it appears the Turnbull government does not share our commitment to the people of Townsville. The Palaszczuk government has put \$75 million on the table in the budget last year to widen the channel to make sure that bigger ships can berth in North Queensland and ensure the prosperity of North Queensland. What has the Turnbull government offered? They have only offered a loan from the NAIF which is an insult to the people of Townsville. Even Minister Canavan has admitted that the NAIF does not work very well.

They have not got a single loan going in Queensland. They are leaving Townsville in the lurch once again. I call on the Turnbull government to match our \$75 million commitment to get the channel widening project done in Townsville because it is critical to the economic future of that city. If they cared about North Queensland that is exactly what they would do. I call on the Turnbull government to join with the Palaszczuk government and our three re-elected Townsville MPs who are passionate about Townsville to commit to the channel widening project in Townsville.

(Time expired)

M1 Upgrade, Funding

Mrs STUCKEY: My question without notice is directed to the Premier. In relation to funding for the M1 upgrade from Varsity Lakes to Tugun, will the Premier match the \$1 billion funding commitment by both the Commonwealth government and Bill Shorten for this important congestion-busting project?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Currumbin for that question. We all know what the LNP's record was when they were in office in terms of how much they spent on the M1. How much did they spend? They spent zero. We made election commitments in relation to progressing that work. Of course we will be considering those matters as part of our budget deliberations.

It is finally good to see a little bit of money coming from the federal government. We all know that when we cross the border into New South Wales it is 80-20, but when we cross the border into Queensland the federal government wants fifty-fifty. We want some clarification from the federal government when they outline their budget next week about how they plan to spend that money over the forward estimates and we will consider that as part of our budget deliberations.

Let me say this very clearly to the member for Currumbin. Perhaps she can advise the House whether or not legal advice was requested to close down the Commonwealth Games—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is with respect to relevance. The Premier is abusing the processes of this House. The question had nothing to do with what the Premier was just talking about. I ask that the Premier be asked to get back to answering the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is point of order on relevance. At this point, I am listening very carefully. I believe the Premier has actually answered the question. It may not be the answer the member wished to hear; however, I believe the Premier has answered the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Whilst I am on my feet and talking about infrastructure on the Gold Coast, I am very pleased that my government delivered the second stage of light rail. We sought funding from the council and the federal government. We know very clearly that the state LNP had no policy for building the second stage of light rail in time for the Commonwealth Games.

As we know, the Commonwealth Games was a success. The transport system worked incredibly well. We are now a world benchmark in terms of the delivery of the games when it comes to transport and security. It is very disappointing that some members living on the Gold Coast decided to abandon the Gold Coast during the Commonwealth Games. I am extremely disappointed. The member for Currumbin talked at length about leaving the Gold Coast. The member for Burleigh left the Gold Coast.

Mrs STUCKEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at what the Premier is saying and I ask her to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, the member has taken offence.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw. It was good to see that the member for Currumbin turned up at one event I was at. That was the official welcome at the new art gallery that the mayor—

Mrs Stuckey: I was there.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You were there. It was lovely to see you there. Before that you were talking about leaving the Gold Coast, so it was good to see you at the Gold Coast.

Mrs STUCKEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at what the Premier is saying and I ask her to withdraw. Don't verbal me.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, I was having difficulty hearing the Premier's answer because there were so many interjections in the House. Premier, was there a direct reference to the member for Currumbin? The member has found the comments offensive and has asked that they be withdrawn.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I again caution you about directing your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, Mr Speaker. I reiterate: it was lovely seeing the member for Currumbin at one function that I went to.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier's time has expired.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is a fact. I saw her at a function.


Mr SPEAKER: Premier, your time has expired. The time for question time has expired. I would like to acknowledge in the gallery another group of students from Wooloowin State School in the electorate of Clayfield.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 1 May (see p. 842), on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (11.21 am), continuing: As the government's own scientific adviser said about improving the SLATS mapping, it is about getting the time and some resources to look at that. Why not wait until we get the right information? If we get the right information we can make the right decisions. This is about perception for people. When we hear about large quantities of land being cleared based on false mapping then of course all of us will be concerned, but we need to get the information right so that that perception is corrected.


The new bill seeks to have landholders go through a new process to get a permit. Acquiring permits to clear high-value irrigated agriculture is a major concern for Lockyer. In response to this concern, bearing in mind that any applications for high-value agriculture and high-value irrigated agriculture must now go through the same process, Mr Lyall Hinrichsen, Executive Director of Land Policy in the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, did not give a lot of confidence about the probable outcomes and suggested that expensive consultants would be necessary for people to justify their application and demonstrate evidence of thickening. The definition of 'demonstrated evidence of thickening' is not adequately outlined in the legislation. Farmers will end up submitting multiple expensive and time-consuming applications, not only to have them automatically rejected but also wasting valuable time and money. This detail is just another reinforcement of the lack of consultation with primary producers or, more importantly, the failure to listen to their concerns.

The family of my wife, Deb, were dairy farmers in the Laidley valley. I can tell you from personal conversations that these laws are personal for our farmers. They rip at the heart and soul of our farmers. Many are confused about the laws but all are concerned that their stewardship of the land is under threat. I wonder how many of the departmental staff have spent time in the country to intimately understand the great practices many of our farmers employ to ensure the environment is cared for and protected so that future generations will have a farm. I think the government know this but are more intent on satisfying the social conscience of some. They have created that perception of damage and destruction by our trusted farmers. It is just not true.

At a time when Queensland needs sustainable growth opportunities, particularly in regional areas—we have suffered prolonged droughts, floods and the loss of employment opportunities—these laws are just another nail in the coffin for some of our farmers, some of whom are genuinely suffering mental stress. These laws have a very real impact on Queensland farmers and on rural and regional communities. Unfortunately, the very people these laws will hit hardest were not even given a seat at the table when they were written up.

The government have admitted that they have not done any modelling to see what economic impacts this legislation will have on our economy. I would suggest that there has been a report: the CommSec State of the States report released this week which had Queensland languishing in sixth place. These laws have stifled and will further stifle our economy. This government has failed in its role to ensure due diligence. It has not listened to the people of Queensland or conducted any assessment to see what effect these laws will have.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Order! I issue a reminder about the audible chatter in the chamber. I also remind the following members that they are on a warning: the members for Burnett, McConnel, Everton, Kawana and Cooper.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (11.25 am): I rise to speak in support of the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and to deliver on a commitment that I made to the electorate of Springwood. In 2015 voters in Queensland asked us to end excessive tree clearing. During the last term of parliament we brought in a bill which was, as we know, blocked by the LNP. We explained during debate of that bill that we had promised UNESCO we would do this to protect the Great Barrier Reef. We promised that because the world saw that reform as important, yet the LNP blocked the legislation. That is why the first order of business in this parliament this year was to introduce the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 to protect Queensland's remnant and high-value regrowth vegetation.

Fourteen years ago, in 2004, Labor ended indiscriminate clearing of remnant vegetation in this state for the first time. Those reforms delivered the largest single reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Australia's history. Even with that, our farmers kept farming. Our agriculture sector grew and grew to be worth more than \$10 billion to the Queensland economy during that period. Under the previous Newman government those emission reductions were trashed. That was from a government that trashed the economy—its members are now talking down the Commonwealth Games—and back in 2014 trashed Queensland's environmental protections.

Everyone acknowledges that there are farmers who recognise that near-threatened animals and plants need protection, who understand that you cannot go around killing thousands upon thousands of animals and who understand that the rate of tree clearing in the wrong places is destroying critical natural habitat and know that it is damaging the reef. This legislation is not going to stop a single one of them from farming, just as it did not 14 years ago.

It seems that kids get it. Kids in this state seem to get it better than do many of the adults who sit opposite.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: I take the interjection. A few weeks ago my eight-year-old daughter, without any prompting, wrote me a note which she left on the kitchen bench. When I asked, 'What's this?' she said, 'Dad, I want you to read this out in parliament.' It is a note about protecting trees and our native animals. I am sure members will forgive her for some of her grammar and sentence structure. Her note reads—

We're animals too.

We're polluting our far away cousin's homes and food.

If we keep doing this pollution we'll have no cousins to join our true families.

I think she was referring to her cousins who live in Far North Queensland. It goes on—

We all know that paper is made out of trees.

We need trees to breathe.

We need to stop polluting in our world!

I table her note.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting written statement, dated 19 March 2018, regarding pollution [\[588\]](#).

She makes me very proud because she is exactly right. I say to the other members of my own family who have differing views from mine on this reform: I have thought deeply and carefully about this. I know that they have, too, and I understand the points that are made. My decision, despite what those opposite say, is not made in my personal interests; it is made in the interests of all Queenslanders. I think those opposite ought to think about the legacy we are collectively leaving to future generations.

It is imperative that we protect the reef for the sake of our heritage. For those opposite who are in denial about many things and in denial about this, here is a simple, practical, cold, hard, mercenary reason why we should do this. We have heard a lot about our Great Barrier Reef and, as a superb tourist destination, it pumps \$6.4 billion into the state's economy and supports 64,000 jobs. We know the Liberal National Party in Queensland have some pretty awe-inspiring form when it comes to destroying Queensland jobs. They did it last time they were in government, sacking 14,000 Queensland workers. Now they want to do it by stealth by killing off the reef and with it the tourism industry and those 64,000 jobs along the way. I will not stand by and let them sentence our environment to a long, slow, ugly death as the life is choked out of it by run-off and pollution, because I think that is vandalism of the most offensive kind.


I believe that all Queenslanders want to see our government protect the reef. Those opposite are wilfully ignoring what Queenslanders want. They are whipping up a scare campaign. They are doing it with some pretty awful dog whistle politics. I think that they are ignoring Queensland farmers. The Leader of the Opposition stands in this place and purports to represent the interests of farmers. We know and Queenslanders know that farmers do care for their land—their very livelihood depends on it. It is for that very reason that most farmers are conservationists.

I want to talk about a fine example of one of Logan's late great leaders, former mayor Glen Shailer. He was both a farmer and a conservationist. It was very much thanks to his advocacy, his activism and his action that our precious Daisy Hill koala bushland was not broadscale cleared to make way for a tollway. Glen listened to his community. He acted and led by example. Glen cut down some trees. He turned them into timber and sold them to pay his rates, but he cut down trees in a way that

was measured and balanced just like this legislation is—measured and balanced. That is what we are doing in government. We are doing this because it should be done. It is the right thing to do for Queensland and for future generations.

We are today and this week undoing what those opposite should not have done back in 2013 when they tore down protections for Queensland's forests. The evidence is clear. Queenslanders want action on this. The science is clear. We can and we must act with urgency to change our future. As they say, although the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second best time is today. I commend this bill to the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Before I call the member for Toowoomba South, I would like to recognise the Sunshine Coast Grammar School who are in the gallery today.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.32 am): Given my shadow portfolio responsibilities, I will primarily limit my contribution to a few specific legal issues associated with this bill today. Others from the LNP have and will continue to articulate beautifully why this bill ought to be rejected and substantially amended. They will do so, and have already done so, on the grounds of agricultural, environmental, economic and also social impacts that are on foot under this bill. I pay tribute to the contributions of the shadow minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and various rural and regional members from our party.

When reviewing this bill, one cannot forget what the Labor government really want to do—what they tried to do in 2016 and narrowly failed—and that was to make a direct strike at the very heart of the rights and liberties of Queensland citizens. Back in 2016 I remember the former member for Hinchinbrook, the inimitable shadow minister of the time, describing the bill before us then as an 'act of calculated political retribution'. It was and it remains so today.

How could we forget the 2016 attempts to introduce similar laws to these but with their offensive removal of the mistake of fact and the reverse onus of proof provisions that they sought to implement? Who could forget the offhanded comment in the explanatory notes to that bill in 2016 which stated, 'There is likely to be a reduction in compliance costs by reinstating reverse onus of proof and removing mistake of fact defence provisions.' What that said to the people of rural and regional Queensland was that their rights and liberties are second rate—in fact, worse than that, that they come last. It may have been too hard for the Labor government at the time to round up enough evidence to bring a proceedings, so the guilt would be placed on landholders until it could be proven otherwise. We all know that deep down they have not changed at all, even if this bill does not contain those most offensive provisions.

The Queensland Law Society spoke strongly against various provisions of the 2016 bill and have done so again on this bill. They have critically commented on the failure to appropriately consult, uncertainty around code revocation and replacement, Planning Act 2016 regulations, restoration notices and retrospectivity. It is retrospectivity which raises the most grave of concerns. The Labor government has form but this is a most egregious breach of fundamental legislative principles.

The government believe that this breach is justified by their attempts to legislate by press release in that they foreshadowed their attention to legislate in this manner. I am not sure how many farmers and landholders were watching the minister's Twitter feed, watching out for ministerial statements and media statements associated with vegetation management, just to keep in touch with his legislative intentions. I doubt there were any. The rule of law demands predictability. A law that can be changed retrospectively is not predictable. Citizens should not have to endure capricious retrospective law making and the Labor government ought to address this issue today.

One significant philosophical issue with the bill that the Queensland Law Society has not raised is the Labor government's failure to contemplate the provision of any compensation for the loss of property value that occurs due to the imposition of many aspects of this bill. It is a proposition that was explored at length some years ago by Emeritus Professor Suri Ratnapala at the University of Queensland—incidentally my constitutional law lecturer. Emeritus Professor Ratnapala's exploration was based on Labor's first vexatious foray into vegetation management in 1999. That act—the Vegetation Management Act—introduced the first ever restrictions on vegetation management on freehold land in Queensland, although the Land Act 1994 had created the first controls on vegetation management in Queensland, albeit at the leasehold level.

I want to dwell on a number of Emeritus Professor Ratnapala's themes for a moment. There is no doubt that Queensland farmers and landowners will see the value of their property diminish due to this Labor government limiting their use, and thereby reducing their income, and removing in some substance the enjoyment of their property. This is done in the government's mind to allegedly advance the public interest of nature conservation. However, it fails to answer the fundamental question of why

do farmers and individual landowners bear the cost of the alleged public benefit? Thousands and thousands of farmers—and we saw hundreds of them out there just yesterday—would undoubtedly appreciate an answer to this question.

There also remains an argument that bills of this nature, like the one before the chamber today, fall foul of the just terms provision of the Constitution. In the 1999 decision of the Commonwealth v Western Australia, the High Court faced the question of whether a federal authorisation to carry out defence training on Western Australian land was an acquisition of property in the minerals reserved for Western Australia. Justices Callinan and Kirby found that there was an acquisition and Justice Callinan stated that the authorisation may be compared to a restrictive covenant 'if one person'—for his or her own reasons—'wishes to sterilise or restrict the usages of another person's land, the latter, in a free marketplace, would demand recompense and the former would be expected to pay it'.

By analogy, it might be asserted that the restrictions as proposed by the Labor government are tantamount to such an acquisition and thereby attract compensation. Regardless, it is another reminder that this Labor government cares very little for interests in private property and cares even less for those who seek to maximise such interests in private property for their own business development and for the economic and social good of Queensland.

When it comes to the social good of Queensland, I am reminded of one instance that has come into my electorate office over the last couple of weeks, and that is the interest of Balmoral Avocados, which is situated on the northern side of Toowoomba near Cabarlah. This bill has seen their plans to expand their avocado orchard at Cabarlah placed at the most serious and grave risk.

Co-owner Bill Mair explained to me that this additional development—they had planned to plant over 10,000 avocado trees on their orchard—would have created substantial economic activity for the Toowoomba region and would have created six full-time jobs and more than 40 part-time jobs on seasonal conditions. That is just one example of major economic loss that these laws will bring to the Queensland economy.

Finally, I want to spend a few moments reflecting on a personal note. As so many members on this side of the House have already outlined, when you are born and raised on the land—and I think of the Leader of the Opposition and the members for Gympie, Condamine, Gregory and Scenic Rim—personal offence is taken when you realise that these laws show a deep distrust of the farming community. Many of us were born and raised on the land, and many of us retain an interest in agricultural land such as the member for Broadwater. I reflect on the words of the member for Springwood just a moment ago and his acknowledgement that farmers are some of the best conservationists. It is not acceptable to just say that. His actions must reflect it. It is not good enough to simply mouth the words. The actions that we see through legislative provisions must reflect the words spoken.


Mr Costigan: You've got to back it up.

Mr JANETZKI: You have to back it up. I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. My parents cleared marginal country near the Bunya Mountains to create a dairy farm. They milked 100 cows. They cleared some land to cultivate crops to keep their dairy cattle alive.

Mr Krause: They are required to.

Mr JANETZKI: They are required to. These laws strike at the very heart of hardworking and trustworthy farming families, and we saw hundreds of them out there yesterday. We saw them heartbroken and absolutely despairing about what this will mean for their future in farming and their children's future in farming. I would say to the government on a personal note once more: their members on the committee and in the government should have spent time listening to rural and regional Queenslanders and reflecting on the social and economic good for Queensland.

(Time expired)

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (11.42 am): I rise in the House to support the passing of the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I believe that we are on the same page as those opposite, because we are both concerned about doing two things: protecting farms for the future of Queensland and protecting farms for the future of our children. I understand that the opposition is concerned about what will happen to people in relation to their land rights. Coming from Italian heritage, I well understand that connection, but there are times when we need laws to ensure that we are good corporate citizens, and the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is exactly that.

When the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy introduced the bill to the House on 8 March 2018, he made the following comments which I will adopt in my short contribution to the debate. The Labor government has a long and proud history of delivering nation-leading reforms in vegetation management dating back to the introduction of the original vegetation management laws in 1999. It was a Labor government that 14 years ago put an end to broadscale clearing of remnant vegetation here in Queensland. Those reforms delivered the largest single reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Australia's history and allowed the then Howard government to tell the Australian people that we had met our international commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

Those nation-leading reforms came to an end in 2013 when the LNP set about removing the protections that the Labor Party had built over 13 years. The minister went on to say in his introductory speech that the bill will reinstate the protection of high-value regrowth vegetation on freehold and Indigenous land. The bill will change the definition of high-value regrowth to ensure that additional vegetation that has significant environmental value is protected. This aligns with scientific advice that has been provided.


In the final paragraph of the minister's introductory speech the minister said that he believed this bill and the complementary measures that have been outlined will deliver on the election commitment to deliver a more sustainable vegetation management framework for Queensland. This government will continue to work with our vital agricultural sector so that together we can care for the environment and ensure that their farms can pass in good condition and in safe hands from generation to generation.

I will now turn to the background of what occurred in 2013. The Liberal National Party government made amendments to the vegetation management framework which allowed broadscale clearing for high-value and irrigated high-value agricultural development. The opposition removed high-value regrowth protections on freehold and Indigenous land and introduced self-assessable vegetation clearing codes. Also in 2013 the Water Act 2000 riverine protection provisions were amended to remove the consideration of native vegetation clearing in a watercourse, lake or spring.

In 2015 the Queensland Labor government made an election commitment to protect the Great Barrier Reef and reduce Queensland's carbon emissions by reinstating nation-leading vegetation protection laws repealed by the Liberal National Party. Legislation was subsequently introduced into parliament in the first quarter of 2016. Unfortunately, those laws were defeated in the Legislative Assembly. The government has recommitted to end broadscale clearing in Queensland as outlined in the Labor Party's 2017 policy document.

It is difficult to see how the LNP can deny what science has been telling us for years—that is, large-scale land clearing has an impact on the environment. Queensland has a huge responsibility to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Changes in the environment brought about by the warming of the planet, coral bleaching and the threat of the crown-of-thorns to the Great Barrier Reef have all been traced back to climate change. Many conservation groups have documented this change. Floods in North Queensland have meant that silt build-up on the reef causes damage to the reef. Run-off from our river system damages the Great Barrier Reef.

This legislation when passed in this parliament will provide protection to the Great Barrier Reef and also ensure that our state has a viable agricultural industry into the future. The level of clearing that has taken place in Queensland since 2013 is unsustainable and not in the public interest in terms of protecting remnant vegetation, reducing carbon emissions and protecting the Great Barrier Reef. The Palaszczuk Labor government recognises the importance of agriculture to the state's economy. It is important to be aware that a range of opportunities will still exist for rural and agricultural development. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (11.49 am): I can see the laughter coming from my friend, the muppet, across the chamber, Madam Deputy Speaker.

A government member: Withdraw.

Mr COSTIGAN: I withdraw. The member for Maryborough is anticipating what I am about to say. We saw all of the farmers out the front of Parliament House yesterday—the graziers and the people passionate about agriculture. Where are the farmers on the other side of the aisle? If she were here, we would see the member for Bulimba. She is the only 'Farmer' I see over there from time to time, but she would not have a clue, nor would any of the other members over there—none of them. We have people on this side of the aisle who are very passionate about agriculture. I am going to go straight for the jugular here, Madam Deputy Speaker. Labor is divided on this.

Government members interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: They may laugh, but I can tell the House that right now the *Daily Mercury* in Mackay is cooking up a cracker of a story. The president of the local branch of the Labor Party in Mackay is Ryan Casey. His great uncle, Labor legend Ed Casey, would be turning in his grave because last night Ryan Casey took to social media to decry and denounce what that mob over there is doing to regional and rural Queensland and our agricultural sector. What does that tell you, Madam Deputy Speaker? The local branch president of the Labor Party in Mackay—that is right, the red army, the bloke who heads up the comrades in the sugar capital, the city that I represent—took to social media last night because he does not like it.

I take my hat off to the president of the Labor Party branch. I knew his great uncle, like a few people in this place did. I see the member for Gympie is nodding his head. His father served in here and he was perhaps an old sparring partner of the late Edmund Casey. There is a lot of history with the Casey family and the Labor movement in the great city of Mackay; there is no doubt about that. Even though we did not agree on the politics, there was a lot of common ground and a lot of people in the agricultural sector and the farming community had enormous respect for the late Edmund Casey. He served as minister for primary industries, which is an old-fashioned term, in the Goss government. He was a former Labor leader who served 26 years in this place, and he would be turning in his grave, rolling in his grave, because what we have here with the Palaszczuk Labor government is the most left-leaning government in Queensland's history. This is a Green policy being implemented by a Labor government.

It was amazing to see the Greens MP in this House out there yesterday morning. I see that the member for Burdekin is nodding. The Greens MP had more front than David Jones and Myer put together because he was down there yesterday with people whose livelihoods, families and communities are under fire. Regional and rural Queenslanders are under siege from this mob.

It is not just Edmund Casey who would be rolling in his grave. I remember him fondly and I will never forget the day I saw him at Mackay Airport. He was battling ill health, with one leg having been amputated, but he said, 'G'day.' I thought, 'Mr Casey, what a legend you are.' He was first class every day.

Mr Whiting: I know what he would have thought of you.

Mr COSTIGAN: The member for Bancroft—who has presided over this disaster and who loves to wax lyrical about his connections to Mackay, the sugar capital—should go to the Captain John Mackay clock in Victoria Street, Mackay, and tell them what he thinks of agriculture and what he thinks of sugar. This is a \$2 billion industry and the government is sending it down the gurgler.

It is not just Edmund Casey rolling in his grave. I also fondly remember a constituent when I first came in here by the name of Dr Rex Patterson who had served in the Whitlam government as the minister for agriculture. He led the recovery efforts post Cyclone Tracy in Darwin. He was a great man. I bet you that he and Ed Casey are swapping notes now saying, 'What about these fools. What about these buffoons.'

Government members interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: They laugh. They are laughing at the dead.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Order! I ask that the member address his comments through the chair.

Mr COSTIGAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, they are laughing at the dead and I find it disrespectful.

Mr Saunders: We are laughing at you.

Mr COSTIGAN: I do not think they are laughing at me, member for Maryborough. You might be. You all need to get into Specsavers.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr COSTIGAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you for your guidance. They all need to get into Specsavers—all of them.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just focus on relevance.

Mr COSTIGAN: I am responding to the interjections, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am happy to take them all day.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are showing disrespect to the chair.

Mr COSTIGAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, there was no disrespect meant and I apologise if that is how you felt. Labor is split on this. This will be like putting Humpty Dumpty back together after this because there are that many cracks appearing. Ryan Casey, the president of the Labor Party in Mackay, has spoken with conviction, and good on him.

As I said, I knew Dr Rex Patterson, the minister for agriculture in the Whitlam government, and he would be turning in his grave. He loved agriculture—cane, cattle, the Brigalow Belt, the beef roads. He was a good man and he would not go for any of this. As I said a moment ago, this is the most left-leaning government in Queensland's political history—

Government members interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: Don't they love it? I take the interjections. They are proud of it. Ryan Casey is proud of being a Labor man, and he is proud to call it as he sees it. They will not like it.


What about the current member for Mackay? Fair dinkum, she should look at a new career as a motivational speaker. When we heard from the member for Mackay last night, she mentioned one farmer and he happens to be a constituent of mine, a bloke called Paul Schembri. I wonder what he thinks of this report. There were 700-odd submitters to the committee, including four Finger girls from the Central Highlands—Aleisha, Sue-Ellen, Tamara and Rhiannon. I know them and I know their families. Fairlane Park in fact is owned by the Finger family. It was previously owned by my good friends and constituents, the McFarlane family, near Bloomsbury. Central North Queensland is a small world, isn't it. The four Fingers have had their say. If this passes, I know what they will do. They will give this mob over there the finger. They will not like it. People do not like it. They are hurting. We had people turn up here yesterday who never go to a protest. They never do that.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The comment you made is unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr COSTIGAN: I withdraw. Thank you for your guidance. We saw Malcolm McClymont, a respected grazier. I caught up with him a couple of years ago at the Richmond Field Days with my great friend, John Wharton, the mayor of Richmond. Among the many submitters were Ron Pullen from Nebo, the Piggott family from Christmas Creek out the back of Rolleston with their Droughtmasters, Peter Spies from the Atherton Tablelands and even my own constituents, including good cane-farming people like Phil Axiak and Les Durnsford.

I draw the attention of honourable members to the dissenting report. I commend the work of the member for Condamine and others. We do not want the tree police. No-one has actually used that term in this debate, but that is what they are. As the member for Burdekin has alluded to, they will have more powers than the average copper. Farmers and graziers are terrified of the tree police. Whether those opposite like it or not, the LNP government did some great things to protect the Great Barrier Reef, which I am very passionate about, and our tourism industry. We can have the best of both worlds. The laws at the moment do not need changing. This is just political payback for those Greens preferences. We all know that and so does Ryan Casey, the president of the Labor Party in Mackay.

I want to thank all of those people who made submissions, including the aforementioned. I want to pay tribute particularly to the member for Gregory for his leadership not only in Central Queensland but also further afield. The member for Callide travelled more kilometres and more miles than Cobb & Co. There were six public hearings and I do not know whether he went to all of them. To all of those people who turned out in Cloncurry, Charleville, Longreach and east of the Great Divide in Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton, I say well done for having your say and speaking up. I see again the member for Gympie, and he knows where I am going with my next comment because his community was snubbed. They never had a chance to go to a local meeting and get their feelings off their chest. Mackay and the Whitsunday were snubbed too and that was disgraceful. I will be voting against this and supporting the amendments as foreshadowed by the member for Burdekin.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (11.59 am): I proudly rise in this House today to speak to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Queensland is an incredibly special place socially, economically and environmentally. We are all custodians of some of the world's most environmentally sensitive and important landscapes, rivers and marine environments. We have an incredible level of biodiversity that is renowned on the global stage. I know, as do most Queenslanders, that the responsibility for the ongoing protection of our environment is vested with us all and, importantly, with the government in ensuring we set the right controls within the legislation. We sit in a privileged position in this place and whereas legislation can sometimes be difficult, at the heart

of all of our activities in considering legislation must be the interests of all Queenslanders. The legislation we pass here in this place is how we will be judged by all Queenslanders now and into the future.

Trees and vegetation have vital importance to the environment that is often undermined or simply oversimplified. Land clearing has, and continues to have, consequent effects on the climate that is intensified depending on the rate of occurrence. It is well documented that Queensland was historically the land-clearing capital of Australia and, ashamedly, it is back at the top again, a position we cannot be proud of. The current statistics have us clearing over a thousand football fields a day. Just imagine that: a thousand football fields a day. We have heard a lot from the other side of the House about shonky science, but let's talk about the science facts.

What we do know is that clearing trees not only releases carbon emissions into the atmosphere; it alters the climate by increasing temperature, altering circulation of heat and moisture and thus changing rainfall. We know how devastating droughts are to our farmers. It is of concern that tree-clearing areas can have far wider reaching implications with regional and global effects. This further emphasises the need to regulate land clearing here in Queensland.

The science is further validated in the submission received from the University of Queensland's Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science in which Associate Professor Maron writes—

We are writing to you on behalf of the University of Queensland's Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Science ... a dynamic team of multidisciplinary conservation scientists, with expertise in ecology, biogeography, decision science, mathematics, economics, spatial analysis, social science and climate modelling. The team has worked extensively with state and federal governments to develop and refine environmental policy.

It is well established that land clearing rates in Queensland have increased dramatically over the past five years, in particular after the changes in vegetation laws under the Newman government in 2013.

There is a strong evidence base that land clearing causes myriad problems for Queensland's environment as detailed in the attached submission ... originally made by a group of 28 concerned senior Queensland environmental scientists to the 2016 Parliamentary Inquiry on a related Bill, and a scientific paper authored by—

the University of Queensland's CBCS scientists.

The clearing of trees, bushland and other native vegetation represents the greatest threat to native wildlife and biodiversity in Queensland. Again, we know the science is clear: land clearing is connected with ecosystem damage and mass loss of wildlife. I can tell honourable members that this has never been more evident than in my electorate in the Redlands where we have seen our koala population rapidly decline in direct correlation to land clearing. What is interesting to note is that the clearing of these lands has not been for the continuation of the wonderful farming traditions of our great red soils but to clear lands for sprawling small-lot housing development. The clearing was never about preserving what was once known as the great salad bowl of South-East Queensland. I table these images of the fertile, producing farmlands of the Redlands and what is happening with them now.

Tabled paper: Photographs depicting vacant blocks in new housing development [\[589\]](#).

Yesterday the member for Nanango suggested that the farmers she stood shoulder to shoulder with would be reduced to potential criminals after the introduction of this legislation. I apologise to the farmers for this type of commentary because we all know that farmers have successfully operated under this level of legislation previously—and not in criminal activity. I understand that the farmers have been experiencing difficulties with vegetation and soil fertility, are struggling with drought and have a strong belief that their economic survival is underpinned by their ability to clear trees. It is understandable that with farming being their main source of income, they are concerned with the immediate solution of these issues. However, this need for an immediate solution should not distract from our need to deliver a sustainable strategy to regenerate existing degraded agricultural lands. We must think with a longer term view to prosperity and what prosperity will look like in the future. This is achievable and it has been demonstrated that it is achievable under these laws previously.


I reiterate that it is important to remember that agriculture thrived historically for over a decade under stricter tree-clearing laws. In fact, the industry grew by more than \$2 billion in sector profitability. It has been proven that we can get the balance right between agriculture and our environment. The legislation is about getting it right while also backing the best standards that farmers can implement every day. I know that our farmers do an amazing job. They have been successful at operating under these strict laws before and I know that they will be successful at doing it again. It is also important to note that our government is committed to establishing a flagship \$500 million Land Restoration Fund that will directly support Queensland based land sector carbon projects and create new jobs and opportunities in this growing industry. It is important for us in this place to be continually looking at how we create jobs and jobs that deliver on a sustainable future.

To conclude, I want to touch on the Great Barrier Reef and what this legislation means to the next generation of Queenslanders and, indeed, the world. The future of the Great Barrier Reef is inextricably linked to how Queensland deals with its land clearing. The federal LNP government has just spent the past weekend cooing in Cairns over their \$500 million investment towards the future health of the marine park that includes multimillion dollar commitments to protect the reef and to secure its viability, along with the 65,000 jobs it creates for Queensland and the \$6 billion annually it injects into our economy. This is a natural wonder and is an incredible asset to Queensland. We as a state and nation have pledged in our Reef 2050 Plan to address the environmental concerns of UNESCO about the Great Barrier Reef's future. This plan is redundant if we do not have legislation in place that prescribes how we manage land clearing.

The LNP federal environment minister, Greg Hunt, went to Bonn in Germany to outline Australia's long-term commitment to protect the reef. Mr Hunt said the Great Barrier Reef faced real challenges, like any reef, such as climate change and water quality issues, and we know that land clearing plays a significant part in ensuring climate change is managed. He described it as a 'game-changing' blueprint. He said, 'We have clearly heard the concerns of the World Heritage Committee.'

There is so much at stake if we do not ensure we protect our environment. Honourable members need only to look around the world at countries where the lack of legislation has allowed mass deforestation and where poor vegetation management controls have existed to see what is really at stake for future generations.

I will finish where I started. The legacy we leave behind must be one that all Queenslanders—I repeat: all Queenslanders—can be proud of and one that secures our world for future generations. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (12.07 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the bill before the House. I want to start by congratulating the shadow minister on the work he has done with regard to this bill and the non-government members—the members for Condamine, Bundaberg and Buderim—on the dissenting report they put together in relation to the bill. That report is an excellent document and highlights a number of the concerns that have been raised throughout the process and placed together in a coherent sense and a sense that outlines the reasons this House should vote against the legislation.

I remember in the last parliament a similar bill came before this House that was defeated. One can imagine the wailing and the gnashing of teeth that night in the Labor Party when they saw that their commitment to the Greens had been shredded by the people's house—by the House that is required to review the legislation—and found it wanting. Of course, the Labor Party again made commitments to ensure that the bill would come back into this chamber this term if they were successful in the campaign in 2017, which of course they were.

One of the things people do if they want to control an outcome of any bill is to control the process by which the consultation is undertaken. This bill came into the House on 8 March 2018 and the report was tabled on 23 April 2018. Honourable members also have to know that during the period in which consultation is to occur there are certain events that will disrupt the capacity of people to present themselves and give opinions.

There was Easter, school holidays and the Commonwealth Games coupled with rain events up north—all factors known at the time the bill was tabled in the House—yet the request to extend was completely denied or refused by the government. There was clearly an attempt to both control the consultation process and ensure that the process was fettered by known events and the denial of an extension of time.

This government has precedent in relation to using the Commonwealth Games to hide matters. Four very important reports were dumped on the media during that process: (1) the QCA's water pricing report; (2) the Public Service workforce statistics; (3) the annual report into child deaths, which is very important; and (4) a report on the chemicals found in Bundaberg's water sources, which will have a major impact on the people of Bundaberg. This government certainly uses time in the best way it can to dump negative reports or hide a consultation process so as to limit the capacity of those who are able to make a submission.

There are other issues in relation to this bill that raise real concerns. One point that has been raised on two or three occasions relates to the right of entry. If I were a police officer I would love to have the right-of-entry powers provided by this bill because there is no redress, no second assessment and no process to ensure that what is done or what is taken is in accordance with the law. The poor

police officer has to comply with strict requirements. What they do is subject to review, but that will not occur here. There are greater powers vested in these people than in police officers in this state, and you have to ask why that would be the case.

I also pose a question in relation to the training of these officers. Police officers are fully trained in relation to search and seizure and the like. What training will these people receive in relation to exercising their rights contained within the bill? If I were a police officer I would be licking my chops at the powers this bill gives me. The police rightfully do not have those powers. I ask why these people have greater authority under the terms of this bill than police officers.

There have been serious concerns raised about the accuracy of the data that has been used in relation to the mapping of regrowth and the tracking of regrowth area rates. It is fundamental to any bill before the House that the science is accurate and that the facts upon which it is built are accurate. The dissenting report contains quotes from people who know that the data is not accurate. If that is the case the bill cannot be sustained, because a bill that is built on a false premise has no authority to be in this House or passed by this House. Until we get the science right this House will be faced with one bill after another. This bill is fatally flawed on that basis alone.

Another point of real concern is that one would have thought if you were going to restrict the capacity to clear land, you then need to understand the implications for agricultural growth in this state. That was never taken into account; that was never considered. It is clearly contained within the dissenting report. Any report that does not cover that question in relation to a bill of this nature is flawed. Any bill that does not take into account the impact on the growth of agriculture or the impact on the sector is flawed. You cannot pinpoint one area such as the Great Barrier Reef but leave other important sectors alone, including the lives of the people who rely upon that sector. Again the bill is flawed.


Members have raised a question regarding the mental health of people on the land. That is a very relevant factor, but it is not just mental health: it is stress which impacts the physical health of people, so it is mental health and physical health. When a farmer falls sick the whole business collapses and the family suffers, but it is not just that: the community suffers—the Mitre 10s that supply the nails and timber, the bakeries and the corner stores. The flow-on effects from poor mental health, physical stress and physical ailments flow right throughout the community. That needs to be taken into account in a situation where farmers do not know from one parliament to the next where they sit with regard to laws of this nature.

I recently heard the term 'poliholic'. I will not say where I heard the term, but it means someone who is dedicated to nothing else but winning in politics. Winning comes first, second and third; humanitarian considerations do not come into account. I say quite clearly that this bill, driven by a Green agenda, clearly marks the Labor Party as poliholics. They will win by any means possible. They will pay back a debt to make sure they retain government, but the humanitarian concerns associated with legislation and policy are thrown out the door. That is not the way a government should operate.

I conclude by making this point: I cannot recall the number of bills going back and forth I have seen in this House dealing with this issue. I went outside yesterday and spoke to a young man whose family has been on the land for 104 years. He is the fourth generation on the land. I asked this young bloke, 'What do you need?' He said, 'We need certainty for the future.' When the bill went to a vote in the last parliament, the former Speaker, Peter Wellington, made the comment—and it was one of the few occasions when I agreed with him—that at some point in time we have to get together and come up with something that gives farmers certainty. We cannot keep going back and forth because I guarantee you that, if we are successful in 2020, there will be a change to this bill. My real concern is that farmers are the ones who are suffering because they have to know where they stand. Both sides of the chamber have to understand that this corner of Queensland, Brisbane, impacts upon the whole rural sector of this state. Until we get our act together and come to a consensus as to how to best deal with this issue, the punter and the farmer out there will continue to suffer.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the next speaker I would like to acknowledge members of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research who are studying at the University of the Sunshine Coast in the electorate of Buderim. Welcome to our parliament.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.18 pm): I rise to oppose this bill and reflect on the contributions of other members on this side who have pointed out that this bill represents nothing more than political payback by the Labor Party to their friends the Greens. That is the only reason this bill is here in this parliament and the only reason that at least the last six changes made by the Labor Party to the Vegetation Management Act have come to this parliament.

I represent an area which will be affected greatly by the restrictions that will be put in place by this bill. There is a lot of concern out there in my community about the impact of this legislation and even more concern about the ongoing agenda of the Greens and the Labor Party in South-East Queensland when it comes to vegetation management. As a result of this legislation and all of its past iterations it is getting harder and harder for farmers to farm and manage their land.

I grew up in Marburg in the electorate of Ipswich West, and I want to talk about slightly different issues to other members. It is part of the Rosewood scrub area and about 130 years ago thousands and thousands of German immigrants were sent to live there and they were given land—the same as they were in the Brisbane Valley, the same as they were in the Darling Downs, the same as they were in the Fassifern area in my electorate.

They were given land and they were told to clear it and to make it productive because back then, in the 1870s and the early 1900s, this parliament recognised that the clearing of land for agriculture created value for that land, created value for the economy and created value for Queensland. They did the work to create the vital agricultural industry that we have today. They did the work and cleared the land to grow crops to put food on the table of people in Brisbane and Ipswich and everywhere else in Queensland. They did the work to create the export industries that still put dollars into Treasury coffers today. They did the work that fed Queensland through very tough times.

Back then our farmers were valued and government valued the work that they did. Once again the Labor Party, for naked political purposes, is demonising and devaluing and denigrating farmers, it is denigrating agricultural industries and it is denigrating rural and regional communities, and for what? Because vegetation management activity takes place on about 0.3 per cent of Queensland's land mass each year. It is a tiny footprint.

Mr Millar: Less than a quarter of a per cent.

Mr KRAUSE: Less than a quarter of a per cent. In areas like Marburg on the outskirts of Ipswich, where agriculture has stopped due to market changes, the scrub that was taken away years ago is reasserting itself. It is growing back, but that is not even included in the data that the government is relying on to bring in these changes. Regrowth is not included in its calculations. In fact, there is no way of measuring regrowth. The government data is flawed. The science is flawed. In the Fassifern and Beaudesert regions the biggest risk to vegetation is not farming; it is actually residential development. In many places in South-East Queensland that is the biggest risk, but we do not hear any of the noises made by the government with regard to agriculture made with respect to residential development.

These laws destroy value in land, they will destroy agricultural productivity and, in some cases, they will destroy livelihoods. That has been expressed to me many times by farmers in my electorate who are concerned about their ability to do what they need to do to make their land productive, and at best they will have to go through the bureaucratic wringer. They will have to pay fees and charges. They will have to commission consultants' reports and spend thousands and thousands of dollars in order to do what they have been doing for generations—at best.

At worst, they will not be able to undertake what they need to do to keep their land in use and productive land will be lost. This is happening at a time when the government always bangs on about how much it loves agriculture and it wants to support it and it wants to grow it, but then it brings in laws like this that are going to take land out of development. In particular the regrowth restrictions in this bill will mean that land farmed for generations will be locked up. It will be locked up and farmers will need to go through an exhaustive and extensive—a hideous—development approval process just to do what they have been doing for generations.

The Labor Party members in this House should hang their heads in shame at what they are doing to rural and regional Queensland and farming communities through this bill. I know some members know better than this. I know personally some members opposite know that what they are doing is the wrong thing, but will they have the courage to walk across here to vote against these laws? I very much doubt it, because the Labor Party is too beholden to the green movement and to Greens party preferences at each election—state and federal—so therefore there is no way that those opposite can do that.

This is not just an issue for agricultural industries. The Urban Development Institute of Australia has already expressed its concern that the regrowth definition will lock up land from residential development. The Property Council is concerned that local governments may also, on the back of this legislation, change their planning schemes to inhibit urban development. Most of all, the proposal from the government to pass this bill ignores the voices of Queenslanders through the consultation process.

There were 13,000-plus submissions to the inquiry, most against the laws. The inquiry process was not perfect—no, far from it in that the committee should have gone to many other places—but the voices that were heard were by and large against this. Yesterday there were hundreds, perhaps over 1,000, farmers and their families outside here letting it be known that this is, in some cases, a do-or-die proposition for their businesses, yet the government proceeds nonetheless despite vegetation management activities only occurring on less than a quarter of a per cent of Queensland's land mass.


As the member for Caloundra elaborated earlier, the powers given to the vegetation enforcement officers will be greater than the powers given to police. The fact that they can enter landowners' properties, even if they have only a suspicion of a breach, is very concerning. I know that the reverse onus of proof has been taken out of this bill. That is a good move; no doubt about it. It would be better if the bill was not in the House altogether. That reverse onus of proof is taken out, but it is very concerning to have these Gestapo-like powers given to vegetation enforcement officers.

Mr Millar: With no warrant.

Mr KRAUSE: The tree police will be back without a warrant, as the member for Gregory says, and I think farmers all around the state have much to worry about when it comes to these powers. Who will be the oversight body for those officers? Will they be subject to CCC oversight? Will they be subject to oversight by a parliamentary committee, or will they simply have free rein to do whatever they want under the departmental powers and the powers in this bill?

These laws demonise, denigrate and will be destructive to agricultural industries in my electorate and across the state. The inclusion of regrowth that has not been cleared for 15 years will lock up about 860,000 hectares of productive land. Labor's legislation is all about the Greens preferences, the deals. It is not truly about looking after the land, because our farmers are terrific custodians of our country and they are true environmentalists who actually care for their land because they depend on it for a living. They depend on it for their family's income and their livelihood. This is all about Greens preferences and Greens scare campaigns. The Labor Party should hang its head in shame that it continually submits to the lies and propaganda of the Greens party. It should have the courage and the determination to stand up to it and say, 'Enough is enough,' but it does not. We oppose these laws, which will be destructive to farming families and farming communities. They should be rejected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the next member, I want to acknowledge in the gallery today students from Wynnum State High School in the electorate of Lytton. We welcome them to our parliament.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (12.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I want to make comment with regard to the member for Scenic Rim and his demonisation of the Queensland Labor Party. Like my parliamentary colleague the member for Cooper, I want to be on the right side of history. The Palaszczuk government is committed to protecting Australia's greatest natural wonder—the Great Barrier Reef. I thank the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy for introducing the bill into this parliament; the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for its consideration of the bill; those who lodged written submissions on the bill; and the committee secretariat. I also understand that Hansard was kept very busy at the public hearings, so thank you for that. I also want to acknowledge all of the people who attended the many hearings putting forward their views.

The objectives of this bill are to amend the Planning Act 2016, the Planning Regulation 2017, the Vegetation Management Act 1999 and the Water Act 2000 and to reinstate a responsible vegetation management framework, providing long-term sustainability of the Great Barrier Reef and indeed the agricultural sector. This bill is important as it honours the government's 2017 election commitment to further protect remnant and high-conservation-value non-remnant vegetation, to amend the accepted development vegetation clearing codes to ensure that they are providing appropriate protections based on Queensland Herbarium advice, and to align the definition of 'high-value regrowth vegetation' with the international definition of high conservation value.

I also know how important agriculture is to Queensland and that it has seen significant growth—in fact, since 2006 that growth has almost doubled. The Port of Brisbane, which is in my electorate of Lytton, is the final port of call for much of our agricultural exports.

In 2014 the Queensland government made election commitments to protect the Great Barrier Reef and reduce Queensland's carbon emissions by reinstating nation-leading vegetation protection laws that were repealed by the LNP. This government's commitment was part of a broader drive to end broadscale tree clearing in Queensland and enhance protection for vegetation of significant environmental value, including native vegetation and maturing regrowth, habitat for near-threatened

species and riparian vegetation growth across all Great Barrier Reef catchments. These changes are also considered to be critical to the government's agenda to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and better protect the health of the Great Barrier Reef.


Central to the bill is removing the 2013 amendments made by the LNP that, shamefully, allowed broadscale clearing. Within three years in Queensland, clearing rates of remnant native vegetation increased from 59,800 hectares in 2012-13 to 138,000 in 2015-16. This bill will remove high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture as a relevant purpose for clearing. It is anticipated that the removal of this purpose will also reduce clearing rates and subsequent carbon emissions in Queensland.

Following advice from the Queensland Herbarium, this bill also redefines the high-value regrowth definition to high-value regrowth vegetation that has not been cleared for 15 years and reinstates the protection of high-value regrowth vegetation on freehold and Indigenous land. This regulatory change will be supported by high-value regrowth mapping updates to the regulated vegetation maps. It is further proposed to align high-value regrowth with high conservation values by amending the definition of 'protected wildlife' to include habitat for near-threatened wildlife species. The bill also amends the provisions of the Water Act 2000 to ensure the appropriate management of riverine activities to prevent adverse impacts to the integrity of the watercourses and the environment.

The Great Barrier Reef is an iconic part of Queensland. It is an economic enabler, generating thousands of jobs in the tourism sector, attracting thousands of visitors each and every year and it contributes nearly \$6 billion to the Queensland economy. This magnificent great wonder of the world needs to be protected so that it can continue to be a natural wonder for each successive generation. In echoing the words of the member for Cooper, I, too, want to look my children and my children's children in the eye and say that, when I was a member of parliament, I fought for the Great Barrier Reef.

We will achieve this commitment by strengthening vegetation management laws to protect remnant and high-value regrowth native vegetation. This bill provides consistent protection by extending the regulation of clearing regrowth near watercourses and the regrowth of vegetation to three additional Great Barrier Reef catchments: the eastern Cape York, Fitzroy and Burnett-Mary catchments. Expanding the regulation of riverine regrowth to these catchments will increase the protection for the Great Barrier Reef from sediment run-offs and other impacts of clearing. The changes to the definition of 'high-value regrowth' will also protect an additional 405,000 hectares, or 47 per cent, within the Great Barrier Reef catchments.

This bill recognises the importance of ensuring that Queensland follows a responsible vegetation management framework that values conservation regrowth and ends broadscale tree clearing. It also supports one of Australia's greatest natural wonders and ensures that it can be protected so that generations to come can continue to enjoy its rich beauty and wonder. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.33 pm): I rise to speak to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Of course I do. It is a terrible bill. It is a bill that makes a mockery of the government's claim to govern for all Queenslanders. In fact, it is such a repugnant bill that, yesterday, hundreds of farmers were outside here protesting. When we consider how far many of them had to come—hundreds or, in a couple of cases, over 1,000 kilometres—to be here and when we consider that people on the land generally have better things to do than come to a protest, we see that their demonstration of dissent was no small thing.

This bill has been crafted by the phalanx of green extremists that the Labor Party outsources its environmental policy to. It is a bill that proposes to disadvantage the hardworking people who operate farms and live and work in the rural communities of this state. It is all about appeasing those green groups. This bill is designed to arouse a city and bush divide. It cynically manipulates the debate and casts farmers and people in the bush as backward environmental wreckers. That is completely unacceptable. This bill has been crafted to accumulate political advantage for the government at the expense of hardworking farmers who are already dealing with drought, pests and rising costs. Now, they have to contend with the state attacking their property rights and their livelihoods.

There have been many fine contributions to this debate from LNP members. An examination of the *Hansard* shows that, in speaking against this dreadful bill, the LNP members do so with a true understanding of the issues at hand. They also speak with authenticity on behalf of the communities that will be affected by this bill. I would like to add my comments to their contributions.

There can be no doubt—none whatsoever—that this government is not interested in the rightful protests of the bush. We know that, because farming and rural interests were excluded from the drafting process of this bill. They were shut out of government consultation and also in consultation with the

Labor Party in the development of its environmental policy. This bill is being rammed through in just a matter of weeks. I am sure it is by design that this period includes the school holidays, Easter and the Commonwealth Games. Pleas for additional time for consultation with the community were rebuffed by the government.

As stated by many affected industry groups, councils and other bodies, before this bill was introduced there was no consultation whatsoever with the bush. The LNP's dissenting report of the committee contains vivid examples of this pattern of exclusion. I will read a few. Travis Tobin, the Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Farmers' Federation, said—

Disappointingly, the government did not consult with the agricultural sector and key stakeholders before the 2016 bill was introduced and nor has it done so before tabling the 2018 bill we are here to discuss today. Considering the significant issue vegetation management is for the sector, this is not only disappointing but also concerning.

Dan Galligan, the Chief Executive Officer of Canegrowers said—

There has been no consultation on this matter.

My honourable friend the member for Condamine asked Ms Joanne Rea, the Chair of Property Rights Australia, if there had been any consultation. Her response was—

Absolutely none.

My honourable friend then asked—

Is that surprising?

Ms Rea replied—

I find it disturbing but not surprising.

Councillor Mike Pratt from the Barcoo Shire Council said—

I am on the Desert Channels board as well. None of the NRM groups were consulted before all of this was put in place. Surely the NRM groups should have had some input here and they were not consulted.

Ms Darlene Irvine of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils said—

We are again disappointed that the consultation period was so short that many councils were unable to consider the impacts and make an informed submission through their councils. We are also disappointed that again there are no regulations to read in partnership with the bill, especially as the state has had two years to develop them and this was an issue last time.

I think the contributions from those who were frozen out of the development of this bill speak for themselves. This bill is hasty, rushed and is intended to be pushed through without the proper consultation with those people who are going to be impacted. I thank my honourable friends the member for Condamine, the member for Bundaberg and the member for Buderim for their excellent dissenting report. That report included comments made by people who appeared before the committee in its hearings that give voice to the overwhelming dismay that is felt by rural and agricultural interests about the impact of this bill and also the spectre of future regulatory meddling with the codes.

I say again that this government being a government that governs for all Queenslanders is just a flagrant falsehood. It is nonsense. The LNP members who have spoken prior to me in this debate have provided ample technical rebuttal to the bill. My honourable friends the members for Burdekin, Gympie, Lockyer, Gregory, Condamine, Bundaberg, Buderim, Toowoomba South, Caloundra and Scenic Rim—

An honourable member: Costo.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection—along with the member for Whitsunday have exposed in devastating detail the flaws in the data, science and logic that abound in this bill.

In fact, the exposure commenced before that. It was during the committee hearings when the public was able to go and make their contributions and be questioned by the committee that the hollowness of this bill became apparent to all. In my contribution I would like to focus on the impacts that this bill will have on people: people who are farmers, people who live in regional communities and people who work in or operate the small businesses in those communities.

This is a bill that is an alarming affront to the rights of property owners and a threat to the economic future of families and communities. In order to satisfy the political needs of this government, the rights of property owners to manage their land, to invest in it and to reap just reward is being curtailed. What this means in many cases is that improvement of property is prevented and job creating and maintaining investment ceases. Landholders' property values are diminished by laws like this. This has flow-on effects to the ability of local councils to collect rates and provide services for their communities. Less investment, less production and reduced rates for councils equals a triple whammy against rural interests and rural communities.


At the AgForce rally yesterday I bumped into a few people from my electorate of Southern Downs. The first one was Mr Linden Charles who is a farmer in Inglewood. He is a grain farmer and has sheep as well. He scoffs at the government's idea that he needs to be regulated in how he manages his own property. He knows his property better than anyone else and he has looked after it awfully well. He has also complained that this sort of attack on landholders' rights diminishes the value of his property and it is threatening his impending retirement. Can members imagine seizing a portion of someone's superannuation arbitrarily? It is unthinkable, but that is exactly the effect it will have on some farmers.

I also met a leafy green vegetable producer from Bapaume in the Granite Belt part of my electorate, Mr Howard Poole. He explained to me that, because of the unique climate of the Granite Belt, it is possible to grow each year many crops of leafy green vegetables and that a single 2.5-hectare area can provide \$70,000 crop after \$70,000 crop, provided water is available. If water is available but they cannot clear the land to cultivate, look at the loss in production, the loss in investment and the loss in potential jobs in that very labour-intensive industry. What becomes of that potential growth? It is lost. What will be the impact of that lost growth on communities like mine and many others around the state? People who want jobs, people who are working hard in small business and struggling need that economic activity. A government that sits in Brisbane and imposes crazy tree-clearing laws on electorates like mine is doing them a great disservice. This bill is an inequity. I oppose it and I will be supporting the amendments foreshadowed by my honourable friend, the member for Burdekin.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lister, adjourned.

LIQUOR (RURAL HOTELS CONCESSION) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.43 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Liquor Act 1992 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill 2018 [\[590\]](#).

Tabled paper: Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes [\[591\]](#).

The bill I present to the House was presented in the previous parliament. It had the support of the committee. Licence fees for small pubs are based on volume of litreage sold in recognition of smaller hotels. It was relative to the size of the enterprise. However, today we have inherited a charge, the pub licence fee, that is the same across-the-board. Last time I checked it was about \$3,700.

This issue first came to my attention in a handwritten letter with scratchy writing from a small pub owner in a remote area that said his accountant had told him he had made \$38,000 net profit last year and that it was not really worth him owning the pub and keeping it open for the community. He is paying over \$3,500, the same as the Breakfast Creek Hotel, for his pub licence fee and he is not sure that is fair. To put it in perspective, that pub is the only private business in that town. If the local MP wants to go to town and meet with people the pub is the only meeting place. If people want to go and talk about things or have a community meeting they go to the pub. If you are a tourist travelling through the area and you want to get directions on the lonely roads you pull into the pub. It is important we do everything possible to help these remote pubs. This is a way that we can help them.

I have had various discussions over the years with previous attorneys-general about how it can be done. There are some difficulties in doing it equitably. No solution is perfect, I will admit, but the best way that we have found was to apply the classification of 'very remote Australia' under the Australian Statistical Geography Standard, as acknowledged in the explanatory notes. Using that classification, there are 110 venues around Queensland, which could represent a cost to the government of around \$300,000 in forgone revenue. I would not say it is a huge cost to taxpayers. It is a cost, I acknowledge that, but one might say that does not sound like too much. The recommended reduction is from \$3,500 down to \$350. I have had a positive response to the bill. People think the cost reduction would make a difference to their operations. The sentiment from the government would also make a big difference to these people. It would be a very good thing for this parliament to pass the bill.

The bill has had support from the Queensland Hotels Association; Clubs Queensland—with some qualifications; the Quilpie Shire Council; and the Mount Isa City Council. In the last parliament about 14 pubs made submissions. I can assure the House that a large volume of correspondence came through to my office saying they hope we can get this bill through. I have had a number of conversations with angry publicans saying, 'You didn't bloody deliver on that.' Pardon my French. I retract that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): I ask you to withdraw.

Mr KATTER: I withdraw. There is a real appetite for this amendment. I have had meaningful discussions with the government and the committee. It is a good initiative that the parliament could implement to help small pubs in remote areas. It is not only about the pub or the town, but also about Outback tourism and trying to preserve the community fabric in those areas that are under stress. I ask for the support of the House on this bill.

First Reading

Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (12.49 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee


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

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 887, on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.49 pm): I rise in support of the government's Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I commend my cabinet colleague the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy for bringing the bill into the House. I also commend the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts for her enormous contribution to the bill that the House is now considering.

Of course, this bill is being presented in the second term of the Palaszczuk Labor government, having been presented to the House in the first term of the Palaszczuk Labor government. These laws were put to the people of Queensland at the election in 2015 and at the election in 2017. The people of Queensland voted on these laws and elected a Palaszczuk Labor government in 2015 and in 2017.

I contrast that with what happened in 2012 when, under the leadership of Campbell Newman, those opposite swore that there would be no statutory reduction to the protection of native vegetation in Queensland. That was the promise given by those opposite at the 2012 election. There are many issues that those on the other side of the House put to the people of Queensland and then reneged on. One of the key issues they reneged on was keeping the statutory protections for native vegetation in Queensland. The results have been devastating for our state and our nation.

The statistics speak for themselves: in the last year alone, in Queensland almost 400,000 hectares have been affected, 40 per cent in Great Barrier Reef catchment areas, and there has been a doubling in the volume of emissions from land-use management. Queensland is now leading the nation in terms of carbon emissions from land-use management, because Campbell Newman and the LNP lied to the people of Queensland, and changed and weakened tree-clearing laws.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. There have been numerous rulings by previous Speakers, including by Mr Speaker this morning, with respect to the term that the Deputy Premier just used. I ask her to withdraw. She has been here long enough and she should know the rules.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): I ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. At the 2012 election, Campbell Newman and those opposite said one thing, were re-elected and did exactly the opposite, particularly on vegetation management. Many years ago in the 1990s when I was a young person, and many people here will remember me in the 1990s, I joined the Australian Labor Party. At that time there was an international conversation about one of the biggest issues happening in the world, which was the deforestation of the world's native forests. I recall seeing vision of bulldozers bulldozing down trees. Whether it was in Queensland, Brazil or Indonesia, around the world forests were disappearing.

In Queensland, one party, the Australian Labor Party, actually stood up and said that we need to get the balance right; we actually need to better manage our land, so that there is not unthinking clearing of land in Queensland. I was incredibly proud to join the Australian Labor Party, because they had conservation values and they had values around economic development. Ours is the only party that believed that we could get the balance right and we did, because under Labor's vegetation management laws not only did the rate of tree clearing in Queensland plummet but also profits and productivity from agriculture skyrocketed. They skyrocketed under the Australian Labor Party in government.

Of course, in 2013 I was incredibly devastated to sit in this chamber and watch those opposite rip up the laws that had been a sensible approach to getting the balance right between stopping unthinking and unsustainable land clearing and making sure that the agricultural sector had the tools necessary to increase profits and productivity, both of which happened in Queensland under Labor. It really pains me that now Australia is the only western advanced economy in the world to be on the deforestation hotspot list. In February this year, the international magazine the *Economist* reported that policymakers around the world recognise the fact that increases in forest cover are happening worldwide. Almost every European nation saw increases in forest cover between 1990 and 2015, including gains of between five and 10 per cent—

Mr Perrett interjected.

Ms TRAD: I am getting to it, if you can be a little bit patient. I know it is very hard to sit still.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Gympie.

Ms TRAD: Those gains of between five and 10 per cent occurred in countries such as Spain, France and Italy, all of which are agricultural producing countries. Reforestation has also occurred in the United States and China, but Australia is an unfortunate exception to the general rule that trees tend to multiply in advanced economies. The same publication also pointed out that Australia's worst clearing occurs right here in Queensland. That is an embarrassment and it is a shame on our reputation.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Gympie.

Ms TRAD: A number of years ago, my colleague the member for Murrumba and I went to UNESCO with the former federal environment minister, Mr Greg Hunt. We went to plead with the UNESCO World Heritage Committee not to put the Great Barrier Reef on the endangered list. The then minister for the environment and I were part of a delegation that outlined in great detail to the UNESCO committee all of the measures that we were going to undertake to reverse the decline in the Great Barrier Reef.

Key to those measures—critical to those measures—and the confidence of UNESCO in the Australian government to meet its commitments was Queensland's commitment to restore sensible native vegetation laws in this state. In the eyes of the international community, central and critical was our commitment to restoring sensible tree-clearing laws in this state. Those opposite could not care what happens to the Great Barrier Reef. They wanted to dump millions of tons of dredge spoil on the Great Barrier Reef. They do not care about ripping up riparian vegetation in the reef catchment.

Mr Perrett interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! One moment, Deputy Premier. Member for Gympie, you have had a good go. Your interjections are not being taken. You are now warned under standing orders.

Ms TRAD: I would like to see him give it a bad go. Quite frankly, you cannot trust those opposite with anything. You cannot trust them to keep their commitments to the people of Queensland. You cannot trust them to keep trees in the ground. You cannot trust them with the Great Barrier Reef. You cannot trust them to get right a simple balance between growing our economy, growing the agricultural sector and making sure that we have something to give to our children and their children's children in terms of a sustainable and healthy environment. I have personally met with farmers who support these laws, but are too afraid to speak up.

You can trust only Labor to get the balance right. You can always trust Labor to do what is right in terms of the environment and the agricultural sector. That is why we made a commitment to the people of Queensland to implement these laws and we will do that. That is why we made a commitment

to the landholders of Queensland that we would establish a land restoration fund to work with farmers and landholders to continue to get the balance right. You can trust only Labor on this matter. Those opposite are absolutely unhinged on this issue. It is time to get this job done and move on. I commend the bill to the House.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.00 pm.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (2.00 pm): I rise today to speak against the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Like our deputy leader, the member for Everton, I too have not known the hardships of making a living from the land that our farmers face. I grew up in the New South Wales regional town of Lismore in a suburban house and the only land management I struggled with was the regular mowing of my parents' lawn.

I have not known the rural farmer's life—the ups and downs of seasons, drought, natural disasters, transport costs, pests and all the other hurdles they face. What I do know is that I will not be part of putting more hurdles and more hardships in their way. When one does not know what it is like and when one is elected to parliament to represent the interests of an electorate which includes farming areas, as Nicklin does—the areas of Kenilworth and surrounds—it pays to listen to the people this legislation will affect.

I went down to the front gate of this parliament yesterday. I had the absolute pleasure of meeting many farming families from right throughout the state. Many had travelled hundreds and hundreds of kilometres to be here. These people are not our usual protestors. These people expressed their absolute frustration at the laws being made in this House by people who just did not want to listen to them. This is a kick in the guts for regional Queensland and for farming families.

One of the striking things I noticed was that there was not one Labor member down there talking to the farmers. They simply do not want to know. I will take this opportunity to pass on their message. They want to be recognised and respected as land managers. They want to be appreciated for the food and fibre they provide for our Queensland families. They want to be supported to remain a viable part of the Queensland economy.

Those opposite gained the support of environmental lobbyists through mapping which was shown to be severely flawed. Then they hold the Great Barrier Reef to ransom—bring in these laws or the reef gets it. We all love the Great Barrier Reef. I love the Great Barrier Reef. I am a scuba diver. The overreach and hysteria which has resulted in these laws cannot be trusted. What I do trust is the ability of our farmers to manage their land as they have done for generations. It is not enough for those opposite to agree that farmers are our best environmentalists and then create laws which give the exact opposite message.

The committee process of this parliament is supposed to engage with the community, listen to stakeholders and recommend amendments if necessary. The LNP has actually taken this process seriously. The LNP has listened to farmers and is proposing sensible amendments to these laws to soften the blow on our farming families. Those opposite went through the charade of pretending to listen and then completely disregarded any of the submissions made by our farming communities.

Only the LNP will fight for farmers and property rights. Visiting rural areas, having a beer in the pub and opening some tourist attraction is not sufficient. Making laws in this place that severely diminish the ability of our farmers to provide for themselves and us is what farmers care about. They showed that by their presence in Brisbane yesterday.

Labor's proposed changes make it nearly impossible to bring new land into high-value agriculture. That means we cannot supply more Queensland avocados, mangos and macadamia nuts. We will need to import these into Queensland. What are those opposite trying to do to one of the pillars of our economy? What are they doing to farming families? They speak about wanting to be on the right side of history and being able to look future generations in the eye. I too want to be able to look the children I met yesterday in the eye and know that I have done my job in this House by fighting for their futures.

One of my other concerns with the bill is the incredible powers given to the tree police to enter properties without warrants. As a former police officer I note that we were always required to get a warrant to enter a person's property for the purpose of gathering evidence unless exceptional circumstances existed. Even under those circumstances we would still need to subsequently have the search warrant issued.


These incredible powers given to the tree police are treating farming families worse than criminals. There are fewer powers for police to search a house of a suspected drug dealer than the tree police have to search our farming families' properties. This is an extraordinary overreach in the rush by those opposite to push their ideological agenda at the expense of the rights and respect of our farming families.

I really wish the members opposite had come outside yesterday morning. I really wish they had taken the time to listen to people whose land is their life. I really wish they had met the children whom we would hope would take on the family farm one day. The Labor government is rushing to push this bill through the parliament with no regard for anything brought to the committee by the communities they visited. I urge those opposite to consider their vote. They do not need to blindly vote along party lines and destroy the lives of farming families.

I am disappointed that those opposite who were not part of the committee process but will be voting on this bill did not bother to take a few moments yesterday morning to have a bit of a listen to the hundreds of people who had travelled hundreds of kilometres to be here. We are voting in this place on a bill that will drastically affect the lives of Queensland families—families who came along yesterday to be heard by those opposite. I promised those families yesterday morning that I will fight for them. I promised those families out there that their voice would be heard in this House. I promised the children there that I would not give up. Even if we lose this battle we will never forget them. We will not abandon them. This is only the beginning.

Our farmers are iconic Australians. They are the backbone of our country. My great-great-grandfather James Hunt came out to Australia from Dorsetshire in England in 1857 at the age of 21, leaving his agricultural family in England to make a life for himself in our great country. He took his agricultural skills and set up a market garden to make a living for himself and his family. Australia and indeed Queensland has a great history of farming. We rely on those prepared to make a life on the land to supply us with the very necessities of life.

I cannot support this assault on our farming families. I cannot sit in this House and watch the destruction of our agricultural industry without giving them a voice. I appeal to those opposite to hear their voice.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (2.09 pm): The proposed legislation is of real concern. The Palaszczuk Labor government's approach is not fair to the thousands of Queensland farmers who have invested in their land, livestock and farming equipment with the clear expectation of being able to manage their properties to generate returns to pay their bills and service borrowing costs, as in any normal business enterprise.

In the electorate of Burnett it is clear: Labor's proposed changes will make it nearly impossible to bring new land into high-value agriculture. That means we cannot supply more Queensland avocados, mangoes and macadamia nuts or increase sugarcane production, which we desperately need. These changes mean that Queensland will be forced to import more fruit, vegetables and nuts, even though we have the ability to grow even more here. That is because Labor is removing the exemptions for high-value agriculture, making it harder to grow more fruit, vegetables and nuts in Queensland. Labor wants to tie farmers up in red tape, with new development approval processes for new clearing permits for activities such as thinning. Labor is imposing new notification requirements on drought impacted farmers who are just trying to feed their cattle.

The Palaszczuk government's proposed regulations on native vegetation attack responsible farmers and threaten agricultural development in regional Queensland. The changes being considered here in this place reverse a policy that allows farmers to clear high-value agricultural land to put it to productive use. Those laws were a sensible attempt to find a balance between environmental conservation and agricultural development. They allowed farmers to extract value from their land while still requiring them to minimise overclearing by self-assessing their activities against codes of conduct that were strongly enforced. The proposed laws are a further step away from balance in favour of environmental extremists—the same extremists who unfortunately control this government. Labor's legislation is about Labor buying votes in Brisbane.

We are concerned that, at a time when Queensland needs sustainable growth opportunities, particularly in regional areas, which have suffered prolonged drought and loss of employment opportunities, farm management and development projects will be stymied by Labor's bill. The presumption underlying these extreme reforms regarding agricultural land clearing is that environmental protection cannot coexist with agricultural development, so we demonise our farmers once again. The legislation suggests that there is no situation in which the benefits of developing land could outweigh the costs of clearing shrubbery and trees from farmland.

The inclusion of regrowth that has not been cleared for 15 years will lock up over 862,000 hectares of land into the high-value regrowth classification. Furthermore, scientists have admitted that there is no mapping of regrowth. That makes a mockery of the Statewide Landcover and Trees Study, which has been talked about many times in this place. This is extreme and ignores the many economic benefits to farmers, the state and the nation of releasing land otherwise locked up by the government. It is not surprising that over the period 2012-13 to 2015-16 the gross value of agricultural commodities produced in Queensland increased by almost 30 per cent—almost double the national increase—and we became Australia's most valuable agricultural state. By comparison, the gross value of agricultural production in New South Wales and Victoria over the same period increased by just eight per cent and 12.5 per cent respectively.

A number of other assumptions are clouding the land-clearing debate. Claims that land is being cleared at Brazil-like levels since 2013 are overblown, incorrect and disingenuous. In 2015-16 just a quarter of one per cent of Queensland's land area was cleared. About two-thirds of the vegetation management carried out by farmers is to control regrowth areas that had previously been cleared, for routine farm maintenance such as the erection of fences and the construction of tracks, and to stop the encroachment of trees and shrubs into naturally open grassland areas. This does not say anything about the extent of vegetation that has grown back since 2013. It has been reported that the department of science remote-sensing centre leader, Dan Tindall, has conceded that the satellite mapping of regrowth is a very difficult thing to do and that the possibility exists that more trees are growing back than are being cut down.

The reason land clearing has not been occurring at reckless rates under the laws enacted previously is that farmers know how to get the most out of their land in the least destructive way. This leads to other assumptions underlying environmental extremism: the idea that farmers do not know how to manage their land so it must be publicly managed. Governments need to get out of the road of these hardworking families.

We need to be acutely aware of the extreme policies of this Labor government—policies that now state that the public interest in environmental conservation means that private property rights are irrelevant. Property rights give landowners an incentive to care for their land. They know that their livelihoods depend on environmentally sustainable practices. This means economising land use or the use of more efficient and environmentally friendly machinery and technology. They certainly do not need city based bureaucrats, professional politicians or coastal activists telling them how to do their job.

The government also transfers the cost of protecting the environment from the public to the landowners. This distorts how people understand the costs of environmental protection regulations. For instance, the explanatory notes for the new proposals estimate the financial cost of administering the legislation to be cost neutral, but this ignores the real cost to farmers in lost agricultural production, a cost that flows to consumers right across Australia.

Locking up farmland may make the lefties feel good, but it makes life much harder for our farmers. It will not put food on the tables of families already struggling to keep up with the increasing cost of living. Research last month illustrated how government regulated and subsidised sectors are driving up the cost of living. Wage growth has slightly outpaced the increase in food prices since 1997, but this will be more difficult if governments continue to pile regulations on food producers. Labor red tape costs the national economy about \$176 billion each year in lost economic output. The Palaszczuk government needs to ignore the environmental ideological low-growth agenda and start cutting red tape to unleash prosperity for Queenslanders.

My region now has been included in the catchment. There are real problems with this legislation designed to protect the Great Barrier Reef. I remind the House that the Great Barrier Reef catchment is nearly 500,000 square kilometres in area. The catchment represents 25 per cent of Queensland's total area. Queensland's land mass comprises a mainland area of 1.7 million square kilometres and an island area of 6,700 square kilometres. Based on this information, approximately 74 per cent of Queensland's land mass is not part of the Great Barrier Reef catchment.

Along with my colleagues I remain committed to protecting landholders' rights and protecting my region's farmers' rights—protecting their right to farm—as Labor continues to distort the truth on vegetation management. I thank AgForce and all stakeholders including Bundaberg Canegrowers and Bundaberg Fruit & Vegetable Growers, who joined the many concerned industry members and constituents of the Bundaberg and Burnett region who have shown strong support in speaking out on these terrible laws.

In conclusion I want to read an open letter by Ms Bonnie Coolee, a farmer's daughter from my part of the world. It states—

I never thought the day would come where I would say that I could ever be ashamed to be Australian, but here it is!!!

I am absolutely outraged at the ignorance and lack of empathy from the leaders of our nation! I am sick and tired of our current ministers taking action in situations that are said to be delicate because they are scared to offend a minority group. Ministers that are too scared to stand up for Australians because they might be seen as politically incorrect or not diplomatic.

Maybe if our entire country's primary producers stopped their passion for even one week, maybe only then would you ball point pushers realise the damage you have caused by not even allowing an opportunity of negotiation.

The result of this is far more superior than your rules and protocol....

Now you will not have your luscious \$60+kg wagyu steaks to eat at your fine dining restaurants.

You will not have quality fruit and vegetables, rather spend ridiculous amounts importing foreign produce that has poor quality control.

You have now began to send the nation into financial deficit and heartache.

You WILL see increased statistics of SUICIDE, regardless of your claim for support, you have taken grazers livelihood and cut it in half.


You WILL see children becoming UNEDUCATED, because rural families will not be able to afford to send their children to school.

You will NOT reduce your carbon emissions in your CITY because your infrastructure continues to expand.... on fertile ground.

My list could go on for as long as word space would allow, but all I will say to end this here is.... Enough is Enough!

GOOD LUCK to your reinstatement in 2 years, if you still have a state left to vote you in!!

I thank Bonnie and all of the contributors to the committee's report. I think it is important that we all take a stand and vote against this legislation.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.18 pm): I rise to speak wholeheartedly in support of this legislation. I make the point that there has never been an electoral mandate for weak vegetation management laws in this state. In 2012 the LNP went to the people and said that they were not going to touch vegetation management laws. They clearly deceived the people of Queensland, because that is exactly what they did. They lied to the people of Queensland—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Member for Miller, could you retract that word please. You know that it is unparliamentary language.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw. They deceived the people of Queensland by doing exactly the opposite of what they said was their platform. What we are seeking to do is to rectify that and we have received a mandate not once but twice. In 2015 and 2017 the people of Queensland voted in a Labor government and this has been part of our platform. It is now a majority Labor government, and I am very pleased to see that this law will pass.

Why should members vote for it? Members should vote for it not because of the political posturing of members on the other side of the chamber. It is about science and it is about knowledge. With carbon emissions we are seeing the warming of the planet at an unprecedented level. Some members have made the point that this is all about extreme green ideology. Let me read from a document which I will table from one of those extreme green organisations—NASA.

Members would know about NASA. NASA are that group in the US who have to have such a precise understanding of science to get rockets in and out of space. They tend to know what they are talking about. They have a vested interest in knowing what they are talking about. In NASA's global climate change document there is a very interesting graph showing carbon dioxide levels in parts per million. We have generally been in a band of about 160 to 300 parts per million over many centuries. Now we are at a level of 408 parts per million and surging above that. If you have not thought about what impact that is going to have on everybody in this state, including farmers and everybody who is associated with it, then you are not being serious.

Let us get beyond the silliness about this being about votes and preferences and blah, blah, blah. This is about science and this is about knowledge. It is clear and there is consensus: 97 per cent of scientists around the globe agree that human induced climate change is happening. It is having an impact and deforestation is part of that. We have to do our share in Queensland to make sure that we have responsible management to ensure that deforestation does not occur at unsustainable rates. This bill does not prevent it. The opposition has made some alarmist comments. Saying that it will destroy farming families is just nonsense. It did not occur when the Beattie government brought in strong

vegetation management laws and it is not going to happen now. There has been a lot of debate. This has not been rushed in. This has been discussed for the last couple of years. It is a responsible measure to what is in fact an extremity. Climate change is in itself inherently an extremity and it is surging.

This government will act on climate change and we will act on it on multiple fronts. On the renewable energy front that is exactly what we are doing and our position is well known. We have 25 large-scale renewable energy projects, and growing, to transition into clean energy. This is another part of our responsible approach to dealing with climate change here in Queensland. I table the NASA global climate change document, with some data that I just referred to.

Tabled paper: Web pages titled 'NASA Global Climate Change, Vital Signs of the Planet, Climate change: How do we know' [592].

I also table for the benefit of the House and members some information on climate change from the Office of the Chief Scientist—in fact, the previous Office of the Chief Scientist.

Tabled paper: Office of the Chief Scientist, Australia: Occasional paper series Issue 8, October 2013, 'Climate change: the story so far' [593].

This is symptomatic of the scientific consensus on this issue. I know certain members will play to their base—and there is a certain level of that in politics, as we would all admit—but this is a critical issue. We all have to contribute to dealing with climate change because every one of us will suffer. We are an interconnected state, nation and global community and we all have to be part of the solution.


This bill responds to the climate change crisis. The rate of tree clearing has sky rocketed in Queensland, reaching 395,000 hectares in 2015-16—the highest since 2003-04. This is a 33 per cent increase. This is equivalent to roughly half of the forest cleared in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest in 2016. That is a shocking fact. A third of that—138,000 hectares—was remnant forest. Almost half of it was in the Great Barrier Reef catchments. That is a fact. The total is equal to a thousand football fields a day. Land clearing is directly responsible for two plant species becoming extinct in the wild. There are 45 million tonnes of emissions generated in Queensland alone from land clearing.

Queensland is responsible for 90 per cent of Australia's emissions from land use—90 per cent. That is not sustainable and cannot continue. Anybody who votes to continue that is not thinking deeply enough about this issue. This is a worldwide issue which we are contributing to and we need to solve, and we have the resources and the know-how to do that. We have become the hotspot for land clearing, accounting for between 50 per cent and 65 per cent of the total loss of native forests in Australia over the last four decades. Over one million hectares of woody vegetation, of which 41 per cent was remnant vegetation, was cleared in Queensland between 2012-13 and 2015-16.

Many members on this side have spoken very eloquently. I do not wish to repeat too many of them. There are a lot of people in my constituency who want to see me support strong vegetation management and tree-clearing laws and that is exactly what I will be doing. I acknowledge people like Michele from Annerley who said to me, 'Stay strong on land clearing. I'm asking you to take a stand for the hundreds of thousands of hectares of beautiful bushland, rainforest, savanna and heathland—some hundreds of years old—wiped out every year.' I acknowledge Jennifer from Yeronga who asked me to vote yes on this bill and said she was horrified at the rate of destruction of Queensland habitat.

I have heard a lot of nonsense here—attacks on the data, attacks on SLATS, the Statewide Landcover and Trees Study. This is a methodology that has existed for 30 years across successive governments. There is more data and more evidence now than there has ever been. If members opposite want to take a short-term view and sell out future generations in terms of impacts on climate change, if that is the story they want to tell to their grandchildren, by all means do that. They are the ones who will look back on this debate with horror that they did not vote for strong vegetation management laws and tree-clearing laws.

This is not just about being on the right side of history; it is about being on the right side of evidence based policy, of science, of knowledge. That is what we have to be about as a species, as a state, as a country and as a global community. I say to everybody in this chamber: even if you are bound to vote a certain way by your party, have a good look at the science of climate change. This is not something that is a green left ideology or extreme. This is not some Labor Party conspiracy. This is something acknowledged by the scientific institutions around the world like NASA that understand that we have to go forward on the basis of knowledge. That is the way that we all advance as a community.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (2.26 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate today on the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. At the outset I want to thank the opposition committee members for their due diligence on this very important piece of legislation that affects a massive proportion of Queensland. The amount of work that the opposition

members put into the dissenting report was quite phenomenal. I congratulate them on their hard-earned work in representing the interests of the farmers—the people who look after this state, who look after the farming communities and who look after the land in this state. Those individuals are the cornerstone of the history of this wonderful place we call Queensland. If we look at the coat of arms up there just above the Deputy Speaker's head, we will see the heads of a bull and a ram, a sheaf of wheat and sugar cane.

Mr Costigan: You don't see NASA.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. You do not see NASA up there. Agriculture is the cornerstone of our state and always has been. Those opposite will persecute the farmers for their own political ideology to look after the Greens voters out there to ensure that they stay in their seats. Yesterday farmers came to Brisbane to exercise their democratic right to protest against this unfair legislation. I listened to their stories and saw young families, the next generation of farmers who will be directly affected by this legislation, who were so passionate about their future and about their rights. The last thing anybody in South-East Queensland would like is somebody coming on to their property and telling them, 'You cannot do this. You cannot do that.'

Mr Costigan: I wonder how that would go down.

An opposition member: Especially when you make an income out of it.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. Those opposite seem to forget the export dollars we receive from farming industries. They seem to forget that that is one of the main powerhouses of our economy. We are feeding other nations around the world because our farming practices are seen as clean and green. A few decades ago the Theodore electorate was populated with dairy farms, orchards and other farms. Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, you would know that too. You would have driven around over the years and you would have seen the massive amount of development—

Mr Minnikin: The Albert shire.

Mr BOOTHMAN:—in the old Albert shire that has slowly encroached on those farming lands. I found what Rachel Mackenzie from Growcom said very interesting. She stated that we have lost something like 5,700 hectares of land per year to urbanisation since 1999. Nowhere is this more evident than on the northern Gold Coast.

Let us talk about how farmers look after their land, because this is their income source. Calopo is an introduced weed. It is a very aggressive vine. When it gets into an orchard—let us say an avocado orchard—those vines will overtake that orchard within weeks. They literally suffocate the tree with foliage. The problem for the farmer—using the example of avocados—when the farmer is trying to remove those vines is that he rips away his fruit also because those vines envelop everything on those trees and they are so invasive.

There has been discussion about the protection of watercourses, water management, soil run-off and pollution. Let us use Moreton Bay as an example. There are so many invasive weeds along the Coomera River. There are weeds like the castor oil plant and elephant grass. I will tell the House a little bit about elephant grass, because this is something that my local residents commonly bring up. Every time we get a flood, elephant grass rips the riverbanks away. All the soil and nutrients go straight into Moreton Bay. Elephant grass affects other parts of Queensland too. Elephant grass is designed to rip itself away because that is how it repopulates further down the river. These types of weeds—the castor oil plant and elephant grass—literally smother all the native vegetation in an area. Native vegetation does not have a chance.

If you go further up the river where farming practices are established, the land producers are doing something about it but the further south you go down the river they are not. Farmers are actively trying to look after and manage their own land. There is no better example than the Coomera River. We have other introduced species throughout these areas such as lantana and wild tobacco, which can be found near John Muntz Bridge especially. It is all over the place. Does the government do anything about it? It is on council land but do they do anything about it? No, it just sits there, and every time we get a flood we have enormous amounts of erosion because it is killing the native vegetation underneath it. It is stopping the native trees from coming up.

The people of Brisbane and the Gold Coast have to realise that the best custodians of the land are farmers. They are the people who know how to manage it. They are the individuals who do the right thing by the land, because the last thing they want is their main income-producing asset to be damaged. That is their livelihood. I say to members opposite: if they lock up all these areas they will become a

haven for weeds and feral animals and, unfortunately, that means that biodiversity suffers even further. Those opposite have talked about the science and other so-called information, but as someone who has a bit of experience on properties I can say that the farmer is not the enemy of the environment.

Mr Costigan: He is a friend.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. They are friends of the environment, so please give them a fair go. That is all they are asking for. All those people who were out there protesting yesterday were asking for was a fair go. I will end my contribution with that: give them a fair go.

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.36 pm): In rising to speak to this bill, I want to take the opportunity to quote some words from a friend of mine whom I will not name who provides an important insight into the human impact it has when governments introduce laws and ride roughshod over the people who have to implement them. There is a gut-wrenching cry coming from rural, regional and remote Queensland in response to the way this Labor government has ignored the human impact of those who have to implement these laws whose concerns have been ignored.

It was quite telling that there were mental health workers who had taken the time to accompany farmers to the rally outside this parliament yesterday. They have warned about mental health impacts because they are dealing with that in these areas already. People are completely disempowered by a government that ignores their concerns, and the impact of that is tragic. We do not want to see anyone harm themselves due to a sense of powerlessness and being abandoned by government, but the health sector is warning us that that is what they are hearing in conversations with people who have been through so much.

I will quote some words from a friend who has been at the doors of people who have been on the brink of suicide and tragically people who have suicided. They know what it is like to deal with people who are at the most desperate point in their lives. The letter reads—

We grow the best 1st world produce in the world and we are putting it out of business, please tell me the sense in that.

Farmers have gone through such a harsh drought which has been hard enough and now the Qld government does this on top to our farmers. I have visited farmers who were totally at the end of themselves through this drought and the government has gone and done this on top of what they have been through. Talk about injustice.

This once was the Lucky country where you could have a go, have a dream to do something, make a living to get ahead.

You do realise what this means, if this can happen with farming it can happen in any business or industry and there is nothing you can do about it.

What I find amazing is we can have multi national mining companies coming and raping our land, knocking over large areas of bush, ripping big holes in our country and nothing gets said. Some of our beautiful artesian water courses damaged and no one does a thing.

New highways get put in and beautiful rainforests gets dozed, no one says a thing. There is something really wrong.

There are one lot of rules for one and another lot of rules for others.

The letter goes on—

We already see properties that have been bought by national parks and wildlife totally let go. Some are now full of feral animals wild pigs, wild dogs wild goats and they can breed safely in that environment.

One property we called in on had killed over 3000 wild pigs. The herds of pigs were coming straight out of a national park and onto his property.

Please tell me how locking up country to breed feral pigs, wild dogs, wild cats, wild goats helps the country.

Please tell me how this fixes things and does not make it worse.

Please tell me what happens when it catches on fire. Who will be there to put it out. Please tell me when the Bush is let go with the undergrowth how are you going to stop it?

How are you going to save all the wild animals caught up in these fires.

Have you really thought all this through.

There is more in that letter. It comes from the heart of someone who knows what it is like coming from a coastal area and going out into rural and regional areas. It comes from someone who understands the impacts of this.

We have heard a lot of people say, 'It's the science. That's why these laws are being passed.' This is more about political science than environmental science because it is unbalanced. We have heard from my colleagues who have outlined the fact that in the hearings and submissions it was admitted that there has not been consideration given to regrowth. On the one hand, they talk about clearing from the government but they do not address the fact that the science and the evidence around regrowth have been very poorly managed and not taken into account. The regrowth has not been measured by government and has not been taken into account in this legislation.

I want to also address the economic management issue. We have talked about the absolutely appalling land management track record of this Labor government. Feral animals are running riot in the national parks because this government could not manage a chook raffle let alone manage the land that is in their stewardship. With their economic management track record, we know that this Labor government did not do a regulatory impact statement. They had this weak as water excuse that they were trying to stop people panic clearing. Why do they not do an economic management study now? They do not want to do it because it would clearly point the finger at their track record of bringing in legislation without counting the costs.

All of these poor people are counting the costs because it is their land that they manage at great personal expense. They understand the costs, but this government does not want to ask the question about what the cost is. That is just incompetent. This is corrupt. To take the people's resources and not count the costs of the impact is really an abuse of power and it is arrogant. That is why we have people talking about suicide and mental depression. They feel that they cannot do anything or put any submissions forward about their land management practices when they are doing the right thing because this government had another agenda which was about political science rather than environmental science. There should be a regulatory impact statement. There should be a proper economic analysis of the impact of this legislation.

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The honourable member is using the word 'corrupt' fairly liberally. Is that in conformity with the standing orders?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Thank you, member for Miller. It is not a personal imputation; it is being used generally in the speech. I will allow the member to continue.

Ms SIMPSON: This Labor government is corrupt because it is using its power in an abusive way and it is failing to take into account that it is ripping off Queenslanders who are paying for the impact of the government's ineptitude and mismanagement. The government may not intend to be inept, but the reality is that the negative impact of the decisions made by those in government who are inept is as bad as if they were taking brown paper bags. They are ripping the hard-earned dollars from everyday Queenslanders who are trying to do the right thing.

Government members interjected.


Ms SIMPSON: I know government members think it is funny but I have people saying to me that they see this situation affecting their livelihoods and their hard-earned money. They feel their generational input into land management has been ignored by a government that just thinks it is a joke. The government thinks that those people do not vote for them because they are in those rural and remote areas, but these people are Queenslanders who have given their blood, sweat and tears and who love this state and this land. The ineptitude of the government is not just breaking their hearts; it is breaking the economies of these regions.

There needs to be an economic analysis and I call on this government to do it. It is completely incomprehensible that they can bring in such significant legislation without doing it. Unfortunately, this mediocrity that we see with Labor governments almost breeds a situation where people just say, 'They don't do the economic analysis, but that's just the Labor government once again using their power and that's what we expect.' I think we need to expect more from this government. We need to expect them to do the analysis rather than hide from the impact of their decisions. Ultimately, if the government really believed in science and economic impacts, they would do that work and put it to a rigorous independent analysis.

I will close by quoting from someone who does work with those in rural and regional areas. They said, 'Let's champion sustainable land management that partners with the owners of the land to support the food and fibre industry.' I back that. We need to partner with people rather than demonise them. That is what I have heard from the Labor Party; they are demonising those who are out there trying to do the right thing. The fact that we have laws before the House that give more power to the tree police than to coppers on the beat who are out there trying to track down real criminals tells me what this Labor government really think and it shows that they are treating farmers in this nation with disrespect.

We know that every farmer in Queensland and Australia is supporting hundreds of people in Australia and internationally with their food supplies. For every farmer, there are about 600 people in Australia and internationally who are dependent on them for their food. We should value our food and fibre. We should work with people who are the true sustainable land managers as farmers in this state.

(Time expired)

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (2.46 pm): The city-country divide has never been so clear under this Labor government. Yesterday I delivered my maiden speech in this House where in my closing paragraph I said—

Collectively, this 56th Parliament can make the most difference to the lives of Queenslanders and the most difference to the future prosperity of our great state.

Today as I rise to make my first contribution to a bill before the House, the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, I see the Palaszczuk Labor government's agenda is in opposition to the LNP's, because we want to make a difference in the lives of Queenslanders and the future prosperity of our great state. This could not be any clearer than in the detail of this bill.

How can the government ignore the voices of real Queenslanders? I talk of real people like Brad Cameron, a property owner north of Roma who, in his concluding comments in his submission, said to the government—

I just hope you realise that you are making a very big mistake!!!

Sue Denham is not a farmer but she lives in the bush and she also took the time to write to the committee with her concerns about this bill. Sue said—

Under the proposed changes farmers would be unable to effectively manage their properties without breaking the law and facing significant fines.

Sue, like the majority of Queenslanders, said that she enjoys eating food that is produced here in Queensland and she wants to continue to do this for the rest of her life but, as Sue correctly points out, the provisions of this bill will see farmers struggle to manage their properties efficiently and we are at risk of them leaving the industry altogether. Sue gets it. If we were to listen to the Labor government, they would have us all believe that these hardworking farmers are just vandals and are inept at managing their own land, so much so that Big Brother must step in with new laws that are void of any common sense. The laws cast farmers as vandals, but Sue got it right because she said that farmers are not environmental vandals.

There is only one vandal in all of this mess and that is the Queensland Labor government led by a Premier whose barometer on all things farming is to sit in a pub and wait for people to come and speak to her. That is what the Premier said yesterday. She said she was drinking with farmers in the pub and there was plenty of opportunity for people to come and speak to her. That is how she responded yesterday when asked by the Leader of the Opposition if she would show some common decency and go out and listen to the concerns of the over 500 farmers and graziers and their families who made the long trip to Brisbane to try to speak some common sense to this government.

Whilst the Premier was sitting in the pub in Winton, let me tell honourable members what the farmers were doing. They were out producing from their land to keep our vital state prosperous. They do not have the time to visit the Premier in a pub. They were not sitting around a pub on the one-off chance of running into the Premier so they could voice their absolute disdain for this bill. They were working hard to put the produce that we all enjoy on our plates. They were working hard to make a crust. They were working hard for their future generations so that, as Sue said, we can all enjoy the food produced here in Queensland for the rest of our lives. That is what they were doing whilst the Premier sat in the pub.

It is disappointing to say the least that we have a government here in Queensland that is hell-bent on destroying the lifeblood of our state, our farmers and their rights to properly manage their own land. Laws imposed on farmers and their families are purely and simply politically motivated to appease the Greens—nothing more, nothing less—and Queenslanders know this. They know what those on the opposite side are up to and it is shameful.

As I said yesterday, we heard the voices of hundreds of farmers and graziers, and I was very proud to speak to a group of young farmers all the same age as one of my sons. These young lads are devastated by the implications that this bill will have on their family farms and their future as young farmers. They want to continue their farming legacy, to farm the land just as their great-grandparents once did in a sustainable way. These young farmers and all those present outside this House yesterday did themselves proud. They were loud and they were clear; and they, more than anyone sitting in this parliament, know that for hundreds of years they have adopted, and continue to adopt, ways to sustain their farmland with their priority being to protect the environment in which they live.

I would like to take a second to read some closing comments from Stirling Tavener, who wrote a submission to the committee. He said—

The Labor State Government has been 'cherry-picking' science.

...


The fact is that trees grow, and right now they are regrowing at a much faster rate than they are being managed.

We can have Agricultural production and environment co-exist. We must move away from approaches that place economic and social development at loggerheads with the Environment. They are not diametrically opposed.

The laws that we are debating here today are nothing short of rushed, ill conceived and ultimately a slap in the face for our hardworking Queensland farmers and graziers. To all who attended the committee hearings and took the time to make submissions, we say thank you for your contributions. We let you know that the LNP members of this parliament hear you and support you. To those opposite, who will support this bill, the message from regional Queensland and their communities has been loud and clear: leave our vegetation management laws alone and stop attacking our farmers and graziers.

The Leader of the Opposition has put forward five common-sense amendments to bring balance to what is a highly flawed bill. These include (1) delivering administrative and bureaucratic accountability; (2) returning sensible 'right to enter' property rights; (3) returning to a sensible definition of high-value regrowth vegetation; (4) allowing considered and economically significant agricultural clearing; and (5) reinstating mulga and fodder area management plans. We can only hope that common sense prevails.

Finally, to the hundreds of graziers who came here Tuesday morning and to those many more thousands across our state who stand in solidarity with them, let me just say that we on this side of the House will continue to fight for them against these unfair and unworkable vegetation management laws.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.55 pm): Early in the morning of 19 August 2016, the last time we debated these laws, I can remember sitting alone in my office. I could hear opposition members celebrating elsewhere in the precinct. I could hear them arrogantly slapping each other's backs and of course I felt defeated. As then environment minister I had put everything I had into Labor's efforts to stem escalating land clearing. I did that because after speaking with scientists all the way up the Queensland coast I was convinced that only by protecting tree cover on river and creek banks could we stem the hundreds of thousands of tonnes of sediment polluting the Great Barrier Reef, blocking the light and suffocating the coral.

I had travelled to Germany with the Deputy Premier and then federal environment minister—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Order! Members on my left.

Dr MILES: I had travelled to Germany with the Deputy Premier and then federal environment minister, Greg Hunt, to convince UNESCO to keep the reef on the World Heritage List. Ultimately, it was the long-term sustainability plan signed by Hunt and me and supposedly supported by the LNP that convinced the global community that Queensland would act to save the reef. I knew we had to implement that plan, which included a commitment to stem land clearing.

I had also travelled the state and seen the destruction of broadscale land clearing. I had seen some of the tens of millions of native animals left homeless every year. I had also seen shocking data that Queensland was considered the only developed economy that was a global deforestation hotspot; that Queensland was responsible for 90 per cent of the nation's land use emissions; that clearing in Queensland for just two years more than wiped out the entire billion dollar Emissions Reduction Fund, the only—if inadequate—policy proposal from the Turnbull government to meet their own Paris treaty greenhouse gas emissions targets. I knew that defeat that night ensured almost three-quarters of a million more native forests would be cleared, more than 34 million native animals would die, hundreds of thousands of tonnes of sediment would land on the reef and more than 289 million tonnes of CO₂ would be in the atmosphere.

Around the same time I visited the same reef I first snorkelled on. In 2010 I had taken my son, Sam, there and Kim as well, who was pregnant with Aidan at the time. It was magnificent. We swam with a giant turtle. I was hooked. By 2017 at that spot underwater in the Whitsundays the LNP's vandalism was laid bare. Dive operators told me they did not even take tourists there anymore. That reef was like a graveyard. The coral had been bleached once and then for the first time ever what had recovered was bleached again. Cyclone Debbie had torn the coral to pieces, leaving it in crumbs on the ocean floor. Then the sediment from that same storm settled on top like dust and cobwebs in a haunted house. It was haunting.


That night when we last considered these laws I also knew that the LNP's victory would be temporary. That night I knew that Labor would go on to win the next election with enough votes to deliver the laws we are debating here today. Of course I resolved to do everything I could to make sure that happened, not because I thought land clearing would decide the election—it would clearly be an issue, a clear differentiator between the parties thanks to the Premier's leadership, the centrepiece of Labor's election platform—but more so because I know that at every election since 1998 Queenslanders have voted for governments committed to native forest protections, and that includes 2012.

Let us not forget that in the lead-up to the 2012 election the LNP accepted that Queenslanders wanted to retain their land-clearing laws. They promised not to change them. When they broke that and many other promises they were voted out. That is why that night and that vote were so important. Queenslanders have never voted for a party that is committed to land clearing, and that night the LNP finally destroyed what was left of the Liberals and with it their electoral prospects. They took the final lurch to the extreme right. They lost all touch with the majority of Queenslanders, and that is what we saw play out on election night.

Queenslanders from the south-east all the way to the state's north rejected the new, extremely right-wing LNP. In the city and the regions the LNP vote collapsed, but instead of accepting that outcome the LNP has doubled down their support of fringe views over the views of Queenslanders. They have tried to pitch it as city versus country, but the country is not with them either. Their campaign with grazier union AgForce has tried to mislead Queenslanders and pretend that broadscale land clearing is mostly undertaken by 30-something professional women.

They have argued that the sky will fall if these laws are passed, despite the fact that agricultural production increased under previous incarnations of these laws. Some opposites have even suggested that we will all starve. In doing so they have done a disservice not just to this state but also to the farmers they purport to defend. Queenslanders have not fallen for it: they did not last year, they have not this year and they never will. Queenslanders know that we can have sustainable agriculture and protect the Great Barrier Reef and do our fair share to address climate change and keep native forests for our unique native wildlife. Not only can we, but we must. That is what these laws will deliver.

I want to thank and congratulate the members for Stafford and Algester for their work in bringing these laws back to the House. I want to thank the members and supporters of WWF, the Wilderness Society and the Queensland Conservation Council who campaigned so hard to see this bill pass. I want to thank the thousands of citizens who made submissions and the committee for considering them, but most of all I want to thank Queenslanders for electing a government willing to do what it takes to protect the reef, our native forests and the native wildlife that call those forests home.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (3.03 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As a boy from Brisbane who now lives at the beach, vegetation management is not an issue that is often at the forefront of my mind. I submit that being a little detached from this issue has put me in a good position to step back and assess the proposed legislation on the facts and the evidence at hand.

As a former detective, my life revolved around making informed decisions only after an examination of all the available evidence. I have listened carefully to all members from both sides of the House during this debate. I respect those members who have a more close-up, personal connection to the land than I do, particularly those whom this legislation will directly impact. I have tried hard to review the volumes of information available, and I congratulate the parliamentary committee for the work they have done in working through all of the material and the submissions.

I appreciate that I was not here in the previous parliament when this legislation was initially introduced, but I am struggling to find any validated evidence to support or justify it. It appears to me that the catalyst for this legislation was based on satellite imagery contained in the Statewide Landcover and Trees Study, or SLATS report. During recent committee hearings it was submitted that the SLATS report is not reliable as it cannot accurately measure regrowth, so the initial information that led to outrage in the inner city and subsequent media coverage of reckless and unlawful widespread clearing of our farming land was most probably unwarranted. It now appears clear that the satellite imagery used to perpetuate these assertions has been shown to be inconclusive at best.

Listening to the debate on both sides, it appears to me that it has become a farmer versus Great Barrier Reef argument. I have heard those opposites talk about protecting our environment and the Great Barrier Reef. They refer to overseas examples of massive large-scale land clearing and the impact it has on our climate. LNP members on this side also care about our environment and appreciate how


important the Great Barrier Reef is to us, our nation and the world. The LNP is committed to environmental protection and laws which ensure that land clearing is done in a properly regulated manner to protect our streams, rivers and catchments, and particularly our Great Barrier Reef. It was the LNP when in government that fought for and protected the reef. It was the LNP that introduced best management practice policies for our beef and canefarmers.

It appears to me that those opposite are using the Great Barrier Reef, knowing how important it is to us all, to perpetuate fear around this issue. We heard from the Deputy Premier just before the lunch break, who stated on a number of occasions that this legislation is required to stop unthinking and widespread land clearing. As far as I am aware, information now available to the House obtained during the committee process indicates that, due to inaccurate satellite imagery which cannot accurately identify regrowth, there is no evidence that any unthinking land clearing is occurring.

Another issue I have with this bill is the extraordinarily excessive and intrusive powers granted to departmental vegetation management officers with respect to their power of entry. As I said earlier, as a former detective I can tell members that, while conducting a criminal investigation for offences like drug trafficking, possessing child exploitation material, rape or murder, Queensland police officers have to satisfy the grounds of a search warrant, most often before a judge or magistrate. These grounds are often very detailed and require direct intelligence linking evidence of the indictable offence with the property wishing to be searched.

I have personally appeared before a magistrate with a search warrant application for a drug-trafficking operation involving Middle Eastern crime gangs where the grounds for my search warrant and entry to the premises were in supporting information and intelligence contained in over 50 pages. The fact that the current legislation before the House gives departmental officers the power to enter a property without warrant, without prior justification, is extraordinary to say the least.

I too spoke to farmers and their families outside yesterday. They do not want special exemptions or relaxations; all they want is a fair go for our farmers. I submit that the catalyst for this bill has been shown to be flawed during the committee process, and I appeal to those opposite to rethink their position. For those reasons, I oppose this bill and will support the sensible amendments to be put forward by the member for Burdekin.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (3.08 pm): I rise to speak to what should be renamed the vegetation management and re-elect the left-wing member for South Brisbane bill. This bill would not be before this House in the 56th Parliament for consideration if the Katter party and One Nation had not preferenced Labor in certain seats because then Labor would not have the numbers and members such as the member for Hinchinbrook would not be in the position where they have to vote against this Labor Party bill. Similar legislation was introduced in the 55th Parliament but was voted down, as we are well aware. Now with the government's hubris and arrogance, given its numbers in this House, it can push anything it wants through and in this particular case it has sought retribution on the farmers throughout the state. What we are seeing now is a result of that disastrous election result, particularly in the north, which will affect many of those people who rallied outside this place yesterday.

Some might ask: why is the member for Mermaid Beach talking about vegetation clearing? I will tell members a little story about a young lad—I will not say good looking, but he was a very fit and active young lad—of about 14 or 15 and every morning he would go out on his property with his dad, who had a big Solo chainsaw. This young lad was managing a much smaller McCulloch—a little yellow and black one—that used to go like the blazers. They would go out and cut down whitewood trees on their property of 60,000 acres north-east of Richmond and the sheep would follow them around. It was in a complete drought area and that was the only feed for the sheep, particularly in November and December.

They would be doing that all day to keep those sheep alive and then the next week or two they would be cutting down pink gidgee in the gidgee scrubs that are well and truly up in the north, and members would know about those mainly because we were told that they were better fence posts than black gidgee. They had long, hard days with the chainsaw cutting those trees down. That kid of course happened to be me and all of those things now are under threat. We would be out there toiling away trying to keep our sheep alive and trying to make improvements on our property, yet under this legislation a departmental officer can now jump straight out of the scrub and say, 'Here's a \$200,000 fine, mate.'

That is what this legislation is all about and it is for purely political purposes. This is a very favourable topic in South-East Queensland, as we are aware, and in my electorate of Mermaid Beach there has been a lot of input from people who are on our side of politics. Well, they told me they voted for me and they always tell the truth to their local member! They are very concerned about the

propaganda that has been put out in support of this bill to make the people on the other side of the House feel good, and all of them earned their vegetation management stripes in union offices and ministerial offices as apprentices and know a heap about vegetation and land clearing. Some of them are lucky to get across the Great Divide in terms of seeing what it is really like to work on the land and how hard it is. As a matter of fact, it was so hard that that is why I ended up on the Gold Coast, which has been a good paddock.

This bill will be passed. I understand the numbers that the government has to push anything it wants through in this parliament, but that is quite sad given that earlier in the week the Premier spoke about how wonderful it was that she had been in Winton with all of those highly respected people such as Mayor John Wharton of Richmond at the Waltzing Matilda Centre opening. It is a wonderful thing for the Waltzing Matilda Centre to be open—it is fantastic—but Mr John Wharton, the Mayor of Richmond, was in the cafe at lunchtime. I can assure members that he and all of the other folk out there believe that this legislation is a load of rubbish and the reasons behind it are not the reason the Great Barrier Reef is being ruined.


From the Richmond region all the way down to the electorate of the member for Gympie, that is not going to ruin the Great Barrier Reef. We all love the Great Barrier Reef and it is a wonderful catchcry to say, 'Save the reef.' In fact, I think we should probably put up a new party that preferences the LNP called 'Save the Barrier Reef Party'. I think I have 500 members already lined up and they will preference the LNP at the next election under the compulsory preferential voting that those opposite brought in to further their own interests at the last election.

This is a political stunt in that this legislation will not change the outcomes on the Great Barrier Reef given what David Attenborough has said, and I do not think that anyone opposite is questioning David Attenborough in terms of what he says about the condition of the reef now after thousands of years. It was here a long time before we got here. A long time before white man was here the Indigenous people were here and they were burning scrub throughout the area for their hunting and collecting habits. Tree clearing has been going on for a long time. In fact, I would remind everyone in this House who lives in a house or a unit that their block of land was covered in trees before a house was put on it.

Those opposite want to sit in this House and say to those who are working a business and producing and being responsible given their care and consideration for tree clearing on their properties that they cannot do that without this rigmarole of a bureaucratic nightmare and that, basically, there is a brick wall up on clearing in terms of furthering their agricultural interests. I also remind everyone in the House that at the committee meetings the Indigenous people expressed serious concerns and total disappointment at these laws hobbling any farming interests that they may have in their areas, and I do not know why we are picking on Indigenous people in this era when we are trying to make good for some of the mistakes of the past. We should be listening to them and doing everything we can to assist our Indigenous people in all matters. They are saying that this tree-clearing bill is a load of rubbish.

One thing that springs to mind during my career relating to tree clearing is when I was a councillor on the Albert shire, which happened to oversee the complete flattening of a very large area on the Gold Coast next to the highway called Studio Village. The greater public of the Gold Coast and Brisbane went ballistic as it was right next to the highway and very visible and pretty much every tree was flattened. The terminology used at the time was that we turned it into a moonscape in the development of Studio Village. That is a thriving community today and well represented by the member for Theodore. At that time people on the Gold Coast did not understand that those trees had to be cleared and completely flattened to put in all of the services such as the roads, the pipes and all the rest of it so that our generation could enjoy the wonderful residential amenities on the Gold Coast.

This bill is a complete farce in that it is a complete political play to the green vote in certain areas. I am totally disappointed about the effect that it will have on those farmers who are great contributors to our economy and to our community and who just want to get on with the job. I will be more than happy and very pleased to vote against this bill.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (3.18 pm): I want to start my contribution to this debate by congratulating the environmental lobby groups for doing a great job in convincing the government that it is helping the environment by introducing this bill. Unfortunately, the government forgot to talk to many people on the ground. The environment does not manage itself. People interact with it and manage it and maintain it. Since white settlers have moved onto this land, we have had an impact on the environment and it needs to be maintained and managed.

In the process of formulating this bill, the government forgot to talk to those people who manage the land. The environmental outcomes that we all desire—I think it is a legitimate desire to want to save the reef and get environmental outcomes and we would all agree with that—cannot be achieved if the government is not talking and interacting with and taking advice from the people who are on the ground. That is a very unfortunate and regrettable part of this bill. This bill removes provisions relating to high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture.

In this day and age I would say that, when Victoria, New South Wales and the southern areas of Queensland were developed, the early settlers should have left a bit more forest in some areas, but that development has been done. As settlers moved further into Central Queensland, I would probably agree with most of the development that took place. There might be areas that, regrettably, were not done properly. Up in the north, we have hardly had a chance to do anything. Up in the gulf and the cape, 98 per cent is remnant forest. We are at a stage now where we can develop a little bit of that area. We could ask the government, 'Can we have just one or two per cent for a bit of development work?' Members would be surprised by the difference that would make but, under this legislation, that would be denied. The sad fact is that people in the north are denied the opportunity for entrepreneurship and, in some areas, are denied the opportunity to maintain their businesses.

This bill increases penalty offence units for noncompliance and enforces undertakings with a new compliance tool. That is going to make it a lot tougher for people. It will expand the powers of authorised officers by allowing them to enter properties and monitor compliance. There are also amendments to thinning and encroachment permits. I think it is important to detail what those amendments will do and address the science in layman's terms.

During this debate many members have invoked the Great Barrier Reef. We all want to keep the Great Barrier Reef healthy. That is a very worthwhile cause. None of us have a mortgage on that. I find it curious that 75 per cent of Queensland falls outside the catchment of the Great Barrier Reef. Why on earth are we applying the same metrics west of the Great Dividing Range, where water flows into the gulf or Lake Eyre? Surely, those areas should be treated differently. If this bill is all about saving the reef, should we not give separate consideration to those areas west of the Great Dividing Range? This bill does not, because it is not about science or the proper management of the Great Barrier Reef.

When this issue was last debated I read some of the literature that was being farmed out that talked about how bad the situation was. Boulia shire was included in that literature as an area of concern. I am sure a lot of people are aware of where Boulia is located. It borders the Simpson Desert. I will joke like I did the last time this matter was debated and say that in Boulia people would run out of diesel driving from one tree to another, yet Boulia is caught up in an area of concern.

The point I am making is that there are great anomalies in the science. Yes, sometimes the science works really well—it is a good tool to use—but even the department acknowledges that there are big gaps in it, often to the detriment of the farmer, or the person who is putting in his applications. In my experience, too many times the department errs on the side of caution and says, 'We probably should give you 80 per cent of the area but we are just going to give you 20 per cent, because we think we should.'

During this debate many members have mentioned Dr Bill Burrows. We want to embark on the journey of trying to best manage the environment, but where the rubber hits the road is where man is interacting with the environment. Where these activities occur, how are we going to restrict them? Do we have any professionals who have worked in that area who can give us some advice? Luckily, we do. Dr Bill Burrows has spent 30 or 40 years—working for the taxpayer—studying these rangelands. We have a great opportunity to tap into his knowledge, yet he has contradicted what this government says this bill will achieve. He says that this bill is not the answer, that this bill will not help.

If I were trying to address this environmental issue, the next port of call for me would be the NRM groups because they interact with people on the ground. They give advice to people on how to best manage their land. Yet they are saying, 'We weren't consulted.' Yes, they put in submissions, but would the government not go to them first and ask, 'How do we make this happen? How can we best control these issues that we want to address?' Those NRM groups say that this bill will make the situation worse. One would think, 'That can't be right.' I am sure the government must ask that question.

I will give members an example. I am almost getting tired of going to properties to see people who say to me, 'Rob, have a look at this country. This is where we have selectively cleared. We have cleared the scrub under this area and there is all the grass growth. That slows down the water and it is absorbed in the soil. Here is an area that we have not been able to clear.' All the scrub there has proliferated. That is usually a harbour for pests and vermin, because we are not controlling that

throughout the state very well. That is where the ground goes hard, the water rushes over it and starts gouging and rushing down into the waterways. It seems that, when farmers are not allowed to maintain those areas, the exact opposite is achieved. This bill discourages farmers from maintaining those areas or imposes provisions that make it too hard to maintain them. In that way, I think this bill is really counterproductive.

There are many other anomalies in this bill. Another issue relates to Cape York and the gulf, but the same rationale could be applied to any cattle station operator who is not allowed to grow hay. A lot of big cattle station operators do not want to be farmers. They do not want to farm tens of thousands of acres of hay. A lot of those cattle station operators, particularly in the north, just want to use one or two per cent of their cattle station to grow hay. Their properties could span a million acres, and they want to use only 1,000 acres of that to grow hay. People would not even see that area if they were flying over it in a commercial jet. If those operators were able to bale some hay, that would help them during hard times. They could feed their weaners and not have to buy in hay.

Now, they are buying in hay from all over Queensland and exactly the same has happened to them as has happened in my little horse paddock at home. I am getting weeds such as goathead that never used to be there because I am buying in hay. When we buy in hay, we start bringing in the weeds. If that occurs throughout the cape and the gulf, that is a bigger problem. Again, there are so many anomalies in what the government is trying to do through this bill. If the government does not consult the right people, it will not get the outcomes that it is after. Unfortunately, people are then misled. People think we have these good environmental outcomes when that is not true.

Queensland has different bioregions. There is even a big difference between the bioregion of the gulf and the bioregion of the cape. The Brigalow Belt and southern Queensland are different, yet under this bill similar metrics are being applied. It does not make sense that different areas would be treated the same. Again, I refer to that area west of the Great Dividing Range.

I also want to make the point that was made by the member for Mermaid Beach in his contribution. The first Australians used to light up the country all the time. It is a well-known fact that they cleared all the undergrowth. That would let all trees grow into a big, nice tall forest. All the scrub was cleared out. When white man came and developed the land, they did the same. In the early days there were not firebreaks, roads, or rural fire brigades, so big fires would be lit.

They would start at Normanton or Karumba and they would go all the way across the gulf burning everything. That kept down a lot of the scrub. That allowed the big trees to grow bigger and there were nice tidy forests. Most of us would look at those forests and say, 'That's beautiful. What a great environmental outcome.' That does not happen anymore. Mechanical harvesting is used to maintain areas. Some people say, 'That's terrible,' but that is what has always happened. That is what has been used to create the natural environment in those areas.

The member for Kawana was one member of the LNP who said that KAP preferences got Labor into government. For a start, that is misleading parliament. I think they are trying to hide the fact that in this press release—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Is that a document that you want to table?


Mr KATTER: I want to table this press release. It is from 2003 and in it the Liberals skite about Queensland needing to act on a land clearing moratorium in Queensland. Dr Kemp is saying, 'We are proud'—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you table the document, please?

Mr KATTER: He is saying, 'We're proud we've acted on this and now it is time for Peter Beattie and Labor to act in Queensland.' The LNP members have dirty hands as well. They should not try to blame the KAP for things. I acknowledge that, when they were in government, they put in amending legislation. It was good legislation. The LNP members have played a role in this as well and they know it.

Tabled paper: Transcript, dated 16 May 2003, by the former Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, the Hon. David Kemp MP, titled 'Moratorium on Land Clearing in Queensland and Response to Simon Crean's Environment Statement in Budget Reply' [594].

(Time expired)

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.30 pm): I rise to speak to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I wholeheartedly support the bill. All who own private land appreciate that we do not have the right to behave in an unfettered manner to do whatever we want on that land.

Our society is based on the fact that we have an obligation to each other and to future generations to manage our land properly, regardless of whether one lives in the city or the country. We accept that there are certain reasonable restrictions placed on us about how we behave and manage our own property. In my community of Bulimba, home and business owners are restricted by zoning rules which set maximum height rules and minimum setbacks and which control the activity that can be carried out on our private property. They are imposed on us for the broader good and we accept them.

Over the last several decades the community has become more aware of the impacts that certain land management practices can have on our natural environment. At the same time, what has also grown has been the importance that the community places on preserving our natural environment and the importance that the community places on the environment more broadly.

I have heard in the debate about land clearing, both on this occasion and on the last occasion that vegetation management came before the House, that the residents of inner-city electorates like mine and, I presume, the inner-city electorates like yours, Mr Deputy Speaker, and like those of the Liberal Party members opposite—if they are still called the Liberal Party—should not have views on how land management can affect the environment.

I want to say in response to that view that the residents of my electorate do have very strong views on the environment. They have very strong views on the Great Barrier Reef and they have strong views on climate change. These are matters that affect us all, regardless of where we live, and we have a right to have those views. In fact, we must take responsibility for those things. It is because of our growing respect for and desire to preserve our natural wonders and our growing scientific knowledge that governments across the world have increased environmental protections and restricted activities on private land.

Today we are debating the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 because we know the importance of our native woodlands as habitat for our native wildlife, because we know that riparian vegetation reduces sediment run-off into our waters and because we know that large-scale clearing contributes to our carbon emissions. Not a person in my electorate fails to be shocked to hear that due to tree clearing, which is occurring right now in Queensland, and has been occurring since the LNP government introduced its legislation, CO₂ emissions have almost doubled and has led to Queensland being the biggest contributor to CO₂ emissions from land clearing in Australia.

In Queensland, since that legislation was introduced, we have single-handedly compromised our commitment to the Paris accord. I would be fairly confident that not a single person in one of those Liberal Party inner-city electorates who heard that information would fail to be shocked as well. There has been a 350 per cent increase in land clearing in Great Barrier Reef catchment areas since that legislation was introduced.

Ending broadscale tree clearing is one of the greatest actions a government can take to protect our environment. I know this because Queensland Labor has done it before. Our laws to protect native vegetation were the sole reason Australia was able to meet its emissions reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. Professor Andrew McIntosh of the Australian National University Centre for Climate Law and Policy has gone so far as to say of Queensland Labor's tree-clearing laws that arguably it is the single most important environmental policy achievement in Australian history.

One would think that after our substantial record in government that the Newman government would have left well enough alone. Campbell Newman promised it in 2012. He said he would not touch the Vegetation Management Act. Well, we know what happened with Campbell Newman and promises. Unfortunately, in 2013 the LNP showed itself to be the greatest environmental vandal in Australian history with its decision to take the axe to our laws.

I have heard throughout this debate that it is extremely important to provide consistency for landholders. We are the party that provided consistency. We are the party that is restoring the intent and effect of the laws that were in place before they were torn apart by those opposite. We are the ones delivering on the commitment that the LNP made at the 2012 election.

In 2015 the Queensland government made election commitments to protect the Great Barrier Reef by strengthening vegetation management laws to protect remnant and high-value regrowth native vegetation, to reduce Queensland's carbon emissions by reinstating vegetation protection laws repealed by the previous government, to retain existing self-assessable codes as long as they provide appropriate protection and to reintroduce riverine protection permits to guard against excessive clearing of riparian vegetation. We all know that in November 2015 the government introduced legislation to parliament to reinstate a responsible vegetation management framework. To my personal despair, in 2016 these laws were defeated in the Legislative Assembly.


This amendment bill delivers on the government's 2017 election commitments to protect remnant and high-conservation-value non-remnant vegetation, to amend the accepted development vegetation clearing codes to ensure they are providing appropriate protections based on Queensland Herbarium advice and to align the definition of high-value regrowth vegetation with the international definition of high conservation value.

This is not just a commitment to Queenslanders; it is a commitment we made to the world in the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan, the LTSP. Last year the UNESCO World Heritage Centre made special note that these laws had not yet been passed. In its advice to the World Heritage Committee in Krakow, Poland, it stated—

It is also noted that important legislation regulating land clearing has not been passed yet, and that increased efforts are needed to ensure that all important legislation necessary to deliver the 2050 LTSP outcomes is put in place.

The next meeting of the World Heritage Committee will take place in Bahrain in less than two months. We must pass this legislation. We must demonstrate to the world that we will deliver on all our commitments to protect the Great Barrier Reef. On this side of the House we understand our commitments to the world and to the environment. Those opposite fail to understand that the expectations on us are growing. Those opposite must represent their state and their country. They must think of the future. This legislation is vital—it is vital for our wildlife, it is vital for our rivers and it is vital for the Great Barrier Reef.

When this legislation was in place previously it did not stop good farmers from being good farmers. In fact, the agricultural sector grew in that period. I do not believe the legislation we are seeking to have passed now will stop good farmers from being good farmers. I acknowledge the majority of primary producers who are those good people and I pay my respects to them. I say to them that I have spent much time answering the concerns of people in my electorate who are concerned for their good. My constituents expect us to deliver this commitment, as does the wider Queensland public and the world. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (3.39 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Firstly, I put on the record my thanks to all members of the bipartisan committee and my appreciation of their hard work and their travel in the consideration of this bill, and for their report. The fact that they took their hearings to regional centres, allowing interested parties to address them directly, adds weight to the process undertaken.

I note that the committee went to locations such as Rockhampton, Townsville and Cloncurry, where they visited Granada Station and met with the Hacon family. Several weeks prior to that visit, I too had visited the Hacons' homestead. I have a lot of respect for the Hacon family. They are a resilient family, identical to other families in regions throughout Queensland. The committee also travelled to Longreach, Charleville, Cairns and then back to Brisbane where they conducted further hearings.

In the lead-up to the introduction of this bill I spoke to producers and stakeholders in many of those places. Therefore, I was keen for the committee to hear directly from interested producers across the state about the impacts of the bill. In my visits throughout the state, I have had the opportunity to meet many good men and women from the land. I was very pleased that the committee considered the views of the people interested in this debate and enabled them to participate in the process.

As I told regional producers and councils at that time, if you want to have your say, put in a submission and be part of the process. I am pleased that they did. In March, I wrote to the chair of the committee asking that they consider holding hearings in regional Queensland. I am glad that they listened to that advice and that it came to pass. I note the recommendations of the report prepared by the bipartisan committee.

I support the government's legislative agenda by supporting this legislation. The Labor Party could have not been clearer about its intentions regarding this legislation. A key plank of our 2015 election campaign was that, in government, the Labor Party would act on land clearing. Labor took the land-clearing laws to the last parliament. The Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 was well ventilated, with numerous public hearings held across Queensland.

I think few bills have had the same level of community engagement, committee investigation and parliamentary debate as this bill and its previous iterations. The report of the previous committee was detailed. Over 600 submissions were received. Our government has again ensured that a full committee process has been undertaken and hearings have been held during the committee's consideration of this bill.

Midway through 2017, the Labor Party launched the policy, but the LNP was missing in action when it came to debate on that policy at the time. It should be noted that those opposite who have criticised this process remain quiet about their past form on this legislation. In fact, in 2004 the members for Caloundra, Surfers Paradise and Currumbin voted with the then Labor government for stronger vegetation management laws to protect the environment. For the benefit of the House, I table a copy of the division on the third reading of that bill, which identifies their support of the 2004 legislation.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland parliament *Record of Proceedings*, dated 22 April 2004, pp 409-410 [595].

In 2012, before coming to government, the LNP was not up-front with the people of Queensland. Before that election, in a letter to the WWF, then leader of the opposition Campbell Newman stated that the LNP would retain the current level of statutory vegetation protection. I repeat: he stated that the LNP would retain the current level of statutory vegetation protection. I table that correspondence to the WWF.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 14 March 2012, from the then leader of the LNP, Mr Campbell Newman, to the Chief Executive Officer, WWF-Australia, Mr Dermot O’Gorman, regarding the WWF-Australia’s key election issues on the Great Barrier Reef [596].

That was just one of the many election commitments that the Newman government broke while the Leader of the Opposition was his assistant treasurer. That further shows that the LNP either was inconsistent in its policies or flat out misled the public about its intentions. That is in stark contrast to the Labor approach, which is to set out clearly at election time our agenda and policies, explaining fully the parliamentary processes and the committee hearings that will be held.

Those opposite may not like the bill, but they cannot say that they did not know it was coming or that they lacked an opportunity to have their say. I know that the committee report disappointed some in the agriculture sector, but Labor will continue to provide certainty for those people into the future. I note that, at the recent committee hearings, committee members reiterated their message to witnesses, stating multiple times that this bill will not erode the certainty of PMAVs.

As I said in this place on 17 March 2016 in relation to the last iteration of this bill, climate change is an ever-pressing concern. I have been consistent on this point for many years. At that time I noted that we are at a point where we need to act on the matter before us. Whether it is in respect to managing vegetation or managing climate change, as a parliament we have a responsibility to act on behalf of Queenslanders. That was true then and it is true now.

As a senator for Queensland, I saw firsthand the reactionary approach of the LNP in the federal sphere, denying the reality of climate change and ignoring the fact that the science has been settled. I was fortunate enough to be on two committees that heard matters in respect to not only the science but also the economics behind climate change: the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme Inquiry and the Senate Select Committee on Climate Change. Having heard the evidence around those matters, I did not need any convincing as to why we need to address climate change.


In 2009, Queensland Liberal and National Party senators are on record as voting with the Greens to oppose climate change legislation in the federal Senate. Across this chamber, elements of the LNP still refuse to accept the science on climate change, refuse to believe that Queensland needs to act and refuse to believe that we have a problem. It remains clear that the LNP is now a disappointing exhibit of the anti-science brigade.

It is not a stretch to recognise that there is not broad support for this legislation from industry and I acknowledge that. However, I make it clear to industry and the agricultural sector more broadly that the Palaszczuk government will continue to engage with the sector on the broad range of issues facing agricultural industries in Queensland. Although this is a matter where there is disagreement, it will not detract from my commitment or that of the government to make sure that agriculture is well placed to grow and increase in value and productivity.

In conjunction with Minister Anthony Lynham, I have engaged with industry on this matter and I will continue to do so. So far in my time in this portfolio, I have travelled to over 18 rural and regional towns, covering more than 12,000 kilometres. I have the backing of the Premier in doing that. I have met face to face with farmers, growers, industry bodies, fisher men and women and local councillors. This government will continue to consult on our approach and will not shy away from difficult discussions, even when there are disagreements over policy.

I note that one of the concerns raised by industry is ongoing thickening not being captured by SLATS. I am pleased that Minister Lynham has committed to future consideration of measuring regrowth in SLATS.

In conclusion, the report prepared by the committee is fulsome, rigorous and in-depth, and demonstrates that the bill before the House should be supported. Under this legislation agriculture will continue to prosper in Queensland and Queensland produce will continue to be the desire of customers around the world. Again, I thank the committee for their consideration of and deliberations on this bill.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (3.47 pm): This is a very sad day for Queensland farmers and for rural and regional Queensland. I vehemently oppose these laws. This is quite disappointing, but it is in Labor's DNA to attack the farmers. In 1999, then member for Callide Jeff Seenev and I attended the rally to protest the Beattie government's vegetation laws, which removed the rights to freehold property.

In 2004, the then member for Callide again led the charge. For three days, he fought clause by clause to stop the broadscale land-clearing laws affecting freehold land. In 2006, the Labor government introduced the wild rivers legislation. While it was disappointing that those laws passed through the House, we must thank the Indigenous communities for having the laws overturned in the courts. That was a big fight and it was great to finally see a victory come our way in regard to draconian vegetation laws.

In 2010 the Bligh government introduced ERMPs, environmental risk management plans. This required landowners to fill out a form telling the department of natural resources where there were washouts on their properties and how they were going to fix them. If they did not fill out that form correctly there was a \$75,000 fine. The other insult was that if they did not fill out that form they could be jailed. This occurred at the time when the Bligh government privatised our railways and Forestry Plantations Queensland.

We were fortunate because after that finally Queensland had a reprieve. The Labor government was smashed at the next election and was reduced to seven seats in Queensland. That occurred as a result of two things—the animosity towards ERMPs and asset sales. The Newman government then came to power with 78 seats. They declared war on everybody. They introduced asset sales and their seats were reduced to 42 at the next election.

People are sick of this issue being a political football. They are after some certainty. The mother of all insults was when the last government reversed the onus of proof. In other words, landowners were guilty before being proven innocent. I believe it was the Law Society that said that not even terrorists are treated that badly. Not even our most hardened criminals are treated this badly.

It is disappointing that the Labor government would treat landowners with such disrespect. We are now debating the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. The great thing is that we had a win when the vegetation management laws were defeated in 2016 with the support of KAP and a member of the crossbench whom we were able to convince to come our way and throw the bill out. That was probably one of the happiest days of our lives.

The good thing introduced by the Newman government was clearing for high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture. I believe that was a sensible move because so much land was tied up. Some 98 per cent of the Einasleigh Uplands, 98 per cent of Cape York and 98 per cent of the gulf plains was remnant. That was a good thing that the Newman government put in place. It finally allowed land to be freed up for development. It is rubbish to talk about destroying the Great Barrier Reef and the ozone layer; it is make-believe.

It is disappointing that the LNP has chosen to make political an important issue that will have an impact on farmers. They have come out and pointed the finger at KAP and blamed KAP for this problem. I listened to a number of LNP speakers say yesterday that we are the problem because we decided to give people the choice about where they allocated their preferences. They believe that we are the reason behind this. The LNP really needs to have a good look at itself because it was the LNP that preferred Jackie Trad—the architect and mastermind of these vegetation management laws. She was the person in the driver's seat.

It was KAP that introduced a vegetation management bill last year that allowed for an appeal mechanism for rejected clearing applications. It also allowed for clearing for high-value grazing. The LNP voted with Labor to delay debate on that bill. They also voted with Labor to not give landowners category H licences. They also voted with Labor to toughen gun control laws introduced by Jackie Trad. They voted with Labor to block KAP's fair milk logo bill. If they want to say that we are the problem then they should look at the fact that they were reduced from 78 seats to 39. I believe the LNP has to have a good look at itself and ask itself whether it is a pathetic opposition.

As I mentioned before, the Einasleigh Uplands, the gulf plains and Cape York are 98 per cent remnant. The 2012-14 SLATS report clearly states that 296,000 hectares was cleared and there was 437,000 hectares of regrowth. That means that regrowth is outstripping land clearing. The government's figures estimate that vegetation regrowth far outstripped clearing in the three years. In fact, tree coverage increased in 51 of the 77 council areas across Queensland.

Land management is about sowing good seed and producing good crops. Landowners will clear vegetation but what we see are the bulldozers and not the end product, which is the seed sown, the sorghum grown, the fat cattle, kangaroos jumping through crops and the grasses that are holding the soil together and stopping erosion.


It is disappointing that, after all the committee hearings right across the state, not one change has been made to the legislation. Landowners travelled right across the state to appeal to the Labor government. Many of them were in tears and were pleading for help. They identified that this is going to impact severely on their businesses. Members of the Indigenous community indicated very strongly that they are in a position where they are ready to go, ready to develop and ready to create jobs for Indigenous people. They have been waiting for 20 or 30 years and they are finally at this point. These laws are going to put a stop to that.

I have a copy of a letter from a landowner that was sent to the Premier. The letter does not condemn or criticise; it comes from the heart. Sue Salmond from Lestree Downs states—

I am just a poor simple farmer dedicated totally 100% to what I do. My husband's family will be the paying guardians of the property which I have had the pleasure of spending the past 36 years with my husband on. Next year we hope to celebrate 100 years of family ownership on Lestree Downs. I turned 60 in March this year and have only spent 3 of those years in town ... My mother's family have been graziers for over 150 years, so I do believe I have the right to send this letter to you to ask you to Help us to continue to be your guardians of this land and to treasure and continue to farm the land we are bred to look after. Please think very seriously about working with us and not against us to find a workable out come for future and our families' futures.

I table this letter for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 30 April 2018, from Ms Susan Salmond to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, regarding vegetation management [597].

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (3.58 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This bill is no surprise to anyone. Ending broadscale clearing in Queensland has been a policy of Queensland Labor for almost two decades. In fact, we did it once before in 2004 before it was undone by the LNP in 2013, despite Campbell Newman's promise that he would not.

Unlike those opposite, I keep my election commitments. When I launched my election campaign in 2015 I made a promise to reinstate these laws. This legislation has not been rushed through this House as though it was something we were ashamed of. It has been discussed and debated openly and publicly for years. It has been subjected to the independent committee system. Stakeholders have had their say. Members are having their say.

This bill seeks to put back protections that existed for 13 years before the Newman government scrapped them. We are simply putting back something that was taken away. This issue has become a partisan issue solely due to the behaviour of those opposite. It is disappointing that the LNP has made it such an issue. When this legislation came to Queensland in 2003, the federal Liberal government of John Howard supported our legislation—in fact, called on Peter Beattie to hurry up and do it. The Howard government even claimed that they had worked with Queensland Labor to do it. On 16 May 2003, the then federal environment minister, David Kemp, said—

... today I'm delighted to announce that a moratorium has now been imposed on new applications and permits on land clearing in Queensland.

He also said—

Queensland land clearing has been by far the most significant land clearing here in Australia at the present time. There is land clearing going on in other states but the Queensland issue is the one which I think has concerned everyone around Australia. It is one that has to be tackled. It is a top priority for the nation's environmental policies for farmers. The Howard government and the Beattie government in Queensland have now formed a partnership to address it.

In fact, this was voted on by this chamber in 2004 and the then Liberal Party voted for it. The members for Surfers Paradise and Caloundra were both members of this House at that time and voted with their Liberal Party. I table *Hansard* extracts from the debate and vote on 21 April 2004.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland parliament *Record of Proceedings*, dated 21 April 2004, pp 296, 297 and 317 [598].

Those opposite charge that our policies are just politically expedient but, unlike the LNP, our position has been consistent for many, many years. This is not convenience; it is conviction. We are doing this for the environment. Losing vegetation adds to run-off that is killing the Great Barrier Reef. Protect the vegetation and you protect the reef. UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, agrees. The CSIRO agrees. No-one doubts the reef's value. Estimates of its economic worth are about \$7 billion a year, and as many as 70,000 people rely on it for their jobs alone in Queensland. How do you put a price on what is priceless?

The reef is Queensland's greatest treasure, but it is also ours to protect. It does not look after itself. There are a number of threats facing the Great Barrier Reef and my government has done more than any other state government to protect it. One of those threats is sediment run-off reducing water quality. This legislation will protect riparian vegetation, which will reduce sediment run-off. Climate change is the greatest threat to our reef, and ending broadscale tree clearing is the most effective thing we can do at a state level to reduce carbon emissions.

Being pro environment does not mean being anti farmer—far from it. First of all, let me say out loud the deep respect and admiration that we have for every family who works on the land.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Members, there will be no talk across the chamber.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know that no-one has greater respect for their properties than the men and women who work them. No-one has to deal with the environment as closely. We have retained accepted development codes to make it easier for farmers to manage their land.


Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gregory, I have already said there will be no talking across the chamber.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are establishing the Land Restoration Fund, which will help farmers with new income streams for the conservation work that they already do—income streams for allowing regrowth to occur. We listened to farmers and removed the reverse onus of proof provision that would have had farmers having to prove that they did not break the law. That was the right thing to do.

As I told a delegation of peak farming bodies on Tuesday, we do not shrink from our long-promised objectives in this bill, but that does not mean we stop listening. An agricultural ministerial advisory group will continue to supply expert advice. I know that the Minister for Agriculture also made this commitment to the group that we met with yesterday. We have also committed to a review of accepted development codes in three years. This is an opportunity to make these laws work for everyone.

What if these laws were enacted when we were still in primary school? How different might our state have looked today? In how much better health would our Great Barrier Reef be? How can we tell the next generation that, when the responsibility fell to us to do something, we failed to act? These laws are for them. They are for Queensland. They are for the reef. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (4.04 pm): It is indeed opportune that the Premier found time, limited as it might be, to come into this House to try to defend the actions of a government that cares little or nothing for the rights of farmers or people on the land. The Premier comes in here and the whole Labor government comes in here and pretends that they respect people on the land. They pretend that they respect the farmers. We just heard the Premier say, 'This does not mean that we do not respect the farmers. We do respect the farmers.' With this legislation they are saying, 'We respect you so much we won't let you do what you want to do on your own land. We don't trust you to manage your own land. We are going to send in the green police and if you don't let them in we are going to fine you hundreds of thousands of dollars.' That is how much the Premier and the Labor Party and the Minister for Agriculture respect the people on this land. That is exactly what they are doing.

They say that there is no land-clearing vegetation protection legislation in place. That is completely wrong. They behave as though the farmers, the landowners, the graziers, the pastoralists wake up every morning at five o'clock, have a cup of tea, crank up the bikes, grab the chainsaws, get the bulldozer drivers and go out and clear the land. That is what they think happens. That is what they think, other than the fact that there is widespread protection for vegetation in Queensland and has been for a lengthy period of time.

I heard them talk about the legislation in 2004 and the votes that took place in 2004. What they do not talk about, though, is the next step they took in 2006 with the remnant vegetation and the regrowth vegetation more particularly when they made it harder for pastoralists to maintain their property, not to clear it but to deal with the regrowth—the gidgee, the mulga and the other acacias that in the space of three years can grow quite high. They will not talk about that. What they will not talk about is the dirty deal that was done by Peter Beattie in 2006 for Greens votes. They will not talk about that deal. The member for Currumbin remembers that deal that was done in the weeks before the election with the wild rivers and the regrowth vegetation. Some of us remember it. We remember it. I stood up in this place as the newly elected member for Clayfield and I proudly stood beside my friend the then new member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, and said, ‘This is an intrusion on people’s rights.’ I stood up and I am a member from the inner city. I stood up for people’s private property rights.

Importantly, what do we have here now? What we have in respect of this legislation and what is being proposed, at its essence, is a deep philosophical question. There is a deep philosophical issue at stake here. The philosophical issue is the ever-increasing intrusion of the state, particularly under Labor governments—but parties and governments from both sides have tended to do it—into the private businesses of individuals and the private businesses of companies. It is the Labor intrusion of saying, ‘We know better than you. We know better than you how to manage your land, despite the fact that your family have been on it for 100, 120 or 150 years. We know better than you how to run your business, despite the fact that you have been in business, you have been paying wages, you have been paying taxes’—taxes that these leeches feed off, passing it on and on and on—

Mr Power: Tim, you don’t want to be leader again.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mate, you will never be there, so do not worry about that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Order! Can we have a bit of quiet in the House please?

Mr NICHOLLS: That is a race you do not even want to start, old boy. You are not even in it. You are not at the starting line—couldn’t get it up.

Mr Bailey: You didn’t last three years.

Mr NICHOLLS: As for the member here, old ‘Cut and Run’—when he could not get the chairmanship of the planning committee of the Brisbane City Council, he packed up and left his car behind and went off to the bush. He went and found himself in the bush.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Clayfield, I ask for some quiet in the House and we will get back to the vegetation management bill.

Mr NICHOLLS: It has been a little time, Mr Deputy Speaker. One cannot help responding to foolishness wherever it shows itself, and it shows itself most particularly on the Labor side of the fence.

It is a deeper philosophical question that we have to deal with here today because it is not just this piece of legislation. Under this Labor government, it will not be just this one piece of legislation, as important as this piece of legislation is. It will be the ever-increasing and overweening hand—the dead hand of bureaucracy—coming in and telling private individuals and private businesses how they should live their lives, how they should think, how they should invest their money, how we should educate our children, what we can and cannot say to our children, to our friends and in the workplace. This is overwhelmingly the way of Labor governments.

It is not today a question of city versus country because that question when raised in this place is always a false and invidious question. My experience from travelling around this state is that people in the city care deeply about people in the country, and people in the country know of their obligations to people in the city. I have spent a little bit of time over the last couple of months travelling. I have a bit more time on my hands, as people know.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I have been out through various parts of Western Queensland. I have been out through a lot of parts of Queensland and I have spent some time talking to property owners there. These are not people who are rebels. These are not people who are unbelievably upset about all things government. They are reasonable people who want to get on and live their life and do what they have been doing for a lengthy period of time and be given a fair go to do it.

We have had five years of drought. Dalkeith is a property 150 kilometres west of Longreach. I visited that property before Australia Day. Mr M McClymont is from the Dalkeith property and is one of the people who gave evidence. I think he is Mac McClymont.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, Malcolm but he is called Mac. Mac is 63 or 64 and that is the property that his parents had as well. They are just putting up the dog fence. They are finally getting some money coming back in. They have just had a little bit of water out there. They got a bit of feed and they are starting to get some sheep back onto that property again. Mr McClymont gave the following evidence—

With the codes, the infrastructure code is very useful—

this is the code that we had in place to allow them to make an application for clearing—


because there is certain essential maintenance work that you have to do—clearing fence lines, firebreaks, what have you—and you can just go ahead and do it.

Avoiding unnecessary paperwork is very important. Not only does it save us a lot of time, but also it saves the department a heap of time.

I got a text from Mac today on another matter and I will be raising that later on. Mac said, 'Tim, good luck today. I'm praying for a miracle but I don't think they're listening to us.' Mac, if you are watching, if you are reading this at some stage, I can tell you, mate, that they are not, and that is the great tragedy of this legislation. We are seeing that intrusion occurring further and further here in Queensland. This government seeks to set up a fight—a city versus country fight—when such a fight is unwarranted.

The question we have to ask ourselves when voting on this legislation today is this: to what extent to salve the conscience of a certain group of people, whether supported by science, evidence or not, do we as parliamentarians intrude and take individuals' rights to exercise their own rights of ownership away from them? Where does the state stop? Who stands up for the individual against the state? How much state interference do we allow at the behest of some who have nothing at stake, nothing to lose, will also pay no price, will suffer no consequence as a result of this legislation and, importantly, also now enjoy all the benefit of the actions that they seek to stop, regulate and restrict? It is a shallow call to close the gate after they have received the benefit. This legislation should not be supported for those reasons.

(Time expired)

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.15 pm): I wholeheartedly oppose the ALP government's Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Let me start with the government's own Queensland food and fibre policy, which has clearly been forgotten. The Queensland government is committed to supporting the growth of a productive and prosperous food and fibre sector estimated to be valued at \$15.02 billion in 2014-15.

My roots lie in a small cane-farming town named Ingham, which sits right in the middle of the North Queensland farming district. Farming is how we have built our local economy. We do not have any massive shopping centres, housing developments, superhighways or megatunnels, but what we do have is our land that our families have purchased and developed. For many of us, our land has been the way our family for generations has made a living. It is more than something we have built a house on and mow the grass of once a week; it is our livelihood, our lives and our blood, sweat and tears. We value every inch of it.

We have fought drought and floods to protect it and now we face one of our greatest fears: having a city-centric government tell us how to manage our land effectively and environmentally. To me, this is an insult to every person who works from dust to dawn looking after their most valuable generational asset, their land. A farmer's land is what defines him or her. Every farmer knows that, if they work hard on their land and look after it, it will eventually reward them.

Australia is supposed to be a great country—a fair country where people are treated equally—and we would expect that the government would support its core industries and primary producers, but not this Queensland government. How do we support and grow our agricultural industry if we are unable to develop our land? We have been seen as the food bowl of Asia, with food being one of our last major exports. I am not a mathematician, but if this legislation goes through it will reduce our country's and our state's revenue. We can only have so much money being spent and not enough money coming in until we are eventually broke.

My electorate is dominated by the sugar industry and the community of Ingham relies on it. It has gone through some tough times recently. We work very hard towards diversification. The recent announcement of the proposed sugar tax and this disgraceful vegetation management bill will stifle the

industry. My patch on a good year cuts five million tonnes of sugar cane but, suffering from poor world prices and competing on a global market with heavily subsidised overseas growers, it is becoming increasingly hard to make a living. These laws have many farmers convinced that the government is targeting and destroying the sugar industry in Queensland, and I am on their side with that one.

I was given the opportunity during the committee process to sit on the committee panel during the Townsville public hearing. This hearing was being held at a time when my electorate was experiencing flood and through no fault of their own many farmers could not attend the hearing. This left zero representation from the cane-growing community in our area. The limited time the committee had to perform its role meant that postponing this hearing was out of the question.

During that hearing we were fortunate enough to hear from a couple of farmers, mainly cattlemen and graziers, who would be devastated by this bill. The real stories should have cut through to the members on that committee, except I feel they have rolled over to their party's wishes. If they were convinced by the green submissions that we heard that day, they must be more crazy than the people who were giving evidence.

I have listened to the ALP members talk about the bill over the past two days. They have thrown figures around trying to justify their move and tell those in the House that farmers will not be affected by this bill. I do not understand how the agricultural industry could believe this. Well over 300 farmers stood outside yesterday and protested, and I was quite happy to stand at the front of the picket line with them. There were hundreds of submissions against the bill from our farming community, and the former government chief scientist, Bill Burrows, violently disagreed with the government's absurd claims.

I ask the regional ALP members to please start listening to the real people who are affected by this law and then try to look them in the eye and tell them that this bill will not affect them. As policymakers, we are supposed to legislate for balance and take into account how our decisions affect the people whom we represent.

How can that possibly be said about this bill, when the Department of Natural Resources and Mines admitted that it had not undertaken any modelling or research in relation to the effects this proposed bill will have on agricultural production across Queensland. This is a \$15 billion industry that employs one in every seven Queenslanders directly or indirectly. The government has had no consideration for them or how these vegetation management changes will affect them.

I am astonished that this bill is not worthy of thorough investigation and consultation to deliver a balanced policy. In my opinion, it is a kneejerk reaction to appease city seats and the international community. The last time I checked, we lived in Queensland where our policies should put our own industry and people first.

It is simply a disgrace and an abject failure of this government to try to rush through changes without credible research, impact studies or effective consultation. I will give an example. In North Queensland we have people dying from crocodile attacks so the government has commissioned a three-year study costing \$5 million to find out exactly what is going on with the numbers, yet the impact of the bill on the agricultural industry does not warrant a study and the bill has been rushed through in six weeks.

There has been an admitted distinct lack of consultation with the farming community and chief bodies of the agricultural industry. This bill has been bowled through the committee process to get one result—to approve the bill as quickly as possible so the ALP can honour its pre-election promise and commitments to green groups, whose sole aim is to destroy the agricultural industry in Queensland.

Do not be fooled. This is only the beginning. The Greens groups will not stop with their radical policy demands. During the committee process, I heard one Greens person giving evidence who suggested that humans are the problem and that the only way to protect the environment is to remove humans from the situation. That is a pretty scary statement. The Queensland Law Society stated in their submission to the committee that they are—

... disappointed to note ... that stakeholders have not been consulted specifically on the Bill. Given the sensitive nature of this legislation and the significant public debate on the issues during 2016, further consultation would have been welcomed by all affected stakeholders including QLS.

The submission is a stark reminder that the bill is a dud, a leaky boat, that has been hurriedly put together and directly goes against common law and the rights and liberties of individuals. If I were a business and was handed this document to put in place in my business—a document that opened me up to breaches of common law—I would fire the department that put it together in the first place. I have

no doubt litigation against the government as a result of this disgraceful bill will cost Queensland taxpayers millions of dollars. The government turns a blind eye to the clearing of thousands of hectares for urban development—housing estates, railway lines, triple-lane highways and shopping centres.

I would like to finish with a poem that was sent to me from a farmer. It is called *What's at Stake* by Phil Hodgkinson—

City folk, you've no doubt heard
 Of the Vegetation Debate
 But have you ever wondered
 Just what is at stake!
 The politicians will have you believe
 It's about the environment and the reef
 But dig down through the bull
 And you'll find the truth lies underneath!
 It's their job that they're protecting
 They want the green vote
 So they plan on persecuting farmers
 And that's the real joke!
 Just think about a barbeque
 With no Australian meat
 Think about the tasty fruit
 That you all like to eat
 Now think about the vegetables
 That will come from overseas
 Then wash that down with something strong
 So you won't catch a disease!
 Please, ask your politicians
 To give farmers a Fair Go
 Or you'll all be eating foreign food
 Much sooner than you know!!!

(Time expired)

Debate, on motion of Mr Dametto, adjourned.

MOTION

Early Childhood Education and Care Services, Federal Funding



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations)
 (4.25 pm): I move—

That this House calls upon the federal government to provide long-term funding certainty in next week's federal budget for the early childhood sector to ensure a great start for all Queensland children.

Mr Speaker, if I could just digress for one second and send my condolences to the family of the great Terry Mackenroth, his wife, Mary, and his two daughters. I know exactly what they are going through, having just recently lost my own beloved father, Salvatore Farfaglia.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to giving all Queensland children a great start. This includes universal access to high-quality kindergarten for all Queensland children in the year before school, regardless of their background or where they live. We know that children who participate in a quality kindergarten program will go on to have improved school results and better health and employment prospects.

Even the latest Gonski report, which was released this week, highlights that high-quality early childhood education sets children up for success at school, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Even though early childhood education was not in the terms of reference in Gonski, he could not but report on the benefits of early childhood education—even going further to say that investing in early childhood education is generally more effective and economic than trying to close the developmental gaps later.

That is why the Palaszczuk government is focused on ensuring Queensland children can access kindergarten, whether they live in Coolangatta or Coen, Maleny or Mackay, Birdsville or Brisbane. I am pleased to report that in 2017 more than 95 per cent of Queensland children were enrolled in a kindergarten program in the year before school. We have come a long way since 2009, when 29 per cent of Queensland children attended kindergarten in the year before school. This increase is truly one of the great public policy success stories of the past decade and it has happened because of the foresight and courage of a federal Labor government.


It was the federal Labor government which, in 2009, struck the first national partnership agreement with the states and territories to provide universal access funding for kindergarten of 15 hours per week. To continue to improve these results, we need the current federal Turnbull government to step up and fulfil its responsibilities for the early childhood sector.

At the moment, we are facing a triple whammy of funding and policy neglect from the federal government: there is no long-term national partnership funding agreement for universal access for kindergarten, there is no ongoing funding commitment for regulation of the early childhood sector, and the federal government is going ahead with child-care subsidy reforms from 1 July that will leave low-income Queensland families out of pocket. In the federal budget next week, we need to see a long-term funding commitment for early childhood in this country. This was the No. 1 recommendation of *Lifting our game* released earlier this year as a blueprint for early childhood policy. Unfortunately, we will not be holding our breath.

In February this year the federal government announced a further one-year extension of the national partnership agreement for universal access funding for the 2019 calendar year. This is the fifth—I repeat: the fifth—short-term rollover of the national partnership agreement for universal access funding since 2009. This is no way to run a critical sector for the future of our children.

In all my discussions with stakeholders across the sector—Goodstart, C&K, Lady Gowrie, United Voice—this has been the one issue they ram home to me. We need long-term funding certainty. We cannot operate kindergarten services year to year. The sector cannot plan ahead and retain qualified and experienced staff without funding certainty.

I call on the federal government to put their money where their mouth is. This is investing in the right area. Do the right thing and fund this sector. We know it has benefits. Invest in our children as early as possible and we as Australians will reap the benefits. I urge members of this House to support the motion and once again call on the federal government to fund early childhood education.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (4.30 pm): I wish the Labor government in Queensland would stop using our kids and our kids' education as a political football. We know that there is a meeting this Friday with education ministers, so here comes the Minister for Education in Queensland with this motion that she will take down to the COAG meeting on Friday and say, 'This was passed in the Queensland parliament,' two days before the meeting. What has the minister been doing? Has she had discussions with the federal government, or is this just political spin and political play today? Having been a minister, I know that these discussions about finance and Treasury would have been happening for months. In fact, I have no doubt the minister sits over there knowing very well what is on the agenda and what the outcome of this motion will be tonight. It is likely—

Ms Grace: In an alternative universe maybe.

Mr BLEIJIE: She probably has not read the papers for Friday's COAG meeting. We know that earlier this year the federal government in its package invested \$428 million to support preschooling for 2018 and a further \$440 million to continue the program next year in 2019.

This minister is developing a reputation of talking more about what is happening in other states and territories than what is happening in Queensland. Every time an education matter comes up, is discussed or is debated all the Minister for Education in Queensland does is stand up with her hands out saying, 'We want more money. We don't want to debate issues, we don't want to debate the Gonski 2.0 that was released a few days ago.'

Instead of the Minister for Education holding a press conference about the benefits of Gonski 2.0—recommendation 1 talked mostly about early learning and early development, exactly the subject matter of the motion we are debating today—the minister said, 'We need more money.' That is straight out of the union play handbook, straight from the education union. In fact, the Australian education union beat her to the punch by about five minutes saying, 'We need more money.'

Rather than thinking, 'Let's stop all the Genderbread social engineering and programming in state schools; let's stop the Safe Schools program in state schools; let's stop trying to socially engineer our children in our schools,' and rather than investing all that wasted money and time in getting teachers to do that—and the member for Mansfield shakes her head, yet she was a principal in the system that has seen literacy and numeracy on the decline under Labor for years.

Is it any wonder that our poor teachers and teacher aides are having to spend more time because of Labor state governments trying to socially engineer our children with programs? Those programs teach them that, if they wake up in the morning and they want to be a girl for the day, they can be a girl for the day. Then if by lunchtime they want to change their sex and they want to walk out of the classroom as a boy, they can be a boy for the rest of the day. That is what that program is about. That is how they are investing in our children's education rather than concentrating on the real issues of early development.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The reason I can speak to this is that I am a father of three children and I am a father of a young son with early developmental issues.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Let us tone it down. Let us reset.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the education minister. Yes, I am a father and I am a father of a young boy—


Ms Grace: You never know what happens. You never know.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am a father of a young boy with learning difficulties.

Ms Grace: You don't know. Be very careful what you say.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am very careful with what I say and I talk with passion because I want my young son to have the very best education he can have. I want the programs in place to give him the very best education he can have. However, teaching kids that they can decide three times a day whether they are male or female does not improve literacy or numeracy in this state.

The education minister should spend more time looking at the numeracy and literacy rates which have been on the decline under Labor and on Labor's watch rather than all of the other programs she is investing money in and spending time on. Get the priorities right for our kids' future.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (4.35 pm): It is a pleasure to rise to make a contribution to this debate. Can I say from the outset that I am proud to have an education minister who goes down to Canberra with her hands out and asks for a fair share for our kids here in Queensland. We will not ever see the shadow education minister go to Canberra and talk to his cronies in Canberra to get them to give our state a fair deal. He did not talk once to the substance of the motion—

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think in previous rulings the word 'crony' has been deemed to be unparliamentary language. I would ask that you direct the member to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not a word that has appeared on any unparliamentary language list I have ever seen. Thank you for your point of order.

Ms BOYD: We in Labor strongly believe that early learning and care is for everyone. We in Labor believe that it must be affordable and accessible and we in Labor also recognise the important work of the dedicated professionals in the sector. We in Labor fundamentally subscribe to the science that shows that investment in early learning gives kids the best start in life, improves school readiness, results in them being less likely to repeat grades or require additional support, are more likely to complete year 12 and links these kids with higher future levels of employment, income and financial security, improved health outcomes and reduced crime.

It was a federal Labor government that in 2009 initiated the first national partnership agreement with the states and territories to provide universal access funding for kindergarten of 15 hours per week. Since then our kindies have seen 66 per cent growth—I repeat: 66 per cent growth—in the last eight years. Last year our kindy programs had a participation rate of 95 per cent of children in the year before school. This is a program to be proud of, a program transforming the lives of many.


The federal government has shared responsibility for early childhood education through the National Partnership Agreement for Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, although we are getting nothing out of Malcolm Turnbull and the coalition except for stopgap funding, resulting in uncertainty for states and territories from year to year. In fact, this year will be the fifth short-term extension of the original 2009 funding agreement for early childhood education. It is not good enough. Sector uncertainty drags on. The Palaszczuk government continues to seek a commitment from the Australian government for a single national agreement providing long-term, sustainable and untied funding for universal access to early childhood education in the year before school as well as regulatory activities associated with the national quality agenda.

All the while what do we hear from the LNP members on this issue? Nothing! We do not see them lobbying their mates in Canberra for fair funding for Queensland kids—yet another instance of the LNP members squibbing Queenslanders. Devastatingly, from 2 July 2018 the federal government's actions will see low-income earners worse off under their childcare subsidy reforms. The very supports that are designed to ensure out-of-pocket costs are not a barrier for vulnerable families to access kindergarten are going to be tampered with. If honourable members do the maths they will find it will be harder for those families doing it tough in communities to access kindy programs. Let us break this down. We know that children from disadvantaged families benefit most from participation in quality kindergarten programs.

We know that these are the very families who are less likely to access these services. The subsidy designed and implemented to help address this issue, the subsidy under which we have seen dramatically increased participation, will be tampered with by the Turnbull government. This will result in increased costs to disadvantaged families. This approach is in direct opposition to the intent of the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. This is madness. The most important factor in delivering quality early childhood education is a skilled and stable workforce. One of the Lifting our Game report recommendations states—

Australian governments agree to a new national early childhood education and care workforce strategy to support the recruitment, retention, sustainability and enhanced professionalisation of the workforce, thereby improving service quality and children's outcomes.

A recent workforce study showed that, while most educators enjoy their work and appreciate its value, one in five was planning to move on and leave the sector. Poor wages and conditions were the driving factors. I have spoken in this House on many occasions about my journey as an early childhood educator and having to walk away from the career I loved simply because it was not sustainable to stay. My story is also the story of too many others. In next week's federal budget I call on the LNP to deliver a long-term funding solution and commitment to early childhood education in this state and this country. I call upon this House to support the motion to ensure that we are giving Queensland children the best start in life, because they deserve nothing less.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (4.41 pm): We all want the best education for the children in our communities and, of course, for our own children. Education is the great enabler in life and provides the opportunity for every person to get on in life to the best of their natural ability. There is no dispute about that from anyone, and that is why it is disappointing that the Labor Party continues to use education as a political football. We have seen it with the review into independent public schools—no doubt at the behest of the QTU—and the constant claims that the coalition parties are delivering less money for education. The truth is that education funding increases each year. I ask the minister whether she has picked up the phone and called education minister Simon Birmingham to discuss this, or has she walked in here for some political grandstanding in another vain attempt to use education as a political football.

As I said, education funding goes up each year. Only one government I can remember has cut funding to an area of essential service delivery, and that was under Wayne Swan back in 2013—those opposite were taking a holiday—when he retrospectively cut \$103 million from Queensland Health's budget. The member for Redcliffe was part of the government that did that. Education funding goes up each year because it is one of the things that we invest in as a community.

When it comes to early childhood education, preschool enrolments have been on an upward trajectory since 2008 when a national partnership agreement brought about a consistent approach to preschool education across Australia. The Commonwealth has been providing funding for 600 hours a year of preschool education, and I have no doubt that the result of the increase in the number of children attending preschool education is beneficial to later education outcomes. The Commonwealth is providing \$428 million this year and a further \$440 million in 2019 as part of that national partnership agreement.


Instead of continually trying to run scare campaigns about education funding, I think it is time for the Labor government to work with the Commonwealth instead of blaming everyone else for their problems and ineptitude—which they do in everything, not just education. How about working constructively and putting a shoulder to the wheel to make our places of education the best they can be. The LNP has a track record of doing this.

We worked with the Labor Party government in Canberra in 2012 and 2013 to deliver independent public schools. We delivered the Great Results Guarantee under the stewardship of the member for Surfers Paradise. Federal and state governments from different parties worked together to improve literacy and numeracy in our schools. That funding crucially was dedicated locally so that local communities had a say in where the funding went because different schools have different needs.

We delivered other national partnership funding in both the early childhood sector and the primary and secondary sectors. In 2014 I was proud to officially open improvements to the Boonah kindergarten, which were funded by the Commonwealth and the state. That is a real benefit to the community and a great example of different parties working together. It is now where two of my sons have been educated by dedicated kindy educators Susan Parker and Judy Jenner.

The LNP also delivered national partnership funding in the primary and secondary sectors. I remind members opposite that many of the reforms made by the LNP to the TAFE sector and the vocational training sector were part of the national agenda set by the Labor Party government in Canberra. When it comes to working together with the Commonwealth we have the runs on the board. We sat down with the Labor Party and nipped out a deal for the benefit of our communities, our children and our teachers. I am the son of a teacher, Mr Speaker, and I can tell you that they work bloody hard. We need to support them as much as we can. They do not get that support when all you hear is partisanship and constant political bickering from an ALP determined to use education as a political football.

Our party and the coalition in Canberra have a laser-like focus when it comes to education, and that is to improve outcomes for our children and not to play silly political games. We have the runs on the board when it comes to working together constructively across party lines. That is what the Labor government in Queensland should do. I call on them to stop treating education as a political football, get on with doing the job they are paid very well to do, and sit down with Canberra and nip out an agreement.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors) (4.46 pm): I rise to speak in support of this motion. I am absolutely appalled that the opposition members have the hide to sit there and say that we are using education as a political football. More than anything Queensland children deserve the certainty of high-quality education, particularly in the early years. I know firsthand the benefits that a good-quality education can provide to a child in their early years. The importance of a good-quality learning environment and highly-qualified educators set the foundations that enable a child to develop the desire to become a lifelong learner.

As a qualified early childhood teacher, and having had the experience of running an early learning centre and kindergarten program myself, I am disturbed and alarmed that there is absolutely no long-term commitment to a national partnership funding agreement of universal access to kindergarten. Without the security of knowing that there is a commitment to long-term funding to early childhood education, centres and staff cannot operate to the best of their ability. Educators and early learning centres do not have the certainty they need to establish strong networks, employ highly-qualified staff and plan for future development. Long-term funding will give them this certainty.

The Australian government has shared responsibility for early childhood education through a National Partnership Agreement for Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. The federal government said last year that it would extend kindergarten funding under this agreement by one year to the end of 2018. It promised that it would work with states and territories on how to guarantee the continued provision of 15 hours of kindergarten per week from 2019; however, they have not done what they said they would. They have not worked collaboratively with us to guarantee this funding. To only again announce another one year of funding extension is unacceptable. You cannot expect early childhood centres to flourish and evolve if they only have rolling funding approval from year to year.

Strong early childhood centres provide opportunities for strong futures. We are not using education as a tool to ask for more money or to run a scare campaign. There is a plethora of research available that supports the fact that an investment in quality education in the early years contributes


significantly to a child's future positive life outcomes. As educators we all know that parents are a child's first teacher, but our early childhood education services support and grow the first learnings of a child and they need financial support and certainty to attract and keep quality staff in order to do this.

An early childhood learning centre's biggest asset is its staff, and that should never be underestimated. Quality educators are the people who build additional important relationships with children, develop an understanding of how children learn, and are the ones who plan the learning experiences that will provide children with opportunities that enable them to build on their skills of exploration—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I am having a very difficult time hearing the member on her feet. I ask you to please take your conversations outside if you are not in any way contributing to the motion before the House.

Mrs O'ROURKE: It will enable them to build on their skills for exploration, questioning and problem solving. They plan experiences that will ignite their curiosity and build their social and educational capability. These are all important life skills that will carry these children into the future with the ability to address the different life experiences that they will encounter as they grow. Early childhood educators are the ones who identify early learning difficulties and work with the family to establish strategies and put appropriate supports in place that will provide the child with what they need in order to achieve. They know how important it is to cater for differences and to build strong foundations for the many years of learning to come. These are demanding roles with many responsibilities.

The children of Queensland deserve the best educators and Queensland parents deserve to know that the early learning centre they have so carefully chosen for their child will be there. We need to acknowledge that many children do not have access to quality resources in their home environments and these early learning centres provide them with that opportunity. As I have done before, I again call on the federal government to acknowledge the importance of providing a good-quality early education for our children and to give the sector the long-term funding certainty it needs to invest in the future of our children. All I can say to the federal government is that a decision to not invest in our children's early education only demonstrates a lack of understanding of the real difference good-quality early education makes in a child's life and the positive impacts that it can have on all future government investment. Put simply, it is the best investment we can make for the future.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (4.51 pm): The more things change, the more they stay the same. We heard from the education minister about her concerns about early childhood programs. In fact, she has been hoist by her own petard. She said that this has been the fifth extension since 2009. Who was the minister federally whom I had to deal with in relation to early childhood? It was Kate Ellis from the Labor Party who gave us no funding certainty and very short term extensions, and I had the same people coming to my office as are obviously going to the minister's office. We just heard the minister and member for Mundingburra proclaim the government's concerns about early childhood, yet that is what we got from a Labor federal government that wanted to end a national partnership.

Whilst we were working hard as the LNP to increase kindy attendance and ensure that Queensland had access to quality education and educators, Kate Ellis was trying to find any way to shift funding responsibilities to the state. When I was at COAG meetings we would have education ministers—Labor as well as I recall from South Australia—asking for funding certainty. Worse than that though, I do not think Queensland parents will forget when Kate Ellis cut the Inclusion Support Subsidy to exclude kindy-age children.

The Inclusion Support Subsidy—remembering that that side of the parliament proclaims that it is there for people of all shapes and sizes and with all other concerns—was provided by the federal government and ensured that children with disabilities and additional needs had the same access to long day care services as every other child. The ISS was used on top of existing funding by day care services to employ an aide to assist with the functioning of higher needs children and their interaction with other children, and I table a media release for the benefit of the parliament.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 17 January 2013, from the then minister for education, training and employment, the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, titled 'Gillard Government must reinstate disability subsidy' [\[599\]](#).

I also refer to a petition response in which I said—

The changed practice excludes ISS funding for children in long day care services who are participating in a state-funded kindergarten program, leaving a gap in service support for these vulnerable children. Previously, children with disability could attend a long day care service and participate in a funded kindergarten program with ISS funded supports.

I went on to say in that letter, which I also table—

I have raised this matter on multiple occasions with The Honourable Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Early Childhood, Child Care and Youth ...

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 September 2013, from then minister for education, training and employment, Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, to the Clerk of Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, regarding e-Petition 2088-13 [600].

From the Labor Party we heard nothing—no response. That was what its response was for early childhood.

I am very passionate about early childhood education. That is how I got involved in politics to begin with—with my C&K at Broadbeach where my three children went. I want to pay tribute to the three staff who are still there from over 20 years ago, and I refer to Danni Sorensen, Libby Power and Kathyne Powell, who were the educators when my children went there. Being on that committee at that kindergarten taught me about what they were going through before we had a national system of early childhood—and we all acknowledge the importance of the early years—when those opposite had this department in the department of communities.

I am really happy to say today that kindy is growing and more children at this Broadbeach kindy are getting the quality education that they deserve—from crayon to career. Whilst it is fantastic to hear that the area and the kindy is growing, it has resulted in parking issues in Broadbeach. Kindy educators have been left with no long-term parking options. It is hard for parents when they are doing drop-offs. It is troublesome when educators must move their cars because of the timing restrictions. They have an obligation to stay with their students, so this must be fixed and I am working with Councillor Paul Taylor and the Gold Coast City Council to try to resolve this issue.

As the son of a school principal who was a teacher, a teacher aide and a teacher librarian and a mum who is a library aide, I have always believed in the principle of universal access to early childhood education. It has come a long way since it was contained within the department of communities. That is why we worked hard with communities, educators and the department to increase kindy attendance. Under those opposite, the attendance rate for kindy was 29 per cent. We increased it to 97.4 per cent in 2014. We were doing more work with Indigenous children in that we got attendance to 65.3 per cent and we started a new program for children in rural and remote parts of Queensland called e-kindy. Some 239 children from rural and remote areas participated. That is why we worked hard to coordinate early childhood services with schools as well to make sure that there was a seamless transition to prep.

We worked hand in hand with Indigenous communities to secure 571 enrolments in prep prep in 35 communities and ensure that more qualified teachers delivered our programs. We had 19 new or extended kindergarten services across the state in 2014. We have already heard how there is more money coming from the federal government. The current funding package provides certainty until the end of 2019, which is exactly what Kate Ellis used to do to us, so members opposite should stop playing petty politics and work constructively with the Commonwealth and other state ministers at COAG. When the minister gets that big agenda for Friday, she can go there and fight the fight and I am sure she will win.


(Time expired)

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER'S RULING


Notice of Motion

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I refer to the notice of motion given this morning by the Leader of the Opposition. I am concerned by paragraph 2(e) of the notice of motion. That paragraph refers to the killing of a man. I appreciate that the man is not identified; however, the paragraph raises the issue of sub judice and whether there are criminal proceedings on foot regarding the matter. The risk is that the inclusion of that matter in the notice of motion will open the door for debate and that would contravene the sub judice convention contained in standing order 233.

Standing order 233 has always been applied strictly. Therefore, I have decided to exercise my powers under standing order 70(2) to amend the notice of motion by omitting certain words in paragraph 2(e). I note that the notice of motion references at least 13 particularised matters. I am satisfied that the omission of the words in paragraph 2(e) will not overly affect the debate. I wish to stress that members should avoid making any statements in the debate that will contravene standing orders.

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Reports

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.57 pm): I move the following amended motion—

That this House—

1. condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government for its arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy;
2. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to immediately publish:
 - (a) all ministerial records in the mangocube6@yahoo.co.uk account;
 - (b) the State Archivist's report into Minister Bailey's deletion of ministerial records;
 - (c) the Ethical Standards Unit report into fraud at Cavendish Road State High School under the member for Mansfield—
 - (d) the youth detention report;
 - (e) the report into systemic failings in the Queensland mental health system;
 - (f) the list of proposed youth bail house addresses;
 - (g) the unwashed department of child safety performance data under former minister Fentiman;
 - (h) the Cross River Rail, Nullinga Dam and Sunshine Coast rail business cases;
 - (i) all Child Death Case Review Panel reports under the Palaszczuk government;
 - (j) the \$165,000 KPMG report into Public Service efficiency;
 - (k) details of the deferred royalty framework offered to Adani for the Carmichael coalmine;
 - (l) the cost and details of the inducement provided to the producers of *Thor: Ragnarok* and *Dora the Explorer*; and
 - (m) every other report that the Palaszczuk Labor government has relied on cabinet privilege to hide from Queenslanders; and—
3. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to end its culture of secrecy and to be honest with the people of Queensland.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said that she would lead a government that is accountable and transparent. Anastacia Palaszczuk promised integrity. The Premier promised accountability. It was an easy promise to make to Queensland because it was simply an empty promise. The Premier's commitment to integrity and accountability has been broken time and time and time again. The actions of this Labor government are breaking the trust of Queenslanders. It is as simple as that. Hidden reports and secret documents concern us and also concern the media. There are many pages that we could table in this House, but this one from the *Courier-Mail* in April is headlined 'Culture of secrecy'.

Mr SPEAKER: You will be tabling that; thank you, member.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will table that one.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 28 April 2017, titled 'Culture of Secrecy' [\[601\]](#).

We then had a front-page story in July headlined 'Big little lies', and I table that document.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 21 July 2017, titled 'Big little lies' [\[602\]](#).

The lengths to which this Palaszczuk Labor government goes to keep all Queenslanders in the dark is staggering. The Labor government has had in its possession thousands of documents that Queenslanders deserve to see, but they are being kept under lock and key.

My message and the message of the LNP state opposition to Anastacia Palaszczuk is clear: Queenslanders deserve to see those documents. While they are hidden, Queenslanders have no clue about the truth and the true nature of how this government does its business. The consequence is simply that Queenslanders are not fully informed about their government and that is a dangerous place to be.

The Labor government should release the documents about energy minister, Mark Bailey, and the secret directions and back-channel communications between him and the ETU. It is irrelevant that this minister has now moved portfolios in an attempt to hide from those emails. The Labor government should release those documents about Minister Bailey and, importantly, the secret directions and back-channel communications with the ETU. We know only a fraction—only a fraction—of Minister Bailey's conduct and that little scrap is so disturbing to anyone who believes in a transparent government. The emails and the complete remainder of the emails should be released so that Queenslanders are fully informed about their elected official.

Clearly, the ETU has directed the minister to intervene in industrial relations disputes, overruling the professional executives who have been hired to run these government owned energy businesses efficiently, and locked in work practices that are increasing the cost of electricity.


Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister for Transport and Main Roads and member for Chatsworth, please do not have crossfire across the chamber. I will ask you both to leave the chamber if you cannot listen to this debate or be involved in it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The minister sits there and we still have close to 1,000 emails that have not been released. What do we hear from the Premier? 'It's been dealt with.' The issue is that it has not been dealt with, because those 1,000 emails still have not been released. Those secret emails with secret demands from the Palaszczuk government's union masters should be out in the open. The ones that have been obtained by the LNP and the media outlets are damning. They put the desires of unions before everyday energy users.

The head of the CCC said that it was a corruption risk that Minister Bailey used his private email account for ministerial businesses. It is a culture of secrecy and hiding. Queenslanders have a lot of questions. If Labor does not believe it is hiding anything, why will it not continue to release these documents? We have put in right to information request after right to information request. We will continue to hold this government to account.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (5.02 pm): After waiting all day for that contribution I have to say that I am incredibly disappointed. The member opposite could have spoken to a very long list and at least been a little bit passionate in her contribution. I was very hard pressed to find any passion or conviction in what she had to say. Maybe that is because she knows, as everyone else in this chamber knows, that this motion is an absolute load of rubbish from those members opposite who, when it comes to issues of integrity, transparency, cannot keep a straight face.

Let us go over their very long list of contributions to matters of integrity, accountability and transparency in Queensland. What happened when the member for Nanango sat around the CBRC table? A lot of things, such as the New Generation Rollingstock were ordered and they were not compliant with disability standards in Australia. Where are the cabinet documents relating to the contract and the design for that? I am waiting for the member for Nanango to release those. I am waiting for the member for Nanango to release all of the information in relation to when the Newman government decided to start sacking public servants. If at any time she wants to release them, we would love to have a look at them.

I would love to see all of the decisions related to No. 1 William Street—the only infrastructure project that those opposite funded and delivered. Where are all the decision documents? We know that there is not a business case, because the members opposite did not get a business case done. There is a lot that we would like to know from those opposite that we can never find out, because they are not prepared to release the documents, just like they are not prepared to fully disclose \$100,000 worth of secret donations. The members opposite are even prepared to take the government to court and waste taxpayers' money defending a position that is indefensible. The court has told them to comply with the laws of Queensland and still they hold out. If you want to talk about accountability, integrity and transparency, you should start in your own backyard. They are outrageous.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I remind you to make your comments through the chair. Members, I am having a hard time hearing the Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, that is the first time anyone has ever said that to me. Let me go over their record apart from all the documents that they are sitting on. They sacked the entire parliamentary crime and misconduct committee. I was on that committee at the time they came in here at 11 pm at night and sacked the entire committee because they did not like what the committee had to say and do about their hand-picked head of the CCC. What did the CCC find? It found that there was collusion between the head of the CCC and then premier Campbell Newman's chief media spin doctor in relation to the then government's—now opposition—bikie laws. There was collusion about the messaging from the CCC out to the Queensland public.

Mr Bleijie: You talk rubbish. You're making stuff up.

Ms TRAD: I take that interjection from the member opposite—the member opposite who interfered in the judiciary. He is the most despised person in Queensland. We know that, because it was—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at that comment and I ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw.


Ms TRAD: I withdraw. The members opposite raised the cap on political donations from \$1,000 to \$12,800. That meant that anyone could walk into the office of the member for Nanango and hand over \$10,000 and no-one would need to know about it.

There was cash for legislation. We had Sibelco handing over a \$90,000 political donation to help Campbell Newman get up in his seat of Ashgrove. In return, Sibelco got absolute front-door access so that it could get what it wanted in relation to sandmining. What happened? Sandmining on North Stradbroke Island was pushed out to 2036.

What about the legislation that the former deputy premier brought into this House in the dead of night in relation to that big LNP donor, Karreman Quarries, in terms of some of their planning decisions? Those opposite are hypocrites to the extreme. They come in here and talk about accountability and transparency. They should look in their own backyard.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I will make this statement once. Any member who is trying to seek a relevance call on any member in the debate on this motion should read the motion. It is a very broad motion covering a lot of territory, so I will not hear any interjections regarding relevance.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.08 pm): Mr Speaker, thank you for that guidance. How galling is it to listen to the member for South Brisbane, the Treasurer, talk about everything else but the motion, everything else other than the cover-ups and secrecy of this government. This is somebody who accepted on behalf of the Labor Party a donation from Eddie Obeid of \$5,000. We do not hear anything about that.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba South. What did Eddie Obeid get for his \$5,000 donation to the Queensland Labor Party?

Mr Nicholls: Five to 10 in the lockup, I think.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Clayfield. It is no coincidence that the Deputy Premier did not address one issue in this motion. That is what this government is all about. What is so galling about this government is they get up on their high horse, they take this high moral position and then cannot deliver it with their actions.

We have listed a litany of examples showing how this government does not live up to the expectations that it itself gave to the people of Queensland. We were limited in that motion to 250 words. How we wish we had 1,000 words because we could have gone on and on and given example after example of secrecy and cover-up.

Where do we start? We will start with the member for Miller, mangocube, and the hundreds, or is it thousands, of emails that have been sent to his private email account.

Mr Minnikin: 600 at the moment.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Chatsworth—these hundreds of emails where it appears government business has been done and it has not been put on the public record.

Mr Watts: It has been done in secret.

Mr MANDER: It has been done in secret. We talk about influence on members of parliament. What greater influence has there been on any member of parliament in this House than the influence the unions have on the Labor Party. The mangocube emails are the greatest example of this, wherein we have ETU officials, the heads of unions, making not even recommendations but directions with regard to who should be on what board. Despite the fact that the person did not make the application themselves and despite the fact that the deadline for the applications had passed we see this appointment made. The secrecy and cover-up involved is appalling.


Then we have the secret royalty deal with Adani. We have still not been told what agreement has been negotiated with Adani. The Labor government approved the Adani mine, encouraged Adani to apply for a NAIF loan and negotiated a secret royalty deal that the people of Queensland have no idea about.

Then there was the review of the youth detention centres and the redactions contained in the report. There were so many redactions in that review that it made absolutely no sense whatsoever. Every third word was redacted. It was only when the government was shamed by the media that it went back and reviewed it. Even then it was still heavily redacted and hard to understand.

This is a government that constantly talks about being transparent and accountable. It is neither of those. Those opposite are good at blaming everybody else but themselves. We love it when the government does that. The Queensland public is sick of it. They are sick of excuses. They are sick of you blaming the federal government.

Mr SPEAKER: Comments through the chair, please.

Mr MANDER: Sorry, Mr Speaker. They are sick of excuses and the blame being put on the federal government, the former LNP government or the Brisbane City Council. Take some responsibility for your own actions and govern this state competently.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.13 pm): I rise to speak on the motion moved by the member for Nanango and oppose it. It warms my heart that the member for Nanango has expressed an interest in the lives of vulnerable Queensland children. Those opposite are normally very humble when it comes to child safety and youth justice and to supporting victims of domestic and family violence. We all know they have much to be humble about.

The reforms we have seen in the last three years in my portfolio are remarkable and, in many cases, life-changing. Gone are the days in Child Safety under the LNP when 225 jobs were cut and when child safety workers were made to feel like second-class citizens. The Palaszczuk government has had the courage to take a close look at our child safety system to learn where we can do it better. In direct response to the Apelt review—which we published—we have funded more than 400 additional child safety staff. We know that our investment in staff is working because we publish our performance data every quarter. Our case loads are now down under 18, which means we are responding more quickly to helping kids at risk.

Our government has learnt from reports like those from the Child Death Case Review Panel—which we published—instead of burying our heads in the sand. Those reports have informed our significant improvements to the capacity of child safety staff to address domestic and family violence issues. It was the LNP that removed the legislative requirement for those reports to be released. We have published them every single time.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission's When a child is missing report—which we published—has directly led to improvements in cooperation between child safety staff, police and other agencies to make it easier to find missing children and keep them safe. The review into the tragic death of Mason Jet Lee led directly to improved communication between child safety and health staff as well as police and the education system. We published that. The clear benefits of child safety staff working closely with police, as outlined in this published review, led us to install child safety staff to work directly with Police Headquarters to make sure critical information is shared as fast as possible in order to keep a child safe.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, if you are going to have conversations please take them outside. I appreciate if there is some controversy in the debate or provocation that there may be some interjections, but now all we are hearing is a dull murmur across the chamber. I would ask members to leave and have those conversations outside. Apologies, Minister. Please continue.


Ms FARMER: We have taken on the tough issues identified in every single report which we have commissioned—and published—about the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the child protection system and we have adopted a 20-year strategy aimed to end that overrepresentation.

In youth justice we have moved on from the LNP era of failed boot camps that did nothing to reduce offending and that lock-them-up-and-throw-away-the-key approach that actually increases the chance of reoffending. We have made bold reforms that have been decades in the making: bringing Queensland into line with the rest of Australia and with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by dealing with 17-year-olds under the youth justice system because we do not think young people in Queensland should have less hope and opportunity than young people in the rest of Australia.

We are implementing the recommendations of the youth detention review—which we published—to employ specialist staff who are best able to help the vulnerable and traumatised young people in our detention centres to help them access a better life. We have genuinely invested in programs like Transition 2 Success, linking young offenders to training, education and work.

We are doing more than any Queensland government has ever done to fight domestic and family violence. We listened to the evidence and the recommendations of the *Not now, not ever* report—which we published—and accepted them all. Already 90 recommendations have been completed and we are working on the remaining 31 recommendations made to government. We have not only massively increased funding but also funded the building of seven new domestic violence shelters across the state—the first built by a Queensland government in more than two decades. Gone is the LNP era of slash and burn of critical domestic violence services across our state. No longer do those organisations have to live in fear from year to year, unable to lock in key staff and vital services because they did not know whether their funding would once again be cut from underneath them.

The Palaszczuk government has a proud record in all the areas of my portfolio—a very proud record. We have had the courage to take on the big issues. We do it in an open and accountable way. The record is there in black and white and we are happy to stand on that record next to the record of the LNP any day of the week. The list of reports that those opposite put forward are from last term. They were never once raised. They were never taken to the election. I think those opposite just did not have anything else to talk about today. I say to every vulnerable Queenslanders that the Palaszczuk Labor government has your back.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.19 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the private member's motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, which condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government for its arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy. At the last election, I put my hand up to be a candidate because, like many people, I was dissatisfied with the political process generally in Queensland. I was sick of government failing to take responsibility and blaming others for its own failings. When I doorknocked across my electorate as recently as last week, that sentiment came through clearly. People are sick and tired of blame-shifting and dodgy deals. They are sick of cover-ups to protect factional allies and they are sick of their political representatives putting the pursuit of power and the maintenance of it above the interests of the state as a whole.

Just last week when I was doorknocking in Sippy Downs, I spoke to a rusted-on Labor supporter. He told me in no uncertain terms, some of which I cannot repeat in this House, that he was sick and tired of the political games, the cover-ups and the deception. He told me he just wants political representatives to work for the good of the entire community, not for their vested interests. Although we did not agree on many policy issues, we both agreed on the need for political representatives to restore the public's faith in the political process.

However, how can we expect the public to have faith in us as their representatives when they cannot see or understand the contents of the countless reviews and reports that this government relies upon to support its tenuous arguments to protect incompetent ministers and decisions that are made on the basis of ideology, rather than public need? During its last term, the Palaszczuk government commissioned a total of 213 reviews, reports or inquiries, which is approximately one every three days.


What do members think the public's view is on commissioning a report by KPMG into public sector efficiency with \$165,000 of their money? The people of Buderim tell me they understand that the government should consider the effectiveness and the appropriateness of their actions, so they do not begrudge the government making appropriate investigations into matters of public importance. However, they do expect to see the outcome of that expense, regardless of whether or not it suits the government of the day.

What do members think the public's view is of a minister of the Crown using his mangocube6 personal email account to correspond with stakeholders and lobbyists in relation to matters of relevance to his ministerial responsibilities? When I was in the Army, if I were to pass information of such a sensitive nature using my Yahoo email account rather than my Defence email account, I would have been charged under the official secrets act and the likely result would have been discharge from the Army. That is how it should be, because the public require confidence.

We have heard this government consistently rely on business cases for things such as Cross River Rail to support their argument when it suits them. How can they expect the public to support such projects when we are not in possession of all of the facts on such proposals? On the Sunshine Coast, duplication of the North Coast rail line has been on the agenda for many years and Infrastructure Australia is on the record saying that it is the No. 1 priority project for Queensland. We have seen business cases released in the past, so if the Labor government believe Cross River Rail is of more importance than the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line, they should release the full Cross River Rail business case and allow the public to scrutinise it. Otherwise, they should stump up and fund the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line.

As a father, one of the things that concerns me most is child abuse. It breaks my heart every time I hear of a child who has died at the hands of one of those who should have been caring for them. I am sure everyone in this House feels as I do in relation to such a terrible problem. However, that issue should be above politics. That is why I am so disgusted to see instances where, time and time again, this government has attempted to sit on adverse reports, such as the 2016-17 Queensland Family and Child Commission's annual report, when they have released excessively redacted reports or when they have attempted to bury information until a time when it will not be scrutinised as heavily.

It is not good enough. As elected representatives we should be better. The Premier says that she wants to run an open and transparent government, but to date we have only seen a culture of arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy that puts the interests of the Palaszczuk Labor government ahead of the people of Queensland. It is simply not good enough.

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.23 pm): I rise to oppose the private member's motion moved by the member for Nanango. Let us talk about integrity, transparency and openness. I want to speak to this House not only as the member for Barron River and the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services but also as someone with 15 years experience as an ambulance officer. I want to highlight the alarming record of arrogance and hypocrisy of those opposite, especially the member for Nanango, who was Campbell Newman's assistant treasurer when the LNP cut and slashed front-line services and axed thousands of Public Service jobs.

I was not just on the sidelines watching on as the former Newman government unleashed one of the most destructive periods in the state's history; as a paramedic in Cairns, I was called on to deal with the human fallout from the former LNP government's reckless policies of cutting essential services and sacking nurses, teachers and other public sector workers. I treated patients who were also public servants who had lost their jobs, their livelihoods and, ultimately, their health under the draconian policies of those opposite. Their complaints included chest pain, anxiety and stress-related conditions, some began drinking and many experienced mental health issues.

There was a terrible impact on their lives and on mine, as well. Friends and colleagues lost their jobs as the LNP swung their axe widely across the Public Service. Good loyal people, hardworking front-line workers, suddenly found themselves on the unemployment scrap heap. Thousands feared for their jobs. Those who had not been sacked at that point were waiting for the razor gang to arrive.


I acknowledge the defiant efforts of the United Voice union, the front line of defence for the rights of paramedics in Queensland. During the reign of those opposite, our union defended not only individuals but also the entire cohort of 3,000 paramedics to safeguard their conditions. As part of the UV union, a group of paramedics and communication operators formed an executive body, a state council, to defend those 3,000 staff. For many years, my parliamentary colleague the member for Thuringowa and I worked on that state council. We fought those opposite for solutions and conditions to improve our front-line services.

I remind those opposite that such was the anger, the resentment and the frustration caused by the then government of the day that front-line service workers such as paramedics, firefighters and nurses had to take their cause to the streets to campaign, to march and to wage war against their government. Those trusted professionals took to the streets purely to try to resolve their wages and conditions.

Paramedics joined with fire crews from around the state to protest as the LNP forged ahead with pay cuts and job losses across the Emergency Services sector. At rallies they joined the QNU, the ETU, the AWU, the CFMEU and other unions because they were angry. United Voice secretary Garry Bullock put it quite well when he said, 'We don't want Treasury officials determining the quality of emergency services provided to Queenslanders'. What was the heartless retort from the LNP government at the time? They said that hard decisions had to be made. That is the legacy of the LNP. To members opposite who came into this House not just after the 2017 election but also after the election before that, I say: that is the legacy of your predecessors; when you stand in this House and defend them, that is what you defend.

Our government is committed to ensuring Emergency Services have the resources they need to continue their high standard of service to Queenslanders. Let me highlight what those opposite wanted to do during their term in government. They planned to sack 46 Rural Fire Service officers who train and support over 30,000 Rural Fire Service volunteers. They were forced back after an angry backlash led by none other than Vaughan Johnson, the former member for Gregory, who used to sit in this House. They froze recruitment. They insulted off-duty firefighters. As some members would remember, I think it was during the Redcliffe by-election when they referred to firefighters as strippers, saying that they were not real firefighters at all. That is the legacy of those opposite.

I certainly oppose the reckless and desperate tactics of the LNP in moving this ridiculous motion. I compare our record to that of those opposite. Queenslanders made their choice last November. I cannot work out why we are debating such a ridiculous motion tonight.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.28 pm): I rise to speak to the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, the honourable member for Nanango. In condemning the Palaszczuk government for its arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy it is important to note that this is not a new behaviour. It has been learned over many years as Labor thinks it is their right not privilege to be the government in Queensland. They have managed to hold onto power for 17 of the last 20 years or thereabouts. They are the party with the born-to-rule mentality, the party beholden to their puppetmasters the unions and of course always paying back the Greens to stop it stealing seats from them.

Over the past 14 years that I have spent in this place, I have seen some appalling decisions. Parliament was recalled to pass a motion to protect Gordon Nuttall in December 2005. To this day I feel sick thinking about what the Beattie government did. That is right: Peter Beattie—the Premier who left mid term under questionable circumstances and whom the Palaszczuk government made chair of Goldoc for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Unfortunately, the 2018 Commonwealth Games is another example of the Palaszczuk government's arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy. I am pleased to say that the Gold Coast shone in spite of this government's interference at every stage and in every way. There are too many avoidable blunders to mention here, but secrecy around the closing ceremony where this Palaszczuk government, and particularly the Minister for the Commonwealth Games, committed the ultimate sin—omitting our wonderful athletes from playing a role—is inexcusable.

Minister Jones can point the finger away from herself as much as she likes, but the buck stops with her. Her own director-general was privy to the final program and so was my director-general in relation to the Glasgow's closing ceremony and so was I. Was the minister too busy deciding which dress to wear to talk to her director-general?

Government members interjected.

Mrs STUCKEY: She can dish it out, can't she.

Ms BOYD: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Although the motion is extraordinarily lengthy, I fail to see any reference to the Commonwealth Games in it.

Mr SPEAKER: I have already said that there will be a broad interpretation of the motion. I will allow the member to continue.

Mrs STUCKEY: The question to ask the minister is whether she is not telling the truth or whether she was just too lazy to read her briefs. For the record, I am happy to advise the House that whilst I was minister for the Commonwealth Games my department did not undertake any investigations into axing or moving the 2018 games. I said as much in today's *Gold Coast Bulletin*, but the member for Cooper and the Premier chose to treat parliament as a plaything in an attempt to score cheap political points.


Rather, we got on with identifying and locking in the athletes village site and 17 or so sporting venues and securing funding from federal and council partners as none—and I repeat, none—had been secured for this \$2 billion event. There was no governance in place. Maybe that is why Bligh government treasurer, Andrew Fraser, did not hide his displeasure that the Gold Coast had won the bid for the 2018 games. Those from Labor who cast stones should look at some of their own ministerial papers.

The biggest cover-up of all, the 2010 Health payroll debacle, which was widely described as the worst IT blunder made by any government, happened while the now Premier and member for Cooper, or Ashgrove as it was called then, sat around the cabinet table. As I said, the Palaszczuk government's arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy is not new behaviour. It is the norm and Queenslanders need to wake up to the wolf, or wolves in this case, in sheep's clothing. My documents from 2010 tell of a damning Auditor-General's report finding that a botched payroll system, which left nurses and doctors unpaid or wrongly paid for months, was approved despite awareness of the extent of serious risks.

These are the front-line workers Labor pretend to support. I say pretend because then minister and member for Rockhampton, Rob Swarten, pretended when questioned to be clueless about the workings in his department—a department he headed for more than a decade. It is little surprise then that the honourable member for Cooper, who was his understudy and boasts of that fact in this place, acts exactly the same way—arrogant, denying responsibility, deflecting blame onto innocent people.

During the 55th Parliament the Palaszczuk government commenced over 150 reviews. That is about one per week during their term of government. It is fair to ask what happened to them; in fact, what happens to any government reports? In recent times we have seen them so heavily redacted that they are useless and others are tabled under the cover of darkness or during a busy period of distraction such as the Commonwealth Games.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (5.34 pm): For the member for Nanango to be making accusations about arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy is just incredible. She was assistant treasurer in the most arrogant, the most hypocritical and the most secretive government Queensland has ever seen. Nowhere was that secrecy more damaging than in the Health portfolio.

They did not tell the people of Queensland that they planned to sack our front-line health workers—that they would sack 4,400 health staff, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. Their secrecy was literally bad for the health of Queenslanders, especially those who got sick and needed health care. To make their waiting list data look better the LNP kept a secret waiting list for the waiting list, leaving sick Queenslanders languishing waiting to see a specialist.

What is so cruel about that approach is that until a patient sees a specialist they often will not know how serious their illness is. When Labor came to government there were more than 104,000 Queenslanders on the LNP's secret waiting list. Some of those Queenslanders would have died as a result of the LNP's arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy.


In government the LNP commissioned and never released no fewer than five health service investigations. The LNP motion talks about reports into mental health. Let us talk about reports into mental health. Let us talk about the report of the expert clinical reference group into the Barrett Adolescent Centre which recommended that the Barrett centre should not be closed without replacement. This report was so secret that the LNP health minister kept it secret from himself. The LNP minister for health did not even read the report let alone release it. He did not even read it when it was tabled in front of him by the then leader of the opposition now Premier. He did not even read it after he met with the young patients of the Barrett centre who were distressed about its impending closure. They begged him to keep it open. He ignored the report, he ignore their pleas and they closed the centre without replacement which, as we now know, had catastrophic consequences.

In their motion those opposite have demanded the release of a health service investigation report that they know very well we are legally not able to release at this time. This is despite the fact that the previous minister agreed to release the report publicly once it was appropriate to do so. If they want to talk about hypocrisy, using this House to demand the government release a report that we have agreed to release as soon as it is responsible to do so is hypocrisy.

Queenslanders got rid of that arrogant, hypocritical, secretive government and twice now elected the Palaszczuk government because we are none of those things. This government is open, accountable and transparent. No government in Australia proactively releases as much data about hospital performance and patient safety as our government does—no other government. In contrast, the LNP actually axed the entire unit within Queensland Health that collected information on patient safety outcomes. In July 2016 Labor re-established the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service, which was axed by the Newman-Nicholls LNP government, with 20 full-time-equivalent staff.

When this government travels to the regions we let the community come to our community meetings. There are no appointments and no vetting. People can come along and have their say. We are transparent about the performance of Queensland's hospitals. Every month we release hundreds of data points, including the list the LNP kept secret. Thanks to that openness, we have dramatically reduced the number of people waiting for an outpatient specialist appointment.

Of course we listened to the Barrett centre families and the experts and we are building a new adolescent mental health facility informed by clinicians and consumers. When it comes to listening to and delivering for Queenslanders, the Palaszczuk government has a proud record. For that reason, I will be opposing this motion and I urge members to do the same.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (5.39 pm): I rise in support of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Nanango. It is true that I am new to this parliament. I thought, maybe naively, that I would come into this House in question time and see the opposition and crossbenchers ask questions of the government and see the government, who promised to be open and accountable to the people of Queensland, answer those questions and be open and accountable. Instead, what I have seen is a government that is far from open and transparent.

What I have witnessed is a government that does not answer questions, that dodges details or ignores the questions completely and waffles on about irrelevant material, blaming the federal government and blaming former governments for its own woes. I have seen a government that laughs, points fingers and yells across the chamber about what former governments have done or what federal governments have done to dodge its own accountability. The Queensland government's own website states—

As an open and transparent government, we make information about our activities available for you in a range of formats, and actively engage in the review and improvement of our integrity and accountability framework.

...

As custodians of community information, we will release government-held information unless we think releasing it is not in the public interest.

It appears that the real test for this government is not the test of public interest but instead a test of the government's interests. We have seen examples of cover-ups, secrecy and a culture of arrogance not only to those on this side of the chamber but to the people of Queensland. We have had a minister using a private email account for ministerial business and then refusing to release the details of those emails. If there is nothing to hide, why don't we see them? No, instead we have seen information reluctantly trickled out under freedom-of-information requests, with hundreds of pages of ministerial business still not published. What did we find in that information that trickled out? We found union interference in appointments to government positions and interference in enterprise bargaining agreements by the unions. If there is nothing to hide, why not publish them all? We keep being told that the CCC has investigated. What is the government trying to hide then from the people of Queensland? Publish those emails.


We have seen cover-up after cover-up to try to hide the government's embarrassment of reports of incompetence. We have seen redactions in reports that have made them totally useless and an insult to the people of Queensland who this government is supposed to be accountable to. What is the government spending to attract *Dora* and *Thor* to Queensland? What is the big secret? If it makes business sense then release the figures. Tell the people of Queensland what you are spending their money on and what value is in it for them.

As a former police officer and detective working in child safety, the most concerning area of lack of transparency by this government is unfortunately in child safety. The safety of our children is paramount and needs to be above politics. We cannot have the government covering up reports, delaying their publication, sneaking them out during the Commonwealth Games or redacting critical information from the people of Queensland. One can only wonder whether the new Minister for Child Safety is using the same washing machine as the former minister to clean the child safety data. We need accurate reporting and accountability when it comes to our children. Surely nothing could be more important.

Government members interjected.

Mr HUNT: There they go again. We have seen a change in laws that has put youth custody into chaos and young criminals into suburbs. Now Queensland families have people who should be in detention centres living next door to them. The people of Queensland have a right to know if they are living next to a quasi youth detention centre.

I guess we will see if this motion is defeated by the government's numbers, if they snub their nose at the people of Queensland, if they once again refuse to be accountable as promised to the people of Queensland. Unfortunately, this government's promise of accountability and transparency appears to be campaign rhetoric as we continue to see lists of reports that have been covered up, as detailed in this motion. I urge the House to vote in favour of this motion to hold the government to the standard that they promised to the people of Queensland.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (5.44 pm): I love it when the LNP kick an own goal. When it comes to motions, they had absolutely no idea when they put this rubbish together. When the LNP start talking about arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy, it is a reminder to the people of Queensland why they booted them out of government in 2015 and why they kept them out of government in 2017. We are happy to have the discussion, the debate, on arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy.

For those new members on the other side who have spoken in this debate and talked about the government making reference to previous governments, particularly the LNP government, they should educate themselves about why the LNP lost government in the first place, why a government with the

largest majority that a government has ever seen in this state managed to lose in one term. They have to ask themselves that question. It was arrogance, hypocrisy, secrecy—everything that those on the other side now want to point the finger at this government about.

Let us talk about those issues. Let us talk about the arrogance of telling public servants that they have nothing to fear from an LNP government. Let us talk about their rhetoric that there would be no forced redundancies under an LNP government. When I make that statement I am not just talking about in 2012. That was said in the most recent election campaign by the LNP leadership again—‘There will be no forced redundancies under us if we get elected.’ We have heard that before and there are people in our communities today who are still hurting because of those job losses. It was not just public servants; it was all of those community organisations and programs that were slashed like Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

If those opposite want to talk about KPMG reports and other reports, how much money was given to Peter Costello to do that audit to recommend slashing all of those services and sacking public servants? How much money was wasted on Strong Choices? Over \$100 million was wasted on propaganda and marketing materials and consultancies. There were 42 consultancies that we had to pay for in government, funded by that lot—42 consultancies to start selling off assets, despite the LNP saying, ‘We won’t sell assets until we get the support of the people from Queensland in the 2015 election.’ That is what they said: ‘We will take asset sales to the election.’ What they did not tell the people of Queensland is that they had already spent over \$100 million in preparing for those asset sales. I take great offence to those on the other side who talk about—


Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! The Leader of the House is not taking your interjections. If you continue to interject, I will start warning members. Regardless of the robust nature of the debate, I am having a difficult time hearing a member who is less than two metres away from me.

Mrs D’ATH: Those on the other side are saying that they are acting in the best interests of children and the safety of children, yet time and time again they ask for reports and information to be released that is either in breach of legislation—so as lawmakers they are wanting us to break the law in releasing details of young people and their information—or alternatively would potentially prejudice criminal proceedings before courts. Let us not forget the former member for Mansfield’s wonderful performance when asking me to interfere with a police operation and question the police about why they did not do certain things in an investigation.

While they have been doing all of this, they have been fighting in the courts. Let us not forget that in government they were so eager to hide political donations they dropped the threshold to thousand dollars. A court decision has just been handed down that says, ‘You must disclose.’ What have they done? They have turned around and appealed it, because they will do anything to not divulge who their donors are and where the money is coming from. The LNP should not come in here and move motions about hypocrisy, arrogance and secrecy because the LNP are the height of hypocrisy, they are nothing but secretive and they are so arrogant that the people of Queensland threw them out after one term and kept them out.

We are a government of transparency. We are about listening to the people of Queensland and standing up for the people of Queensland. That is what we do. That is what we will continue to do. For as long as I am here, I will do everything to keep the LNP out of government.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.50 pm): To the Leader of the House, I am not going to be lectured to in this place about political donation laws when she was the member for Petrie tied up in the AWU scandal and the Bill Shorten scandal and took \$25,000—

Mrs D’ATH: Mr Speaker, firstly, I will be writing to you about that. Secondly, I take personal offence and it should be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, will you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. I was not even 10 seconds into it, colleagues, and we are already there. When she was the member for Petrie she took a political donation of \$25,000 from the AWU. That was then later investigated by the royal commission into union corruption and the dodgy deal when Bill Shorten sold out the workers in the cleaning industry.

Earlier we had the Deputy Premier lecturing us about political donations. No-one on this side of the House has signed off an Eddie Obeid cheque for \$5,000 as she did when she was the state secretary of the Labor Party. Those opposite should not come in here and lecture us about political donations when most of the people they took corrupt political donations from are sitting in a prison cell. Eddie Obeid is sitting in a prison cell in this country.

This government said when first elected in 2015 that it would be open and transparent. It has been anything but open and transparent. It is an arrogant government. Have we not seen it now it has have a majority in this House? Now we can see its arrogance. The Minister for Education sat in here this morning and said, 'That's why we're over here and you're over there, and we are going to be here for a long time.' I do not think so with that sort of arrogance.

I note that the member for Woodridge is on the speaking list. He is one of the most arrogant members in this place. He has never done a day in opposition. He would not be able to handle a day in opposition. When he wakes up and walks out his front door if his limo is not there he will go inside and sulk for the rest of the day. The very first thing he did when he became health minister in 2015 was put an iris lock on his door to keep the director-general out of his office. That is how scared he was, but he should be because he was the minister who oversaw SPER when SPER payments reached over a billion dollars and he forced the department of justice to hide the figures by disclosing two separate amounts. That is what we have from that side of the House.


We have seen cash for access. When Tony Fitzgerald was talking about accountability and integrity there was deafening silence from the Labor Party in the state of Queensland. The Deputy Premier stood in this place and said that she was concerned with the number of items on the list. So are we! We were limited to 250 words. It could have been a lot bigger had we been given the chance under standing orders because if we could have we would have mentioned Gordon Nuttall, Traveston Dam, Health payroll, the SPER fiasco, the fake Tahitian prince and the waste levy that we were not going to have. The list could have gone on.

One of the items on the list concerns the member for Mansfield. When I made an accusation of alleged fraud and an Ethical Standards Unit investigation at the last parliamentary sitting, the member for Woodridge screeched, 'How dare you talk to her like that?' If there are allegations of fraud—I do not care who you are in the state of Queensland—you own up to it and you take responsibility for it. Just because you are a socialist Labor member does not mean you do not have the responsibility to stand in this place.

She did stand in this place later and talk about sending flowers to someone. If that is all it was, release the 175 pages of the RTI. She should clear her name. I have some advice for the member for Mansfield. If the member for Mansfield wonders where we got this information from, we did not wake up in the morning and decide to do an RTI on the Cavendish Road State High School when the member for Mansfield was the principal. It is because one of her colleagues told us about it. That is why we did the RTI. One of her colleagues told us about it and hence we did the RTI. She needs to look closer to home and those who really support her.

In terms of accountability, the Premier makes one press conference a week or one a fortnight. That is all we get from her in terms of press conferences. We know the gallery cannot get more than a couple of tweets about various things during the week. On the other hand, the member for Nanango is out every day of the week doing media because we believe in the future of Queensland. We want a positive Queensland. This government should hang its head in shame.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (5.55 pm): I am delighted to stand tonight to oppose this motion and delighted to follow the member for Kawana. Remember 'Operation Boring'? 'Operation Boring' was all about making the member for Kawana so secret that he was kept out of the public limelight in Queensland altogether. They hid the Premier, Campbell Newman and the member for Kawana from the entire Queensland community. There is one person who can lecture us on secrecy, and that is the member for Kawana.

When the member for Clayfield was the leader of the opposition in the last parliament he had the distinction of leading the worst opposition in Queensland history. The member for Clayfield can rest easy tonight, because, as hard as it is to believe, the LNP under the member for Nanango and the member for Everton has plumbed even lower depths. This motion has all the credibility of a late-night Donald Trump Twitter rant.

For the parliament to be debating a motion condemning the government for its arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy from the fractured remnants of the Newman government—the most arrogant, the most hypocritical and the most secretive government in history—absolutely beggars belief. We knew they were inept. Now we know they are completely delusional. This is from the crew who fought

like Kilkenny cats to hide their \$100,000 donors. Where are their health service investigations? They have been kept secret from the public. Where is the legal advice when they wanted to sink the Commonwealth Games? When it comes to arrogance, the LNP is in a league of its own.

Imagine presenting and putting forward a motion in the parliament on the release of information in mental health when they were part of a government that closed the Barrett centre against expert advice with tragic consequences. Imagine targeting the department of child safety when the member for Nanango and the member for Everton were part of a government that cut 225 child safety officers from the front line. In her righteous campaign the Leader of the Opposition knows that she will take no prisoners. *Dora the Explorer* will be put to the sword by the Leader of the Opposition in her righteous campaign for transparency across Queensland. Even Dora is not safe. Nothing in this motion is more revealing about the arrogance and incompetence of members opposite than item (h), the demand for the immediate publication of business cases. For the benefit of the LNP, contemporary research techniques 101 is go to your computer and click on the Google icon. Google, for the members opposite, is a search engine on the internet. Under the word 'Google' there is an empty rectangle. In that space type the words 'Nullinga Dam business case'. That is in their motion. Now read how the business case was publicly released last February. The Leader of the Opposition got us tonight! Now type in 'Cross River Rail' and read how that business case was released last August. The member for Nanango got us again!

This reckless and pernicious motion seeks to undermine the core democratic principle of governance which is cabinet confidentiality. The definition of optimism: the hope that one day the opposition will be worthy of the position they hold in this House.

To be lectured by the LNP on arrogance and hypocrisy is like being lectured by Barnaby Joyce on how to staff a ministerial office. This is from the crew who sacked the PCCC, dumped their own hand-picked head of the Ethics Committee and made the Chief Magistrate the Chief Justice—thanks again, member for Kawana. This is from the crew who is still fighting the courts to hide their donors, who rode roughshod—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister is a former attorney-general and he knows in this place not to discuss judicial officers. The person he is speaking to is a justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland. He is making reflections on a justice of the Supreme Court. I would ask you to rule on that, Mr Speaker.

Mr DICK: I am happy to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: That is fine. Just in explanation, I think the minister may have been making possible reflections on the former attorney-general, not a judicial officer, but the minister has withdrawn.

Mr DICK: I will say this about being the Attorney-General of Queensland. One appeal I am most proud about was appealing the sentence against Gordon Nuttall. I got him to serve more jail time. This is from the LNP, who rode roughshod over every principle and convention when it suited them in government—during the grim, dark but mercifully short years of government.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The minister earlier in his contribution in this debate said that the LNP sacked child safety officers. There has been, from my understanding, an ethics investigation into that matter and they found that statement to be misleading previously. Mr Speaker, I am going to be writing to you about this matter to draw it to your attention.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. For future reference, I do not believe that point of order is warranted, and it certainly was not in my view a matter of privilege suddenly arising. If you hear of something, I encourage you to write to me, as I have given rulings in the past. I find this may have been an attempt to disrupt the speaker.

Mr DICK: I apologise if those child safety officers voluntarily resigned. One of the most remarkable things about the LNP is their capacity to disappoint, made all the more remarkable when you consider how little we expect of them. Can I just say the abiding image of this parliament is the last fragments of the LNP's moral character in full retreat. I urge members to oppose the motion.

(Time expired)

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

In division—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want to take this opportunity to remind you all that standing orders still apply when the bills are ringing. They apply during divisions. I will not tolerate crossfire like I saw earlier. You have just had a one-hour debate which was broad ranging where you could get matters off your chest. That will not seep into the period of the division.

AYES, 41:

LNP, 38—Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Costigan, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

KAP, 1—Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 47:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Resolved in the negative.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL


Second Reading

Resumed from p. 914, on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand amendments to the vegetation management legislation have been circulated by the member for Maiwar. The member for Maiwar has not included any explanatory notes. My understanding is there is nothing under the statutory legislation that would stop the member for Maiwar from moving such amendments without explanatory notes, but I think it is very difficult for members in this House to properly debate amendments to clauses during consideration in detail or even the debate when no written explanation or previous explanation has been given to these amendments. I ask the member for Maiwar to withdraw his amendments or for you, Mr Speaker, to possibly make a ruling that, until such time, the amendments cannot be moved.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, thank you for bringing that to my attention. Member for Maiwar, as you have just heard in that contribution, whilst there is nothing compelling you to circulate explanatory notes, I would suggest that it would be beneficial to members of the House so as to ensure they understand the rationale behind the proposed amendments. If that is something you could do as a future practice, it would be appreciated for the benefit of all members.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.09 pm): I support the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I would like to thank the minister for his work on this bill. I would like to thank the committee and the many submitters. The very high number of submissions is a welcome sign of the interest of the public in this important issue and it completely smashes any notion of a rushed consultation process that ignored the community. This is a myth peddled by those opposite.

Our environmental achievements include: stopping the Franklin Dam; declaring the Wet Tropics of Queensland a World Heritage area; stopping mining for oil on the Great Barrier Reef and creating the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; increasing the amount of national park area to four per cent of the state; creating bikeways, city farms, low-emission buses and recycling in Brisbane; stopping logging on Fraser Island; introducing a price on carbon, which was sadly later removed; reinstating full objection rights for all Queenslanders in regards to mining activities; and introducing a total ban on single use plastic bags and a container deposit scheme.

All of these were controversial. All of these issues and achievements presented challenges for our community. All required significant changes in attitude and behaviour and all were delivered at the federal, state and Brisbane City Council levels by Labor. This bill, if passed, will continue this great Labor tradition of caring for the environment. Inevitably, many of these issues have required the balancing of the deeply held interests of many people and organisations. However, it is Labor

governments that have managed to achieve these important environmental outcomes while balancing the interests of many and varied groups. When we look back on this list as a city, as a state and as a nation, we are rightly proud. One day we will be rightly proud of this bill as well.

The people in my electorate support Labor's action to respond to climate change. They understand that climate change is real and needs real action. The people of my electorate support this bill because it is about taking real action on climate change. They know that if this bill is passed it will protect Queensland's high-value regrowth vegetation, better protect the Great Barrier Reef and restore sustainable vegetation management frameworks in Queensland. They also understand how important agriculture is for our community and for our entire state. They value farmers and they know farmers care for their land.

I would like to briefly reflect on my late father-in-law. He devoted his life to agriculture, both as a farmer and as a long-term public servant with the department of primary industries, particularly in the fruit section. He put himself through his agricultural studies, which augmented years of practical experience gained almost from birth. For the entire time that I knew him he spent his whole week working at the DPI or later for private sector fruit exporters and then raced to one of his farms. There were two things that made him happy: his family and when he was working hard on and caring for his land. Being born in the 1930s, he had a fairly traditional view of land and land management, but in the last 10 years of his life he developed an interest in sustainability. He always spoke passionately about his land and he was the first person I heard speaking passionately about sustainable farming practices.

He did not just speak; he acted, changing his attitudes and his practices, and he based this all on science. I will not speculate on what he would have thought about these laws, but I know he valued science and sustainability and I know he cared deeply about the land. In this he was not unique. The majority of people involved in agriculture have practices that are driven by much the same things that drive my nursing practice: it is driven by science. I care for people and the farmers care for the land, plants and the animals, and these things are to the ultimate benefit of people. Science and sustainability: these are the things that people in the electorate of Greenslopes value and these are what this bill is based upon.

People in my electorate also know that if this bill is passed it will require changes to the way farmers manage their land. Change is hard. We are all having to change to adjust to a changing understanding of the limits of our resources. One of our key strengths as a species has been our willingness and our ability to adapt and to change. In fact, we have supercharged this strength by basing our changes and our adaptations on science.

We have a choice: we can ignore the science and bury our head in the sand, or we can base our policy on the best available science and create a system of sustainable vegetation management. We know what the LNP chose. They ignored the science; they buried their head in the sand; they ripped up the original balanced laws that were put in place by Labor. I choose to support this bill. I choose to support sustainable vegetation management practices in this state that will deliver better long-term outcomes for farmers, for consumers, for the environment and for future generations. I commend this bill to the House.



Mr BERKMAN (Maiwar—Grn) (6.15 pm): Vegetation management has become Queensland's greatest political football. It is the issue that seems to most polarise the people within this chamber, and that division is often reflected within elements of the Queensland community. Both sides of this chamber are guilty of having treated the agricultural and conservation sectors as political pawns, creating division between sectors that should be working together. We again risk trading positive policy outcomes for cheap electoral pointscoreing.

Whilst laying the blame on the agricultural sector or the environmental sector for all the environmental or economic ills of this state, both Labor and the LNP have ignored what both of these sectors have been saying: that the swings and roundabouts, the perpetual policy uncertainty, drives the worst outcomes for both farmers and the environment. This kind of political brinkmanship cannot be expected to protect the Great Barrier Reef, support strong rural communities, position Queensland as a leader on climate change, reverse our declining biodiversity or manage the drought that still afflicts two-thirds of the state.

It has not quite been 19 years since the Vegetation Management Act was passed, yet that act has been amended 39 times. This bill would make 40—40 versions of the act in about as much time as it takes for a tree to reach maturity. For all the noise and fury in this chamber, Queensland still bears the shame of being a world leader in tree clearing. Each cycle of reregulation by Labor results in a spike in clearing rates, or panic clearing. The LNP appears to embrace the polarisation and holds onto this

fight as its saving grace in rural seats and perpetuates the uncertainty that plagues farmers. Both parties have sold communities down the river to mining interests and economic frameworks that favour big business over mum-and-dad farmers and the social services around them.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the debate on this bill is the ongoing politicisation of science. Science knows no politics. Brash claims about the supposedly 'fundamentally flawed' science neglects that this is our best evidence to guide policy. As with climate science, it is plain arrogance to dismiss the work of scientists and experts and suggest that we know better. It has been implied by opposition members that since we do not have good data on recent regrowth, there might really have been an increase in vegetation cover. Not only is it incredibly far-fetched to think that may in fact be the case, but it is farcical to compare the ecological value of new regrowth to remnant vegetation. Of course, honourable members could be forgiven for thinking, based on the political rhetoric, that it is only farmers that cut down trees in Queensland. Clearing also occurs for property development, for roads and powerlines, for mines and for numerous other purposes that appear to garner little attention.

Agriculture is our state's predominant land use and accounts for most of the clearing rates that, no matter which way you cut it, even with regard to our history of settlement and land use, are staggeringly, heartbreakingly high. We must always be clear in this debate that farmers are not villains and the vast majority of farmers are outstanding stewards of their land. However, regulation is clearly required to reverse these trends and bring us in line with agricultural producers across the developed world. To the extent that this bill achieves that outcome, I support it. However, Labor's bill will only slow a fraction of that clearing whilst reinforcing the inequity between sectors and land uses and areas of the state. When a tree is felled, whether it is replaced with a road, a mine shaft or a banana plantation, the loss of that tree and the carbon it has stored and the habitat it has provided is felt the same. I believe Queensland can and should be a world leader in environmental protection. I have fought for our environment for years before entering this chamber, and I will continue to do so during my time here.

Labor's proposed laws, or even those they had in 2012, are not world leading despite their claims. There is nothing world leading about policy that changes on average twice a year. There is nothing world leading about a policy framework that so divides this parliament or the community to which it applies. There is nothing world leading about policy that puts politics ahead of outcomes. There is certainly nothing world leading about flogging the same dead horse and claiming that it will address all of the ills that afflict our reef, our climate and our koala habitat.

Labor's proposed bill does not resolve the division between two sectors that I dearly believe should be working in unity. By the LNP's account, this bill has no hope of ending the biannual reform churn. I have met with, and listened to, advocates on all sides of the debate. I went out to the front of parliament yesterday to listen to the farmers, much to the chagrin of the member for Whitsunday. I have attended hearings and briefings, read submissions and considered proposed amendments, and within the scope of the government's bill I will bring some of those amendments forward.

I will move to limit the range of purposes for which an accepted development vegetation code can be made to prevent the provision of exemptions by stealth. I will move to expand the definition of high-value regrowth vegetation so that it applies to a broader range of tenures and land uses. I will move to retain substantially tightened provisions for high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture. These amendments would allow minimal, sensible, but tightly regulated and targeted agricultural development by allowing this kind of development only on land already identified as a priority agricultural area that is a least concern ecosystem, amongst other constraints. I will also move to retain limited provisions for area management plans for the purposes of controlling non-native vegetation and declared pests and for ecological restoration.

Let me be the first to acknowledge that my amendments to the bill do not yet address the inequities between land uses and the concerning loss of biodiversity corridors, koala habitat, green space and the creation of heat islands in our urban and peri-urban areas. These amendments address a tiny fraction of the changes to vegetation protection that I would like to see and that various interest groups on all sides have been calling for. Most importantly, they do not and cannot address the 23 million hectares of land classified as category X that Labor's bill will leave completely unregulated. There is much outside the scope of this bill that I cannot propose to amend now but that I encourage the government to address through subordinate legislation or policy implementation.

I encourage the government to incorporate a requirement that a drought declaration is a precursor for clearing to be accepted development under the fodder harvesting code. I encourage the removal of the words 'managing thickened vegetation' from self-assessable codes relating to category C and category R vegetation, thus ensuring that all such clearing remains assessable. I encourage the government to annually map total native vegetation cover, including native regrowth, to provide more


comprehensive information on carbon sequestration and to support the assessment and compliance of clearing to manage thickened vegetation. I encourage the government to remove exemptions for activities relating to urban development and the resource sector. I encourage the government to properly invest in extension to support sustainable agricultural land management across the state.

I encourage the government to invest in the science of understanding riparian buffer zones and the protection needs of different stream orders. I then encourage the government to apply that science in extending riparian vegetation protections to all land uses and all Queensland catchments, not just to agriculture near the Great Barrier Reef. I encourage the government to provide property maps of assessable vegetation to all landholders on a five-year rolling-term basis without application or payment and to provide with those maps supporting information that empowers landholders to manage their land legally and for the good of Queensland's environment.

I encourage the government to better protect our wondrous biodiversity by broadening the requirements for flora and fauna services prior to development approval being granted and for spotters and species relocation to be factored into clearing activities. I encourage the government to prevent any further land being mapped as category X or being made otherwise exempt and instead implement a best management practice program or similar voluntary codes to apply to significant areas of non-regulated vegetation across the state and encourage the retention of native vegetation.

Queensland is calling out for significant reform of both our environmental laws and the way that our democracy operates. I thank the committee for its consideration of this bill in the unconscionably short period allocated, although we must question the effectiveness of the committee system as a replacement for the proper checks and balances of an upper house. Rather than consensus decision-making and evidence based public policy, we rely on minimalistic processes and dissenting reports that have little to no effect on the parliamentary outcome.

I would also like to thank the thousands of Queenslanders who wrote submissions and signed petitions and even those who have been protesting outside this week. This gives me faith that there is a public that wants to improve our democracy. For the good of us all—for the reef and for investment in rural communities—I sincerely hope that we can this time pass a bill that actually puts outcomes above party politics. I hope that we are not back here next month, next year, or in 2020 debating the same ground as this House of parliament has been for nearly 20 years.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.25 pm): I have been a little bit stunned today to hear the reef mentioned so many times. The headwaters of the beautiful Pioneer River, which runs through the Mackay electorate, start in the electorate of Mirani, and 1.2 or 1.3 nautical miles from the mouth of that river there is a little reef called Reichelmann's reef. Just off that reef, as you probably do not know, we catch 600-millimetre red emperor right in front of the Pioneer River. I think everyone knows that the Pioneer River has farms along it, from the beginning right to the end. The only part that does not is the part in Mackay itself.

The Pioneer River is the only blue river up and down the coast. Members will see the river when the government visits Mackay as it governs from the regions. Members who fly from Brisbane to Mackay will see the difference between the rivers running through those two cities. With this in mind, and knowing what goes on with the reef and how healthy the ecosystems surrounding the reef are, I oppose this 2018 vegetation management bill.

The previous government and Mackay Sugar got together and pledged \$44 million to build a railroad for sugar, and that railroad leads all the way down to Carmilla in my electorate. It is all high-value agricultural land. The member for Mackay has recently spoken about biofuels, and I know that the government put out a paper in 2015 with regard to cleaner energy. This paper talks about biofuels, and that railway line and all of the infrastructure that was put in by the ALP government and Mackay Sugar will stand there and go begging. It is not going to be used. It is just so sad that we have all that infrastructure put in place.

I am confused about which way we want to go with this. The government wants to go one way at one time, and then it wants to turn the whole thing around because something else has changed and it suits them. There are a lot of stakeholders who would like to contribute towards biofuels. I know there was talk about jet fuel for the US Navy, Army and Air Force. There are so many things we could be doing. An AgForce member has penned an open letter to the Queensland Premier which states—

Dear Ms Palaszczuk:

Remember when your people invited yourselves out to our property last year? You were passing through our small farming town to visit striking miners in a nearby town. Your publicity team thought it would be a great opportunity for you to put on an Akubra hat and hold a baby. We put on a lovely smoko for you and your team in our machinery shed. Do you remember us? Remember

the 'exporting chickpeas to India' conversation? Remember asking us how we could export more chickpea? Remember asking how we can get more chickpea in the ground? You asked if the problem was that there was not enough land. Do you remember the response you got from a second-generation farmer? 'There's plenty of land. We could plant plenty of chickpea, but we need to clear some of that land.' Do you remember how quickly you shut down that conversation?

It was amazing to us that you even let yourself get into a pickle like that. Maybe you were having an off day, or maybe you just don't have a clue about any of it. Either way, we remember. We remember that little publicity stunt. We remember your team taking all the smoko with you when you left to give at your next publicity stunt. I bet you didn't tell them that the food had come from the farmers either. I bet you didn't care that the farmers had provided you with that smoko. Thank you for that day. Thank you for reminding us why we make the choices we do when it comes to voting time. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to give you a chance and thank you for letting us down, because it shows us that we do make the right decisions with our vote. How can you have gotten it so incredibly wrong?

Yours sincerely,

Just a farmer's wife.

In my maiden speech I stated that city and country areas are different and they have their own unique requirements. How can a city Labor MP dictate to farmers and rural families about their future viability? This legislation will only devalue the farms of many Queenslanders. It will limit farmers' incomes. It may force farmers to take their own lives, and that is a conversation that I have had. There is only one word that can describe the ALP's actions—bullying. I will say it again: it is a form of bullying.

At the moment there is another problem that has been discovered that probably takes precedence over what is going on with land clearing and the Vegetation Management Act. I bring to the attention of the House the buffel dieback that is going on right now. It is threatening all agriculture right across Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Member for Mirani, are you prepared to table that document?

Mr ANDREW: Yes, I will table that document. It is a report.

Tabled paper: Document, titled 'Buffel Dieback Landholder Survey Summary Report', Dr Gerry Roberts, GR Consulting, October 2017 Draft V1 [\[603\]](#).

This problem is being found in the reef catchments and the rivers west of Roma which is the southern-flowing catchment. The problem seems to be random in where it first appears in paddocks and properties. It does not seem to be shifted by vehicles, as it usually does not start near tracks. It is the same with cattle in that it does not start near cattle pads or tracks. In fact, these sometimes seem to halt the spread for a short time before however it starts to shift across the barrier and then it continues spreading. Some of the grass species that the problem has appeared in are buffel, bisset, hatch, bluegrass, green panic, pangola, urochloa, rhodes grass and some native grass. It is still unknown what it is doing—that is, whether it is a fungus or insect pest or viral or a microbial disease.

This is a very serious issue, yet I have not heard anyone speak about how this could be damaging for vegetation management going forward. In six months paddocks that were previously good strong grass pastures with high cattle production can be turned into paddocks of weeds with very low cattle production without the operator overgrazing or drought being a cause. In fact, the more conservative the grazing management the more likely it will turn up in your paddock. It is a real threat to us.

The electorate of Mirani is in a pretty unique position as the sugar capital of Queensland. There are billions of dollars of industry that has huge potential for growth and diversification. Sensible and sustainable vegetation management policy is required so that farmers can manage their properties and businesses effectively, but I, like many others in the electorate of Mirani, oppose the changes which inhibit the ability of farmers to grow their business or manage regrowth vegetation.


Canegrowers and sugarcane farmers in coastal Queensland have been developing science driven best management practice programs to ensure productivity and profitability on the farm as well as ensuring environmental stewardship. Evidence of this is visible within the development of constructed wetlands and recycling pits as sediment and nutrient traps as well as significantly reducing chemical and fertiliser inputs across the whole industry. This is well supported by engagement in the Reef Rescue program and the uptake of chemical and chemical training nutrient programs, including Six Easy Steps nutrient management.

The Queensland government promotes the need for increased agricultural production to feed the growing world population and has identified sugar cane as a critical feedstock for the new biofutures industry, including renewable energy and the jobs and the economic activity they can create. However, the proposed amendments will jeopardise the industry's ability to expand and evolve to achieve those goals.

Just last year the government invested \$1.6 million for the future of bioenergy in Mackay and surrounding areas. What happened to that? The sugarcane industry is the economic and social backbone of coastal Queensland. The vast majority—87 per cent—of sugar cane grown in Queensland occurs within the catchments adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The economic return and the job creation derived from clearing high-value agriculture or irrigated high-value agricultural land is incredibly high compared to the amount of land cleared. For example, the wholesale value of sugar cane is over \$5,000 per hectare and in some districts can be as high as two or three times this value.

Many rural and regional communities rely on the considerable returns from these high-value industries for their economic wellbeing. The sugarcane industry provides relatively high direct and indirect employment throughout the growing and milling activities and the relatively small footprint we maintain.

(Time expired)

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (6.35 pm): I rise to speak briefly on the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and appreciate and respect the debate from both sides of the House. For those who have never experienced a farmer's life, it is very difficult to convey the reality. The hardship, grief and heartache is one that I am familiar with, with generations of farmers in our family stretching back to the 1800s in Queensland.


The extremes of floods and droughts, fluctuating prices, disease and, yes, even poverty through to competing against cheap imports, new legislation and, recently, the increasing demonisation of farming and farmers across Australia are just part of their daily lives. Whether they use chemicals authorised by governments as safe, utilise approved land and animal management practices or undertake activities that are consistent with running a farm but not appreciated by neighbours, they are under attack and duress.

Many only remain viable through the leveraging of friends, neighbours and families for no pay to pick the crop, so to speak. When they can no longer pay their loans or mortgages they are criticised, even when selling up in case it may be purchased by offshore interests. Stress and mental and physical impacts including depression and suicide are statistics that we should be ashamed of. Many farmers do not get the luxuries we take for granted, often hours away from schooling and medical help with no time off nor little hope of a well-earned retirement as many have no superannuation.

There is little understanding about the loss of opportunity experienced through the generations of farmers—economically, socially and educationally. Farmers and their families proudly support their communities and are deeply embedded in the social fabric. From all of my experiences, they are good people, caring people and the backbone of our country, putting food on our tables. We need to support their endeavours which include listening with empathy to what they are saying and understanding what they are going through. The current bill in its intent is admirable as there is no doubt that broadscale clearing of remnant vegetation needs to stop and increased protection is needed for areas of concern, including our Great Barrier Reef catchment.

Queensland shows, as we have heard, the highest emissions of CO₂ of all states on an absolute basis and, with a substantial proportion of our emissions coming from land use, land use change and forestry, action is needed. However, in saying that, I have a great concern—that is, this bill does not guarantee the long-term outcomes we seek, as without bipartisan support any change in government may see a change in legislation again, creating further duress for farmers and our environment through the lack of surety.

As with many other aspects of governance and the development of legislation, we should be looking to adopt a ground-up approach customised to regions and electorates instead of a top-down blanket approach. Good outcomes come from working together and when stakeholders are part of the solution. It would be beneficial for the two sides of the House to come together and work with the farmers on this, to collaborate and support them by the provision of assistance in developing greater productivity and responsibility in their land management, and during this time use the provisions in this bill to provide the necessary breathing space to have time to come to a much needed bipartisan agreement that will give the longevity and the surety that is needed.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (6.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. When I came to this place I promised that I would deliver not only for the people of the Cook electorate but also for the generations of people who will live on Cape York and the Torres Strait not just until the next election but for the years to come. Some people say that we have to choose between protecting the environment and growing the economy of the cape, but I know that we can do both and we will do that together.

Over the past few weeks I have heard lots of people from outside the cape lecture me about what is good for the economic development of Cape York. To those politicians in Canberra, who have lots of free advice, let me give them some local advice from the cape: they cannot claim that they want to grow the Cape York economy when they are cutting funds for the construction industry, putting apprentices out of work, and cutting houses across the remote communities that I represent.


During the election, I made it clear that I am passionate about a strong, growing economy with jobs for locals and protecting our environment for the generations to come. This legislation is nothing new. Queensland had vegetation management laws in place from 2004 until 2013, when the Newman government scrapped laws that it promised to protect at the 2012 election. During the time those laws were in place, the Cook community continued to grow and prosper. I know it will be no different under the latest version of the legislation.

The government is committed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Cape York having opportunities to benefit from ecologically sustainable development on their land. Since 2007, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been able to apply to clear for a special Indigenous purpose in Indigenous community use areas under the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can apply for clearing for agriculture, grazing, animal husbandry or aquaculture on Indigenous community use areas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can also apply for minor clearing such as for growing local food supplies on Indigenous community use areas. This bill will not impact the ability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to apply for clearing for agriculture under the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act.

I accept that there have been no applications under the act to date. I understand that some Aboriginal corporations have expressed concerns that the process may be too cumbersome. The government will commence a review of the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act over the coming year to ensure that it provides economic development opportunities for traditional owners. I want to make sure that the hard-fought protections for economic development on the cape are workable and not a barrier to opportunities. I have made it clear that I want the government to be a partner in economic development. I want this review to deliver a simple and effective process whereby the application of these protections is judged in the context of the local needs and demands across the most diverse communities in our state.

There are already protections in the legislation for local landholders. Landholders on the cape can continue to apply for other types of clearing permitted by the vegetation management framework. Landholders in the cape can clear under the accepted development codes and exemptions for a range of activities. These activities include clearing for property and infrastructure, weed control and public safety and exemptions to clear to construct and maintain fences, firebreaks and necessary infrastructure.

I have spoken to locals who have concerns about the impact of this bill. I say to those people that, regardless of our differences of opinion on this legislation, I will continue to listen and I will continue to work with them on the economic development of Cape York. We have had this legislation in the past and we continued to grow local opportunities on the cape. I am confident that the cape has a strong future and that this legislation will be part of that strong future. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (6.44 pm): I rise to speak to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I have read and heard a lot about preservation and protection from those opposite, but the only thing that this legislation helps preserve is Labor preferences from the Greens in South-East Queensland. This legislation helps no-one outside of Brisbane. It is the result of pandering to those in the Greens and Labor whose idea of going out to the bush is having a picnic at New Farm Park.

This legislation is nothing but bad news for Queenslanders. This legislation will see the loss of more jobs in rural and regional Queensland. It will see the loss of more prime agricultural land and demonstrates a complete lack of planning and foresight on the part of the government.

I refer to the dissenting report, particularly the evidence that there has been no consideration given to how this legislation will impact on production or on local communities. Even testimony by officers of the department evidenced that lack of consideration. When questioned if the department had undertaken any modelling or if they had intended to undertake any, their answers were simply, 'No.' That is the problem: there has not been enough consideration given to the financial impact of these proposed changes on the Queensland economy, on the livelihoods of farmers and, for that matter, the flow-on effect that these changes will have on the cost of living for Queenslanders.

Mr Grant Maudsley, the president of AgForce Queensland, stated—

We need to get a better understanding of why we do what we do and stop talking about ecological values alone. We can have win-win if we think about this properly. Rather than being 100 percent focussed on ecology the whole time, we have to do both. We have to grow food for this state and we have to look after the environment.

This evening we heard from the member for Maiwar, who said that there have been enough changes—39 changes over the past 20 years—to the legislation. Earlier today we heard from the member for Caloundra, who spoke about the plea from farmers for certainty. This state is looking for investment. We are wanting to send a message to the rest of Australia that Queensland is a great place to live and invest. Unfortunately, we undermine any certainty that investors could have in Queensland because, from one government to the next, from one dodgy piece of legislation to the next, for some 20 or 30 years now we have seen Labor continuing to attack business and farmers in this state.

We have before us another raft of changes that are simply not affordable. I love it when constituents come to me and say, 'Do you know what the government needs to do? We need some more rules,' or, 'We need to spend some more money on something in the community,' or, 'We need to fund another program.' I always say to them, 'What you are actually saying is, "Please tax me more. Please give me another tax. Please put up the cost of living for me and my family."'

Every time we ask for more rules, every time we impose more costs on business and on farmers—and dare I just say 'farmers' because if my mother-in-law were here she would say to me, 'We're graziers, not farmers'—and graziers, we are putting up the prices of food in our supermarkets, we are creating more job losses across the state, we are making our businesses and our farms and our cattle properties less and less sustainable and we are restricting our opportunities for exports to drive the economy.

At the end of the day, who pays? We do. That is the problem with Labornomics. The members opposite do not understand how the economy works. They think that we can keep putting up the costs, we can keep introducing more red tape, we can strip away more and more entitlements, we can undermine people's investments and somehow everything is going to be hunky-dory. It will not.

Like many of my colleagues, I spoke to some of those who were gathered here yesterday at the rally out the front of Parliament House. Some of those families are absolutely heartbroken. They are already doing it tough and all this legislation does is simply put another layer of burden and impost on them. It is simply not fair.

The LNP is the party that stands up for the people in rural and regional Queensland. We care about business and understand how tough it is to make a dollar in a state where the government keeps introducing more and more costs and imposing more and more green ideology on the way business should be conducted. The world is crushing in on us. Those on the other side of the House would do well to consider the future of the Queensland economy. The hypocrisy on the other side of the House is breathtaking: it is not okay to clear land or to maintain land for agricultural purposes—growing food that feeds people and generates prosperity is bad, but it is perfectly okay to allocate and clear prime agricultural land and add to the issue of endangered species by building more solar farms.


Somehow importing more solar panels from Germany and China and hiding all the dirty practices that go with making those solar panels, because we do not want to talk about that, and killing off the mining and agricultural industries in Queensland is better for the economy. The only jobs that we see Labor producing are more jobs in sweatshops in China and Germany and other factories by encouraging policy to build great big solar farms, strip away jobs in the mining industry, disparage hardworking businesses and farmers and take away their land. Those opposite do not like to hear the truth. They do not think about these issues and that is the problem.

Frankly, the proposed changes in this legislation are an absolute disgrace. We have heard from the farmers that they are working hard to comply with the requirements of the past legislation that former member Andrew Cripps brought to this House and fought so hard for. I spoke with farmers yesterday and I have spoken with members of my family who are on the land. I have been to Charleville and up to Mount Ravenswood. For some 10 or 15 years I have spent holidays with my sons working with cattle and fencing some of the waterways around my in-laws' properties. I can assure the House that the farmers and graziers of Queensland are working hard to protect the environment.

There is a next generation of farmers and graziers out there and we should be proud of them because they understand that sustainability is the key to the future. They understand that the key to the future security of their kids is to put in place good farming and clearing practices. Some of the draconian commentary that we have heard from the other side of the House suggesting that farmers drive around with D9s and clear vegetation may have been true back in the forties and fifties, the post war era in

Australia when there was a flurry of uneducated activity to get the nation going, but that is not the case today. Frankly, it is an absolute insult to suggest that the farmers and graziers of Queensland are not responsible with their practices.

I am conscious of the fact that I am running out of time, but I do want to share a story with the House. The member for Callide and I have a common interest in Target Downs. The member for Callide is now the owner of Target Downs. Some 30-odd years ago I spent two weeks of my honeymoon at Target Downs feeding cattle off the back of a truck and refuelling molasses licks. That area was so badly drought stricken that we chose to take time to go out and support our family who were doing it really tough. We know what it is like to do it tough on the land. I know firsthand how hard farmers and graziers are working for Queensland. Frankly, those on the other side of the House should hang their heads in shame that they would even dare to get up and speak in favour of such draconian legislation.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.54 pm): Everybody in Queensland needs a farmer. Yesterday out the front of parliament I was moved by the placards young boys and girls had hanging around their shoulders that read, 'I want to be a farmer like my dad,' and 'I want to be a farmer like my mum.' For farmers to drop their tools, leave their farms and come to the city, the capital of Queensland, to protest against intervention by the state means so much more than a bunch of union members on their lunch break protesting out the front of parliament. These farmers are not protestors. That is not how they do things. They just want to grow food and leave a legacy for their children.

Earlier the Premier talked about flying into Winton to open the Waltzing Matilda Centre. Flying into Winton did not give the Premier the opportunity to hear what the people wanted the Premier to hear about. In fact, I have seen an email sent to the Premier's office today which said that the only reason that farmers did not boo the Premier is that they respected that it was the opening of the Waltzing Matilda Centre and they did not think it appropriate. The Premier left in a hurry. She did not have the capacity to stay there and talk to the farmers about vegetation management.

Disappointingly, the member for Cook said she was not going to be told what to do by Canberra politicians. Perhaps the member for Cook needs to read the submissions that were put in to the committee inquiring into the vegetation management laws. I quote from the dissenting report by LNP members, where they quote some of the most scathing criticism of this legislation that came from the Cairns hearing, firstly from Mr Shannon Burns, a policy officer from the Cape York Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. He said—

The amendments to the Vegetation Management Act proposed by this bill would have significant impacts on Aboriginal land on Cape York.

Mr Gerhard Pearson, executive officer of the Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, said—

Mr Chairman, yes, this law may very well pass, it is poison law, but we will not rest, we will fight until the next government comes in and changes this law. That is our commitment here today. It is bad law.

Member for Cook, they are not Canberra politicians; they are your constituents of Far North Queensland saying that it is poison law.

What gets me most angry about this debate is if one goes on Google Earth and takes a screenshot of the city of Brisbane and South-East Queensland, and one looks at the people protesting out the front in the Greens movement today and the member for Maiwar as a member of the Greens in this parliament, they live in a concrete jungle. They come out of their concrete jungle, they go to their concrete cafes every morning for their drinks and they protest about farmers who have been managing their land for hundreds of years. If one gets that bird's eye view of Brisbane and South-East Queensland and then looks at the protestors, the farmers and those pro the vegetation management laws, tell me who has not managed the land—those living in a concrete jungle in a city or the farmers who continue to develop their land?


Every farmer knows that if they wreck the land they lose their livelihood. Farmers in Queensland are the best protectors of the environment and the land that we have in this state. I do not think farmers should be lectured to by inner city elites who leave their air-conditioned apartments every morning, go and work in the city and then come here and protest about vegetation management laws. These elitists would not have stepped foot in regional and rural Queensland, but they expect to go to the markets every Saturday and Sunday and get their fresh groceries. They want all their fresh produce, but do they not think where it comes from? Do they not think of the many hours of labour that has gone in to preparing that food to sell at the grocery stores or the markets? That is why I oppose this legislation. I oppose this legislation as a South-East Queensland member of parliament.

I have never been a farmer, although I have family members who were pig farmers. I am not going to come in here and tell farmers that I know best for rural and regional Queensland. What I will do as a South-East Queensland member is back them and stand up for them. I will end where I started: everyone in Queensland needs a farmer.

Debate, on motion of Dr Lynham, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Water Prices

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.00 pm): I rise to inform the House of the concerns of Redland residents about Labor's pending water price hike. I have heard from local residents and businesses that they are worried about the future financial climate in the Cleveland district under Labor. The cost of living and the cost of doing business is becoming unsustainable for many. Under Labor, the SEQ bulk water price will increase by nine per cent or \$88 for Redland residents. That price hike makes our water increases the largest in South-East Queensland.


Our water used to be cheap. The former Redland shire council had the foresight to plan, secure and construct the necessary water infrastructure for our valuable water resources and kept water price increases low. However, the once-cheap local Redlands water does its circuit around Labor's Seqwater network and comes back dramatically more expensive as state bulk water. When Labor seized control of Redlands water, they failed to tell local residents and businesses how very expensive their decision would be.

Today, owners of local businesses, such as Pierre's Cafe, are worried. Pierre's Cafe is a local Cleveland business located in Middle Street, owned and operated by Sharon Milne. Sharon was so angry about the water price rises and the impacts of Labor policy on her business that she was prepared to speak out about it on ABC TV news recently. After seeing the story on the news, I met with Sharon. She told me that the water price rise will impact her business negatively, which will be placed under unnecessary pressure. She is concerned about the increased costs to run the cafe, with increased power bills and now increased water bills.

She is concerned about the impact on some of her customers who are already feeling the pressure of the increased cost of living. She said that those costs have to be paid for in some way. She asked what small businesses like hers are supposed to do to make ends meet. Sharon suggested that Labor's water price rises would put pressure on the costs of goods and services, and upon staffing. Would she pass costs on to customers if at all possible, although not desirable? Would she be able to keep her staff in the same levels of employment?

Unlike Labor, small businesses have to balance the books and live within their means. The local businesses of Redland City and South-East Queensland cannot afford the next two years of this Labor government and certainly they cannot afford a federal Shorten Labor government. Under the LNP government, the costs of living and doing business were lower. Small business growth and job creation were up and unnecessary compliance measures, red tape and green tape were reduced. Labor's higher water prices mean my local residents and small businesses are out of pocket. The costs of goods and services will be under pressure to rise and jobs will be put at risk. It is time for Labor to listen to the pleas of my community and stop treating small businesses like cash cows.

Redlands Electorate, Educators

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.04 pm): I start by offering my condolences to the Webber family on the passing of much-loved local John Webber, who was an outstanding contributor to the Redlands. Tonight I proudly rise to say thank you to all our educators. I know what a pillar of our community they are and of the hard work and dedication that they put into shaping the young minds and hearts of Queenslanders. However, I have to say how embarrassed I am by the comments and inferences continually made by the federal member, Andrew Laming, about our teachers. He did it again yesterday while suffering from a moment of relevance deprivation. I want to say how out of touch he is with our community.

Today it was really interesting to hear the hypocrisy of members from the other side of this House who talked about education, when a federal member from their side of politics slams teachers and does not support our kids. That is a real shame. Time and time again Mr Laming has demonstrated how out

of touch he is with our community. I call on the member for Oodgeroo to stand with our community and say enough is enough and to let Mr Laming know that he backs our Redlands teachers and not Mr Laming's media tactics.

Over many months I have had the privilege of meeting with the principals and teachers of the Redlands. I can tell the House that they do an incredible job. Last week I had the opportunity to catch up with a number of principals and teachers in school visits and Anzac Day celebrations. Principal Steinhardt at Victoria Point State High School, Principal Bancroft at Cleveland District State High School, Principal Seawright at Macleay Island State School, Principal Barnett at Russell Island State School, Dr Lyn Bishop at Sheldon College and Principal Wilton at Thornlands State School are all doing a fantastic job.

The detail and quality of the Anzac Day celebrations and ceremonies were outstanding. Our teachers are not only teachers; they transform into historians, poets, scientists, mathematicians, artists, dancers, athletes and so much more, each and every day. The talents of our teachers and their dedication and passion for their profession go beyond the concept of an eight-hour day.


At Victoria Point State High School I spoke at length with Principal Steinhardt and students on the importance of reading and the lifelong joy reading provides. It has been wonderful to see the Premier's Reading Challenge being embraced by the schools in my community. We know how important it is, both at home and in our schools, to have a lifelong love of reading.

At Sheldon College I was impressed with two amazing young ladies who have started to convert a shipping container into a demonstration model of crisis housing for victims of domestic violence. Through skills in design, planning, programming and construction, this project demonstrates big thinking by those young ladies and they have been supported by many in our community.

During Queensland antibullying week, it was wonderful to meet with Principal Manthey and the students at Victoria Point State High School to talk about how they can help to stamp out bullying in schools. Next week, I will host a youth antibullying forum with students from across the Redlands to—

(Time expired)

Passenger Transport Compliance

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (7.07 pm): I have always said that the best way to get on top of your brief as a shadow minister is to actually get out from behind the desk and see what is going on. To this end, a couple of Saturday nights ago, on 21 April, from 11.30 pm until just after 2 am, I undertook a taxi industry field trip into the Valley and the CBD. I joined taxi rank coordinators Len and John, along with Ronny from Black & White Cabs. We ventured into the Valley nightclub precinct, as well as the CBD pubs and clubs precinct. On that particular night, there were huge numbers in the Valley, whilst crowd numbers appeared moderate in the CBD. The taxi rank coordinators informed me that that situation can reverse, depending on the night of the week. We also popped into the ChaplainWatch program run by Lance Merghard. I congratulate him and his crew for the excellent job they do.

I have been told by many different stakeholders that since late last year when the regulations were changed to incorporate rideshare operators things have been getting out of hand. Let me stress that this speech is not about bagging rideshare operators or taxi operators. It is about providing a level playing field. It is about compliance or, moreover, a complete lack thereof. I saw major traffic congestion. I saw young men and women jaywalking and ducking in and out of traffic. I observed rideshare vehicles—and I know they were, because they displayed their company identification logos on their front and rear windscreens—taking up bus lanes so that public transport could not get through. It took forever to get through signalised intersections because of the free-for-all that was occurring. To be frank, it was a free-for-all between rideshare operators and taxis. It needs much better TMR compliance. In fact, it really was a complete cluster.


I am not sure whether the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, after pouring himself a chai latte and munching on a lentil burger after attending to his private emails, has ever ventured out to see the consequences of an industry that is seemingly bereft of compliance. If Minister Bailey is listening to this contribution then I suggest that he should.

Despite the pleas of various stakeholders requesting that TMR compliance officers actually start getting out and about to ensure that taxi operators and rideshare operators are complying with the relevant government regulations, it certainly, on the face of it, does not appear to be happening. I did not see one TMR compliance officer on the night I was out, but that is not to say that they were not there. Allegedly, there was one officer in the Valley for a brief period around 11.05 pm.

In any event, from what I have been told and will investigate further to ascertain, even when a fine is issued by a TMR compliance officer the paperwork takes 30 to 40 minutes. I think a simple iPad or similar app would do it a lot quicker. TMR needs to crackdown on compliance within the rideshare and taxi industry as a matter of priority.

(Time expired)

Mount Gravatt Community Centre

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.10 pm): I rise tonight to inform the House of the work performed by the Mount Gravatt Community Centre. The centre is located on Logan Road, Mount Gravatt, within the electorate of Mansfield, although the area the centre services is more than 40 suburbs of Brisbane's south side.

The centre began operating more than 25 years ago, with a largely volunteer staff. The driving force behind the centre was dynamic social worker Bernadette Dawson, known as Bernie, and the then newly elected Labor member for Mount Gravatt, Judy Spence. Today the centre offers a range of outreach services to the community, particularly to frail, aged community members and those with a disability through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, Queensland Community Care and Home Assist Secure. Mount Gravatt Community Centre, through its first contact team, maintenance and modification teams and almost 60 contractors, assist vulnerable community members to live safely and securely in their own homes.


Community members are able to access a range of services provided at the centre through the Neighbourhood Centre Program. Last year almost 1,300 food parcels were distributed by volunteers to those in need. Clients can also access free tax help, no interest loans for the purchase of whitegoods, counselling and wellbeing programs. The seniors social group, Paint Pals, and the ukulele groups are just some of the more than 30 social groups that meet at the centre every month. In 2014 the centre negotiated the purchase of the adjoining property and refurbished it as a community asset.

The building named Bernie's Place after Bernie Dawson has become a valuable community meeting place. Bernie's Place was officially opened by the Hon. Judy Spence, a life member of the centre.

The incredible work performed by the Mount Gravatt Community Centre is a result of a hardworking and dedicated team of paid staff led by Centre Manager, Deb Crompton; Community Engagement Coordinator, Denise Foley; and Maintenance Coordinator, Lisa Stanhope. Mention should also be made of the contribution of the long-serving president of the board of the Mount Gravatt Community Centre, Ian Lang—a true Mansfield community champion. The centre is now ably led by president Toni McDonald.

Organisations such as this centre provide a vital service to those in need in our community. I am proud to say that it has been through the policies of successive Queensland Labor governments that the much needed funding has been and will continue to be provided to community organisations like the Mount Gravatt Community Centre so that their important work can continue.

Gunn, Mrs L; Lockyer Electorate, Water Security

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.13 pm): I pay tribute to a wonderful, gentle lady and great community contributor. On Monday, 30 April 2018 Mrs Lorna Gunn passed away. Lorna is best known as the lovely wife of former member of this chamber Bill Gunn, the deputy premier from 1983 to 1989. Bill Gunn was a champion of Queensland and the regions and best known for establishing the Fitzgerald inquiry, being a key organizer for Expo 88, promoting and delivering many multimillion dollar regional infrastructure projects and securing funding for bulletproof vests for police officers in Queensland.

Lorna was a wonderful lady, proud and absolutely genuine. As sad as any death is, at 88 Lorna was still in very good health and was expected to live for many more years. Illness came over her just a few days before her passing. Our thoughts are with Lorna and Bill's family—Dr Bill, Morrie, Dr Jennifer, Helen, Karen and their families. Lorna Gunn, a lovely yet gentle, proud lady, rest in peace. Lorna's funeral will be on Wednesday next week.

I will use the balance of my time this evening to speak about an exciting initiative in Lockyer. The Lockyer state electorate overlaps the Lockyer Valley Regional Council area and part of the Somerset Regional Council area. I commend the leadership of these local governments in putting their combined

weight behind the fight for long-term water security. Mayor Tanya Milligan of the Lockyer Valley Regional Council and Mayor Graeme Lehmann of the Somerset Regional Council and their council teams have joined together to form the Lockyer Valley and Somerset Water Collaborative.


Importantly, this initiative brings together stakeholders with a common vision of improving water security for both regions. The group is made up of the Lockyer Valley and Somerset regional councils, Queensland Urban Utilities, the Lockyer Water Users Forum, the Lockyer Valley Growers Inc. and the Lockyer Chamber of Commerce & Industry. An independent chair and project manager, Mr Stephen Robertson—a person well known in this House—has been appointed to assist with the strategic direction, to work with industry and to focus on outcomes for water security.

President Michael Sippel of the Lockyer Valley Growers Inc. put it well when he said—

A secure water supply will give confidence to the region's horticulture and industry. We have a huge interest in export markets now, not just domestic ... Water has a massive impact on us.

I look forward to fully supporting the Lockyer Valley and Somerset Water Collaborative and will continue to fight for water security for our region.

Building Ministers' Forum

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (7.16 pm): Whilst the opposition has been engaged in their usual gutter politics, vilifying the character of social housing tenants in Queensland once again, I have been working on behalf of all Queenslanders to protect their safety by making buildings safer. Last Friday I spent the day in Melbourne with Australia's state, territory and Commonwealth building ministers at the national Building Ministers' Forum.

We agreed on Friday to something quite historic. We agreed to release the Shergold Weir report. This report applauded Queensland's handling of the issue of combustible cladding in this state. Members have heard me refer to this on several occasions. I have been pursuing this particular issue with some vigour because of the large number of tradesmen and women and people working in the construction sector whom I represent in the electorate of Springwood.

One of the authors of the report, leading construction lawyer Bronwyn Weir, stated—

Many continue to argue that swathing buildings in solid petrol was allowed or is not really a problem, reflecting a culture of denial and buck passing.

She goes on to state—


These are not signals that there is a problem, they are sirens.

When legislation allows industry to do things which are dangerous we have seen some operators in the industry, particularly in the construction of high-rise buildings, who take it to mean that it is okay to put Queenslanders at risk and to put constituents of my electorate at risk. That is why the Palaszczuk government last year took nation-leading action. This House agreed to legislation to make every link in the building supply chain responsible for the products they supply. An important part of our work was to ban polyethylene composite cladding on government construction. We took the firm view that the construction workers, firies and other emergency services workers who call Springwood home should not be left at risk.

Our Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce has been working steadily as well in the background to identify potential cladding issues on government buildings. One of the biggest issues that we came up with in that process was the issue of product substitution and not being able to tell what a building is clad in. Once the cladding is on it is very expensive to remove and identify.

Our work in Melbourne last Friday involved a proposal to the Building Ministers' Forum to institute a system of permanent labelling on all cladding products. We achieved an historic agreement around that. Not only have we agreed to the recommendations in the Shergold Weir report but we have put on track a new system of safety for construction workers in this state that will ensure the safety of Queenslanders for generations to come.

Mount Morgan


 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (7.19 pm): I stand here in this adjournment debate to talk about Mount Morgan and its important history and how it has propped up this House. Mount Morgan actually pulled Queensland out of debt twice in its history. I would also like to talk about the fact that Mount Morgan was such a rich mine. For every tonne of dirt that was taken out of the ground there was a beer

carton size piece of gold. Recently at Mount Morgan the Carbine Resources project has fallen over, leaving a million ounces of gold in the ground. It has been left behind. It is unfortunate that Mount Morgan feels left behind as well.

There are a couple of projects at Mount Morgan that I would like to put forward to the House that we could work together on that would ensure financial stability for Mount Morgan and increase employment. The first project is to do with the dinosaur footprints in the caves at Mount Morgan. They are still doing tests and inquiring into how safe it is going to be to get into the caves. There is also a project to do with the railway line and reconstituting some of the steam trains they have. It would be great for tourism to take some of the railway line back and have steam trains running at Mount Morgan again.

I wanted to bring these projects to the attention of the House. Mount Morgan is a very important place and it has been an important place for Queensland. It has built the sandstone buildings that we are standing in now. Going forward I would like to make tourism a priority and maybe revisit mining in the area. These things are very dear to my heart. I know after all of the time I have spent there that the people of Mount Morgan really want to be heard here in this House.

Bulimba Electorate, Traffic Congestion

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (7.21 pm): In my electorate we are right in the middle of a consultation which goes to the heart of one of our most critical issues, and that is traffic congestion, particularly in the Bulimba peninsula suburbs of Balmoral, Bulimba and Hawthorne. Although we are only five kilometres from the city and it takes us 10 minutes to get to the city on the weekend, in peak hour on week days this completely blows out. Literally, if you have not got to Galloways Hill by 7 am then you will be sitting in your car for an hour.


Tackling traffic congestion in general is a big priority for me and for the Palaszczuk government. It is why we have already delivered on some important projects that will make a real difference. Those projects include Cross River Rail—projected to take 18,500 cars off the road and cut public transport travel time; Fairer Fares—the massive reduction in public transport fares we brought in last year; and upgrades of the park-and-rides at Murarrie and Cannon Hill stations, making public transport more accessible. There is more we can do and there is more we need to do it.

Traffic congestion is literally affecting our way of life. We are spending too much time in the car and away from our families and friends. Some parents are even dropping their kids off at child care at 6.30 in the morning to avoid the traffic. Everyone always has lots of ideas about what we need to do to solve this problem locally, and I know there is not one way alone that will do it. What I also know is that we need to finally identify all of those potential solutions and put some plans in place. It is why I lobbied hard last year, with magnificent support from my community, to get funding for a study to channel all of the fantastic suggestions of local residents into a way forward and to apply some science to our issues.

I thank the Deputy Premier and former minister for transport and the current Minister for Transport for always listening to me about this. I am sure they are both quite sick of me, but they nevertheless 'get' the pressures on an inner-city electorate. As a result, I was delighted to be able to go to the election last year promising a detailed investigation into the best long-term options to address our local transport and traffic congestion issues.

The resulting Bulimba Peninsula Transport and Congestion Study—the community consultation phase—is now being undertaken. The study will deliver some definitive direction about the best initiatives to pursue to start addressing our local issues. As always, my wonderful local community is engaging and participating all over the place. I have so valued the feedback I have received so far. There have been fantastic conversations, great ideas, excellent and thoughtful submissions, and a positive approach to working together for the future. I thank everyone involved in getting us this far, from the ministers down. Most of all, I thank local residents for working alongside me on an issue that is so important to all of us.

Coomera Electorate, Anzac Day


 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.24 pm): I know that we all would have attended several Anzac Day ceremonies. They are very special events in all of our communities. It is a commemoration of all of the wars that Australians and New Zealanders have been involved in over the last more than 100 years. One special commemoration occurred at Woongoolba in my electorate. I speak about it because it is a very young one, although the area is very old. I think the school has been there for 145

years. The cenotaph has been there for only a handful of years. It is all thanks to a dedicated local—a fellow by the name of Zeke Wulff, who has lived in Steiglitz for a long time. That commemoration for our Anzacs is situated at the Woongoolba Bowls Club.

It was particularly special. We had 500 or 600 people there. That is quite an achievement given the small local community that we are talking about. It was particularly special because the community gave Zeke Wulff a special award, a dedicated commitment award for the efforts that he has put in over the last five or so years to bring that special Anzac Day moment each year, and of course 11 November as well, to the local community—something that has not really been there for all of these years, even though Woongoolba and its surrounds has been a thriving community over that time.

I took the opportunity at one of the school ceremonies to talk to year 12 students in particular about Anzac Day and the fact that Anzac Day is a commemoration, not a celebration. In having that conversation with them, I reminded them that in commemorating what those soldiers have done for them that does bring about a celebration, and that is the celebration of the freedoms that we enjoy as a community, the freedoms that we as Australians and New Zealanders and, indeed, the Western world enjoy as a result of those soldiers—more than 100,000 soldiers—who lost their lives and made the ultimate sacrifice for those freedoms. There is no doubt that it is a commemoration, but there is a celebration in it in that we can now celebrate the freedoms that we all enjoy here in Australia and, indeed, right around the world.

Port of Townsville

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.27 pm): With just a week to go before the federal budget is handed down, I want to ensure that North Queensland's voice is heard loudly in regard to the federal funding required for our port expansion in Townsville. We know that the expansion cannot go ahead unless the federal government matches the \$75 million that our proud state government has put up for the dredging and widening of the Port of Townsville.

Our Townsville port is North Queensland's major port. We are home to the largest port in northern Australia. Our proud Labor government knows the importance of the \$14 billion the port adds to the state's economy and its importance to Townsville's history in that Townsville was built on the back of the port in 1863. There is a \$1.64 billion port expansion plan to grow and develop our port, and our proud Townsville community holds dear the fact that we held the port in government hands when the LNP and Newman had plans to sell off the lot.

Why then is the federal government not matching our state funding to grow and develop our port? It is because the state LNP and Malcolm Turnbull have gone cold on Townsville. One has to ask the question: is it because we have a Labor elected federal member? We hope not. Townsville has no time for silly political games. It is time for the state LNP and Malcolm Turnbull to stomp up, get behind us and back Townsville. I do not want to see another Townsville stadium debacle where the Prime Minister came in at the eleventh hour and 59th minute, dragged kicking and screaming to co-fund the North Queensland Stadium.

On water security we have done it again, with \$225 million in funding for the 36-kilometre pipeline to make sure that Townsville has water security for its future development. We also know that this trunk infrastructure is going to attract major industry. As for the federal government, cue the crickets. As for the state LNP, cue the crickets. I can walk around Riverway or down The Strand with a picture of Senator Ian Macdonald and ask: who is this man and what has he done for Townsville? What about the lone LNP member for North Queensland, the member for Burdekin, Dale Last? We have not heard a sound, not a peep—silence.

They are supposed to stand up and back us on the Townsville City Deal; we have heard nothing. Bill Shorten is listening. He has committed \$100 million to stage 2 of the water pipeline; there has been nothing from the federal government. I received \$36 million as part of our election commitments to start stage 5 of the Townsville Ring Road; there has been nothing from the federal government. That is a major infrastructure project to deliver real jobs in North Queensland, in our city of Townsville. I say to the federal members: do something. I say to the state LNP members: find some intestinal fortitude to pick up the phone and tell the federal government that they need to back us on the Townsville City Deal and get funding for key infrastructure and jobs in Townsville.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson