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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 20 September 2018

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THURSDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 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.

REPORT

Information Commissioner



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Information Commissioner a report titled *Annual report 2017-18*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Office of the Information Commissioner—Annual Report 2017-18 [[1392](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that this morning we will be visited in the House by students and teachers from Quinalow State School in the electorate of Condamine and St Joseph's Primary School, Nambour in the electorate of Nicklin.

PETITIONS

The following lodged paper and e-petitions, sponsored by the Clerk are now closed and presented—

Abortion Laws

From 39,459 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the proposed abortion law reform bill [[1393](#), [1394](#), [1395](#), [1396](#)].

The following lodged e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk is now closed and presented—

Police Memorial Process; Isles, Senior Sergeant M

From 202 petitioners, requesting the House to apply consistent application of Police Memorial Process and "memorialise" the recognition of Queensland Police Senior Sergeant Michael Isles [[1397](#)].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles)—

[1398](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles) to a paper petition (2984-18), presented by Mr Bennett, from 491 petitioners, and two ePetitions (2901-18) and (2918-18) sponsored by Mr Bennett, from 54 and 85 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to provide a Pain Management Specialist at the Bundaberg Hospital to support sufferers of chronic pain conditions

[1399](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (2999-18) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (2971-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 24 and 3,032 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to commence an inquiry by the Health Committee into better end of life choices and voluntary assisted dying no later than October 2018 to allow debate and submissions and tabling of a bill within this term of government

Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. Palaszczuk)—

[1400](#) Interim response from the Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. Palaszczuk), to an ePetition (2894-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 398 petitioners, requesting the House to consider amending the Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) to include the following offences: cyber-bullying, bullying which results in psychological and self-harm and inciting suicide; and amend the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and the Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995 to include bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour punishable in accordance with the Acts. Such amendments to be known as Breannah's Law

[1401](#) Response from the Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. Palaszczuk), to an ePetition (2959-18) sponsored by Mr Berkman, from 210 petitioners, requesting the House to refer an inquiry to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to consider such amendments to the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the terms and conditions that would relax restrictions around the use of Parliamentary material, publications and broadcasts for satirical purpose

Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. Farmer)—

[1402](#) Response from the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. Farmer), to an ePetition (2914-18) sponsored by Mr Knuth, from 1,705 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce youth crime in regional Queensland within 12 months and adopt Relocation Sentencing incorporating the Petford Program for young offenders

Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch)—

[1403](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), to an ePetition (2964-18) sponsored by Mr Sorensen, from 1,115 petitioners, requesting the House to extend the period of the Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement reviewing the management of protected wildlife (animals) in Queensland under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to allow for adequate consultation with stakeholders

Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace)—

[1404](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace), to an ePetition (2902-18) sponsored by Mr Molhoek from 124 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the proposed telecommunications facility to be located at Baratta Street, Southport, is moved to a more suitable location away from the Southport State School

[1405](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace), to a paper petition (2983-18), presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) from 1,027 petitioners, requesting the House to permit Woolworths in Mission Beach to open on Sundays and public holidays and grant exemption to the present laws that no new applications be granted in country areas until 2022

[1406](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace), to a paper petition (2985-18) presented by Mr McArdle and an ePetition (2941-18) sponsored by Mr McArdle, from 1,200 and 331 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to fast-track the construction and opening of Baringa State High School (Caloundra South High School) for the 2020 school year

[1407](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace), to an ePetition (2910-18) sponsored by Mr Perrett, from 887 petitioners, requesting the House to establish a public inquiry into the harm and deaths caused by bullying in our schools

Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey)—


[1408](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2938-18) sponsored by Ms Boyd, from 110 petitioners, requesting the House to implement plans for a duplication or upgrade to the Linkfield/Telegraph Road overpass to meet growing population in the Warner/Eatons Hill area

[1409](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2926-18) sponsored by Mr Boothman, from 1,416 petitioners, requesting the House to stop installation of the solar panels at exit 57 of the M1 Pacific Motorway and install a slip lane on this land to ease traffic congestion at the intersection


[1410](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (2986-18) presented by Ms Leahy and an ePetition (2956-18) sponsored by Ms Leahy from 383 and 318 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to urgently reduce the speed limit on the Warrego Highway in the built up area of Yuleba to 60km/h

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Whitsunday Island, Shark Attack

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 am): The Whitsunday islands are one of Queensland's greatest tourism assets, with turquoise water and brilliant white beaches known and loved around the world. Like so many Queenslanders, last night I was horrified to hear details of a shark attack on a Tasmanian tourist at Cid Harbour on Whitsunday Island. I understand the person is in a critical but stable condition in Mackay Base Hospital after a complex rescue operation. That operation involved two separate helicopter airlifts, first to Proserpine and then Mackay. I extend my thanks to the calm professionalism once again displayed by our police, paramedics and other rescue services in dealing with this incident. On behalf of the House, I offer to the woman involved our best wishes and prayers for a speedy recovery.

Invictus Games

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.34 am): The word 'invictus' comes from the Latin, meaning 'unconquered' or 'undefeated'. This year, Queensland will send 31 unconquered and undefeated athletes to the Invictus Games, to be held in Sydney next month. So strong is the Queensland contingent that they represent nearly half of the Australian team. Queensland has a long history of punching above our weight when it comes to sport. At the recent 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Queenslanders made up a quarter of the Australian team and we brought home nearly half of Australia's medal tally.


However, as much as sport is about winning, the Invictus Games is about so much more. When His Royal Highness Prince Harry launched the first Invictus Games in 2014, he said the Games would 'demonstrate the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and demonstrate life beyond disability'. All of the Invictus athletes are returned service men and women who have sustained illness or injury in the line of duty. We could not be more proud that they will be representing not only Queensland but also Australia.

I look forward to meeting Australian Team Captain Nicole Bradley and other Queensland athletes at Parliament House today, along with the Minister for Sport, Mick de Brenni. I also extend my welcome to Invictus Games representatives Brigadier Phil Winter, Wing Commander David Worrall and Warrant Officer Geoffrey Stokes.


I will also be announcing that we are extending the Queensland Academy of Sport's Bonus Grants Scheme, on top of the in-kind support already provided to assist them. My government has been proud to support athletes on their journey to the Invictus Games by providing access to Queensland Academy of Sport facilities for training. The QAS also provided specialist knowledge in performance health, including sport and exercise psychology and nutrition, as well as strength and conditioning.

Today will be a very special day. I congratulate all of our Invictus Games athletes. I wish them the very best for the upcoming competition. They have already proven that they are unconquerable. They are Invictus.

Drought Appeal, Reception

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): This evening, for a few brief shining hours, there will be no politics at Parliament House. We will come together to do our small bit for the drought. I want to once again thank the sponsors who have generously donated goods so that profits can go directly to the people who need them. Those sponsors include, not to name all of them but just a few: Suncorp, Nolan Meats, Sunpork, Gold Coast Tiger Prawns, Australian Prawn Farmers, Bingil Bay Barramundi, Creative Cuisine and Oatley. There are also generous raffle and auction items, including cruises and family holidays out west. I will join you, Mr Speaker, and the Leader of the Opposition, along with 500 guests, parliamentary staff and members of this House in what I believe will be a truly bipartisan event.

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers; Governing from the Regions

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.37 am): As many of us attend the Drought Appeal Reception tonight, thousands of visitors are descending on Toowoomba for the start of this year's Carnival of Flowers. Under my government, Toowoomba's tourism economy has grown by more than \$110 million. In that time, the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers has also blossomed.

This year's event is tipped to generate around \$14 million for the local economy. In 2016, we saw more than 120,000 visitors come through the gates. That grew to more than 141,000 last year. We know that this year's Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers will be bigger and better than ever.


The Carnival of Flowers is a fitting way to begin a week that will see my government governing from Toowoomba. Just like the Carnival of Flowers, the community of Toowoomba is growing. It has its own international airport and it needs it, because it is one of Queensland's biggest food bowls, as well as being one of the state's fastest growing regional centres. Whether its record investment in health, education, roads or job-creating projects, we are delivering for Toowoomba. We are investing \$469 million in the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, you are not off to a good start. Please cease interjecting. I believe the Premier is providing a factual ministerial statement. There is no need for interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I would mention to the honourable member that my cabinet is looking forward to spending the week governing from Toowoomba. We will be out and about, visiting many places right across Toowoomba. We might even bump into a member or two up there. This financial year we are investing \$55 million in schools in the Toowoomba region and more than 1,000 locals have gone through the hugely successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, because we are a government that represents and delivers for all of Queensland. We never have and we never will take Toowoomba for granted.

Toowoomba Region, Infrastructure

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.39 am): In our budget earlier this year the Palaszczuk government committed to spend \$45.8 billion over the next four years on infrastructure across our state. This represents the highest infrastructure spend since the 2011 Queensland floods and will go to supporting some 38,000 jobs this year alone.

We know that building the infrastructure we need to preserve our great lifestyle is critical to support Queensland's growing population. This is especially important in cities like Toowoomba, which is increasingly becoming a regional hub for emerging industries in education, health services and trade. That is why this year's budget continues our track record of delivering much needed infrastructure to support the Toowoomba and Darling Downs regions.


The Palaszczuk government is delivering over \$1.2 billion of infrastructure for the region in this financial year alone, representing \$4,400 for every man, woman and child in the region—well above the state average. This spend will also support around 4,100 local jobs in 2018-19. This includes key roads projects, as the Premier has already mentioned, like the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing—a \$1.606 billion, 41-kilometre project which is supporting up to 1,800 full-time jobs during construction—and the \$635 million Warrego Highway upgrade program with \$150.8 million allocated in 2018-19.

There is the redevelopment of Roma Hospital, which took a Labor government to deliver, with \$40 million to be spent over the financial year out of a total of \$90 million for this key regional health precinct. It will deliver additional patient beds, birthing suites, operating rooms and accommodation for families or people having to travel long distances for day surgery. This is in addition to a \$950.9 million annual spend on health services across the region.

There is funding towards fire station upgrades for Yarraman, Charlton and Dirranbandi, a new ambulance station for Drayton and significant upgrades for Toowoomba TAFE. We are also investing in the important education infrastructure Toowoomba and the Darling Downs needs for the future with the 2018-19 budget providing \$12 million to deliver a new building for Harristown State High School, \$5.6 million for additional classrooms at Highfields State Secondary College, \$3.6 million for an early years service at Tara Shire State College, \$8.9 million for a new performing arts centre at Centenary Heights State High and \$2.8 million for new classrooms at Dalby State School.

The Palaszczuk Labor government knows that to grow Queensland's economy we must invest in the infrastructure needed in our key regional centres. This is just a sample of investments that we are making in Toowoomba and surrounds. Like the Premier and my cabinet colleagues, I am very much looking forward to visiting Toowoomba next week to govern from Toowoomba and discuss the work we are doing alongside the community to grow the local economy and set up the region for the future.


Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (9.42 am): Toowoomba's tourism economy has gone from strength to strength under the Palaszczuk government. Since 2014 we have grown Toowoomba's tourism economy by more than 40 per cent. In that same period we have more than doubled the number of visitor nights in the region. I am proud to say that, thanks to our investment in regional tourism, these numbers are set to grow, just like a flower.

As the Premier has said this morning, the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers, which will kick off tonight, is expected to generate about \$14 million for the region's economy. This festival has gone into full bloom since we elevated it to major events status in 2015. It is an iconic event for the city. I can confirm that starting today we will be welcoming somewhere in the order of 145,000 people to the great city of Toowoomba. With the international attention that this event has attracted in 2018, we know this number will continue to grow into the future.

We invest in major events because we know they deliver a strong return particularly for local businesses in communities. For every dollar we invest in major events, tourism operators get \$10 back. That is why we have thrown our support behind the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers, elevating the festival to major event status. My family and I are looking forward to joining all of the people in Toowoomba for this great event.

Toowoomba, Health Services; Queensland Health, Payroll Deductions

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.43 am): Queensland is one of the safest places in world to give birth. By June 2019 we will have delivered on our election commitment of employing 100 new midwives across all parts of the state. Forty-two will work in rural and regional Queensland. Many of our hospital and health services have also introduced midwifery group practice continuity of care models. These are providing quality, consistent care to women in remote areas. I have also recently established a rural maternity task force. Part of the process for the task force will include visiting rural areas to meet with community members and front-line clinicians.


I am pleased to inform the House about a new, innovative model of care being used in the Darling Downs region to benefit mums and bubs and our future midwives. Toowoomba Hospital has joined with Griffith University to offer student led antenatal clinics, a first for the regional facility. These clinics will help to give practical experience to the next generation of midwives and give them a taste of what it is like to work in a regional hospital. They are also really beneficial to expectant mothers.

Women who receive their antenatal care through this model see the same student midwife right through their pregnancy, labour and birth and transition to motherhood. The clinic is also held after usual business hours, which means more women can attend after work and they are able to bring their partner or support person to the appointment. We are doing everything we can to support our rural and remote clinicians and continue delivering great outcomes for mums and babies.

That is not all we are delivering in health care in the Toowoomba region. The Palaszczuk government is investing a record \$801 million in health care in the Darling Downs region this financial year. This includes a \$15.9 million growth funding boost to help our hardworking doctors and nurses meet the growing demand for services, including 31 new beds at Toowoomba Hospital. On this side of House, we believe that no matter where people live in the Darling Downs region they will have access to high-quality health care. I am looking forward to visiting Toowoomba once again next week.

Like most employers, Queensland Health facilitates payroll deductions on behalf of their employees to charities, unions, health funds and other organisations. Since 2009 Queensland Health has facilitated donations to Australian People for Humanitarian, Educational and Development Abroad, which is a charity registered by the Commonwealth government and a foreign aid organisation registered and funded by DFAT. That arrangement has continued under both Labor and LNP governments. Registration of charities is a responsibility of the federal government not Queensland Health.

Toowoomba Region, Agricultural Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (9.46 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to strengthening Queensland's agricultural trade and investment relationships with our key trading partners. The more people living in Asia who consume our produce, the more jobs created in regional Queensland.

Last week I undertook a trade mission to Japan and South Korea—our second and third largest agricultural export markets. It was great to see so many food products grown and processed on the Darling Downs on supermarket shelves in both Tokyo and Seoul. From high-quality beef from Oakey, to orange juice processed in Warwick, to broccoli grown in the Lockyer Valley, the Darling Downs region is an Asian agricultural powerhouse. That means more local jobs for the region.

I was very encouraged that Queensland beef proved very popular in Japan. Preliminary figures value our beef exports to Japan at \$1.39 billion. Of the 76 countries Queensland sends beef to, Japan is our most valuable customer, with the largest volume and highest value. I am committed to supporting our producers, processors, feedlotters and their partners across the entire beef supply chain to capitalise on future opportunities to expand both our beef exports and investment in the industry.


That is why we have invested \$1.3 million in our export ready grants to help Queensland agriculture businesses prepare for and explore international markets. We are already seeing the benefits of that funding. Queensland's agrifood capabilities now align perfectly with growing demand in

both markets for our premium fruit, vegetables and value added food and beverages. Queensland broccoli, cauliflower, beetroot, mangoes and macadamia nuts have all proven popular with consumers. I met with a broccoli importer in Japan who could not be more impressed with Queensland's produce, and had a Queensland call to rival Billy Moore's.

Queensland exporters that are already operating in Japan and Korea joined me at various events and were highly positive about the trade mission. One recurring theme in the discussions with consumers and importers in both Japan and Korea was the positive, clean and green reputation the Queensland agricultural industry has. Queensland's response has been quick, open and transparent, and this will have been noticed internationally.

This was my first overseas trade mission as Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries. I was proud to represent the Palaszczuk government and our productive, resilient and innovative agricultural sector.


Toowoomba Trades Hall

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (9.49 am): It gives me great pleasure to update the House on the \$100,000 investment the Queensland government is providing for the restoration of the heritage listed Toowoomba Trades Hall. The Toowoomba Trades Hall is a monument to the achievements of workers and the mighty trade union movement in Queensland. The building demonstrates the growth of the labour movement and organisation of workers in Toowoomba during the 20th century and illustrates the city's longstanding historical role as the industrial centre of the Darling Downs.

Like other Queensland cities with significant industrial components to their economy, Toowoomba became a regional centre for union activity. The building has been a central gathering place for unions and the labour movement since its opening. Built in 1934, the building is believed to be Queensland's oldest surviving purpose-built trades hall. Since opening its doors, the building has cemented its place in the community. Not only has the building been used as a meeting place for trade unions; many Toowoomba locals have utilised the much needed hall over the years.

Next week we will be governing from Toowoomba and I will be pleased to see the works. With the Queensland government's support, the building's owners, the Trades Hall Board Toowoomba, will repair the building's roof and ceiling, the hall's stage and the external stairs. The hall will be opened up to its original size. In addition to this, a much needed upgrade to the kitchen will also be completed. This work will preserve the building for many years to come and will enable the community to have better access to, and enjoyment of, this important Toowoomba landmark.

Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.51 am): The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing is a once-in-a-generation project that will give significant benefits for Queenslanders. As Queensland's largest inland city, Toowoomba plays a pivotal role in supporting our state's economy. This project will help to reclaim local roads for residents in Toowoomba and Withcott in the Lockyer Valley by removing heavy vehicles from their local streets.

The project will bypass Toowoomba's central business district, enabling trucks to avoid 18 sets of traffic lights. Redirecting up to 80 per cent of heavy commercial vehicles away from Toowoomba will make roads safer and reduce operating costs for freight. The six interchanges under construction will integrate the new toll road into the national and local transport network.

In partnership with the Australian government, the Palaszczuk government is delivering the 41-kilometre-long road, bypassing Toowoomba's northern side, linking the Warrego Highway at Helidon Spa in the east and the Gore Highway at Athol in the west. This is an economic supercharger that will reduce freight time and improve road safety. As reported earlier this year, a geological issue under an embankment on the range that was not picked up during initial planning will delay the project's completion until around mid-2019. Despite this, I am pleased to report to the House that all other works are well advanced.


The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing has been an impressive feat of engineering. Earthworks are more than 95 per cent completed; the bridge program, which involves 30 bridges, is 95 per cent completed; and large sections of the final road surface are now complete. The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing has also delivered many local jobs to the Garden City. Up to 1,800 direct and

indirect jobs were or are being created. More than 5,000 people have worked on site during construction, with up to 600 people working on site daily at its peak. As of last month, local workforce participation on the project was more than 80 per cent in the total dollar value of contracts.

It would be remiss of me not to highlight the concerns this government has had about safety on this project. We expect all contractors to manage health and safety to the highest standards and comply with their legislative obligations. In February this year, the Minister for Industrial Relations, Grace Grace, and I met with the contractor Nexus to discuss a series of safety incidents on site that were investigated by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. An independent audit of safety practices on site was carried out, and Nexus provided assurances that it would implement all 51 recommendations from that audit.

Work is nearly complete on the Warrego Highway's western interchange at Charlton, the Gore Highway interchange at Athol and the Warrego Highway eastern interchange at Helidon Spa. I look forward to seeing how advanced this project is next week when we head west to govern from Toowoomba.

Gladstone Energy and Ammonia Project

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.54 am): The Palaszczuk government is bringing more jobs to Central Queensland. Today I am pleased to advise the House that the independent Coordinator-General has declared the \$1 billion Australian Future Energy Gladstone Energy and Ammonia Project a coordinated project. Should all approvals be granted, construction is proposed to commence in the middle of 2020. A peak workforce of 800 jobs during the two-year construction period is expected, with up to 200 jobs supported during the 30-year operational period.

Australian Future Energy estimates that 1,280 indirect jobs will also be created in the region during the operational phase, generating a significant increase in employment opportunities for the local communities in the Gladstone area. Further strengthening regional employment and job security, the Gladstone Energy and Ammonia Project proposes to use coal sourced from an existing mine in the Gladstone region.


The coal will be converted using state-of-the-art process plant technology into ammonia, synthetic natural gas and electricity. While ammonia is produced elsewhere in Australia, this is the first time that the above-ground coal gasification technology will be used to produce ammonia in Queensland, progressing our state's advanced manufacturing sector.

Ammonia is one of the basic building blocks of our modern economy and is used to produce agricultural fertiliser, household cleaners, water purification systems and the manufacture of plastics, fabrics and explosives. I know that this project will be welcomed by the member for Gladstone, the Gladstone community and the wider region, as it will support the area's growing manufacturing industry, making a fundamental contribution to the local economy and providing numerous employment and economic benefits.

The Coordinator-General's decision to declare this project a coordinated project will help streamline approvals and fast-track its delivery. This proven one-stop shop approach also ensures that all the potential impacts and benefits of the project will be considered in an integrated and rigorous way. I look forward to the preparation of the draft terms of reference by the Coordinator-General who, in coming months, will invite community comment on the matters that must be addressed in the environmental impact statement.

This project is ideally located within the Gladstone State Development Area, which has been specifically planned and designated to accommodate manufacturing and processing industries such as this. At the last election our government promised more jobs for Queensland and it is more jobs that the Palaszczuk government is delivering.

Toowoomba Region, Buy Queensland

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (9.56 am): I am very much looking forward to going to Toowoomba again next week. I want to update the House on how the Buy Queensland procurement approach has been growing local jobs and supporting regional communities.

The data tells us that since Buy Queensland commenced, 84 per cent of contracts awarded through the QTenders website went to Queensland based companies, and we are pushing to see that even higher. As a result, we have seen excellent jobs growth over the past year in regional economies like the Gold Coast, where there are 20,800 more people employed in 2017-18 than in 2016-17, and Mackay, where there are 5,700 more people employed than in the previous year.

It also means more apprentices being supported to build a career of their own through employment on Queensland government projects. In particular, in advance of next week I want to update the House on the effectiveness of the Buy Queensland approach in the Toowoomba region. I know that all ministers in the Palaszczuk government who will be spending next week in beautiful Toowoomba, in the Garden City, were very interested to hear from the Deputy Premier this morning about a number of projects. I also want to inform the House of the outcomes and impacts of the Buy Queensland procurement approach ahead of meetings with local businesses at our community reception next week.


In the 2017-18 financial year in the Toowoomba, Darling Downs, Maranoa and Lockyer Valley regions, 110 contracts were awarded by the Palaszczuk government, representing a total value of just over \$600 million last year. That investment was shared between 2,500 suppliers. The Minister for Education will be pleased to hear that the local family owned firm Burke Industries, who are based in Harristown, has secured contracts to do maintenance and upgrades at their local school, Harristown State High School, and also at the Oakey State School.

The Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries will also be pleased to hear that another Toowoomba firm, FK Gardner, who were recognised at the 2017 WorkSafe Awards for their workplace health and wellbeing initiative 'Wellness Matters', have been awarded contracts to complete upgrade works for government buildings and health facilities.

The Minister for Employment and Minister for Training will also be pleased to know that, in addition to the initiatives that she has implemented around programs like Skilling Queenslanders for Work, the Buy Queensland approach in the region on those examples alone has supported the full-time equivalent of 31 apprentices and trainees to not only gain valuable experience but also maybe be on their way to start their own business and employ apprentices of their own in the future.

We cannot wait to get up to Toowoomba to meet with businesses and the community next week to hear the ways that we can continue to build on our support for the region. Buy Queensland is supporting small business, it is supporting regional businesses and, in particular, it is supporting ethical businesses that take their responsibility to keep Queensland workers safe seriously.

Darling Downs, Operation Barracuda

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.00 am): Our police are making a big difference in the regions. They are taking crims and drugs off the streets. Earlier this month police officers from across the Darling Downs region joined forces to shut down a major drug network in south-west Queensland. Operation Barracuda, which was coordinated by the Warwick Criminal Investigation Branch, culminated with a raid at a property in Warwick. The team seized a substantial quantity of dangerous drugs and money.


Over 40 people were arrested and charged with 131 offences including trafficking in dangerous drugs, possession, producing and supplying dangerous drugs. It is a great example of how collaborative police efforts can work to stop crime in the community. Dismantling criminal networks and getting drugs off the streets is vital for so many reasons.

The simple reality is that crime in our regional communities can have a negative impact on local economies. The drug trade and the drug addiction that it gives rise to often results in criminal acts that have far-reaching effects. Private homes become targets for those desperate to fund their habit. The owners of small businesses and their workers also become targets.

Our police men and women are working hard to rid communities of all types of drugs including the drug ice. In a little over a year, police have executed almost 1,000 search warrants in response to ice and organised crime. They have seized almost 50 kilograms of ice, \$4.5 million in cash and more than \$100 million in illicit drugs.

Our government backs our police. Their work complements the Premier's Action on Ice plan, which was launched earlier this year. As part of this plan, police prioritised crime investigations into high-threat criminal networks to disrupt and dismantle networks trafficking ice in Queensland. These results show that police remain resolute when it comes to ridding communities of this insidious and dangerous drug. Well done to our police. We thank them for their good work.

Toowoomba, Regional Settlement

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.02 am): It will be my pleasure to be in Toowoomba next week with my colleagues as part of our Governing from the Regions program. One thing that has struck me as I have visited the Garden City over many years is its transformation from a country town servicing the Downs to Australia's biggest inland city with a population knocking on 120,000. It is a city that has grown and matured, and this was recognised by the Commonwealth when it was given the status of being a primary settlement site for refugees in 2013.


It is the only city outside a capital city that has been bestowed with that status. This makes it a shining example of regional settlement done right. Much of the credit for this lies with the Toowoomba Regional Council under the leadership of Mayor Paul Antonio, whom I look forward to catching up with next week.

This success can be experienced by more communities. The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting our rural and regional towns and councils in remaining vibrant and sustainable. Regional settlement is a win-win for Queensland. It gives refugee families the opportunity to start a new life outside of our busy and sometimes chaotic capital cities, but it can also breathe life into our small towns. More students mean more opportunities for our teachers and students in smaller schools, and there is more certainty for a reliable workforce in key industries such as agriculture.

The opportunities for growth in our regional towns and cities need to be actively encouraged and promoted. That is why we have commissioned Welcoming Cities to do research on the regional settlement opportunities here in Queensland. They have been tasked with creating a framework for our government to help support regional councils to best achieve this in a sustainable and inclusive way.

In August, Toowoomba hosted the first national regional resettlement conference to great success. Mayors from south-west Queensland councils have said that they are interested in the potential of such a program and they want more people to call their towns home. Toowoomba is a perfect example of the diversity and inclusion that is supported by the Palaszczuk government, and I look forward to seeing more regional communities opening their arms in the same way.

Small Business, Payment Terms

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.04 am): All businesses, big or small, have an obligation to support local communities where they and their employees work. This includes providing fair payment terms to allow small businesses in particular to manage their cash flow, plan for growth and take on new contracts. This is something that is often raised with me, and it is something I know we will be talking about at the small business breakfast in Toowoomba next week with the Deputy Premier and Treasurer.

The Palaszczuk government understands that being paid on time is crucial for small business, which is why we have a policy to pay small businesses within 30 days. It is why I wrote to Queensland's resource sector companies last week to seek their support to join our approach. Already the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman has highlighted extending payment terms for suppliers effectively uses the businesses in the supply chain as a cheap form of finance. Some of these big companies have 90- to 120-day payment terms and this is simply not good enough.

The call for change has been echoed by regional Queensland industry groups like the Gladstone Engineering Alliance. President and local owner of Corfield's Electrical in Gladstone, Ken Corfield, said late payments to his business have a direct impact on not only cash flow but also job security for his staff and the ability to accept future work.

It is pleasing to see that opportunity is not being missed by all. Some in the industry like New Hope whose suppliers include small businesses in the Toowoomba and surrounding regions have already responded with confirmation and a commitment to 30-day payment terms. I am looking forward to meeting with New Hope and their suppliers when we govern from Toowoomba next week. Small

business owners like Clint and Fiona Ireland from Ireland Engineering in Oakey, who have a very positive relationship with New Hope, are eager to meet with me to talk about how important it is that more resource sector companies institute fair payment terms. I commend these companies for setting a strong example for others in the industry.


Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydore, cease your interjections.

Ms FENTIMAN: I call on Queensland's large suppliers in the resource sector to improve their transparency and publish their payment terms on the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman National Payment Transparency Register. The Queensland government would prefer for these standards to be met as a matter of voluntary adoption by the resource sector, but we will not stand by and see local Queensland small businesses starved of cash flow and we will be considering all our options to require companies to comply. We want a thriving sector for businesses big and small. That is how we make sure all Queenslanders share in our economic growth.

HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Reporting Date


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.07 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the date for the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to report to the Legislative Assembly on the inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and transfers of pharmacy ownership in Queensland be extended from 30 September to 16 October 2018.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.07 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 16 October 2018.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.08 am.

Union Aid Abroad

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.08 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier guarantee that not one single dollar transferred by the Queensland government has been funnelled to any Palestinian terrorist linked organisations through Union Aid Abroad?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I would appreciate your silence during questions. It is important for myself and Hansard to hear the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I was having a little chuckle to myself about what is coming. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. I looked at the front page of the *Courier-Mail* today and I thought, 'We'd better get some answers for that.' The Minister for Health made a ministerial statement today and said that it is actually a federal government responsibility and that of course it is still there for the federal government to do something about it.

I then thought I should ask my director-general and through the Minister for Health how many thousands of public servants would be giving to this registered charity through the federal government. I can advise the House that I ruffled through all the paper because we wanted to find out how many people were involved. It is on the front page of the *Courier-Mail* so it must be a very serious issue and

the opposition have been talking it up. I have been advised by the Minister for Health that there is one employee and the Department of Health will contact that one person just to inform them. I have also been advised by the Police Service that they have no information about any terrorist links associated with these organisations.

I think the Leader of the Opposition might need to do a bit of homework first before jumping to conclusions. She is whipping up some hysteria, which we know they are good at. They are very good at whipping up hysteria and not checking the facts. Maybe they could pick up the phone to their federal colleagues down in Canberra. If they have those concerns then—

Dr Miles: Raise them.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They can raise them—exactly. That might be an idea. They should do that before they start contacting journalists from the *Courier-Mail*. Yes, we investigated it. As we can see today, I think the Leader of the Opposition has a bit of egg on her face, unfortunately.

Union Aid Abroad

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My next question is to the Premier. I table the list of salary deductions available to Queensland Health public servants to allow workplace giving.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Department of Health: Pay Slip Glossary of Terms' [1411].

Can the Premier explain why the Palaszczuk government is so out of touch that terrorist linked Union Aid Abroad is on this list but not trusted charities like Heart of Australia, Surf Live Saving Queensland, Red Cross or the McGrath breast cancer foundation?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are imputations in that. The Premier has already stated that this is an NGO listed on DFAT's website so the terms that are used are an imputation in relation to that organisation.

Mr SPEAKER: I am going to seek some advice from the table. In responding to your point of order, Leader of the House, any suggestion of inference or imputation there may relate to an organisation, not members. On that basis, I will allow the question to be asked and to be answered, but I give quite free-ranging opportunity for the response.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said very clearly to the Leader of the Opposition in the first question, for a charity to be registered it is through the federal government. It is the federal government. If members opposite have concerns with their federal colleagues—actually, they might not be able to contact them at the moment because we are not quite sure who is doing what at the moment federally. There is so much disarray down there in Canberra.

Ms Grace interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. If those opposite had such real concerns, was there a public outcry when they were in government and the Leader of the Opposition was the assistant minister? Did they investigate it? They did nothing. They did absolutely nothing—zero. Members, I want to apologise on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition because this week's question time has been the worst I have ever seen in this House. It has been the worst. It is embarrassing. I could write better questions for them. It is absolutely embarrassing. If I was on the backbench there, I would have my head hung down in shame as well.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I am having trouble hearing the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We can see that they are all embarrassed in the back there. They are absolutely embarrassed.

A government member: Heads down.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, heads down. They are embarrassed by what is happening federally and they are embarrassed by what is happening here. They are absolutely embarrassed. Let me make it very clear. The registration is—

Mrs Frecklington: Are you going to do something? Are you going to act?

Dr Miles: Is Tim going to act?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, you have asked your question. You do not get another chance to ask the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will take that interjection. Is the deputy leader going to act? Maybe. Only if Gary says so. Pick up the phone to Gary Spence.

Ms Grace: What is she doing about the conscience vote?

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. There is no leadership. As I said, if they even bothered to listen to ministerial statements, the Minister for Health—

An opposition member: What is wrong with the Red Cross?

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is a choice for the employee.

Ms Trad: Remember when you gagged them. You defunded them and you gagged them.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Let us go through that. I thank the Deputy Premier for that. When they were in government, they cut funding to NGOs in this state and they stopped them from speaking out. They stopped the NGOs from speaking out about any government policy decision. That is the record of the LNP in this state. It is a complete embarrassment. That is right: they cut the funding, they cut the staff and they gagged the NGOs from speaking out. They silenced the NGOs. The Leader of the Opposition, the member for Nanango, was an assistant minister during this time when all of this happened. This is very, very disappointing.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I am going to issue a general warning. There is a lot of cross-chamber action happening today. It is Thursday and I appreciate that, but if members to my left in particular have a question to ask, you should rise to your feet at the appropriate time to ask the question. Do not pose your questions as interjections. Chances are they will not be taken.

Regional Queensland, Economy

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the economic strength of regional Queensland in places like Mackay? Is she aware of any alternative views?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mackay for that question. On this side of the House, we are focusing on ensuring that people get into work. There is nothing more important than the dignity of a job and making sure that we have strong regional communities across our state. Every time I go to Mackay—and the member for Mackay knows this—I think how great the city is looking because our Back to Work and Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs are doing such a great job there. The unemployment rate in Mackay has come right down.

As we are the most decentralised state in the nation, we know how important the regions are. Members will never, ever hear me talk down our regions in our state. Unfortunately, we continue to hear those opposite talk down the regions. Just recently, the deputy opposition leader wrote in the local paper about Mackay and said that we were killing Queensland's economy. If we wanted any evidence about what happened under those opposite, we saw it with cuts to health services and cuts to NGOs. The regions were crying out for help after the three years of damage under Campbell Newman.

The local mayor Greg Williamson does not agree. On the weekend he said there were some 2,800 extra jobs on offer across the region and that Mackay has one of the lowest unemployment rates outside of Brisbane. The opposition was once again on the Sunshine Coast talking down the economy. Last week the member for Nanango, on her 'talking down Queensland' tour, said, 'What the Sunshine Coast needs is more money spent on infrastructure.' That is what she said. That was just five days after the Minister for State Development was with the mayor announcing the new submarine cable—working together.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House.

Mr Bleijie: 'Hey big spender!'

Ms PALASZCZUK: There is only one big spender here, and we know who that is.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, there is no need to break into song. You are warned under standing orders.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I said singing, not dancing. The House will come to order.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Sunshine Coast Business Council chair, Sandy Zubrinich, said—

... it was looking positive for business on the Coast. "There is a lot happening here in terms of infrastructure investment and generally as a region we are performing pretty well" ...

This is what the LNP do: they go around always talking down the economy. They never want to talk about anything positive; it is always doom and gloom. On this side we will keep delivering for Queenslanders and we will keep delivering jobs because that is what good, decent Labor governments do.

(Time expired)

Union Aid Abroad

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier now order the suspension of all government facilitated payments to Union Aid Abroad—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, the rules and my expectations around hearing the question in silence are very clear. I ask you to respect that. I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to please start your question again.

Mr MANDER: Will the Premier now order the suspension of all government facilitated payments to Union Aid Abroad pending the outcome of the federal government's investigation into its links to an organisation with links to two known Palestine terrorists?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, the QPS has advised that there are no known terrorist links, so I find the question somewhat misleading. Mr Speaker, I may write to you about that—

Mr Dick: And offensive.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—and offensive, extremely offensive. As I said, if the member for Everton was listening, the Minister for Health, through the Department of Health, was contacting that one person. Let me say this again: it is a registered charity which is done through the federal government—not through the state government, but the federal government. I am sorry, but the last time I looked—who was in charge of the federal government? The LNP!

Mr Dick: No-one.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am sorry, I just cannot believe this questioning today.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Being led down the garden path.

Dr Miles: Too late to change tack.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Firstly, the Department of Health is contacting the one person. Secondly, the police have said there are no known terrorist links. Thirdly, it is a registered charity through the federal government. Do I have to be clearer than that? I do not think I can be clearer. I hope they have listened.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have now repeated it three times for them to hear. I think it is actually very negligent of the opposition to come in here and dare to claim that this government would have anything to do with terrorism in Australia. I find that absolutely despicable. It is taking politics to a whole new level, but that is the best they can do.

Toowoomba and Darling Downs Region, Infrastructure and Services

Mr POWER: My question is to the Deputy Premier. What is the Palaszczuk government doing to provide infrastructure and services in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs? Are there any alternative policies?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Logan for the question, because he is absolutely committed to ensuring that we have a great infrastructure delivery program in Queensland. He understands that by delivering critical infrastructure right throughout our state, we are actually creating jobs and attracting private sector investment in our state. Can I say that in my ministerial statement—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North.

Ms TRAD:—I did outline our investment in roads, transport, schools and hospitals for the Toowoomba-Darling Downs region.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry to interrupt you, Deputy Premier. Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under standing orders. I warned you earlier and cautioned you earlier in the day. You are continually interjecting.

Ms TRAD: Maybe the member for Toowoomba North's interjections are based on the fact that this government does not care who the local member is, we will deliver on our local commitments; we will deliver to the people of Queensland. I remind the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Toowoomba South and every single LNP member over there that when they went to the election in 2015, what did they promise the people of Queensland? They said, 'We will only deliver you infrastructure if you return LNP members.' I table a copy of Campbell Newman's commitments on that topic.

Tabled paper: Article from the ABC News online, dated 24 January 2015, titled 'Queensland election 2015: Campbell Newman will not guarantee projects if LNP members not elected' [1412].

Those opposite only care about delivering to the people they represent, not all of Queensland.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth.

Ms TRAD: This side of politics cares about every single Queensland and every single region. Those opposite are used to bullying, intimidation and threats, and Queenslanders have seen through that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Silence is golden.

Ms TRAD: Those opposite—I thought it was just Campbell Newman who was threatening, who was the bully. No, it is Gary Spence; it is every single one of them.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House.

Ms TRAD: Despite the LNP constitution, which has as its first value 'the freedom of conscience, the freedom of religion, the freedom of expression', we know that Gary Spence comes in here and says, 'You can't exercise that No. 1 value in your constitution because we will absolutely cancel your preselection if you vote according to your conscience in this place.' That is shameful.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs.

Ms TRAD: If those opposite are interested in what will happen if they cannot exercise their conscience vote, then all they need to do is look at the polling released today. Queenslanders overwhelmingly want change and those opposite should stop bullying, threatening and intimidating members and allow them to vote according to their conscience and according to the LNP constitution.

Union Aid Abroad

Mr BLEIJIE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I have asked for silence during questions.

Mr BLEIJIE: As the former head of the Queensland Council of Unions and now minister in charge of public servants' pay and conditions, will the minister tell the House how many departments other than Health have selected the now terrorist-linked Union Aid Abroad as a preferred charity to receive salary deductions directly from the government?

Ms GRACE: I feel sorry for those opposite; I feel sorry for the backbench. Obviously they get up in the morning and they scratch their head. We saw the brains trust over there—the three of them—getting together talking to the man who calls a nine-year-old names, talking to the wannabe leader. They get up and they say, 'What questions are we going to ask to impress the backbench?' What do they do? They get up and they open the *Courier-Mail* and they say, 'We've got the questions!'

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms GRACE: Guess what?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GRACE: Guess what? It is linked to the unions as well. Bingo! Bingo! Bingo! Does it matter?

Ms Jones: And the Public Service.

Ms GRACE: And the Public Service, of course. Those they care so much about. Those public servants they care so much about that they sacked 14,000 of them. They come in here with crocodile tears because they do not have enough police and they do not have enough nurses, but they sacked 14,000. That is the legacy of those opposite. Now they have the audacity to come in here with unsubstantiated claims. We have heard there is one person who is contributing, and then all of a sudden I am supposed to know everything about what people want to voluntarily do with their payroll. It is voluntary. We are not forcing anyone to do anything. Not only that, but we have an organisation that is regulated by the LNP, those opposite, who are in government at the moment. I do not know where they think this is going or what the political punch is, but if the brains trust over there think this is the best they can do to impress their backbench, guess what? I feel sorry for them.

The reality of Union Aid Abroad—and I have known them for many years—is they have done an incredible job in helping poor countries around the world. Unlike those opposite, I am not going to accuse anybody of anything without evidence. We have talked to the QPS. The federal government is doing something about it, so let's wait on those outcomes. Let's not go into hysteria. You have nothing else to question us about—nothing! The cupboard is bare, and they come in here after reading the *Courier-Mail*. Can I just say one thing? Please get serious!

Regional Queensland, Jobs and Growth

Mr MADDEN: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister please update the House on the government's support for jobs and regional growth, particularly in the meat industry, and is the minister aware of any other approach?

Mr DICK: Everything that the Minister for Education said, plus more. I thank the member for Ipswich West for his support of Queensland's great beef industry and equally important food processing sector. I am pleased to announce today that our Jobs and Regional Growth Fund has provided assistance to Mort & Co, which is a large feedlot company on the Darling Downs. Our government's support will help Mort & Co deliver a \$35 million expansion to its operations at Grassdale near Dalby to become one of Australia's most significant feedlots. The project will increase the annual throughput of its feedlot by an additional 80,000 head of cattle per year, with gas-fired power, and they will also build a world-class fertiliser manufacturing facility. This is what Labor governments do. We work with the private sector to back the growth of our economy and jobs.

What did we hear from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition yesterday? We heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition what he does best: talking down the Queensland economy and talking down Queensland jobs. We did not hear anything from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about the increased flow of interstate immigration or the second highest workforce participation rate in the country. The unemployment rate is lower than the 7.3 per cent they presided over when they were in government. He did not mention the NAB survey that put Queensland at the head of the pack when it comes to business confidence. Exports are up 70 per cent since the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was in government. He did not talk about that great train wreck of an interview on the ABC when he boldly announced to Craig Zonka that they had a debt plan, but to announce it would be irrelevant and irresponsible.

That is only topped by the irrelevant and irresponsible questions they have asked in question time today. What I expect from the opposition after their performance this morning are questions about UFOs, aliens and the return of Elvis. Maybe we will see Elvis return to Toowoomba next week. That is the capacity of the brains trust at the front. These are the questions that the backbench has to hear every day and every week. It is not an opposition, members of the backbench and crossbenchers. It is not even a comedy routine: it is just embarrassing. It is all led by the genius shadow Treasurer and the member for Nanango. Queensland deserves better. The economy deserves better than to have people running it down, 'No, no, no.' I am not going to go near the member for Kawana; he has nothing to contribute. Queensland deserves better.

(Time expired)

Youth Detention Centres

Mr LAST: My question without notice is to the Premier. I table this letter from the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women, which says that Queensland has been slugged over a quarter of a million dollars to replace televisions and air-conditioning systems inside detention centres after inmates have damaged or destroyed them time and time again.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Hon. Di Farmer, to the member for Burdekin, Mr Dale Last MP, regarding detention centres [\[1413\]](#).

Will Labor put taxpayers first and teach these offenders some respect by not replacing televisions and air-conditioning systems if they are damaged by inmates?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. Of course anyone who causes damage in youth detention centres will face the consequences of the law. We want to address all of the issues when it comes to youth offending in this state. That is why you have seen my government respond with \$200 million. We are ensuring that we have more front-line staff in our—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you have been warned numerous times today. You are warned under the standing orders for repeated interjections which are designed to disrupt.

Ms Grace interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes. We as a government and as a community want to address all of the issues around youth offending. As I have said in this House, and I will say it again: the best way to stop youth offending is to get them into employment. That is exactly what I am doing.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to have another catch-up with retired Major General Stuart Smith. The work that he is doing in Townsville is absolutely outstanding. He has been talking with the community and coming up with community solutions. He has been speaking with the community extensively about issues around early intervention, rehabilitation and getting young people employed. He has been working not only with all three local members of my team but also the council, community services, the police and the Stronger Communities Task Force. I want to see a robust youth justice system that has the staff required to look after people who are in detention. At the end of the day, I want to see people get a job and become productive citizens in the Queensland community. That is what my government will work towards and that is what we will achieve.

Toowoomba, Innovation

Mr BUTCHER: My question is of the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister please update the House on how the government's innovation agenda is benefiting the people of Toowoomba?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. He knows how important industries are to developing jobs in regional Queensland. Today I am very proud to announce that Queensland researchers have discovered a way to turn red meat into green energy. Associate Professor Bernadette McCabe and her team from the University of Southern Queensland have developed a system that is turning wastewater into clean energy. This is already making a difference in one of the biggest industries in Queensland, our abattoir and meat-processing industry. They have developed a way to extract biogas from wastewater at abattoirs. This biogas is then used to produce energy that is fed back into the plant.

We are all over the moon and excited about going to Toowoomba for the Carnival of Flowers. This breakthrough technology is being used in an abattoir at Toowoomba as we speak. This is reducing not only emissions but also the cost of running that abattoir, as they now use this new product instead of having to pay for natural gas to be imported into their plant.

This is yet another example, like the one the Minister for State Development has spoken about, of our Advance Queensland agenda making a real difference to local businesses in regional Queensland, creating new jobs and efficiencies across industry. We are very proud of the fact that our \$650 million Advance Queensland agenda is now supporting more than 12½ thousand jobs across Queensland, the bulk of which are in regional Queensland.

I also read the *Courier-Mail* this morning. That is what you do when preparing for question time. No wonder those opposite stopped at page 1. If they had got to page 3 they would have to look at the poll result that 70 per cent support our reforms—72 per cent on the Gold Coast. Once and for all, why does the Leader of the Opposition not show some innovation of her own and allow a conscience vote? She stands for nothing. She believes in nothing.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister—

Ms JONES: It is about time—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms JONES:—the Leader of the Opposition gave a conscience vote in this state.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms JONES: Listen to the people of Queensland—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms JONES:—and listen to your conscience.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I have heard a couple of references today to allowing a conscience vote in a broad application. It can be deemed to be across multiple bills. I believe the minister is straying into talking about particular bills and particular approaches to voting. I caution the minister on that and ask her to come back to the core of the question.

Youth Justice

Mr JANETZKI: My question without notice is to the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women. In just six months Labor has spent over \$80,000 on flights for youth offenders to return home after being released from detention and over \$3½ thousand on cancelled flights when offenders were refused bail and remanded in custody. Will the minister explain why she believes it is a reasonable use of taxpayers' money to put unescorted released offenders on flights home instead of putting them on a bus or train?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question. Mr Speaker, you know what they are like: I think he has just a couple of things wrong—but never let the facts get in the way of a good story! I refer to the member's assertion about young people going unescorted on trips. That does not happen—wrong. Can I also say—those opposite have been trying to prosecute this case through the media over recent months—that young people need to be escorted to and from detention centres for a range of reasons. Sometimes it is to go back to their communities; sometimes it is to go to court. It is for a range of reasons.

If the member would like us to do a comparison of the costs of escorting a young person, perhaps from Brisbane to Townsville, on a bus with a staff member over maybe a two-day period—if he would like to get—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Who was interjecting to my right? Member for Murrumba, you are warned under standing orders. Member for Kawana, you are already on a warning. I issued a warning earlier. You have interjected and you were quarrelling with the Minister for Skills. Minister for Skills, you are warned under standing orders. Member for Kawana, you can leave the chamber for 15 minutes.

Whereupon the honourable member for Kawana withdrew from the chamber at 10.45 am.

Ms FARMER: There are also safety issues around having a detainee on a bus or a train with members of the public for a two-day period. I do not know if I have to spell that out, but I am happy to do it.

I am interested in the question about costs, because I just do not know if anyone on the other side of the House asked the former attorney-general, the member for Kawana, about the \$15,000 he spent on helicopter flights to his boot camps. I just have not heard that from them during this term.

I would love to do a comparison of \$15,000 helicopter flights for the member for Kawana to visit his boot camps, which the Auditor-General found failed and delivered no value for money at all, with the cost of flying a detainee with a staff member back to their community or to court and then with the cost of taking a bus for two days with a staff member. We can talk about value for money after that. It is really quite bizarre for those opposite to be talking about costs when they ripped \$150 million out of the youth justice system.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next member, I wish to correct my earlier ruling related to the member for Murrumba. Old habits die hard. Member for Bancroft, you are warned under standing orders. I apologise to the member for Murrumba. I am sorry to see your good name smeared.

Toowoomba, Schools

Mr PEGG: My question is of the Minister for Education. Will the minister advise how the Palaszczuk government is investing in Toowoomba schools and planning for future enrolment growth in the area? Is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question. He knows that our \$1 billion infrastructure spend on education benefits not only his electorate but also other electorates all over Queensland represented by members from both sides of the House. That includes more than \$55 million—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms GRACE: I hear the member for Burleigh interjecting. It is great to have him back. It is good to hear his voice. We did not hear it during the last sitting week. It is good to have him back.

This includes \$55 million for school infrastructure and maintenance in the Toowoomba region this year alone. Toowoomba State High School is earmarked as one of the 17 schools across the state to benefit from our four-year \$235 million renewing our schools program. Toowoomba schools are also benefiting from our 2020 Ready program. A number of classrooms and learning centres are being built right across that area. Under our 2020 Ready program Centenary Heights State High School will receive a two-storey building for \$10.5 million, and Harristown State High School will receive \$14 million for a learning facility and administration centre.

I am looking forward to visiting Harristown with the Premier when we are governing from Toowoomba next week. I was delighted to visit Toowoomba—I acknowledge that the member for Toowoomba North was there as well—to open the fantastic Wilsonton performing arts and learning centre, worth \$6.3 million. That was funded under our \$200 million Advancing Queensland schools program.

What did we have from those opposite? When one of the biggest student cohorts came into our state education system, rather than put on 519 teachers numbers went back by 61. They cut the number of teachers at a time when one of the biggest cohorts was entering the state system. What did that do? As the Premier has talked about previously, it increased class sizes.

If you ask teachers, the one thing they say helps them is a reduction in the number of students in classes. That is their No. 1 issue. What did those opposite do? We get bigger class sizes under the LNP. I acknowledge the member for Toowoomba South's comments in the House yesterday and his continued calls for a new high school in his electorate, and I will be happy to meet with him next week to discuss it.

Our record on delivering for students everywhere—not only in the Toowoomba region—is in stark contrast because under those opposite three schools in Toowoomba were earmarked for closure. They closed Toowoomba South State School and Charlton State School, but thank God we stopped them from closing Wyreema State School because since 2014, when they wanted to close it, it has now tripled in size from 53 students to 161. Only Labor delivers infrastructure for education, and we are proud of it.

Condamine Electorate, Volunteer Drought Committee

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr WEIR: My question without notice—

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, member. Minister for Education, you are warned under standing orders. I have asked for silence during questions. I call the member for Condamine to start your question again.

Mr WEIR: My question without notice is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries. On the eve of the drought relief gala evening tonight and in the middle of the worst drought for decades, the minister has sacked a volunteer drought committee because he did not like its recommendation to overturn his decision. How can the minister be so heartless and deaf to the needs of regional Queenslanders?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for Condamine for his question. One thing that bemuses me is when those on the other side come in here and talk about sackings. Who has the legacy of sacking in this place? Those opposite. Some 14,000 public servants were sacked during their term. Those opposite hold that legacy. For 19 years I was in the industrial relations system, as members are probably aware, and I know what the terms 'dismissal' and 'sacking' mean.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FURNER: They mean when you sack or you terminate an employee. The people on the LDC of the Western Downs are not employees. They have not been sacked. They have been dismissed. They have been relieved of their duties.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left.

Mr FURNER: Once again it bemuses me when people come in here with misinformation, particularly the member for Condamine, who knows very well that the decision I made yesterday by the declaration supports the constituents in the area of Condamine. I listened to the advice of the LDC and acted on that advice, but it is unfortunate that people on the other side compromised their ability to make decisions as LDC members. They became involved with the politicisation of their ability to make decisions on science. We know where some of those opposite sit on science.

Yesterday the member for Callide requested me to talk to real farmers in his electorate. There are real farmers everywhere, member for Callide. There are real farmers in all of our regions, and that is why the Palaszczuk government listens to farmers. That is why I am on the ground—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Order, members!

Mr FURNER: That is why there is no friend greater than the Palaszczuk government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr FURNER: No friend greater. When I travel extensively around the regions people say to me, 'Here comes Furner, the friend of the farmers.'

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: All right, members. Come to order, please.

Mr FURNER: For goodness sake, I implore members of the opposition to come in here and ask some relevant questions. They should get their comments right, get their facts right and understand what the issues are before they come into this place. It is amazing, and I go back to the member for Callide talking about the ice age. The last time I heard that sort of commentary was when I was in the chamber down there from then senator Joyce talking about \$100 roasts and the member for Callide—

(Time expired)

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! I will wait for the House to come to order.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gregory, you interjected after I asked you to come to order. You are warned under standing orders.

Regional Queensland, Energy Policy

Mr STEWART: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Will the minister update the House on Queensland's energy policy impacts in regional Queensland and is the minister aware of any alternate policies and their potential impacts on regional economies?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Townsville for the question because he knows under Labor regional power prices are going down. The Palaszczuk government is investing nearly half a billion dollars to make sure that families in Townsville are paying comparable rates for their electricity to families in my electorate of Stafford. We have provided rebates to around 13,000 regional households to help them buy energy-efficient appliances.

Around 3,500 interest-free loans are available for families in regions for rooftop solar panels, and the first of these loans has been approved in Townsville, Cairns, Mackay, and Southern Downs. His constituents realise the value of renewable energy in Southern Downs. The list goes on: an extension to the Energy Savers Program for free energy orders for agriculture business, more families brought into energy savvy programs to help them cut their energy bills, and of course there is our annual \$50 dividend to the proud owners of our electricity assets—the families of Queensland.

What would be the alternative? Those opposite have been telling Queenslanders they will bring competition into regional Queensland. They have lifted this policy from a portion of the Queensland Productivity Commission report, but in a rush to get some sort of energy policy out there—any energy

policy out there—they failed to read all of the Productivity Commission report. The commission calculated that its option would add \$400 to every regional Queensland household bill. One thing: they are consistent—43 per cent up and now another extra \$400 for families in Queensland.

To top it all off, we have the ‘muppet show’ in Canberra. A couple of weeks ago old Gonzo was telling us the NEG is going to save everyone \$150 off their power bills. Kermit the Frog jumps up and says, ‘The NEG is dead!’ Nothing describes them better than the famous band on the *Muppet Show*. Who can forget that band—the Electric Mayhem? You could not invent it! That is what we are going to get from those opposite for regional Queensland—electric mayhem and higher regional power bills.

Age of Criminal Responsibility

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Queensland has more 10- to 13-year-olds in prison than any other state. Eight in 10 of these kids are being held unnecessarily on remand and seven in 10 are Indigenous. Will the minister accept the overwhelming evidence that locking up kids does more harm than good and commit to raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question and for his interest in youth justice in Queensland. It is quite refreshing to have some people in this parliament outside of the government who are genuinely interested. I am sure that the member for Maiwar would be very aware of the report that I commissioned former police commissioner Bob Atkinson to undertake—a man who has devoted his entire life to community safety. He has identified in that report, which he delivered to me in June of this year, that there are a number of issues which need to be addressed and in fact has raised the age of criminal responsibility as one of the questions which should be looked at at a national level.

Mr Atkinson’s report has been used as the basis for the widespread consultation that we have been conducting. It has been wonderful to see the level of engagement in this issue. In fact, I hope the member for Maiwar is going to respond to that report. We have learned so much from it on a range of issues. Bob Atkinson’s report identifies four pillars that we should be looking at. They are about early intervention, keeping our young people out of the courts and keeping our young people out of custody.

I keep saying time and time again that we know that, if we keep doing the same thing in youth justice that we have been doing over and over again and expect things to be different, we are kidding ourselves. We know that the community expects young people to be accountable for their actions, but locking them up and throwing away the key, which is what sometimes—it depends on the day—the members opposite say, is almost guaranteeing that those young people are going to reoffend. We need to make sure that the community remains safe, but that we change the stories for those young people.

No-one wants to see young people getting into the youth detention system or the youth justice system. We want to see those young people changing their stories. We have committed to this process. We have made a strong statement. The Premier could not be stronger about our commitment to this. I am very much looking forward to delivering that youth justice strategy at the end of this year.

As I said, I welcome any input from the member for Maiwar or any other members of this House. In fact, I was very pleased to see the member for Coomera at one of our stakeholder consultations and I value his contribution.

(Time expired)

Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

Mr RUSSO: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister please update the House on the status of the process for the naming of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing?

Mr BAILEY: Tomorrow is the last day that people will be able to submit their ideas for the naming of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. So far, we have received over 450 community submissions and I am sure there will be a late surge of suggestions over the next 24 hours. The community does not just have an opportunity to name the 41-kilometre bypass—

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Theodore.

Mr BAILEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is great to see the member for Burleigh turn up to parliament for a change. The community does not just have an opportunity to name the 41-kilometre bypass route that will be used by heavy vehicles; we are also asking for suggestions to name the New

England Highway twin arch bridges and the viaduct that will negotiate that steep terrain on the range. Schools across the Lockyer Valley and the Toowoomba region are also involved and will provide their picks for naming the three bridges located on the Warrego Highway in the east and west and over the Gore Highway near Athol.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, you would think that the opposition would be interested to hear about something that matters to the electorates covering Toowoomba, but apparently not.

Unlike the LNP, which decided to name the Lady Cilento hospital without public consultation, without involving the community, the Palaszczuk government cares about listening to people's views. That is why we are involving the public—and I know that is a foreign idea to the LNP, but that is what we are committed to—so that this important piece of public infrastructure is named and we know that it is named with public support.

So far, many of the names submitted acknowledge the history of the Toowoomba region and its landscape, tourism and people. Of course, I am also aware that we have had probably the predictable suggestions in submissions of Rangy McRange Face and Roady McRoad Face, which I am told do not have the support of the Toowoomba mayor, Paul Antonio. I have to say that I support him on that all the way and I look forward to seeing him when I am in Toowoomba. The nomination process has never been about selecting the name with the most nominations; it has always been about getting the right name that reflects community values.

We want to involve the public in this. A committee made up of local, state and federal government representatives and community representatives will decide these names. All submissions will be reviewed by the committee in November before a short list and recommendations are presented to the state government. I look forward to receiving those recommendations from the committee at the end of the year. The selected names will be released at the official opening of the crossing in mid-2019.

The second range crossing will become part of the region's identity when it opens. The economic and social benefits will leave a lasting legacy. I look forward to being in Toowoomba. This government supports regional Queensland—

(Time expired)

Hamilton Island, Paramedic Services

Mr COSTIGAN: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Given what the minister said in the House just 24 hours ago about Queenslanders having access to quality paramedic services no matter where they live, will the minister commit to an extra paramedic on Hamilton Island, especially now that Labor's federal candidate for Dawson is supporting my push for better resources?

Dr MILES: It is indeed a shame for the people of the Whitsunday electorate that they are represented so poorly by their current member. The matter of an additional paramedic for Hamilton Island has been raised with me by Labor's candidate for Dawson and Labor's previous candidate for Whitsunday, who made to me a strong argument that an additional paramedic would allow for a 24-hour service on the island. I have asked the Ambulance Commissioner to assess the need for services on the island and provide advice to me about whether one of the additional 100 ambulance officers who are being employed by the Palaszczuk government, as part of our election commitments, can be deployed to Hamilton Island.

That would not have even been an option if the party of the member for Whitsunday had won government, because it was not promising to appoint the 100 ambulance officers. The member for Whitsunday went to the election supporting a policy that would mean that Hamilton Island could not have the ambulance officer that Labor in his region says it needs, which the member for Whitsunday now supports.

If the member had felt so strongly about this matter, during the last election campaign his party should have promised more paramedics, but it did not. Everyone in this House knows which party employs more doctors, nurses, midwives and paramedics and which party does not. That is exactly why at the election it was this side of the House that promised to employ more doctors, nurses, paramedics, midwives, nurse navigators and firefighters and those opposite refused to do so.

I hope that the Ambulance Commissioner comes back to me and says that there is a demand for an ambulance officer to be stationed on Hamilton Island. I hope to go there with Labor's candidate for Dawson and announce with her that, because of her advocacy, Hamilton Island gets a 24-hour ambulance station and explain to the people of Whitsunday that this bloke failed them, that this bloke


went to the election supporting a platform that would mean that they could not have another ambulance officer. The hypocrisy of the member coming into this place and claiming credit for Labor's campaign is incredible. I look forward to coming back to the House with the outcome of that consultation with the Ambulance Commissioner.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, the time for questions has expired.

ELECTRICITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION (BATTERIES AND PREMIUM FEED-IN TARIFF) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 15 February (see p. 116).

Second Reading

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (11.08 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for its consideration of the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. I note that the committee tabled its report on 15 March 2018 and recommended that the bill be passed. In recommending that the bill be passed, the committee gave careful consideration to the public submissions received, which covered each of the main aspects of the bill.

The Queensland Farmers' Federation proposed the full rather than partial removal of the non-reversion policy in order to cover all regional customers, small and large. While the government examined this option, given the potential impact it could have on the competition that is growing in the large customer market, it was not preferred. Nearly 40 per cent of large and very large customers in Ergon's area have switched to a private retailer. The figures are even higher in the section of Ergon's area along the east coast where more than 50 per cent of large and 76 per cent of very large customers have switched.


In relation to the Solar Bonus Scheme, issues predominantly centred on the proposed ban on the practice of oversizing and the ease with which customers and industry will understand the reforms. The government appreciates that Solar Bonus Scheme customers want to get the best out of their systems to maximise efficiency and reduce reliance on the grid. While the government is supportive of Solar Bonus Scheme customers, committing to retain the scheme until its legislated 2028 end date, as a responsible government we have a responsibility to manage the costs of the scheme. Oversizing, which becomes more affordable as the cost of solar panels reduces, poses a significant risk factor to the Solar Bonus Scheme as customers are able to export more energy during shoulder periods and increase their returns from the scheme. This was not envisaged when the scheme was designed and could come with a significant cost burden.

Information has been provided to key solar industry representative groups, such as Master Electricians Australia, and to the distribution businesses so they can help customers understand the proposed restrictions when it is most relevant to them—when they are considering upgrades to their systems. In relation to embedded networks, concerns mainly focused on the effectiveness of national scheme arrangements. New national rules have been operating in Queensland since 1 December 2017. This bill removes inconsistencies in state legislation and ensures those who do take up the option of retail competition are able to access the Energy and Water Ombudsman consistent with the rights of most other Queenslanders. I now table the explanatory notes for amendments that will be moved during the consideration in detail stage.

Tabled paper: Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Hon. Dr. Anthony Lynham's amendments [\[1414\]](#).

The first amendment amends the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014 to extend the current Queensland derogation preventing retailers from introducing new types of fees and charges, including late payment fees, on standing offers in South-East Queensland and to correct a minor administrative error. I also propose to move amendments to the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 during consideration in detail. These amendments will exempt certain provisions of the Land Act 1994 to facilitate the development of the Neville Bonner Bridge. They will extend the overriding provisions to include areas declared as Priority Development Area—Associated Development for the Queen's Wharf Brisbane project.

The Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act currently excludes the application of certain property and planning legislative provisions which are not intended to apply to large-scale developments so that the commercial outcomes negotiated between the state and Destination Brisbane Consortium can be achieved. When the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Bill 2015 was introduced into parliament, it was clear that legislative exemptions would be required to allow for the commercial outcomes negotiated by the state to be achieved. The amendment is urgent to ensure construction of the Neville Bonner Bridge occurs in accordance with the project program and to continue to deliver the economic benefits to the state. The amendment is also supported by all involved parties. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (11.13 am): That was one of the shortest speeches I have heard in quite a while from a member moving a second reading. This bill was a bit of a hospital pass from the previous minister. The Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018 is, in fact, a rework of a bill that was put before the House by the previous incompetent minister in 2017.

The policy objectives of the bill, as set out in the explanatory notes, are that it intends to clarify when additional generation systems and electricity storage devices can be deployed in association with the Solar Bonus Scheme; it enables the effective implementation of the new national regulatory framework for retail competition in embedded electricity networks which commenced on 1 December 2017; and it allows residential and small business customers in regional Queensland to have the option to return to Ergon Retail if at a property that has switched to a private retailer.

Let us do a bit of a history check. This bill was introduced in June 2017. At that time it only had the first two objectives and the reversion to Ergon was not part of the bill. This bill prevents people from replacing their solar panels with larger panels. They would lose their Solar Bonus Scheme, the 44 cent payment, if they did that. Unfortunately the minister who had carriage of this in 2017 did not bother to tell anybody in the electrical businesses that were installing these panels that this could happen.

That is why we saw this bill languish on the *Notice Paper* until it was prorogued at the election. The minister did not want this bill to come to the House because there may well have been quite a few lawsuits from installers who had installed solar panels in good faith, because they thought they could, and the government did not bother to tell them that they were changing the laws retrospectively back to the day that the bill was introduced. That may have caused quite a few problems. The Master Electricians Association brought that to the attention of the government and the opposition. That is why this bill sat on the *Notice Paper* from June 2017 until the election later that year.

In early 2018 this bill was reintroduced and an extra objective added to it following commitments made during the election campaign to allow people in the Ergon area to revert back to Ergon if they had, in fact, moved away. That is a complete failure of an election promise that the minister at the time, the member for Miller, made along with the treasurer at the time. They put out a media release at the time of the election. I will table a copy of that release for the benefit of the members of the House.

Tabled paper: Media release, undated, by the former treasurer and minister for trade and investment, Hon. Curtis Pitt, and former minister for main roads, road safety and ports and former minister for energy, biofuels and water supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'New bill cutting energy initiatives announced as Palaszczuk Govt continues to use energy assets to back Qlders' [[1415](#)].

In that media release they say the Palaszczuk government is removing Ergon's non-reversion policy. That was the election promise that was made to the people of Queensland. There was no mention that they were only going to allow some people to revert. Clearly the people of Queensland would have understood that this would allow anybody to revert to Ergon had they moved away. The media release goes on to say—

We recognise the desire of regional customers to have more choice of electricity retailers, so we will amend the current policy that prevents customers who switch away from Ergon Retail from returning.

That is not what they are doing. They are only allowing some people to return.

Removing the policy will give regional customers more choice and control over their energy bills, which is good news in terms of savings. I imagine that a lot of people were quite excited about the possibility of going back to Ergon, because they had been stopped by Labor governments in the past. They took that on face value and they have been let down by the government. I will come back to that point later in my submission.

The bill tries to stop people from taking advantage of the Solar Bonus Scheme. Again we need to look at a bit of history. The Solar Bonus Scheme was put in place by a Labor government. It paid 44 cents per kilowatt to people who fed back into the electricity grid from their solar panels. Let us put that into perspective and look at it closely. When you buy electricity from a coal-fired power station, a large-scale solar plant or a wind farm, normally the cost is around seven or eight cents.

An opposition member: It's going up.

Mr HART: It is going up; I take the interjection. At the time, the cost of providing that electricity was about seven or eight cents. In fact, when the Solar Bonus Scheme was first started it was about 3½ cents. The Labor Party then decided that it was a good idea to give people 44 cents. That is Labor economics for you.

An opposition member: Labornomics.

Mr HART: It is Labornomics; I take that interjection as well. People could buy electricity for seven cents and feed it back into the grid at 44 cents. When we were elected in 2012, as minister for energy the member for Caloundra, to his credit, thought that that was a bad idea and we should stop anybody else joining the scheme, so we cut it off. By doing that, we limited the cost to the people of Queensland to about \$4.1 billion over the life of the Solar Bonus Scheme. I repeat: \$4.1 billion. Where do members think that \$4.1 billion goes? It goes on to people's electricity bills! In Queensland the Solar Bonus Scheme has pushed up the price of electricity by about \$4.8 billion, in fact. Last year the government removed the Solar Bonus Scheme costs for the next three years, at a cost of \$770 million, so we can see the extreme costs involved in it.

However, when the government established the scheme originally it missed a loophole, which now it is attempting to fix. The opposition will not oppose the legislation, because the cost of an incompetent Labor government would be borne by the people of Queensland. People were starting to take advantage of the scheme because of the loophole. An industry was being formed by electricians and others who said, 'There's a hole in the legislation so big you could drive a truck through it. Let's take advantage of it. Let's install bigger panels, generators and batteries. We'll take power out of the grid to run generators and charge batteries. We'll use our solar panels to provide electricity back into the grid at 44 cents.' We can see how the costs could well and truly blow out when people can buy in electricity for 22 cents or 25 cents, including all of the network costs, and then sell it at 44 cents. It would not take a rocket scientist to see that the legislation had a big loophole, which the government is closing.

In evidence from the Department of Energy and Water Supply, we heard that that loophole could have cost the government an extra \$1 billion. Of that, \$900 million alone came from an increase in the size of solar panels. That is an extra \$1 billion on top of the \$4.84 billion that people are already paying towards the Solar Bonus Scheme. That cost would have been put straight onto the electricity bills of the people of Queensland. Obviously, the LNP does not support that. As I said, we do support the part of the bill that closes the loophole.

Members of the committee asked the department to give us some advice on the sorts of solar panels that may be installed to replace panels that have worn out over time. For example, if a 250-watt solar panel fails and needs to be replaced, you may not be able to buy another panel of exactly the same size. The legislation says that you cannot oversize your panels, but it does not lock in a number. The department said that they will be pragmatic about this. However, what happens if you cannot buy the same size panel and you have to replace it with something slightly bigger, so you go over the inverter rating? Would you be in breach of the Solar Bonus Scheme and lose the 44-cent payment? That cannot be allowed to happen.

The department, I assume via the minister, has said that they will be 'pragmatic' about that particular approach. When the minister speaks more on the bill—and he has plenty of time to do that—I ask him to explain that pragmatic approach. Are we talking about a five per cent increase in size? Will that be allowable? Will it be a 10 per cent increase in size? If so, why is it not in the legislation? Why do we need to be pragmatic? After all, Labor governments are not that well known for being pragmatic. That is one of the things that I would like to get to the bottom of.

The bill looks at embedded networks, which came in on 1 December last year under the power of choice legislation. We are almost 12 months down the track from when the power of choice legislation came in and only now has the government put the bill before the House. This bill has been sitting on the *Notice Paper* for a long time. In fact, I have written on the top of my notes '22 March 2018', which is over six months ago. That shows how long we have been ready to debate this bill, but it has been stalled. That is a reflection on the government's family-friendly hours. They cannot get anything done and things have dragged on. This particular bill has been on the *Notice Paper* for months. It was introduced last year and finally we are debating it. One billion dollars is a lot of money, but they could not get around to putting the legislation before the House.

As far as embedded networks go, the bill ensures that the rule changes put in by the Australian Energy Market Commission come to fruition. A whole series of questions around how that will work was raised during submissions to the committee. I am not sure whether members are aware of what an

embedded network is. If you own a factory or a unit complex, electricity is supplied to a meter and the owner of the complex owns the network between it and the end user. That is an embedded network. In the past, if you had to buy your electricity from the embedded network operator they may have taken advantage of you. I fully support the government fixing that problem. It needs to be fixed.

There needs to be some clarity because, at the end of the day, that embedded network owner still owns the embedded network. Instead of the end user now dealing with just one person—the embedded network operator—they are now having to deal with a retailer—the embedded network operator—and maybe even an embedded network manager to work out their bill. Instead of getting one bill they are now possibly going to get two bills—one for the network and one for supply of electricity.

There is a lot of confusion among people who are running embedded networks. They do not quite understand how this whole thing will work. Quite frankly, the people who are relying on an embedded network to get their electricity have no idea what is going on. They are very surprised when they get a second bill from the embedded network operator. We would be quite happy to work with the government to see whether there is any way of clarifying this situation. We would be happy to work with the federal government as well. I understand that this has come from COAG and a decision made by all the state governments and the federal government.

While I am on the issue of the power of choice, I point out that I have raised with the minister before that we are having issues with the installation of meters to buildings brought about by the power of choice legislation. It used to take two weeks for meters to be installed but it is currently taking 12 or 16 weeks for them to be installed. Some people on the Gold Coast who are having issues with delays in meter installations are telling me that they are able to construct a house on a vacant block of land before they can get a meter installed. It is taking that long to get a meter installed. There needs to be a solution to that. Again, the opposition is quite happy to work with the government to see whether there is something we can both agree on to fix that particular issue.

The other issue raised with me is that an embedded network manager needs to be appointed to every embedded network. We are unsure at this stage how many people have been trained to be embedded network managers. Could the minister give us an idea how many embedded network managers are in the system now? How are people who have embedded networks being notified of that? How can people who buy embedded network electricity contact these people? Is there a process in place to streamline that whole organisation? It would be nice to have answers to those questions.

It is very unclear for people what will happen in, say, an industrial complex where there is an embedded network and they have a significant electricity user, say a foundry or a large-scale manufacturing group, and then at the other end of the scale there is an office with a few lights on and a couple of computers going. How is the network cost going to be broken up between those users? What is in place to make sure they are not being taken advantage of? What is the process for them appealing the decision of the network operator as to what their costs might be? Does that get referred to the ombudsman? Exactly what happens there? If the minister could clarify those issues that would be wonderful.

As I said at the start of my contribution, the other big issue relates to what the government said during the election campaign. They received some information from the final report of the Queensland Productivity Commission that it would be a good idea to take the non-reversion policy out. They copied the LNP's policy and said that they would take the non-reversion policy out and scrap it. They basically said that they would scrap the entire non-reversion policy. The legislation before us only scraps it for residential users and small business users. The government's explanatory notes state—

The Queensland Competition Authority advises that as of June 2016, around 38 per cent of large and very large customers in Ergon's area had switched to a private retailer.

This does not apply to them. It continues—

In Ergon's network east pricing zone, transmission region one (effectively the area along the Queensland coastline) the figures are higher—

this does not apply to them—

with more than 50 per cent of the large and 76 per cent of very large customers having switched to a private retailer at June 2016.

The explanatory notes go on to say—

In comparison, less than one percent of residential and small business customers have switched to a private retailer.

It does apply to them. The government has gone out and said, 'If you have switched away from Ergon, we are going to let you come back to Ergon.' When they produced the legislation it says that they are only going to let one per cent of people swap back. The other 99 per cent of people cannot.

Why would that be the case would members think? The reason is that the department was asked how much this would cost. They said that this particular policy—the one per cent of people to come back—is going to cost \$5 million. The government went out and made a promise—

Mr Krause: They had no idea what it would cost.

Mr HART: I take that interjection. That is where I was going. They had no idea how much this was going to cost. In fact, I suspect they did not care. Remember that this came from the incompetent previous minister for energy. Who was that, member for Chatsworth?

Mr Minnikin: 'Mangocube'.

Mr HART: That is the one—'mangocube'. They had no idea how much this would cost. They went out and made a promise that was uncosted, unfunded and not available to the budget. It could have been hundreds of millions of dollars. It may have been billions of dollars, we do not know. They reneged on it.

This is a clear indication to the people of Queensland that they cannot trust a Labor government. People cannot trust what they say, when they say it—especially during an election campaign—because they have no intention of following through. I hope the people of Queensland remember this when we get to the next election campaign and the Labor Party makes grandiose promises—'We are going to cut the price of electricity; we are going to do this and we are going to do that.' They then renege on it. I think there are words for that. The Labor Party goes out and makes a promise.

I want to thank the minister for giving me a briefing this morning on the amendments that will be moved later. There are three amendments. The opposition has no issue with two of them. I suspect we will have no issue with the third. We are checking on a last-minute planning change. This is the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill but they have thrown in a last-minute planning amendment to fix a problem that the government may have missed.

There is a whole series of problems in legislation but they are not going to bother to fix any of those. They will just fix this one. They will fix the bridge across the river issue in an electricity bill. The opposition is having a look at that at the moment. We were only notified about this at nine o'clock this morning. Again, this an indication that the government's family-friendly parliamentary sitting hours just do not work.

Even though we have no issue with the amendments, the second amendment, as the minister mentioned during his very short contribution, proposes to extend the derogation of further costs that retailers could charge, because that derogation expired on 30 June and they missed it. They 'missed it by that much', so now they want to fix that retrospectively—there is that word again—and extend it by two years so that it is taken off the agenda. It is quite clear from this bill that the government have no idea what they are doing. It would have cost the people of Queensland, including the parents of the young people in our gallery today, an extra billion dollars. That is a lot of money—a thousand million dollars in extra costs on the electricity bills of all your parents—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Direct your comments through the chair, member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: Through the chair to the members of the gallery, all of their parents would have had to pay an extra billion dollars had this bill not come before parliament again. This bill was introduced in June 2017. It has been sitting on the *Notice Paper* for so long. I have been monitoring the *Notice Paper* for the last six months, looking to see where the electricity bill is and it has been going down the list instead of coming up. It is just a pesky billion dollars.

Mr Boothman: What's a billion dollars between friends?

Mr HART: I take that interjection: 'What's a billion dollars between friends?' It means increased electricity bills for every person in this state, and that is pretty serious, so we do need to fix this. The opposition will not be opposing the bill, but we are very disappointed that the Labor Party thinks it is okay to tell porkies to the people of Queensland during an election campaign and then not follow through with it when the legislation—I withdraw the word 'porkies', Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is very good. You obviously knew that was unparliamentary. I heard it as 'poorly'. Thank you for picking that up.

Mr HART: The Labor Party behaved very poorly during the election campaign when they promised—

Mr Watts: Telling untruths.

Mr HART: We will try that. They told untruths when they led the people of Queensland astray by promising that they would be able to jump back to Ergon. Every time I go to Townsville I talk to a lot of people and there is one particular guy who owns a bowling alley who was really looking forward to being able to revert back to Ergon. He uses over 100 megawatts of power a year, so unfortunately he is not going to be able to jump back to Ergon. He has been caught out by the mistruths of the members of the ALP in Townsville who led him astray during the election campaign. I am sure they would have gone out waving this press release around and saying, 'You guys are going to be able to go back to Ergon and save money,' and all of a sudden they have had the rug pulled out from underneath them.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you going to table that prop, member for Burleigh?


Mr HART: Madam Deputy Speaker, I tabled it about 10 minutes ago. Members on this side have seen this press release. I have waved it around quite a bit. Most of the regional members would be well aware of it. In fact, I am sure they have been flooded by people in their electorates saying that they wish they could revert to Ergon. The Labor Party in this state has let them down.

(Time expired)

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Bancroft for his contribution, I would like to welcome to the gallery the students of St Joseph's Primary School in Nambour in the electorate of Nicklin, represented in the House by Marty Hunt.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will wait for quiet. I think I might read the warnings as well: the members for Kawana, Toowoomba North, Everton, Waterford, Bancroft and Gregory.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (11.44 am): I rise to commend the bill to the House, after we have all listened for half an hour to the ramblings by the member for Burleigh savaging us. Look out everyone on this side: the moose is loose!

There are three important outcomes of this bill that we can all support. The first is, as we have heard, the changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme. It is very clear that this scheme has been incredibly successful. I do want to rebut a couple of things that have been said previously. It is clear that solar and renewable energy has been overlooked in years past by the LNP. This is an industry that simply did not exist under the previous LNP government. We now have this incredibly vibrant and powerful industry throughout regional Queensland, and we should all be very thankful for that and for what we have created in just a few years.

What we have done through initiatives like the Solar Bonus Scheme is create the solar state. Queensland solar PVs are now the biggest or the second biggest electrical power plant in the state—over two gigawatt in capacity. We have probably over 440,000 solar rooftops here in Queensland, and we will make that half a million under the Palaszczuk government.

This bill corrects some of the anomalies and deals with some of the issues raised with this scheme. If we do not do this, as we have heard, people who oversize—put in a bigger inverter than what is outlined in their solar bonus contract—would be able to generate extra electricity, perhaps with more panels, and pump that back into the system. Also, they could do that with a battery—they could generate it, store it and send it back. Also, may I point out, they could even use a battery in an electric car to do that. This bill will deal with some of those anomalies. We want people in the Solar Bonus Scheme to maximise their use of solar generated power, but we want them to do that in accordance with their agreement.

It was highlighted in the committee report that the Palaszczuk government, as we have heard, has directed Energy Queensland to remove the cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme from electricity bills over the next three years from 2017, and prices have been set in accordance with that saving. That is a very welcome outcome for Queenslanders. Not only are we the leading state in renewable energies; we are leading Australia in putting downward pressure on electricity prices.

We are putting downward pressure on electricity prices under the Palaszczuk government. Our \$2 billion Affordable Energy Plan is helping to place downward pressure on prices, lowering costs for homes and businesses. We are giving people a \$50 bonus off their next electricity bill. Let us not forget the rebate program for energy-efficient appliances which was incredibly popular with Queenslanders.

Queensland farmers can now apply to get a free energy efficiency audit to help cut their power bills as part of the Palaszczuk government's \$10 million Energy Savers Plus Program. In the first phase of the Energy Savers Plus Program, Ergon delivered energy audits for almost 100 Queensland primary producers, resulting in \$1.5 million in annual power savings to date.

Mr HART: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As nice as this is, this is not relevant to the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Burleigh. There is no point of order. I am listening very closely to the contribution of the member for Bancroft and I find he is being relevant to the bill.

Mr WHITING: That is an amazing call. I sat here waiting for the call for half an hour listening to every point he made. I think we were very generous. The Advancing Clean Energy Schools program will help 800 Queensland schools cut their power bills by about 20 per cent and save about \$10.2 million per year.


I turn to the non-reversion policy. In terms of helping place downward pressure on prices, this bill delivers a great outcome for regional Queenslanders looking for a better electricity deal. That is the outcome of the changes to the non-reversion policy. For those who want to go back to Ergon as their electricity provider, they can do that under the changes to the non-reversion policy in this bill. In regional Queensland about 50 per cent of large businesses have switched from Ergon, and that has been great for competition. We want to help those small customers go back to Ergon which previously they were prevented from doing.

I turn to the issue of embedded networks. Another great outcome is the changes made to embedded networks. I want to commend the Minister for Public Works who has overseen the building better futures act as well. That has been a great outcome for people on embedded networks in home parks. This will build competition amongst electricity retailers. People on embedded networks get a great advantage because their supplier, their on-seller, is able to buy electricity in bulk and pass on those savings to them. Often people in home parks or retirement villages are charged by their wholesaler at commercial rates. It would be great to see them negotiate with these parks to make sure they are supplying them at residential rates. That is something I would like to see changed as it will deliver some improvements in Queensland. As I said, it is a great outcome for people in home parks on embedded networks to be able to select a retailer of their own.

Another wonderful element of this bill is that people in embedded networks can now go to the electricity ombudsman free of charge to resolve any issues they may have. For people in those parks on fixed incomes, that is a great result. I have three large parks in my area and I pay tribute to the people who live there—Green Wattle, Pacific Palms and Palm Lake. Many of them have embedded networks. I have worked hard for many years on behalf of those residents to get a better result in their embedded network outcomes to help deliver better electricity prices and costs.

Being able to access the ombudsman is one of three great changes that we have made for people on embedded networks as it delivers better outcomes for electricity. Another great change we have made is that pensioners can now access state and local government rebates. For years they tried to get those rebates and they now can. We have also made sure there is no fee charged for reading these meters. Once again, the embedded network manager can only recover their cost of supplying electricity. We have done a lot to look after these people who are on embedded networks.

I pay tribute to the secretariat and to the Public Works and Utilities Committee in the last parliament. I was a member of that committee as well, guided by the member for Kurwongbah. I also thank the other members on our committee. I think we have worked well together to deliver this great outcome. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (11.53 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018 as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. This bill was the subject of a report in the 55th Parliament by the then Public Works and Utilities Committee which lapsed with the dissolution of the parliament following the announcement of the election. The bill was subsequently introduced into the House and referred to the committee on 15 February 2018 to report by 15 March 2018. I remind the House that that is six months ago.

That leads to the first comment I would make in relation to the bill. This was a very short reporting period. Granted there may have been a previous report done, but this is a new committee and there were some additions and amendments made to the previous bill. This meant there was only a short

time frame for submissions and no opportunity to hold a public hearing with the submitters, nor was there any public hearing with submitters in the 2017 report. The committee did hold a public hearing with the department and also received a written response from the department to submissions received, but sufficient time should have been allowed for submitters to appear. The committee agreed that the report be adopted, but due to the lack of opportunity to interview submitters the non-government members submitted a statement of reservation regarding some of the concerns raised by some submitters.

The first section of the bill that I would like to address is the Solar Bonus Scheme. The bill proposes to amend the Electricity Act to clarify the specific circumstances in which Solar Bonus Scheme customers will not be permitted to use additional generation and electricity storage devices. This will be accomplished by no longer allowing the installation of additional generation systems and/or electricity storage devices in a way that enables the system and/or device to supply energy to the premises at the same time as the Solar Bonus Scheme qualifying generator is operating; the installation of additional generation systems and/or electricity storage devices in a way that allows them to export energy to the network; or the practice of oversizing existing Solar Bonus Scheme qualifying generators.

If any of these conditions are breached, the customer would no longer receive the 44-cent-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff. The department advised that the bill does not limit the customer's ability to expand an existing system, install an additional system or use a battery to power their home or business but if they do so beyond what is permitted under the proposed provisions they would become ineligible to receive the Solar Bonus Scheme.

The advancements in solar panel technologies have led to ageing solar panels being replaced with new panels with a greater generating capacity which will lead to a dramatic increase to the cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme. The committee asked whether the department had made an estimation of how much it would cost the government if the proposed changes to the scheme were not implemented. The department advised that it had estimated approximately \$1 billion in additional costs would be incurred by the scheme, with about \$900,000 attributed to oversizing and the remainder for second systems and batteries.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr WEIR: One billion. The Solar Bonus Scheme was an ill-conceived piece of legislation when it was introduced in 2008 by the then Labor government and will cost an estimated \$4.1 billion by 2028. This legislation is to prevent a further blow-out in what the ACCC Chairman, Rod Sims, has described as an excessively generous scheme.

The next aspect of this bill is the regulatory arrangements for competition in embedded networks. Embedded networks are private electricity networks which serve multiple premises and are located within and connected to a distribution or transmission system through a parent connection point in the National Electricity Market—for example, shopping centres, retirement villages, caravan parks, apartment blocks and office buildings. Within an embedded network the embedded network operator—for example, a shopping centre owner—also known as an on-supplier, provides embedded network customers with network services which deliver electricity to their businesses. Many embedded network owners also sell electricity to the embedded network customers. Some submitters expressed concern about the additional cost that would be imposed to manage this system as embedded network owners that sell electricity to 30 or more customers will be required to appoint an embedded network manager.


TradeCoast Central stated in its submission that the Australian Energy Market Commission is currently undertaking a broad review to address problems that have arisen in Victoria and New South Wales and made the suggestion that this legislation be delayed until the review is complete and the findings released.

The final piece of legislation in this bill is the removal of the non-reversion policy for small customers. This legislation was intended to encourage retail competition by preventing customers in regional Queensland that switch to another retailer from returning to the non-competing government retailer Ergon Energy. The government introduced the non-reversion policy 10 years ago, and the policy has delivered mixed results with about 38 per cent of large and very large customers switching to a private retailer compared to less than one per cent of residential and small business.

The department advised that the non-reversion policy may be the reason that small businesses and residents have been reluctant to enter the market, knowing that they could not return to the previous provider. I would suggest that that conclusion should have been obvious 10 years ago when the bill

was introduced. This bill is all about repairing the omissions and lack of foresight when these various pieces of legislation were introduced in the first place. This has become a commonplace occurrence with this Palaszczuk government.

The committee recommended that the bill be passed so we will not be opposing the second reading. In conclusion, I would like to thank the other members of the committee and the research staff, headed by Dr Jacqui Dewar, for their contributions in preparing this report in what was a very short reporting time frame.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (12.00 pm): I rise to say a few words in support of the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018 as well as the proposed amendments. Queensland's energy landscape has been transformed by technological improvements over the past decade, and the state government needs the associated legislation to keep up to date with these technological improvements.


Queensland is a leading state in Australia in renewable generation development. Our biggest power station is rooftop solar systems, and Queenslanders are open to using emerging technology to manage their energy usage and costs. We need our legislation to support the Palaszczuk government's Affordable Energy Plan, which is placing downward pressure on electricity prices and supporting our government's commitment to a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. Unfortunately, our current laws were framed in the 2000s and did not even recognise the incoming battery technology or the off-grid scenarios where customers are entirely energy self-sufficient.

The rules around Queensland's fast-changing energy landscape are being overhauled to accommodate a new world of energy storage systems, remote controlled home energy and customers who are independent of the electricity grid. This bill will ensure we have the regulatory framework in place to integrate emerging technologies and to continue to provide secure and reliable supply statewide.

This bill will amend the Electricity Act 1994, the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006 and the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014. As the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines said in his introductory speech—

The bill also rules out the practice of oversizing Solar Bonus Scheme systems. Oversizing occurs when the overall size of solar panels exceeds the size of the solar inverter approved for use under the scheme. Oversizing has become easier with advances in technology and has the potential to increase scheme costs beyond what were anticipated when the scheme was designed. I do recognise there will be situations—such as warranty replacements and system reinstallations following disasters—where a customer has no choice but to oversize, particularly because original panel sizes are no longer available. I anticipate a pragmatic approach will be taken by the electricity distribution businesses to compliance and enforcement. Solar Bonus Scheme aspects of the bill are proposed to commence retrospectively from the date of introduction. This provides clarity.

The bill was reviewed by the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. In its report No. 2 to the 56th Parliament, the committee made only one recommendation and that was that the bill be passed. In closing, as a member of that committee, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, the committee secretariat, the submitters and the Hansard reporters.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (12.04 pm): I rise today to speak to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018 and to express my deep concern about another amendment bill that is before this House designed to fix the failures of Labor's previous legislation that was poorly conceived and has been poorly executed.

As a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee tasked to review this bill, I would first like to thank my fellow committee members—the members for Bancroft, Condamine, Bundaberg, Ipswich West and Mount Ommaney—for their contributions. I would also like to acknowledge those entities and individuals who made submissions to the committee in relation to the bill, including staff from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Finally, I would like to thank the committee secretariat staff who, as always, conscientiously and professionally supported the committee in reviewing this bill.

This bill was one of the first considered by the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. I am concerned that the government considered it necessary to allow a very short time frame for review of the bill which meant that no public hearings were offered to submitters. I would understand such a course of action had the legislation been considered by the House in a timely fashion after the conclusion of the committee process. However, here we are more than six months after the tabling of the committee's report and the bill has still not been considered. This is emblematic of this government's shambolic and amateurish approach to managing the businesses of government.

Queenslanders deserve better. If the government is incapable of considering legislation in a timely fashion, it should allow the committee sufficient latitude to fully examine proposed legislation. Failure to do so simply indicates that the government does not wish to subject itself to the scrutiny that an open and transparent government should. I note that this bill will reluctantly have the support of the opposition because we have little choice other than to support it, given that the amendments will help save Queenslanders from further financial peril at the hands of Labor.

It is an indictment on this government that the word 'electricity' is now synonymous with terms like 'rip-off', 'price gouging' and 'price manipulation'. Buderim residents I speak to tell me that when they think about electricity they think of Labor's ambitious and expensive renewable energy target, a move designed to appease the Greens and not cut power costs, Labor's generous Solar Bonus Scheme that robbed Peter to pay Paul—the amendment of which is the focus of this bill. More than all of these concerns combined, they speak of the sleepless nights trying to think of ways they can reduce their consumption and how they will come up with money to pay the next exorbitant power bill.

The Grant report slammed Labor's 2006 move to national network regulation as 'catastrophic' which led to gold plating of the network. In simple terms, Queensland Labor overspent on unnecessary infrastructure, overestimated demand and as a result needlessly drove up prices. Labor's introduction of a \$4.1 billion Solar Bonus Scheme in 2008 was another costly attempt at stimulating the market in an unsustainable and overzealous way.

The government itself has revealed, that without amendment, this scheme alone could blow out by more than \$1 billion. It is not rocket science. Renewable energy sources will increasingly become more important. However, the maintenance of an appropriate technology mix that ensures reliability and affordability must be the focus of any energy policy. Unfortunately, Labor has demonstrated time and time again that it would prefer to subject Queenslanders to extortionate electricity prices as a consequence of an ideological crusade that rushes headlong into a 50 per cent renewable energy target rather than focus on affordability and reliability.

In 2012 the LNP closed the Solar Bonus Scheme to new entrants in order to reduce electricity prices and to slow the fiscal tsunami the scheme had triggered. The amendments to the Solar Bonus Scheme contained in this bill are essential if the state government is to curtail the excesses of the past and maintain the scheme's original intent.

When introduced, the overly generous and ill-conceived Solar Bonus Scheme did not account for the use of household solar storage batteries. As a result, there is nothing stopping a householder from using battery storage to power their home during the day and exporting solar generated power to the grid, buying electricity at eight cents per kilowatt hour at the same time as selling electricity for 44 cents per kilowatt hour. While it is vital to introduce generation and storage limits, it is unfortunate that it is a decade too late. Even considering the fast-moving trends in the energy market, it is classic Labor to not take this into account: no attention to detail, no attempt at futureproofing and no care for the economic fallout. It is about time existing Solar Bonus Scheme customers were told what the rules are and how they can play by them, giving them the clarity and certainty they deserve and protecting other consumers in the energy market as well.

Mr Deputy Speaker, as I know you are well aware, the new national regulatory framework for retail competition, known as the embedded networks rule, came into effect on 1 December 2017, making it possible for unit residents and shopping centre and factory tenants to shop around for their electricity retailer instead of having this sourced on their behalf by their landlord or embedded network owner. In 2006 section 23 was specifically introduced by Labor into Queensland legislation to deny embedded network customers access to the retailer of their choice until such time as the government was satisfied that market problems, such as the administrative arrangements of how the embedded network owner would pass on the network charges to their tenants, had been resolved. That said, the Australian Energy Market Commission, the AEMC, is the rule maker in the electricity market. In 2017 it conducted a thorough review which concluded that the regulatory framework with respect to embedded networks is no longer fit for purpose and that the commission does not see retaining the current framework as an option. It also proposed a significant overhaul of the rules to enable retail contestability in embedded networks.

It did, however, note that the New South Wales and Victorian experience had been less than positive. Surely the Palaszczuk government cannot be satisfied, then, that market problems have been resolved. Only an irresponsible government would make a change now that will affect millions of customers when the framework is likely to be overhauled in the near future. Queensland Labor has not taken the necessary steps to craft thoughtful and effective legislation, instead forging ahead before the AEMC reports on its view of regulatory arrangements.


Submitters to this bill stated quite clearly that they fear extra administrative burden and compliance costs, which will significantly impact the owners of embedded networks. Economic impacts may have been addressed and reduced by the AEMC if Labor had not sought to rush the introduction of this legislation in February. Without a proper hearing, Labor made it clear to these submitters that it was not interested in the real challenges they would face and that, in this case, it had prioritised expediency over technicality or practicality.

Without the necessary regulatory instruments, this bill leaves the owners of embedded networks to decide how the share of network charges is calculated and disbursed to tenants, paving the way for future legal challenges around fairness. It is yet another headache for them as a result of Labor's poor attention to detail. Given that these charges can be close to a quarter of the bill, these arrangements could completely decimate a small business. To leave these arrangements up to market forces or some such classic Labor scapegoat to resolve is completely reckless.

I put it to those opposite that robust policy comes from due diligence, active listening and genuine engagement with all stakeholders, especially consumers. Even when Labor failed to increase electricity retail competition in the regions 10 years ago and was forced into an embarrassing backflip at the last election to repair it, it still has not been able to get it right.

Labor was right to copy the LNP's commitment to scrap its non-reversion policy, which prevented consumers from returning to a government owned electricity provider once they signed up with a different retailer. Unfortunately, it overlooked the detail of the LNP's policy and has misled voters again. Despite the assertions of the member for Bancroft, the facts are that Labor has only slightly amended this ineffective policy and has not scrapped it as it said it would. These decade-old laws will still apply to large energy consumers that use more than 100 megawatt hours each year. Yet again it is business that has been left blindsided by Labor's smoke and mirrors and misleading election promises.

A few questions still remain as to Labor's real plan for driving down electricity prices. However, what we do know is that the secret to keeping power prices down is competition and transparency in the market. We do know that Labor has no record for producing either.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.14 pm): I am pleased to rise today to add my support to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. These amendments make a number of changes in relation to the non-reversion policy in regional Queensland, the Solar Bonus Scheme and embedded networks. Ten years after the introduction of solar power incentives by the then Labor government, who could have imagined just how successful the uptake of renewable energy would be? It is wonderful to see that Queenslanders have embraced renewable energy with such enthusiasm and it is for this reason we are making these amendments today.

As I drive through the electorate of Mount Ommaney it is clear to me that solar is here to stay. We in the Palaszczuk government know that renewable energy is only growing in popularity and continues to grow, thanks to the innovative local businesses such as Super Quick Electric in my electorate of Mount Ommaney. Rob and his team are helping Mount Ommaney locals crush their power bills down to almost zero by installing solar and battery technology in their homes, allowing them to save the planet and their hard-earned money at the same time. I am also thrilled by the government's solar loans, which will allow families who cannot afford the up-front cost of renewable energy to get on board. I know that already in Mount Ommaney many local families have taken this up, and that is fantastic to see.

We on this side of the House know that renewable energy is critical to customers seeing savings on their power bills. By installing solar or other renewables, people have the ability to cut their power bills right down, sometimes to zero. However, the legislation as it stands allows people to install systems larger than their household needs in order to create additional energy to sell back to the grid. As the minister has outlined previously, oversizing occurs when the overall size of the panels exceeds the size of the solar inverter approved for use under the scheme. Due to advances in technology, oversizing has become more prevalent and has the potential to increase scheme costs beyond what was anticipated when the scheme was designed over 10 years ago. That means the government would have to pay householders for their additional energy output.

When I spoke with Rob from Super Quick Electric in my electorate he was able to reasonably predict for me what size storage facility I would need to meet my personal household requirements and showed me a power bill based on this recommendation. We know that in the market these great local operators can assist consumers with selecting the right products that best meet their needs. Knowing


that customers are able to seek accurate advice from their renewable energy product suppliers, it is important that we ensure taxpayers are not footing the bill for oversized systems. This is not in keeping with the spirit or the intention of the original legislation. This legislation will close that loophole and ensure that we continue to provide the maximum bang for buck for Queensland taxpayers while still allowing taxpayers to crush their power bills. The legislation will place beyond doubt what is acceptable for households to install in order to meet their electricity needs.

Members of the House will be well aware of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to having 50 per cent renewable energy in the state of Queensland by 2030. It is vital to facilitate that for all Queenslanders, not just those in the south-east corner, so everyone has easy access to solar and the other expanding markets of renewable energy that we are now seeing. This is why a key component of the bill is removing the restriction on residential and small business customers in regional Queensland. This restriction is commonly referred to as the non-reversion policy and was introduced 10 years ago. Non-reversion as a policy was very successful in encouraging competition for large customers in regional Queensland; nearly 50 per cent of the customers on the east coast switched from Ergon Retail. However, smaller regional customers did not see the same benefits, with only one per cent going to market contracts.

As a result, the Palaszczuk government has reconsidered the efficacy of this policy for small customers and listened to the concerns raised in regional communities. It is with this in mind that we are removing the restriction in the interests of competition for the entire state of Queensland. The renewable energy sector in the state of Queensland—

Mr Hart: You don't understand your own policies.

Ms PUGH: The interjections from the member for Burleigh are not being taken. The renewable energy sector in the state of Queensland has gone from strength to strength. We have more solar on rooftops than any other state in Australia. We continue to lead the nation year on year in continuing to add solar to rooftops and renewables to households in Queensland. I am proud to be a part of the government leading the charge on renewables for all Queenslanders. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (12.19 pm): I rise to speak to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. The objectives of the bill are to modify the Electricity Act 1994, the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006 and the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014. The bill proposes a number of changes relating to the current non-reversion policy for regional Queensland, the Solar Bonus Scheme and embedded networks which fall under these acts.

The changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme particularly affect people in the Bundaberg electorate. An article in the *NewsMail* a few weeks ago confirmed that Bundaberg still takes the No. 1 spot in Australia for the most solar panel installations. We have had the highest number of small solar generation units since 2001, installing just shy of 12,000 panels in the past 17 years. Bundaberg is home to a large number of retirees and a high number of small business owners. We also have one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. Given these factors, many Bundaberg residents simply cannot afford the expensive costs of living. I often hear that they feel distressed and worried about money and how they will pay their day-to-day bills.

The first proposed amendment I wish to discuss is the change to the Solar Bonus Scheme's guidelines. Right now the scheme is vague, complex and plainly confusing. The proposed changes to the scheme will make it easier for everyday people to follow. Customers need to understand when and under what circumstances they can install energy storage systems like batteries and secondary generation systems without putting their current eligibility for the Solar Bonus Scheme at risk. Electricity and the legislation surrounding it are extremely complicated, so it is only fair we adjust the scheme to make it transparent. As I mentioned, many Bundaberg residents struggle financially, so of course I want them to be able to continue to receive the up-front payments associated with the scheme for as long as they are eligible. It is only fair that we honour the current contracts with those who have invested in solar.

As well as making the rules clearer for our people, the proposed amendment to the scheme will assist with getting Queensland's finances under control. People are genuinely worried about the amount of debt the government is in. It is also a concern I hear regularly from Bundaberg residents. When introduced in 2008, the lavish scheme offered eligible customers 44-cent feed-in tariffs, which is great for those who signed up but not so great for Queensland's debt. It is not a shock to hear that the scheme has been described as excessively generous. Labor introduced the scheme without proper consideration of its long-term financial implications.

Four years after its introduction, in 2012 the LNP government closed the scheme to new entrants. This was done in order to try and contain the projected major cost explosion. People who currently receive the rebate will continue to do so until the scheme's expiry date in mid-2028, as long as they remain eligible. It would not have been fair to retrospectively take this away. Even after closing the scheme to new entrants, it has been estimated that this Labor creation will still end up costing the government over \$4 billion from its introduction in 2008 until 2028.

During the examination of the bill I asked departmental staff how much money the passing of this bill would save the government. I did not expect such a precise and quick answer, but I was advised that the savings would be approximately \$1 billion. That is huge. Imagine what we could do with that money. How many new schools could we build? It is disappointing that now, 10 years down the track, we have had to make corrections to try and get the current government out of the mess it has made of our state's energy policies.

The other proposed amendment I would like to discuss relates to the non-reversion policy. The current non-reversion policy means that customers in regional Queensland who leave Ergon Energy to try a different electricity supplier cannot return to Ergon if they wish to do so. If this bill is passed, this policy would no longer be in effect for small customers. In October 2017, as a pre-election sweetener the Labor government announced it would be removing the non-reversion policy for customers, giving them the option of returning to Ergon Retail. It was not apparent that they were referring to residential and small business customers only and would not be including the more than 50 per cent large and very large customers who had switched to a private retailer.

Labor estimates that, if all small customers currently supplied by private retailers elect to return to Ergon, the nets cost would be \$3 million to \$5 million per annum, which would be funded from the dividends of the state owned electricity entities. That means \$3 million to \$5 million per annum savings to regional customers if this bill passes, including those Bundaberg small business owners.

Ergon Energy is a government owned corporation, and the non-reversion policy was originally implemented in order to boost smaller, privately owned retailers in regional Queensland. However, all customers have different needs, so restricting their choice of who supplies their power is unfair. As I mentioned earlier, Bundaberg uses the most solar power in Australia. Because of this there is an oversupply of electricity in the market, causing the price of electricity to rise. Additionally, the pure lack of competition in Bundaberg leaves us with unreasonable and expensive electricity bills, which are set to increase by another \$313 per household by the end of next year. The people who can afford it least are paying the price.

Given all of this, I am aware and disappointed that this legislative change will not fix the monopoly we have in Bundaberg for private households. However, as a member of the committee that reviewed this bill, I am able to see how it would make it fairer and less expensive for those living in regional areas who are lucky enough to have options when it comes to electricity providers.


Small businesses is the backbone of regional community economies, including Bundaberg. In Bundy we are so proud of our local businesses, and I will continue to back them as long as I have the privilege of standing in this House. The change to the non-reversion policy will help make sure that all those small business owners in regional areas, including Bundaberg, who are paying too much for their electricity will have access to a fairer deal when it comes to choosing their provider. Life is about choice. Everyone is different. Every business is different, so it is obvious that different electricity providers are going to suit different situations. The people of our great state deserve simple fairness. We need to support residents and small business owners in regional areas. This is done by creating environments where they can thrive—not restricting them and watching them fail. Electricity prices seem to be constantly increasing, so it is only fair that customers are allowed to at least choose who they are paying their money to.

The State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee reviewed this bill. I would like to thank the other committee members including you, Mr Deputy Speaker Weir, the secretariat staff and all submitters. The bill was originally referred to the former Public Works and Utilities Committee for consideration prior to the dissolution of the 55th Parliament in October 2017. I also thank the previous committee for the work they did on this bill.

The 2018 bill is substantially the same as the 2017 bill with one major additional purpose: amending the non-reversion policy. This bill was introduced to parliament on 15 February 2018, and on 20 February 2018 stakeholders and subscribers were invited to make written submissions on the bill.

We received seven submissions. On 5 March 2018 the committee held a public hearing with the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy to discuss the bill. The committee also received written advice from the department in response to concerns that were raised in the submissions.

As a committee member and as the state member for Bundaberg, I support the passing of this bill based on the positive effects the amendments will have on Bundaberg and regional Queensland.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise today to make a brief contribution to the debate of the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. As has been stated before, this bill was introduced in the 55th Parliament and reported on by the committee I chaired then, the Public Works and Utilities Committee; however, as the bill lapsed with the conclusion of the parliament, here we are today.

This bill will help to address a few issues with our current framework. It will: clarify when additional generation systems and electricity storage devices can be deployed in association with the Solar Bonus Scheme; enable the effective implementation of a new national regulatory framework for retail competition in embedded networks; and allow residential and small business customers in regional Queensland to have the option to return to Ergon Retail if they are based at a property that has switched to a private retailer. I note that, as with the previous bill, the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee made only one recommendation, and that is that the bill be passed.

When the Solar Bonus Scheme was introduced in 2008, I do not think anyone predicted the massive uptake—of around 280,000 customers to date—or the emerging technologies that have appeared since. The Palaszczuk government is committed to retaining the scheme for customers who continue to meet the eligibility requirements as well as enabling the installation of more solar PV and other emerging and new technologies such as batteries. All of these innovations, and the rapidly growing availability of them, present an exciting opportunity for customers to have more control over their energy use. Some customers on the current scheme are confused, however, about whether they can include or use these technologies without risking their eligibility to remain on the scheme. This bill will provide customers with the certainty they need about just what they can do while retaining their feed-in tariff.

Replacing panels in an array with like for like or even greater capacity panels is not an issue unless the whole array when modified has a significantly greater generation capacity. Likewise, batteries are fine to be included in a system as long as they are not used as additional generation above what the system was designed to supply. The practice of oversizing by playing with an inverter to allow it to provide greater capacity is therefore increasing generation and is not permitted.

These amendments will clarify and allow new technologies to be integrated to align with the original intent of the Solar Bonus Scheme, which was that generation would be used in a customer's residence or business and that excess beyond normal use could be exported to help overall generation to the network and they would be compensated for that.

Mr Hart: Hear, hear! Someone who understands.


Mr KING: I note the interjection from the member for Burleigh, who has recently completed a study trip on feed-in tariffs overseas. It seems like he did not learn much, but I hope he enjoyed it.

I will now make a few remarks on the regulatory arrangements for competition in embedded networks. Embedded networks are private systems such as caravan parks, apartment blocks and industrial parks with a single network connection point. In December 2017 the National Electricity Rules changed to remove barriers to retail competition for customers in embedded networks. These amendments simply allow us to comply with this and give customers a choice to access the competitive market if they wish.

Finally, the non-reversion policy introduced 10 years ago has made any customers outside the south-east who choose to switch to a retailer other than Ergon only able to go one way and not return to Ergon. Very few residential and small business customers have switched to private retailers. These amendments will give small customers affected by this policy the option of returning to Ergon Retail and give surety to small customers thinking about making the switch from Ergon Retail that they can choose to return down the track.

This was good legislation in the last parliament. It is good legislation in this parliament. I am pleased that everyone—although there are some negative nellyes—is going to support it. It is good legislation. I commend it to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Before I call the member for Glass House, I acknowledge in the public gallery school leaders and the principal of Aspley State High School in the electorate of Aspley.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.32 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. I will restrict my comments to two aspects: one pertinent to the bill as it was introduced and the second to the amendments that have been proposed by the minister in relation to the Queen's Wharf development.

I pick up on the comments made by previous speakers about embedded networks. I understand that I have at least one embedded network in the electorate of Glass House. That is at the Twin Cedars villas in Beerburrum. Recently I was contacted by just about every single resident of the Twin Cedars lifestyle villas, particularly by James and Carol Fitzgerald, John and Kaye Kempson, Graham and Noela Vonhoff, and Geoff and Gail Hancock. They are all very concerned with what they perceive is a very sudden and unexplainable change in their arrangements.

As is the case in many of these situations, just about every resident in those villas has solar on their roof and until recently were receiving a rebate for such. Suddenly they received notification from management—I have all respect for managers of such villas, but I seek some clarification here—that they could no longer do so. I will use James and Carol Fitzgerald's case as an example. They have had panels since 2015. They have been receiving the rebate since and can demonstrate that on correspondence that I have and that I have subsequently provided to the minister. Their energy supplier is ERM. It goes through the organisation that runs the villas and they supply that house. They have received a letter from management that that will no longer be the case. That letter states that the owner—

... wishes to advise that the Park Owner will no longer credit home owners for solar power that is fed back into the park infrastructure.

The park owner is not obliged to reimburse home owners for power generated on the site. Where excess solar power is generated, the home owner will not receive a charge or credit.

I have written to the minister on behalf of the residents seeking some clarification of this. Perhaps as part of the debate of the bill and the legislative changes we are making today the minister and his department can clarify the situation. I look forward to receiving a response either today, if we have a situation where this bill is not guillotined because of the motion moved on Tuesday, or in subsequent correspondence from the minister clarifying that for the residents of Twin Cedars at Beerburrum.


I now turn to the amendments the minister flagged this morning, particularly those that relate to the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016. I think we need to be very clear that this is another sign of the incompetence of those opposite. To show that, I need to provide a time line of what occurred. The Queen's Wharf Brisbane Priority Development Area was declared on 28 November 2014—yes, during the LNP's term in government. It included land located between the Brisbane River and George Street and between Alice and Queen streets, with a riverfront connection to the Goodwill Bridge. Obviously, the election then occurred in January 2015 and there was a change of government in February 2015.

Interestingly, the preferred proponent and project concept were selected in July 2015 by Labor. Yes, the process started under the LNP the previous year with expressions of interest, but the design and project concept were finalised in July 2015. On 28 January 2016 the Queen's Wharf Brisbane PDA Development Scheme was approved by the Queensland government, having been put out for public consultation and notification between August and September 2015. Basically, since that time Labor has had over two years to amend the PDA declaration to include what the project concept now includes—that is, a bridge from Queen's Wharf over to South Bank. They could have done it at any time after July 2015. That is more than two years—in fact three years.

Previously, when then acting planning minister Miles issued a media release about this on Christmas Eve a couple of years back, he tried to blame it on the LNP government and suggest that we had not done our job in declaring the PDA. Hopefully that time line clearly shows that this has all occurred under the Palaszczuk Labor government. Any suggestion that what we are rushing through today is to clean up anything that was done by the LNP government is completely and utterly false. If anything, this again demonstrates just how lazy, slow and incompetent those opposite are. We have a situation where Labor is quick to drive our great state's economy into the ground, but it is certainly not rushed when it makes self-labelled urgent changes—urgent changes that then minister Miles mentioned back on 24 December 2016.


It is like inviting six friends to a dinner party but only setting the table for four and then sitting on that situation for two to three years. It is not acceptable. Your friends would be pretty grumpy if that was the case. It just goes to show that minister after minister, including the Deputy Premier, did not have a handle on what was going on at Queen's Wharf. They have shown a level of incompetence and now we have to sit here and sort out this mess. It is not good enough that we now have to deal with urgent amendments—amendments that the LNP opposition saw only this morning—when we have known about the problem since July 2015. It is not good enough that this is rushed in as an amendment to a bill that has nothing to do with planning or the Queen's Wharf development. It is not good enough that this has not been scrutinised by the committee. It is not good enough that this debate will be guillotined and that this may in fact affect a number of other people.

I can assure those opposite that the LNP will be supporting these amendments because we know that they should have happened in the first place. Again, I say to the people of Queensland: know that you have an incompetent Palaszczuk Labor government that cannot get the simple things right and will continue to do so for as long as it is in government.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.39 pm): When I first started as minister for environment and minister for the Great Barrier Reef in 2015, I was shocked by the extent of the devastation the Newman government had wrought upon renewables programs and programs to reduce carbon pollution. It was hard to see then how we would turn those things around, but today, in under four years, we can see how quickly the Palaszczuk government has been able to rebuild. With this bill, we will support the next wave of renewable energy, encouraging more people to take up solar and help regional Queenslanders save on their power bills.

From the moment we came to government, the Palaszczuk government has played its part in the global effort to address climate change. We have implemented policies that will ensure the long-term sustainability of our economy, communities and industries. Solar and battery technology has been a big part of that, not just in the regions but right across the state and across industries. Queensland Health is a big consumer of energy and it also sees the benefits of solar. Renewable energy will form a crucial part of its effort to make the Queensland Health system more sustainable, and I support it. It was not always easy.

The LNP has tried every scare campaign it could think of to rubbish climate science, but Queenslanders do not buy it. They want renewables, they want to protect our incredible environment and they want the savings in their pockets. I am proud to stand in this House today and with this bill support the next wave of renewable energy for Queensland.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.41 pm): In speaking to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill I want to make a few comments about the amendments to be moved in consideration in detail, in particular the extension of the derogations under the national energy retail law, which, as the member for Burleigh pointed out, expired on 30 June this year and will be reinstated through an amendment to be moved. I also want to make some comments about the non-reversion policy and comments by the QFF.

In relation to the extension of the derogations under the national electricity retail law, one of the issues that I have raised in the House before is irrigation tariffs for our primary producers and the fact that specific irrigation tariffs that are available now to irrigators are due to be phased out or abolished in 2020 after they were extended in 2013 until 2020. I have previously called for those irrigation tariffs to be retained and for the government to look at what it can do in terms of retaining those tariffs because they are one of the very few extensions made to primary producers to recognise the difficulties they have in dealing with energy costs in their businesses.

As many members know, our producers and our farmers do not know when it is going to rain. They do not know when there is going to be a drought. They do not know when they are going to have a flood and when there is going to be a heat wave. It is a very unpredictable business. On top of all of that, over the last decade or more successive policies have seen the costs of irrigating go through the roof. It is good to see that the government is extending those derogations under the national energy retail law, but it should also be looking at what it can do to retain those irrigation tariffs that are relied on by many small producers not only in my electorate but also across the state.

I note the QFF made a submission to the bill in which it supported the abolition of the non-reversion policy for small customers but also sought to have it extended to large customers for Ergon Energy areas, and I support that position by the QFF. The position it is coming from is that not only do we need competition in the electricity market but also there needs to be the ability for businesses that have uncertainty—the unpredictable weather patterns, the unpredictable energy usage patterns—

like primary producers to be able to seek the best competitive position possible when it comes to dealing with energy companies, and at the moment they do not have that. Our larger primary producers in the Ergon Energy area do not have that ability to get the most competition in their market, and they should have that.

There was also a submission made by the QFF about the categorisation of large customers, and this is another issue that I have spoken about in this place many times where primary producers and small businesses—and a lot of small businesses—fall over the 100 megawatt line of usage per annum and it puts them into the invidious position of having to pay significant demand charges—additional network charges—because they use over 100 megawatts of electricity per year. It is a perverse disincentive to growing your business that when you use more power you get whacked with hugely increased network charges, and it is not just farmers that suffer this for irrigation but also small businesses.

There is a business in Boonah called the Ants Fruit Market and Dave's Deli. It started as a fruit shop but expanded into offering a food and beverage service to people as well within the same premises. Because of that, it is using more power. It uses over 100 megawatts a year and it gets charged several thousand dollars more per month on its electricity bill. If it shrunk the size of its business—sacked a few people—and went back to using less than 100 megawatts per annum, it would not get whacked with those charges. It is completely nonsensical that when someone grows their business—a small business person employs a few more people, offers some more services, diversifies their offering—they then go over that 100 megawatt line and have to pay thousands of dollars more per month in electricity costs.

This is the system we have and it is a system that needs to change in the future if we want to see growth in that particular business sector, both from a retail small business sense and also in the primary producer sense. The worst thing about it is that all of that money that is put on to the bills of our small businesses and our farmers for network demand charges goes straight to the state owned companies of Energex and Ergon and then straight into the Treasury coffers of the Queensland government. That is why there is an electricity tax that goes straight to the government and it collects over \$1 billion from those network companies, which is coming out of the pockets of hardworking small businesses and farmers.

It is hard enough as it is for farmers to make a living, let alone having to contribute to prop up the budget bottom line of those members opposite, but that is exactly what is happening when it comes to network demand charges. The QFF submission about changing the categorisation of large customers—those over 100 megawatts—to be revised to 160 megawatts is actually a very sensible proposition and it is a shame that we have not seen any interest by the government in taking that suggestion from the QFF on board.

The other thing that I want to make brief comment about is in relation to Energex charges. I note there has been comment by the government about the Energex charges that are to be going forward from 2020 onwards. In fact, I was fortunate enough to have a briefing from an Energex officer in my office in Beaudesert a couple of months ago outlining what he thought was the pattern for Energex charges into the future.


I want to say this: Energex charges were, until 2015, the main cause of all of the price increases that Queenslanders have suffered and they were put in place by then Labor treasurer Andrew Fraser when he wrote to the AER in 2010 asking for permission to be able to charge Queenslanders more for their power. Through the good work of the member for Caloundra and the LNP in government, we managed to bring those network charges under control and we have seen stability on that front since 2015 when the AER brought down its decision and limited the increase in those charges in a significant way.

That was not good enough for the government. It had to look at the electricity generation side to see what it could do to increase the price to continue to get money coming into its coffers. The government has done that very successfully. The member for Burleigh and others have pointed out all of the money that has come to the Treasury coffers through those state owned generators over the past few years, and that amount continues to increase. Queenslanders continue to pay the price of the gouging of electricity prices by the Labor Party. It started in 2006 and 2008 and it continued across Energex, Ergon and Powerlink until 2015. We got that under control, then the government went after the generators and made people pay through them.

That needs to stop. If we want to retain our primary production capacity in Queensland, we need to put water on the crops for them to grow. If farmers cannot afford to irrigate because it costs too much in electricity, we are not going to have much of a primary industry in Queensland. If the member for

Ferny Grove wants to really do something for primary producers in this state, he should bang on the cabinet table and make the relevant ministers—the Treasurer and the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy—do something about the outrageous network and generation charges that are being imposed on our primary producers every day. We know that, when it comes to talking about agriculture, the minister is all froth and bubble. There are no friends of the farmer among the members opposite. That is an issue that remains to be addressed in the future.

As other members on this side have said, the LNP will be supporting the bill, but other issues have arisen through the committee's consideration of the bill that remain outstanding, that remain to be big drags on the Queensland economy and need to be addressed by the government in the future.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.51 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. This bill is about our management of the transition in the energy sector. It is another raft of reform in which this government has a very successful track record in terms of managing a rapidly changing energy market. Any government that is interested in the economy has to understand energy policy. This bill is another wave of reform. As a former minister for energy in my first term in parliament, I have a lot of interest in this bill as it will manage that transition. I will give members the context to that.

It is very clear that we support the transition to renewable energy. A 50 per cent renewable energy target is driving billions of dollars of investment in Queensland in jobs and energy infrastructure that is augmenting the most secure energy network in Australia. We are building more capacity, more competition, more output and greater security in our energy sector, particularly as we see some old plants start to transition out of the market in future years.

Under Labor's Powering Queensland Plan, which we introduced last year, we are managing that transition with our Powering North Queensland Plan, with our direction to Stanwell to ensure better outcomes for consumers and by acting on climate change by generating renewable energy. We have the Great Barrier Reef. I want to see the 'great' stay in the Great Barrier Reef. The way to do that is to act on climate change. Renewable energy is the way forward. One in three Queenslanders have solar PV systems on their rooftops. That is part of this reform.

When the provisions were originally put in place, batteries in relation to solar PV systems were not foreseen. The reforms contained in this bill will ensure that the intent of that original legislation is maintained and distortions in the marketplace are prevented from happening. That is a good thing in terms of giving security to the marketplace and consumers.

During the last term of the previous Palaszczuk Labor government, under the Powering Queensland Plan, we saw the introduction of the Energy Security Taskforce, Swanbank E brought on, the North Queensland renewable energy hub, which is going incredibly well, solar farms in North Queensland being commissioned and a third of Sun Metals zinc refinery running off solar without batteries. That is an awesome transition. Of course, we are committed to the public ownership of our assets.

We also believe in integrating our climate and energy policies—something that the federal government has not been capable of doing for five years. The federal government has had five years to come up with an energy policy. All we see is dysfunction, division, squabbling, internal fighting and a lot of ideologues who are not interested in what is happening in the energy market. It has been left to states such as Queensland and Victoria to lead the way in energy policy. I pay tribute to the energy minister in Victoria. That state government understands the transition to renewable energy as well.

Mr Lister: Victoria leading the way on energy policy? You've got to be joking.

Mr BAILEY: I hear the member interjecting. One sad thing about this debate has been the woeful contributions of the members opposite, particularly from some of the newer LNP members. One would think that they might be interested in understanding energy policy. We have heard the same moans and groans from them but, of course, they are going to vote for the legislation. I have seen that happen before. Maybe that is a positive.

It is also good to see the member for Burleigh here for the debate. If this bill had come on for debate during the last session of parliament, the shadow minister for energy would have been on a cruise off Canada—and to quote his words when he was being interviewed by the ABC—'having a wonderful time'. While we are doing our jobs in the people's house for which we were elected, by pure luck the member for Burleigh happens to be here for the debate. During the last session, he was on holiday 'having a wonderful time' in his words and he did not think that he was doing anything wrong.

The people of Burleigh deserve a full-time member, someone who is really committed to them rather than committed to their overseas holiday. Even though the member's contribution to this debate was meagre and fairly pathetic, it is good to see him attend this House to debate this bill and, in the end, vote for it.

From this government we see sensible, evidence based energy policy, as opposed to the record of those opposite. Under the Newman government, in only three years we saw a 43 per cent increase in electricity prices. In the entire term of the Newman government, not a single large-scale renewable energy project was started. That is an astonishing record. That was probably because the views of the former treasurer and member for Clayfield were very clear—that solar PV adopters were latte sippers and champagne drinkers. That showed people how out of touch that government was. That one comment probably lost that government a couple of seats. We also saw that government sack workers in the energy sector. It had no renewable energy target. That government had no idea about energy policy.

During the last election campaign, even though the members opposite had three years to work it out, they were still running around promising a coal-fired power station. By the way, how did that go in Townsville? How many seats did the LNP win in Townsville? I think it was none and the LNP went backwards in Hinchinbrook. If the members opposite want to play populist politics from their brief of 2002, they should go for it, but the people are way ahead of them. This government is in sync with what people want in the energy sector. They want the cheapest and, in terms of climate change, the lightest energy infrastructure, and that is renewable energy.

Three aspects of this bill are very important. Firstly, it allows residential and small business customers in regional Queensland to have the option to return to Ergon Energy Retail for a property that has been switched to a private retailer. The non-reversion policy had an intent but, in terms of the small customer, we saw people locked into electricity plans that they could not get out of and they ended up paying more. This bill is about keeping the marketplace honest. It is sensible reform that, again, is something that the previous government did not do. The previous government was so out of touch. It was not interested in doing this for the people of regional Queensland. It was left to the Palaszczuk Labor government to do this.

We are also clarifying the circumstances in which Solar Bonus Scheme customers may install additional generation capacity—a secondary generation system and battery storage technology. As I outlined earlier, it is very important to ensure that we do not have distortions in the market when those batteries become economically viable. There is no doubt at all that that is coming. Once the costs of batteries come down to a certain level, I believe that they will be as popular as solar PV. That is going to change massively the energy market. We want sensible policies in that people benefit from having batteries, but do not benefit from that in an inordinate way in terms of the taxpayer contribution. We are enabling the effective implementation of a new national regulatory framework for retail competition in embedded electricity networks, which commenced on 1 December 2017.

I would also like to say that electric vehicles are coming. This bill takes into account the impact of electric vehicles. We are seeing the electric vehicle technology being taken up in many other countries. The first \$40,100, 100 per cent electric vehicle will be on sale in Queensland in November. That is going to be an interesting time, because once those vehicles are affordable and people realise that they are not only as good as but also better—

Mr Bleijie interjected.


Mr BAILEY: There is the ignorance from the member for Kawana. Even if people charge a car off the grid right now, it is better for the environment. As we transition to renewable energy, that will continue to get better. The member for Kawana is showing that he is an ignoramus on energy policy, just as he is an ignoramus on so many other things.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bailey, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School, Air Conditioning

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.00 pm): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise today to lobby for one of the great schools in my electorate of Chatsworth. With winter now firmly behind us and the mercury quickly rising across Queensland as we approach summer, we will no doubt see many

Queenslanders retreating to their air-conditioned homes, offices and classrooms. Sadly, the year 1 and 2 students at Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School are not afforded this opportunity. Directly after PE the children will be patiently waiting in two lines, with faces rather like tomatoes, about to walk into classrooms resembling ovens more than an encouraging learning environment. It is in this challenging situation that the hardworking teachers of Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School will try to get the best out of their students whilst wiping beads of sweat off their own foreheads.

Given our subtropical climate, air conditioning should be a standardised requirement for all Queensland schools. Earlier this year I met with the Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School principal, Ms Deborah Driver, and the P&C president, Ms Nicole Carey, who both informed me that the school had been tirelessly raising funds to finish air conditioning of the remaining classrooms on the campus. I congratulate them and the local school community on their tremendous effort.


Over this time the P&C has fundraised approximately \$35,000 from the goodwill of the wider community which paid for air conditioning to be installed in the special education and the prep classrooms. I applaud the members of the P&C as this was no easy feat. However, after years of fundraising, the fountain of generosity has now, sadly, dried up—the well is dry. With the nation stalling, the school still requires an additional roughly \$25,000 to have all year 1 and 2 classrooms air conditioned. Parents at the Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School have expressed concern for their children's development under the current conditions and as a parent myself I would be gravely concerned sending my kids to school on a 35-degree day with no air conditioning.

The LNP has a plan to see all classrooms in public schools air conditioned by 2028. This is the plan that Queensland families want to see. Parents no longer want to see their kids coming home from school hot, sweaty and red in the face. That is why I launched a petition, which received more than 370 signatures, calling on the Minister for Education to step up and provide these kids and teachers with the best learning and working environment. I table this nonconforming petition.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding air conditioning in year 1 and 2 classrooms at Camp Hill State Infant and Primary School [1416].

I urge the minister, a very reasonable lady, to listen to the united voice of the community who are crying out for support. It is quite simple: prove you are providing the best learning environment for our students. This is a fantastic school and certainly the year and 1 and 2 classrooms deserve air conditioning.

Townsville, Crime

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.04 pm): I have said in this House before that in relation to the broad and challenging issue of crime that I can assure my constituents that I will not give up finding solutions and fighting for them to help make our community a safer place to raise families. Expanding police officer numbers last year by 20 officers in the rapid action patrol hub located in Thuringowa can be attributed to my work and I intend to deliver more resources in our area. Having more police patrolling our streets is an entirely good thing. I commend all our fine officers in the QPS, particularly those in the Thuringowa area.

The issue of youth crime in North Queensland has been one that has affected and challenged our communities. It has been well ventilated that there is no one single solution. Youth crime is a complex issue and I do not have the time in this particular speech to talk about the causes, such as drugs, alcohol, chroming or domestic violence. That will have to wait for another time. This broad issue requires a suite of programs and supports to make real change. Whilst we must hold people to account for their actions through things such as detention, we must also support local solutions to make the community a safer place.

Programs and initiatives that the Labor government has invested in are working. I have spoken previously about such programs, including the Townsville Strong Communities program, the Yinda cultural mentoring program, the Clontarf Foundation, the Pathways College and the list goes on. One thing I do know is that the increased visibility of police in our community works. This is fundamental to our safety. Our local police need the right facilities. I table a nonconforming petition.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding a new police facility in the Upper Ross [1417].


We ran out of forms and members of the community started writing on the back of it.

The petition calls for a new police facility in the Upper Ross area covering three suburbs and 25,000 residents. I will provide a copy to the police minister. I thank each and every one of those 319 local residents who have supported my petition in recent weeks. Together we will get this done and

help make our communities safer. I say to the minister, respectfully, it is time to stomp up and deliver. I have worked very closely with the community and our local police in the Upper Ross in conducting a successful trial over the last 24 months.

I give a shout out to the Upper Ross Community Voice. We get regular briefs from the police. They know that combining the old 1991 demountable police beat in Yvette Street and the old single-officer Rasmussen beat to a new facility located geographically between the two will provide a dozen officers and thereby a better response to demand for services as it increases in the area. Hopefully we will see a decreasing trend for those calls. I am determined to deliver for my electorate. I thank the police minister for listening to the residents of Thuringowa. Let us get this done.

Burdekin Electorate, Aged Care


 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.06 pm): I rise to speak about the provision of aged care in the Burdekin and, in particular, the Lower Burdekin Home for the Aged Society, a two-campus aged-care provider located in the Burdekin. This 40-year-old business is run by a not-for-profit board and is home to 173 residents, directly employing 220 staff, under the supervision and care of the CEO Jim Collins.

The society started with independent living for the aged, but is now exclusively dedicated to acute and subacute care for our frail and elderly. Urgent changes are required to the LBHA in response to new challenges brought about by new rules to the aged care sector in Australia. Residential aged care is now late stage of care that follows a progression of supported living and care supplied to recipients in their own home. Most Burdekin people are enjoying supported living in their home when before that they may have been provided with care in a low-care environment such as that offered by an aged-care facility. We know that the individual's decision to move into residential aged care is left much later. The effect has been dramatic and it means the low-care accommodation provided by the Lower Burdekin Home for the Aged no longer has any appeal or demand in the Burdekin community. Instead, the demand is for more high-care settings with full-time nursing and hospital grade equipment.

Unfortunately, not enough of the LBHA beds suit that need. Parts of the facility are no longer fit for purpose. Currently the joint facilities are short 20 physical places for the elderly, meaning no beds. An additional 20 other places are using shared ablution facilities, which in today's society is unacceptable. It is projected that this community will require 230 residential placements in aged care by 2023.

Due diligence studies show that without immediate changes to the business, including rationalisations and new infrastructure build, LBHA has an uncertain future. Expenditure of \$3 million in works in the last two years to meet a 40 per cent increase—14 beds—in local dementia care places only scratches the surface of the demands in this area. To meet this change the LBHA has committed to a new nursing home in Ayr. To achieve the new nursing home they will need to revise the way they do business and respond to the new levels of care demanded by the Burdekin. The program will take three years to fully implement. The scale of the task is significant. It is critical to act now and build 45 places in stage 1. Government funding of \$7.5 million is required. A further \$4 million will be provided by LBHA. If this building work goes ahead, LBHA will be able to complete the second stage and continue to support the elderly residents of the Burdekin. On behalf of the LBHA I call on government at all levels to support the LBHA in its funding application which will allow for the care of our elderly citizens and the ongoing employment of 200 persons in the Burdekin region.

Redlands Electorate, Coffee with a Cop

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (2.09 pm): Like my good friend the member for Thuringowa, I rise to talk about policing and community safety.

Mr Harper: You're not a bad member, yourself.

Ms RICHARDS: Thank you. I want to report on the growing success of Coffee with a Cop events that have been occurring throughout the Redlands for a number of years. Those events have proven to be an effective way for our police officers to meet locals in a relaxed and safe environment. What many people do not know is that Redlands was the birthplace of Coffee with a Cop.

The idea of Coffee with a Cop was first introduced in Queensland in 2014, with the aim of breaking down barriers between police officers and members of the public. It was founded in the Redlands by Senior Constable Sam Schofield and Administration Officer Pauline Dunn of the Capalaba police beat. It was established to create an opportunity for community discussion and an understanding of local issues. It provides a chance to build healthy relationships between our police force and the

community. Coffee with a Cop has encouraged important conversations with people who may have been hesitant to attend a police station but still want the opportunity to talk with our police. Who would have thought a simple cup of coffee could be so powerful?

These events have allowed police a better insight into community concerns and an opportunity to build stronger connections with locals. This sends an important message that anyone can approach our police officers for support and guidance. Coffee with a Cop reminds locals about how they can assist and play their part in community safety. It was wonderful to also have the presence of Crime Stoppers and Volunteers in Policing, who do a really incredible job in our community. Ridding our community of crime is a group effort and this program opens the door to safe discussions and, in turn, promotes positive attitudes towards our police.


I congratulate Constable Chris Hebblewaite on the successful use of Coffee with a Cop in the Redlands as part of Road Safety Awareness Week. He has put in a huge amount of work to bring together Volunteers in Policing, Crime Stoppers and the Road Policing Unit. On the day, the children had a fantastic time checking out the motorcycles and the sirens. They had a really good time. It was a wonderful opportunity to provide essential road safety information. It is really important that we keep reinforcing the message that to have safer roads people have to play their part.

I am proud to report that two other Coffee with a Cop events have been hugely successful on Coochiemudlo Island and Macleay Island. Our island police officers are working really hard. There are two officers on each island. I also give a shout out to Tim and Eddie on Russell Island and to Carolyn and Dave on Macleay Island. They do a fantastic job.

I am about to conduct some community safety forums with the assistance of Deputy Mayor Lance Hewlett. We are hosting them on Coochiemudlo Island and at Victoria Point. It is fantastic that the Queensland police are again supporting this event, with Volunteers in Policing, Crime Stoppers and council compliance officers. Again the community will get a chance to engage and talk about the issues that matter most to them and to think about what crime prevention looks like.

(Time expired)

Devlin, Mr R

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.12 pm): Bravery is not an absence of fear, but rather an assessment that something else is more important. It is not instinctual for everyone. A situation that may cause one person to leap into action may paralyse another with fear. There is no set measure or circumstance as to what constitutes brave behaviour, but the Governor-General's website—

Brave acts usually involve a deliberate choice to go from a place of safety to danger or remain in a perilous situation to provide help to another.

The actions of a constituent I am going to talk about today definitely fall into that category.

In the early hours of the morning of 6 June 2018, Robert Devlin was travelling along the Eton Range, on his way to work. A steep narrow range, the Eton Range does not offer any opportunity to pull over. A guardrail separates motorists from a sheer drop. Hurling towards Robert in the dark was a truck whose driver had lost control. It overturned onto its side. Mr Devlin reversed his own car to safety before he leapt into action to assist the truck driver.

Fire began to engulf the rear of the truck as Robert broke and removed the windscreen to remove the driver who was otherwise trapped. Soon after, the cab where the driver had been sitting caught alight, but he had already been moved to safety by his rescuer. Despite the risky terrain, the dangers from other traffic, the spreading fire and the risk of explosion, Robert Devlin acted with selflessness to assist another and save his life.

That was not the first time that Robert Devlin had gone above and beyond. In February 2018, Mr Devlin came across a traffic accident in Carmilla, in the Mirani electorate. He was second on the scene. He helped to remove a woman from a vehicle and assisted her until the paramedics arrived to take over. Clearly Mr Devlin is an upstanding member of the community, willing to forgo his own safety in favour of helping another.


I believe that when we have such extraordinary people in our communities, it is necessary to celebrate those people and their actions. For that reason, I have nominated Robert for a bravery medal through the Office of the Governor-General. It takes a strong character to put their own needs aside and instinctively put another person first. It shows a selfless act of humility and is a true reflection of character.

I wanted to bring Mr Devlin's stoic attitude to the attention of the House today because, as tumultuous as society can be, it is humbling to realise our capacity for what we can do for our fellow man. Sometimes I think we forget that, both in this House and in our outside lives.

It is a pleasure to represent the Mirani electorate, especially when such extraordinary everyday men and women call Mirani home. Four bravery medals, four commendations for brave conduct and two group bravery citations have been awarded within the electorate. While there is not enough time to list all the recipients, I particularly mention award recipients Robert Cowan and Neale Dunphy of Gogango, Scott Smith of Kabra and Janette Star of Stanwell.

(Time expired)

Targa Great Barrier Reef

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.15 pm): Last month I had the great pleasure of attending the inaugural Targa Great Barrier Reef rally. Before members on the other side start asking what a rally is, because last time I got up they did not know what an app was, I want to make this clear. This is called a 'commercial opportunity'. Hard work does sometimes wear overalls.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HEALY: I cannot hear you, guys; I am talking. Targa Great Barrier Reef is an international tarmac motor rally based in Cairns, with stages held around our beautiful region of North Queensland between Tully, Ravenshoe, Atherton, Mareeba and Port Douglas. The event was contested by some of the world's best touring, sports and GT cars. It covered 800 kilometres over three days, with approximately 200 kilometres of competitive closed-road stages. It was highly entertaining. Around 200 cars took part in the event in a cavalcade of motoring history from prewar classics through to the latest exotic cars.


Each day the event started and finished in Cairns, with a Super Street Stage on the last Sunday night that brought the action right into the heart of the city. Cairns also hosted Targafest on the Esplanade. That was a great chance for the people of Cairns to get close to the cars, as three blocks were closed off and the cars were parked along the roads. An estimated 25,000 people turned up. It was a fantastic event. You could hardly see the cars for the number of people who were there. It was very family friendly. A band played and there was a jumping castle, which I know would impress some of my learned colleagues on the other side of the chamber, as well as face painting, which could also help a few of them. Regional towns shared in the action by hosting lunches. Each day, the vehicles would stop in a local town, enabling the occupants to support local charities.

The Cairns round is the newest addition in what is now the Confederation of Australian Motorsport four-event Australian Targa Championship. The other three events are held in Victoria, Tasmania's west region and the centre of Tasmania, which is the world's largest, longest and hardest tarmac rally. The concept of Targa is drawn directly from the best features of the famous Targa Florio which operates in Italy, as well as in France and on the island of Corsica.

Ms Grace: Hear, hear!

Mr HEALY: It is good that some of us can recognise talent. Targa Great Barrier Reef was brought to Cairns with a \$1.25 million three-year deal struck by Tourism and Events Queensland, the Cairns Regional Council and Targa Australia. As one would expect, the event brings hundreds of people who spend tens of thousands of dollars across the region in many different outlets. That is called an 'economic opportunity'. It is important, so I am taking a bit of time out of my day to teach my learned colleagues across the chamber that these things generate jobs and economic activity. The town was busy and it is just one of a number of events that contributes significantly to our regional economy.

Currumbin Electorate, Events

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.18 pm): There is always something amazing happening in my beloved Currumbin. The annual Swell Sculpture Festival is once again adorning Currumbin's picturesque foreshore and beachfront. In its 15th year, this free 10-day event, running from 14 to 23 September, continues to attract huge crowds to view the creative pieces made by artists from near and far. Last year's visitations were estimated to be around 276,000, which is impressive and great for local businesses along the route—many of which suffered through the poor planning of the Commonwealth Games. Swell's co-founder and curator, Natasha Edwards, and her terrific team are to be congratulated for their remarkable efforts and infectious enthusiasm.

I popped down for a quick peek last Friday and joined the throng of camera-toting individuals and families keen to view this year's exhibits. I plan to head back this weekend for a closer look and suggest honourable members do the same. There are 45 artists involved this year representing 38 pieces ranging from *Trafficking*, a seven-metre high art form made from 100 traffic cones to highlight the horrific crime of human trafficking, to *Prickles the Unhuggable Bear*, a 500-kilogram barbed and fencing wire work of art.

Mr Stevens: He won.

Mrs STUCKEY: Yes, he did win the Neumann prize.

Last Friday I also had the absolute pleasure of attending Currumbin Community Special School for their 'Our kitchen rocks competition'. Students from both Currumbin and Mudgeeraba special schools donned aprons and prepared a series of courses for discerning judges. Friday's event was held to celebrate students' cooking skills and to raise funds for Currumbin Community Special School's Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation program. This clever program is described as follows—

The Vision:

Children form positive food habits for life.

The Mission:


We provide the inspiration, information, professional learning and support for educational institutions to deliver pleasurable food education, in conjunction with educators, partners and the wider community.

Having been involved with this program since it was established at the school, I have witnessed the hands-on engagement with students who take pride in growing food they can cook and eat. The competition is a fantastic extension of the Stephanie Alexander garden philosophy.

Bridge from Gold FM 92.5; John Lazarou, one of the owners of Coffee Club; and Felicity Best, the head chef at Currumbin RSL, made up the judging panel, and Spida Everett from Gold FM 92.5 was the entertaining MC. It meant a lot to have judges of this calibre giving genuine critiques of the food, which they said was delicious and of a very high standard, making it hard to pick a winner. Mudgeeraba eventually won.

Students enhanced the luncheon with a rousing rendition of *We will Rock You* by Queen, which was given new words and a brand-new meaning. Next we were treated to a magnificent piano recital from senior Currumbin student Teika who then accompanied Mudgeeraba's Sara as she sang solo. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation to all who organised and played a part in this memorable and enjoyable function. I ask us all to remember National Police Remembrance Day on Friday, 28 September.

Workforce, Women Participation

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.22 pm): In Queensland women have reached historic heights, with some 61.5 per cent female participation in the workforce. This is a first and represents around 1.27 million Queensland women engaged in the Queensland workforce, which is a 1.5 per cent increase in the participation rate.

Women make up 50 per cent of the population and gender equality is quite simply good business. Companies that reported the highest number of women in senior leadership roles financially outperformed those with lower rates of women, with a 35 per cent higher return in equity. Yet, sadly, we women still experience barriers within our economy, with, on average, starting salaries sitting at seven per cent lower than our male counterparts. In the media and telecommunications industry, the gap is 23.3 per cent.

The visibility of women in leadership roles is an extremely important arena of representation. The positive portrayal of women is crucial and vital so that people are aware of diversity and appreciate and celebrate that diversity. The *2015 Women in media report: A study of gender differences in Australia media* found that women make up 48.5 per cent of the broadcasting and 51 per cent of the publishing industries, with female print and broadcast journalists only being named or acknowledged as journalists of 30 per cent of that media coverage. Further, female journalists were more likely to work on stories in areas such as lifestyle reporting or celebrity news and gossip rather than in areas such as politics and sport.


News media and political programming feature men talking to men about men. Women are the focus of only 10 per cent of news stories, comprise just 20 per cent of experts or spokespeople interviewed and only four per cent of news stories are seen as challenging gender roles. What we see on screen affects what happens off screen. Who we see in power influences how we see ourselves.

Politics is portrayed by the media as a man's game. That is what we have seen played out in recent times in the federal LNP. With only 22 out of 107 federal parliamentarians being women and six—yes, just six—women in the Queensland parliament, it is no wonder female LNP members should be put on the endangered list. Perhaps we should put some signs up during sitting weeks: 'Be aware—endangered LNP female MPs about.'

At least five of the federal female LNP elected representatives are talking openly about bullying and harassment. We have heard female Labor MPs referred to as the dregs behind Shorten. Equal representation of women in parliament requires leadership, which is what we in the Labor Party are all about with a female leader and a female deputy leader.

(Time expired)

Aged Care, Royal Commission; Moggill Electorate, Events

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.25 pm): Recently the Morrison federal coalition government announced that it will be launching a royal commission into aged care. The royal commission will primarily look at the quality of care provided in residential and home aged-care settings to senior Australians, but it will also include young Australians with disabilities living in residential aged-care settings.

Although the final terms of reference have yet to be determined, it is expected that they will include: firstly, the quality of care provided to older Australians and the extent of substandard care; secondly, the challenge of providing care to Australians with disabilities living in residential aged care, particularly younger people with disabilities; thirdly, the challenge of supporting the increasing number of Australians suffering dementia and addressing their care needs as they age; and, fourthly, the future challenges and opportunities for delivering aged-care services in the context of changing demographics, including in remote, rural and regional Australia.

As revealed by the ABC's *Four Corners* report, far too many cases of elder abuse and neglect have been reported across Queensland and Australia. The Liberal National Party stands in support of seniors, for safe communities and for real action to support all aged Queenslanders. I hope that all members of the Palaszczuk Labor government will join me in supporting the Morrison federal coalition government's royal commission into aged care.

In my remaining time, I acknowledge and congratulate a number of community and sporting organisations with respect to events that were held last weekend in my electorate of Moggill. Firstly, the Brookfield Uniting Church held its country market. Congratulations to Reverend Dr John Roulston, Edith McPhee and the many volunteers who assisted on the day.

The Brisbane Independent School held its 50th anniversary celebrations. Congratulations to principal, Jen Haynes, the school board, Friends of BIS, staff, parents and students. I also attended the Chapel Hill Community Kindergarten art show. Well done to social convenor, Natalie Obersky, staff and parents.

I presented awards at the Kenmore Bears Junior Australian Football Club. Congratulations to president, Rod Lake, coaches, parents and players at that club. The UQFC Kenmore end of season presentation day was held last Sunday. Congratulations to president Andrew Bird, vice president Joanna Cullinan, other executive members, Remo Buess, staff, coaches, parents and players.


The Combined Moggill Pony Club and Help Enterprises' McIntyre Centre Riding for Disabled open hack day was also held. President Brad Henderson, vice presidents James Robinson and Tanya Holliman, all committee members and many others ensured the day was an outstanding success. It was certainly terrific to be able to present ribbons. I joined other local representatives there. Barry Searle from the *Local Bulletin* community newspaper was also there.

On Friday night I also attended the Kenmore-Moggill RSL sub branch 2018 annual dinner. Congratulations to president, Rick Maher, and his team on a successful night. I table a copy of the program from the evening.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 14 September 2018, titled 'The Returned and Services League of Australia, Kenmore-Moggill sub-branch, 2018 Annual Dinner' [\[1418\]](#).

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Mansfield, members I note that there is far too much audible conversation in the chamber this afternoon.

Mansfield State High School

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (2.28 pm): Today I want to talk about education and, in particular, excellence in public education. As members of this House are aware, like you, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, I have had recent experience with the public education system. During my time as both a teacher and administrator, I have witnessed and been part of the excellent product that can be found in our state schools in Queensland. The quality and vitality on show is a credit to the principals and teachers who are delivering for the students in their care.

In my electorate of Mansfield, one school that epitomises the high quality of public education is Mansfield State High School. At Mansfield there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy with a dedicated team of literacy and numeracy teachers providing targeted interventions to meet the needs of every student. Mansfield has always prided itself on the explicit teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation, and this approach is reflected in the growth in student results, particularly in recent achievements recorded in the annual NAPLAN tests. These achievements have been realised without resorting to selective processes to exclude students who may lower the school's overall results. All students in years 7 and 9 do the NAPLAN test. I want to publicly acknowledge the excellence in education shown by my close friend and principal at Mansfield State High School, Karen Tanks, and her dedicated, hardworking and motivated staff.

Excellent education is the key to a strong economy, a democratic and compassionate society, a flexible and skilled workforce and an individual's quality of life. Public education, through the hard work and dedication of its teachers, is the principal driver of this important task. I commend all of my previous colleagues who are now the custodians of this nation's future.


Of course good public education only exists when there is government commitment to supporting its educational systems. The Palaszczuk government's record funding for public education in the 2018-19 budget is clear testimony of this commitment. Over the forward estimates, there will be a massive \$717 million devoted to public schools. In my own electorate, there will be a record \$16 million spent to upgrade and modernise both state primary and state secondary schools. I commend the Treasurer and the minister for their vision in supporting our great system.

An emerging trend regarding public education is the comparative increase in enrolments in state schools and a commensurate decrease in enrolments in independent schools. Queensland parents are realising something that many of us have known for some time, and that is that state schools are great schools.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Members, before I call the member for Mudgeeraba, I welcome to the gallery two athletes who will be competing at the Invictus Games later this year. Can we welcome them to Parliament House and wish them all the very best.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Health System; Aged Care

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.32 pm): Queenslanders deserve a world-class public health system that the Palaszczuk Labor government is not delivering. Sadly, our health system has lurched back to the dark old days when the Premier sat around the Bligh cabinet table at a time when Queensland Health was going to be split in half—things were that bad. That was at a time when we had the \$1.25 billion Health payroll debacle and nurses were not paid, and a fake Tahitian prince ripping \$18 million off the taxpayer.

What we continue to see is a public health system in crisis under Labor. We have a health minister who continues to hide from scrutiny and refuses to take responsibility for policy failures on his watch. He is the minister. The buck stops with him and we will continue to hold him accountable for his job. We saw it with the tissue bank debacle and we saw it with the failures that led to the death of Manmeet Sharma.

The minister is happy to do fluffy picture ops when it suits him but hides behind public servants to avoid facing any scrutiny on the tough questions and the tough issues. It is always someone else's fault and Queenslanders are sick of his 'dog ate my homework' excuses. Dr Dolittle needs to stop playing politics and start putting patients first.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, you need to refer to members by their correct title.

Ms BATES: Thank you—the minister. As a nurse, I understand and appreciate the job that our hardworking nurses, doctors and paramedics do every day, but they need more help on the front line. Ambulance ramping in our major hospitals continues to get worse and patients are stuck in the back of ambulances waiting to get emergency care. Promised hospital upgrades are years away from completion, particularly in major growth areas, at a time when bed block in our emergency departments is not improving. We have seen scandal after scandal on this minister's watch, yet he continues to push public servants out to front the media because he cannot answer questions about his own portfolio.

I also want to address the minister's statements earlier this week in relation to aged care. Aged-care residents deserve the best care possible. I welcome the federal royal commission in response to the horrific scenes we witnessed on the recent *Four Corners* story. Unlike the minister, I have actually been in charge of aged-care homes. I have actually been in them. I also continue to regularly visit all of the centres in my own electorate. There are 16 state run aged-care facilities under the minister's watch, some of which have previously been classified as a serious risk. The minister needs to look in his own backyard and focus on improving the care provided in state run aged-care facilities.

I have spoken with both the federal health minister and federal aged care minister about issues in aged-care facilities and options to improve care. In doing so, we need to ensure that aged care remains affordable for residents and their families, otherwise more pressure will be placed on the public health system.

Aspley Electorate

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.35 pm): Last week I had the pleasure of hosting an event with the Attorney-General of Queensland, alongside Everaldo Compton OAM, who is an incredibly well-respected member of the community on the north side. We had the opportunity to hear from the Public Trustee about the importance of having a will, keeping a will up to date and having enduring power of attorney. I would like to thank the Attorney-General and the Public Trustee for helping to organise the event and for the great work the Public Trustee does in the community, as well as Everaldo Compton for always managing to lighten up a conversation about something that is not often fun to discuss. Thanks also to the Aspley Hornets for hosting us.

The Aspley Hornets are just one of the incredible sporting associations in the Aspley electorate that have been up to some great things over the last couple of months. Massive congratulations to the Hornets footy club women's team who did an amazing job this year and took out the premiership in the Queensland Women's Football Association. They have been making a great effort to continue to build up female involvement and participation in their club and further their development. I was very excited to hear that their efforts over the last year have culminated in them securing a spot in the Queensland Women's AFL competition next year. Congratulations to Dale, Reevsey and all the team there.


Congratulations also to the Northside Wizards Basketball Association Southern Basketball League teams, who both did fantastically in their competitions, with the women's team unfortunately coming up short in the grand final but with the men's team taking out the game in a very close, nail-biting finish. It was certainly a sight to see. I look forward to following the Northside Wizards representative teams through the upcoming seasons and continuing to work with them to build a bigger and better new home on the north side. I also thank the Minister for Sport for helping us through that process. The Aspley Devils Rugby League Football Club came away from the season with both the under-12 division 3 team and the under-14 division 1 team making it all the way through to their grand finals and picking up runner-up awards.

A massive shout out must go to the parents, volunteers, coaches, officials and committees of all our fantastic sporting clubs and associations in Aspley as they end the winter season. Their tireless work and efforts do not go unnoticed, and I thank them all for the work they do in making our area a more engaged and welcoming community. I look forward to going to as many games as I can next season and cheering them all on.

I would also like to acknowledge the high schools in my electorate—Aspley State High School and Craigslea State High School in particular. I had the pleasure of having their very impressive student leaders and principals in parliament this week before they break for school holidays and go back for the final stretch in term 4. The student leaders I met are great individuals. They are great representatives of their schools and they are all going on to bigger and better things.

While on the topic of schools, I would like to congratulate St Dymphna's, Bald Hills State School and Aspley East State School for holding fantastic school fetes and fairs over the weekend. They are a huge logistical and organisational challenge. I do not think I have ever seen Ekka-level rides and massive slippery slopes and the size of the fetes and fairs that I saw over the weekend. It is a mountain of work putting all of that together and they all did a great job on what were very successful days.

Bonney Electorate

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.38 pm): I want to spend my time today fitting in as many shout-outs as possible to the incredible people across our community in Queensland's best electorate. I got to be part of Coombabah State High School's upskilling program last week, run by Synthia—one of the teachers at the school and a former school captain. She set up the program to help develop the leadership skills of year 11 kids who are putting their hand up for positions next year. They had some great questions and I wish them all the best.

I have been part of a number of special moments this year at the Parkwood Sharks Rugby League Club. Last night they gave me the honour of making me their patron. I would like to mention one coach there in particular, Steve Johnston. He goes above and beyond and is a huge character around the club. He has had his team help out at a homeless feed and at our community garden for a working bee and he has helped run a mental health awareness day at the club.


Over the weekend I also had the great honour of being emcee for the Gold Coast Relay for Life. It was a very moving day that raised thousands of dollars for the fight against cancer. Well done to the entire committee for their voluntary work.

We have also had a few great sporting wins over the last few weeks in our area. The mighty Southport Sharks won the NEAFL grand final against the Sydney Swans. It is their first premiership in a decade and the first time they have won the NEAFL. The Musgrave Mustangs Soccer Club won six of six grand finals they played in last weekend. On Friday night I worked in the bar at the Labrador Hockey Club juniors' presentation night. As a club it won six grand finals as well over the last season, including one result that saw two Labrador teams battle it out.

I was at the Arundel State School P&C meeting last week, led by their fantastic president, Katie, and I was pleased to hear how their NAPLAN results have improved dramatically over the last decade. This is a credit to the school and its teachers who have been working tirelessly with their students to achieve this outcome. I also got to see firsthand the work Radio Lollipop do for sick kids at the Gold Coast University Hospital. They run an internal radio service taking song requests for the kids ward. They also go around bringing much needed respite from the trauma of a hospital stay for kids and their parents. They are celebrating Radio Lollipop day next month and will get to broadcast their station to the whole hospital.

Finally, I would like to thank the hundreds of people who have signed my petition calling for late-night tram services to run on the second stage of the light rail as they do for the rest of the line.

Torres Strait Islands, Climate Change

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.41 pm): I rise to speak about the impact of climate change on the Torres Strait Islands. The beautiful islands of the Torres Strait sit in the pristine part of Far North Queensland, scattered between Papua New Guinea and Australia. There are 16 inhabited islands and 17 discrete remote communities. These islands have been occupied by Torres Strait Islanders for many generations, with lifestyle and traditional cultural practices depicted through songs and dance. The stories told through Torres Strait Island songs and dance reflect the strong connection that Torres Strait Islanders have with the land and sea.

Today I would like to raise awareness of climate change and the impact it poses on vulnerable island communities and first nations people of the Torres Strait in my electorate. This is an important issue that deserves much attention as the impact is quite broad in that it not only affects the physical make-up of these island communities but also has an ongoing effect on the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing of a whole race of people.

Climate change seems to be an issue that attracts ongoing for-and-against debates, particularly around the types of government policies that influence climate change. Research shows—


The excessive use of fossil fuels for energy production is creating a build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas emitted when fossil fuels, such as coal and natural gas, are burned to create energy and although this is disputed, rising levels of greenhouse gases are believed to be the cause of global warming.

What people are experiencing in the Torres Strait, particularly the most vulnerable low-lying island communities, are inundation and structural damage associated with the rapid rising of the sea level. In 2017 the *Guardian* wrote an article titled 'The island is being eaten: how climate change is affecting the Torres Strait' which described the very real impact of climate change affecting Boigu community, the real experience of the community's cemetery facing inundation and roads being washed into the sea, a seawall being installed to protect the community failing and the anxiety around not being able to stop erosion.

In August I visited Boigu Island. In January I visited Yam Island with Minister Craig Crawford. The story that resonates most with me is of a little boy on a typical night sitting down after dinner to watch TV and being shocked by sea water rushing into his home. This is the reality that people in remote communities in the Torres Strait face. This is an issue of not only state but also federal responsibility. It is a global issue that needs much attention. We need to make a start here in Queensland and nationally. If we are going to tackle this worldwide problem we need to do it today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before calling the member for Clayfield, I would like to acknowledge the school captains from Cleveland District State High School and their principal, Paul Bancroft, from the electorate of Oodgeroo.

Four-Wheel Drives, Modifications

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (2.43 pm): Members will recall that yesterday evening I made a statement to the House where I said that I feared I may be unintentionally in breach of Queensland's laws by having a two-inch lift and a slightly larger set of tyres fitted to my vehicle. That was a very real fear that I shared with tens of thousands of other people who own four-wheel drives who do modifications, but a miracle has occurred overnight. The minister has issued a press release. He has done a backflip. He has changed his position.

Has he done it like a proper parliamentarian and a proper minister would? Has he stood up in the House in a ministerial statement and said, 'I got it wrong; I'm making a change'? Has he come forward and said, 'I seek leave to make a ministerial statement to announce this change'? What has he done? He slipped out a press release at 12.05 today. I table a copy of that press release.

Tabled paper: Media release, undated, by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'Greater consistency on lift laws for Queensland 4WD owners' [\[1419\]](#).

He has changed his position entirely in relation to it. Could it have been the fact that there have been something like 15½ thousand views of that speech of mine last night on my Facebook page? Could it have been the total disdain that everyone who owns a four-wheel drive in Queensland has for Minister Bailey? Could it be the fact that he would not know what a four-wheel drive is if it ran over him? All we know is that under Minister Bailey the damage would be worse because it would not have a two-inch lift and it would not have had bigger tyres on it either.


We have seen a change. I want to thank the minister for seeing the light, for showing some common sense and for backing down, but the minister still has not consulted. Four Wheel Drive Queensland is the peak body in Queensland for four-wheel drive owners. Its office is five minutes away from Minister Bailey's. I rang Four Wheel Drive Queensland just before I came into the House and said, 'This is good news. We should be thankful that the minister has finally seen some common sense and backed down. It is a victory for the good guys.' I asked, 'Has he spoken to you or had any consultation with you?' No. 'A phone call?' No. 'Has he sought to meet with you? Has he walked around the corner to your office?' No.

An opposition member: What about an email?

Mr NICHOLLS: I did say that. I then said, 'What about an email? Have you checked mangocube?' He said, 'No, I haven't heard about it at all—not a thing.' The Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association have been leading the charge. Have they heard from the minister? Not at all. This is a minister who is clearly incompetent and not across his brief. We are thankful for the change. The devil will be in the detail. Well done to all those associations, community groups and four-wheel drivers who reached out and said, 'This is a silly law; change it. Don't point the finger; fix the problem.'

(Time expired)

Jobs

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.46 pm): When the government works with business and the private sector, jobs are created. That is exactly what the Palaszczuk Labor government is all about. We get numbers like 177,500 new jobs being created and exports increasing by 70 per cent since 2014. I

would like to say well done to Minister Furner on the Growing Queensland's Food Exports program. I would also like to congratulate Minister Dick on regional jobs and growth. No doubt that contributed to that 70 per cent growth.

I will tell the House what numbers we do not get. We do not get 14,000 Public Service jobs cut from our community. We do not get thousands of families damaged and thousands of small businesses losing customers. Really nothing has changed. The Leader of the Opposition was part of that carnage then and she leads the same team now with the same approach.

On this side of the House we understand the importance of working with business, not picking stupid fights. I remain committed to creating more local jobs in my community. I am glad our side is led by a Premier who is keeping her promise to all Queenslanders to create jobs. I am pleased that in this year's budget we extended the payroll tax rebates for taking on apprentices. We have seen a significant number of apprentices taken on under that scheme. I am glad the Advance Queensland Industry Attraction Fund was also increased.


There are so many examples of the Palaszczuk government working with the private sector to create jobs. The Land 400 Rheinmetall project is creating sustainable jobs, high-skilled jobs and long-term jobs in Ipswich. That is good for Ipswich, it is good for Queensland and it is certainly good for the electorate of Greenslopes.

I would like to acknowledge the great work of Minister Fentiman and Minister Jones. There is so much good work being done in their portfolios. I have seen small business, digital innovation and entrepreneurship grants in action in my electorate. I think about Steve from Wil-Tow whom I met a few months ago. He is using that grant to change his cash flow, grow his business and employ more people.

I recently met with Tim O'Brien. He had a start-up in my electorate called RaffleTix. He said that Queensland is the best place in Australia to do business as a start-up. The amount of support is extraordinary and the breadth of opportunity is fantastic. I know Minister Fentiman is really excited about the Advancing Women in Business program. We need to get more women into business. We already have a third of Australian businesses owned by women. I know that several businesses in my electorate have applied for that.

I remain committed to creating local jobs. I am proud to be part of a government that is committed to creating jobs. I understand that, when you create jobs, you create dignity for people, you improve quality of life and you build community. That is why I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that is committed to creating jobs and building our community.

Regional Queensland, Drought

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.50 pm): There is no doubt that the drought is hitting hard in regional Queensland. In fact 58 per cent of the state is now drought declared. This is not only affecting primary producers and communities; it is also affecting local governments which are being very careful with how they manage their domestic water supplies across Queensland at this time. I want to acknowledge the great work that local governments do in the management of water supplies right across this state. In fact over 30 local governments already have water restrictions in place in their towns and cities, and we have not made it to those thirsty summer months yet.

The spring rain predictions and also the outlook from the weather bureau, unfortunately, are that we are not likely to see general rainfall relief until sometime next year, and that is very, very concerning. In Queensland we do not wish to see the situation that is occurring in New South Wales where we are hearing reports of towns running out of domestic water supplies and councils being forced into the expensive option of trucking in domestic water supplies.


In Queensland it is the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program that provides financial assistance to local councils to build essential water supply and sewerage infrastructure projects in their communities. Yet, sadly, under this Labor government, there were 190 council projects that applied for funding and only 92 of those projects received funding. This means that critical water infrastructure projects that local councils want to actually do are unable to progress because they have not received a subsidy from the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Our local governments deserve better and it is the ratepayers of Queensland who will end up without domestic water if this situation is not addressed in the near future. Some councils, like the Western Downs Regional Council, have been proactive. At the cost of a million dollars, they have put down a new bore. Dalby is currently on level 3 restrictions and its reserve water supply is running low. Townsville, which I am sure you are quite familiar with, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, is on level 2 water

restrictions and is building a \$215 million pipeline from the Burdekin Falls Dam so the city can have a reliable domestic water supply. Unfortunately, the cost to ratepayers of that project is currently unknown.

This is what happens when state Labor governments do not pull their weight when it comes to ensuring essential infrastructure of water and sewerage for towns and cities in Queensland. Over the last 10 years, we have unfortunately seen Labor governments take a billion dollars worth of grants and subsidies from our local councils, and it is our councils and water supplies that are now suffering. Queensland is on the edge of a water infrastructure cliff, and the Palaszczuk Labor government have no plans to address this need for essential water and sewerage services across Queensland.

Whitsunday Island, Shark Attack; Mackay Electorate, Local Businesses

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.53 pm): Unfortunately, in the news this afternoon there are reports of a second shark attack in the Whitsundays. I would like to put on record our thoughts and prayers for the second victim. It is very unusual to have any shark attacks in that area. I would also like to thank the RACQ helicopter service for their professionalism as they rushed out to those victims yesterday and today.

Mr Healy: They save so many lives.


Mrs GILBERT: They do save a lot of lives. Unfortunately, we have heard the opposition doing a lot of talking down of the wonderful regional Queensland areas over the last week. Readers of the *Mackay Daily Mercury* last weekend were bewildered by a letter to the editor from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Everton. I am not sure if the member for Everton actually knows where Mackay is, let alone what is happening there.

It was only this weekend that Mayor Greg Williamson, who will be attending the drought appeal function later today, said there were some 2,800 jobs on offer across our region. I was also talking to Daniel from Hastings Deering a couple of days ago, and he said there were still 160 jobs from his organisation that they cannot fill locally. Mackay has the lowest unemployment rate in the state outside of Brisbane. Currently, it is at 3.2 per cent. This is coupled with the highest participation rate in the state. We are desperate for skilled workers to return to the area after they were pushed out by the member for Everton and Campbell Newman.

The Palaszczuk government is again investing in Mackay. We were able to entice Mercurius, a US biofuel company, to undertake research and make plans to set up its operations in the regions. Tourism is developing in Mackay and the Isaac regions, and it is booming in the Whitsundays after the LNP ripped out thousands in advertising funds from this industry. The Seaforth net-free zone, which the LNP threatened to repeal, has returned the region to a recreational fishing hotspot. In fact, it is the centre of the Mackay Regional Council's regional fishing strategy. The \$28 million Vines Creek bridges are nearly complete, months ahead of schedule. The \$7 million fire station is complete and in operation.

What we do need, though, is for the large mining companies to come to the table and start paying our local businesses within 30 days. During the commodities downturn, payment days went up to 90 days. It is time for them to turn around. It is time for the federal government to step up and put pressure on these companies. It is the Palaszczuk government that is supporting local businesses.

Gordon, Mr B

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to inform the House of the sad loss of a great man. On Thursday morning, 30 August, Barry Norman 'Flash' Gordon suffered a cardiac arrest. Beverley, his wife of more than 52 years, having become aware that something was wrong, woke grandson Zac, who at just 12 years of age performed CPR whilst paramedics were in transit. There is no doubt that young Zac's actions gave his beloved grandfather a chance to survive.

Despite all efforts, Barry passed away peacefully surrounded by close family on Monday, 3 September, just 16 days short of his 77th birthday. Barry was laid to rest last Wednesday, 12 September. Confirmation of the respect for this man is the attendance at St Mary's Catholic Church, where well in excess of the 500 expected were there—many resplendent in tartan. I wear this tie today, the tartan of the parliament of Scotland, in his honour. The bagpipes were abundant as well. The service was followed by a funeral procession to the historic Pimpama Uniting Church, where he was laid to rest.

Barry Gordon was a unique individual who achieved much in his life. His interests were far ranging, but most important among them were his family—yes, his close family, but also the whole Gordon clan, the forebears of whom originally settled in Milbong 150 years ago. Barry was larger than

life and never missed an opportunity to give advice—and I mean good advice—to members of his family, the many people who called him a mate and the acquaintances he met along the way. He used to delight in talking to young and old alike, making people laugh, giving them sage advice or perhaps reciting one of his own poems—just one of his many talents.

Barry was intimately involved in my last three election campaigns, two of them as campaign manager. I recall us being summoned to attend a meeting with LNP management on one occasion. Some of the first words out of Barry's mouth were that he was not an LNP member but the good news was that he was a member of the human race. At the end of the meeting, Barry recited one of his poems, the one he had especially written for politicians. It was not particularly flattering.

The seeds Barry planted in the minds of those he touched will grow in them and, at the very least, make their lives just that little bit better. I often recite the poem *A Philosophy to Live By* by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Now when I think of the words of this poem, I can think of no person that is better reflected by them than Barry Gordon. The poem states—

To laugh often and much;

To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;

To earn the appreciation of honest critics ...

To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others;

To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition;


To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.

This is to have succeeded.

That is Barry Gordon. He absolutely succeeded in life.

I will close with Barry's last words on anything that was not quite going according to plan. He would say, 'Listen, it's okay. Tomorrow morning, the sun will rise again,' and he was right. Rest in peace, old mate. Your body has been returned to the earth, your soul has ascended to heaven, but you are not gone. You will live on inside the hearts of all those you have touched. You will never be forgotten.

Rackley Swimming

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (2.58 pm): I rise to congratulate Anieka McDonagh and the team at Rackley Swimming Runcorn on recently hosting a very successful A-grade short course meet at the Runcorn pool. As you know, Mr Deputy Speaker, a lot of hard work goes into organising these events. I congratulate Anieka, all the parents, the coaches and everyone who came along to what was a fantastic meet. It was the biggest meet ever held at the Runcorn pool. The hill was packed. There were swimmers swimming and splashing around everywhere. There were heaps of parents and coaches. It was a fantastic day. I do thank other honourable members. I know the members for Mansfield and Toohey donated marquees. There were so many people I did not have enough marquees to donate to Rackley Swimming at Runcorn, so I had to borrow some from neighbouring members. It was fantastic.

There were 30 swimmers from Runcorn and they all received a top three placement. It was gold, silver and bronze for Runcorn at that meet. They are currently sitting at the top of the Brisbane premier division. It is a fantastic result; it is outstanding. I also want to congratulate coach Humberto Angerami. He is Brazilian so he is still getting over the World Cup. I am hoping these fantastic results at Rackley Swimming Runcorn will lift his spirits and drive him on. There is a swimmer at Runcorn Rackley who is currently in fifth place in Australia for school state swimming. I think that is outstanding.


I thank all the mums and dads; they ran a barbecue and had everything organised. There were lots of volunteers in blue shirts doing fantastic things. People came from far and wide in South-East Queensland to this meet. There were members from Carina Leagues CJ's, Chandler and Citipointe. They even came from the Gold Coast, Holland Park, John Paul College, Lake's, the Logan Vikings, Logan West, Mansfield, Rackley South, Redlands, Sheldon, Southside Aquatics, Sunnybank, Wellers Hill, Wellington Point, Whites Hill and Wishart. They were coming from far and wide to compete at Runcorn. Where else but Runcorn would people go for a fantastic meet and such a well-organised meet?

Once again I congratulate Anieka and the team at Rackley Swimming at Runcorn on doing a fantastic job and wonderful work supporting our community, supporting our young people in sport and supporting swimming, which is a great sport for all ages. I am pretty sure I saw some future Commonwealth Games champions and future Olympic representatives at the short-course meet at Runcorn.

**STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE****Report, Motion to Take Note**

Resumed from 6 September (see p. 2418), on motion of Mr Whiting—

That the House take note of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report No. 9 titled *Consideration of Auditor-General's report 9: 2017-18—Energy: 2016-17 results of financial audits* tabled 18 June 2018.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.02 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report on the Auditor-General's report into financial matters relating to energy. It is clear that the Palaszczuk Labor government is taking Queenslanders for a ride and using government owned electricity generators as a cash cow. It is clear that the Palaszczuk Labor government has misled Queenslanders by loading up more and more debt into state owned energy companies. It is clear that this Palaszczuk Labor government thinks that it is okay to transfer the cost burden for ill-conceived Labor government decisions of the past, such as gold plating the electricity network, onto the people of Queensland. Queenslanders deserve better.

The committee heard testimony that profit from the state owned electricity companies amounted to a staggering \$1.9 billion for the financial year ended 2017. I repeat: \$1.9 billion. That is an increase of 45 per cent on the year prior. Primarily, this increase was due to the profits from the state owned electricity generators. It is reflective of this government's approach to manipulating market prices through the bidding practices of CS Energy and Stanwell. Put simply, this government uses state owned electricity generators as a secret tax on all Queenslanders, a secret tax of more than \$500 million.


It is clear that this government's strategy is to load up as much debt as possible onto government owned corporations. To that end, the committee heard testimony that Powerlink took on an additional \$160 million in debt in the 2017 financial year, which increased the entity's debt-to-equity ratio to 75 per cent. That is to say, Powerlink has three times more debt than it has equity. Such a level of debt means that the entity is more exposed in the event of adverse market changes or other revenue pressures—hardly the actions of a prudent government in a time of considerable change and uncertainty with electricity markets.

Speaking of debt, I was interested to hear about the fact that there was a debt action plan, which was reported in the 2015-16 state budget. It was news to me, given the Treasurer could not even mention the word 'debt' in her budget speech this year. I just assumed that the government's debt action plan was simply to ignore the problem or to hide the real state of affairs by loading additional debt into government owned corporations. Unfortunately, it turned out I was right. This government's debt action plan went by the wayside long ago—another broken election promise from this Palaszczuk Labor government.

Labor's 2006 haphazard attempt at a national electricity network regulation was catastrophic. It led to gold plating of the network. Put simply, Queensland Labor overspent on infrastructure and overestimated demand and, as a result, needlessly drove up prices. Now the chickens are coming home to roost. As a consequence of Labor's flawed decisions, Queenslanders now have to carry the cost of redundant infrastructure, which is passed on to consumers each and every second they use electricity across this state.

There is desperation across Queensland about the mere mention of electricity—desperation from cash-strapped households and struggling businesses who we know were tricked into donating \$470 of their hard-earned money to the Labor government which they are now giving back \$50 in the way of a bonus because they know electricity is expensive. We know that Labor love the 'money-go-round', but come on!

Before I conclude my remarks, I would also like to draw attention to the changes in the valuation assumptions used to determine what Queensland's government owned electricity assets are worth. At a time when the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has discussed writing down the regulated asset base of Queensland's electricity companies, it seems a strange course of action to be increasing the valuation of those same assets. Increasing the valuation of electricity assets will only have the effect of driving up electricity prices—higher electricity prices that will be paid by mums and dads in Sippy Downs, the bakery at Brightwater, retirees in Buderim and strawberry growers in the south of my electorate; higher electricity prices that can ill afford to be paid by Queenslanders already cowed by the relentless increases in electricity prices across this state.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.07 pm): I rise today to speak to committee report No. 9, titled *Consideration of Auditor-General's report 9: 2017-18—Energy: 2016-17 results of financial audits*. As I have said before, Auditor-General's reports are absolutely crucial to ensure that our government entities are operating with good corporate governance. I want to place on record my thanks to the Queensland Audit Office for their consistent work in doing so. As is the case with water, energy is for everyone and the sectors of the Queensland economy that rely on energy are very widespread. The strawberry growers, the carrot growers and households right across Queensland rely on energy.

Importantly, the energy sector is an area of significant innovation in our economy. In Mount Ommaney, as I have said today in this House, we have many innovative businesses doing wonderful things in the energy sector, business both large and small. One such business is Super Quick Electric, with whom I hosted an energy forum on renewable energy in my electorate a few weeks ago. It was very popular; around 50 locals attended to find out what they can do to lower their power bills. I think it is wonderful to see people attending such a forum put on by a local business and a local member to find out what they can do to take charge of their electricity usage by getting solar power and batteries installed in their homes.

As we know, the importance of our energy assets and infrastructure is impossible to understate. I also note proudly that in Queensland we own ours. That is the reason that many South-East Queensland residents have been able to lower their power bills by well over 20 per cent. I have spoken before in this House about the importance of getting on board with renewables as the Palaszczuk government has set themselves the target of 50 per cent renewables by 2030, and I will speak more on that later. More importantly, the Queensland Audit Office, the QAO, identifies the importance of the Powering Queensland Plan, released in June 2017.


The plan includes a number of measures undertaken by the government at a cost of \$1.16 billion to reinvest the profits of energy generators. According to the QAO report, the measures are aimed at ensuring affordable, secure and sustainable energy. The report states—

The remaining measures are intended to put downward pressure on retail prices, and include:

- providing electricity price relief by investing \$771 million to cover the cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme, reducing the 2017-18 increase for the typical regional Queensland household from 7.1 per cent to 3.3 per cent, and for the typical small business from 8.2 per cent to 4.1 per cent
- investigating the restructure of the government owned corporation generators and establishing a 'CleanCo'

The Audit Office also noted that it does create a risk of coal-fired power plants not being able to maintain income growth in future financial years, so in response generators are diversifying their operations by expanding into the retail market and exploring alternative methods of revenue generation. We know just how important it is to always keep an eye towards the future.

I am thrilled to be part of a government that has a plan to lower power prices, diversify revenues and achieve the all-important 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. I am pleased to report that the Queensland Audit Office found that energy entities have strong end-of-year processes. This allows them to produce high-quality energy financial statements in a timely manner. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee in consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 9 of 2017-18 titled *Energy: 2016-17 results of financial audits*. The Auditor-General's report was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for consideration.

As a member of the committee I thank the Queensland Audit Office for its assistance with the committee's examination. Our task as a committee was to consider findings in relation to the financial audits of the government's main energy sector entities—Stanwell, CS Energy, Powerlink and Energy Queensland—and the entities controlled by these companies and the regulatory submissions to the Australian Energy Regulator for Energex and Ergon.

On 14 May 2018 our committee received a public briefing on the report from the QAO. The four government owned corporations or energy entities that form the energy sector in our state are: Stanwell Corporation Limited, CS Energy Limited, Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited and Energy Queensland Limited. The energy sector also includes 31 government owned corporation subsidiaries, but only Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd prepares separate financial statements. The other subsidiaries either have an exemption from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission or are not required to prepare statements under the Corporation Act.

The QAO provided unmodified audit opinions on the financial statements for 2016-17 for all energy sector entities. This means that the financial statements of the examined energy sector entities were prepared in accordance with the requirements of legislative standards. The QAO stated that all entities had strong year-end-close processes that have allowed them to provide high-quality financial statements in a timely manner.


Throughout its analysis the QAO assessed the strength of internal controls designed, implemented and maintained by entities to ensure reliable financial reporting. The QAO found that the control environment was suitably designed and implemented for all energy entities. The QAO did not identify any significant high-risk matters in the control environment across the sector, though it did identify 16 control deficiencies that were low to moderate risk. The QAO stated that these are matters which should be resolved to ensure a good-quality control environment. These deficiencies mostly related to general information technology controls relating to user access system capability and system changes. These issues were isolated and are being addressed by the management of the entities.

As part of its analysis of entities' financial statements, the Auditor-General's report set out a financial snapshot of the Queensland energy sector. There was a 45 per cent increase in profits from the previous year across this sector of \$1.9 billion—a 21 per cent increase on income—for a total of \$10.9 billion. In these current times when cost-of-living pressures are so high on mums and dads right across Queensland, it is a hard pill to swallow to see that our state energy sector is ripping a \$1.9 billion profit from them while electricity prices remain the No. 1 issue that I hear from my constituents in Bundaberg.

At the public briefing, the QAO advised the committee that these increased profits for the energy sector were mostly because of increased profits from energy generation of around \$511 million because of increased demand for energy and record highs in market energy prices—the exact reason why so many Queensland residents simply cannot afford to pay their electricity bills and struggle to put food on the table to feed their families.

At the briefing the committee raised the following issues: firstly, the control deficiencies in the Auditor-General's report and the response by the relevant entities; secondly, the increase in market prices for energy and some of the reasons for this; thirdly, the future challenges and emerging risks of the energy sector; fourthly, the sustainability of Powerlink and the challenges for regional energy distribution networks; and lastly, the useful life of the assets of Stanwell and CS Energy.

The committee is content with this report and we recommend that the Legislative Assembly note its contents.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.15 pm): There can be no more damning report into the Labor Party's use of electricity as a secret tax than the Auditor-General's report No. 9 of 2017-18 titled *Energy: 2016-17 results of financial audits*. When you look at this report, it shows that electricity profit is up 45 per cent in that year alone and income is up 21 per cent. This is inside all of the energy businesses of this government. We have already heard from members on the other side that they own the assets. The government owns the assets, so it is the government's responsibility to take care of the people of Queensland. What they have been doing instead is using electricity as a hidden tax.

If you look at the budget papers, it shows that in 2016-17 this government expected to earn \$482 million from the generation of electricity, but in the next year it showed that the estimated actual was \$892 million. That is a jump of \$410 million in one year. In the next year's budget, when we get the real figures and the actual amount of money that these companies earned, it was \$1.24 billion. The Treasurer, as a shareholding minister in these entities, tripped over and found an extra \$800 million.

An opposition member: There it is!

Mr HART: There it is! They just found it. Conveniently, that \$770 million is exactly the same figure they needed to pay off the Solar Bonus Scheme. I understand those members opposite do not understand how the Solar Bonus Scheme works. We saw that during the debate on the electricity bill this morning. We saw member after member from the other side try to explain exactly how these systems work, and they do not understand. We saw the member for Mount Ommaney, who is on the committee, stand in this place and tell us that the oversizing of solar panels is adding more solar panels and a bigger inverter to the system, and that causes you to lose your Solar Bonus Scheme payment.


That is not what that legislation is about at all: it is about oversizing the actual panel if you have to replace it. Here we have members of the committee—and, especially disappointing, the chairman of the committee—who do not understand the non-reversion policy. They got it completely wrong. They completely messed it up. That is the problem with this government: they are using electricity as a secret

tax and they are trying to hide it from the people of Queensland. They are not being honest with the people of Queensland. Instead, they are giving back little bits of subsidies—\$50 here and \$50 there—but they are ripping money out of the pockets of Queenslanders.

Some people are turning off their lights at night and not running their air conditioners during summer because this mob opposite thinks it is okay to rip off people when it comes to electricity. The people of Queensland are sick and tired of this. They are sick and tired of Labor blaming everybody else for its mistakes. We have to remember that over the past 30 years Labor has been in government for 25 years. It is a bit rich for those on the other side to try to blame everybody else for their mistakes. They are the ones who have been ripping off the people of Queensland for the last 25 years. The people of Queensland are awake to it, and they are coming to get those opposite at the next election. We will be reminding them every day of what the Labor Party has done when it comes to using electricity as a hidden tax and selling assets.

Those opposite accuse us of selling assets, but we sold nothing. Those opposite sold Queensland ports, Queensland forestry and Queensland Rail. They sold just about everything that was not nailed down. There was some renewable energy owned by the Queensland government. Guess what it did with that? It sold it! Then it wants to create CleanCo—\$250 million of unallocated money that it does not have—

(Time expired)

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.20 pm): I associate myself 100 per cent with the comments of the member for Burleigh and with the comments of the member for Broadwater when he spoke to this report during the last sittings. It is here in black and white. When the people of our electorates—the people in voter land who vote for us every three or four years—ask us why their power bills are still so high, we can point to the 45 per cent increase in the profits of energy government owned corporations.

Mr Stewart interjected.

Mr KRAUSE: I hear the member for Townsville interjecting—probably saying something about what happened back in 2010, when his comrade Andrew Fraser asked the AER for permission to put the rates up in Queensland so much more. He asked for permission to charge every Queenslanders more on their electricity bills. It had nothing to do with the LNP. It was a Labor government that locked in the network charges between 2010 and 2015.

As I said earlier today, it did not stop in 2015, when the AER caught up with Energex and Ergon. This report lays bare that the generators—owned by the Labor government opposite, owned by the people of Queensland—are continuing to gouge Queenslanders when it comes to their power bills. When those opposite say that there is nothing they can do about it except offer people \$50 back on their power bills—

Mr Bennett: Insulting.


Mr KRAUSE: I take that interjection. That is insulting, because there is something they can do about it. There are 1.9 billion things they can do about it. They can return those profits to the consumers of Queensland. They could have returned those profits to the people of Queensland, but they did not. They chose to spend it. That is exactly what the Labor Party always does. It cooks up ways to get money out of people's pockets and then spend it on something else. It has to stop or else business, primary industries and all sorts of industries in the state will grind to a halt. It is there in black and white: a 45 per cent increase in one year in the profits of government owned generators and distribution companies. It is outrageous. I thank my colleagues on this side of the House who today in this debate have laid bare what the Auditor-General put down in black and white about the pilfering of Queensland taxpayers' money by the government.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.23 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report No. 13 titled *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman* tabled on 21 June 2018.


I rise to speak about the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's oversight report on the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman. The report provides information regarding the performance by the Queensland Ombudsman of his statutory functions and the committee's examination of the Ombudsman's annual report 2016-17, which was tabled on 29 September 2017.

The committee's jurisdiction in respect of the Ombudsman requires the committee to monitor and review the performance by the Ombudsman of his statutory functions. The committee is also required to examine each annual report of the Ombudsman's office. The committee must report to the House on any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the office that the committee considers desirable.

In conducting its oversight the committee met with the Ombudsman, Mr Phil Clarke, and his staff and toured the Ombudsman's office to understand its day-to-day operations. The committee was impressed to observe improvements in the system functionality designed to adapt to changes in workload that are being generated by the office now receiving more public interest disclosures. The committee was also pleased to observe ongoing efforts to modernise and streamline complaint-handling procedures.

The committee held a public oversight hearing with the Ombudsman and his officers on 30 April and received answers to a number of questions on notice. Both the hearing transcript and the answers to questions on notice are available on the committee's web page. At the oversight hearing the committee took advice from Mr Clarke on a number of matters pertinent to the running of his office including anticipated challenges for the office for the immediate future, interactions with other integrity agencies like the Crime and Corruption Commission, and the correlation between training given to agencies and departments and the type and number of complaints that are subsequently received about such agencies.

On behalf of the committee I thank Mr Clarke and his staff, who assisted the committee with its oversight role. I also thank the secretariat and the members of the committee for their assistance. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (3.27 pm): I am not quite sure whether that contribution from the member for Toohey was comedy or tragedy, because there was a significant gap—

Mr Crisafulli: A tragicomedy.

Mr JANETZKI: I take that interjection from the member for Broadwater. Let's call it a tragicomedy, because there were a few gaps in what the member for Toohey had to say about this particular report and the 2016-17 annual report of the Queensland Ombudsman.

I do agree with the member for Toohey that the Queensland Ombudsman plays a vital role in Queensland public life. The Queensland Ombudsman, which was an initiative of the Bjelke-Petersen government in 1974 to improve the relationship between administrative agencies and the citizens of Queensland, allows Queenslanders, if they are unhappy with an administrative decision that impacts on their lives, to make an application, make a request, to the Queensland Ombudsman. It serves a vital purpose and it has for a very long period of time. It is a place where people can lodge administrative complaints or requests. The Queensland Ombudsman also plays a vital educative role. It makes its way around Queensland advising Queensland citizens and agencies as to what they can and cannot do. That makes this report and its findings particularly important.

If we look into the report for 2016-17 we see that there are a couple of very disturbing trends. Mr Phil Clarke, with whom I have had the good fortune of spending some time learning about the Queensland Ombudsman's role and its purpose—he is a fine public servant doing a wonderful job—has identified a range of problems.

In 2016-17 reported wrongdoing in the public sector has skyrocketed—there is no other word for it—36 per cent. In 2016-17 reported complaints have increased by 36 per cent. Of greatest concern is that of 798 public interest disclosures—that is, reported wrongdoing in the public sector—53 per cent were about corrupt conduct. Why is that important? Because the Public Service serves the public interest. The numbers do not lie. The 2016-17 Queensland Ombudsman report goes on to say that state government departments ranked first in the number of public interest disclosures at 53 per cent followed by statutory authorities, local councils and then TAFEs. What can we glean from this report? We can glean from this report that, under Labor, corruption is getting worse and the government needs to explain why there are additional cases of maladministration around Queensland.


Dr Rowan: Look at Ipswich.

Mr JANETZKI: I take that interjection from the member for Moggill. I think the government needs to explain why there are increasing cases of misuse of public funds. You cannot help thinking that the fish rots from the head down and, in particular, I think about the member for Miller, who has been called very foolish by the chairman of the CCC in respect of his conduct of public affairs in this state—his conduct of backchannelling emails in clear contravention. He should know better. The honourable minister should know better and should be conducting public affairs through the appropriate channels. I can see no other reason for this increase in maladministration—reported conduct to the Queensland Ombudsman—other than the fish rotting from the head down.

Dr Rowan: Labor at Ipswich.

Mr JANETZKI: I take that interjection from the member for Moggill: just look at Ipswich. The key issue that Mr Clarke identified in the Queensland Ombudsman report is that these increased reports ultimately cost the taxpayer, and I will use his words. Mr Clarke has said that corruption, maladministration and misuse of public resources increase the costs of providing public services, so there is not just an increase in corrupt activity being reported but there is an increased cost to the public of Queensland.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.32 pm): I rise to speak to report No. 13 titled *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman* by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which has oversight responsibilities for the Queensland Ombudsman. This report provides information regarding the performance of the Queensland Ombudsman and his functions over the reporting period of 2016-17. I want to go to a couple of areas under 'Public Reports' on page 10 of the report that was tabled some time ago. One of those reports tabled by the office was the *Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme report: an investigation into the administration of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme by Queensland Health*.

I want to remind the House that the LNP doubled the PTSS in 2012 to support people in rural and regional areas who have to travel long distances for medical care. In Burnett there are many residents in Agnes Water and 1770 who travel from their homes to Bundaberg for hospital and specialist appointments—a round trip of some 242 kilometres. Residents eligible for the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme were formerly able to be subsidised for the cost of travel from their nearest hospital at Gin Gin. This changed in 2015 when the residents' nearest hospital became Bundaberg due to a reluctance on the part of the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service to include unsealed roads in the travel calculations to the nearest hospital. This is an anomaly in itself and reflects the wide variety of interpretations the various hospital and health services make when applying the PTSS, something that was mentioned in the report.

This value judgement exists in the Wide Bay health service despite the many kilometres that Queenslanders spend driving on unsealed roads to reach services, including health. Patients living in Miriam Vale travel to their nearest hospital, which is in Gladstone. If specialist treatment is not available in Gladstone, they are referred to Bundaberg. Miriam Vale residents are subsidised \$112 to travel between the Gladstone Hospital and Bundaberg Hospital, a trip of some 400 kilometres. In real terms, Miriam Vale residents travel one kilometre further to get from their homes to Bundaberg for treatment—a complete anomaly, as I am sure all members would agree. Agnes Water residents believe this is an anomaly in the PTSS and are keen to see a reassessment of their eligibility for travel to Bundaberg—a round trip of 242 kilometres, something also that the Ombudsman's report clearly articulated.

As a specific example, I have a constituent who travels from Agnes Water to Bundaberg for three sessions per week for renal dialysis. He is not eligible for any assistance with the travel costs for his two weekly return visits. The dialysis service is not available to him in Gladstone due to capacity and he must travel to Bundaberg. As PTSS eligible patients are frequently those on low or fixed incomes, this is causing considerable financial distress. Despite four reviews or audits, including the report in this report, since 2010 of the PTSS by the Queensland Ombudsman and recommendations for change, it appears that Queensland Health continues to do nothing. The only changes were in 2012 when we did what had to be done in doubling the allowances.

The same problems are identified in each review—inconsistencies and flaws related to decentralisation; policies determined by individual hospitals, often leading to inequities and value judgements being made; and the overburdensome application process, leading to long delays in reimbursement for often cash-strapped patients. Pensioners mainly get caught up. It is my belief that we need to seriously consider the payment of travel subsidies for all eligible patients attending special appointments when they are required to travel more than 100 kilometres to meet their nearest hospital.

I call on the Minister for Health to take up the cause—listen to what the Ombudsman said—for all Queenslanders in all electorates and to make it a priority to implement the recommendations of the Queensland Ombudsman to address the problem with the PTSS.

Point 4 on page 10 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report deals with the management of child safety complaints. It is only appropriate that we consider what the Ombudsman said in his report about the child safety statistics that are directly related to this report in relation to the complaints process. Once again, we are sadly seeing substantiated cases of children being harmed or at risk on the rise in Queensland.

According to the latest statistics on child safety, 5,799 children were subject to substantiation over the year of this report, an overall increase of 148 children from the year before. In regional terms of child safety substantiations, this has meant an increase of 5.4 per cent in Far North Queensland, eight per cent in Central Queensland, eight per cent in south-west Queensland and an increase of 13.5 per cent in South-East Queensland. In the same period there were 318 substantiated cases of children subject to sexual harm, an increase of 12 cases from the same time the year before.

The Queensland Ombudsman has clearly articulated that more needs to be done from the 2016-17 review of this particular committee's report. When we reflect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up less than five per cent of the population but represent 37 per cent, we know that this is not good enough.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Lapse of Notice of Motion

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): In accordance with standing order 71, the notice of motion relating to report No. 14 has lapsed.

STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr WHITING (Bancroft—ALP) (3.38 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report No. 10 titled *Consideration of Auditor-General's report 16: 2015-16—Flood resilience of river catchments* tabled on 19 July 2018.

This is quite an important report. We are talking about the flood resilience of our communities, and this is a vitally important concern to many in our electorates. I go back to what happened in 2011 in my area when I was a councillor the day after the Grantham floods.

On the same day of the Grantham flood, the creeks in my area were up and the roads were flooded. I spent a bit of time literally wading through floodwaters to try to get to some areas. After the Grantham flood, everyone was very nervous. The rain started to fall and we had an early warning system go off to all mobile phones in the Moreton Bay council area telling people to go to high ground now. That was very confusing and quite scary for a lot of people. Nothing happened, but the Moreton Bay Regional Council community was put on notice about what may be coming. My community had to do a lot of work to be fully prepared for that kind of situation which, gladly, did not happen.

In 2015, once again, floodwaters came through my area. That was the second one-in-100-year rain event that I have experienced as an elected representative for my area. That is one of the predicted outcomes of climate change that we are seeing. In 2015, Major Street in Deception Bay flooded very quickly. Water came up from the creek and there was almost a rush of water coming through houses along that street. Once again, people were not prepared for that. We had to consider how we could improve our warning systems. More than that, we had to consider how, as a community, we could be more resilient. It was clear that our houses were not resilient to such flooding. After the 2011 floods, a lot of money was spent by the state government, local government and the federal government through the Building Better Regions Fund to create a levee bank and a detention basin in the Burpengary area to protect one street. A lot of houses along that street were bought to make way for that development to make that street a lot safer.


We are seeing a lot more flooding and, with that, there is the huge potential of more damage to our communities. This report shows that the coordination within councils and between councils is not good. It should be better. The report also shows that councils need to better allocate resources to deal with floods and not rely on other levels of government to do so.

I think it is quite useful that the report also points out the benefits of the Brisbane River Catchment Flood Study. Although that study and the plans cost \$5 million, I believe they are the crucial first step in communities becoming resilient. My experience as a member of the Moreton Bay Regional Council is that a year-long study into where floodwaters go revealed some harsh and unpalatable truths about where flooding can be expected to be experienced in the future. Our local governments need to do more of those flood studies. I note that the Ipswich City Council did not provide a response to these recommendations.

This report shows that there needs to be better resilience in our local communities and our councils. The Brisbane City Council's Flood Resilient Homes Program is a new initiative that includes an incentive scheme that provides financial assistance for modifying homes. This program could be a good template for my area as well, because we need to build homes that can cope with floodwaters. That is a much better option than going down the buyback path. That program is an example of how we can better build flood resilience in our catchments in South-East Queensland.

This report makes the interesting finding that 33 per cent of residents in the Lockyer and Somerset council areas—both very good councils—would not evacuate if they had that flood message, but five per cent of residents in Brisbane and Ipswich would not evacuate if they received that warning. It is very clear that we need to help those councils—

(Time expired)

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.43 pm): This report began in the term of the 55th Parliament. It was not finalised when the parliament was dissolved for the 2017 election. The report was then referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee to finalise. I was a member of the former agriculture committee, as was the member for Ipswich West. We did a lot of work on this issue. This issue had been in the hands of another committee before it was referred to our committee, so this report has had a long gestation period. The trigger for this report was the 2011 floods. No small part of that trigger was when the Mount Crosby treatment plant was inundated with mud and Brisbane faced a water crisis.

There was an investigation as to what could mitigate the impact of such flood events. In saying that, we all remember the flood of 2011. At that time, I was living on a farm out at Cecil Plains. That area is a flat flood plain. That year, I had never seen water flow so fast. Not far away from where I live is Toowoomba. None of us will ever forget what happened in Toowoomba and what then went down the range to hit the towns of Grantham and Withcott and the death and destruction that followed down there.

The committee looked at how that flood impact could be better managed. We see a lot of footage of floods occurring—not only in Australia but throughout the world—where houses are washed away. I do not remember seeing that before. As we develop, we create more run-off. That water finds its way into the streams. In agriculture, all paddocks are laser levelled. They are drained. The water flows off them into the drains and the streams quicker. As we build more houses, shopping centres and more roads, more water falls onto hard surfaces and finds its way into the river streams much faster than it used to. That compounds the problem.


As I speak now, we are going through one of the worst droughts on record. For example, so far this year Clifton and Pittsworth have not received five inches of rain. Their average rainfall is somewhere around 26 inches, so the rainfall there is a long way short. Sometimes that rainfall averages out by the end of the year. If that happens, we will have a lot of rain between now and then. That will mean a lot of erosion.

During the committee's consideration of this issue, we saw some work that was being done to try to repair damage to rivers and to try to slow down the flow of water. We went out to the Logan River and saw the works that had been carried out there. There is still a lot to do. It was apparent that the work that is needed to mitigate these disasters is beyond the scope of just one council. The committee studied the areas covered by the Toowoomba, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley and Somerset council areas. One of the recommendations of the report was—

... in the absence of stand-alone catchment management authorities, the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning ... Fulfil its obligation under the State Disaster Management Plan to drive the enhancement of flood resilience in the four catchments.

The report goes on to make a number of recommendations, including developing strategies and plans in consultation with the four councils, developing flood plain management plans and working together to effectively and economically regulate levee banks. Although levee banks can be a help, if they are constructed in the wrong place they become a danger and a menace.

Part of this report was dedicated to warning systems, particularly in the Lockyer Valley. That area had very little warning of what was coming. Now, a lot of monitoring stations are being put down both the rivers and streams to give more warning of an impending disaster. This report contains a lot of good recommendations, but there is still a long way to go. It is still a work in progress.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to outline the findings of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report No. 10 of the 56th Parliament tabled in July 2018 considering the Auditor-General's report No. 16 of 2015-16 titled *Flood resilience of river catchments*. The committee's task was to consider the Auditor-General's findings in relation to the effectiveness of flood resilience activity in the Bremer, Lockyer, and mid and upper Brisbane river catchments since the 2011 Queensland floods. The committee also examined the progress in implementing the recommendations of the Auditor-General.

On 19 April 2016 the Auditor-General's report No. 16 of 2015-16 titled *Flood resilience of river catchments* report was tabled in this parliament and subsequently referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee of the 55th Parliament of which I was a former member, as was the member for Condamine. As part of its inquiry the committee held one public briefing and three public hearings and received 10 submissions from a range of organisations. Unfortunately, the committee could not report back to the parliament before the dissolution of the previous parliament on 29 October 2017. The Auditor-General's report was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee on 3 May 2018. The committee received a public briefing from the Auditor-General's office, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority on 11 June 2018.

During major rainfall events Queensland river catchments can become a source of flooding, as we all know. Flooding is historically the most destructive and expensive natural disaster in Australia, with average losses estimated at \$377 million per year between the years 1967 and 2005. Flood mitigation measures can minimise the impact of floods. Flood resilience means preparing for and managing potential flood hazards to minimise the impacts of floods. The integration of flood resilience activities at a river catchment level is very important. It may be the case that our local councils can get the best results from spending their resources upstream in other council areas. However, this is complicated by the fact that council and river catchment boundaries do not line up.


The Auditor-General recommended the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning fulfil its obligation under the State Disaster Management Plan to drive the enhancement of flood resilience in the four catchments: the Bremer, Lockyer, mid Brisbane River and upper Brisbane River catchments. That would involve firstly coordinating flood resilience activities and funding at a state and catchment level and, secondly, developing strategies and plans in consultation with four councils and the relevant entities to effectively identify, assess, prioritise and manage catchment scale flood risks using an integrated catchment management approach.

It also recommended assessing the capacity and capabilities of the four councils and supporting them as necessary in building flood resilience in the catchments and their local areas. It also recommended that the department, as a matter of priority, establish funding as reasonably required and complete all elements of the Brisbane River Catchment Flood Study.

It recommended that the four councils, Ipswich, Lockyer, Scenic Rim and Somerset, develop flood management plans in accordance with recommendations 2.12 of the final report of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. As well, it recommended that the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and the four councils work together to effectively and economically regulate levee banks.

Having considered the Auditor-General's report, the committee made one recommendation and that was that the Legislative Assembly note the contents of the report. In closing, I would like to thank my fellow committee members.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (3.53 pm): I rise to speak as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, which considered the Auditor-General's report No. 10 of 2016-17 titled *Flood resilience of river catchments*. The

Auditor-General's report discusses the performance audit that was conducted to determine the effectiveness of flood resilience activities in the Bremer, Lockyer, mid and upper Brisbane river catchments.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the former department of infrastructure, local government and planning and the department of natural resources and mines and four councils, being Ipswich, Lockyer, Scenic Rim and Somerset, were all audited. The audits aimed to examine whether effective governance arrangements were in place, flood preparedness was informed by an understanding of flood risks and whether flood risks were effectively managed. The audit was undertaken following the significant flood events in Queensland in 2011 and 2013.

As Bundaberg's former deputy mayor and flood recovery coordinator for the major 2013 flood event, I have seen firsthand just how much heartbreak flooding can cause a community. In January 2013 the Burnett River burst its banks and Bundaberg was hit by its biggest flood ever recorded. Over 2,000 homes, 600 businesses and major community infrastructure was inundated and much of it destroyed. I have always been proud to call Bundy home, but it was that Bundy spirit in those days, weeks and months after the flood, when the TV crews had lost interest, that cemented my genuine love for the Bundaberg community. Given my history and experience with flooding, the findings of this report are of particular interest to me and extremely important.

The report was referred to our committee on 3 May 2018 and on 11 June we received a public briefing on the report from the Queensland Audit Office, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. As a committee member, I would like to thank the QAO staff, the QRA staff and the department staff for their assistance.


At the briefing the Auditor-General discussed that the audit had found a generally positive increased effort and spending on flood resilience by the four councils. However, the audit discovered that there remained an overall lack of accountability and shared responsibility when it came to flood resilience. The Auditor-General concluded that the Queensland government and the councils have a better understanding of flood risks and are better prepared than they were in 2011. However, in not one of the catchments was one entity responsible for leading and coordinating cross boundary risks, priorities and activities.

The audit recognised that the necessary integrated catchment was missing. The Auditor-General mentioned that this is what is needed in order to achieve greater resilience and as a direct result made four recommendations as part of this report. I could not agree more. In absence of standalone catchment management authorities, the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning should fulfil its obligations under the State Disaster Management Plan to drive the enhancement of flood resilience in the four catchments by coordinating flood resilience activities and funding at a state and catchment level by developing strategies and plans in consultation with the four councils and relevant entities and by assessing the capacity and capabilities of the four councils and supporting them as necessary.

It is recommended that the department establishes what funding is reasonably required and complete all elements of the Brisbane River Catchment Flood Study as a matter of priority. In my Bundaberg Regional Council days I worked through flood mitigation plans, proposals, engineering and design. Flood resilience for any community is extremely important and needs to be continually improved as our technology advances to protect members of our community and our cities, homes, parks and buildings. It is essential for councils, the state government and other organisations such as Seqwater and SunWater to work together to coordinate flood resilience activities. Councils cannot do it alone. The Bundaberg-Burnett region was the first catchment where the councils and the relevant department sat down and worked together to come up with pathways for the region to be more effective in flood resilience activities.

The committee notes that a range of actions to strengthen flood resilience are taking place in Queensland, but there is more to be done. It is clear that a significant and varied range of actions have already been implemented or are planned to be implemented. Having come from a flood prone region I, alongside my committee members, understand and acknowledge that a one-size-fits-all solution just does not work for Queensland. Instead, locally specific fit-for-purpose solutions are best placed to deliver improved flood resilience that will contribute to making our state a more flood resilient place to call home.

I acknowledge the efforts of all the organisations and agencies involved in this important work and I recommend that the Legislative Assembly note the contents of this report. I am looking forward to seeing more improvement in this sector in the future.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.58 pm): I, too, rise to speak to the *Flood resilience of river catchments* report delivered by the Auditor-General. It is really important to note that so far all of the speakers from the many different corners of Queensland that we call home have had some experience with flood in their electorates. Sadly, Mount Ommaney is no different. Therefore, today I speak in part in my role with the committee and also as the member for Mount Ommaney, which was hit hard by the 2011 floods. I know that today many residents will be keen to hear the results of this report. In particular, Bruce Mutch and other members of the Jindalee Neighbourhood Watch will be very keen to hear the outcome of the report.


The Auditor-General's report was a performance audit to determine the effectiveness of flood resilience in four catchments: the Bremer, Lockyer and mid and upper Brisbane River catchments, where my electorate is located. Indeed, the Brisbane River flows past my electorate, bordering the suburbs of Corinda, Oxley, Jindalee, Westlake and Riverhills. Half of my electorate is bound by river.

In my community, the impacts of the 2011 flood are still felt by some and remembered by others. The audit examined whether effective governance arrangements were in place, flood preparedness was informed by an understanding of flood risk and flood risks were effectively managed. The committee inquired whether flood plain management was considered as part of our state planning provisions. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority advised that significant progress has been made, with state planning amendments taking into account flood hazard and flood risks.

Debate, on motion of Ms Pugh, adjourned.

MOTION

Revocation of Protected Areas

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (4.01 pm). I move—

- (1) That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under sections 32 and 70E of the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the dedication of national park, resource reserve and forest reserves as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

Description of the areas to be revoked

Family Islands National Park	An area of about 5.26 hectares described as lot 9 on CWL3549, as illustrated on the attached "Family Islands National Park sketch A".
Tewantin National Park	An area of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.9184 hectares described as lots 100 to 103 on SP172000, as illustrated on the attached "Tewantin National Park sketch B"; and 5.3858 hectares described as lots 10 to 12 on SP230058, as illustrated on the attached "Tewantin National Park sketch C".
Heathlands Resources Reserve	An area of about 11.5606 hectares described as lot 1 on SP288875, lot 2 on SP288876, lot 3 on SP296927 and lots 35 to 37 on SP296936, as illustrated on the attached "Heathlands Resources Reserve sketch D".
Gadgarra Forest Reserve	An area of about 43.6837 hectares described as lots 10 to 15 and 19 to 24 on SP224679, as illustrated on the attached "Gadgarra Forest Reserve sketch E".
Gillies Highway Forest Reserve	An area of 16.717 hectares described as lots 16 to 18 on SP224683, as illustrated on the attached "Gillies Highway Forest Reserve sketch F".
Little Mulgrave Forest Reserve	An area of about 28.5683 hectares described as lots 1 to 9 on SP224678, as illustrated on the attached "Little Mulgrave Forest Reserve sketch G".

- (2) That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts for submission to the Governor in Council.

The Palaszczuk government will only support the revocation of land from the protected area and forest reserve estates where it can be clearly demonstrated that it is in the interests of the specific tenure, it provides for greater protected area management effectiveness, there is a net conservation benefit as a result, it is in the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the public, and there is no reasonable practical alternative. Since coming to government in 2015, the Palaszczuk government has increased the size of Queensland's protected area estate from 7.56 per cent to 8.2 per

cent. That means that in less than four years an extra 1.1 million hectares of Queensland is now protected. That is on top of the ecological values and essential habitat that have been saved by the Queensland government's new vegetation management laws.

With such a large and dispersed protected area and forest reserve estate, there is the occasional need to revoke the dedication of areas for greater public benefit. The decision to revoke those parts of the estate are not made lightly, but in those cases clear benefits to the community, road safety and to first nations people have been demonstrated. Careful consideration has been given to this proposal and in each instance consultation has occurred with state and local agencies, landholders and interested groups and, of course, first nations peoples. The proposal will not extinguish or affect native title or native title rights and interests in relation to the land.

I turn to the areas affected by the motion, starting with the Family Islands National Park. An area of 5.26 hectares, part of the Family Islands National Park about 24 kilometres east of Tully, is proposed to be revoked for a Land Act 1994 community purpose or recreation reserve, with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council to be appointed as trustees. The area known as the Dunk Island Spit is subject to a 30-year term lease with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council and contains Dunk Island resort and council infrastructure. That lease expires on 12 November 2019.

The proposed revocation is of significant strategic and management advantage to the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, because the area to be revoked will remain available for community purposes; has no inherent natural, environmental, social or cultural values due to the level of manmade and natural disturbance; is not connected with the remainder of the national park; and has longstanding and existing values and uses more appropriately managed as a community-purpose or recreation reserve.

There are two elements to the proposal for the revocation of parts of the Tewantin National Park, about four kilometres west of Tewantin. The first is to revoke parts of the national park containing an area of 1.9 hectares to ratify the alignment of the McKinnon Drive road reserve with the actual constructed road. McKinnon Drive has been on its current alignment since before 1964 and the Department of Transport and Main Roads requires the road reserve alignment to be ratified to enable it to undertake road safety improvements, rehabilitation works and ongoing maintenance.

The final part of the proposal is to revoke parts of the national park, an area of 5.3 hectares, to fulfil the Department of Transport and Main Roads and Noosa Shire Council's Integrated Regional Transport Plan *Demaining Agreement 2000* to establish the Tewantin Bypass, connecting the Cooroy Noosa Road to the Eumundi Noosa Road via Beckmans Road. The Noosa Shire Council will provide land for inclusion into the national park as compensation for the loss of the inherent natural, environmental, social and cultural values associated with the areas being revoked from the national park.

I turn now to Heathlands Resources Reserve. To facilitate the return of land to Aboriginal ownership, it is proposed that parts of Heathlands Resources Reserve, about 66 kilometres south of Bamaga, be revoked for road and Aboriginal freehold land purposes. This proposal is aligned with a package of revocations that were supported in the House last year on 14 June 2017 and will enable traditional owners to pursue economic opportunities and re-establish cultural ties to the land. Firstly, to rectify the erroneous dedication of a section of road reserve as part of the resources reserve, an area of about 6.55 hectares is to be revoked to correct administrative errors where a closed road was mistakenly dedicated as resources reserve. This land was also intended to be transferred as Aboriginal freehold.


Another part of the proposal is to exclude a gravel pit from the resources reserve in the Captain Billy Landing area, an area of about 0.2834 hectares. That is an area that is already disturbed, but suitably located to enable the traditional owners to pursue income-generating opportunities, particularly in the area of tourism. The final part of this proposal is to revoke two small parcels of resources reserve lying between the Captain Billy Landing access track and a proposed lookout on Aboriginal freehold containing an area of 2.5472 hectares. This area is also disturbed and will also provide consistency of tenure to enable the traditional owners to pursue further economic opportunities in the Captain Billy Landing area.

I turn to the Gillies Range Road safety improvements. To allow for the realignment of the Gillies Range Road, it is proposed that parts of Gadgarra Forest Reserve, parts of Little Mulgrave Forest Reserve and the Gillies Highway Forest Reserve containing an area of 16.7 hectares, about 26 kilometres east of Atherton, are also included in the proposal. That is essential to enable road safety improvements, rehabilitation works, ongoing maintenance and drainage upgrades to the Gillies Range Road.

I take this opportunity to announce that, following a signed agreement between the government and landowners, a 34,217 hectare parcel of land adjoining Rungulla National Park has become Queensland's newest nature refuge. Located 130 kilometres south of Forsyth, with a landscape of rugged hills and plateaus that supports a range of eucalypt woodlands, the Gilberton Nature Refuge will protect and conserve an amazing diversity of animals, plants and ecosystems. I take this opportunity to thank the Gilberton landholders, the French family, for their commitment to protecting and conserving our unique environment. The beautiful property is home to the Gilbert River, which winds between the hills for 20 kilometres. It is home to a mosaic of vegetation types, supports koalas and has Aboriginal, European and Chinese cultural heritage sites.

I am very proud of the fact that the Queensland government has signed 14 nature refuge agreements this year alone, creating just over 35,000 hectares of nature refuge space in Queensland.

As I have stated, decisions to revoke parts of the protected area are not made lightly. However, given the clear benefits to the community, road safety and the traditional owners of the north-east coast of the cape, I urge all members to support the motion before the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (4.09 pm): From the outset, I would like to say that the opposition will certainly be supporting the matter brought forward by the minister today. I thank the minister for her contribution today. She is clearly not well so to be in here is an excellent effort. I thank her for the briefing on this matter provided to me and my staff by her staff and the department.

I would like to go through the items for revocation and make a brief contribution on each. The first is an area of around five hectares of Family Islands National Park. This makes a lot of sense. The council has come forward with what it sees as a way it can provide all that we are getting at the moment without the department having to continue to keep its status as a national park. The minister quite rightly said that it is not connected to the current national park. Therefore, I think the case has been put that it is a recreational area for all intents and purposes.

With regard to the next revocation involving Tewantin National Park, I note the member for Noosa is in the chamber and will speak on this. I will allow her to make a more detailed contribution on this one. However, I will say that it appears from our analysis to be a matter of road alignments.

In terms of the 11 hectares at Heathlands Resources Reserve, I would like to make a point about the smallest bit of this revocation—that is, the gravel pit. It is an excellent economic opportunity for the community to have the current working quarry included. I would stress that it is absolutely vital that those facilities remain open and remain accessible. Without quarries in that part of the world our ability to undertake efficient and cost-effective road upgrades goes out the window. That is a very important part of it. When it comes to Indigenous communities, I have always been of the view that the two greatest things a government can give are employment and ownership. This has the potential for both. I sincerely hope that the community and council take that land and make every opportunity with it.

The next revocation is an area of about 43½ hectares of forest reserve about 26 kilometre east of Atherton. Again, this is for road realignment and maintenance.


The next revocation is for 16.7 hectares of the Gillies Highway Forest Reserve east of Atherton. This is obviously for road purposes. I would urge those working in this area to use the minimum amount possible for both access as well as the road. It is an important project that the opposition will support. The final revocation is 28.5 hectares of the Little Mulgrave Forest Reserve for road realignment.

The minister began her contribution by listing off some of the priorities when these matters are being decided. One of them was clear benefits and net conservation benefit. While we are talking about national parks, I would like to make a brief contribution about what I think governments must do when they are looking at our national parks, declaring our national parks and caring for and maintaining our national parks.

It is one thing to have areas set aside as national parks, but if we are not maintaining them then they are of questionable environmental benefit. Governments must ensure that feral weeds and animals are dealt with, otherwise friction is created with those whose properties border national parks. So many times I have seen landholders at their wit's end because they are prepared to put their shoulder to the wheel, spend thousands and thousands of dollars eradicating weeds and pests and then on the other side of the fence, heaven forbid, is the national park which is in fact in far worse condition than their freehold land.

Are national parks vital? You bet they are. The greatest gift a government can give is well-resourced national parks. Governments need a clear focus on removing feral pests and weeds and the funding to do so. To just declare something and put a ribbon around it is not enough. They also need to do the right thing and continue to maintain them.

I will conclude by going back to where I started. I thank the minister for the briefing provided. The opposition will be supporting these revocations.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (4.15 pm): I rise to speak in support of this revocation motion. As the chair of the Transport and Public Works Committee, I will largely keep my remarks to the revocations that allow for regional road upgrades and better road safety.


Gillies Range Road, known locally as the Gillies Highway, winds from Gordonvale up to the Atherton Tablelands. It is a scenic tourist route that connects Cairns and the coast with destinations on the Tablelands and further west and north. It is a road I know well from a previous life where I spent a great deal of time inspecting high-voltage substations near Ravenshoe and Mareeba and travelled this and Kuranda Road regularly. This road is a vital communication link for numerous local rural properties. It links several local roads and is an important local transport route.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is responsible for the management of this state controlled road network, including Gillies Range Road. Part of this responsibility includes ensuring that adequate road reserves are secured to accommodate this network. Gillies Range Road has poor sight distances, steep cross fall and traffic hazards in numerous locations. As such, the revocation of 43.6 hectares from Gadgarra Forest Reserve, which includes 2.4 hectares of state controlled road that was erroneously dedicated as a forest reserve, is a good idea. This revocation will realign Gillies Range Road for road safety improvements, including rehabilitation works, ongoing maintenance and drainage purposes, and is certain to be of enormous benefit to the community and motorists.

The 16.7-hectare Gillies Highway Forest Reserve that includes 9.2 hectares of state controlled road was also erroneously dedicated as forest reserve. The realignment and construction of the Gillies Range Road entirely within the current road reserve would be very expensive and no doubt could be environmentally destructive. This potential for environmental harm is due to the constrained horizontal geometry associated with the topography of the Gillies Range, which would require significant embankment excavation and stabilisation for work within the current road reserve.

Finally, the revocation of parts of the Little Mulgrave Forest Reserve will also allow for the realignment of Gillies Range Road to facilitate more safety improvements which will also allow rehabilitation works and ongoing maintenance of the road reserve. These revocation proposals will result in significant benefits to the community by aligning Gillies Range Road with the already constructed road pavement. It will improve its safety and remove the need for vegetated land to be cleared to maintain the road.

All parties have agreed to these revocations following extensive consultation with state and local government agencies. Of course, financial compensation will be provided for the loss of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's managed lands. I commend the motion to the House.


 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.18 pm): I rise to briefly speak to the revocation motion moved by the Minister for Environment contained the tabled proposals under sections 32 and 70E of the Nature Conservation Act 1992. I note that the proposal details six separate revocations located in the Tully, Tewantin, Atherton and Bamaga areas. Given that the areas that we are talking about are of conservation value, it is right and proper that the people of Queensland should have confidence that these types of decisions are made with the requisite level of community consultation, particularly with those individuals who live in the immediate proximity of the affected areas. Given that the majority of these revocations occur in Far North Queensland, I seek the minister's assurance that community consultation has been undertaken with communities on the Atherton Tablelands, at Mission Beach and, importantly, in the northern cape.

I would like to take a moment to focus on the Heathlands Resources Reserve. I understand that a quarry, as the shadow minister for environment mentioned, is included within the proposed revocation. As anyone who has spent time in the north knows, the availability of material for the construction and maintenance of roads is essential. Earlier in the year the parliament heard testimony from Cape York Aboriginal elder Gerhardt Pearson in Cairns where he told the Palaszczuk Labor government that its legislative agenda would 'snuff out' economic opportunities for traditional owners across the Far North, and he used the vegetation management legislation as an example.

The LNP has a proud record of providing greater economic opportunity for regional development and economic prosperity for Aboriginal freehold land. After all, it was the LNP that drove the most significant review of Queensland's state land in more than a century. It is imperative that future economic development opportunities are provided to local communities and not just residents of the south-east.

I would also like clarification from the minister as to the need for any revocations to facilitate development of the Wangetti Trail between Cairns and Port Douglas. We have previously heard in this House how this important ecotourism project will contribute to the Far North Queensland economy. Earlier in the year I was privileged to see how ecotourism ventures like mountain biking and the Three Capes Track in Tasmania have completely redefined the local economies of previously struggling regional towns.

I, like all members on this side of the House, am keen to see such economic development opportunities proceed in a timely fashion. I call on the government to get on with the job of building the Wangetti Trail. All Queenslanders want to know that ecologically significant areas are conserved and they also want to see economic development opportunities proceed wherever possible. Ecotourism provides an additional bow to economies that have historically struggled or been reliant on a single industry. Surely both sides of politics can agree on that.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (4.21 pm): I rise to speak in support of the revocation motion. The Palaszczuk government is committed to returning lands to Aboriginal traditional owners and creating opportunities for economic development. We have an impressive record of achieving this on Cape York Peninsula, with over 3.7 million hectares of land returned to date.


These revocations form part of a broader proposal for the Apudthama, previously known as Thayanaku, land dealing located on the north-east coast of Cape York Peninsula in accordance with the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program. The Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program is working with traditional owners and other departments, including Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, to reach agreement on tenure outcomes for the Apudthama land tenure dealing area, which will include a benefits package to kickstart tourism enterprise development as well as employment opportunities for traditional owners associated with jointly managed national parks.

These revocations will enable the subsequent transfer of Aboriginal freehold land under the Aboriginal Land Act 1992 and the creation of national park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land) under the Nature Conservation Act 1992. The grant of Aboriginal freehold land to the traditional owners of this land will enable them to maintain cultural ties to the land and pursue economic opportunities in the Captain Billy Landing and Cockatoo Creek areas. This proposal will also correct the erroneous dedication of parts of the Southern Bypass Road as part of the resources reserve.

Consultation has occurred with the traditional owners of the lands concerned and with other relevant Aboriginal people, the Cape York Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, the Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation and other relevant stakeholders and government agencies, with all parties supporting these revocations.

The revocations from Heathlands Resources Reserve are further evidence that this government is upholding a long-term undertaking by successive Labor governments to return land to its traditional custodians. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Deputy Premier for her passion and dedication towards ensuring that our first nations people are able to gain economic opportunity, maintain cultural practices and reconnect to country that has been cared for by traditional owners for thousands of generations.


I would also like to thank Minister Enoch for facilitating this important piece of Apudthama land dealing. I am extremely proud of the achievements of this government in returning large areas of land to the traditional custodians on Cape York Peninsula, but I am also proud of the achievements of the Aboriginal landholding entities that are now working hard to establish businesses, including tourism and cattle grazing ventures, which are generating much needed income and jobs to support families and their communities. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (4.25 pm): I rise to speak very briefly in support of the revocation of the identified lots within the Tewanin National Park. As the minister outlined, these revocations are not done lightly nor without very good reasons. For Noosa, the first, being lots 100 to 103, is to ratify the alignment of the McKinnon Drive road reserve with the actual constructed road. The second, and most importantly for my constituents, is lots 10 to 12. This five hectares is essential to establish the long-awaited Tewanin bypass. I thank the minister and the department for ensuring this revocation was completed to avoid any delays in getting this bypass underway, which will address the historical congestion issues and dangerous intersection at the corner of Beckmans and Cooroy-Noosa roads. As members can imagine, this will be very welcomed and appreciated by our community as well as by the many, many visitors who come to Noosa every year.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.26 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determination made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136(3), that the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report on the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 8 November 2018.

MOTION**Order of Business**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.27 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, immediately after the completion of all stages of the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill, government business orders of the day Nos 2 to 9 be postponed.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**ELECTRICITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION (BATTERIES AND PREMIUM
FEED-IN TARIFF) AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Resumed from p. 2702, on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.27 pm): I rise to speak to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill with a sense of frustration that all of my constituents feel about electricity issues. As previous speakers have noted, the LNP is supporting this bill because to do otherwise would have severe financial consequences on the state of Queensland. The fact that these amendments are needed should show all Queenslanders, if they need to be shown, what a cobbled together muddle Labor has made of Queensland's electricity industry. Too often Labor policies have been driven by factional considerations rather than a clear-sighted view of what is actually needed in this vast state.

On 24 October 2017, Minister Bailey, the then energy minister, announced with great fanfare, '... the Palaszczuk government was investing \$40 million to remove barriers to regional Queenslanders switching retailers and to improve access to solar panels and household storage batteries.' All the people in my electorate probably rolled their eyes. They probably wanted to say, 'Hey, we are regional Queensland but we don't have a suite of retailers to switch to. The only one is Ergon.' They might have added that their use of solar panels is often curtailed by the poor state of local electricity grids so that Ergon is forced to refuse their application to install solar.

Like most regional Queenslanders, the people of my electorate are getting used to the contempt heaped on them by this government. We do not even recognise who they are talking about in their media releases. Here is another quote from Minister Bailey in 2017: '... give regional customers more choice and control over their energy bills which is good news for electricity bill savings in regional areas'. It was lucky that we were not waiting with bated breath for that, because it is only today that we see that when the minister said 'regional customers' he meant fewer than one per cent of us. There is no benefit for 99 per cent of us.

Let us consider the date of the ministerial statement that I just quoted—24 October 2017. I do not know if we could refer to this bill as having lapsed, because there has been a superficial change, so maybe it has not lapsed but it has certainly languished. It was introduced in June 2017 and sent for consideration to the former Public Works and Utilities Committee. The committee duly reported on 11 August 2017. The only recommendation was that the bill be passed.

This bill seeks to contain the financial damage of the previous Labor government's Solar Bonus Scheme. Despite the fact that it is a bill designed to plug a \$1 billion hole created by the former Labor government, it has languished all that time. Even with a potential saving to Queensland taxpayers of \$1 billion, the Palaszczuk government did not see this bill as a priority. It joined quite a lengthy list of lapsed bills when the parliament was dissolved the last time. Now we are seeing a new minister give it another go.

As we have said, the LNP will support this bill because we are a party of good financial governance. That brings me back to the Solar Bonus Scheme. When the former Labor government introduced the Solar Bonus Scheme in 2008, blind Freddy could see that there were problems. It committed Queensland taxpayers to paying a bonus payment to Solar Bonus Scheme participants until 2028. The bonus has since been described by the ACCC Chairman, Rod Sims, as excessively generous. This open-handed generosity was going to cost Queensland taxpayers billions all in the name of achieving a renewable energy target made up by the same government.


I am all for renewable energy, but the best way to develop it as part of Queensland's energy mix is not a scheme like the Solar Bonus Scheme. What the government could have been doing is working with regional industries to move our industry groups to their own solar generation. By now we could have made a significant impact for the mining industry, for irrigated farming and orchards, for feedlots and meat processors, and for the hospitality and tourism industries. We could have moved all our regional schools, hospitals and government facilities to solar. It would probably have been cheaper and it would have created a 21st century infrastructure that would have improved our productivity and international competitiveness.

We should also have seriously re-examined whether being on the national energy grid is the best energy solution for rural and remote Queenslanders across the great divide. We may have been able to do something about the cost of maintaining electricity SWERs in remote and extreme climates where the national energy grid is useless and a fantasy anyway. We get blackouts all the time on the Clermont-Alpha SWER. The hydropower sold by Tasmania into the national grid has as much real impact for us as an ashtray on a motorbike. Targeting consumers and users for solar power in these settings makes real sense in terms of security of supply—endless sunshine and savings in terms of energy grid maintenance.

For the Labor government, Queensland is just South-East Queensland. Our taxpayers have paid billions of dollars to put solar panels on suburban homes that already enjoy gold plated electricity infrastructure right outside their front door. As usual, it has not been the battlers who have enjoyed this generosity because they cannot afford the up-front investment. For renters and people in public housing, forget it; they do not get a look-in. Yet the cost of the scheme has increased everyone's electricity prices, even those who could not afford solar panels.

Although the LNP government closed the scheme to new entrants in 2012, it has been estimated that when the Solar Bonus Scheme finishes in 2028 it will cost taxpayers \$4.1 billion. Think of what we could have done with that money for Queensland. These amendments before us will save around \$1 billion, which is something but it is way too late. The amendments will prevent a further cost blowout by clarifying what Solar Bonus Scheme participants can install and still remain eligible for the scheme. Even these amendments reflect how poorly designed the original scheme was, how little it foresaw the rapid development of technology in solar panels and battery storage, and the sheer lack of vision in the ALP about how to best use renewable power in our vast state.

Every Queenslander knows that the Treasurer uses electricity consumers as a cash cow, creaming dollars off the top of their power bills and pouring it into a black hole of consolidated revenue. These dividends, which the Auditor-General puts at around \$583 million, are in fact a form of taxation and most Queenslanders understand that. They should also understand that it is the worst form of taxation because it drives up power costs, which affects households, businesses and prosperity right across Queensland. This bill will not solve the burden, but it will potentially decrease the cost to the Queensland taxpayer by \$1 billion, and so I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (4.34 pm): The Palaszczuk government has never been shy about its support for small businesses in this state. As the Minister for Small Business, I have personally spoken to hundreds of small business owners across urban, regional and remote Queensland. I know that for many of them energy and electricity is a critical issue. When you are running a small business, every bit of assistance that you can get helps and this bill seeks to do just that.

This bill aims to do three things: give clarity to the Solar Bonus Scheme; enable the effective implementation of the national regulatory framework for retail competition in embedded electricity networks; and allow residential and small businesses in regional Queensland to have the option to return to Ergon Retail. These proposed amendments will go a long way to ensuring that small businesses and households will be able to make the right choices for their electricity needs.

When the Solar Bonus Scheme was introduced in 2008, it was an ambitious but innovative policy and it was critical in encouraging Queenslanders to take advantage of our abundant sunshine as a source of energy. The LNP—ever the critics of environmentally responsible policies—pledged to tear this scheme apart. The member for Clayfield, the former treasurer and opposition leader, Tim Nicholls, called the people who took up the scheme champagne sippers and the latte set when most of the households that installed solar PVs were on middle and lower incomes and many of them are in my electorate.


Since it started, the scheme has helped over 280,000 Queensland small businesses and residents install solar PV systems and it has been instrumental in building our state's solar industry. Given that more efficient solar PVs and new energy technologies like batteries are now available with rapidly falling prices, we need to modernise. We know that customers want to take advantage of new technologies, but the ambiguity around how the scheme addresses this and the risk of losing their eligibility if they do so is making them reluctant to transition into more effective and efficient technologies, and the bill seeks to clarify this. It is important that we set the right conditions to encourage small businesses and households to install new solar PVs and batteries without the worry of losing their eligibility to the scheme.

The bill will give participants in the Solar Bonus Scheme the necessary confidence to invest in new technology, assured that they can continue to receive the tariff as long as they remain eligible. A new national regulatory framework for embedded electricity networks started in December last year. This means that small businesses on embedded networks are better able to choose their electricity products, services and providers. The proposed amendments enable the implementation of the framework in Queensland, giving our small businesses access to a wider and more competitive range of options for electricity supply. This means they can reduce operating costs and tailor the services they need according to their business.

Finally, this bill seeks to remove the non-reversion policy for regional households and small businesses, and remove the restriction on these customers from returning to Ergon Retail for their electricity. This change will give regional households and small businesses more choice when it comes to their electricity provider and give them the opportunity to reduce their energy costs.

All the proposed amendments provide tangible and effective opportunities for Queensland's small businesses and households to reduce their power costs. The bill complements other measures we have put in place to help small business understand and minimise their energy costs, such as the incredibly successful Business Energy Savers Program and the wonderful ecoBiz program that we run in partnership with the CCIQ.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to making energy more affordable for Queensland small businesses and this bill will help us do it. We want to give Queenslanders stability on energy but, more importantly, we want to give households and small businesses clarity around their options to reduce energy costs because this government values the role small businesses play as the engine room of our economy, as the engine room of employment and growth in local communities, and we want to do everything we can to assist them. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.38 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill. I note that one of the main areas of concern relates to the Solar Bonus Scheme which, like many Labor policies, was introduced without first carefully considering the longer term financial implications for the state's finances, which sadly seems to be a common failure.

In crafting the Solar Bonus Scheme, the Labor government came up with details that have been described by the ACCC Chairman, Rod Sims, as 'excessively generous'. Without this amending legislation to clarify the ambiguity in this scheme as it relates to the additional generation systems and electricity storage devices, the opportunity exists for this scheme to be exploited even further.

The Solar Bonus Scheme was closed to new entrants by the LNP in 2012 to reduce electricity prices as well as to contain what was projected to be a major cost blowout of epic proportions. Even so, it has been estimated that the scheme will still end up costing \$4.1 billion from its introduction in 2008 until 2028. Without these amendments, DEWS estimates the cost blowout may be more than

a billion dollars. The bill addresses the ambiguity surrounding the scheme but also sets clear boundaries for what is permissible and seeks to contain the cost impacts that would otherwise become prohibitive.

I welcome the amendments that remove the non-reversion policy for residential and small customers, thereby giving them the option of returning to Ergon Retail. That is a particularly important matter for my electorate given that everyone in my electorate has no other choice but to be connected with Ergon or, if they are lucky enough, to be on New South Wales power, probably Country Energy. Ergon is the government owned retailer. I note that this is not consistent with the policy change announced by Labor just prior to the last election.


The Queensland government introduced the non-reversion policy some 10 years ago to encourage retail competition by preventing customers in regional Queensland who switched to another retailer from returning to the non-competing government owned retailer Ergon Energy. Because this policy applies to properties, new occupants are unable to be Ergon Retail customers if the previous occupant switched to a private retailer. This has caused some real heartache for some businesses in my electorate as have the regulatory arrangements for competition in the embedded networks.

I want to tell the House a story about a McDonald's restaurant. A McDonald's restaurant opened their doors in my electorate. That is particularly important because they employed about 80 staff in that community, most of them young residents. McDonald's is well recognised for the global training opportunities it provides its young people and it is keen to deliver that tradition locally. Two months after opening the restaurant, the licensees received their electricity bills that were double those received by the neighbouring McDonald's restaurants in Dalby and Roma. The invoices were in excess of \$18,000 per month.

Discussions with the electricity provider revealed that during the building phase the project manager had signed the retail contract with TRUenergy, which are now known as EnergyAustralia. The project manager was unaware of the options available and at this stage of the development the licensees are not usually consulted; they had taken on a franchise of a McDonald's restaurant not knowing, unfortunately, who the electricity was being provided by. Had the site's retail supply been assigned to Ergon Energy, that McDonald's restaurant would have been entitled to a subsidy that would have reduced the electricity bill to close to \$10,000 per month, the amount being paid by the neighbouring restaurants in places like Dalby and Roma. The impact of the situation was that \$10,000 per month from this small business's training and staff development costs was being used to cover unnecessary electricity costs.

I have another example as well in relation to a local butcher shop. This example is that of Country Meats in Roma, which leased a premises, an industrial unit, in Raglan Street in Roma, for storage. The previous lessees had the power connected with Powerdirect, the only alternate electricity supplier in the Roma area. When Queensland Country Meats requested that Ergon connect the power to the premises, they advised that business they were prevented by the Queensland legislation from changing the account to Ergon. As a result, Queensland Country Meats had to pay \$3,800-plus every month for the electricity. That business could not support the additional expenses of having this company as their electricity supplier.

These are two examples that occurred prior to this legislation being brought to the parliament. These businesses would certainly appreciate confirmation that they will now be able to revert back to Ergon Energy as their electricity provider given these changes to the legislation. I hope the minister will be able to outline this in his summing-up. The explanatory notes say that there have been mixed results in terms of increasing retail competition in regional Queensland. I would go as far as to say that it has created some significant hardship and probably some disastrous results for businesses. I look forward to the minister's clarification for those two particular businesses.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill before the House. I would like to turn to a number of issues mentioned in the debate on the bill before the House. In particular, I would like to turn to the issue of the non-reversion policy. It seems that those opposite are a bit confused about the scale of the non-reversion policy. In particular, I had the misfortune of having to listen to the 30 minutes of rambling from the member for Burleigh. In his contribution he referred to his concern that the non-reversion policy applied only to small businesses and residential customers. Of course, the member for Burleigh should be more concerned about his position being out of step with his very own party on this issue.

While I understand the problems some large businesses face in the retail market, the drivers for removing the non-reversion policy are not as strong in the large customer market as they are for small customers. While only one per cent of regional small customers are with retailers other than Ergon

Energy Queensland, 50 per cent of the large customers in the Ergon Energy Queensland east zone have moved away from the government owned retailer. This is why we do not need to remove the non-reversion policy for large customers.

The member for Burleigh has been in the media stating that the government was breaching an election commitment by not applying the non-reversion policy to large businesses. That is out and out wrong. The only thing that is being breached here is the member for Burleigh's ability to tell the truth. The department representative at the hearing made it quite clear that it was always in the Affordable Energy Plan that this reform would apply only to small customers. I table a copy for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, from the Department of Energy and Water Supply, titled 'Affordable Energy Plan' [1420].

Indeed, the ministerial statement made in the House on 24 October last year by the former treasurer and member for Mulgrave explicitly stated—

The government recognises the desire of regional customers to have more choice of electricity retailers. To give them more choice, the Palaszczuk government is also removing what is known as the non-reversion policy that currently exists for households and small business that are Ergon's customers.

I table a copy of that ministerial statement as well. In addition, a media release from 25 October, which I also table for the benefit of the House, explicitly states that—

Getting rid of the non-reversion policy will remove the restriction on Bundaberg customers who would like to return to Ergon Energy, giving households and small businesses choice and control over their power bills.

Tabled paper: Extract from the Queensland Parliament Record of Proceedings of 24 October 2017 [1422].

Tabled paper: Media release, undated, by the former minister for main roads, road safety and ports and former minister for energy, biofuels and water supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'Choice and bill relief for Bundaberg power customers' [1421].

Quite clearly, what those opposite have been stating in the House is tantamount to misleading this House. I do not intend to say much more other than—

Mr Hart: If you feel like that write to the Speaker. Write to the Speaker; go ahead.

Mr RYAN: Just wait. I do not intend to say much more except to ask that those opposite pay a little bit more attention and do your research, otherwise you will be stuck on those benches forever. In respect of the Solar Bonus Scheme—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Order!

Mr Hart: You don't understand your own policy.

Mr RYAN: You do not. You are out of step with your own policy. That is the hilarity of it all. No wonder you ran away last week.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask that all comments come through the chair.

Mr RYAN: The Solar Bonus Scheme allowed for the solar industry to be established and grow at a time when the technology was new and costs were high. Thanks to this initiative, we now have a mature market with a commercial product that has delivered billions of dollars in private investment that supports thousands of jobs. Out of all the Australian states, we have the most installed solar capacity and the highest employment in the small-scale solar industry. A system goes in every 15 minutes in Queensland and Queensland is a world leader in solar installs.

A large proportion of the ongoing costs of the program came as a result of additional uptake that occurred during the two weeks between when the Newman government announced the closure of the program to new entrants and when they closed it. The action resulted in over 93,000 new customers joining the program during that period, adding approximately \$2 billion to the overall cost of the scheme.

Other points raised in the consultation and debate on the Solar Bonus Scheme amendments relate to the oversizing prohibition. The government understands that oversizing is becoming a more common practice in new solar installations to overcome issues such as degradation. Like most products, PV panels experience normal wear and tear with use. The output of PV panels reduces over time, however, scientific studies have demonstrated that only small amounts of loss occur.


While the restrictions in the bill allow customers to replace components with like for like, they prevent customers who wish to go beyond this and boost their solar exports. I understand that information has been provided to the industry on how repairs with like for like will apply in the event that only larger panels are available. This approach was consulted on and agreed with by Master Electricians Australia. Oversizing will also be monitored by the distribution business. This is necessary to contain scheme costs while remaining consistent with the original intent of the Solar Bonus Scheme.

Because of my obligations under the standing orders, and to avoid any doubt, I note that, like many hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders, I am a participant in the Solar Bonus Scheme and have been for almost 10 years now.

With regard to embedded networks, most of the issues raised relate to the National Electricity Rules change which commenced on 1 December 2017 rather than the substantive provisions in the bill. I am advised that, under the new rule, embedded network customers will have the ability to shop around and compare what they currently pay for the usage component, or cents-per-kilowatt-hour charge, against a retailer's energy-only offer.

Network charges will continue to be billed by the embedded network owner, so a customer may receive two bills: one from their retailer for the usage component and one from their embedded network owner for the fixed charge. Alternatively, the embedded network owner and retailer may enter into an arrangement whereby the customer receives a combined bill from the retailer. For embedded network customers, aligning state laws with the new National Electricity Rules will provide residential and commercial embedded network customers who reside in the 2,200 embedded networks across the state with the opportunity to choose the offer that suits them best.

I take this opportunity to commend the current minister and the previous minister, the now Minister for Transport and Main Roads, for their contribution towards developing a sustainable, affordable electricity market here in Queensland that is delivering real results. We are seeing electricity bills right across the state coming down, and that is a tribute not only to our leadership but also to the support that our government provides to reduce the cost-of-living impacts on Queenslanders. This is a great bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (4.52 pm): I rise to speak to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. Being the member for Mirani, my regional and rural constituents are especially hurting from rising electricity bills. First and foremost, the removal of the non-reversion policy is a positive inclusion in this amendment bill. I commend the members of the public who contacted the Queensland Productivity Commission during its electricity pricing inquiry, which concluded that regional retail competition was not being improved by permanently removing the choice for consumers to return to Ergon Retail. Indeed, it is an indictment on National Competition Policy that, 20 years down the track, part of the solution to ridiculously high open market prices is a return to regulated prices. I strongly suspect that a major component of why electricity prices have risen has been indecent profit-taking by energy retailers, network and transmission providers, and the generators.

As for the specifics of regional Queensland, this electricity market has remained regulated for the entire period and has not been immune from economically destructive electricity price rises dating back to 1998. I most certainly encourage the Queensland government to ensure that the regulated pricing regime now administered by Energy Queensland will reflect the absolute—and I mean the absolute—best possible price for all electricity consumers across Queensland. Whilst the title of this amendment bill speaks of batteries and solar feed-in, I would point out that the fundamental structure of Ergon's regulated tariff remains problematic for regional retail electricity consumers, especially small and medium sized businesses that are lumped with demand based tariffs or who have an annual consumption exceeding 100 megawatt hours.

Another group of electricity consumers who are heavily penalised are the sugarcane farmers in my electorate, who obviously irrigate their crops for long hours during the height of the growing season. Being able to irrigate crops with cost-effective water will ensure that the billion dollar agricultural sector and the many thousands who rely indirectly on that industry have a future. Yesterday I had a phone call from a local grazier in relation to the molasses situation because it has all dried up. When I rang the person who distributes bulk molasses in my area, he said that the cane is not yielding the molasses it should. The reason is we have dams that are at 96 per cent capacity, but the farmers will not even use power to put the water on. My father has even seen it. He has cut cane since he was 11 years old, and he has seen sticks of cane falling dead straight down. I thought pigs had eaten it, but it is dying because there is no water because farmers will not pay the cost. This is the flow-on effect. If there is no molasses, people are worried about where they will get food for their cattle. It is shocking.

Incredibly, the canefarmers in my electorate are paying upwards of 51 cents per kilowatt hour from 7 am right through the day. This is at the very time of day that Queensland has plenty of generation capacity, and the extraordinary growth in rooftop and utility-scale solar adds vast amounts of extra capacity. Furthermore, it is rather absurd that Ergon's off-peak power on their T31 and T33 tariffs is

now being made available for just 19 cents per kilowatt hour, inclusive of the evening peak period, seemingly every day. How can it be that they charged 51 cents and 19 cents at the very same time of day?


Perhaps those who have a spa or backyard pool think they are somewhat fortunate, but what is unfolding is the destruction of numerous businesses across Queensland because of unaffordable electricity costs. I challenge the present state government to immediately address the seemingly illogical differences between various retail tariffs and revisit demand-based tariffs that will become mandatory from 30 June 2020. The fact is that underlying wholesale energy costs are increasingly pushed into negative territory in the midst of sunny Queensland days. Hence, it makes no sense to have so much generating capacity underutilised, while at the other end forcing consumers to use less power and still require them to pay for the network infrastructure in between.

In fact, the energy policy in Queensland is so utterly twisted that a solid number of small and medium sized businesses and numerous rural landholders across my electorate are strongly considering installing solar. The reality is that the energy tariff structure and technical red tape remain problematic, and the results are leaving a very bad taste. From a personal perspective, it is disheartening to see multinational firms installing giant solar farms and benefiting greatly from the rush to secure green subsidies that will be paid for by Queensland electricity consumers for the next decade or more.

It must be noted that the legacy of the 44-cent Solar Bonus Scheme has created some complications and triggered many years of polarising debate. However, in light of the many gigawatts of large-scale, mostly foreign owned solar being built in this state, why must this legislation be so jackbooted towards a group of Queensland residents who signed an energy contract? Many of the earlier adopters spent \$20,000 or \$30,000 on then modest rooftop solar systems. The analogy was that the premium tariff would cause the cost of solar PV systems to come down, which undeniably has occurred.

The key point is that these early adopters signed contracts based on the maximum output of their grid feed inverter, and they will now face constraints on the number of additional solar panels to make the best use of their existing inverter's spare capacity. I can totally accept that the intent was to prevent profit-taking by fitting battery storage and other measures to exploit the generous 44-cent feed-in tariff for excess power generated, but I believe that this amendment bill has it wrong by preventing those consumers who are still eligible for the premium solar feed-in tariff from being able to overpopulate their own roof space with up to the CEC's 133 per cent limit for granting small-scale energy certificates.

To conclude, the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill only serves to address a narrow range of problems affecting the direction of energy policy in this state. I sincerely urge the parliament to do much more in the interests of getting electricity prices down.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.59 pm): In speaking to this legislation I want to put on the record some questions that constituents have raised with me on aspects which still are not clear enough, from the answers provided during the committee process or in the parliament. If downward pressure is to be put on power prices, for businesses supplying people in the market to lower their power prices, it is vitally important for there to be clarity.

This is vitally important for one of the small businesses in my electorate involved in providing solar systems that feed into the network. I want to read a letter into the record, because it illustrates the problem of a lack of clarity and why there are still concerns on the part of electricians and solar installers with regard to this legislation. One of my constituents wrote—

I do not support the proposal to limit PV capacity to the inverter ac output rating, due to the following reasons.

1. Due to unavoidable system losses, there is approximately 30% loss in a system from PV nameplate rating to inverter a.c. output.
2. 2.1.3 Degradation of Solar Panels:

It is not actually possible to obtain 'like for like' replacement PV modules at the same power rating as a few years ago, new PV modules have up to 30% more output (for same size / configuration for PV cells / module), e.g. new 125mm cell 72 cell modules are now around 200 to 215W, where the same 125mm cell 72 cell modules used to be 160 to 165W when I entered the industry with the 44c feed in tariff.

3. In the example where a 165W PV module on a string inverter (which was the technology employed at the time of 44c feed in tariff) is replaced with a 215W PV module of same size cell configuration, the 215W panel will only pass the same amount of current as the worst performing PV module in the series string, effectively making it only as good as the worst 165W module in that string.

To retain 'the intent' of the Solar Bonus 44c feed in tariff I believe that sizing limits should apply under the following arrangements:

a customer should be able to add PV capacity up to the inverter manufacturers recommended maximum PV input Power, or 130% PV to inverter rating, whichever is the lesser.

In any case, a consumer should be able to operate within the rules that were in force at the time they invested in the system.

I wanted to read that into the record because the government has said that there will be a pragmatic approach taken to this issue, that there is not 'like for like' in replacing a failed or damaged system. Clearly, there are no guidelines as to what the government means by that. It is not in the legislation. There is still a failure to provide clarity to businesses and those who are seeking to purchase or fix systems by putting these new modules in place.

I call on the minister to do more than just say that there will be a pragmatic approach taken. He should give us the guidelines and give us certainty so that people can invest and know that, if they are fixing a system in this way, they will not get pinged because they have lost their ability, due to this legislation, to access what they could previously access—that is, the feed-in tariff.

I acknowledge that probably about half of my electorate, if not more, benefited from the solar feed-in bonus when it was announced, including me. When it was announced it was extremely popular. The program was oversubscribed and take-up continued such that it cost a lot more than the government originally thought it would. We acknowledge that, and when the LNP came to government there was a move to put some limits on the scheme. This is another attempt to do that. As I outlined, we must ensure that those who have a system that needs to be fixed will not get pinged by the fact that they cannot buy like for like. I ask the minister to address the issue with greater clarity to provide certainty to my constituents and my local businesses. That would be very much appreciated.

The partial removal of the non-reversion policy by this government is a step in the right direction but it still represents a broken promise by this government, which originally said that it would remove the non-reversion policy. It has not done that. That is a broken promise. People who do not have large businesses are still caught by this non-reversion policy in parts of the state where they are not allowed to go back to their previous energy provider to get a more competitive deal.


While this legislation, as I understand it, is allowing a non-reversion policy for those who have up to 100 megawatt hours per year, there are still a lot of people in a lot of businesses that are not able to access the competition they should be able to access in the marketplace. There are a lot of corner stores that are running a lot of refrigeration units that will not be able to access this non-reversion policy as it is presented here in the House.

I want to touch on the issue of embedded networks. It is a mess, and this legislation still does not fix the issue. It has been said by my colleagues in this place that, due to its complexity, this issue still is not fully resolved. In fact, this legislation may make the situation a little more confusing, even though I know that the intention is to provide people with options, to find a way of being individually metred or take advantage of competition. This issue is really quite complex.

In my own area there are a lot of mixed-use developments. There could be residential and commercial customers on the same embedded network. When I was in Cairns recently I met with a number of people who told me about their problems with their embedded network. When they bought into this place they had no idea that they were copping this system. I think this is a real issue for people buying off the plan or buying into an existing complex. They may not realise how they can get caught and find themselves in a very difficult situation.

I appreciate the minister providing some clarity in relation to this example. This unit complex, which has some commercial users as well, has an embedded network that is in excess of 100 megawatt hours. Will the members of that complex, which is an embedded network that is over that threshold, be able to avail themselves of these separate bills under this legislation? That is a very messy situation. We need to understand whether they, as part of a large complex that has over 100 megawatt hours, are able to access the provisions of this legislation.

Every measure possible must be taken to put downward pressure on electricity prices. We have been critical that Queenslanders are paying too much for their electricity. This can be traced back to the poor investment choices made by Labor a decade ago, whereby overinvestment in the network means we are still paying for this gross miscalculation into the future. These are policy issues that impact people and their ability to pay to keep the lights on or to pay to employ that extra person in their business. We still have not seen the policy with regard to businesses that fall over these thresholds. There are still people in this state who are finding it hard to keep the lights on.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.09 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. Here we are yet again. The LNP opposition and the parliament are once again being asked to support legislation to rectify the mess of Labor's own making. Not too long ago we sat in this House and we were called upon by Labor to support yet more legislation to clean up the mess made by Labor's handling of the circumstances surrounding Ipswich City Council and the issues caused by Labor's Ipswich city councillors, and that was a stain of corruption which is a stain on the Labor Party itself.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Dr ROWAN: Back then it was local government; now it is electricity and green schemes. I hear the member for Miller interjecting. Whilst he has been cleared by the CCC, I would say that some of his dubious practices in relation to his backchannel email communications when it comes to mangocube are very dubious.

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order. The member is straying well off the bill and I ask him to come back and address the bill instead of personal attacks on me.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Thank you for your advice, member. I ask that you return to the long title of the bill.

Dr ROWAN: Those opposite do not like hearing that, but who knows? With any luck the next sitting of parliament may be an opportunity to clean up Labor's transport and traffic congestion mess, which the member for Miller is leading, or even hospital wait times, access block or ambulance ramping.

The LNP will not oppose the bill before us today. Having said that, there are a number of issues that must be made clear and placed on the record before Labor can congratulate itself. I want to draw to the attention of the House the ham-fisted process that this bill has gone through. As my colleague and my good friend the member for Condamine highlighted in the Liberal National Party's statement of reservation to the parliamentary committee report—

... there were no public hearings offered to submitters to appear before the committee due to the very short timeframe to finalise the report.

That is right. Instead, all the committee was afforded was a public briefing from the department and a written response to submissions by the department. There was no opportunity for the committee to perform one of its central and most basic functions, and that is being able to ask questions of those who took the time and effort to make submissions. Further, it is worth noting that an earlier incarnation of this bill was introduced in June last year during the 55th Parliament. With the then committee issuing its report in August, the bill sat idle on the *Notice Paper* right up until it lapsed due to the 55th Parliament being dissolved.

What we do know is that with the bill now before us these amendments being processed today seek to address, amongst other things, one of Labor's most substantial public policy failures and financial burdens—the Solar Bonus Scheme. True to form, the Solar Bonus Scheme had all the hallmarks of a true Queensland Labor policy—that is, announce a brand-new policy or scheme, bask in the publicity but deal with the consequences and substantial financial burden later.

Announced with great fanfare in 2008, the Solar Bonus Scheme was introduced without detailed consideration into how new solar PV systems and storage devices would impact the scheme over subsequent years. With a solar feed-in tariff of 44 cents, it was a scheme that was later described by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Chairman, Rod Sims, as excessively generous, and that is putting it nicely.

By 2012, as the true financial burden that this scheme would have on Queensland became clear, the Liberal National Party closed the scheme to new entrants in order to reduce electricity prices and contain what was projected to be a truly substantial cost blowout. Even with the measures and strong action undertaken by the Liberal National Party, it is estimated that this scheme will still end up costing Queensland more than \$4 billion by 2028. Over \$4 billion is one almighty price to pay for a Labor photo opportunity and to keep the Greens on side and have shady Labor-Greens preference deals implemented come election time.

That being said, at least with the passing of these changes today we can save the Queensland economy from a further estimated blowout of over \$1 billion. If there is one thing Labor and the Greens have in common, it is reckless financial management. Labor's Solar Bonus Scheme has pushed up electricity costs. It is a sad state of affairs that in this country Queenslanders—hardworking families, seniors and pensioners, small business owners—pay more than any other state for green schemes and Labor's failures, and that is certainly the case for residents in the electorate of Moggill.

This Palaszczuk Labor government continues to fail my constituents in the electorate of Moggill on electricity prices, cost of living, traffic congestion, planning legislation and school infrastructure. However, I am pleased that this bill does at least give adequate regard to the rights of individuals by clarifying how customers can invest in new technology without affecting their solar bonus eligibility and establishing clear boundaries as to what is permissible.


The proposals today are a start in addressing the many inadequacies of Labor's electricity policies and financial imposts, but there is still more to be done. At a time when Queenslanders are genuinely hurting from the ever-rising cost of living and electricity prices, thanks in no part to Labor's locked-in gold plating of the electricity network, it is imperative that more is done to reform the electricity market. We on this side of the House in the Liberal National Party have already begun with the announcement of our plans for a more competitive electricity market by restructuring our government owned power generators from two to three entities as well as our plan to introduce retail competition in the regional electricity market.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I hear the minister still interjecting over there. He does not like hearing that. He does not like hearing the fact that Labor's electricity policies have failed Queenslanders. There are higher prices for residents in the electorate of Moggill, for residents in his electorate of Miller and right across Queensland. Those opposite do not like hearing the truth when it comes to these things. They are driving up electricity costs and prices for not only consumers but also businesses. They are putting industry at risk here in Queensland and it is simply not good enough.

This Palaszczuk Labor government has no plans to drive down electricity costs; no plans for infrastructure, let alone in the western suburbs of Brisbane; and no plan to reduce the cost of living. It is driving up higher unemployment and higher debt when it comes to Queensland—up to \$83 billion by 2021-22. It is not good enough for Queenslanders. It is certainly not good enough for my residents in the electorate of Moggill and right across the western suburbs of Brisbane. This is only just the beginning and we know that so much more needs to be done to rectify the hurt caused by this Labor government's electricity policies and green schemes failing.

Finally, whilst renewable energy is an important part of our energy mix, we must also continue to support our traditional energy sources to deliver baseload power generation and, as such, ensure electricity in Queensland is both reliable and affordable. That is very important for my constituents in Moggill. It is very important for all residents across the western suburbs of Brisbane, but it is also vitally important for Queensland's economy.

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (5.17 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. As my colleagues before me have said, the LNP will support the amendments contained in this bill as we want to protect the state from further cost blowouts and ensure areas of doubt within the Solar Bonus Scheme are addressed.

One of the proposed changes in the bill will at least assist those living in regional Queensland—and it is nice to see them finally getting a little attention—but this could have come sooner for them. As a result of the amendments proposed in this bill, both residential and small business customers will have an option to return to Ergon Retail if the located property has switched to a private retailer.

There is yet again a deep sense of frustration and disappointment on this side of the House that the amendments contained in this bill are being made to once again bail Labor out of the mess it made with the energy policy in this state. The original bill was introduced in June 2017 and the committee reported on it in August of that year. However, that bill, which would have saved the government over \$1 billion and provided some relief to regional Queensland, sat idle on the *Notice Paper* until parliament was dissolved in October 2017. Queenslanders are quickly working out why this state is pushing almost \$83 billion in debt when sensible cost-cutting measures like these go begging, or, in this case, simply get pushed into the long grass.

Whilst the LNP supports this bill, we should reflect on how the Palaszczuk Labor government invests in itself and not the people of Queensland. One of the submissions received by the committee was from a Brisbane based company, TradeCoast Central, in which it specifically discussed the deletion of section 23(2) of the Electricity Act which, it notes, was introduced into the act in 2006 when the Queensland Labor government privatised Sun Retail, the retail business of Energex, which the government sold off to Origin Energy for \$1.2 billion. How can we forget Powerdirect, which was formerly owned by Ergon Energy, but also sold off by Labor—

An opposition member: Simmo didn't like that.

Mrs WILSON: No—to AGL for a further \$1.2 billion.

Mr Boothman: Labor sold assets?

Mrs WILSON: I take that interjection. It did. Which is the party that is selling Queensland's assets? It is the Labor Party. It is the Labor government that has a history of selling assets. It likes to pretend that this never happened.

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am having trouble hearing the speaker above the interjections from the opposition.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Thank you, Minister. Continue please.

Mrs WILSON: The members opposite like to pretend that this never happened, but we on this side will not let them forget. In its submission TradeCoast Central noted—

At the time it was identified that significant issues arose regarding retail access to embedded networks, being situations where the customer was not directly connected to the local distributor's network (i.e. Ergon or Energex).

...

As this Bill incorporates the removal of Section 23(2), it is necessary to assess whether the initial reasons for its introduction have been addressed, prior to its removal.

In regard to this matter, I would be interested to hear a further explanation from the minister. As we are debating a bill that is all about energy supply, consumption and tariffs, let us spare a thought for the Queenslanders who are doing it tough in making ends meet with their household budgets. I ask members to spare a thought for those who, in the lead-up to receiving their next energy bill, start stressing out about how they will pay for it. I want to touch on this issue, because how our energy is supplied and the cost of supply impacts on all of us.

We all need to pay for our utility usage—that is a given—but to have a government continually pile new tax after new tax onto already struggling households is simply unforgivable. Where possible, the government should be making life better for people, not hurting them. This is all we have had from this Labor government. It is hitting people where it hurts the most—their everyday cost of living. Under the Labor Palaszczuk government, that will only get worse.

A strong government is underpinned by values that support all people to have a better life. It is the LNP's belief in personal freedom, the strength of the family, the worth of the individual, our commitment to lower taxes and fiscal responsibility, reward for effort and a sustainable environment that will shape Queensland for the better—

Dr LYNHAM: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is straying well away from the bill.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can the member return to the long title of the bill?

Mrs WILSON: This will shape Queensland for a better way forward. At a time when every dollar counts in the family budget, real action is needed by this Labor government to lower electricity bills and stop using hardworking Queenslanders as its cash cow.

Dr LYNHAM: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It appears that the member has taken no heed of your warning.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Member, I remind you to return to the long title of the bill.

Mrs WILSON: Madam Speaker, I mentioned electricity prices. It is the LNP and only the LNP that has a real plan to lower electricity bills for Queensland families. It is high time the Premier swallowed her pride and adopted the LNP's policy so that Queenslanders can get the relief they deserve.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.24 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. I would like to make some general observations about this bill from the point of view of the LNP. The LNP members support the amendments contained in the bill, but we stress that it is only on the basis that the bill will help protect the state from further cost blowouts by addressing areas of ambiguity within the Solar Bonus Scheme and giving certainty to scheme customers who may wish to install new or additional generation storage technology.

When the Solar Bonus Scheme was introduced in 2008, we expressed our concern that it was done so without a full appreciation of the long-term financial consequences it would mean for the state and the subsequent economic impact that the new solar photovoltaic systems and storage devices

would have on the scheme over the years. The LNP members are of the view that, by clarifying how customers can invest in new technology without affecting their Solar Bonus Scheme eligibility and by setting clear boundaries around what is permissible, the bill gives sufficient regard to the rights of individuals. It also preserves the rights of individuals who have already made investments to upgrade their systems and that is a good thing.

The LNP members welcome the amendments that will remove the non-reversion policy for residential and small customers, thereby giving them the option of returning to Ergon Retail—the government owned retailer—but we note that this is not consistent with the policy change announced by Labor just prior to the last election. I will talk about the non-reversion policy and matters relating to electricity pricing in my own electorate of Southern Downs later in my speech.

The LNP members note that amendments to the Queensland legislation are required in order to remove barriers that prevent competition for embedded network customers and avoid conflict with the implementation of this major national reform in Queensland. We also note that the bill will create additional costs and administrative burdens on the owners of embedded networks. In that regard, we suggest that the government should have listened to stakeholders' concerns.

In common with many other bills, this bill was pushed through the committee stage quite quickly. There was no public hearing, which I think is very remiss considering the monumental impact that electricity policy has on everybody in this state—the families, the individuals, the pensioners, the small businesses, the farmers—

Mr Costigan: The little people.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Whitsunday. Electricity policy has an input into every aspect of our lives. The fact that the committee did not hold a public hearing on this bill is disappointing. Considering that this report has been available for quite some time before this second reading debate, it begs the question as to why there was the need to avoid a public hearing. It cannot be that, because the bill was so urgent, it had to be rushed through the committee stage. I will leave the House and the wider audience who is watching me make this speech consider that point.

Government members interjected.

Mr LISTER: I can hear the interjections from members to my left. I wonder if they have ever been to Goondiwindi, Texas, Inglewood, Wallangarra, Toobeah, Bungunya, Weengallon, or to any of those other places in my electorate that are located along the Queensland-New South Wales border where the electricity is supplied by New South Wales.

When I hear government members talk in glowing terms about how this bill is going to make an improvement for all Queenslanders, I am here as proof positive to say that that is not true. People living in those areas, such as my constituents who run the pub at Talwood, or at Toobeah, or the sawmill at Inglewood, which is a big employer in my electorate, are paying way too much for electricity compared to their competitors elsewhere. It is a perverse incentive. It encourages businesses to leave the area. The Texas Motel and residents in the border town of Wallangarra, who recently approached me—

Mr Costigan: Billy Moore country.

Mr LISTER: Yes, I take the interjection from my honourable friend the member for Whitsunday—Billy Moore country.

Ordinary people, small business operators and larger business operators are tied to the New South Wales system. They do receive a token contribution from the state, supposedly to equalise their electricity bills, but they do not have the opportunity to revert to Ergon, they do not have the opportunity to avail themselves of the vital competition that will enable them to get a better deal on their electricity price.

As a result the ground on which they stand is cut away from Queensland, it is cut away from the interests of this government. Obviously if a person lives in Wallangarra, Texas, Inglewood, Goondiwindi, Bungunya, Weengallon, Toobeah or one of those areas they do not count in the eyes of this Labor state government. This Labor state government is happy for them to continue to pay extraordinarily high energy costs, which is having a depressive effect on industry in those areas and jobs and also on the mums and dads, the pensioners and the singles who have to pay for their air conditioning and who have to pay to pump water. What about the farmers in those areas who have to pump water for irrigation?

Mr Costigan: They are paying through the nose.


Mr LISTER: I take that interjection. They are paying through the nose. We are already facing the possibility—it looks like the certainty—that this government will walk away from the special irrigation tariffs for those who have to pump water to produce food and fibre for the good of this country. The government's protestations that it is focused on development and growing the economy in Queensland are soft soap, they are flannel, they are press release material as they get on with the business of doing their union deals.

My honourable friend the member for Burleigh and other speakers spoke about how electricity policy in this state over long years has been used by the Labor Party as a secret tax. They load debt onto the generators and the poles and wires so they hide it from the state's bottom line. Then they have to charge more for electricity in order to be able to provide the extraordinary dividends that the government has demanded over long years. That is the secret tax that my colleagues have been talking about today.

My honourable friend the member for Pumicestone made a very revealing statement about the company which made a submission talking about the sale of the electricity interests, again by the Labor Party. It shows this suggestion that the Labor Party is the party of public ownership to be a complete sham. They have sold themselves into all shame when it comes to public assets.

I stress again that I have been in correspondence with the minister. I thank the minister for the courtesy and the promptness of his replies. I always enjoy his letters and some banter in the corridor with him, but so far he has not been able to address the concerns that I and the residents of Southern Downs have concerning their access to cheap reliable power. They are paying way above the odds.

When one lives that close to the Queensland border one would think that you would want everything on your side. You would think that this state would say, 'You're living on the frontier. We will make sure that you are not disadvantaged', but that is exactly what is not happening. We have consumers who have been living for far too long with way too high electricity prices. I emphasise that has a massive depressive effect on the economy, on jobs, on business investment and on production along the border with New South Wales, which is a very large part of my electorate. Other than that, the LNP does support the bill. I commend it to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (5.32 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to make a brief contribution to the Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2018. We have heard contributions from our shadow minister, the member for Burleigh, and from the members for Southern Downs and Pumicestone. Just after lunch we had debate on the committee report of the Queensland Audit Office report. There is no doubt that profits for the energy sector have increased significantly. I table an article from the *Courier-Mail* of 27 April 2018.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 27 April 2018, titled 'How the State Government profits from household power bills' [[1423](#)].

For anyone who is questioning the relevance of this contribution I point to the introductory speech at page 116 of *Hansard* in February when the minister said the bill was about a program to give consumers more opportunities to understand and take control of their electricity use and costs. It is pretty obvious that a lot of Queenslanders who do not understand why their bills are increasing would like to understand what has been happening. This *Courier-Mail* article states—

More than a quarter of the average household power bill is going to the Queensland Government in profits on state-owned networks charges

The article continues—

Analysis by electricity sector consultant Hugh Grant says that the profit margin on charges by Energex, Ergon and powerline over the past three years have averaged 47 per cent.

The constituents of Surfers Paradise, amongst others in this state, are paying the price with the skyrocketing cost of living. Having run a dental surgery in Surfers Paradise as a small business owner, my wife Stacey and I are always looking for ways to try to make sure that our electricity costs are being managed. Retailers finally have started to offer some discounts on usage charges for households, but it is very confusing for a lot of consumers. It is bringing bills down but not as much as we would like it to.

This bill is a reflection of the fact that amendments are required to bail Labor out of the mess that it has created when it comes to energy in this state. Gold Coasters are frustrated. Around the state there are many Queenslanders who are struggling with the cost of living. There are issues with people in caravan parks and shopping centres who felt they were being gouged. I want to make sure that those concerns are heard. With that I conclude my contribution.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Members, under the provisions of the resolution agreed to by the House on 18 September 2018, the time allocated for consideration of the bill has expired. The question is—

That the bill be now read a second time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I note that the minister's amendments Nos 1 and 2 are outside the long title of the bill and therefore require leave of the House. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is—

That the minister's amendments Nos 1 and 2, as circulated, be agreed to and clauses 1 to 13, as amended, stand part of the bill.

Amendments as circulated—

1 Clause 13 (Amendment of schedule (Modification of application of National Energy Retail Law))

Page 10, after line 11—

insert—

(3) Schedule, section 15, inserted section 22A(3)(b), '89B'—

omit, insert—

89E

(4) Schedule, section 15, inserted section 22A(4), '2'—

omit, insert—

4

2 After clause 13

Page 10, after line 11—

insert—

Part 5 Amendment of Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016

14 Act amended

This part amends the *Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016*.

15 Amendment of s 41 (Purpose of part)

Section 41, 'priority development'—

omit.

16 Amendment of s 42 (Interpretation for part)

Section 42(1)—

insert—

Queen's Wharf area means—

(a) the Queen's Wharf priority development area; or

(b) PDA-associated land under the *Economic Development Act 2012*, schedule 1 for the Queen's Wharf priority development area.

17 Amendment of s 43 (Declaration)

Section 43(1), 'priority development'—

omit.

18 Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary)

Schedule 2—

insert—

Queen's Wharf area, for chapter 5, part 1, see section 42(1).

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 13, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is—

That the minister's amendment No. 3 and the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Amendment as circulated—

3 Long title

Long title, 'and the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014'—

omit, insert—


, the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014 and the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 19 September (p. 2653)

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.36 pm), continuing: In a previous position Minister Kate Jones, now the member for Cooper, had promised, together with former premier Bligh, 400 ecotourism jobs to replace the sandmining jobs on North Stradbroke Island and assured residents that that plan would be put into place. So far today we do not see any of those jobs.

The member for South Brisbane wanted to get in on the act. She promised that there would be something in the order of several hundred jobs that would flow on from Toondah Harbour in time to save the Sibelco workers and others on North Stradbroke Island who were no longer in employment due to Labor's laws. We have had two ministers previously promise two lots of hundreds of jobs that were supposedly going to save the economy as this rapid rushed transition out of sandmining was to take place.

To date those promises have not eventuated. Both the LNP and industry experts warned and cautioned about those kinds of promises yet the government of the day, because it was hell-bent on that mission to achieve it, ignored what industry experts said and we now have the growing mess that we have today on North Stradbroke Island. Groups like the Australian Workers' Union, Sibelco and the Straddie Chamber of Commerce all told the current Deputy Premier that this jobs transition plan would not work in the time frames that Labor had set in place. It would not work in terms of the timing, the chronology, and it would not work in terms of the skills differences between mining and construction. Yet that advice was ignored. The Straddie chamber president said that saying sandmining jobs can be turned into construction jobs at Toondah Harbour is the easy answer, but it is the wrong answer. The experts turned out to be right again and successive Labor premiers and ministers have turned out to be wrong.

The workers on North Stradbroke Island have been let down by successive Labor governments that make empty promises about their future and do not fulfil them. This week in question time, we heard the revelation from the Premier that only five jobs have been created for sacked workers, as part of the workers assistance program, that is, five jobs in the entire economic transition strategy. That is an absolute disgrace and it shows the difference between Labor promises and delivery. I say to the Premier that if she truly loves Straddie as she says, she should do something to help the people. If you love Straddie, which means you love going there, love the people and do something to help them, because they are desperate.

I am proud of what we achieved when we were in government to provide improved health services in Redland City, particularly with respect to the Redland Hospital. I am proud of what we have been able to fight for and get from successive governments. Under the LNP government, waiting lists

at Redland Hospital were significantly reduced and the local dental waiting list was reduced from over 10,000 to zero. We completed the construction of the new emergency department at Redland Hospital, including a paediatric section and 10 new short-stay beds, among other things. We funded the staffing and nurses that Labor forgot to budget for when we opened the emergency department. Unfortunately, their lack of planning for staffing caused a nine-month delay in the opening of the emergency department. More ambulance officers and new ambulances were provided at Cleveland and Birkdale stations. A new and better ambulance station was built in Cleveland.

Sadly, Labor's Redland Hospital infrastructure freeze has continued into its fourth year. As there is no planned upgrade to the hospital in Labor's forward estimates, that infrastructure freeze has been extended to seven years on big ticket items or a major upgrade. It seems that the federal Labor candidate for Bowman, who is a doctor, does not want to talk about health. He was challenged to a debate, at any time, by the federal member for Bowman, Andrew Laming, but he wimped out. As a doctor, he will not face Andrew Laming in an open debate. Today I repeat Andrew Laming's challenge to him to talk about health, the hospital and Labor's failures for Redland City.

Sadly, the state health minister has neglected the Redlands in the 2018 budget and in the forward estimates. Cleveland district and Redland City residents expect their fair share of the state budget, but they are not getting it. While they are glad that finally my call for a water birthing suite is being heeded, that is not a hospital upgrade as Labor fraudulently claimed in the budget. It is not a major hospital upgrade.

The health achievement that I am most proud of and that I have mentioned in the House before was achieved under the LNP government. It was the establishment of a new palliative care service at the Redland Hospital. That healthcare service included a five-bed palliative care service based at the Redland Hospital, plus additional in-home capacity based out of the hospital.

Sadly, recently the health minister was caught out trying to move beds from the Redland Hospital under the guise of a palliative care review. After receiving credible information from Queensland Health sources, we asked the minister about this through the budget process, estimates, social media, a direct letter from myself and now in a question on notice that I hope, finally, the minister will answer and answer truthfully. The minister will not guarantee the future of the beds, which is all we have asked about. The minister could clear that up in the House today. Are the five palliative care beds at Redland Hospital safe and budgeted for? Are the beds at the hospital budgeted in this budget and beyond? The minister could answer that today.

More not less palliative care investment is needed in the Redlands. We have a growing and ageing population. We need a full 10-bed palliative care unit, plus more in-home care, so that people in our Redlands community with terminal conditions, those who are very ill and those with the worst conditions can die with dignity. We need to be a life-affirming culture, whether at the beginning or the end of life. We do not need radical extreme laws that take human life when we can save it or provide the needed dignity at the end of life.

In terms of education, Cleveland schools warmly welcomed the introduction of the Independent Public Schools initiative. A number of schools in the Cleveland and Redland City areas have become independent public schools. They have been very happy about that commitment and the principals continue to support it. We have seen the construction of important facilities such as the Cleveland State High School year 7 buildings, the Bay View State School indoor auditorium and flashing school lights at almost all of the schools. I am very proud of those achievements. We are looking forward to the opening of the Paul Bancroft Centre, the indoor sports and multipurpose auditorium that has been 10 years in the making. Finally, we did it. We have a commitment to the Cleveland State High School learning centre, which will assist with the growing needs of the school. Most of our high schools and our primary schools are certainly under pressure because of growth in our region.

At some stage, the central region of the Redland City, Cleveland and Thornlands areas will need another high school of some kind—at least in the south.

Ms Grace: Stand in line. Everybody wants one of those.

Dr ROBINSON: Minister, thanks for your lack of enthusiasm for the needs in our area—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Member for Oodgeroo, your comments need to be directed through the chair.

Dr ROBINSON: One idea that has been floated, and I think it is a great idea, is potentially using the unused land at the DPI site at Ormiston bordering on Cleveland, or possibly purchasing the Rural Press site, which is coming up for sale. Those would be great places for a second campus for the animal studies program at Cleveland State High School. Those would be very good solutions for emerging problems.

It would be very disappointing if the education minister were to cut the two demountable buildings at Ormiston State School. It is a great state school. Those buildings house a number of important programs, including the STEM, instrumental music and other programs. My understanding is that the school would have to reduce its offerings in the STEM and languages areas should those demountable buildings be moved. I have been calling for the two buildings to be replaced, not taken away. I ask the minister to intervene and not cut anything from Ormiston State School. Wellington Point State High School has an emerging need as its hall needs some sort of upgrade. In the medium term, the school needs another hall or indoor auditorium. I flag those immediate and ongoing needs.

In terms of transport and road infrastructure, there has not been very much investment in duplicating roads in the Cleveland district and Oodgeroo electorate, or in the Redland City area in general. Certainly more needs to be done to reduce and ease traffic congestion. We need solutions for a number of road intersections, such as at Shore and Wellington streets, which again I bring to the attention of the House. We need investment in rail. We increased the number of seats and capacity on the Cleveland line at peak hour, only to see that unwind under Labor's rail fail. We need that to be addressed.


Mr Minnikin: The misery line.

Dr ROBINSON: I take the interjection from the shadow minister. It has been called the misery line, because people have to wait at stations because there are all sorts of problems associated with the Cleveland line. Emergency expresses are overcrowded. We urgently need solutions.

The duplication of the railway line is the most significant piece of infrastructure needed in terms of rail. It is certainly more important—locals think of it as more important—than an inner-city rail solution which ultimately does need to happen. The duplication of the Cleveland rail line is critical.

There are many other important areas that I could address with more time. I look forward to doing so in the remainder of this parliamentary term, though Labor's new rules have guillotined debate so it will be harder to talk about all of those topics. I look forward to working hard for the families of the Cleveland district and the Oodgeroo electorate in this term of parliament, to getting our fair share of infrastructure and services and to holding this government to account.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Mulgrave, I point out that joining us in the gallery this evening is Matt Foley, a former member and former attorney-general. Welcome back to parliament.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (5.50 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the address-in-reply debate to His Excellency the Governor's speech at the opening of the 56th Parliament in February this year. I also put on record my thanks and admiration of the Hon. Paul de Jersey AC and his wife, Kaye, for their visit to Parliament House as part of the PH 150 Open Day, as well as their prolific travel to centres in regional and rural Queensland. Their dedication is to be commended.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate all members who have been returned to this place and in particular I congratulate those members who have been elected to parliament for the first time. It is humbling to receive the faith of your electorate to represent their interests in this place and beyond. Serving as a member of parliament is a high honour and privilege, but it comes with great responsibility. To the new MPs I say: it will not be easy. You will have days which you will absolutely dread, but you will also have days when you will feel an enormous sense of satisfaction at your contribution to public life.

It is in that spirit that I wish to again say thank you to the honourable members of this House for electing me as the Speaker of the Parliament of Queensland. I have always had the greatest respect for those who came before me in the office that I now hold. I am both humbled and grateful for the opportunity. While I appreciate I will not make every member happy with my rulings, rest assured I am committed to not only appearing to be impartial in the role but strive to actually be impartial. If you have any concerns, you should talk to George, Shane, Elly or anyone else in the Speaker's office.

As members in this place know, you cannot hold a higher office without being a local MP first and foremost. I would like to thank my campaign team for their tireless efforts towards my re-election campaign. I would like to make special mention of my dedicated campaign committee: Bronwyn and Mick Hodgkins; Melinda Eades; Jim Smith, my campaign director; and, of course, my hardworking parents, Warren and Linda.

I thank Steve and Sonya Struber and Phil Cassell, Luckbir and Ranjit Singh, Vanessa Maruna and Dhananjoy Bose and his son Abhijit who flew up from Brisbane especially to help. To everyone who did the handing out at pre-poll and on election day, including Helen Cooper, Jenny Dovaston, Nathaneal Honnef, Jordan Rooke, Karen Jacobs, Amy Malsem, Cheryl Malsem, Tracey Morris, William Tapaitau, Sharon Winn, Jimmy Floyd, Larry Kellett, John and Jan Philips, Ken Robertson, Leigh Dall'Osto, Anne Holden, Nola Jappe, Deb Pearson, Krissie Bishop, Peter Firth, Natasha Lyons, John Brennan, Bruce Slade, Brenden Slade, Darren Hunt—whom I visited at the Wesley Hospital earlier this week; get well soon DJ—Michael McGarry, my father-in-law, Bill Grant, Vivian Robertson, Patrick Hoare, Tom McCartney, Paula Neal and Councillor Richie Bates, again I say that these things are not a solo act and nothing happens by accident so thank you.

I want to give a special mention of my grandma Doreen Dodd who has had some health concerns lately. Even though she has been living independently for so long, after a recent stay in hospital the decision was made that she would move into an aged-care facility. A couple of weekends ago we helped her make that transition. We all love her and we are pleased that she is enjoying her time there and making new friends.

I would also like to express my enormous gratitude to my electorate staff, Coral-Leah Kemp and Rebecca Spencer, who do such great work with me to assist the local constituents of Mulgrave. Thanks also to local unions, broader ALP members and others for their terrific support.

I simply do not have enough time or words to thank my amazing wife, Kerry, and my beautiful children, Tristan, Layla and Kobi, for their support, not only during a hectic campaign period but also over the past three terms. My family is everything to me. Other members in this place know all too well that we simply cannot do our jobs without the love and support of our respective families.

I am very proud to be re-elected as the member for Mulgrave for my fourth term and to share the win with the member for Barron River, as well as my newly elected colleagues the member for Cairns and the member for Cook, and all members on the government who were re-elected. My congratulations go to all members elected to this House. Your electorates have spoken and have spoken loudly.

I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech into *Hansard*. This has the approval of the Deputy Speaker, the member for Townsville. I thank him for being so easy to work with.

Leave granted.

I wish to place on the record my thanks at being given the opportunity to serve this state as Queensland Treasurer and express my gratitude to officials and staff at Queensland Treasury, who were always extremely hard working and tireless in their efforts to ensure the wheels of industry kept turning, the economy continued to grow and that Queensland improved its fiscal footing.

Specifically, I wish to thank the former Under Treasurer Jim Murphy for his contribution. Jim came to the Queensland Government with a wealth of knowledge and experience given his long public service career in the Commonwealth Treasury, time in Washington at the IMF, as well as the private sector.

I thank him for his friendship and contribution to a marked improvement in Queensland as it transitioned to a post-mining boom economy.

I must also say a huge thanks to my former Chief of Staff Jason Humphreys for his loyalty and wise counsel, and to Lindsay Marshall and all members of my former Ministerial Office.

The economic and fiscal success under this Government can be found across all the important metrics and indicators. This was achieved without resorting to austerity measures, without selling assets.

I want to share with the House a real world example of how economic policy was crafted around the needs of Queensland communities.

In mid 2016, I was struck by a common refrain from Cairns regional businesses about their capacity to hire new staff.

Many business owners told me that trading conditions were picking up, but they were not ready to hire new staff from fear that the new conditions would not last.

By November 2016, the youth unemployment rate in the Cairns region was not in a good place—it was the highest in the nation at 28.0%.

Knowing this situation, working with Treasury, we created a policy to incentivise employment of young people between 15 and 24 years of age.

From this the \$20,000 Back to work youth boost was born and came into being from 1 December 2016. This triggered a wave of youth employment across Queensland, but particularly in Cairns. By December 2017, the 12 month average youth unemployment rate had more than halved to 13.8%.

The combination of the broader Back To Work program and successful initiatives like Skilling Queenslanders for Work saw spillover effects into the general regional unemployment rate where during the final months of 2017, the Cairns regional unemployment rate reached lows not seen since 2008.

This was part of a larger trend along the coastal regional communities of falling unemployment after a period of difficulty.

From a statewide perspective, I'm proud to have delivered three surplus budgets during my time as Treasurer. Stronger economic growth, lower debt, higher employment growth, an improved credit position, lower unemployment, and higher business and investor confidence were achieved—all while delivering the essential public services, Queenslanders expect and deserve.

Since becoming Speaker, I have had the opportunity to undertake several youth parliaments—here at Queensland Parliament House as well as in regional Queensland in places like Emerald.

I've also had the opportunity to represent the Queensland Parliament on two occasions overseas. Attendance at the Presiding Officers' and Clerks' Conference (POCC) in Wellington in July provided me with the opportunity to represent the Queensland Parliament to develop closer ties and a greater understanding of parliamentary practices and issues in other parliaments; and gain an understanding of the needs of delegates in order to begin preparations for Queensland to host the 50th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in 2019.

I was elected the Deputy Chair of the Conference and also represented the Queensland Parliament at the Australian Region Management Committee Meeting of the CPA and a Joint meeting of the CPA and Australian and Pacific Regions Branches.

I co-presented a paper with the Clerk and I also had the opportunity to meet with the Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand Ewen McDonald. I also want to acknowledge Indigenous Liaison Officer Brett Nutley who was invited to the conference to speak about his role and the benefits that it brings to the Queensland Parliament.

In early August I travelled to the United States to attend the 43rd National Conference of State Legislatures Summit 2018, which was the primary purpose of my travel. Attendance at the Summit had been recommended to me by the Clerk who advised that Queensland had never been represented at the Summit. Other Australian jurisdictions had been represented many times and other Australian Presiding Officers and Clerks had indicated it as a worthwhile event.

After being invited to attend the Summit, I obtained the necessary approvals in accordance with the guidelines for the Office of the Speaker, including approval for my spouse to travel. All relevant approval correspondence was tabled and was also the subject of estimates committee examination. The NCSL Summit was indeed a worthwhile event and extremely well organised. To expand on my trip report, the material accompanying my invitation invited my spouse to register as an international guest, and she accompanied me to NCSL receptions and events as well as other meetings—as has been the case for previous spouses to accompany the Speaker on official business.

The NCSL Summit is one of the largest gatherings of legislators, experts and policymakers and aims to create an environment that works to address modern challenges and give attendees the opportunity to build strong networks and institutions. The Summit attracts more than 5,000 attendees annually. I understand that it is usually attended by over 250 international delegates from over 23 countries. Indeed, almost every other Australian State or Territory was represented at the Summit I attended. It is important that this Parliament be outward-looking, heuristic and continually establishing networks and benchmarking our activities against others—not just those in Australia. We have much to learn from events such as the NCSL summit and visiting other places, learning, sharing and establishing networks. An example of this was an opportunity to deliver a guest lecture at Columbia University in New York as part of their Summer Program, and I thank Associate Professor Patrice Derrington for that invitation.

Section 5.8.1 of the Guidelines for the Financial Management of the Office of the Speaker mandates the Speaker to request to undertake duties on behalf of Queensland during overseas travel which requires the Premier's approval. To fulfil this requirement, in addition to the NCSL Summit, I also undertook trade, investment, international education and tourism related meetings on behalf of the State of Queensland in both Los Angeles and New York. I want to thank the Trade and Investment Queensland and Tourism Events Queensland staff who assisted in putting together the program, including a very worthwhile meeting with the Australian Consul-General in LA, the Honourable Chelsey Martin.

Of particular note was an opportunity to meet with Ralph Bertelle, Executive Vice President of Paramount Studios, to discuss one of Queensland's most successful periods of film and television production. Specifically, I talked about my vision to see a sound stage built in Cairns. This isn't a new idea. I've been speaking with industry contacts over the past few years and others have floated the idea before me. But the time is right to revisit it. And when it comes to opportunities for the Far North in film and television, we should be thinking big.

In recent years through a targeted strategy by the Queensland Government, a range of incentives and grants have been offered—with great success—to land major Hollywood blockbusters to be filmed in Queensland. Think THOR Ragnarok, Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales, Pacific Rim: Uprising, Aquaman and a live-action version of Dora the Explorer. The demand for content on Netflix and other streaming services is rapidly outpacing the available infrastructure to produce it.

Tropical North Queensland has some of the most diverse locations in Australia within an hour of an international airport—tropical islands and beaches, desert, rainforest, farming country and the Art Deco capital of Australia—Innisfail. But these local assets are not enough on their own. The missing ingredient is a purpose-built sound stage to provide 'weather cover' and allow for construction of interior sets.

The economic benefits of building our local film and television industry could be huge. Deloitte estimated in 2016-17 that the screen industry supported more than 7,000 jobs and contributed almost \$1 billion to the Queensland economy. I want to acknowledge the Premier who has been a champion for the screen industry and earlier this year announced \$12 million to repurpose five disused warehouses in Brisbane for use in film and television production.

That same opportunity exists in Cairns with sites like the former Masters Home Improvement or Bunnings.

The largest sound stage in the Southern Hemisphere is the 4000m² Sound Stage 9 which came at a price tag of \$15.5 million. But we don't need to think that big. Village Roadshow's Sound Stage 5 on the Gold Coast is considered the most versatile by those in the know, largely due to its sunken water tank/false floor. A sound stage in the order of 1000m² would be ample, as long as it had a high ceiling, big barn door entry, load-rated floors, and could be sound proofed.

It would need to be close to the CBD and hotels, have lots of outdoor space (for parking and exterior set builds) with room to build more studios in time, and have on-site office and production space.

And like the Gold Coast's Sound Stage 9 (built as the squash venue for the Commonwealth Games but with ongoing benefits for the creative arts), a FNQ studio would need to be multi-use to cater for sport, media, education or cultural activities—but be available should a big production want to shoot a film or TV series.

I learned two key things from my meeting at Paramount Studios. Firstly, the certainty of permanent incentives—including a Federal Film Location Tax Offset—is crucial. Over 80% of recent productions have relied on some form of incentive offered by a government or affiliated body to be filmed outside of the United States. The 2016-17 State Budget committed \$30 million in funding over four-years to foster growth in local productions and attract large-scale film and high-end television productions. This was boosted by \$20 million in this year's Budget.

Second, Queensland is genuinely recognised as a 'film-friendly' destination with the capacity to support large budget international productions, and it's not just because of our unparalleled locations. A couple of years ago I had a conversation with Hollywood royalty Jerry Bruckheimer who said that Australia has some of the most highly-regarded technical crews in the world. One thing's for sure is that we don't have enough of them—and that's where the 'rest-of-the-time' use of a sound stage comes in. There are already moves within the TAFE and university sector to provide the skill base needed for this growing film and television industry to provide employment pathways in fields such as script writing, set design, camera work and more. I've been having conversations with CQ University about just how their strategic plan could complement a sound stage proposal. And I want to thank the Premier's office and Tracey Vieira from Screen Queensland for meeting with me to progress how we can turn this from concept to reality.

There is every reason to believe that Tropical North Queensland can become a genuine film and television destination—not only within Australia but also in the competitive international market. With the Queensland Government's Production Attraction Strategy and Screen Industry Roadmap with Screen Queensland—as well as the increase in the Federal location offset—a sound stage in Cairns would give major studios every reason to consider basing future productions in our region. Add to this skyrocketing interest in the gaming, motion capture, and immersion technology, the development of a sound stage in Tropical North Queensland starts making a whole lot of sense.

This is just one more way that we can further diversify the economy in the Far North.

I am also very proud of the initiatives in the Cairns region that have been driven by this Government since the start of 2015.

One of those is the Global Tourism Hub (GTH) in the Tropical North that I announced in October last year. The GTH has seen strong market interest from national and international firms. Expression of Interest (EOI) documentation was released in May 2018 to suitably qualified proponents from the ROI phase and EOIs have now closed.

EOI responses have closed and for probity reasons, and to maintain competitive tension, the names and the number of the proponents who responded to the State with EOI documentation cannot be released.

I want to thank the Minister for Tourism for her continued focus on Tropical North Queensland and in particular for running hard with the GTH. She may have been adopted as an honorary Gold Coaster, but we like to think she has a soft spot for Cairns!

And the stakeholder briefing on the GTH that I attended last week with the Member for Barron River was an opportunity to update people on where this process is up to. And I want to thank David Edwards for providing that briefing.

Those successful in the EOI phase will be issued with the Request for Detailed Proposals documentation in the first quarter of 2019.

As with Queen's Wharf Brisbane, it may well be that the incumbent operator in Cairns—the Reef Casino—could meet the objectives of the GTH process and no new licence needs to be issued.

While the total value of the project will not be known until announcement of the Preferred Proponent—expected in late 2019—it's anticipated it could be around half a billion dollars.

It will be important for locals to continue to talk positively about the GTH, but also on other projects—like the \$120 million Port of Cairns upgrade and \$176 million Cairns Convention Centre upgrade.

I am also keen to pursue local growth in the international education and training sector. People would know my passion for this area since from my time as Ministerial Champion for International Education and Training last year. Cairns, which already plays home to a broad range of world-class education programs, from study tours, English language courses; primary and secondary schools; to Universities and vocational training—is set for continued strong growth.

And while tourism is one of the cornerstones of the Cairns economy and numbers of international students are growing, we must seek to improve all sectors, not just tourism.

While the Cairns South State Development Area (SDA) process is still undergoing consultation it has great potential for industrial expansion for the Cairns region's economy and greater employment opportunities for Gordonvale residents and the future community of Mount Peter.

If it does go ahead, intermodal/freight related industry and regionally significant industrial enterprises could operate from the area proposed to be unlocked by the SDA.

The process has been boosted by a Memorandum of Understanding that I signed on behalf of the State with MSF Sugar, the operator of the Mulgrave Central Mill. MSF had concerns that the SDA might resume productive cane land and place the ongoing viability of the Mill at risk. The intention of the SDA has always been to complement the existing industries south of Cairns, not replace existing industries with a new ones.

In closing, I'm proud to be part of a Government that reduced public debt, brought down unemployment, stopped the spiralling growth in electricity prices and improved business confidence. These actions have established favourable conditions for Queensland's continued economic growth and diversification. My electorate of Mulgrave—and the greater Cairns region—stand ready to build on this momentum in order to capitalise on these opportunities.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before we move on to our next address-in-reply speech, I acknowledge that also joining us in the gallery this evening is Greg Williamson, the mayor of Mackay.

Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (5.55 pm): The electorate of Logan is filled with great Queenslanders who work hard together for their families, their neighbours, the local community and their state and country. This was never truer than during the floods of 2017 when Logan people pitched in to help others. I was deeply moved by the spirit of people facing tough times themselves looking to help others.

On the night before the day of the major flood I visited many homes of those who were under threat from the floodwaters and even those whose houses were beginning to go under water. For example, on the evening of the floods I visited those in the houses on Beryle Parade in North Maclean near the bridge that crosses the Logan River. In the evening the floodwaters cut the highway there, flooding the bridge, and then rose steadily until water was coming into people's houses. Families moved their possessions and pets to higher ground.

One family I met were completely unfazed. They had moved everything up to the second floor and were having a drink. They had the petrol high-pressure water cleaner ready and poised to spray out their house the very moment the water receded. The next day I saw that same family helping clean out the houses of others. I should also recognise the Amaydia community, the Greenbank Scout Group and so many other groups and individuals who helped others. I also thank the Premier because she took the time to come and visit Beryle Parade during the clean-up in North Maclean and spend time with the Greenbank Scout Group volunteers and the families who were flooded.

To further illustrate the spirit of Logan to help others first, I want to speak about another family in North Maclean. Lynda and her family lived in a much more isolated spot in North Maclean. During the afternoon when the waters were receding I drove up their road and long driveway. I could not see any signs of damage from a distance. I was not even sure they had actually been flooded.

When I reached the house I met Lynda for the first time. Her house had simply been smashed by the floods. The possessions and memories of a lifetime were under water and almost everything they owned was destroyed. Their white besser brick house was cracking. Even the charity goods they collected for Papua New Guinea were damaged.

Lynda was in a wheelchair and was sitting in her sodden yard with her young grandson sitting on her lap and other family members around. As I looked around, the task of cleaning and repair seemed insurmountable. I must have seemed a little overwhelmed by everything I had seen that morning. Lynda, despite her personal devastation, seemed to notice. She asked, 'Have you seen many houses like this?' I said that I had seen many houses flooded like hers that day and night. Instead of putting herself first she was worried about me. She said, 'It must have been very hard for you to see all these houses and people like this.' I looked around at the destruction of her house and was amazed that even in this situation Lynda was looking from her wheelchair to help others.

I am really pleased to say that Lynda and her family have bounced back and live in a new home a little higher up on the same block. Life for all those affected by the flood will never be same, but they also remember the spirit of Logan that rallied around them in their hour of need. It is this community I am so proud to represent.

This is the spirit of Logan. These are the great people of the electorate that I am so honoured to once again be elected to represent. I pledge to do my best to fight to improve their local services and to get funding for our roads, transport services, schools and health services. I made the same pledge to the people of Logan in 2015 and the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering.


It is important that we do not take our democracy for granted. We recognise that the diggers who stood together at Eureka or the shearers who gathered together under the Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine did so to assert the right of ordinary working people to vote, to protest and to be treated fairly. I wish to recognise Queensland's trade unions, especially the Australian Workers' Union, the Plumbers Union, the Transport Workers Union, the Electrical Trades Union—all the unions in Queensland that fight hard for the workers of Queensland.

They do that in workplaces but they also encourage their members to be active citizens participating in the political process. We hear so often about those on the other side attacking our trade unions, but we do not hear about those dedicated men and women who feel themselves called to take on the tough job of representing their fellow workers, especially the voluntary delegates and those who work to organise and represent workers. They all make a contribution to a better and fairer Queensland.

Debate, on motion of Mr Power, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Condamine Electorate, Roads


 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.00 pm): Roads and road safety remain a major issue in the electorate of Condamine. It is very rare for a week to go past without the office getting a phone call, letter or email about a road or the safety of that road. Some of those concerns come from local residents, some from school bus committee representatives and some from heavy vehicle operators. During my time as the member, I have met, sighted and travelled over these roads and I can assure the House that all of these concerns are valid. There is urgent need for some major roadworks to take place on many of these roads.

The Bowenville-Norwin Road intersects the Warrego Highway and travels south-west to Norwin. This road is subject to a large volume of overland flow during times of flood, which during the 2011 flood event deteriorated the condition of the road to such an extent that the Department of Transport and Main Roads has now set the speed limit on most of the road at 60 kilometres per hour. It is almost impossible to keep your seat in the vehicle even at this lower speed. This area produces a lot of grain and cotton, which ultimately has to be transported to market by the use of heavy transport vehicles. They attempt to avoid this road as much as possible. Unfortunately, the school bus has no choice but to travel this road.

The Clifton-Leyburn Road, which commences at Clifton, is in much the same condition, with once again the speed limit being reduced. Apparently that is the only answer to the dangerous conditions experienced by road users. This road intersects with the Toowoomba-Karara Road, which is also in disrepair, not to mention the Toowoomba-Cecil Plains Road, the Bowenville-Moola Road and the Oakey-Pittsworth Road, just to name a few. All of these roads have school buses travelling on them, heavy transport vehicles transporting produce and stock, and local farmers driving from one property to another on a regular basis. The Clifton-Leyburn Road was built by the American Defence Force in the Second World War and there has not been much money spent on it since.

What is it going to take before funding is allocated to repairing or reconstructing these roads? Does the local school bus have to lurch into the path of an oncoming truck? These roads are in a very dangerous condition and need some urgent action before a tragedy occurs. I extend an invitation to Minister Bailey to travel with me and see firsthand the unsafe condition of these roads and many others throughout regional Queensland.

Woodridge Electorate

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (6.03 pm): The City of Logan is one of the most culturally diverse places in Australia. In the electorate of Woodridge, one of the most multicultural electorates in Queensland, refugee and migrant women can experience disadvantage and multiple barriers to obtaining something that many Queenslanders take for granted—obtaining a provisional driver's licence and achieving car ownership.


Getting a driver's licence and owning a car not only enables women to have more independence in their daily lives, particularly refugee and migrant women, but it can lead to greater opportunities in education and training plus possible future employment. There is a great program underway in the Woodridge electorate led by Access Community Services in partnership with Transurban Queensland which is making a huge difference in the lives of refugee and migrant women in my electorate. Women at the Wheel assists refugee and migrant women in gaining the knowledge and the practical experience they need in order to gain a provisional Queensland driver's licence. I am very pleased that Transurban Queensland has contributed an additional \$25,000 to enable the program to continue for the next two years. I would like to congratulate everyone involved in this outstanding community service.

Not only are there good people doing great work for our community in Woodridge; there are also people giving back to children living in disadvantaged parts of the world. Year 8 students from Mabel Park State High School in Logan are assembling prosthetic hands for children who have been victims of landmine explosions. As part of their studies in engineering, science and technology, the students are participating in the Helping Hands Program, assembling prosthetic hands that attach to the limb of an amputee. Not only does this enable the recipient to regain their independence; the recipients are also able to continue their education, as they are once again able to write. It was great to see their success showcased on the ABC television news just last night.

I am sure this positive story lifted the spirits of many people in the Mabel Park State High School community who are grieving the passing of one of the school's recent students. Eighteen-year-old Richard Chu-Shing, a year 12 student, sadly passed away last week after a long battle with cancer. Richard graduated less than three weeks ago with his Queensland Certificate of Education and was the first student to graduate from the Certificate III in Aviation drone program.

I was privileged to attend the graduation ceremony for Richard held at his family home on Saturday, 25 August. I want to commend the principal of the school, Mick Hornby, a great community leader but also a great educator, and all of the staff of the school who arranged this graduation. It was wonderful to see Richard surrounded by his school friends at a wonderful afternoon that recognised his contribution to the school, his academic achievement and the great love and support that his family was providing him at a difficult time. I want to thank the school—a great community school that has a big heart and even bigger arms that are wrapped around our community, the students and Richard's family at this sad time.

North Stradbroke Island

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (6.06 pm): What is clear from the last two weeks is that the workers and residents of North Stradbroke Island are suffering and this Labor government is fiddling while Rome burns. The economic transition strategy is clearly failing. Only two of 23 projects have been completed in two years from 2016 to 2018. Minister Dick has been replaced by Minister Jones in light of this slow progress, but that is jumping out of the frying pan into the fire as far as the people are concerned because Minister Jones has tried and failed before as the lead minister.

The Premier in question time on Tuesday said that the government is working with the Quandamooka people on one project, but the government's own documents show that they are working with the Quandamooka people through QYAC on many projects, so the Premier is out of touch and does not even know her own plan. The government is responsible for 22 of the 23 projects. The Redland City Council is responsible for one of them, so the Premier needs to take responsibility and take control.


The Premier also revealed under questioning that only five island workers of 121 sacked workers have been transitioned to a new job under the government's rescue package to date. This is not only a very slow and expensive lack of progress, but it is a broken promise. Minister Jones assured island residents that all would be okay when she promised, together with then premier Bligh, 400 ecotourism jobs for island workers to transition to, but they never eventuated. Deputy Premier Trad told everyone that it would be okay too and promised hundreds of construction jobs from Toondah Harbour, but that never happened either. What an absolute mess by an incompetent government.

Where to from here? If I could offer some advice as the local member: firstly, start supporting the locals. I have faith in the resilience and capacity of North Stradbroke Island residents, workers and businesses, but the community is running out of patience with this Labor government. Secondly, Minister Jones 2.0 needs to keep the promises she makes this time to restore trust and credibility.

Thirdly, invest more dollars into long-term, job-creating legacy projects like the Dunwich Harbour redevelopment, which could take somewhere around \$30 million to really do it properly. Toondah Harbour and Dunwich Harbour are the gateways to tourism and the future for North Stradbroke Island. Fourthly, fast-track the remaining 21 projects. Fifthly, fast-track the master planning of Dunwich—which should have happened a long time ago—so that the harbour and other projects can go ahead.

Sixthly, incentivise private investment by completing all outstanding planning. The land management plan from the ILUA is still not complete, so investors do not know where they stand. They come to me with finances ready to invest but say that there is still too much uncertainty. If the Premier loves the island then she has a strange way of showing it. Damaging the lifestyle of Indigenous and non-Indigenous island residents is no way to show that you love them.

Four-Wheel Drives; Goff, Mr R

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (6.09 pm): In Capalaba we work hard and we play hard. It is the area I grew up in. I love to fish and camp. One of the first things I did when I was in my 20s was buy a Jeep Wrangler. I would go camping and fishing mainly on beaches along Straddie and Fraser. I bought my accessories locally. I went to Hammond 4WD and later when I had my HiLux I went to ARB at Capalaba. I really appreciate the announcement from the transport minister today that he is overturning Campbell Newman's tough laws on four-wheel drives. As we have done so many times before, we have had to come in and fix bad laws, this time laws hurting our four-wheel drive community, and I thank him for that. Following consultation we have raised the maximum lift certifiable in Queensland from 125 millimetres to 150 millimetres.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr BROWN: I take the interjection from the member for Clayfield—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock.

Mr BROWN: He does not even remember—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Capalaba!

Mr BROWN:—being in the cabinet room—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Capalaba!


Mr BROWN:—when he passed these laws.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Capalaba, I called you to order several times. This is the adjournment debate. I know that you are being provocative. I will tolerate a small amount of interjection, but we are going over the top there and it is difficult for Hansard to hear the contribution.

Mr BROWN: That is why we are bringing in sensible changes. We have raised the maximum lift certifiable in Queensland from 125 millimetres to 150 millimetres. For vehicles with electronic stability control, it will be a sensible 75 millimetres, incorporating 50 millimetres for suspension and 25 millimetres for tyre increase. I would like to thank the minister for listening to my community and the industry. It makes it all worthwhile when I received a thankyou from Allan Sharpley from ARB and Tim Mandt from 4x4 Customs for our hard work.

I want to move on to another topic. I would like to acknowledge the tragic death of my high school classmate Ryan Goff. Ryan's tragic story was shared in today's *Courier-Mail*. Ryan was riding his bike to pick up his two daughters, Zara and Iggy, from primary school. Unfortunately, their father never came to the school gate. Ryan was hit by a truck and never stood a chance. As an avid cyclist and patron of Wynnum Redlands Cycling Club, I know how dangerous our roads can be, and the work that we need to do to destigmatise attitudes towards cyclists needs to start. I want to send my condolences to Ryan's wife, Connie, and his two daughters. I want to let them know that I will do everything I can to advocate for safer cycling laws and infrastructure to make sure that this does not happen to another family again. Rest in peace, Ryan.

Strawberry Industry

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise in this place tonight to talk about the crisis affecting the strawberry industry. Those who are familiar with my electorate of Southern Downs will know that we are a very large producer of strawberries. Our climate enables us to produce strawberries at a time of year when others cannot. Many producers have operations not only in the Southern Downs around the Granite Belt but also near the coast in places like Caboolture and Bundaberg, as my honourable friend the member for Bundaberg would know.


I thank the government for the \$1 million that it has announced as industry support, but I am very concerned that there is no mechanism yet known for affected producers to avail themselves of that support. I do not care whether it is \$5 or \$500 or \$500,000: How do they get it? What is the phone number? I urge the minister responsible, the minister for agriculture, to expedite the arrangements for getting this support to the coalface and to the producers who need it.

In Southern Downs the horticultural industry is vital. It is the bedrock of our economy alongside tourism. There are thousands of people employed in the strawberry industry statewide. In peak season during the summer there would be 2,000 in my electorate of Southern Downs. In the Southern Downs we also have the largest strawberry runner producer in Australia, Sweet's Strawberry Runners. They have a shift there of upwards of 600 people. They do two crops a year. They are facing uncertainty

about future orders, and those farmers who are producing fruit have ploughed an enormous amount of money into investing in their crops with no certain outcome. This disaster—this criminal act—is being perpetuated on their industry. They are entirely innocent and yet they have to pick their crop every three days, whether it is going to go to waste or whether they can sell it. At the moment in most cases after the cost of production, shipping and packaging it is far less than what they would get.

I was talking to one particular producer—George Him from Oasis Berries—who told me a very alarming story. The New South Wales police incorrectly named his business as one of the ones affected by the contamination scare. Concerningly, he also told me that media personality Alan Jones today publicly reiterated that his business was one of the ones responsible for the contamination scare. I am advised that this is not the case and I urge the media to take this up. I urge Mr Jones to check his facts and make sure that if it is not the case he makes a retraction. I have also spoken to Jon Carmichael from Ashbern Farms and Nathan Baronio from Eastern Colour. They are worried about the summer crop. We need to ensure that government support is real and here and now.

Park Ridge Pirates; Skilling Queenslanders for Work


 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.15 pm): I want to recognise the Park Ridge Pirates AFL team. It has grown from great strength in recent years and won the AFL division 2 final on the weekend in a great win over Beenleigh, proving that western Logan is always going to be a better place than other areas of Logan.

We all know that young people have limited experience in work. Their skills can be lower, they can have lower confidence and they can find it difficult to get work. If they do not get experience or work for some time, they have a far greater chance of becoming habituated to not working. That is why I was gutted when the LNP cut the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, which was providing great value for taxpayers and ensuring young Queenslanders were work ready. We know this because reports looked at the value that it provided for the state. I was so proud when we restored the program, but I was even more proud when I saw the good projects that were being completed—projects like the new museum building at Logan village, the renovation and fencing of the RSL at Jimboomba, the community garden at Jimboomba, the Greenbank Pony Club and so many other projects.

We are often told by outside consultants that this strong government has improved employment outcomes. On the ground, however, I see more the feeling of pride and achievement that young people and their team leaders achieve. They are rightly proud of the lasting legacy they leave their local community. I want to give the House a few examples. At the Greenbank Pony Club the coordinator took the group aside after they had been working hard and looked at a fence post. He asked them, 'What is wrong with it?' They offered a few suggestions: maybe the railing was not straight enough. At the end he said, 'There is nothing wrong with it. You need to learn the lesson that you can do great work and you can be proud of what you do.'

At the Jimboomba RSL there was an unfortunate incident during construction. The president of the RSL told me that the kids laid out the concrete path and somebody with football boots walked over it. However, it was a great lesson to those kids learning to take pride in their work because they were angry. They said, 'They have not just insulted our work; they have insulted the RSL.' I am proud that this project has done an amazing job to renovate RSL buildings in Jimboomba, but it has also put up a secure fence and the knowledge that this place will be sacred for both the people who built it and those veterans who served our country.

Four-Wheel Drives

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.18 pm): Just like the member for Clayfield and many Sunshine Coast residents, I am a keen four-wheel drive enthusiast, as are my family and children. The only criticism that I might cop is that I drive a Jeep Grand Cherokee to Fraser Island—a jeep Grand Cherokee that has had a bit of work from Ron and the team at Opposite Lock with the bash plates and the automatic lift that I have on the Jeep.

There is one thing that does scare me when my family and I go to Fraser Island and Double Island, which we love. We went on our last trip there at Christmas time. Thankfully, it was raining, because we never want to get bogged at Inskip Point. The biggest fear for a four-wheel-drive owner going over to Fraser Island is that the guys from 'I got bogged at Inskip Point' are there watching. Thankfully, at Christmas it was a bit wet, so there was going to be no getting bogged.

I also have in my Jeep Cherokee one of these little buttons that allows the driver to switch from snow to sand to mud. I know enough about four-wheel driving to know that when I go to Fraser I do not just click it onto 'sand' and then think I am all right. I know I have to lower the tyres and I know I have to have the recovery tracks and all the gear when I go four-wheel driving. Is it not a surprise that over the last few months we have had the Labor Party attacking four-wheel-drive lovers and owners—

Mr Nicholls: And small businesses.

Mr BLEIJIE:—and small businesses. Two days ago the Minister for Transport, Mark Bailey, stood up in this place and said, 'We have been interpreting the laws wrongly.' By his own admission in the press release that he issued today, he admits that he has been interpreting the laws incorrectly and he will now fix that which relates to the lift. Four-wheel-drive enthusiasts, such as those on I got bogged at Inskip Point, Four Wheel Drive Queensland, Four Wheel Drive Australia and the accessories association, have been telling the minister for months that he got it wrong and his department has got it wrong. All of a sudden at midday two days ago, he said he was going to consult over the next few weeks.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, are you going to table that document?

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes, I will.

Tabled paper. Media release, undated, by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'Greater consistency on lift laws for Queensland 4WD owners' [[1424](#)].

Over the next few weeks they were going to consult. Then all of a sudden at midday today the consultation has apparently occurred—at midnight—and they are going to fix it. Hundreds or thousands of people have been issued fines by the Queensland Police Service. I ask Minister Bailey to withdraw the defect notices because those people who were issued those defect notices some months ago are now being told, by the minister's admission today, that they will be legal. I ask the minister to look at all the people who have been issued with defect notices in relation to these lifts, which will be legal in October, and immediately withdraw them. We love four-wheel drivers, and guess what? Four-wheel drivers vote.

Crime Stoppers

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.21 pm): Recently I was delighted to attend the Crime Stoppers Queensland Annual Awards function on behalf of the Hon. Mark Ryan, Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. The event celebrated and acknowledged the commitment and dedication of the Crime Stoppers volunteers in Queensland.

The Crime Stoppers program is highly respected across all of Queensland. Through their partnership with the Queensland Police Service they make Queensland communities safer through their detection work. I give a big shout-out to our local, hardworking Queensland police officers, many of whom volunteer with Queensland Crime Stoppers. I say thanks for all that they do each and every day. In particular, I recognise Brendan—or should I call him Brendan 'the magnificent'—and all the team at Wynnum Police Station.


Crime Stoppers is Queensland's only not-for-profit organisation that impacts the entire crime prevention spectrum. Crime Stoppers volunteer area committees are made up of members of the community who donate their time. The valuable work undertaken by the Crime Stoppers volunteers helps to build stronger relationships in the community by engaging with the community and raising the profile of Crime Stoppers, encouraging the community with opportunity and highlighting the value and benefits of reporting criminal activity to Crime Stoppers. Across Queensland there are 32 volunteer area committees, and I am sure many members are familiar with the great work that Crime Stoppers undertakes in their local area.

In 2017 Crime Stoppers received 56,683 contacts and 20,313 reports; 2,812 arrests were made from information that was passed on to the police and 8,359 charges were laid. This is impressive considering that it is all undertaken by a not-for-profit organisation that is run by volunteers. Every month Crime Stoppers Queensland receive over 5,000 contacts from the public. Furthermore, when calling these contact centres, the average wait time for these calls is less than 17 seconds. A lot of the work is performed by the many Queensland volunteers who dedicate their time for the safety of our communities.

The information received from those contacts is sent to the Queensland Police Service for investigation by local officers or specialist investigators. It is no surprise that Queensland's results for solving crime are among the best in the nation. The Queensland government strongly supports and values the Crime Stoppers program, and by the end of the 2020-21 financial year we will have provided \$1.75 million in funding to assist with the operations of the Queensland Crime Stoppers contact centre.

I want to thank all of the Crime Stoppers volunteers, in particular the crew at Bayside. I thank them for devoting so much of their personal time to help fight crime, to keep the community safe and to make Queensland a better place to live for everyone.

Mount Lindesay Highway


 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (6.24 pm): The northern parts of my electorate along the Mount Lindesay Highway corridor contain the areas of Cedar Grove, Cedar Vale, Woodhill, Veresdale Scrub, Veresdale and Mundoolun. These are areas that have suffered from a lack of planning in the past in so many ways. The Mount Lindesay Highway is the common theme here. Development has occurred both north of those areas and south of those areas without adequate resources or planning being put towards that arterial road running through those areas. I am proud to represent those areas, especially the area of Cedar Grove, which is an acreage area just south of Jimboomba. They are suffering as well from poor planning by Labor governments.

In 2010 the Labor Party government approved the Flagstone priority development area, which is a massive residential development area. Unfortunately for the residents of Cedar Grove, they are now stuck with the prospect of a wastewater treatment plant being constructed in their rural residential area to treat the wastewater that will be created within the Flagstone PDA, which is across the river and in a totally different community. It is simply not right that the development that was approved by the Labor government, which had inadequate planning, has resulted in a wastewater treatment plant having to be built in a completely different area. It is not fair to those people. It is also not fair that there is a lack of resources in this area to service those communities.

We talk about police resources at Beaudesert and Jimboomba to enable people to feel safe in their homes. When we were in government we had a very proud record of bringing 24-hour policing to the Beaudesert Police Station and increasing the numbers of police there. That needs to keep going. Beaudesert needs that new police station that is constantly put on the backburner to service those communities in the northern part of my electorate. Another problem, which has existed for so many years, is the planning schemes that are consistently foisted on these communities by the state authorities. We have small-lot subdevelopments being approved in Beaudesert, small lot subdevelopments being approved north of the area. These are very dense residential developments, sometimes up to 15 lots to a hectare. That is extremely dense development for such a rural area with inadequate infrastructure, particularly roads, being built to accommodate them.

All roads in these suburbs lead to the Mount Lindesay Highway, Jimboomba bottleneck. I have been calling on the government to get on with the planning now to fix that bottleneck at Jimboomba. We can have a great highway on both sides, but in the very near future there are going to be six sets of lights between Millstream Road and Greenbank Road. This surely cannot be the government's plan for dealing with the road issues through that area.

Pringle, Mr G

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.28 pm): Every member of this parliament knows just how much I love my dad, and this evening I wish to pay tribute to my late father, George Pringle. He was born on 27 January 1927 and he passed away on 24 August 2018. He was the son of James Daniel and Victoria May Pringle. He had brothers and sisters: Norman, Jimmy, Alex, Garth, Jean, Mary and May. He was also the proud husband of my late mother, Edith May, and the proud father of my brother David, my sister Karen and myself, and the devoted grandfather of my daughters, Stephanie and Brianna.

Dad was a coalminer to the day he died. He just loved the industry. It was in his blood, like his father and grandfather. It was also within him, as he had black lung disease. He was an underground coalminer, having worked at Rosewood, Rhondda and Southern Cross mines for around about 46 years. He was a qualified mine deputy and an open cut examiner and, in spite of serious injuries when the mine roof caved in on him—which occurred on many occasions—he loved being underground with the boys.

He loved his union, the Queensland Colliery Employees Union—now the CFMEU Mining and Energy Division. He devoted his life to mine safety, the church, Labor and the community. His No. 1 priority, however, was his family. My dad was committed to education, knowing that having a good education was a passport out of poverty. He was committed to helping those who could not help themselves: the poor, the sick and the elderly. He was a devout Pentecostal Christian. He was a church elder, a Sunday school teacher for many decades, and he practised what he believed in. His love of God shone through right throughout his life, and you could see it in his face and in everything he said and did. He was an outstanding testimony to everyone who knew him, and his life was truly a blessed assurance.

My dad lived to 91½ years of age. He woke up every day at 4 am at the Salvation Army nursing home at Riverview. He woke up and he walked the mine with his safety lamp to check the belts and to keep the boys safe. My dad's pet nickname was 'Grogan'. To the end my dad put his helmet back on one last time, turned on his miner's light and went back to his beloved underground to be buried together with my mum. So goodnight, my beautiful dad, not goodbye. I will see you up there soon.

The House adjourned at 6.31 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, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson