



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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 Phone (07) 3553 6344 Fax (07) 3553 6369

## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

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## THURSDAY, 26 MAY 2016

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

### PRIVILEGE

#### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member



**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. Yesterday in question time the member for Indooroopilly asked a question without notice of the Premier. He cited a Queensland Treasury Corporation half-yearly report to claim that the QSuper defined benefit scheme had made a loss in the six months to December 2015 of \$855 million. Upon examination of the source document cited by the shadow Treasurer, this is clearly not the case. Nowhere in the document tabled by the member is the phrase 'defined benefit scheme'; nor does it contain a profit and loss figure for the defined benefit scheme. Mr Speaker, I believe that the member for Indooroopilly may have deliberately misled the House and I will be writing to you to ask you to consider referring him to the Ethics Committee.

### PRIVILEGE

#### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



**Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (9.32 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. Last night in the debate on the North Stradbroke Island bills the Deputy Premier took offence at a statement that I made that there were meetings on North Stradbroke Island with the Electrical Trades Union that the Deputy Premier attended. She took offence at that. She denied that. I believe that she has misled the House. Mr Speaker, I will be writing to you in the hope that that will be referred to the Ethics Committee.

### PETITIONS

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

#### Crazy Ants

From 633 petitioners, requesting the House to implement the yellow crazy ant eradication program in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and surrounds as proposed by the Wet Tropics Management Authority [\[783\]](#).

Petition received.

### TABLED PAPER

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

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland (Hon. Wellington)—

[784](#) Letter, dated 26 May 2016, from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, requesting a change in the Shadow Ministerial title of the Member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Aurukun



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.33 am): As I told the parliament yesterday, the priority for my government is for the children of Aurukun to continue their schooling. The safety of their teachers must also be assured. Until then, the government is putting in place options for Aurukun families and children.

As the education minister has advised, the Cairns School of Distance Education is making available an education program through the PCYC for students in Aurukun. I can advise the House that an experienced principal and two teachers will travel to Aurukun on Monday to support students in the distance education program. This program will be run at the Aurukun PCYC. The principal has extensive experience in Indigenous and rural and remote education.

The 24-hour police presence remains in Aurukun. An additional eight police officers arrived in Aurukun yesterday, bringing the total to 21 officers. I am advised that an additional four officers can be deployed at the weekend if required. I am further advised that there were no calls for service overnight related to the recent spate of property offences. Investigations continued yesterday in relation to the offences that occurred on Tuesday night.

As I advised the House, I will be travelling to Aurukun tomorrow. My government is determined to work with the mayor and his council to restore calm to the local community.

### National Sorry Day

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.35 am): Today is National Sorry Day, a very significant day for all Australians. National Sorry Day is held every year on 26 May and provides the opportunity for us all to reflect upon the hurt and suffering endured by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who formed the stolen generation. On this day, as individuals and as a nation it is important to acknowledge the wrongs of the past and commemorate the profound grief, suffering and loss caused by the forcible removal of those children.

My government is committed to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in health outcomes, educational achievements and the opportunity to participate in Queensland's economic and social lifestyle. To this end, earlier this month we launched Towards a Queensland action plan for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, which will support the development of a whole-of-government action plan by the end of the year. The action plan is in recognition that much more needs to be done to overcome the broader issues of social and economic disadvantage. We have also announced \$150 million in funding over five years to establish a community run family wellbeing service to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

National Sorry Day serves as a reminder to us all that we must continue to acknowledge and reflect on the wrongs of the past to support the process of healing and recovery. Importantly, we must move forward together.

### Renewable Energy

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): I have important news for Queensland. At the last election I committed this government to embrace new industries including biofuels and large-scale renewable energy to generate more jobs and attract more investment. My government committed to a public inquiry into establishing Queensland's 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. Under the previous LNP government there was no uptake of large-scale renewable energy projects, and it sat by while Queensland lost 1,300 renewable energy sector jobs.

I can announce today that Ergon Energy has offered a power purchase agreement to Mount Emerald wind farm in Far North Queensland. This is a joint venture between Ratch Australia and Port Bajool. Under this government's commitment to renewable energy, last year the government owned Ergon Energy undertook an expressions of interest process for up to 150 megawatts of renewable energy. The EOI sought new renewable energy projects that could help Ergon discharge its obligations under the national renewable energy target in Queensland. The opportunity was to support new renewable energy projects in Queensland that can generate renewable energy as well as jobs locally.

If executed, the offer of a PPA to Mount Emerald wind farm would secure 170 megawatts of renewable energy for Queensland—20 megawatts more than the EOI had initially sought. The project would mean wind energy in Queensland would increase by 15 times, with only 12 megawatts of installed wind energy in our state. To put this project into further perspective, the electricity it could generate could power a city the size of Mackay.

The proponent has advised that during the construction phase employment will peak at more than 150 jobs. In terms of investment and economic activity, the projections are for more than \$400 million in total expenditure in the region over the two-year construction and 25-year life of the project, with more than \$900 million when all indirect flow-on impacts are taken into account over the same period.

I would like to pay tribute to the shareholding ministers—the Treasurer and the energy minister—and the Deputy Premier, who oversaw the planning approval for this project last year.

### State of Origin

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.38 am): Yesterday we had the great pleasure of hosting the mighty Maroons here at Parliament House. As I mentioned at the time, it seems the annual State of Origin reception is the best attended function by MPs, and for good reason. The Queensland team is under new management with Kevin Walters as coach, but after speaking with Kevin and Cameron Smith I am confident in our success.

Whether it is Origin time or not, as I travel around the state it is unusual to go somewhere and not see maroon jerseys, hats and shirts all over the place, and most of the time it is Queensland kids who are wearing these colours. Queenslanders are a proud bunch, and there is no doubt that this team in particular instils pride in us all. To Kevin, Cameron and the entire squad: I am confident—and Queenslanders are confident—that you will continue the amazing era of success we have witnessed. Good luck to the Maroons, and go next week!

### Indonesia and South Korea, Trade Mission

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.40 am): Last week I returned from a successful trade mission to Indonesia and South Korea. Today I would like to update the House on some of the highlights of this mission, which was focused on promoting Queensland's world-class international education and training sector. This is about creating jobs here in Queensland, with the sector estimated to contribute some \$2.9 billion in export revenue and more than 19,000 jobs.

In Indonesia I led a delegation of 18 senior representatives from Queensland's higher education and vocational education and training sectors for our inaugural Study Queensland Week, which was a chance to showcase our education and training providers to prospective students, agents and institutions abroad.

The Indonesian interest in Queensland was very strong. I personally spoke to more than 200 students and staff in sessions at two major Indonesian universities in Semarang and Jakarta, and I can assure members that the students were very interested in what Queensland has to offer. They were particularly keen to hear about the Palaszczuk government's exciting new Best Semester Abroad campaign, which is an innovative initiative we recently launched to promote Queensland's first-class international education and training sector to the world. This campaign will see 20 students from 10 countries, including two from Indonesia, win five months of study in Brisbane, Cairns or the Gold Coast. This includes tuition, flights, accommodation and holiday experiences worth up to \$30,000 funded by private sector sponsors.

In Jakarta I witnessed the signing of an MOU between TAFE Queensland and the Indonesian government, which is a significant step forward for Queensland in the Indonesian education and training sector. While I was in Indonesia I also marked the 25th anniversary of Queensland and Java's sister state relationship with Central Java's Governor, Ganjar Pranowo.

I also promoted our education and training sector in South Korea, where I also signed an MOU with the Human Resources Development Services of Korea, the organisation set up by the Korean Ministry of Employment and Labour to tackle the country's increasing youth unemployment. This new agreement will open up significant new opportunities for our vocational education and training sector, and that means jobs for Queenslanders. In South Korea I also signed an MOU with one of Korea's leading financial institutions, the Korea Development Bank, which will help unlock significant new investment opportunities, including in infrastructure, energy and natural resources. This was a truly historic agreement and a real vote of confidence by South Korea in Queensland. This is the first agreement of its kind that the Korea Development Bank has signed with any Australian government, state or federal.

Trade missions are an important element in the Palaszczuk government's determined efforts to support the Queensland economy by helping our exporters find new markets and attract the investment essential for our state's development. The mission I have just come back from has already produced some solid results. In particular, we have developed new relationships that open the door for our education providers to work with agencies in Indonesia and South Korea and we have helped unlock significant new investment opportunities through our agreement with the Korea Development Bank. This is an indication of how the Palaszczuk Labor government is getting on with building our economy for the future.

## Science and Innovation

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (9.44 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing all Queenslanders with opportunities to develop the skills needed to fully participate in the knowledge economy. As we move towards a future where technology is playing an increasingly important role, developing skills in areas such as coding and robotics will become even more significant. This is what the Palaszczuk government's \$180 million Advance Queensland innovation and jobs plan is all about: preparing Queenslanders for the future economy.

Public libraries have a core role in supporting coding and robotics across Queensland by providing an inclusive and non-academic learning environment that complements the new digital technology curriculum. To support the critical role of libraries, I can today announce that the Palaszczuk government will deliver more than \$300,000 in grant funding to public libraries across Queensland to deliver additional coding and robotics activities. This funding will enable people of all ages and digital literacy levels to participate in free robotics and coding activities in their local communities through libraries in 33 council areas. Programs will range from introducing new robots such as the NAO humanoid robot through to holding community coding days to learn how coding works.

I cannot mention all of the exciting activities on the horizon, but I would like to highlight two that demonstrate the tailored approach to delivering programs. For instance, the Balonne Shire Council is purchasing a range of robotics platforms and delivering a digital literacy roadshow throughout its region to reach as many community members as possible. The Central Highlands and Fraser Coast regional councils, through their libraries, are fostering digital inclusion by developing programs unique to their communities' needs, including competitions in robotics between local communities and programs for people with disabilities.

The environment provided by libraries enables generations that did not grow up with digital technology to learn alongside young people and delivers opportunities for everyone to fully participate in the digital economy. Public libraries across Queensland have consistently been at the forefront of the robotics and coding wave and have conducted hands-on programs using a wide range of robotics and coding platforms. The programs also involve partnering with local community services or schools to provide outreach programs with coding and robotics equipment. The funding announced today once again underlines the Palaszczuk government's commitment to ensuring that all Queenslanders have the opportunity to participate in the digital economy.

## National Sorry Day

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.47 am): Today, National Sorry Day, is a very significant day for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians alike. Every year, 26 May provides us all with the opportunity to reflect upon the hurt and suffering endured by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who form the stolen generation. While the 2008 apology by former prime minister Kevin Rudd was an important step in the reconciliation process, we must continue the process of healing and recovery because the wrongs of the past continue to haunt modern Australia. We have not reconciled our past with our present, let alone our future, but we are working towards that.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that our past wrongs are not repeated and to taking action to address their ongoing impacts. In fact, just last fortnight Minister Fentiman and I announced \$150 million over five years for community-run family wellbeing services to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in our child protection system. I would like to flag that at 1 pm this afternoon I am hosting a Sorry Day function here at parliament, where I will be announcing a significant commitment to continuing Queensland's process of reconciliation alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda.

I would also like to advise the House that this will also be a great symbol, with National Reconciliation Week starting tomorrow. The theme of National Reconciliation Week 2016 is 'Our history, our story, our future'. During this coming week we call on all Australians to reflect on our shared national identity and the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights in the formation of our national future. We can only truly reflect on our national identity when we reflect on, acknowledge and accept our national history.

Past laws, practices and policies have had a deep and lasting impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and contribute to the underlying causes of continuing disadvantage. The situation in Aurukun is a reminder that there is no denying the real-life challenges we still face. We

are being confronted with a poignant reminder that there is still so much to be done if we are ever to close the gap. The wrongs that Indigenous Australians have endured are not ancient history or relegated to the time of Captain James Cook. Up until 1992—that is in our lifetime—Australia's national story included the discredited legal doctrine of terra nullius, the legal principle that no-one had owned Australian land prior to colonisation. It took 10 years of campaigning by Eddie Mabo, a man from remote Murray Island, to finally see that legislation changed. I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone in this place that we have a responsibility to drive changes that genuinely matter to all Queenslanders.

Last Friday at Gordonvale I attended Djarragun College's parade, where I presented student leaders with a set of new Australian, Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. These flags are symbols of our country's history, both pre-European and ancient. Our country's history is of course going to be settled on both of those fronts. These may be seen as symbols—that is exactly what they are—but we have seen many symbols. The national apology was symbolic and seeking to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our Constitution is symbolic. We know that symbolism is not about tokenism; it is actually about providing hope for the future. I urge all members of this House to attend today's event, to get involved with the many community events being held around the state over Reconciliation Week and to think very deeply about where we all need to go in the future.

### Advancing Health 2026

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.50 am): By 2026 the Palaszczuk government wants Queenslanders to be among the healthiest people in the world. This is an ambitious goal, but it is achievable if we have a shared vision and can bring all the elements together in a coordinated way. That is why last week I released the Palaszczuk Labor government's vision and strategy document for health in Queensland. *My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026* is a 10-year plan to shape our state's health system.

Advancing Health 2026 has been developed through consultation with representatives from inside and outside our health system. The four directions set out in Advancing Health include promoting wellbeing, delivering health care, connecting health care and pursuing innovation. It is an ambitious plan with some concrete goals. By 2026 we aim to reduce childhood obesity by 10 per cent, reduce the rate of suicide deaths in Queensland by 50 per cent, increase life expectancy for Indigenous males by 4.8 years and Indigenous females by 5.1 years, increase levels of physical activity by 20 per cent and radically increase the availability of electronic health data for Queenslanders.

One of the key directions of this vision is pursuing innovation, making our state a place where ideas can be turned into realities. The recent Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit, so ably led by the Premier and the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy, identified the health sector as one which could help drive Queensland's economic growth. Health services is an area where Queensland has a strategic advantage over many other jurisdictions.

There are major opportunities for knowledge-based growth in health services exports from our state. There is a hunger throughout Asia and the rest of the world for the skills contained within the Queensland health system such as designing and constructing new healthcare facilities, the management of those facilities and the training of clinicians. As our economy transitions at the end of the mining boom, our health industries are well placed to capitalise on the export of services to Asian markets. I can inform the House that by the end of this year I intend to establish the Queensland Health Export and Investment Advisory Council to help facilitate health export services to Asia. We intend to partner with the private sector in this push to increase Queensland's exports of health services. I also intend to lead a trade delegation to facilitate further exchange of health and medical research information, expertise and skills between Queensland and Asia.

Queensland's health system is one of the best in the world. While the primary objective of Queensland's health sector is to provide the best possible outcomes to Queenslanders, there is an opportunity for us to capitalise on our leadership internationally, and this government intends to pursue this with vigour.

### Schools, External Assessment

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (9.53 am): From tomorrow, close to 20,000 year 11 students at 250 schools will take part in a trial of external assessment. It will be the first subject based external assessment to be conducted in Queensland in more than 40 years. The external assessment trial is an important milestone in the

transition to a new system of senior assessment and tertiary entrance in our state. The English assessment will be the largest of five trials involving around 11,000 students in 109 schools right across Queensland. Similar trials will be held for mathematics B, chemistry, modern history and geography. The trial is part of our plan to transition to external assessment from 2019 and preparing students and schools for successful participation. I thank representatives and teachers from independent schools, Catholic schools and state schools who have been involved in making this trial happen.

In the new system, external assessment will complement school based assessment by providing an extra layer of information about what students have learned and can do in a subject. Queensland is not introducing one-shot external exams where an entire course of study comes down to performance over a few hours. For most senior subjects, external assessment will contribute 25 per cent towards a student's final result. In mathematics and science subjects it will contribute 50 per cent.

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority has worked with expert teachers and university academics to develop the trial assessments. The QCAA will also manage the administration of the trial assessments including a marking operation involving hundreds of specially trained teachers. This is all part of our efforts to renew senior secondary schooling and help young Queenslanders reach their full potential.

### Domestic and Family Violence

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.55 am): May is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, and I am proud that the Palaszczuk government is leading the way by providing \$150,000 for more than 60 community events that are being held right across the state to stand up against violence. From Goondiwindi to Gladstone, communities are calling out violence against women. We want to drive home the message that domestic and family violence is not acceptable—not now, not ever.

I hear a lot of heartbreaking stories every day, and they are usually from the perspective of those whose lives have been changed by the menace of domestic and family violence. However, recently I visited a men's domestic violence perpetrator program. I have to say that hearing from perpetrators at that court ordered program was incredibly challenging. What did not surprise me was that they were ordinary men of all ages and backgrounds, from all walks of life. That is the thing about domestic and family violence: it does not discriminate. I speak a lot about the kind of cultural change we need to instil in our young people to develop healthy, respectful relationships free from violence. This program reminded me about the importance of prevention programs but also of the need for generational change so that we can shift our culture away from this violence.

This year's campaign for domestic violence prevention month calls on us to say 'not now, not ever' to violence in our homes, our schools, our workplaces, our communities. It encourages community campaigns to showcase how they can help stop violence and send the message that together we can change the culture, attitudes and systems that underpin violence in our community, because we all have a role to play.

In Gladstone, the Gladstone Women's Health Centre brought the community together with their 'Not in our town' initiative; in Rockhampton, UnitingCare Community and AFL Capricornia have run a 'Not in our club' campaign; and in the Redlands I was proud to join the member for Capalaba at the launch of the 'Non-violence is contagious: give it to your friends' sticker campaign. This fantastic campaign has seen the local DV service WAVSS Across the Redlands, community groups and the Redlands City Council send out 60,000 stickers to local residents, sticking them around their neighbourhoods and even on JJ Richards garbage trucks.

In order to tackle domestic violence we have to harness the energy of all the forces and all the voices in our community, because the community is the solution. As a community we must challenge the attitudes and cultures that have allowed domestic violence to fester in silence for way too long. I know that many members of this House were at the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month reception in the Premiers Hall last night to show their support. For that I say thank you. I believe that if we all stand up to say 'not now, not ever', we can make a real and lasting difference.

### Biomedicine

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.57 am): Last week I had the pleasure of visiting the University of the Sunshine Coast to see firsthand the groundbreaking work they are doing in the biomedical and life sciences field. As members know, this government is committed to innovation and building the jobs and industries of

tomorrow, and innovative health industries will be well supported—not only by me in my role as Minister for State Development but also by my colleagues the Minister for Health and the Minister for Innovation and Science. The significant investments previous governments made in this sector mean Queensland has globally connected biomedical and biotechnology capabilities. We are now well positioned to leverage these capabilities.

Whilst at the University of the Sunshine Coast I saw the state-of-the-art, five-star green star rated engineering learning hub delivering world-class learning and teaching facilities. At the core of this new building are three cutting-edge visualisation facilities. It provides a hybrid of two-dimensional and three-dimensional virtual reality techniques, allowing students to see and interact with complex data to deepen their learning. The largest of these facilities is the visualisation studio which houses a CAVE2TM. One of only four of its kind in the world, the CAVE2TM provides a near seamless, 320-degree panoramic three-dimensional virtual environment. It was most impressive indeed.

The Sunshine Coast region is experiencing massive growth in health services, with more than a \$2 billion investment in health and hospital care currently underway, including the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital. The University of the Sunshine Coast is set to expand its contribution to improving regional and national health and wellbeing. Throughout its groundbreaking research, USC is building close relationships with regional health providers. I was particularly impressed by the rapid diagnostic technology being developed by USC. With the increasingly mobile society in which we live, we need answers and treatment fast. I note that the Minister for Health has particular interest in this technology. The research team led by Joanne Macdonald is developing a simple diagnostic test to report on the presence of multiple health related biomarkers. The test is essentially like a pregnancy test kit—very simple to use—but this is world groundbreaking technology because this test will rapidly detect Ebola, Hendra virus, malaria, dengue, Ross River and even Zika right here in Queensland on the Sunshine Coast. This technology is simple to use and rapid. This is the kind of technology that saves lives.

This government is very focused on developing opportunities in the biomedical sector. My department is currently developing a discussion paper, working with my colleagues the Minister for Health and the Minister for Innovation and Science. We are developing a 10-year biomedical and life sciences road map and action plan. I will be seeking input from stakeholders about the opportunity and challenges facing the biomedical and life sciences sector. Feedback from stakeholders will inform the road map which will build on Queensland's comparative advantages in this innovative sector. I intend to release the discussion paper for consultation with my colleagues in the coming weeks, with the final road map released by the end of the year.

### **Dairy Industry; World Brahman Congress 2016**



**Hon. LE DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries) (10.00 am): The retrospective cuts to the price paid to dairy farmers in southern states was a shock to the dairy industry and has added to the pricing concerns of Queensland dairy farmers. Last week at the Australia-New Zealand Agriculture Ministers' Forum I met with my ministerial counterparts from the southern states and we discussed the impact milk pricing was having on dairy farmers. Following the meeting I rang Queensland Dairyfarmers Organisation President, Brian Tessmann, to brief him on the discussions and I am continuing to consult with industry on the challenges. Yesterday the federal agriculture minister, Barnaby Joyce, announced a support package for dairy farmers impacted by the retrospective price changes by Murray Goulburn and Fonterra, and the House should note that this package excludes Queensland's 450 dairy farmers. I have written to Barnaby Joyce calling on him to extend the assistance package to Queensland if dairy farmers here are impacted by the same price cuts. Last night Barnaby Joyce also stated that the federal government would not reregulate the dairy industry and ruled out a floor price for milk. We should be cautious about some of the proposals being put forward on this issue that could have unintended consequences for the very farmers we are trying to assist.

Last week I also had the pleasure to be in Australia's beef capital to welcome delegates to the 18th World Brahman Congress with my colleague the member for Keppel. I want to thank Shane Bishop, President of the Australian Brahman Breeders Association, for inviting me to the world congress. The congress attracted over 300 overseas beef experts who took part in six days of activities in and around the Rockhampton region. This was the third time Australia has hosted the world congress, and for the third time it was Rockhampton that was chosen to host. The beef industry is one of Queensland's iconic industries and it is its largest agricultural industry. The Palaszczuk government understands the importance of the cattle industry and that is why we have been a great supporter. Research, development and extension into the beef and grazing industry is a vital component of this support. The Spyglass Beef Research Facility in North Queensland is one example of the R&D

commitment to agriculture. Spyglass focuses on improvements in cattle husbandry, genetics, pasture improvement, soil mapping and remote sensing, assisting industry to drive greater success. Research, development, extension and innovation will help continue to deliver success to this most productive component of our agriculture industry and will ultimately benefit Queensland's dairy and beef industry.

### Connected Autonomy in Smart Cities Summit

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.04 am): Another step towards advancing Queensland was taken this week with the Connected Autonomy in Smart Cities Summit at QUT, co-hosted by the Palaszczuk government and Intelligent Transport Systems Australia. The Queensland-first summit brought together more than 200 international experts and industry specialists to discuss the advances in transport technology and how we will prepare our Queensland network for connected and automated vehicles in the future. It was a great success and concluded with key delegates agreeing that Queensland has never been in a better position to capitalise on emerging transport technologies. We know that automated vehicles and big data will play a critical role in our ever-evolving transport system, improving safety and enabling smarter and cleaner travel. We want to work with the community and industry to build confidence in these new technologies and to put Queensland on the front foot, ensuring our state is ready for these changes.

Attendees heard from world-leading experts including CISCO Global Transportation executive Barry Einsig, BMW Group's vice-president of quality management Volker Richter, and Q-Free chief technologist Knut Eversen. Having these leaders as guest speakers just down the road at QUT on how we might be able to better use technology to deliver transport solutions for Queenslanders was a real coup for Queensland and it was great talking with them at our parliamentary reception here on Monday night. All who attended enjoyed an excellent opportunity to strengthen their organisation's position within this developing industry as well as the chance to network, share ideas and make important business partnerships and work together. One exciting development the Palaszczuk government is already progressing is a pilot program for the integration of connected and automated vehicles. The department is currently negotiating a joint agreement with Bosch and the QUT Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety to test cooperative and highly automated vehicles on our roads. We are also looking at a large-scale pilot of cooperative intelligent transport systems. This pilot will grow the department's technical and organisational readiness as well as encourage partnerships and build capability in both the private and public sectors. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring Queensland is ahead of the game in tackling technological change and driving the jobs of the future.

### World Environment Day

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.06 am): World Environment Day on Sunday, 5 June is an international day of celebration, raising awareness about the importance of caring for and protecting our environment. To celebrate World Environment Day 2016, let me remind the House of the economic importance of protecting one of the world's most iconic natural wonders—the Great Barrier Reef. This world renowned icon in our very own backyard attracts 1.9 million visitors a year, supports almost 70,000 jobs and injects \$6 billion a year into the economy. It is a treasure that we are lucky to be the custodians of. The continued health of Queensland's creeks, rivers and estuaries affecting the Great Barrier Reef is a top priority. That is why we have provided an additional \$100 million over five years towards water quality initiatives, scientific research and helping businesses transition to better environmental practices, and I am pleased to update the House that yesterday the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce has handed down its final report on how to deliver clean water for a healthy reef with 10 key recommendations.

There are a number of actions recommended by the task force that we can begin to implement immediately. These include exploring more affordable monitoring technologies to provide greater coverage of the catchments across more than 400,000 square kilometres of Queensland and progressing the design of the two major integrated projects that will allow us to road test measures recommended by the task force. Of course I cannot speak about our unique environment without mentioning Queensland's beautiful parks and forests that also contribute to the state's thriving nature based tourism industry. Each year they attract millions of international and domestic visitors who contribute over \$4.4 billion annually—28 per cent of all total tourism spending in Queensland. As we celebrate World Environment Day, it is a reminder why it is important that we conserve the natural and cultural values of these areas.

We have also been working hard to effectively manage Queensland's air and water quality and efficiently address waste issues with industry and local governments. My wish is for Queensland to be a leader in innovative resource recovery activities and for all Queenslanders to take on the reduce, re-use and recycle mantle. I am confident that the measures that the Queensland government continues to put in place to safeguard our unique environment will enable us to hand it over to future generations in as good as, if not better, condition.

### **Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Public Transport Infrastructure**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (10.09 am): The excitement is building for the 2018 Commonwealth Games and our government is determined to make sure that the world sees what world-class facilities Queensland has to offer. That includes our infrastructure and upgrades, such as the vital new Coomera to Helensvale rail duplication, which will provide significantly improved service capacity and reliability for the residents of the region. I can advise the House that last week I announced that the Palaszczuk government is investing \$10 million to refurbish six key stations on the Gold Coast rail line to improve train station facilities ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Games. The Ormeau, Coomera, Helensvale, Nerang, Robina and Varsity Lakes stations will all be refurbished over the next two years. This improvement project will support about 30 new job opportunities for Queenslanders in the construction industry, including in trades such as electrical, carpentry, painting, plumbing, roofing and tiling. Station buildings will be revamped with a fresh lick of paint and upgraded amenities, as well as new signage, CCTV and passenger information displays. The pedestrian subway at Coomera station is set to be completely retiled and the footbridge at the Ormeau station upgraded, while modernisation works will be carried out on the lifts at the Coomera and Nerang stations.

As South-East Queensland's population continues to expand and the games approach, the state government is committed to investing in public transport infrastructure. Works will be completed mostly outside of peak travelling times to minimise inconvenience to passengers and the finished product will be a comfortable, modern environment for local customers and visitors alike. These station upgrades, along with peak time trains between the Gold Coast and Brisbane every 7½ minutes when the rail duplication is complete and the second stage of the light rail project will ensure that the region is fitted out with the rail structure that is needed for the future. The Palaszczuk government is delivering not only a seamless journey to and from the Gold Coast but also a journey of comfort, convenience and quality when moving around the Gold Coast.

I know that Borobi, the game's blue koala mascot, is known for arriving by helicopter or by surfboard. I am advised that he also has a soft spot for other forms of travel. Yesterday, Borobi was at the Gold Coast Airport greeting visitors to the state in a demonstration of his enthusiasm for the games, with 678 days to go. I know Borobi has a soft spot for rail travel as well. We may soon see him riding the rails in Queensland, boarding and alighting at many fine stations, including those on the Gold Coast line.

### **Home Assist Secure Program, Lawnmowing Services**

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (10.12 am): We are a government that is committed to making it easier for older Queenslanders and people with a disability to remain in their current home should it meet their needs. We know that some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders need just a little bit of extra assistance in areas of home maintenance, modifications and repairs. They do not need to be forced out of their homes. Instead, this government will support them to stay in their homes. The Home Assist Secure program, funded by my department, provides this helping hand through free information, through referrals and subsidised assistance to clients.

However, the previous LNP government severely restricted the use of some of those important services and, in particular, in 2013, lawnmowing services, limiting the services that Home Assist Secure providers can offer. In North Queensland, this policy led to overgrown yards, with elderly people unable to feel proud of the homes in which they lived. Once again, we see the heartless policy decisions of those opposite impacting on those we are here to stand up for. A strong choice? I do not think so. The members opposite can cut jobs, but they cannot cut grass.

Prior to the former LNP government's arbitrary change, the program recognised that the delivery of mowing services in regional and remote parts of Queensland was far more difficult than it was in other areas. Under our trial, selected Home Assist Secure providers servicing—

**A government member:** How many 'hectares' of grass?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I take that interjection. Many 'hectares' of grass required mowing and in some places you could watch the grass grow. Selected HAS providers servicing broad regional and rural areas will be requested to recommence mowing services in line with Labor's previous and fair policies. These areas are in Far North Queensland, including Cairns and the Tablelands, North Queensland and the Mackay-Whitsunday region. The trial arrangements for HAS subsidised mowing services will commence on 1 July 2016.

**Mr Cripps** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, one moment. I am having difficulty hearing the minister. Member for Hinchinbrook, I can certainly hear you.

**Mr de BRENNI:** As I was saying, I am pleased to announce that a trial program will commence, which will allow Home Assist Secure providers across eight areas to extend their services to lawn mowing. That means that eligible clients—the elderly—in places such as Cairns, the Tablelands, Charters Towers, Townsville, Mackay-Whitsunday, Rockhampton and Bundaberg will be able to contact their local Home Assist Secure provider and access vital lawnmowing services. This is about reintroducing fairness to Queenslanders.

## REPORT

### Overseas Visit

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (10.16 am): In accordance with section 4.15.8 of the opposition handbook, I table a report of official overseas travel undertaken by me and my chief of staff between 29 March and 12 April this year.

*Tabled paper:* Overseas Travel Report: Report on a visit to Japan, China, India and Singapore by the former Leader of the Opposition (Mr Springborg), 29 March 2016 to 12 April 2016 [\[785\]](#).

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### State Actuary, Report; Order for Production of Documents

 **Mr EMERSON** (Inndooroopilly—LNP) (10.16 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That, pursuant to standing order 27, this House orders the Treasurer to table, in accordance with standing order 31, the State Actuary's latest triennial report and all subsequent interim valuation reports and any correspondence from the State Actuary into the public sector superannuation scheme, also known as the defined benefit fund, in his possession or control by 5 pm, 27 May 2016.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Queensland Health

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (10.16 am): Yesterday, members will recall that I gave members an update on the progress of the Commonwealth Games. Today, it is my great pleasure to give members an update about what is happening in that other part of my portfolio responsibilities, the Health portfolio. Members will recall that, when it came to the Commonwealth Games, the LNP inherited a financial black hole. We all know that former premier Anna Bligh said that Health was a basket case and that when we came to government we had to fix the problems that had been left.

On Tuesday in this House it was revealed that, in the minister's words, issues had left staff financially impacted as a result of more Health payroll errors. Our health minister reduced dental long waits to zero, introduced the surgery wait-time guarantee, left financial surpluses—which this government is now spending—and, from 1 April 2012 to 21 December 2014, increased the nurse headcount from 32,825 to 34,100 nurses. Under the LNP government, there were more front-line nurses.

People know that the weather has become a little cooler lately. That little birdie that used to be in Caloundra has migrated south to the Gold Coast. Because it is warmer on the Gold Coast, that little birdie has told me that the CBRC submission—

**Mr Hinchliffe:** We are in the Southern Hemisphere, you know. It does not work that way.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** In Queensland, they love to come south.

**An honourable member:** Next stop 'Ormoo'.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** As they fly over 'Ormoo'—where the dairy farmers are doing their best. The CBRC submission for Queensland nurses under EB9 has been completed. I understand that there will be a 2.5 per cent increase, but nurses will also receive an additional so-called bonus payment to get them to three per cent. The interesting thing is that, 14 months after the agreement has expired, the ALP is still paying them less than they were under the LNP. At the end of our term, under the LNP, nurses were getting 3.12 per cent.

The LNP left more nurses being paid more. The annual report from Queensland Nurses' Union described that increase from the LNP as ensuring—

Queensland Health nurses and midwives amongst the highest paid in the country.

What a contrast to the Labor Party, which has taken 14 months and now is giving nurses less than they received under the LNP.

The little birdie has also told me that in the minister's own department, the hand-picked director-general of the Premier has applied to be the director-general in New South Wales. That is the culture of this government. After 12 months, we have the same old culture—payroll errors and a culture of paranoia. What does Labor have in store for us next? A fake Tahitian prince?

### Sale of Public Assets

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.19 am): I did not think it was possible for anyone to be more out of touch or more arrogant than Campbell Newman.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the minister.

**Mr DICK:** I can tell members that the Leader of the Opposition has the trophy. I took the time to read *Can Do*, the biography of Campbell Newman. Thankfully it was a very short read. One can skim through it. It should have been called *How not to govern Queensland*. It did not take me long to read it. I found this quote—

Campbell's impassioned plea for a political reality check was enough to convince his colleagues to abandon the full suite of asset sales proposed by the commission of audit and backed by Tim Nicholls.

The Leader of the Opposition was holding the line on asset sales. Even his colleagues were getting worried but, no, he wanted to hold the line. That was his position. Of course, so committed was the Leader of the Opposition to his precious Strong Choices he even put it on his Christmas card. Christmas is a happy time. The kids get up and run around looking for their presents. They are so happy and then they get their Christmas card. 'Happy Christmas! We are selling your assets. Best wishes, Mr Strong Choices. PS: Campbell sends his regards.' Then the children started crying.

I know the Leader of the Opposition. He will not listen to me. He certainly will not listen to the member for Southern Downs. At least the member for Southern Downs had the self-respect to dispose of that policy when he was the leader. The Leader of the Opposition will not listen to him. A few weeks ago he ruthlessly dispatched him as the leader with the full support of 14 of his 41 member parliamentary party—a third of them right behind him supporting him. He will not listen to them, but will 'Tin Ear' Tim finally listen to the people of Queensland? Will the Leader of the Opposition listen to the people of Queensland who said no to the Newman government, no to Strong Choices and no to asset sales? He had three minutes yesterday to apologise to the people of Queensland. He has another three minutes coming up. Is he willing to admit that he was wrong? We all know what happens when we do not apologise in here. We all know how important it is to apologise. Will the Leader of the Opposition finally say that he has heard the people of Queensland and that he has listened to the people of Queensland? Will he say today no to asset sales?

### Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (10.22 am): Just as you would not put Dracula in charge of the blood bank, you would not put an old union hack in charge of industrial relations in Queensland, but that is exactly what Premier Palaszczuk has done. She has put the member for Brisbane Central in charge of all industrial relations. There is only one group of people who benefit from that and it is union mates getting jobs in Queensland.

When a new minister is appointed the media generally ask the new minister what are their goals, what are their aspirations, what is their vision for industrial relations—what is the vision of the employment minister in the state. The minister would generally give a positive outlook of what she or

he thinks is the future of employment in the state. The member for Brisbane Central says she has been misquoted and that she has been taken out of context when we say she said there was nothing to be done about youth unemployment so I thought the best way to settle the matter and to get it on the record was to table the entire media report. I quote from the report—

'Youth unemployment is always difficult to address. I don't know that there's much you can change structurally,' she said. 'There's always an issue with youth unemployment. It's not new, it's been around a long time.'

In response to that the Townsville mayor slammed the comments as not good enough. She said—

At this stage, for anyone to say what Grace Grace said, that is not the attitude, you've got to go in there,

Cairns mayor Bob Manning said Mrs Grace's comments were an 'admission of failure or not really trying'. I table a copy of that media report.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 15 January 2016, titled 'Fall from Grace: Regions blast youth jobs stance' [786].

We know under this Minister for Employment our trend unemployment rate is 0.5 per cent higher than the national average. In all the other states and territories unemployment is going down: New South Wales 0.1; Victoria two per cent; South Australia; and Tasmania by 0.5 per cent. Queensland is up by 3.4 per cent. Is it any wonder that the employment minister comes in here completely asleep at the wheel and says she has been taken out of context. The minister was not taken out of context. They were her words. Those opposite do not have a plan for employment other than union mates getting jobs in Queensland. Youth unemployment is up again: from 11.6 per cent to 15 per cent. I table a copy of that.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Palaszczuk promised to create jobs for young Qlders' [787].

I also table another document in relation to Labor's promised jobs for Queensland: unemployment up again 6.2 per cent to 6.5 per cent.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Labor promised jobs for Qld but in April ...' [788].

Queensland lost 6,800 jobs. Today new figures will come out. Shame on the employment minister who is only considering jobs for union mates, not young Queenslanders.

### Member for Kawana, Performance

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.26 am): I read a press release that was put out recently by the member for Kawana. I have never read such diatribe in all of my born days.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, with respect, I am not going to allow a shouting match. If the member for Kawana wants to make a comment is he able to. He does not need everyone to assist him.

**Ms GRACE:** The issues that were raised in that were extraordinary. He would have to be the worst conveyancer in the world who became the worst Queensland Attorney-General known to personkind. He comes into this House after he was able to dramatically—and I do not know how he did it—unify every single member of the judiciary against the government because of his loose lips and his inability to do the job.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, this is the minister's opportunity to speak on any matter that she wants to that is relevant. I do not need your assistance, member for Toowoomba North. You will be warned if you continue with your unnecessary and irrelevant interjections.

**Ms GRACE:** In addition to putting off every single lawyer in Queensland he also managed to take workers' rights and their hard-earned entitlements away while he was industrial relations minister. We have the worst Attorney-General Queensland has seen and now we also have the worst shadow industrial relations minister that Queensland has ever seen.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** Being the member for Kawana. Just wait for it. Do those opposite really believe that they have any credibility in relation to the issue of employment? Let me put on the record that youth unemployment was not even on their radar. When we have gone around the state and held regional employment forums people cannot even remember who the last employment minister was in the LNP Newman-Nicholls government because they did nothing on employment. As the Minister for Health

continually says, they did not see a public servant that they did not want to sack. That is the legacy of those opposite. They left us with the biggest unemployment rate the state has seen. They did not create any jobs; we lost jobs. This government has turned that around and has the plan to create employment in this state. We are advancing Queensland, taking this state forward. Those opposite left us with a state going nowhere.

In that press release the member put in a photo of me at a union rally. It is really quite remarkable that someone with my background is seen at a union rally! I put a challenge out to the member for Kawana: let us do a survey. I will survey 10 members of the judiciary he last met and he can go and survey 10 employers I recently met. Whoever gets the highest score I will do a deal: I will not call you the worst shadow industrial relations minister ever and you call me a proud unionist.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.29 am): What a diatribe! It is another day and yet another independent report shows the economic failure of the Palaszczuk Labor government. Only yesterday, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released its estimate of construction work done throughout Australia, which included what is happening in Queensland. What does that report show? It shows that under this government the value of construction work done in Queensland has declined each and every quarter on both a trend and a seasonally adjusted basis.

Over the past year, the value of seasonally adjusted work done in Queensland has fallen by \$13.8 billion, which is a decline of 26.4 per cent. That means \$13.8 billion less is being spent on infrastructure, construction and engineering in this state. It means that there is \$13.8 billion less to spend on employing Queenslanders at a time when our youth unemployment rate has skyrocketed to 15 per cent. This is a time when not one job has been created in the Treasurer's own region of Cairns. Indeed, jobs have been lost and youth unemployment has gone north of 22 per cent. That will be the legacy of this failed Labor government, which is asleep at the wheel. It has no plan except—

**Ms Trad** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, I urge you not to try to speak over the top of the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** This government does not have a plan to provide infrastructure. This government does not have a plan except to raid money and funds put aside to pay for long service leave and superannuation. It does not have a plan to control its own expenses. This government is firmly asleep at the wheel. In particular, young Queenslanders who, like my own kids, are looking for jobs will be worried about where those jobs will come from and what this government is doing about it.

**Mr Pitt** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, one moment. Treasurer, if you persist in trying to speak over the top of the Leader of the Opposition, you will be warned.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I will quote some of the figures that they do not want to talk about. Regional communities in places such as Townsville, Mackay and Cairns and smaller rural and regional towns are paying the price. In the past year, Townsville has lost 7,000 jobs and the participation rate is in freefall. As I have said, in Cairns not one job has been created and the youth unemployment rate is over 22 per cent. In the past year in Mackay, 6,000 jobs have been lost and unemployment is at 13.4 per cent. In the Fitzroy, 4,500 jobs have gone.

The government is asleep at the wheel. Business confidence plummets and every day Queenslanders are paying the price. Only the LNP can get Queensland moving.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will finish at 11.32 am.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Aurukun

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (10.32 am): My question is to the Premier. Senior Wik women from Aurukun have said in a statement—

The premier has shut our school without notice and with no plan in place. What will happen in five weeks?

Can the Premier outline what options were canvassed before making the decision to close the Aurukun school and can the Premier confirm the Wik women's group was not consulted beforehand?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. As my government has stated very clearly, the issues in Aurukun are very complex and as a government we want to get them right. I welcome the Leader of the Opposition's comments yesterday in this House that we should have a bipartisan approach to tackling those very complex issues.

Yes, I did read reports in relation to the Wik women. I am more than happy to meet with them. I hope to have that opportunity to discuss their concerns. However, I have made it very clear in this House that I believe that no matter where a child lives in Queensland, they should have an equal opportunity to access their fundamental right to education. The fundamental right to have an education is important. No matter whether a child lives in Aurukun, Palm Island, Cairns, the Gold Coast or Ascot, every child in Queensland should have the opportunity to access good quality education.

That is why, in conversations with my director-general and the Minister for Education, at the front of our thinking is ensuring that those young students get the education that they need. We know that some of the children go to boarding schools, some of the children go to the school in Aurukun and, unfortunately, some of the children are disengaged. How do we as a government tackle those complex issues to make sure that every child has the same right to education?

If the Leader of the Opposition had been listening, he would know that I mentioned that on Monday we had been in lengthy discussions with the principal and two teachers, who will fly to Aurukun to run the school of distance education in the lead-up to the school holidays. We are managing this issue very closely. The education minister is managing this process with the sensitivity and the respect that it deserves.

Once again, I place on record my thanks to the teachers who have served the Aurukun community. It would have been an incredibly difficult decision for them to leave the community, as many of them have worked there for years and they have come to know the children very well. However, we need to make sure that those teachers are safe and that counselling is provided for them.

We will work very closely with the community. I am looking forward to going to Aurukun tomorrow with the Minister for Police and the Minister for Education, along with my director-general, Dave Stewart. I will correct the record for the benefit of the honourable member for Maroochydore: the other day, Dave Stewart was on the ground for over five hours and not an hour and a half, as the member said in this House. That was misleading—

*(Time expired)*

### Aurukun

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My second question is also to the Premier. In a statement made this morning, senior Wik women from Aurukun said—

Solving a problem with 15 disengaged youths by disengaging another 300 children from school is a recipe for disaster.

Given the Premier's previous answer, can she explain to the House why those women were not consulted before the decision to close the school was made?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am a bit concerned that he is not listening to the ministerial statements I have given in this House and the answer that I have just given. I have said that I am more than happy to raise these issues with the women. However, we have put clearly in place plans to continue the education of the children. The children are definitely going to receive an education. They will be at the PCYC receiving school of distance education with the principal and two teachers, who will fly in on Monday. I cannot be any clearer. It is a fundamental right of the children to have access to good quality education.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I rise to a point of order. I listened very closely to the Premier's responses, both yesterday and in her ministerial statement today. I have heard what she said. My question goes to not consulting the Wik women's group before the decision was made and not the Premier's statement that she will consult afterwards.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am happy to continue, because when our public servants, whether they are health professionals or educational professionals, serve in any capacity across our state, as the Premier of this state it is my responsibility and that of my ministers to ensure their safety. We have to ensure that they are safe. If they do not feel safe in a particular community, we have a moral responsibility to stand by those public servants.

**Ms TRAD:** A duty of care.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We have a duty of care to those public servants. I respect their decision. I respect that there are complex issues there. We are doing everything we can to address these complex issues.

I spoke at length to the mayor. The mayor is welcoming our attendance there tomorrow. I asked the mayor whether it would be appropriate for me, accompanied by my ministers and senior directors-general, to visit the community. The mayor embraced my suggestion. There will be an extensive community forum held with members of the Aurukun community tomorrow. I have also extended an invitation to the member for Cook to attend as well. We need to address these issues.

This morning I was also heartened by the fact that I received a call from the Prime Minister of our country asking me about the issues in Aurukun to which I said I would be attending there tomorrow and I would follow up with him. He was offering any help he could. The Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, contacted me this morning as well saying, 'Premier, is there anything else I can do to help?' This is a bipartisan offer. Unfortunately, I have not had a call from the Leader of the Opposition: 'Is there anything that we can do to help?'

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I do not want you to enter into a debate on the topic.

### Federal Government, Infrastructure Funding

**Mr FURNER:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, with the Prime Minister backing Queensland today, what support is this government getting to secure funding commitments from the Turnbull government?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Ferny Grove for that very important question. As the member for Ferny Grove rightly pointed out, the Prime Minister is in Queensland this morning. I understand he is on a farm at the moment, I think the Deputy Premier was mentioning—

**Ms Trad:** Looking at sweet potatoes.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—looking at sweet potatoes. We are led to believe the Prime Minister is about to make an announcement about infrastructure for water in this state. If it is the \$150 million that has been spoken about in the papers, that is part of a \$500 million fund that was formally announced by the previous prime minister over a year ago. What I say to the Prime Minister is this: 'It is good to get that money out.'

Unfortunately, we are still seeing a lack of commitment to key infrastructure projects across our state that are shovel ready. I know that the minister assisting me in North Queensland, the member for Townsville and the member for Thuringowa have been putting a very clear case for matching the funding for the Townsville stadium of \$100 million. If Malcolm Turnbull and the federal government announced that \$100 million as part of this federal election campaign we could begin construction on this project.

I had the mayor of Townsville in my office yesterday once again talking about the need to get capital projects underway in Townsville. We have had Johnathan Thurston here as well. We know that he is a very strong advocate for this project as well.

We need more investment from the federal government in relation to infrastructure because we know how critical jobs are for this state. We are yet to hear any alternative plans from those opposite. We know that they have no policies and they have no ideas. We know that their only plan is to sell our state's assets.

This week there have been three occasions—Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday—for the Leader of the Opposition to stand in this House and place clearly on the record once and for all whether the LNP still stands by its previous decision to sell Queensland's assets. There has been a very clear opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to state once and for all whether he is going to put that to the Queensland people again.

We have listened to the Queensland people. They have put their trust in us not to sell their assets. They have put their trust in us. We stand by our commitment and wait to hear the resolve of those opposite.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Nanango for her question, I am informed that we have students from the Park Ridge State School in the electorate of Logan in our public gallery observing our proceedings.

### Aurukun

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question without notice is to the Premier. Senior Wik women from Aurukun have said in a statement this morning that 'we are mothers in shock that our children—high-achieving children—will be deprived of schooling for the next five weeks'. What advice was received from the police on the ground in Aurukun that indicated that the problem with 15 disengaged youth could not be contained to ensure the school could remain open?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the Premier, I remind members of the importance of being able to verify the accuracy of statements and questions they ask.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. I have addressed this in length in the last two answers to questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I have made two ministerial statements in relation to this matter.

We take the concerns of the women very seriously. That is why my government is going to Aurukun tomorrow. I cannot be any clearer. We are going to listen to the community. I want to hear from the women and from the men firsthand—

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. We have had a number of genuine questions to the Premier about the processes that have led up to the closing of a school in Queensland. This question was about what advice was received—

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am happy to hear a range of points of order. The member for Callide is on his feet. I will hear his point of order then I will hear whoever wants to follow.

**Mr SEENEY:** This question was specifically about what advice was received from the police. We appreciate the comments that the Premier has already made, but we would also appreciate knowing what advice was received from the police that the situation could not be controlled.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Leader of Opposition Business's point of order is really an attempt to reframe the question and ask the question again and prosecute an argument about the question. I suggest that it is ruled out of order and we allow the Premier to continue to answer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am happy to call the Premier to respond to the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me make it very clear to the House and to the people of Queensland that there is nothing more important than the teachers' safety. Now we need to get the school up and running, which is why a principal is going there on Monday. We have identified the person. He will be going there on Monday with two other teachers.

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I reluctantly rise on a point of order again. The question is very specific. It is: what advice was received from the police on the ground in Aurukun that indicated the problem could not be contained? We would appreciate, and I think the people of Queensland would appreciate, if the Premier could indicate—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, I have heard your point of order. Resume your seat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am very disappointed that the opposition is trying to—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, honesty. Let us look at your record when it comes to—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If you want to go down that path, I will stand by the teachers of this state. It is about the right of teachers and public servants to be safe where they are working. I will stand by the teachers. If they do not feel safe they need to get out. That is what we did. We got them out.

The PCYC will be providing a safe environment for the children to attend. School of Distance Education will be happening on Monday. The education minister is coming with me to Aurukun tomorrow. We will be sitting down with the community and we will be addressing these issues.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I think that is disgraceful. That is disgraceful.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, you have had ample opportunity. You have had all morning to consider your comments. You are warned under standing order 253A for your unnecessary objections, and your adjoining colleague the member for Mount Ommaney is also warned under standing order 253A for her interjections. Member for Coomera, you will be next if you continue with your comments from your position.

### **Construction Industry**

**Ms PEASE:** My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise the state of activity in the Queensland residential construction sector?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the member for Lytton for her question. It is very good that we have this question because we had a statement earlier from the Leader of the Opposition which seems to be at odds with some of the things we are seeing in terms of trends in this state. The member for Clayfield earlier talked about a decrease in construction. Let us be clear: that is because the LNG plants have been built and the work is complete. That is the reality. What did he leave out of his earlier statement? I can report that the residential construction sector is one of the sectors which has responded very much with vigour to our positive economic agenda, which is about engendering confidence in our economy.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics yesterday reported the construction of medium- to high-density housing in Queensland has continued to record strong growth—a 6.7 per cent seasonally adjusted increase for the March quarter. That is higher than the national increase of 5.2 per cent but, very importantly, it is a 44.6 per cent improvement on the same time last year when the Palaszczuk government had just taken office—almost \$1.3 billion worth of activity in this sector. That means more work for tradies, local subcontractors and, of course, local builders.

Trends in terms of new-dwelling approvals, along with the recent information of the value of housing work which is yet to be done, suggest that the strengths in Queensland's dwelling construction sector is likely to continue. We are seeing terrific interest in the Queensland property market from investors who are obviously craving our fantastic lifestyle. Where else would you rather be than Queensland, with our low business taxes compared to the rest of the country and property prices which are the envy of those people who are in the overheated markets of Sydney and Melbourne?

Finally, one of the more promising signs of yesterday's ABS figures is the rise in renovation spending. This is a pretty important point. After three years when Queenslanders had very little security in terms of their jobs, particularly those government workers under the previous government—they lived in a climate of fear of losing those jobs—confidence is finally returning. Renovation activity rose by 5.2 per cent in the March quarter. This is a good sign that Queensland families feel they have a more secure economy and are happy to make investments in their home. That is demonstrated by rising consumer confidence shown in the Westpac consumer sentiment index. Ongoing business confidence is shown by the NAB Monthly Business Survey, which Queensland has led for 10 months in a row, obviously on the back of our budget last year—we are leading all mainland states.

Confidence is being driven by this government. It is in stark contrast to the sort of thing we heard in the statement earlier by the former treasurer, now Leader of the Opposition, who can find new ways each and every day of talking the economy down. He did it in opposition. He did it in government. Now he is doing it in opposition again. That is the sort of thing that has hurt our economy including the cuts he made to jobs and services and his wishy-washy position when it comes to assets sales. We on this side of the House are clear. We have an economic plan that we delivered in last year's budget. It is delivering for Queensland. The signs in the economy are on the improve because of that buoyant confidence and because of our positivity about Queensland's economy.

### **Construction Industry**

**Mr EMERSON:** My question is to the Premier. Despite the Treasurer just claiming that the construction sector has never had it so good, ABS construction figures released yesterday—

**Mr PITT:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This term was used earlier this week. I have never said that. I take offence to that and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Indooroopilly, can you withdraw the comments that the Treasurer found offensive?

**Mr EMERSON:** I withdraw. Again, my question is to the Premier. ABS construction figures released yesterday show the value of construction work done in Queensland slumped over the last year by \$13.8 billion, and I ask: is this not further evidence that this Labor government is asleep at the wheel?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the shadow Treasurer for the question. I look forward to reading a policy from the member opposite when he gets time to write one. As everyone is aware, the reduction in the construction work in Queensland is currently being driven by the wind-down in engineering construction as a result of the LNG industry. I am quite sure that when they were in government they would have realised the trend was coming down because of that \$60 billion worth of construction work—

**A government member:** Who started that?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. I take that interjection. I think it was the former Labor government that kickstarted that brand-new industry in Queensland. Now we are focusing on another industry—biofuels, and I will have a lot more to say about that next week.

Here we are focusing on jobs, focusing on the Deputy Premier's infrastructure plan, making sure that we have infrastructure in our budget next month to help drive regional economies, to help deliver jobs for Queenslanders. Let us contrast that with the record of those opposite. When it came to the second stage of Gold Coast Light Rail, where was the former treasurer? In fact, former Queensland treasurer Tim Nicholls is still not a supporter of the pre-2018 Gold Coast Light Rail extension. That is his record—not in favour.

When we talk about construction, we only need to look across the road here at 1 William Street to see the dreadful deal that the former treasurer made in the construction of that. What happened? They sold off seven buildings in the CBD. For a profit, one may ask? No. It was for a loss—\$237 million less than the book value. How embarrassing—\$237 million! Let us ask the Minister for Health what \$237 million could do in our health system. We could have more nurses and more doctors, delivering for regional communities right across the state. Let us ask the Minister for Education what could be done with \$237 million in education. We could have more schools across our state. But, no, the evidence of those opposite was very clear—no support for construction, and the construction they did support was a bad deal for Queensland taxpayers and a bad deal for Queensland.

### Advancing Health 2026

**Ms BOYD:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Can the minister update the House on the Advancing Health 2026 strategy he launched last week, and is he aware of any other alternative approaches to health system strategic planning?

**Mr DICK:** I am very pleased to be asked by the member for Pine Rivers about Advancing Health 2026—our government's 10-year vision and strategy for our state's health system. I say to the member for Pine Rivers that, as our government does on so many things, we consulted very widely about this plan—unlike those members opposite, who of course gagged community organisations who are funded by the government. That was part of the funding arrangements put in place by the Leader of the Opposition when he was treasurer.

We listen to other people's views. We are not frightened of them. We are not frightened of the views of others. We like to talk to people and not arrogantly dictate to them. I can say that the response to Advancing Health 2026 has been overwhelmingly positive. The Queensland Council of Social Service said they 'are excited to see this vision that puts every Queenslander at the centre of our health system'. Mark Tucker-Evans, the Chief Executive of the Council on the Ageing and also the Chair of Health Consumers Queensland, said, 'We commend the shift in focus to a health and wellbeing system and placing the consumer—the patient, family and carer—at the heart of the system.'

I was very proud to launch Advancing Health 2026 in front of almost 300 health consumers at the first annual forum for Health Consumers Queensland. These are people with lived experience of the health system. We need to listen to them and incorporate their views into what we do in the health system.

I want to draw a distinction between what the Australian Labor Party does and what the members opposite do. How did they launch their blueprint for health? They went to the great hall of the people—they went to the ballroom of the Sofitel, they had a fundraiser for the LNP and you could pay for a ticket to go and hear their launch. A ticket cost \$200 per person if you came in off the street, but thankfully you got a consumer discount if you were an LNP consumer! If you were an LNP member, it cost you only \$135.

*Tabled paper.* Document, undated, titled "Our Health Partnership" Great State. Great Opportunity.', an invitation to attend the LNP's unveiling of the blueprint for health and hospital partnerships [\[789\]](#).

Currently in the 'where are they now?' file, the former leader of the opposition, the member for Southern Downs, and the former premier were trying to make money while taking their vision of health to the people of Queensland. That is not the way—

**A government member:** Great shame.

**Mr DICK:** It is a shame. I take the interjections from the members of the government.

**Mr Pitt:** Didn't he take it on the bus?

**Mr DICK:** Get on the bus or get underneath the bus, I think is what the former premier said. That is not the way to develop a vision. That is not the way to talk to the people of Queensland: requiring people to pay money, to put it into the pockets of the LNP, when they still have not explained who their big donors are.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection. We tell everyone in Queensland which unions donate to us. Everyone in Queensland knows. The members opposite still will not tell people about who they donate to. That is the difference between us and those opposite, who have no vision, no ideas and no plans for Queensland.

Interruption.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.00 am): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I have been advised that the Director-General of the Department of Health, Mr Michael Walsh, has not applied to be appointed to the position of director-general of the Department of Health in New South Wales, nor has he been headhunted for that position. Mr Speaker, I listened to your comments earlier in the day which were very clear about factual statements being made in the House. It has become the practice of those members opposite to come in and make false claims—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, it is not an opportunity to enter into a debate. You have risen on a matter of privilege suddenly arising.

**Mr DICK:** Mr Speaker, I call on the member for Surfers Paradise to either explain to the House the basis of his claim or to withdraw and apologise immediately to Mr Walsh.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, will you please write to me about that matter you have just raised?

**Mr DICK:** On the basis of the member for Surfers Paradise saying nothing, I will write to you, Mr Speaker.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under standing order 253A. You have had a pretty good go this morning. That is your first warning.

### Public Transport, Fares Review

 **Mr POWELL:** My question without notice is to the Premier. Given the government has refused to release the long overdue public transport fares review, will the Premier guarantee not to increase public transport fares at all?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. As members realise, my government made a commitment that we would undertake a fare review of public transport in South-East Queensland. It was started under the former minister for transport, the Deputy Premier, and it has continued under the current Minister for Transport, Minister Hinchliffe. That report is due to be released by the middle of the year, and that report will be released by the middle of the year. We understand that cost of living is a very important issue for Queenslanders, unlike those opposite who did not understand that when they were in government. We will be making very—

**Ms Trad** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; I take that interjection. There has been an over 40 per cent increase in electricity prices. We will be considering the report very closely, and I look forward to making an announcement in the very near future.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Albert is now warned under standing order 253A.

### Townsville, Crime

**Mr STEWART:** My question is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services. Will the minister please inform the House of the official crime trend in Townsville over the past decade and what actions the Queensland Police Service is taking to keep the community safe?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for Townsville for his strong advocacy for and on behalf of the Queensland Police Service and their work in Townsville and that region. The police are on the beat tackling the problem in the Townsville region, and I commend them for that. The Tactical Crime Squad

and the RAP are important parts of that response. I have spoken to the commissioner to convey my support and the support of this side of the House for their efforts, and I look forward to joining the Attorney-General in Townsville to discuss youth justice.

These positive steps are in real contrast to the slander dished up last night by the opposition in this House. The opposition's ravings about crime only served to damage Townsville's reputation as a safe tourist destination. Their speeches were a direct blight, as was the motion, on the efforts of the hardworking police in the north. There is no other interpretation. I will not cop those sorts of attacks on police, whether it is the idiots on the streets in Townsville or it is the ignorance shown by those across the chamber.

What is the truth about the crime stats? I am advised that official police crime stats over the past decade reflect a downward trend in Townsville. These figures show that in the past 10 years in Townsville overall offences and offences against the person have dropped around 20 per cent, and property offences have dropped more than 35 per cent. To take points-in-time snapshots of raw crime data and try to exploit that for political opportunity demonstrates the agenda being run by those opposite. If we were going to do that, using the road toll as an example, after the Easter road toll results this year—a fantastic result—we would be saying that the problem is solved, that we do not need to do any more because of the fantastic result we had at a point in time, but the fact is that the road toll is tracking about one less than at this point in time last year. It is ridiculous to take crime stats at a point in time in raw data and try to extrapolate that as far as the circumstances.

The crime rate in Townsville is declining. That is what the official figures say and that is where we are. It is about time those opposite started to support the Police Service and their efforts. I am backing targeted enforcement with evidence based programs, like Project Booyah, to redirect youth offenders at all levels of criminal participation—unlike the efforts of those opposite in the youth offender space, which was characterised by populist policy on the run, no cost-benefit analysis, no measurable outcomes and dodgy contracts to back it all up. Our government is getting on with the job. I support the Queensland Police Service. It is about time those—

*(Time expired)*

### **Aurukun**

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the Minister for Police. Considering the Premier could not answer the previous question about police advice on the ground at Aurukun, what advice was received from police on the ground—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is an imputation in the member's preamble, and I think we should move on to another question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I will allow the question.

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the police minister. What advice was received from police on the ground at Aurukun that indicated the problem with 15 disengaged youth could not be contained to ensure the school could remain open?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. Since my first visit to Aurukun in recent times, in December last year, we have been given very specific advice on a regular basis about the situation in Aurukun. I find this sort of questioning to be in stark contrast to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, but if this is the track they want to go down—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr BYRNE:** I find the comments slightly in contrast to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. Police provide regular advice to me and to government about situations in all parts of Queensland. As I have said before in this House, it is not the role of government to be dictating the effort and resources as far as actions in particular locations in particular circumstances. What I can say is that the Queensland Police Service are confident they have the resources in place in Aurukun to deal with the situation as it ebbs and flows. That has been the constant advice to government about the situation at Aurukun. From a purely policing perspective, they deploy their resources with great flexibility and great capacity to deal with the situation as revealed on the ground by those who understand what is happening.

The commissioner and I were party to the meeting yesterday that was published. Advice was provided to that meeting, but I am not in a position to tell this chamber the advice that was provided in circumstances as was evident yesterday. The advice is honest and forthcoming. It is part of the

considerations of a whole-of-government response. It is not a sole factor. There are many other factors that inform government decisions about the wellbeing of employees, not the least of which is the perception of the employees themselves.

The Queensland Police Service advice has been precise, thorough and well informed right through this process. There is a suggestion that there is some wedge involved here. There are many pieces of advice that government receives, and the challenge in a complex environment with a complex set of factors, as admitted by the Leader of the Opposition, is to consider all of those pieces of advice, all of the situations and all of the emotions involved and land in a position that is amenable to most. That is the situation we are in.

I invite the Leader of the Opposition and those opposite to actually engage in a positive way. I thought yesterday was strangely unusual for those in the opposition. I thought the comments they made were characterised by a new sense of them thinking, 'Let us try and do something good for the people of Queensland and the people of Aurukun. Let us not turn this into a political football,' but I see those opposite simply cannot avoid the opportunity. It is a sad reflection—

**Mr SEENEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive. We have asked—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, there is no point of order in relation to you finding those comments offensive. I would urge the minister to not engage in a debate of the topic. I think the minister has answered the question.

Before I call the member for Greenslopes for his question, I am informed that we have students from the Park Ridge State School in the electorate of Logan in our gallery observing our proceedings.

### **TAFE Queensland**

**Mr KELLY:** My question is to the Minister for Training and Skills. Will the minister please explain what actions TAFE Queensland is undertaking to expand the employment opportunities available to Queenslanders?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question and his real passion for the role that TAFE can play as a pre-eminent public provider of vocational education and training in this state. The Palaszczuk government is honouring an election commitment to rescue TAFE, and we are working with TAFE to do much more than that. In recent weeks TAFE Queensland has signed a series of new international agreements that enhance its reputation throughout the Asia-Pacific and around the world. During the Deputy Premier's recent trade mission to Indonesia, she witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between TAFE Queensland and Indonesia's Ministry of Home Affairs. This agreement will help grow the number of international students choosing Queensland as their training destination of choice. It will pave the way for collaboration in aid and development funded programs, management training, capacity building for staff, and the delivery of offshore training, including improving the skills of Indonesian firefighters.

TAFE's international partnerships do not just create opportunities for overseas students to learn here; they provide the chance for Queenslanders to learn their trades in some of the world's most prestigious venues. Last week, along with the member for Greenslopes I visited the Mount Gravatt campus and witnessed the signing of an agreement between TAFE Queensland and Bunka Fashion College in Japan. The Bunka Fashion College is ranked the second best fashion school in the world—I repeat: second in the world—and has been producing the finest designers for 97 years. This agreement for exchange programs opens up amazing opportunities for TAFE students and will bring up-and-coming Japanese fashion students here to enjoy Queensland.

I know the fashion courses at Mount Gravatt TAFE are fantastic. They put on incredible parades and have state-of-the-art facilities, which is why this agreement has been entered into. It is a sign of the high regard in which TAFE's fashion courses are held and is a real shot of confidence in our public provider. It is part of a broader engagement between TAFE Queensland and training providers in Japan.

Earlier this month I had the pleasure of bestowing upon Iron Chef Sakai the honorary title of TAFE culinary ambassador to Japan and also the pleasure of tasting some of his amazing food. As part of this partnership, two of TAFE Queensland's culinary students will earn the chance to travel to Japan and learn at the side of Iron Chef Sakai in one of his restaurants later this year. This is a great initiative of TAFE and it puts Queensland on the map in international education. We look forward to working with TAFE Queensland to put us on the world stage.

### Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Construction Delays

**Mr KRAUSE:** My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the stop-work meetings holding up progress on the Commonwealth Games preparations. Does the Premier support these stop-work meetings?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I urge members to ensure that their questions are not asking for an opinion.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is part of EB negotiations. Let us get the facts right. There is no stop-work meeting. Perhaps the member should get his facts right. I have said very clearly that I have every faith that the Minister for the Commonwealth Games is ensuring the projects on the Gold Coast for the Commonwealth Games are delivered on time.

As these matters are to do with EB negotiations, once again let me reiterate to this House that I encourage the company and the union to sort these issues out. Those opposite do not understand these types of negotiations because they had no respect or regard for the law when they were in office previously. As the minister reminded this House once again this morning, they stripped away workers' rights.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier has answered the question.

### Small Business

**Mr WILLIAMS:** My question is to the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is making it easier for Queensland small businesses to do business with government?

**Ms ENOCH:** I thank the member for Pumicestone for his question. I know that he connects with small business in his electorate regularly and that he is interested in supporting small business. The Palaszczuk government is determined to provide Queensland's small and medium sized businesses with the opportunity to grow and thrive. To help deliver on this agenda for businesses right across the state, we are focused on making ICT procurement a simpler and more transparent process. Today I am delighted to advise the House about a significant Australian-first enhancement to the Queensland government ICT Dashboard to do just that. The revamped ICT Dashboard website now provides not only a transparent display of all government projects currently underway but also an array of information on ICT tenders to help small business find and bid for government ICT work.

At the moment the dashboard is highlighting ICT projects worth more than \$797 million of planned expenditure across 145 projects. The ICT Dashboard shows all of these projects at various stages of their life cycle, with information powered from the Queensland government QTenders website. With a couple of mouse clicks, small business can see a whole-of-government summary of ICT projects as well as a breakdown of projects by department—clearly showing the details of each project. From the dashboard, ICT suppliers can find out about current and upcoming government work, including invitations to offer, requests for interest and expressions of interest. By providing all of this information in one place, the Palaszczuk government is helping deliver some certainty to small business when it comes to accessing government ICT contracts. This enhancement of the ICT Dashboard will help small businesses plan their proposals, business strategies and future resourcing.

Small businesses can also easily identify closed tenders. It is very pleasing to quote the chair of the Council of ICT Associations, Nick Tate, who said that the revamped dashboard would provide important tools for ICT service providers to better access Queensland government work. He went on—

Industry strongly values the ability to gain greater insight into government's current projects and tenders.

That is a great endorsement from the chair of the Council of ICT Associations. As Queensland moves into the knowledge economy of the future with vibrant small business and start-up sectors, it is important government innovates to improve access to government ICT contracts, remains committed to openness and transparency, and makes the site easy to use for both the ICT industry and members of the public.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to introduce improvements to the ICT Dashboard to make it valuable for the ICT industry and for the community more broadly.

### Dairy Farmers

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Agriculture. In the year 2000 there were 1,500 dairy farmers in Queensland and now there are no more than 430 farmers. Their frustrations were revealed in yesterday's rally. I ask: can the minister advise what she is doing to support the dairy farmers' push for a sustainable milk price?

**Ms DONALDSON:** I thank the member for Dalrymple for his question. There has been a lot in the media and on social media in recent days about the problems that beset dairy producers across the nation and here in Queensland. As we know, the southern dairy companies have announced significant reductions in what they pay their suppliers. As well, we have seen the effect that the supermarket competition price war is having on all suppliers. Dairy companies have introduced farmer support mechanisms, which are essentially just a short-term loan. The member is right that currently there are around 433 dairy producers. They produce around 411 million litres of milk per year, and that is significantly down.

The issue around milk supply is around the national milk market. The processors trade milk to meet their own supply and demand and processing requirements. As I said earlier today, there is a lot of work being done in the background. My department works very closely with dairy farmers. They do a lot of work in research, development and extension, looking for export and other market opportunities for the dairy industry, and around attracting investment in Queensland to try to expand and grow the industry.

One of the things that people may have seen was the debate last night between Barnaby Joyce, Joel Fitzgibbon and Richard Di Natale in which there were some discussions around a floor price for milk. The Deputy Prime Minister ruled that out. The Queensland government's priority, as I said, is around investment attraction and export market opportunities to support our dairy farmers and to try to open doors for export markets for them.

### **Domestic and Family Violence**

**Ms FARMER:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. I ask: will the minister outline how innovation can help Queensland as we work to change our culture on domestic and family violence?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Bulimba for her question. Last night she was with the Premier, me and many other members of this House at the reception we had for domestic and family violence workers right across the state. I know she is passionate about tackling this issue.

At the end of last month I visited Mount Isa with Dame Quentin Bryce. Here we heard firsthand about some of the challenges affecting residents and service providers in Mount Isa and the surrounding communities. Sadly, Mount Isa has one of the highest rates of applications for domestic violence orders in this state. Its remoteness from the east coast, particularly the south-east region, presents even more challenges. Victims of domestic and family violence in these communities often face isolation and a lack of access to face-to-face services. That is why we need to be looking at things differently. We do need innovative solutions to tackle domestic and family violence in some of our more rural and remote communities. We need to work together to identify high-risk perpetrators earlier and reach out to help victims quickly.

Dame Quentin Bryce's special domestic and family violence task force recommended three integrated service response trials across Queensland. I am pleased to inform the House that on my visit to Mount Isa recently we announced that this new and innovative approach to tackling domestic and family violence will be trialled in Mount Isa. I would like to thank the member for Mount Isa for his support for this very important announcement. The three-year integrated service response trial will be up and running later this year. This response enables everyone with a role in keeping victims safe and holding perpetrators to account—our police, hospitals, domestic violence services and corrections staff—to collaborate and work together following the same model and risk assessment. An integrated response means that we can reach out to victims of domestic and family violence earlier; identify high-risk perpetrators and hold them to account; and provide a better, more streamlined risk assessment and service response. Ultimately, this is about saving lives.

That is not all we are doing. I am continuing to work with businesses and CEO Challenge to also develop innovative solutions in the workplace such as workplace training to help tackle domestic and family violence at work. We are all spending more and more time at work. We absolutely need to be working with business and workplaces on how to better support victims. Of course, our government is leading the way, providing 10 days paid domestic violence leave for Public Service employees. This week we saw the Human Rights Commission weigh in, calling on the Turnbull government to provide paid domestic violence leave for public servants. It is so disappointing to see the Turnbull government again talking the talk on domestic and family violence but failing to live up to it.

### North Stradbroke Island, Mining

**Dr ROBINSON:** My question is to the Minister for Environment. I refer to Labor's decision to prematurely close the North Stradbroke Island mine, and I ask: will the minister now publicly release an audited version—

**Mr Furner** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Ferny Grove, you are warned under standing order 253A for your interjections.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members. We do not need a cheer squad. I will ask the member for Cleveland to repeat your question, please.

**Dr ROBINSON:** I refer to Labor's decision to prematurely close the North Stradbroke Island mine, and I ask: will the minister now publicly released an audited version of the \$28 million assistance program that the minister claimed last night existed for those who are destined to lose their jobs?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Cleveland for his question and note that last night the House did indeed make a decision about the future of North Stradbroke Island. Sandmining was always going to end on North Stradbroke Island and a responsible government sets a time frame and puts in place a plan for transition. If the member for Cleveland was a responsible representative of those people, he would support a responsible process to set a time frame for transitioning the island. I repeat my plea from last night that he end his cruel, divisive campaign—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I would urge you not to engage in a debate with the member for Cleveland.

**Dr ROBINSON:** I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

**Dr MILES:** I withdraw. Now that the decision has been made by the parliament, we can finalise the economic transition plan. Until the parliament had made that decision, after a lengthy and divisive debate, many of the stakeholders were not prepared to actively engage in the consultation. It was appropriate to keep the economic transition plan open so that, now that the decision has been made, we can give those stakeholders an opportunity to engage further. This is a \$28 million package. What kind of MP in this House would oppose a \$28 million package for his own constituents? This is a responsible plan that will transition the economy and support the workers.

We now have an opportunity to make Straddie everything it can and should be, and the member for Cleveland should get behind that effort. If the member for Cleveland wants to contribute further to the economic transition strategy, I invite him to come and meet with us and provide his ideas, just like any responsible member of this place would do when they have a government that is prepared to spend \$28 million in their community.

We had a long and important debate about this last night, and we have settled that debate. For the sake the Straddie community I call on the member for Cleveland to move on and work with us so that Straddie can transition.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are now warned under standing order 253A. You have had a pretty good go.

### Great Barrier Reef

**Mr CRAWFORD:** My question is of the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef. Will the minister tell the House what the government is doing to protect our greatest icon, the Great Barrier Reef?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Barron River for his question. It is, of course, refreshing to have a member in this place who cares about tourism jobs in their community and committed to protecting the asset which attracts those tourists.

In the wake of the distressing coral-bleaching event that has affected the Great Barrier Reef over this long summer, our efforts to protect the reef and the jobs that depend on it are more important than ever. As I indicated earlier, yesterday I received the final report of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce which contains 10 key recommendations. A greater focus on innovation, education support for farmers and expanded monitoring of water quality are among the recommendations of the task force and its chair, Chief Scientist Dr Geoff Garrett.

I take this opportunity to thank the task force for its hard work and advice on how the water quality targets could be achieved and the priorities for investing our additional \$90 million over four years. The members of the task force embraced a difficult and challenging brief. I hope they will be proud of the legacy which has been created by this important report. The government will formally consider the recommendations of the task force and respond in due course, but there are a number of actions arising from the report that we will begin to implement immediately.

We will consult closely with regional stakeholders to design two major integrated projects focusing on cane in the Wet Tropics and grazing in the Burdekin. The purpose of these projects, which have been earmarked for up to \$33.5 million, will be to evaluate the most effective combination of tools to inform future programs. One of the key recommendations of the task force is to provide more effective, targeted and coordinated extension services to support large-scale land management practice change. Nearly \$20 million is allocated to this work.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Question time has finished.

## **RURAL AND REGIONAL ADJUSTMENT (DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE) AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Introduction**

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.34 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Rural and Regional Adjustment (Development Assistance) Amendment Bill 2016 [\[790\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Rural and Regional Adjustment (Development Assistance) Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes [\[791\]](#).

The genesis of the Rural and Regional Adjustment (Development Assistance) Amendment Bill goes back to 2012 when I was first elected to parliament. The drought had started in Western Queensland, and when I became a member of parliament I became aware of some of the issues. In 2013, when the drought had set in, the mayors of Western Queensland were in crisis mode. They had some big problems, and they talked about assistance in the form of a stimulus package worth billions of dollars in order to keep going or they would lose a substantial portion of the population. They also considered a possible discount on rates and there were other different ideas, but none of that ever came about. It is important to recognise that since that point the situation has deteriorated substantially, so what they were calling a crisis situation back in 2013 has deteriorated even further and there has been nothing substantial to turn it around during that period.

I am sure that, like myself, many others have been trying to think of ways to create structural change to reinvigorate the community, to create some hope and to stabilise the decline in rural towns so that that the situation can be turned around. The question is how we do that in a cost-effective way for taxpayers. We begin by looking at the major industries out there. In the Mount Isa electorate there is cattle and mining: mining goes up and down, but the cattle are always there. The cattle industry supports the majority of the towns in my electorate, so if the cattle industry is healthy then businesses in town are healthy. I could take all members of this House on a trip to the towns in my electorate that are not Cloncurry and Mount Isa—and they are having problems with mining at the moment—and if one walks through the supermarkets and the pharmacies they are doing 40 per cent and sometimes down to 30 per cent of what they used to. They cannot sell their shops because no-one will ever buy them. They cannot afford to leave town. They are stuck, there is despair and there is no future for them. This is creating all sorts of very dire social problems in these areas. This is a problem for the government because these economies are not living up to their potential and functioning as they should.

The good news for us as a government is that there is light at the end of the tunnel, but the issue is getting us from the position we are in now to where we can capitalise on this prosperity or blue sky down the road. To do that we need to reinvigorate the industries, and I do not think that any government has an appetite to go through all of these towns and provide a subsidy or rates allocation. If we reinvigorate industries around the town there is more money going through the tills at the pubs and other businesses, so then we start looking at the industries. In the cattle industry, the biggest cost component on their profit-and-loss statement on the aggregate is the interest they pay on their bill.

If we go through the MLA report on the northern beef cattle grazing industry it says that, before the cost of interest, these are viable industries. The interest on the debt has grown and has become a burden that is now too big for people to handle, so when we are looking at trying to fix this industry the

biggest problem is rural debt. If we are trying to turn that around, the focus should be to provide structural change and a pathway to put this industry back on its feet. Make no mistake: there is a very serious rural decline happening at the moment which has no chance of turning around. If we do nothing, there is no opportunity to turn it around.

There is a cost-effective way of doing that, and that is by looking at the rural debt situation. To that end, there have been discussions with both sides of the House, and we are very grateful to the Treasurer, with bipartisan support, for resourcing a rural debt task force which I had the pleasure of chairing. I compliment the shadow agriculture minister and the member for Ipswich West for their participation. They gave up a lot of their time—and it was a lot of their time—to go out and get a feel for what is going on out there and to get a picture of what I and other rural members experience in their general day-to-day travels. We hear conversations about moving into other areas to see if there are solutions that can be applied to the cattle industry which could also be applied across other industries to broaden their effects, and I think that would be to everyone's benefit.

As part of that task force there was a strong endorsement of the fact that most people are burdened by the interest they are paying on their debt. In their businesses there are a lot of things they can do. I will put it into the context of the cattle industry. Everyone was celebrating the fact that the price had increased, but in the north in particular—I can speak with some knowledge of the north, maybe not so much of the gulf—in a large part of the Mount Isa electorate no-one has any cattle left. If people have too much rural debt, the bank is not going to lend them more money to buy cattle. The only way to improve if they do have grass and if it does rain is to buy more stock, but no-one has the ability to buy more stock.

Everything at the moment is frozen. The banks have a problem, these businesses have a problem, the businesses in the town have a problem and employment in the town is a problem because at the moment this industry is frozen. It has been seized by the rural debt burden. If we can address that, it will go a long way to reinvigorating towns and providing employment and enabling agriculture—I will also talk about the cattle industry—to do the job it can do for the economy. It can do great and wonderful things, as it always has.

We are a competitive industry now, but participants just need the tools to do the job properly. Someone can be the best grazer in the world on the best block of dirt, but if they are hit with a live-export ban and then three years of drought nothing is going to save them. That is the situation many people have found themselves in. To put some figures on that, anecdotally the average debt size in the north-west region is about \$4 million. They can be paying anywhere from \$200,000 to \$400,000 a year in interest. There are large variances, but that pales in comparison to the drought concessional loans. They can save maybe \$10,000 or \$15,000 through the existing drought concessional loans. They can get the \$20,000 water infrastructure subsidy. I do not mean to be ungrateful—that is taxpayers' money that goes out there—but that is almost throwing good money after bad. The water infrastructure is good, but the drought concessional loans are not doing the job they are supposed to.

The evidence is there. I refer to the DAF figures as at December 2015. Of the 265 drought concessional loans, only four went to the Mount Isa electorate. That area represents a third of Queensland and is arguably the worst drought affected area. The scheme just does not work and does not do its job. The industry out there is dying with no help at the moment. The government does not have access to cheap diesel, cheap molasses or cheap transport, but it does have access to cheap money. It is not a matter of loaning more money; it is a matter of restructuring the debt they currently have.

We have already had banks writing off a rounded figure of \$24 billion of debt over the past three years. There is an appetite for the banks to do write-offs themselves. As we heard through the rural debt task force, the APRA guidelines that apply to the rural lenders make it, in some cases, impossible for them to back and carry what would otherwise be industry-leading participants. There are producers out there who are great contributors to our economy and are in no way a burden—they are paying their interest—but they do not fit the lending criteria under APRA, which banks have to operate under to be fair to their shareholders. The banks themselves will admit that their products cannot carry people over, say, a three-year period of drought or a live-export ban. They cannot accommodate those people. Otherwise they are good, viable prospects. If we throw in the element of debt write-offs, we have a good critical mass of producers out there who, with some assistance to get through the tough times, will be there for the good times.

If we do not provide that assistance we get what we are getting now, which is the do-nothing approach of putting one's head in the sand. People are leaving the land. Their kids are not coming through under them. We are losing them for good and we are losing them out of the towns as well. It impacts the entire social fabric.

Please do not think, 'This is just cyclical. This is how the market operates and these towns will regenerate.' Towns out in the west die all the time. There is a whole string of them along the Flinders Highway. Towns do die and they are dying at the moment. It is much more expensive for government to try to prop up these towns and maintain a support network in regional areas. If we do not have auxiliary firefighters or the CWA doing jobs or running social events, we start paying public servants to do it. We can look after ourselves out there if government enables the industry. The industry will carry itself.

There are two big misconceptions about this. One is that we are carrying people who are bad operators, who are bad for the books. I can give examples of some industry best operators who just do not fit the drought concession criteria by virtue of the fact that they just got hit by drought or the live-export ban. No producer in the world could have avoided that. With the element of write-offs thrown in, they are good clients. They go straight back into AAA for any bank or lending authority. Anyone who knows anything about the industry and old style bankers would say, 'They are the best customers. They will not pay themselves a wage for two years but they will make sure the interest is paid every month.' It actually works the opposite sometimes. Some people may be in a good capital position but are poor producers. They might have poor animal husbandry and are not industry best but are just in a stronger capital position. They are called more viable. On the other hand, I might be the best producer out there—I am innovative, I have good animal husbandry and I am looking after the environment and doing everything well—but because my loan to valuation ratio was triggered I am kicked off, so I leave town, take my wife and kids and try to find work in Townsville. That is what is happening right now. We can stop that and we can enable those good producers, who have the right to be out there, through a very cost-effective scheme. The good news is that this has been done twice in Queensland's history and multiple times in the nation's history.

One of the mechanisms used previously was the QIDC. It was sold for a billion dollars. It was not a burden to the taxpayer but it was sold for a billion dollars. Far from being a burden, these sorts of vehicles can be of benefit. In the meantime, we are enabling industries and reinvigorating them. We are removing the need to go back into these towns and try to subsidise or reinvigorate them in other ways, through public works or public servants' jobs. These can be helpful too, but there is a cost-effective way to do this through industries that already exist and keep them there.

Another misconception is that everyone is doing it well out there. I had a really fruitful meeting with the agriculture minister, who came out to Julia Creek the other week. I think it is very relevant to the discussion we are having. There were seven to 10 families in the room. I thought all of them were doing pretty well in the McKinlay district. To a T, every one of them was in big trouble. That does not ground-truth at all with what is being said by policymakers at the state and federal levels to this point, that the problem is not as bad as we think and there are a lot of people still going okay out there.

I go back to this scenario in Julia Creek. One of the pertinent statements made by one family, who I thought were actually doing quite well, was, 'We have worked very hard all our lives. We wanted to retire and set up the kids so that they could come on the place. We did not need much money to retire. It was not going to be a lavish retirement. We were going to set up the kids so we could stop working as hard, perhaps even still live out on the place and hand over and get the debt down. Following the live-export ban and the drought, the interest just keeps ballooning out now.' Part of it was that they had to buy a place to keep their cattle alive, to keep themselves solvent. It was not that they are just really wealthy and they had to expand; they had to expand to try to keep cattle alive as part of their business.

One of those people said to me, 'I'm in my 70s. I want to retire. I can't afford to. I've got more debt than I've ever had in my life. There's not enough income off this place to employ my kids here, so I'm working harder than I ever have, I've got more debt and my kids have got no chance of coming home.' That is something we have to turn around. Many people seem to be comfortable that we should just say, 'Let the market take its course and this is just how things happen.'

Charleville is a good example of a town that seems to be having this issue in that institutional buyers and absentee landlords buy places in the district that used to be family farms. Those families did a lot of things in the town such as running the auxiliary fire brigade, fetes and races. They help prop that town up. If two or three families leave and either an institutional buyer or a foreign owner or someone else comes in and buys that farm that reduces that critical mass in those districts. Everyone seems to think that that scenario is okay because if the cost structure is still the same, which I would say it is—they do not have some magic formula that makes it run a lot more efficiently—people say, 'They'll go broke anyway in 10 or 20 years. It doesn't matter if we've got foreign owners buying it. They'll go broke and you can buy it back in 20 years.'

Firstly, it is such an irresponsible thing for a government to stand by and say, 'That's all right. We don't mind if the property runs down and that town falls apart because we can buy it back and try to pick things up again in 20 years time.' I do not think that is an option that anyone would be comfortable with if we really think about it. Secondly, if Rob Katter is a good producer who has his family in a western area and is doing a good job, why should it be that someone with a capital advantage—and let us pick on foreign investors or foreign buyers that get access to cheap capital to come in and buy it—competes with me? If people want to be purists and say that we should not prop things up, they are propping that foreign investor up because that foreign investor can use subsidised capital from overseas and compete with me. I would have to leave town with the kids and then we have an absentee owner and we will have kids doing their gap year managing it.

I do not want to be disparaging about employed management because there are some good managers out there, but a lot of the time it is getting harder and harder so we are getting 457 or backpacker workers or kids doing their gap year managing these places that do not do the same job as someone who has lived and breathed the place for the last 50 years. Again, that does not pass the fairness test. Why should that foreign investor be able to compete with me because he can access subsidised capital? I am not saying that I need to be subsidised to the same extent as him, but I should at least be given the ability to stay in that market. Everyone seems to think, 'It's fine. This'll resolve itself because we'll just replace this all with capital.' There is an economic component to this but there is also a very big social component. Many members in this House know exactly what I am talking about when I say that the very fabric of the towns that people live in out there is being entirely compromised. If we do nothing, it will not be a very nice future out there.

Central to this discussion is the rural debt that we need to address. We can all equivocate and debate and say, 'It's not a big problem. I know a lot of producers out there doing it well and some parts of agriculture are doing fine,' but no-one can argue with this graph that I have. This graph shows rural debt versus net farm profitability. There have been anomalies and changes in years, and this is not all about people just buying more farms, albeit that there have been low interest rates and property inflation and banks getting behind people that allowed them to do that. That did contribute, but a lot of this is just people borrowing more to cover their costs to get through next year. There is a big issue here that we need to address.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr KATTER:** That is over a 20- or 30-year period. That does not cover the live-export ban and drought; that covers 20 to 30 years. There are many profitability issues that we need to address, and smarter people than me can address that. Discussion of a reconstruction board is the start of stabilisation, but before we start addressing all of these things there are many cost factors. I am sure other people have ideas on how to address this in its entirety, but something needs to stop the trend shown on that graph and at the moment it is not only an economic problem but a social problem, and I table that graph.

*Tabled paper:* Graph, undated, titled 'Rural Debt & NVFP' [792].

With regard to the solution, the KAP is very open to modifying how this is enabled. However, there needs to be a mechanism that acknowledges that there are some viable businesses in this industry, and let us not just focus on the cattle industry; this is about saving rural towns, because the cash through the tills comes from the businesses around them. There are a lot of viable businesses out there and the banks themselves admit that they do not have the products that properly match seasonal variations and market shocks from political influence like live-export bans. Banks do not have the products under the APRA guidelines to fit that, so until we get around that we are never going to address that problem properly and we will be tinkering at the edges. There are many eloquent ways that that can be designed, but there needs to be somewhere for these people who are good producers and who will be fantastic contributors for the next 30 or 50 years to the Queensland economy to go—always have, always will be. These people have hit hard times and they need to get through this period. Drought concessional loans are not doing the job. As I said, four out of 265 have gone out for one-third of Queensland in the Mount Isa electorate. They are not doing the job and there needs to be a mechanism or a place for these people to go that gives them viability. That is the start of reconstructing agriculture.

There have been discussions on both sides of the House and I know that there is some in-principle support for addressing this issue. This bill proposes setting up a mechanism where the banks have a strong appetite to deal with this problem—I am sure there could be statements made in support of that as well—and resolve this issue and understand that we are also dealing with the threat of asset deflation here. Everyone understands a spiralling decline in values in any property market. If banks have viability issues at the moment on their books, I am dead sure there is a strong appetite for

banks to fix this problem as well. They are screaming out to government to have this conversation to create a home for viable producers to go into a scheme like the QIDC that was sold for \$1 billion profit back to the Queensland taxpayer, so it made money for the taxpayer. It did not cost the taxpayer in the end; it made money for them.

As a country we agreed in principle with the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, and people might agree on or argue about the virtues of whether that is a profit-making industry. Certainly there is a lot of merit in pushing sustainable energy products, but I would say that in comparison agriculture has a lot more opportunity to be profitable and viable with a lot less support in terms of a lending facility like the Clean Energy Finance Corporation that, I think, originally kicked off with \$10 million. A minute fraction of that amount can help stabilise agriculture in Queensland and the same principle applies. If people in the public think that it is important that we have an appropriate lending mechanism to stimulate clean energy development and industry in that area, why not do the same for agriculture? Why is that less important than clean energy finance? That is a very valid point in that space.

The basis of this issue is that we are talking about a mechanism that stimulates an industry, and I just need to make it clear that it is essentially about enabling this industry as a cost-effective way to stimulate business in these towns. That is paramount to this discussion—that is, how else do we stop this haemorrhaging in rural areas, because all of the other solutions are very expensive? This is a very cost-effective way to do that for the taxpayer. It has been done before. Sir Leo Hielscher developed the model last time it was done in Queensland and it did its job. He did a wonderful job and we have been able to pay for hospitals and many other services in the state because we have been able to stabilise agriculture through those tough periods. Everyone says that it is terrible that we cannot support agriculture and we cannot prop up industries that are unviable. We have to ask the question: what is unviable and what is uncompetitive? If we look at OECD figures, the last time I checked the average subsidy and OECD donations for agriculture were 38 per cent.

The last time I checked, in Australia it was about five per cent. It is silly having that discussion until we are providing 20 per cent or 30 per cent in subsidies. At the moment we are heavily hamstrung. We are at an enormously unfair disadvantage, which is why I say that we are efficient already. I challenge anyone to tell me how you can run a cattle grazing property in Queensland any cheaper or smarter than the people up there are doing already. We have a good, strong industry that will always be there. The people who run these grazing properties run off the smell of an oily rag and can deliver for the economy. Without them, it is a bleak landscape. There is a lack of hope. That is why the December unemployment figures for Western Queensland were 14 per cent, which was double the state average at that time. The youth unemployment rate is much worse. Dare I say it, in rural areas the suicide rate is also terrible.

I am very attuned to this issue, because I grew up in these areas. I went to school with kids from those towns who would look forward to going home and working in a tyre shop, or working as a shearer, or getting work on a cattle station and doing contract fencing. Those opportunities are no longer there. At the moment, there is no money out there. Everyone is cash strapped because all of that available money is going back into paying off the interest on loans. People are paying five per cent or six per cent interest when they could be paying a discounted rate to get them through this period. Instead, that cash is tied up and going to banks.

When the GFC hit and we had the same situation with the residential housing industry and banking, the government came in with a \$16 billion guarantee. This proposal is based upon the same principle: to step in to stabilise the industry through a tough time, then pull out. That is what I am advocating in this bill for the rural industry for a fraction of that amount. There are precedents everywhere for what is proposed in this bill. No purists can say, 'We don't believe in any intervention to prop up non-viable operators.' It has been done in all other areas of the economy. There needs to be an acknowledgement that it needs to occur in agriculture.

I believe that this bill would be acceptable to people who, philosophically, would not agree with that view. There is a legitimate argument that this bill is not just about an industry package; it is about reinvigorating these rural towns. Like I said, anyone from these areas knows quite well how tough it is out there at the moment. When I say 'tough', I am talking about people saving up for two or three weeks to be able to afford to fill up the tank to get to Townsville for the weekend or something. I am talking about business owners doing that.

This bill is very important. I know that there is a lot of goodwill on both sides to address the situation and I think that this bill is the most cost-effective way to do it. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the member for Ipswich West and the member for Nanango, who were part of the rural debt task force, which was very much a part of trying to explore how to address these problems. We look forward to further debate on this issue.

There needs to be some acknowledgement that this problem has been around for four years. It has not cropped up overnight. We needed a solution yesterday. We needed a solution maybe 12 months ago, maybe two years ago. I believe that there is a real risk that banks will hit the red button on places. The banks are waiting to see what we are doing in parliament and what we can provide as a solution. I think that this bill is a very viable solution that is very sympathetic to the Queensland taxpayer, and could be very beneficial to the Queensland taxpayer.

I appeal to the House to work through this bill to make sure that something comes out of it that can address this problem in a meaningful way—not tinker at the edges, not just play around with what we have now, but go to the heart of the problem and address it so that there is a structural change. Other issues that arose out of the rural debt task force that were put forward by people throughout Queensland do not relate to this bill, but relate to the same problem. I will not go into those.

### First Reading

**Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (12.04 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Agriculture and Environment Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Crawford): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

## PUBLIC HEALTH (WATER RISK MANAGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 25 May (see p. 2059), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.04 pm): I rise to address the Public Health (Water Risk Management) Amendment Bill 2016, which proposes to amend the Public Health Act 2005. I note that the Queensland parliament's Transport and Utilities Committee recommended that the bill be passed. I certainly support the intent of the bill in establishing a legislative framework for water risk management to protect the health of the public, particularly those at high risk from the effects of legionella, including severely immune compromised patients and residents and patients with chronic diseases in hospitals and residential aged-care facilities.

The objectives of the bill identify that the focus of the legislation is the management of legionella bacteria with the risk management approach proposed applicable to the management of other water borne bacteria. The explanatory notes state that the bill will initially apply to public hospitals as well as private hospitals licensed under the Private Health Facilities Act 1999 and residential aged-care facilities under the Commonwealth's Aged Care Act 1997. The bill identifies a requirement for a water risk management plan, the notification of positive legionella results and the authority for the chief executive to publicly report the presence of legionella.

Legionella is a common occurrence in our water systems. One of the multibarrier treatment strategies is water temperature management. The legionella bacteria multiply where temperatures are between 25 degrees Celsius to 45 degrees Celsius and nutrients are available. The bacteria are dormant at below 20 degrees Celsius and do not survive above 60 degrees Celsius. Ensuring that water temperatures can be delivered within this range when incoming water reflects the ambient temperature in the heat of summer in Queensland can be very challenging. Routine testing, which will form part of a robust water risk management plan, may highlight this challenge further.

I support the reporting of results proposed by new section 61K as long as it provides an opportunity to provide information to the community and enhance understanding of this important public health matter and confidence in our hospital and aged-care facilities. I reinforce the need for healthcare and aged-care facilities to provide notes in relation to the results, including an option to identify actions taken and subsequent results of tests performed.

The Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service submitted concerns regarding the costs for facilities that are already captured by the interim measures implemented in 2013. The costs associated with water sampling and remedial infrastructure measures can be considerable—ranging from hundreds of thousands of dollars to millions of dollars where complex and often aged plumbing systems are installed. Although I support investment in water risk management strategies, I acknowledge that, in a time of constrained Health budgets, this creates an additional cost burden.

The application to aged-care facilities particularly may bring with it some design and capital costs challenges. The design of aged-care facilities can be homelike and hot-water systems may not be of commercial capacity, but domestic systems that do not cope with running the systems for extended periods to heat the pipes. I call upon the minister to monitor the impact of the bill on aged-care and hospital providers and, where possible, provide guidance for water risk management strategies within this context to mitigate both public health risks and reasonable financial impacts on health service providers. Our private and public healthcare facilities provide exceptional services for the residents of my electorate of Moggill.

In Queensland, we are seeing the return of inefficiency and reduced productivity in some Queensland hospital and health services as a consequence of a government beholden to union bosses—as the member for Mansfield would say, a government of the unions, a government by the unions and a government for the unions. With the scandalous actions already undertaken by various militant unions, including unlawful strikes by the CFMEU and the ETU on hospital sites, including the Sunshine Coast university hospital, there is a real risk of hospital water infrastructure not being appropriately maintained, particularly if the plumbing union undertakes unsanctioned or illegal industrial action, which could lead to risks to patient care.

I have seen firsthand health union thuggery and lawlessness, bullying and intimidation. The current de facto shadow federal Labor health minister, the AMA federal president Brian Oowler, and his brand of socialist ACTU affiliated federal ASMOF colleagues, are all advocates for union thuggery and intimidation. Their hypocrisy is extraordinary. Brian Oowler's legacy will be one of fostering union bullying and union intimidation and championing socialist left-wing causes to the detriment of Queensland, but no surprise given Labor's treatment and conduct and the vilification of individuals I have heard about in this place.

**Ms Grace:** You let your members down!

**Dr ROWAN:** I take the interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. The health unions have a track record in this state for disrupting health services to the detriment of the people of Queensland and for fostering union bullying and intimidation to the detriment of patients in Queensland. It is the people of Queensland who matter, but when it comes to the unions in this state they foster a culture of bullying, intimidation and harassment to the detriment of services. That is why we had unlawful strikes at the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital.

**Mr RYAN:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Crawford): I did not see who had the first point of order.

**Mr RYAN:** I am sure mine will be the same as the Leader of the House would make. It is on relevance. This has no relevance to the bill or the long title of the bill and I ask you to bring the member back to the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Leader of the House, did you have a further point of order or was yours the same?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The member for Morayfield did very well.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Member for Moggill, I will remind you to keep to the topic.

**Dr ROWAN:** Thank you for your guidance. My great concern relates to the plumbing unions potentially having unlawful strikes on hospital facilities in this state and disrupting water infrastructure.

**Mr DICK:** I rise to a point of order, again on relevance. This has nothing to do with the legislation. I would respectfully suggest you bring the speaker back to the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** As I said before, member for Moggill, if we can keep to the topic.

**Dr ROWAN:** Certainly maintaining our vital infrastructure in this state is very important. Certainly protecting our vital water infrastructure from transmissible infectious diseases, whether that be legionella or other bacteria in our water supplies, is very important. I commend the Public Health (Water Risk Management) Amendment Bill 2016 to the House and I certainly support its intent.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (12.12 pm): I rise to comment upon the bill before the House and start by commending the Transportation and Utilities Committee for the report it produced. The opposition endorses the content of that document and will support the bill before the House today. I want to canvass the issue of costs as touched upon in a letter written by Mr Len Richards in April of this year to the committee where he raises the point that the public facilities will 'incur considerable costs' as regards the bill being put into place. That issue was taken up in the committee report. At page 9 of the report filed by the committee there are two sets of costs that are identified. First of all there is the expansion of the existing water risk management plans which can cost up to \$100,000 and then infrastructure improvements that could cost in excess of \$1 million. There are many, many hospitals right across the state. Mr Richards' point of view is that in each hospital these costs could well be incurred. It is not a one-off cost of \$1 million per HHS, it could be several millions of dollars across a range of hospitals that have to be budgeted for in the future.

Mr Richards implies in his letter that the costs will be borne by the HHSs alone. The explanatory notes indicate that the costs will be borne by the department and the HHSs. I am seeking clarification around that point. Will the HHSs alone have to bear the costs of any implementation of the bill as it currently stands or will part of those costs be borne by the department? If the department is bearing the costs, what proportion of those costs will be borne by the department? The third question is can the minister advise how many of the hospitals right across the state will have to bear the costs and what those costs will be? On the Sunshine Coast, the Nambour, Caloundra, Noosa and Maleny hospitals will fall into this precinct. How much will they have to bear? Mr Richards' comment is quite correct. The cost will be excessive, it will be huge, and it will bear upon the budget of HHSs.

This is not the first time that this government has passed on what could be significant costs for HHSs. The explanatory notes of the Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015 stated that the costs to implement nurse-patient ratios will be borne by HHSs. The government cannot continue to impose significant costs on HHSs. Their main aim is to provide medical services and treatment for those people who live in their district. I ask the minister what is the breakdown of the costs that will occur as a consequence of this bill? Importantly, will the department make a contribution to that? Does the minister have any knowledge via the HHSs what that cost will be and, finally, what that cost will be by way of impost upon the delivery of medical health services?

Today in question time the Premier asked the health minister what he could do with \$237 million. Can I retaliate by asking what Queensland could have done with \$1.2 billion if the payroll debacle had not taken place and the \$16 million had not been lost to the fake Tahitian prince. It is about time this government got real and looked at what they are doing to HHSs. They are putting more and greater burdens on HHSs every time. They are depleting the capacity and the value of HHSs because they cannot make the budget work. They do not have a plan for the future. Only the LNP can get health back on track and get this state running again.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.17 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Public Health (Water Risk Management) Amendment Bill 2016. I join with the LNP opposition in showing our support for this bill, but I do want to make a few points. This bill helps our hospitals improve the management and control of health risks associated with the supply and use of water in hospitals and residential care facilities with particular focus on the legionella bacteria. It will also make more transparent the water testing undertaken by those facilities.

The changes to the legislation have been brought about following the recommendations from a review into the prevention and control of legionella infection in Queensland which was completed under the former LNP government in June 2013. As we have heard from previous speakers, to achieve this healthcare providers will be required to establish water risk management plans which are recognised internationally as the most effective method of managing the health risk associated with waterborne infectious diseases to protect injured, frail and vulnerable members of the community who are being cared for by our aged-care facilities and hospitals. This is a good outcome in respect of preventing legionella infection.

I want to take this opportunity to draw to the attention of the government, in particular the Health minister, the public hospitals in my electorate. The staff at these hospitals work hard, and will continue to work hard, to implement this new legislation under, to some extent, more onerous and difficult circumstances. As the minister well knows, in my electorate the majority of public hospitals are in desperate need of funding injections for upgrades or, indeed, complete replacements. Those hospitals are at Esk, Kilcoy, Nanango and Kingaroy. I will focus on the Kingaroy Hospital, as I have been fighting for that hospital to be upgraded since I came into this place.

**Mr POWER:** I rise to a point of order on relevance to the bill. We are talking about the water risk management at hospitals. Unless the member wishes to address water risk management, she is not strictly relevant to the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Crawford): There is no point of order.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I assure the House that I am on topic as the water risk management program is an issue for the Kingaroy public hospital, given the age of that hospital.

**Mr Dick:** Put the problem on the record. If there is a problem, tell me.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** That is exactly what I am speaking to. What the staff have to do in that very aged hospital is incredible. They will be working towards—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Logan, you have had your turn.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** At the Kingaroy Hospital, the emergency department desperately needs to be upgraded, if not completely replaced. Whilst we are talking about this very important legislation that is before the House, on behalf of all the administrators and the workers in that hospital I put on record a concern about the introduction of more onerous legislation. I note from the committee report that the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, in the electorate of the member for Callide, outlined their concern about the extra work that this legislation may mean for their health board, given a possible lack of funding in certain places.

I put on the record my concerns about the age of the hospitals in my electorate. I call on this Labor government to address the health concerns of facilities in my electorate. Again, I state my support for the bill.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.22 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the debate. I again thank the members of the Transportation and Utilities Committee for their diligent consideration of the bill and recommendations. I acknowledge the chair of the committee, the member for Kallangur. Before the House moves to considering the bill in detail, I will briefly comment on some points raised by members.

I thank the member for Surfers Paradise for his support of this important legislation. I am grateful that all members of the House, when speaking relevantly to the bill, supported the proposals in the bill to strengthen water risk management plans in Queensland hospitals and private residential aged-care facilities, giving Queensland the strongest framework for water risk management of any jurisdiction in the Commonwealth.

As noted by the member for Surfers Paradise, the interim measures implemented in 2014 were the precursor to this bill. Therefore, it was interesting to hear the member for Caloundra talking about the cost implications of this, given that most of the members of the LNP complimented the government on picking up on what they said was an initiative of their government. We had criticism from the member for Caloundra about the cost, why we were doing this and the impact it would have; other members of the LNP commended us for, in their view, taking up their ideas.

The member for Surfers Paradise reflected on the history of legionnaire's disease. As a community and as individuals, we have benefited from the significant advances in medical treatments and technologies that have been made in recent decades. However, we also have a growing and ageing population, with increasingly complex health needs, including an increasing burden of chronic disease. Therefore, it is inevitable that, at some point in time, we or our loved ones will spend time as hospital inpatients or in an aged-care facility. We know that international consensus is that the proportion of acute infections caused by legionella bacteria that are fatal tends to be much higher for healthcare acquired infections. That is why we need strong standards in hospitals, both public and private, and in residential aged-care facilities. By the nature of those facilities, the residents and patients are at greater risk because generally they are more vulnerable to the impacts of legionella and legionella-related diseases.

Dr Jeanette Young, our state's Chief Health Officer, recently acknowledged the effect of medical treatments prolonging life when she advised the committee that patients in hospitals and people in aged-care facilities are subsequently much sicker now and, hence, more vulnerable to pathogens such as legionella bacteria. Therefore, it is imperative that we safeguard their health and safety in those facilities.

During the debate members made comments about the submission made to the committee by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. While I understand the concerns raised by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service that the reporting of positive legionella detections may

not be in the best interests of the facility, I think that concern will ultimately prove to be unfounded. It is important that the community has confidence in what happens in hospitals, both public and private, and residential aged-care facilities. Regrettably, I believe in the past few years that public confidence has been shaken because of outbreaks of legionella in hospitals, including private hospitals in Brisbane. The importance of reporting is not so much to criticise any facility, but to raise the standard of public transparency around what is occurring. The reporting of legionella will probably increase as a result of this legislation, but that overwhelmingly is a good and positive thing, because when we can identify the bacteria we can address it. We can deal with it in the hospital and residential aged-care space. That is a very important thing.

Controlling legionella bacteria can be quite complex and often there will be opportunities for environmental legionella to contaminate a facility's water distribution system. Therefore, it is likely that legionella will be detected in facilities from time to time. The Chief Health Officer advised the committee that a positive legionella test result does not necessarily mean that a facility is doing something wrong. I reaffirm that today. The evidence of Dr Young was that a positive legionella test result does not necessarily mean that a facility is doing something wrong, but it is important that it be reported so that it can be monitored effectively and managed.

To assist prescribed facilities to meet their notification and periodic reporting requirements, the Department of Health is developing an online reporting tool. In practice, prescribed facilities will be required to enter summary information about their legionella water test results, such as the number of water tests required to be undertaken under the facility's water risk management plan, the number of water tests performed, the number of resamples taken and the number of confirmed positive legionella detections. Importantly, the online tool will allow facilities to provide additional comments or contextual information about their water test results. That will allow hospitals to provide additional information to reassure the public that they are responding appropriately. For example, a facility that has recorded a positive legionella detection may wish to include information about what actions were taken in response to the detection and the results of any follow-up tests.

After the information is entered by facilities, the online tool will be used to generate a summary report that will then be published on the Queensland Health website. The department's report will enable members of the public to review a summary of water test results for individual prescribed facilities and view any comments the facilities may have made regarding the results. The development of the online tool is one way to reduce the regulatory burden on hospitals. If we can develop an online tool where the information can be inputted, that will make the process easier and save expense for those public health facilities. As Dr Young noted when addressing the committee, the public values knowledge and the more information in the community, the more it becomes understood. That is important when it comes to waterborne diseases. In addition to giving Queenslanders confidence that hospitals and residential aged-care facilities are routinely testing their water supplies, the public reporting will provide facilities with an opportunity to inform the public of actions they are taking to safeguard their patients and residents.

The member for Southport spoke about the concerns raised by the Master Plumbers' Association that many ice machines do not meet certification standards as required by the Plumbing Code of Australia—that is, they do not have watermark approval. The Department of Health already has a policy in place regarding the use of ice machines and chilled water dispensers in terms of patient safety. That policy has been communicated to all hospital and health services and private health facility licensees.

The member for the Murrumba spoke of public confidence being built by public disclosure and public knowledge. I reaffirm those comments. That is what we are trying to do as a government. The member for Murrumba acknowledged that legionella is everywhere. It is how a facility responds to it that is important. I concur with the member for Murrumba's statement that this bill builds that knowledge and builds public confidence.

A number of members have noted that there are over 50 species of legionella. While *Legionella pneumophila* is the common source of infection from legionella bacteria, there are a number of other species of legionella that can also cause disease. The important thing to remember is that the controls provided for in the water risk management plan for each facility will control all waterborne legionella species.

I turn to the comments of other members in the debate, including the member for Moggill. I would remind the member for Moggill that Services Trades Queensland made a submission on the bill to the committee. That organisation includes the voice of trade unions, such as the plumbers union. That was a very thoughtful and important submission that was made. The comments of the member for Moggill were far from relevant to the bill.

It was another attack on the unions that we see as standard operating procedure for the members opposite. We welcome the input of trade unions, including the plumbers union, into this legislation and the work that they do in public hospitals and health facilities. They will be partners with us in ensuring those facilities are safe, just as the Master Plumbers' Association will be. We will work effectively with them. I can certainly say that from the perspective of the Department of Health and hospital and health services.

The member for Caloundra went into the time machine and went back to parliament two parliaments previously when he focused on the Health payroll and the Tahitian prince. On the basis of those matters he said that only the LNP could manage health. The member for Caloundra, who is now on the back bench, removed from the position of shadow health minister, fails to recognise the four per cent increase in the state budget allocation for health in the previous budget. I acknowledge the presence of the Treasurer in the chamber. I thank him for that commitment. This government is putting over \$14 billion into the front line and restoring the front line, not only rebuilding the front line through staffing but also doing things to ensure hospitals and public health facilities are safer through this sort of legislation.

The member for Nanango barely mentioned the bill in her contribution. She talked about the need to upgrade her hospitals. I have said in the parliament previously that there are a very significant number of hospitals and health facilities in Queensland that are 40 years old or more. The member for Nanango says she has been championing those hospitals since she was elected to this parliament. Of course, her only answer to that was asset sales.

Her hospitals would have been upgraded—many hospitals in LNP electorates would have been upgraded—if asset sales had proceeded. The Leader of the Opposition will not rule that out. Perhaps that remains their policy and their economic plan for Queensland and for investing in health. Until the Leader of the Opposition clarifies that, which he says he will do in due course, Queenslanders know that they will return to form and will sell public assets to fund their plans.

In conclusion, the reforms proposed in this bill will, if enacted, ensure Queensland has the most sophisticated legislative framework in Australia. This is legislation that I believe this House can be justifiably proud of.

The quality of this framework is due, in no small part, to the efforts of the Chief Health Officer, whom I acknowledge again, Dr Jeannette Young, in undertaking her 2013 review of the prevention and control of legionella infection in Queensland. The legislative response was not progressed by the previous LNP government. It has remained the responsibility of this government to implement the medium-term legislative response recommended by Dr Young.

I want to thank the staff of the Department of Health who were involved in the development of this bill. In particular, I want to thank Sophie Dwyer, Dr Greg Jackson, Heidi Grodecki and Daniel Field from the water unit. I thank them for the ongoing work they do every day to keep our communities safe through public health measures. I thank David Harmer, Dr Alessandra Atkinson, Loretta Carr and Jeremy Kirby from the legislative policy unit. I also thank Stephanie Challen, one of our outstanding policy officers in the department. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Crawford): Before I put the question, I inform the House that we have in the gallery students from the Brisbane Independent School in Kenmore in the electorate Moggill.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.35 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.35 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## NATIONAL INJURY INSURANCE SCHEME (QUEENSLAND) BILL

Resumed from 19 April (see p. 1024).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (12.35 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The introduction of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016 is a significant social reform. It is a scheme designed to deliver better, earlier and lifetime treatment, care and support for people who sustain serious personal injuries in motor vehicle accidents in Queensland. This bill will ensure that people catastrophically injured will receive immediate support for their treatment and care needs following a motor vehicle accident, without having to determine fault. This will lead to improved recovery and health outcomes.

The introduction of the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland is one of the most significant reforms since the introduction of compulsory third-party insurance in Queensland in 1936. Queensland's CTP insurance scheme is a common law fault based scheme. An injured person can only make a CTP claim where fault can be established against an owner or driver of an insured vehicle.

There are currently people who sustain catastrophic injuries in motor vehicle accidents who receive no benefit from the CTP scheme. This is because the accident was the driver's fault or because no-one was at fault. People who sustain these injuries need treatment, care and support for their lifetime. Their injuries are life changing and impact not only the injured person but also their family, friends and community.

Currently these Queenslanders have to rely on the support of family, friends and carers, not-for-profit groups, public health and welfare systems. This can lead to compromised care and support, poor recovery and a limited ability to re-engage with their community. Under the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland—NIISQ—all people catastrophically injured in a Queensland motor vehicle accident would immediately become participants in a no-fault scheme, with treatment, care and support services managed by a national injury insurance agency instead of through the CTP insurer.

I would like to highlight some specifics regarding the operation of the bill. The main purpose of the bill is to ensure that persons who sustain particular serious personal injuries as a result of a motor vehicle accident in Queensland receive the necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support, regardless of fault. To achieve this purpose, the bill establishes the scheme, the National Injury Insurance Agency and the National Injury Insurance Scheme Fund.

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I draw your attention to the numbers in the House. You need 16 members. There are fewer than 16 members present.

*(Quorum formed at 12.39 pm)*

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Crawford): Thank you. I call the minister.

**Mr PITT:** The bill establishes the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland to administer the scheme. The agency is to be a statutory body and its role is to ensure that injured people who participate in the scheme receive the necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support they need. The agency will assess participants and make payments in relation to their treatment, care and support. Fault on the part of a participant will not be relevant when the agency assesses a person's eligibility to enter the scheme. Similarly, payments made by the agency to participants will not be discounted for contributory negligence should a participant be at fault, in whole or in part, for their injuries.

A person would be eligible to participate in the scheme if they sustain a serious personal injury in a motor vehicle accident, the scope of which is set out in the bill, and the injury satisfies criteria set out in the bill and the regulation. The injuries must be as a result of a motor vehicle accident that occurs within Queensland on or after 1 July 2016. The act is intended to apply to the same types of accidents as those covered by the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994.

Consistent with the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994, the type of vehicle, insurance status of the vehicle and whether the motor vehicle accident occurred on a road or in a public place can affect whether the legislation will apply. Coverage is limited for uninsured motor vehicles and certain other types of motor vehicles such as tractors and agricultural machines.

Eligible people will include those who have sustained permanent spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, multiple or high-level limb amputations, serious brachial plexus injuries, severe burns and permanent blindness. The inclusion of serious brachial plexus injuries exceeds the coverage required by the agreed national minimum benchmarks and is included based on advice from representatives from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons that the impact of that injury on a person's functioning is similar to the loss of a limb.

There will be two categories of participants in the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland—interim participants and lifetime participants. This will allow for people to access treatment, care and support early and before it is known whether they will need this support for life. Treatment, care and support services provided by the scheme align with entitlements outlined in the agreed national minimum benchmarks for motor vehicle accidents. These were agreed to in principle by the former Queensland government in 2013.

The National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland will provide necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support for the following types of services: medical treatment, pharmaceuticals, dental treatment, rehabilitation, ambulance transportation, respite care, attendant care and support services, aids and appliances, prostheses, educational and vocational training, and home and transport modifications. By exceeding the agreed national minimum benchmarks, the bill allows persons with a pre-existing catastrophic injury to enter the scheme if their subsequent injury is of a different nature and increases their treatment, care and support needs. Similarly, the bill provides that the agency can allow people to buy into the scheme. The buy-in process exceeds the agreed national minimum benchmarks for motor vehicle accidents which only require that care and support be provided to people injured after 1 July 2016.

Consistent with recommendation 6 of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee report *Inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme*, the bill includes provisions that place the participant, so far as is possible, at the centre of the decision-making process and promotes the person's goals, participation in the community, and maximises their independence and dignity. In particular, the bill sets out the general principles that the agency must have regard to when performing its functions. These principles are intended to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that the focus is on the individual, maximising their health outcomes and community participation, and that dignity, trust and respect are paramount.

Importantly, the bill provides for the assessment of participants' needs for treatment, care and support to be carried out by the agency, in consultation with the participant and their key support people. Consistent with contemporary disability management practices, the bill also makes provision for agreed self-directed funding, where the agency is able to enter into a funding agreement with a person that covers particular expenses, in a stated period, for a participant's treatment, care or support. The committee noted the importance of appropriate safeguards in these arrangements and the bill allows a regulation to prescribe particular requirements around the terms of funding agreements.

This bill also retains participants' common law rights. I note that the opposition is proposing amendments that would strip away these common law rights. This is anti-choice. It is the government's firm view that adopting a hybrid scheme provides greater freedom of choice and self-determination for participants. The bill preserves common law rights and enables participants the freedom to choose whether to receive a lump sum or to remain in the NIISQ.

All participants who have a CTP claim can continue to make a common law claim for damages such as non-economic loss and economic loss. In addition, some participants will be able to opt out of the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland and pursue a claim for treatment, care and support damages. These damages will be paid by the National Injury Insurance Scheme. The bill aligns NIISQ processes with the CTP claims process under the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994 so that damages under CTP and damages under the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland are settled at the same time.

Where the agency holds concerns regarding a person's ability to manage their damages for their lifetime, the agency can apply to the court for an order that prevents certain persons from seeking an award for treatment, care and support damages. The intent is to ensure that catastrophically injured

people have access to treatment, care and support for their lifetime and that their damages are managed efficiently and last for their lifetime. Where a participant is unable to, or does not elect to pursue damages for treatment, care and support, they will remain a participant in the NIISQ.

Where a person was previously a participant in the scheme and has received a lump sum damages payment under the legislation for their future treatment, care and support, the person cannot apply to re-enter the scheme in relation to the same injury for at least five years after they received the damages payment. A regulation may prescribe additional criteria to be satisfied for a re-entry application. The intention is to provide a mechanism for a person to re-enter the scheme in appropriate circumstances—for example, where the person has lived longer than originally anticipated.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee report *Inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme*, the Treasurer can refer a matter about the operation of the scheme to a parliamentary committee. The bill also contains internal and external dispute resolution mechanisms for participants and potential participants regarding eligibility and assessments of treatment, care and support needs. The National Injury Insurance Scheme Fund will cover the costs of the scheme and agency administration.

Turning now to the cost of the proposed scheme, it is proposed that the NIISQ is funded by a levy payable by motorists as part of their CTP insurance premium. This is consistent with all other jurisdictions in Australia. While the NIISQ will commence from 1 July 2016, to allow time for CTP insurers, the National Injury Insurance Agency and the Department of Transport and Main Roads to implement IT system changes, it is proposed the levy for the NIISQ commence from 1 October 2016.

Queensland CTP premiums are based on the class of motor vehicle, whether it is for private or commercial use, the choice of insurer and whether insurance is taken out for 12 months or a shorter period. The original hybrid model for the scheme was actuarially assessed as having a net cost of \$76 per vehicle. This is the net cost I have referred to previously and was used during the parliamentary committee process.

During the course of public consultation with the parliamentary committee, several amendments to the hybrid model were recommended. Subsequent to the committee tabling its report, actuarial costing of the recommended changes came back showing an \$8 reduction compared to the original hybrid model, thereby reducing the net cost to \$68 per vehicle.

For any CTP policy providing cover past 1 July 2016, the CTP insurer has already charged and received the premium for their potential claim liabilities that will now be met by the NIISQ from 1 July 2016. The Motor Accident Insurance Commission—MAIC—and CTP insurers have agreed on a process for insurers to pay this money across to the NIIS Fund. As such, the year one cost of the NIISQ will be reduced, as, quite rightly, motorists should not be expected to have to pay this amount twice.

The MAIC and CTP insurers have held meetings to explore options to reduce premiums from October 2016 in a fair and affordable manner. October premiums are expected to be publicly announced on 29 July 2016. The combined effect of the NIISQ levy introduction, the one-off premium clawback and interim premium savings is aimed at saving \$36 from the cost of the NIISQ for a family car or sedan, ensuring there will be no more than a \$32 increase in premiums for the combined CTP and NIISQ coverage from 1 October 2016. At this cost, the NIISQ will be the most affordable scheme introduced nationally.

Special attention has been given to determining the levy and premium for other vehicle classes where it would be inequitable to charge the NIISQ levy at the same level as a car or sedan. This includes tractors, vintage cars and motorbikes, all of which currently pay a lower CTP premium than a car or sedan. Motorbikes will be monitored closely, as interstate national injury insurance scheme experience is that motorbike riders are overrepresented in their schemes.

The levy for taxis also warrants particular consideration. Taxi premiums are currently 20 times greater than for a family car or sedan, due to their higher claim frequency. Advice from the Motor Accident Insurance Commission is that the many taxi related claims are for minor injuries and not the catastrophic injuries to be covered by the NIISQ. It would therefore be inequitable to require taxi operators to pay a levy 20 times greater than for a family car or sedan.

The actual CTP premium and NIISQ levy for vehicles in Queensland will vary depending on a number of factors including the class of vehicle—car, tractor, taxi et cetera—whether a policy is renewed for 12 months or less and whether the vehicle operator is claiming a GST input tax credit. As I have mentioned already, the outcome for every motorist will reflect the positive efforts of the government to help keep the cost of CTP insurance affordable for motorists.

The alternative design option considered by the parliamentary committee for the NIISQ was a pure no-fault model. This was actuarially costed as being \$8 cheaper than the hybrid scheme—net cost \$60 versus \$68—but this option would see people injured in a motor vehicle accident through the fault of another party lose their common law rights for lifetime care and support damages.

While the government is conscious of cost-of-living pressures, as evidenced by the work being done to reduce the cost of the NIISQ, it is concerned that taking away the common law rights of an injured person is a step too far in implementing a new scheme that is centred around providing choice and flexibility to the injured person. The proposed model for the NIISQ is a sensible balance in protecting the rights of the injured person while keeping the overall cost of the scheme affordable.

As I have previously announced, the passage of the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland will see the cost of CTP insurance for a family car or sedan rise by only \$32 for the combined CTP and NIISQ. To keep the overall cost of CTP premiums affordable following the introduction of the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland, a CTP scheme review is being commissioned. The review committee will report back to the government with reforms expected to be introduced from 1 July 2017. The focus of this review will be identifying opportunities to improve scheme efficiency and affordability for motorists.

I propose a number of amendments to correct minor drafting errors and clarify the policy intent of certain provisions in the bill. The amendments address issues and stakeholder concerns which were identified during and as a result of the inquiry into the bill by the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee.

In submissions to the parliamentary committee, the legal profession raised concerns regarding restrictions to common law rights of participants with contributory negligence of 25 per cent on the basis that it was unfair. In addition, concerns were raised that a finding of a 25 per cent contribution was relatively common and retaining it in the bill would lead to increased disputes and litigation. On review, it is the government's view that restrictions to damages for treatment, care and support should only apply where contributory negligence is 50 per cent or more. This more appropriately reflects the intent of the bill to restrict access to damages for treatment, care and support where a person has materially contributed to their injuries. A finding of contributory negligence of 50 per cent or more aligns with sections 47, 48 and 49 of the Civil Liability Act 2003, which introduces a presumption of 50 per cent contributory negligence where a driver injured in a motor vehicle accident has a blood alcohol level of .15 or more—three times the legal limit. The relevant clauses in the bill have been amended to restrict a participant's access to damages for treatment, care and support where contributory negligence is 50 per cent or more.

In submissions to the parliamentary committee, the legal profession sought confirmation that a finalised claim did not include a matter which required sanction and where the sanction had not been obtained. The relevant clause has been amended to rectify this. The insurance industry raised concerns directly to the government and through the parliamentary committee about the scope of their liability in relation to payments for medical expenses, rehabilitation expenses and for the payment of treatment, care and support damages for injuries arising from a motor vehicle accident.

To ensure the legislation is clear, a number of clauses have been amended to remove the potential uncertainty about the operation of the bill and make the position clearer that the agency is the sole entity responsible for meeting payments for the participant's medical expenses, rehabilitation expenses and treatment, and care and support damages for all injuries arising in the subject accident and not the CTP insurers.

I would like to thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its report tabled on 21 March 2016 regarding the inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland and for its further report tabled on 19 May 2016 regarding the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. I would like to thank those who made submissions to the committee about the model and the bill, and those who appeared as witnesses during the committee's inquiry.

The committee did provide a number of recommendations about design features for the model. These have been incorporated in the model, evidenced in the bill and noted in the government response. The committee was not able to reach agreement on whether the bill should be passed. This is despite the government being able to identify savings to offset the additional cost of the National Injury Insurance Scheme to keep it at a level that is affordable for Queenslanders and more affordable than any other state or territory in the country.

The committee's recommendation regarding a typographical error has been included as an amendment. Additionally, yesterday I tabled an erratum to the explanatory notes to address a further recommendation by the committee. I am pleased to table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: Report No. 11—Inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme, government response [793].

*Tabled paper:* Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee: Report No. 13—National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016, government response [794].

This has been a very important journey that commenced many years ago stemming from the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the lifetime care and support needs of people with disability in this country. The National Disability Insurance Scheme and now the National Injury Insurance Scheme will provide that cover and will be providing the sort of care and support that people expect and deserve over their lifetime. I am pleased, as a former disability services minister involved at the early stage in both the NIIS and the NDIS, to have worked along with people including Jenny Macklin and Bill Shorten on their drive and effort to meet the expectations of the Productivity Commission. I thank them for their early work. I am very pleased and honoured to be able to introduce and, hopefully, pass this bill through the parliament this sitting. It is a milestone for Queenslanders, and I trust that we will have the support of all members in the chamber. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Before I call the next speaker, I inform the House that school captains and college principal from Calamvale Community College in the electorate of Stretton are currently in the gallery.

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (12.55 pm): The LNP supports the establishment of the National Injury Insurance Scheme, but we do not believe the government has adopted the most appropriate model. It was the LNP that signed the heads of agreement with the Commonwealth and agreed in principle to the minimal national benchmarks for the National Injury Insurance Scheme. It was the LNP which pushed the government on the cost issue throughout the whole process. We said at the beginning that the government needed to be looking at the cheapest option for Queenslanders. There is confusion between the Treasurer and the Treasury officials about the numbers put forward by the Treasurer in his introductory speech. Further information about the savings and driving down CTP premiums was not provided to the committee. It looks like the government is rushing this bill through and details are being lost in the process.

We have real concerns there will be further bill shocks coming for Queenslanders in coming years. The government has chosen the most expensive option. It is the option that was not recommended by the vast majority of people who participated in the initial National Injury Insurance Scheme inquiry process. It is also the option that has not been adopted in any other state other than Western Australia, which has not signed a heads of agreement with the Commonwealth in respect of the National Injury Insurance Scheme. The concerns with the model proposed by the government are well established, and these concerns have not been adequately addressed in the bill that is currently before the parliament.

From the outset, I would like to place on record the LNP's support for the National Injury Insurance Scheme. It was an LNP government that signed the intergovernmental agreement in relation to the launch of the NDIS. It was the LNP which funded the \$868 million to help roll out the NDIS here in Queensland. It was the LNP government that signed the heads of agreement between Queensland and the Commonwealth on the NDIS, and it was the LNP government that agreed in principle to the national benchmarks for a National Injury Insurance Scheme. However, we do not believe the government has adopted the best model for the NIIS here in Queensland.

The government's preferred model is more expensive, does not satisfy certain loopholes in relation to lump sums and minimum national benchmarks, and ignores the advice of the vast majority of people who presented to the various committees throughout the inquiry process. It is a model that is not used in any other state other than Western Australia, a state that has not agreed to the same benchmarks as has Queensland. In the words of the Queensland Treasury, how Western Australia's scheme will work in practice is yet to be seen and whether the model will fully meet the NIIS minimum benchmarks remains uncertain. The Western Australian model is inconsistent with all other jurisdictions.

This whole situation has been grossly mishandled by the Treasurer and the government. The fact that we are only debating this legislation weeks before the introduction of the NIIS proves this point. Once again, the Treasurer is asleep at the wheel. In my contribution today I would like to highlight my significant concerns about what the government has presented for consideration in this House. I would also like to flag that the LNP will be moving some amendments to this bill.

First and foremost among my concerns is the complete lack of details provided by the government in relation to the cost per vehicle of the National Injury Insurance Scheme. Through the initial inquiry process, two cost propositions were put forward—option A, the lifetime care and support scheme, came at a cost of \$60 per vehicle; and option B, the hybrid scheme, came at a cost of \$76 per vehicle. These figures are based on detailed actuarial modelling.

The reason for the increased cost for the so-called hybrid scheme has been explored at length, but in a nutshell it goes back to an issue which the government's proposed legislation fails to address—that is, under the heads of agreement people who choose not to participate in the NIIIS and pursue common law payments to cover the cost of their ongoing treatment and care can enter the NDIS if they exhaust that lump sum. That cost is then borne by the Queensland government. For whatever reason, the government has ignored the majority of advice it received through the initial inquiry process including from Queensland Treasury, as the opposition understands it, and have opted for a hybrid model that was only favoured by one particular group. What is perhaps most concerning is that the government has not only ignored the vast majority of advice that was provided by the committee throughout the entire process but also decided on the most expensive option. There is a great deal of confusion around the costs associated with the government's preferred model.

Debate, on motion of Mr Emerson, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Member for Surfers Paradise

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.30 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to address the comments made this morning by the member for Surfers Paradise in the House. A number of the statements made by the member were simply wrong. Earlier this morning I addressed the issue of the member's comments about the director-general of the Department of Health, Mr Michael Walsh. I will be writing to the Speaker about this matter. In the meantime, I ask the member for Surfers Paradise to consider his position ahead of that correspondence and I ask him to do the right thing—to come into this House and apologise to Mr Walsh.

The member also stated that as at 1 April 2012 there was a head count of 32,825 nurses and that by 21 December 2014 there were 34,100 nurses. The member then implied that these figures demonstrated that additional front-line nurses were delivered by the LNP. This is incorrect. The member for Surfers Paradise selectively chose 21 December 2014 as a reference date because it was the first date after the opening of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. It was the first time nurses previously employed by the Mater Children's Hospital were counted in Queensland Health staffing figures. I am advised this merger did not result in an increase in front-line nurses; it merely changed the way the figures were reported. If one properly accounts for the impact of the Mater Children's Hospital staff, there were fewer full-time equivalent nurses employed by Queensland Health under the LNP. I ask the member for Surfers Paradise to stop citing these misleading figures, and I call on the member for Surfers Paradise to correct the record.

The member for Surfers Paradise also made claims about the industrial conditions of nurses. The member for Surfers Paradise claimed that the LNP provided pay rises of 3.12 per cent to nurses. This is incorrect. I table a letter issued by the member for Southern Downs when he was the health minister dated 26 September 2015.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 26 September 2014, from then minister for health Hon. Lawrence Springborg, to nurses and midwives regarding a 2.2 per cent pay rise from 1 April 2015 [795].

That letter states in part, 'As a part of our strong plan for your profession, you will receive a 2.2 per cent wage increase from 1 April 2015.' It is a matter of public record—not in my words but in the words of the member for Southern Downs—that the core pay rise provided by the LNP at the end of their government was 2.2 per cent. Any suggestion that it was 3.12 per cent is incorrect.

The member for Surfers Paradise also suggested that we had been slow to conclude an agreement with nurses following the expiry of EB8 in March 2015. Again, this is incorrect. The agreement continued after its notional expiry of March 2015. That is because the LNP government delayed EB9 negotiations. It was the decision of the LNP government to delay EB9 and extend the current arrangements for 12 months. It was a decision made, as usual, without any consultation with its workforce. I table an article from the January 2015 edition of *The Queensland nurse* referring to these details.

*Tabled paper:* Document, dated January 2015, titled 'EB9 negotiation delays a worrying sign for the future' [796].

I can assure the House that we will conclude an agreement with nurses in good faith and in good time. We will treat them with respect and dignity. I am confident we will reach an agreement that is mutually beneficial. In the future, I ask that the member for Surfers Paradise respect this place and ensure that his statements in the House are factual and not misleading.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Child Sexual Abuse, Statute of Limitations

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.34 pm): For too long in the state of Queensland our laws when it comes to the statute of limitations in child sexual abuse cases have not reflected community expectations. For too long, our laws have prohibited victims of child sexual abuse from pursuing personal injury claims. This is because, under our current statute of limitations, when survivors of child sexual abuse turn 21 years of age they are no longer entitled to make a claim. Under the Limitation of Actions Act 1974, damages in respect of personal injury cannot be brought forward after the expiration of three years from the date on which the cause of action arose. In child abuse cases, this means three years after a victim turns 18. For many, this means justice is never served. This is not good enough and this has to change.

As members of this House should be aware, countless studies have been conducted into child sexual abuse in recent decades. This is an issue which has generated national attention in recent years, particularly with the investigations of the child abuse royal commission. Across all studies, it is broadly understood that only about half of child sexual abuse victims come forward and tell anyone. For every child who does report to authorities, three to five cases are not being reported. These remaining victims often never come forward, leading to social and emotional issues throughout their lives.

In child sexual abuse cases, acceptance and validation are crucial to the emotional and mental health of victims. In many cases, coming forward about child sexual abuse can take place decades after the abuse takes place, when the victim has finally reached a point where they feel they are mentally and emotionally strong enough to take action. As a society and as a parliament, we have an obligation to ensure that, when victims of child sexual abuse speak out, they are not only heard and understood by those around them but also able to pursue appropriate action. This needs to be done free of blame and, most importantly, free of an arbitrary time limit in the form of a statute of limitations.

The LNP understands that we need to act now to address this issue. Child sexual abuse is a blight on our society. The scars this abuse leaves are not just physical. Victims are often left to struggle with depression, fear, anxiety, anger and shame. A clear relationship has been shown between child sexual abuse and lowered self-esteem. These issues stay with victims for the rest of their lives. No longer can we continue to allow victims of child sexual abuse to go unheard in our legal system after 21 years of age. It is the right thing to do for the victims, for their families and for our Queensland community.

### Gladstone Ports Corporation

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (2.37 pm): I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Clayfield on his elevation to the position of Leader of the Opposition. I am obliged to advise the House, though, that the opposition leader is no friend of the Gladstone community. As treasurer in the Newman government, the member for Clayfield proposed the sale of the Gladstone Ports Corporation, one of Gladstone's most successful and profitable government owned corporations which controls the Port of Gladstone, the single most important piece of economic infrastructure in Central Queensland and one of Australia's leading ports.

The attempted sale was one of the greatest pieces of economic folly ever proposed by a Queensland government. It would have handed monopolistic power to a consortia of private enterprise with little interest in doing what the management and workforce of the Gladstone Ports Corporation has been doing for decades—generating jobs and prosperity within Central Queensland and maximising the economic return to the state, not profits to private shareholders.

At the last state election, the Gladstone community delivered its verdict on the member for Clayfield's proposed port sale with a 25 per cent swing to Labor—yes, a 25 per cent swing. Labor's victory last year enabled the 760 port authority employees, who have immense pride in their jobs, to refocus their efforts back on efficiently serving coal shippers through the port's coal terminals and to assist the \$35 billion LNG projects approved under a previous Labor government commence shipments of this massive new export earner for Queensland.

There is no doubt that, if the LNP and the member for Clayfield were given the opportunity in the future, the sale of the Gladstone port would be back on the agenda. The word on the street was that the Newman government advisers were predicting a \$5 billion to \$7 billion outcome from the sale of the port and former treasurer Nicholls could not wait to get his hands on the proceeds.

However, the money is only half the issue. Anyone who has listened to the speeches of the member for Clayfield over the years would know that private ownership and operation of public assets is at the heart of LNP policy and is in its DNA. He truly believes that all government services can be better delivered through private providers. In his deluded view, the role of the government is simply to legislate and regulate and let private organisations run our schools, our hospitals and our ports. A clear example of this was in 2014 when the then treasurer ripped up a 99-year contract entered into three years earlier for the port authority's operation of the Wiggins Island coal terminal, in turn destroying a range of cost and supply chain efficiencies which would have financially benefited the beleaguered Central Queensland coal industry.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Jobs

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.40 pm): What have we seen in the last few weeks from this Labor government? We have seen more jobs for the boys from those opposite. We have already had Terry Mackenroth appointed to the board of QSuper, John Battams appointed to the board of the Queensland Investment Corporation and in recent days we have had Peter Beattie appointed to head the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. What is next? Former deputy premier Jim Elder to head the Electoral Commission of Queensland or Merri Rose to head ethical standards processes in Queensland? Those opposite must think that Queenslanders are true mugs.

The member for Woodridge, the health minister, is always keen to talk about the commissioning of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. Let us talk about unlawful strikes by various militant unions such as the CFMEU and the ETU, which threatened the hospital's opening and led to structural and design problems. Now we have stop-work meetings at the Gold Coast threatening the Commonwealth Games. What about the findings of Judge Greenwood regarding record fines for illegal union activity? Previously, there were illegal strikes at the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, which potentially disrupted and jeopardised vital translational research and clinical services in Queensland. Both state and federal governments should take civil action to recover wasted taxpayer dollars—millions of dollars—as a result of illegal strikes. There has been dreadful action by the CFMEU and the Electrical Trades Union at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

This government is beholden to unions. Unfortunately, the modern Labor Party fosters a culture of union thuggery, lawlessness, bullying, intimidation, illegality and electoral rotting. They talk the talk of eliminating violence and intimidation with respect to domestic violence and violence against health workers, but when it comes to industrial relations, there is a completely different standard. The hypocrisy is extraordinary. They flip-flop all over the place. The Premier, the member for Inala, is no doubt frozen asking, 'What do I do? I can't rule without the unions. My deputy, the member for South Brisbane, wants my job. My industrial relations minister is asleep at the wheel on youth unemployment, which is now running at 15 per cent in some parts of regional Queensland, and is also captive to union bosses.'

Queenslanders are losing patience with the Premier and the Palaszczuk Labor government. With increasing debt, no credible economic plan and an appalling raid on the defined benefit scheme, a lack of infrastructure spending let alone any vision, falling business confidence, higher car registration fees and higher transport costs, those Labor backbenchers opposite must be very nervous indeed.

Only the LNP has the energy, the experience and the enthusiasm to deliver for Queensland. The Nicholls LNP is government ready.

### Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.43 pm): I, too, acknowledge the member for Clayfield's interesting rise to the position of Leader of the Opposition. I rise to talk about asset sales and his plan. As the current member for Thuringowa, it is with a sense of irony that I have recently been asked by the media and constituents to talk on the recent announcement of the former LNP member Sam Cox's intention to run for LNP preselection again in a seat in Townsville. The irony is that Mr Cox put conditions on his return—an 'only if' clause, if you like—which was that, if the LNP won government, they would fund \$300 million for a stadium and convention centre in Townsville. I thought that was

interesting and worth asking if the former LNP treasurer and member for Clayfield is going to bow to those conditions and say yes to Mr Cox's claim that he would run again only if he were to get that amount of full funding.

I did not have to ask the member for Clayfield, because the media kindly took the opportunity to do so during his recent visit during which he strolled around the North Queensland Field Day with a look that said, 'Look at my face only; I have nothing of substance to say.' He said to the media that he was only committed to the previous amount of funding of \$150 million for the Townsville stadium. However, we know that that was on the proviso of the Townsville voting public saying yes to his asset sales and the Campbell Newman Strong Choices plan, and that did not go too well for them. It is ironic because Mr Cox played that exact same ploy in his term of government with the constituents of Thuringowa. He went one step further; he built a billboard at the bottom of Riverway Drive with a large sign saying 'delivered \$22 million—guaranteed', but of course that was if the good voting folks of Thuringowa said yes to the Strong Choices sale of our port and rail line. Of course, they said no.

I welcome Mr Cox to come back and have another go. I got real funding in my first 14 months of standing up for the constituents of Thuringowa. I am getting on with the job of being a good local member and delivering real funds, and I am not selling our assets.

Yesterday, the member for Whitsunday accused the three Townsville members of being monkeys, and I took offence to that. I refer to a *Townsville Bulletin* article that I will table depicting three LNP members. All they did was sell the Townsville voting public down the tube in terms of asset sales. I table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 5 September 2012, titled 'MPs deflect blame for health job cuts' [\[797\]](#).

### **Palm Beach Currumbin State High School; M1, Exit 93**



**Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.46 pm): Palm Beach Currumbin State High School, or PBC as we call it, has a long and proud history of inspiring and educating the youth of my electorate. I enjoy visiting regularly and taking part in a range of activities that showcase achievements and support students and their teachers.

The PBC Alliance initiative began in 2013 and I was very proud to be there to launch it. The alliance offers local businesses, individuals and past students the opportunity to help Palm Beach Currumbin State High School support students to achieve their full potential and help to build a local network of businesses, past students and community-minded individuals to ensure the Palm Beach Currumbin area continues to evolve as a world-class community. The PBC Alliance is committed to: creating opportunities for business promotion and networking; enriching curriculum through local business support; attracting work, apprenticeship, and work placement opportunities for students; and capturing additional financial, physical and human resources to enhance student activities and experiences.

Each term the alliance and its members are invited to attend a networking breakfast. Last Friday, Wayne Hickson, Program Manager Communication and Media for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, and Dimitri Hatzigeorgiou from RBC Group were guest speakers. The breakfast also featured two of the school's year 10 business studies students who have been participating in the Startup Apprentice program where students are given access to mentors and experienced businesspeople, enabling them to develop their entrepreneurial skills and abilities. Congratulations go to Executive Principal, Stephen Loggie, and his team for the leadership and guidance that has seen the school excel not only academically and in sports and the arts but also for the significant community engagement through initiatives like the PBC Alliance.

I am also delighted to advise the House that the petitions to save southbound exit 93 on the M1 from closure have forced the minister to investigate other options. Back in 2008 the then Labor government completed a plan to upgrade the M1 that proposed closing exit 93 leading into Guineas Creek Road, Elanora. This exist, used by thousands on a daily basis, is a vital thoroughfare for our electorate and I promised to stand for my community and fight to keep it open. I would like to thank principal e-petitioner Alan G Hider, who worked hard with me to get this result, and to constituent Dorothy Skewes, who took it upon herself to collect signatures for the hard copy.

The minister has confirmed that further planning will take place and he has advised his department to research alternatives so the exit can remain in use. Now he just needs to stop the finger-pointing and get on with the job of widening the M1 to Tugun. Labor have been in government in Queensland for all but three of the last 18 years, but we have seen very little new road or rail infrastructure in all of that time. Meanwhile, the people in the electorate of Currumbin face gridlock on a daily basis and difficulty going about their daily duties.

### Murrumba Electorate, Infrastructure

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (2.49 pm): I rise to talk about two wonderful pieces of local infrastructure that are being delivered or funded by the Palaszczuk government in the electorate of Murrumba. I was delighted to recently attend the sod turning at the Boundary Road interchange over the highway with the member for Kallangur. This is a huge piece of infrastructure for us: a \$100 million project including \$20 million in funding from the Palaszczuk government. It will be a six-lane bridge, and a shared pathway will soon be built across the Bruce Highway. Preliminary work has already begun. It will take two years to finish the project and it will create 160 full-time jobs during construction. The current interchange carries 20,000 vehicles per day and is the scene of significant congestion.

Recently, members heard me talk about the Rothwell roundabout. The Palaszczuk government and the Minister for Main Roads really have come through here in a big way. We will provide funding of \$22.6 million to upgrade this vital intersection. We are stepping up to do this after the project's viability was threatened by funding withdrawal from the federal LNP. The Abbott and Turnbull governments originally stepped away from funding this project and then delivered only half the funding they had once promised. This upgrade would not have happened without a commitment to local infrastructure from the Palaszczuk government. I am very proud of what we have delivered.

Do members know what makes me even more proud? We do not have to sell assets to get them! These are only two of the infrastructure projects that the LNP said they would only ever deliver if they sold assets. The LNP Campbell Newman government said they would fund the Rothwell roundabout and Boundary Road projects, but it was reliant on them returning LNP members and accepting the sell-off of our local assets.

**Mr Harper:** Bribery!

**Mr WHITING:** Electoral bribery! I predict that at the next election if there are promised projects in our local community they will only be possible through their own proposed sale of assets. These two local projects show that the LNP has no plan to deliver infrastructure without resorting to asset sales. Getting rid of government assets is in their DNA, and that is why the member for Clayfield will refuse to rule out asset sales. He was the architect of Strong Choices and he has invested \$100 million of public money. He is not going to let this go.

To those members opposite who have accepted the member for Clayfield as their leader on the basis that he has abandoned asset sales, you have been let down. That policy carcass has returned, and we will be hanging that albatross around their neck every day to remind people that a vote for them is a vote to sell our assets. Whenever the LNP stand up and deliver a policy the rest of Queensland will be asking, 'Do you have to sell off our assets to do it?'

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! I would like to welcome students from the Wynnum State High School and the Brisbane Bayside State College from the electorate of Lytton. I call the member for Mount Isa.

### Agriculture Industry

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (2.53 pm): With reference to the issues being faced by the dairy industry, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the difficulties that so many other agricultural pursuits are facing at the moment. It seems to be the propensity of policymakers to have a 'hands off' approach and let the market do its job—'You should not touch any of this stuff too much'—but we are again seeing failures in the system. I think that, irrespective of milk, everyone accepts there is a supermarket duopoly in the retail sector which is delivering poor outcomes to people. If we talk about the agricultural sector for a moment, for a market to perform properly and deliver benefits to everyone it needs certain conditions and not the market imbalance that exists here.

In the dairy industry there are processes between retailers and individual farmers—and it happens in the cane industry too—who have few options. All the balance resides with the larger operator, and that is what we are seeing in the dairy industry. The same thing happens in the beef industry, where you only have a few limited options. As those larger companies expand within the meat processing industry you have fewer doors to knock on to sell to, and the individual producer has to deal with these large, often multinational corporations which have enormous marketing power. You will forever have farmers subsidising consumers, and the market will be dictated by the imbalance between these operators. That is the issue they are facing in the dairy industry.

There needs to be some sort of intervention; not just politely asking retailers to give producers a cut. They are big, chunky, muscly corporations that will flex their muscles to maximise their profitability from any pursuit, and the producer will always be at the bottom end of that. Until we address that

imbalance in the dairy, sugar and beef industries they are going to keep coming back for help. The situation will not be resolved until you have mechanisms in place to address the imbalance in the marketing structure. They are imperfect markets, so the market is not operating as it should and it is not delivering to anyone. The consumers might think it is good to have cheap produce for a while, but if you do not have a sustainable industry to back it up we can look forward to having no fresh milk in the distant future.

### Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (2.56 pm): I rise today to speak about a subject not so dear to my heart and one that the prospect of still brings a cold shiver down my spine, and that is asset sales. The words of the new Leader of the Opposition recently that his position on asset sales would be known in due course should bring a shiver down many other spines in this place.

The previous Labor government sold some of our assets and largely because of that, in my opinion, copped one of the biggest hidings ever seen in the state of Queensland. It is no secret to anyone here that I was not a huge fan of those sales, but what the leader of our party did after that loss still fills me with pride. Our now Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk listened to the people of Queensland and walked out of the first shadow cabinet meeting accepting that the sale of assets was wrong and that any future Labor government would not have it as part of their agenda.

The Newman government ignored this and, swollen with their own hubris and pride, embarked on a process of selling more than twice as much as the previous government. Not only did the LNP in government not listen to Queenslanders and their desire to keep assets in public hands; they spent up to \$70 million of our taxpayer dollars trying to convince Queenslanders they were wrong and needed to sell their assets with the Strong Choices agenda. They came up with the rhetoric that they would lease our assets for 49 years instead of selling them. They had forgotten their own history as the now Leader of Opposition Business, the member for Callide, is quoted as saying in 2010, 'Leases are a dishonest, sneaky way to undertake asset sales.'

As I do have a bit of knowledge about the electricity supply industry, I can illustrate how ludicrous a 49-year lease—let alone a 99-year lease—is. The generators CS Energy and Stanwell would probably have some of the most robust assets with the longest life span in our system. The Swanbank Power Station was commissioned in 1971, less than 49 years ago, and they do not build them like that anymore. It has recently been demolished—rubble on the ground—dead at the grand old age of 44 years. It would not have lasted 49 years. Assets such as Swanbank, if owned by a private lessee, would not be here after 49 years, let alone 99 years, and the replacement assets under the LNP scheme at the end of the lease would have to be bought back by the Queensland government—ultimately the Queensland taxpayer.

Electricity is an essential service. Everyone needs power. It is not just a convenience; it is not a luxury. System security and electrical safety is about more than just increased costs: it is life and death for many Queenslanders. These are a priority for our government, who cares for its people—not a private company who wants to keep its shareholders happy. History has shown us that Queenslanders once again chose to keep their assets in public hands at the January 2015 election by backing Labor, and we will keep our promise not to sell our revenue-raising assets. Asset sales are bad for Queensland and they are not what the people of Queensland want.

### Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation

 **Mr ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (2.59 pm): It is appropriate on National Sorry Day to highlight a great success story for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. I refer to the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation that was set up by the Beattie government as reparation under what is known as stolen wages. The Beattie government set up that fund, administered that fund and, having exhausted recipients to pay out for lost wages, closed the fund down. With the residual money—\$26 million—it set up the QATSIF trust under the Public Trustee.

The sole object of the trust is to make available scholarships to young Indigenous men and women in years 11 and 12 to enable them to complete their secondary education and provide them with a solid start to their working career. This has done in exceptional circumstances. This year, QATSIF will allocate just over \$2.2 million to assist 1,208 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to graduate from year 12. I congratulate the 200 Queensland schools who partner with QATSIF. I pay tribute to Auntie Ruth Hegarty, the patron of QATSIF, and Professor Cindy Shannon, the chair, and her

board. At long last there are changes to the trust fund which now allow for donations to be made available to it. I encourage businesses and individuals to do just that so that QATSIF can expand its operations.

QATSIF was born out of stolen wages, one of the most shameful examples of interaction between Indigenous people and Europeans. While it is important to understand the past and indeed to be angry at past deeds, in the absence of a machine to take us there we simply cannot live in the past. You can teach history, be mindful of it and make sure it is never forgotten, but at some point you have to live in today's space. Some 1,200 people this year have a future because of history.

The latest reparations scheme does concern me. \$21 million is the value of this fund set up under pressure from a trade union, with little detail being provided and little reporting on its activities. It should very quickly fulfil its charter, with excess money provided to the QATSIF trust. Education is the key for the future of Indigenous people in this state. We have seen from events in Aurukun the anger, particularly from mothers, when a pathway to education is withdrawn, even temporarily. QATSIF, both in its present form and what it could become, is in a position to educate and provide a solid base for a successful life in work for Indigenous people. This parliament should embrace QATSIF, expand it where it can and support it to its fullest extent.

### Immigration

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.01 pm): My great-grandfather came to this country escaping from war and famine. On an old document he marked the part reserved for his signature with a shaky 'X', indicating that he was not numerate or literate in Irish, let alone English. That is the genius of this country: he could come here with nothing and in the space of a generation transform himself and my family. This is the Australian story of migration. Now, as then, some seek to scapegoat new migrants. Last week we heard the LNP immigration minister say of potential immigrants similar to my great-grandfather—

... they won't be numerate or literate in the own language, let alone English ... These people would be taking Australian jobs ... for many of them that would be unemployed, they would languish in unemployment queues and on Medicare and the rest of it ...

There is a complete lack of logic that new migrants would be both taking Australian jobs and languishing on unemployment queues. This is plainly a nonsense devised with malicious intent. Mr Dutton sought to marginalise and scapegoat migrants.

Ironically, the very next day I attended the Logan Migrant Small Business Expo. There, many migrants, especially refugees, were learning about employment law, tax and entrepreneurialism. They were keen in this country to make something better. That is the strength of Australia. The fact that our immigration minister either does not understand the Australian migration experience or wilfully misleads Australian voters for political gain at the expense of those who are refugees is truly sad. Australia deserves representatives who have higher standards. The fact that Mr Turnbull described Mr Dutton as 'outstanding' just shows that Mr Turnbull has not changed the LNP; indeed, the LNP has changed him.

A few weeks ago I went to the airport to meet refugees invited to Australia with Access, an Australian government settlement services provider. There were two families from Cameroon and escapees from Islamic totalitarianism in Syria and Iraq. These families were positive and hopeful and especially grateful for their new chance at life in Australia. One was a doctor and another a psychologist. They were all keen to learn English and get to work. One young man was going into year 10 at Marsden State High School. I asked him what he wanted to become in two years. In good English he said to me that he wanted to become an astronomer. I do not know whether he will become an astronomer, but we should never forget that even if you grow up in a refugee camp you can still dream of the stars—some to dream on the society we have built here under the Southern Cross.

## NATIONAL INJURY INSURANCE SCHEME (QUEENSLAND) BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2171, on motion of Mr Pitt—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (3.04 pm), continuing: As I was saying before the lunchbreak, what is perhaps most concerning is not only has the government ignored the vast majority of advice that was provided to the committee throughout the entire process; it decided on the most expensive option. There is a great deal of confusion around the costs associated with the government's

preferred model. Throughout the committee process the LNP opposition outlined our concerns about the cost of the NIIS and the need for government to ensure the scheme is as affordable as possible for Queensland motorists. The LNP members' statement of reservation to the initial NIIS inquiry states—

The Non-Government members could not agree with Option B as the price hike of \$76 fails the 'affordability' test of the terms of reference for the Scheme in our view.

...

The LNP Opposition members felt that figure was not affordable and would cause a "bill-shock" for many Queenslanders already struggling with high costs of living.

Queenslanders are again facing increases in the cost of registering a car of double the rate of inflation because of the decisions of this government. It was the LNP members' concerns that forced the government to go back and look at ways of reducing costs for Queenslanders.

The LNP opposition has no confidence in the numbers put forward by the Treasurer, considering the difference between the information he provided in his introductory speech and the evidence provided by Queensland Treasury during the committee process and the lack of detailed modelling put forward. In introducing this bill the Treasurer said—

In terms of the costs, the parliamentary committee examining the NIIS discussed at length a modelled cost of \$76 per vehicle for the introduction of a no-fault lifetime care with common law model. The figure of \$76 per vehicle has been on the public record now for some months. Today, I can advise that, as a result of the great work of this government, the committee and the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, we propose to implement an adjusted NIISQ model at a net additional cost to CTP insurance of \$32 per vehicle.

This is a saving of \$44 for every motorist from the original estimated cost. The savings will be achieved through MAIC working with CTP insurers to improve current CTP premium affordability and returning the part-year unearned CTP premium where cover will now be provided by the NIISQ.

In appearing in front of the committee as part of its examination of this bill, Queensland Treasury provided a further explanation of the Treasurer's numbers as detailed in the introductory speech. I do not want to stray too far into government policy in terms of the costing of these arrangements, but I refer to the Treasurer's introductory speech on the bill in which he outlined the net cost of the scheme. He indicated that savings would be achieved 'through MAIC working with CTP insurers to improve current CTP premium affordability and returning the part-year unearned CTP premium where cover will now be provided by the NIISQ'.

Judging from that evidence, Queensland Treasury referred members of the committee back to the numbers as detailed in the Treasurer's introductory speech—that is, the hybrid scheme costing \$76 and a saving of \$44 by driving down CTP premiums. The member for Albert and the member for Cleveland pushed the Treasury officials for more details in a public hearing on 26 April, confirming that the cost savings as identified by the Treasurer would be available for both options—the lifetime care and support scheme and the hybrid. The member for Albert, Mr Boothman, said—

I have been doing some simple mathematics. We are looking at a \$44 drop in the cost, so it is down to \$32. If we went with option A, we were intending it to be a \$60 increase. If we drop that by \$44, that is down to \$16. That is less than half the price of option B—\$32 down to \$16 ... I just wanted to get that on the record. Going with option A would have saved a tidy sum for our residents.

The Treasury officials at no point disputed the numbers as asserted by the member for Albert. At no stage was a clarification provided. LNP members rightly assumed that the numbers referenced in the Treasurer's introductory speech still remained, but the Under Treasurer was later forced to clarify these numbers in further correspondence provided to the committee more than a week after the Treasurer's initial appearance before the committee. The Under Treasurer for the first time provided evidence that new actuarial modelling had identified the cost of the new hybrid model adopted by the government at \$68 per vehicle. The Under Treasurer again for the first time outlined that the savings from driving down CTP premiums was \$36 and not the \$44 outlined by the Treasurer in his introductory speech. I know this sounds confusing. If it does sound confusing, that is because it is. Effectively we have the Treasurer and the Queensland Treasury throwing around different figures from one week to the next.

What is most concerning is the fact that the Treasurer has thus far failed to release any modelling that details how he has arrived at this magical figure of a \$36 saving per vehicle. In fact, the Treasurer was able to arrive at this figure before even sitting down and talking to the insurance companies that are currently a part of the Queensland CTP scheme. One could be forgiven for thinking he might have plucked the number right out of thin air. The LNP supports any move that reduces costs for Queensland motorists but we again highlight our concerns that, much like the Treasurer's leaked superannuation raid, this is a short-term sugar hit and without the Treasurer providing the assumptions and modelling

that went into the \$36 figure there is no evidence to suggest that the NIIS levy will not have to be substantially increased in future years. I do understand that there are serious and significant concerns in Treasury about this scheme and what the Treasurer has proposed and what the Treasurer has said.

In looking at the evidence Queensland Treasury provided to the committee, these numbers are not based on any modelling provided by Treasury officials; they are based on government policy. I again quote what Assistant Under Treasurer Geoff Waite had to say—

There is probably a point at which I do not want to stray too far into government policy in terms of the costing of these arrangements ...

I will say that again—

There is probably a point at which I do not want to stray too far into government policy in terms of the costing of these arrangements ...

It is significant that when I see the amendments foreshadowed by the Treasurer with the explanatory notes—and I assume this must be just a typo; I hope that is the case, but it does give some insight into where we are with this bill and the amendments—it says that the extent of those cost increases is currently known and is unlikely to be known for some time. In one case it is known and then it is unknown. I assume that is just a typo—we do not know—but that underlines the confusion amongst members of this government and the fact that the numbers just do not add up when we look at what the Treasurer has said and what Treasury has said as well. Are the savings policy decisions or are they based on sound advice from the Queensland Treasury? If the answer is the latter, then the Treasurer owes it to Queenslanders to be open and transparent and release the assumptions behind those numbers. The challenge for the Treasurer today is to step up and provide the modelling, to stand up in this place and outline how he arrived at these savings so that Queenslanders can now have confidence that they are based on sound advice and assumptions. Something tells me that the Treasurer will be unable to do so because he knows full well that this is a stopgap solution.

We know that the Treasurer has failed to properly consult with CTP insurers. We know that he has not completed any savings discussions or negotiations with CTP insurers. We know that CTP insurers are very concerned with the proposals presented by the Treasurer. We know that the Treasurer's short-sightedness could have an effect on hurting the long-term viability of Queensland's CTP scheme. The Treasurer owes it to Queenslanders to step up and finally outline the conversations he has had with CTP insurers and provide the modelling behind the \$36 saving eventually identified by the Under Treasurer. When LNP members of the committee sought more detail about these important meetings between government officials and CTP insurers, they were ruled out of order. Again, this government is failing in its promise to be open and transparent.

As I said earlier, the vast majority of people who made submissions to the committee as part of the consideration of the National Injury Insurance Scheme were in favour of the lifetime care and support model, option A. This is spelled out in black and white in previous information Queensland Treasury provided in response to submissions from the initial NIIS inquiry, and I table the following page from the report.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the NIIS: Queensland Treasury's response to submissions' [798].

Who was in favour of option A, the lifetime care and support model? Spinal Life Australia, Queensland Advocacy Inc., Headway Gold Coast, the Centre for National Research on Disability and Rehabilitation, Young People in Nursing Homes National Alliance, the Insurance Council of Australia, RACQ, Suncorp, QBE, Insurance Australia Group, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service and the Quarterly Brain Injury Services Meeting. As Russell Nelson of Headway Gold Coast put it—

Certainly 75 per cent of initial views were that we should go option A. However, the government has chosen option B.

Most people prefer option A yet the government has gone with option B. Correspondence from the Under Treasurer to the previous inquiry relayed the exact same fact—

Having regard to the Committee's Terms of Reference most submissions have expressed a preference for the lifetime care and support scheme required by the minimum benchmarks whilst legal submissions have advocated the retention of common law lump sums for care and support.

I want to put some of the views of some of those people on the record. These people spent a great deal of their time participating in this process and I feel it is only fair that their views are heard in this debate. Indeed, Mr Nelson described the choice of the hybrid scheme as a sea of grey despair. The RACQ said that it supports the concept of lifetime care and support through a no-fault scheme for people injured in road crashes. The Centre for National Research on Disability and Rehabilitation said that the adoption of a no-fault lifetime care and support scheme for all persons injured in motor vehicle accidents in Queensland is

strongly supported. Young People in Nursing Homes National Alliance said that the provision of no-fault benefits for care and support is important as it enables the rapid mobilisation of resources to promote early intervention that can maximise recovery and provide certainty, timeliness and care. This information provided by the Actuaries Institute is particularly pertinent. It said—

While the details of the option for a hybrid common law and no-fault arrangement have not been set out, any such hybrid arrangement would not meet the Queensland Government's in principle commitment to the provision of a no-fault lifetime care and support scheme. (We note that while the Western Australian Government is introducing a hybrid NIIS model from 1 July 2016, the WA Government has not signed a Heads of Agreement with the Commonwealth in respect of NIIS.)

...

We consider the following to be some of the relative advantages of a no-fault lifetime care scheme over a hybrid common law/no-fault arrangement:

- Participants are treated consistently, regardless of the nature or cause of their injury.
- Participants have their care arrangements co-ordinated for them, ensuring that participants receive the services appropriate to their needs.
- No-fault lifetime care schemes have a focus on early intervention, with an emphasis on rehabilitation and maximising participant outcomes from the outset, arguably resulting in a lower lifetime cost to the scheme. The timeframes involved in the legal process of pursuing a common law application are avoided, with the participant receiving compensation as and when services are required, rather than needing to wait until a settlement can be reached.
- The adversarial nature of a common law system, where fault must be attributed to an individual or organisation, can be avoided, allowing the focus to be on improving a participant's recovery and return to health, rather than the focus being on the amount of compensation to be awarded.
- Participants are not exposed to savings, investment and mortality risk. That is, funding for services such as attendant care and home help will be available for as long as required—

let me say that again quoting from its submission—

... funding for services such as attendant care and home help will be available for as long as required, rather than the participant having to make decisions about how much they can afford to spend on services today versus uncertain future needs. This is particularly an issue for NIIS scheme participants who have suffered catastrophic injuries and are already dealing with significant stress in coming to terms with their injury and focussing on recovering. These factors are further compounded for participants with an acquired brain injury, which often results in a diminished capacity to manage their financial affairs.

Indeed, this is what the Productivity Commission had to say in its report, which forms the basis of what we are discussing today. I refer to the committee's initial report into a suitable mode for NIIS on page 15—

The Productivity Commission considered the existing common law based injury insurance schemes were less effective and efficient than no-fault schemes in delivering care and support, particularly to catastrophically injured people for the following reasons:

- legal costs can be substantial and lump sum payments for compensation often fall short of meeting people's lifetime care needs.
- court outcomes are uncertain. People's future needs are unpredictable and poorly captured by a once-and-for-all lump sum, compensation is often delayed, and there is a risk that lump sums are mismanaged
- adversarial processes and delays may hamper effective recovery and health outcomes,
- in the presence of insurance, especially with little focus on risk-rating, the common law does not provide incentives for prudent behaviour by motorists and other parties.

While accepting that no-fault arrangements reduce people's freedom to the extent that some common law rights are removed, the Productivity Commission considered that no-fault schemes are likely to produce generally superior outcomes compared with fault-based common law systems. The Productivity Commission considered that no-fault schemes:

- provide consistent coverage across injured parties according to injury related needs
- provide much more predictable and coordinated care and support over a person's lifetime
- do not adversely affect people's incentives to improve their functioning following an injury
- are likely to be more efficient
- currently perform no worse at deterring excessively risky behaviour as, despite the appearance of common law, it is the insurer who pays in CTP schemes and not the at-fault driver. In addition, although no-fault arrangements will probably not meet all persons' desire for 'punishment' of an at-fault party, there is no clear evidence that common law achieves this either.

There were a range of other issues identified in relation to the hybrid scheme. On page 53 of the initial report, it was identified that preclusion periods apply where a person receives a lump sum compensation payment, which includes a component for lost earnings or lost capacity to earn. As highlighted by Dr Ros Harrington, the 50 per cent rule for preclusion periods may significantly disadvantage those with catastrophic injuries for whom awards of future care and support are significantly greater than 50 per cent of their settlement.

On page 55 of the initial report, it was identified that, in terms of the exhaustion of lump sum payments, the anecdotal evidence provided that lump sum payments may be exhausted for a range of reasons, including lack of experience in managing and investing large monetary sums; the repayment of debts, including for rehabilitation and medical costs prior to receiving the lump sum payment; poor returns on investment or unwise investment decisions; the development of drug, alcohol or gambling addiction problems; unrecoverable gifts and loans; and the risk of financial exploitation.

Research provided by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission shows that up to 48 per cent of a claimant's compensation can be paid to lawyers for their costs and statutory refunds. Page 46 of the report refers to the belief that lifetime care provides consistent treatment to catastrophically injured people and also provides early intervention and certainty and timeliness in relation to rehabilitation services.

Indeed, I reflect on the advice of the Insurance Commissioner, who described the lifetime care and support scheme as very much person centred and focused on the lifetime care and support of the injured person, rather than the common law focus on determining a lump sum as a once-and-for-all settlement and the person is then left to their own devices as to how their care and support is administered.

The LNP is entirely supportive of the creation of the NIIS. This bill will become incredibly important to many Queenslanders. It will mean that they will have a level of care that they did not always have when injured in a no-fault motor vehicle accident. The LNP members' support for the maximum level of choice, flexibility and independence for catastrophically injured people subject to the appropriate safeguards to ensure the long-term sustainability of the scheme are a matter of public record. We are glad that those views that were expressed in the initial committee inquiry have been adopted.

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge the vast amount of work that has gone into this bill. This issue has been around for a long time and it has been examined by the committee for some months. With that in mind, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the hard work of the public officials, the committee secretariat and all of those who have played a part in formulating the bill that we are debating. Although we may not agree with the model for the reasons that I have outlined, we all agree that it is absolutely important that people who have been injured in motor vehicle accidents, regardless of fault, receive the ongoing care they need for the remainder of their lifetime.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016 as the chair of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee, which had the responsibility to initially conduct an inquiry into the most suitable model and was then later required to examine the bill in detail. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the many groups and organisations for their submissions and those who spoke to the committee at the various public hearings over the duration of the inquiry and examination of the bill. I would also like to thank the various members from both sides of the House who were either members of the committee or substitute members for their involvement in the inquiry and examination of the bill. I, too, would like to express my sincere adulations to the secretariat staff of both the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee as well as the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their outstanding efforts in both inquiries over a short time frame. Every so often we debate and implement legislation that will protect and serve the people of Queensland. This bill is one of those pieces of legislation. I am honoured to have been part of the committee that conducted the inquiry and examined the bill. I must say, it was not an easy task.

As we have already heard, the former Newman government signed a heads of agreement between Queensland and the Commonwealth on the NIIS, which is designed as a lifetime care and support scheme for people who sustain catastrophic injury from accident, regardless of fault, based on the motor accident schemes that operate in some states and territories. The first inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the NIIS was a rigorous and thorough inquiry that initially examined two suggested models for implementation. The first model was a full no-fault lifetime care and support scheme—LCSS—where there would be no lump-sum compensation for lifetime care and support costs. Instead, the claimant's lifetime care and support costs would be met by the LCSS as they arise over their lifetime. The second model suggested a hybrid model, consisting of the existing common law scheme and the LCSS. Under that proposal, the claimant who is catastrophically injured in a motor vehicle accident and who can establish that another driver was at fault would be eligible to pursue a common law claim. Although the committee could not reach a successful determination on the most successful model, the government members of the committee preferred the hybrid model as it allowed individuals to exercise their common law rights and pursue a lump-sum payment for their catastrophic injuries.

When the NIIS(Q) Bill was referred to the committee, it was very clear that the model for implementation was very similar to the hybrid model that was examined in the inquiry, which incorporated the ability for individuals who are catastrophically injured, where fault can be established to a second party, to be able to pursue their common law rights to claim a lump sum payment. However, it also determined that all individuals would initially enter the NIIS to ensure that they obtain immediate care and support.

The construction of this bill affords the individual person to have an option: their ability to exercise their right to pursue a common law claim for catastrophic injuries and to access a lump-sum payment. This lump sum payment respects the dignity and the rights of a responsible and capable person to manage their own lifetime care and support. A lump sum payment affords the individual to make decisions for them and by them on their care and support in exactly the same way that the NDIS will.

During the initial inquiry, concern was raised about safeguards on lump sum payments. Committee members directed questions around the possibility of lump sum payments being accessed by the individual to squander at the casino, the racetrack or the like. We also heard of the possible scenario where a catastrophically injured person may be pressured, through cultural responsibilities to their community, to hand over their lump sum payment in total to the family or the community. The ability for an individual to choose to pursue their common law right to claim a lump sum compensation payout from a CTP insurer under this bill is dependent on a number of filters that would preclude the individual from advancing through the legal system. These filters include initially obtaining legal advice on their possible lump sum payment. Secondly, it would be dependent on their level of contributory negligence to allow them to proceed. Finally, a court would need to determine that the individual was able to manage a lump sum payment before progressing to a settlement judgement. At all points along this journey the individual has the choice, the right, to at any stage return to the NIIS for lifetime care and support. At any stage the individual has the choice, regardless of a no-fault CTP claim, to exercise their right to choose.

During both inquiries concerns were raised with submitters regarding exhaustion of lump sum payments. As you can imagine, exhaustion of a lump sum payment would be catastrophic for the individual. However, when questioned submitters could not produce any documentation or research that determined the number of lump sum claimants who have exhausted their payouts. Throughout this debate we will hear about the additional cost borne by the motorist through the hybrid scheme, the scheme that allows the individual to have a choice about their lifestyle and their care and support. We will hear that the difference between the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme and the hybrid scheme has been calculated at \$8 dollars per annum.

The quality of this long-tailed scheme has some dire consequences for those jurisdictions that have gone down the path of a complete lifetime care scheme without the ability for the individual to pursue their common law right to claim compensation. During the public hearings the committee heard from submitters from a range of legal organisations and associations, including the Australian Lawyers Alliance. They cited the New Zealand model, which is purely an LCSS scheme, which had two problems. Firstly, the scheme reduced the benefits down to the very people they are intended to benefit. The benefits became far less appropriate for the needs of the victim. In other words, those that this legislation is designed to protect ended up becoming the victim of a poorly designed implementation model. Secondly, under the New Zealand scheme the fund needed to be topped up with funds from Consolidated Revenue. In fact, the taxpayer ends up picking up the burden. The scheme becomes a huge bureaucratic nightmare and becomes extremely costly to the taxpayer. The second example Mr Hodgson from the ALA cited was a South Australian scheme. That scheme removed all common law rights and almost immediately the scheme went into the red. Within a few short years their unfunded liabilities were in excess of \$1 billion. There was also the thought that removal of common law rights would reduce the premium rate. Unfortunately, this did not happen either and premium costs soared.

We will hear today that the largest concern of those opposite is the cost difference between the two different schemes, the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme and the hybrid scheme in this bill. The cost difference from Treasury indicated that the difference was \$8 per annum—\$8 per annum to allow people to exercise their common law right to pursue a lump sum payout that they can manage themselves; an \$8 difference, as we heard from the ALA, between having a scheme that provides quality lifetime care and support to victims or a scheme that provides bare bones, minimalist and dodgy lifetime care and support. The difference is \$8 per year—the cost of two cups of coffee—between the taxpayer copping another slug to their hip pocket later down the track due to the perceived initial cheaper price.

Members of this Assembly need to make a decision about what are the best long-term outcomes for Queenslanders who suffer catastrophic injuries through motor vehicle accidents. To ensure those Queenslanders receive the quality lifetime care and support needed for them, it is coming down to the difference between the cost of two cups of coffee per year. It is for the reason that this bill with the hybrid model will produce the best long-term lifetime care and support scheme that allows the individual to exercise their common law right as a choice that I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.35 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. As shadow minister for communities and disability services, I am proud to see a commitment made by the former LNP government to establish a National Injury Insurance Scheme in Queensland come to fruition through this piece of legislation. The introduction of an NIIS is an important step forward in ensuring that no matter who is at fault in motor vehicle accidents in Queensland we will have a scheme that provides ongoing support to those who suffer catastrophic injuries in these tragic events. The National Injury Insurance Scheme forms part of a move towards the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme as recommended by the Productivity Commission in its 2011 report. Whilst in this initial phase it will be most important to those who sustain terrible injuries in traffic accidents, in the future there will be a move towards the inclusion of work injuries and medical accidents. This will create a fairer system for Queenslanders whose lives are irreversibly changed by unforeseen and tragic injuries and who may otherwise not be able to claim any compensation or access any support for their injuries.

As members know after the contribution by my colleague the shadow Treasurer, Queensland currently operates a common law fault based system for motor vehicle crashes which means essentially we are only covered if fault can be determined. This is not good enough in modern Queensland as all too often there are those who, where fault cannot be established, miss out on any coverage. An NIIS will meet the lifetime care and support needs of people who sustain serious personal injury in Queensland in a motor vehicle accident regardless of fault.

This scheme will be paid for by motorists throughout our state who will collectively contribute to ensure that they and their fellow Queenslanders are covered in case the worst should occur on our roads. In the Productivity Commission's final report into disability care and support, the commission identified that an NIIS would cover injuries from accidents such as quadriplegia, acquired brain injuries, severe burns and multiple amputations. It envisaged that the scheme would comprise a coherent set of state based no-fault arrangements for providing lifetime care and support building on existing schemes.

The report identified that in most instances people need lifelong support and, particularly in the initial post injury phase, have intensive clinical needs and require post treatment supports, early interventions and rehabilitation services. It is stated that a key focus of the NIIS would be coordinating these services and supports on a state level. The report also noted that, even when an at-fault party can be identified, the processes for securing compensation for support through litigation are drawn out and costly in fault based regimes. Further, it said that there is no evidence that the common law rights to sue for compensation for care costs increases incentives for prudent behaviour by drivers, doctors and other parties.

From a legal standpoint the Productivity Commission said that the creation of an NIIS would: one, avoid many of the deficiencies of common law compensation systems and improve outcomes for people with catastrophic injuries; two, comprise a system of premium funded, nationally consistent minimum care and support arrangements for people suffering catastrophic injuries; and, three, reduce the legal and frictional costs associated with the current fault based adversarial arrangements.

The report envisaged an NIIS would promote rehabilitation and adjustment and, where possible, employment. In 2013 the then LNP government signed the heads of agreement and agreed to fund the cost of the NDIS participants who are in the NDIS because they are not covered by an appropriate injury insurance scheme from 1 July 2016. We recognised that as the government we had a responsibility to provide adequate care and coverage for those who are subjected to life-changing, catastrophic injuries in vehicle accidents but who until now have not been able to secure assistance and support.

The bill we are debating today follows a committee inquiry into the most appropriate model for a national injury insurance scheme and will set up a body paid for by Queensland motorists that provides ongoing care and support packages. Unfortunately, it appears that this government has been unable to deliver a cost-effective model for the delivery of those support packages, meaning that, whilst this scheme has bipartisan support, we are now left to debate the best way to deliver the scheme.

At present, the model being proposed by the government for the delivery of an NIIS is a hybrid common law and no-fault care and support arrangement. That means that, where the fault of a person other than the injured person can be established, certain participants are able to elect to opt out of the NIIS. Conversely, those who are unable to prove fault have their ongoing care provided through the NIIS. The government's scheme produces a cost to Queensland motorists of \$68 per vehicle, which frankly is too high. Alternatively, the cost from the identified Lifetime Care and Support Scheme was \$60 per vehicle. The government has also identified further savings of \$36, which it claims would be achieved by working with CTP insurers to improve CTP premium affordability. However, this would have been available under both models. Therefore, Treasury has identified the cost per vehicle at \$32 for the government's option and \$24 per vehicle under the lifetime care option. However, as the shadow Treasurer has identified, through the committee process there was some confusion around the numbers and the savings, with the Treasurer indicating the savings per vehicle was \$44 from working with insurance companies to drive down premiums. No further information was provided to the committee to determine how the \$36 saving was arrived at and whether it holds up to scrutiny.

Throughout the committee process, stakeholders within the communities sector raised a number of legitimate concerns about the government's preferred model for the delivery of an NIIS. In their statement of reservation, non-government committee members identified a range of issues with the government's bill and the model they propose for the NIIS, some of which I have mentioned. The statement of reservation noted—

One of the primary concerns the non-government members of the committee has is with respect to inconsistencies between statements made by the Treasurer in introducing the Bill and advice, written and oral, provided to the committee by representatives of Treasury. In his First Reading contribution, the Treasurer indicated that the government had been able to achieve savings through CTP efficiencies; however, there is quite a significant inconsistency between the Treasurer and his Department as to what the savings actually are. This discrepancy is not a minor one and is not one which engenders confidence in the scheme nor its solvency.

The statement of reservation went on to note—

The non-government members of the committee are particularly cognisant that the introduction of an NIIS will result in an impost for all Queenslanders who own a registerable vehicle. To that end, we believe it critical we understand the assumptions upon which Treasury rely and that we have confidence in how those assumptions have been borne out; however, as earlier noted, any attempt to secure the requisite detail was ruled out of order.

With the government's model now confirmed to cost \$8 more per motorist than the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme, the statement of reservation went on to note—

According to the Motor Vehicle Census, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as at 31 January 2015 there were 3,771,321 vehicles registered in Queensland; therefore, the cost of the government's preferred hybrid model is in excess of \$30,000,000 each year, assuming the differential is \$8. The non-government members of the committee believe this is a significant additional impost in the cost of living being imposed by this government on Queensland families.

The non-government members also noted the low level of support for the government's model amongst stakeholders, with their statement of reservation stating—

In addition to their concerns about the cost of living impacts for Queensland the non-government members of the committee are concerned about the model the government have chosen to implement. There was clear evidence, to both the original inquiry and this inquiry, that frontline service providers, insurers and academics believe the life-time care model, as adopted by all other Australian jurisdictions except Western Australia, is the most appropriate model ... It would appear the only submitters who support the government's hybrid model are the Queensland Law Society and the Australian Lawyers' Alliance.

Finally, the non-government members described the explanatory notes for this bill as 'woefully inaccurate', stating—

... in concert with the inconsistency between Treasury's evidence and the Treasurer's statements, meant the non-government members of the committee did not feel sufficient evidence and information had been provided to ameliorate their significant concerns and therefore didn't feel a recommendation could be made on whether or not the Bill should pass.

In turn, whilst an NIIS is an important step forward in providing a new layer of protection for those involved in catastrophic accidents on our roads, this asleep-at-the-wheel government just cannot get a delivery model right for an NIIS. There are a range of unanswered issues, particularly with the hybrid model proposed by the government, including the confusion over cost savings, as well as the fact that people who exhaust lump sum payments after going through the courts can potentially re-enter the NDIS or the NIIS due to the heads of agreement Queensland signed with the Commonwealth government. The community sector does not believe the hybrid scheme achieves the best recovery outcomes for injured persons, and as shadow minister I hope that this government will take on board those concerns.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (3.44 pm): I rise to support the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. I thank the committee members and the committee secretariat for all the work that went into this bill, which did require a lot of detailed effort. I thank the officials from the

Treasury Department for all the briefings they gave us. This issue is complicated, but at the end of the day I never wavered from my belief that people have to have a choice. Early on I made the decision to support the hybrid scheme, because I believe in choice. I did not want people to go into the scheme that the opposition was pushing because we all remember what happened with the workers compensation legislation, which they changed when they were in government. I like to give people choice.

When looking at the ability for people to look after their own finances after a catastrophic accident, I do not believe that all people would blow the money. I attended every committee hearing and, from the figures that I saw, there was no great evidence that people blow the money. That is another reason that I stuck with the choice model.

This is an important and significant reform that will bring Queensland into line with the other states and allow us to meet our obligations under the national benchmarks to deliver a National Injury Insurance Scheme. The NIIS will help to address the current gap in coverage for those significantly injured in a motor vehicle accident where fault cannot be established, as currently those people do not have any existing rights to seek compensation or assistance for their care and equipment in the event of such an accident. At the time of the committee's inquiry, I spoke to many people in my electorate about this issue. Ironically, about 95 per cent of the people I talked to did not realise that they were not necessarily covered. They thought they were automatically covered under the current scheme; that, if they had an accident, it would be okay. Many of my constituents did not understand that, even if they were not at fault, they may not be covered. They thought that, as they pay their CTP, they would be covered. In my electorate I held a lot of briefings about the NIIS, particularly inviting people I knew had had accidents.

This is personal to me, because some years ago my daughter's partner was involved in a very bad traffic accident. A car rolled over on him and did significant damage to his left arm. That has had a big impact on his life. He was one of the lucky ones. The driver of the car was at fault. Often I think about what would have happened to him if no-one was at fault in that accident. Who would have paid for his rehabilitation? His parents and my daughter would have borne the cost of getting him back on deck. Therefore, having gone through that experience with a family member, it has always been my belief that the hybrid scheme is the best scheme. Even before becoming a member of parliament, I was aware that there was no coverage under the CTP scheme for people in a no-fault accident.

I believe that the government's proposed hybrid scheme will cover people, which is why I support it 100 per cent. Non-government committee members have talked about some of the comments made by people with a different view. As a committee member, I felt that they did not fully understand the scheme. That is an observation that I made as a member of the committee. I felt that they did not understand what was going on. I must congratulate the ALA representatives, who made a lot of common-sense addresses to the committee. After committee meetings, I spoke personally to members of the ALA and they made a lot of sense. I was on common ground with them, because I have always believed that people have the right to sue.

We do not want a second-rate system. We know the system we would have ended up with. As the chair of the committee said, for \$8 a year—two cups of coffee a year—the difference between the LNP scheme and the hybrid scheme proposed by the government is that the hybrid scheme gives people a bit better care. That is what we all want. Any of us in this House or any of our family members could have an accident. I would like to know that if it were to happen to my son or my daughter or my son-in-law or my family members that they would get the best care. This will cost an extra \$8 a year.

The LNP members kept talking to the committee about the cost to people. No-one knows this more than I coming from a low socio-economic electorate. I will fight for my people. My electorate will know that I am happy with the scheme that the Palaszczuk government is putting up—the government is delivering again. My people will be covered for \$8 extra a year. They will get top care. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.50 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. Like my colleagues before me, I want to be very clear that the LNP supports the establishment of a national injury insurance scheme in Queensland, and we have for a number of years. It is important for my constituents in Glass House that we understand where this has come from and why it is so important.

The establishment and implementation of a national injury insurance scheme kicked off when the Productivity Commission handed down its report into disability care and support. It reviewed the costs and benefits of replacing the current hotchpotch of disability service provision across the nation, and

particularly in each jurisdiction, and how that is funded. The new proposal of the Productivity Commission would ensure that all Australians with significant and ongoing disabilities were delivered essential care and support.

The Productivity Commission discovered what I think we all really knew and what anyone who has worked in the sector would have experienced and that is that it was poor, inequitable and underfunded. It also highlighted the inability of the current system to adequately support those individuals who are catastrophically injured in motor vehicle accidents. One thing that the Productivity Commission particularly found was that existing common law based injury insurance schemes like Queensland's CTP scheme were less effective and efficient than no-fault schemes in delivering care and support, particularly to catastrophically injured people.

The Productivity Commission recommended the rollout of two separate schemes. The first was the NDIS, which we are all very familiar with. Similar to Medicare, it will provide people with significant and ongoing disability across the nation long-term care and support. The second was a national injury insurance scheme to cover the lifetime care and support needs of people who sustain those catastrophic injuries from an accident, regardless of fault, based on motor vehicle accident schemes that operate in some states and territories.

That brings us to this bill. I think it is important to capture a couple of the key concerns of the opposition when it comes to what is being proposed this afternoon. I will not reiterate all the details that my colleagues have outlined, suffice to say that we do not believe that the hybrid model proposed by the government is the most effective way in which to deliver this important reform.

There are financial concerns. My colleagues have addressed at length the discrepancies they were provided by the Treasurer, Treasury officials and others in determining exactly what the impact would be on the registration of each and every Queenslanders. The non-government members of the committee, in their statement of reservation to the committee report, stated—

The non-government members of the committee are particularly cognisant that the introduction of an NIIS will result in an impost for all Queenslanders who own a registerable vehicle. To that end, we believe it critical we understand the assumptions upon which Treasury rely and that we have confidence in how those assumptions have been borne out ...

The question really is: just how much are Queenslanders going to be paying for this scheme? Whilst we all acknowledge the importance of it, we also want to make sure that we have the best scheme for the right price. If we cannot see the advice and if we cannot see the estimates that underpin that—the actuarial estimates that underpin those—then Queenslanders should be rightly concerned that they might be getting a bum deal in this situation.

That is particularly important on the back of what we have debated previously this week—that is, the 3.5 per cent increase in registration for family vehicles across the state. That is another impost on the cost of living for families in this great state. The concerns are not just financial. The non-government members in their statement of reservation went on to state—

There was clear evidence, to both the original inquiry and this inquiry, that frontline service providers, insurers and academics believe the life-time care model, as adopted by all other Australian jurisdictions except Western Australia, is the most appropriate model.

I want to pull up the previous speaker, the member for Maryborough, for suggesting that this is the LNP model. This is a model that is accepted by front-line service providers, insurers, academics and all jurisdictions with the exception of Western Australia. This is not something that the LNP has concocted. It is what other jurisdictions have adopted. The statement of reservation continues—

It provides those who are catastrophically injured, and their families, with confidence in the knowledge there will be a minimum standard of treatment, care and support for the rest of their lives.

The member for Maryborough went on to talk about what we would term a gold plating of the service. There are no guarantees under the hybrid model that people will actually receive that. The hybrid model does allow people to avail themselves of their rights under common law to seek a lump sum, but should that lump sum dissipate before the end of the catastrophically injured person's life they may, after a period, seek to re-enter the scheme for the provision of lifetime standard care and support.

It appears that the only submitters who support the government's hybrid model are the Queensland Law Society and the Australian Lawyers Alliance. Let me compare that again to those who are actually in support of the lifetime care and support. They are the front-line service providers, the insurers, the academics and all other jurisdictions with the exception of Western Australia.

I will leave my contribution there because it is very clear. What the LNP is proposing is consistent with what the vast majority of submitters and what the vast majority of jurisdictions within Australia are applying. Therefore, I believe it will stand the test of time. I commend the approach taken by the shadow minister in this debate. I will be supporting his actions later on this afternoon.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. The NIIS will transform the way that catastrophically injured persons are dealt with in Queensland from 1 July 2016 forever. This scheme is designed to sit alongside the National Disability Insurance Scheme and will ensure that at least minimum benchmarks of treatment, care and support are delivered to those catastrophically injured in a motor vehicle accident. This is an important and significant reform that will help to bring Queensland into line with other states.

Let us reflect. In 2013 the then LNP government signed onto a heads of agreement with the Commonwealth to implement an NIIS in Queensland for motor vehicles by 1 July 2016. In May way back in 2013, Campbell Newman signed onto the benchmarks and the then treasurer Tim Nicholls was responsible for its implementation. 2013 rolls over, 2014 rolls over, 2015 comes with a snap election and we find ourselves in a position of having to race against the clock due to the inaction of the LNP and the member for Clayfield. In 2015 the member for Mulgrave brought into this place the commitments Queensland had made and charged us as representatives, through the vehicle of the committee system, to make a decision on what we saw as the best model to implement, taking into account a multitude of factors.

I want it on the public record that similar behaviours of inaction were demonstrated by the five opposition committee members who churned through the committee process. The LNP changed the deputy chair three times. The LNP limited continuity through the committee process. There was no transfer of any intelligence and always—just as we saw late last night and well into this morning with the North Stradbroke Island bill—money was prioritised before people by those opposite.

We saw total inaction in decision making from the LNP at every turn. There was hesitation from the members opposite to even fulfil the obligations they were charged with and inaction and fear of even proposing an increase to rego costs. Through the inquiry process they failed to put a position. Here now in the bill phase they want to go back and say, ‘Guess what? We think the government has it wrong. We now want the model that we can disagree with.’

Queenslanders deserve better. For those injured where fault can be established, people do have a right to take legal action and to seek compensation. The NIIS is our safety net, and safety nets should never come at the cost of reduction of longstanding legal rights. Queensland’s CTP scheme works well: it is stable and affordable, and interference with that stability and the rights within it is something we have not done. That is something I am proud of.

The introduction of the NIIS will seek to address a gap by providing coverage for those injured where fault cannot be established whilst also preserving the legal rights of those who can prove fault. It is critically important for this implementation that we get the balance right in levelling up coverage for those injured in accidents without fault whilst also protecting the legal rights of those injured where fault can be established. This is a matter that I have been particularly vocal about and I want to acknowledge the work done by the Treasurer—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Linard): Members on my left, the member is not taking your interjections. I ask that you let her speak.

**Ms BOYD:** Maybe next time. I want to acknowledge the work done by the Treasurer to get the balance right. A hybrid model is one that has the full support of government members because it seeks to level up coverage whilst protecting existing rights and, when the NIIS and the NDIS underpinning principle is all about choice and control, this is the best and in reality the only way to achieve it in my view.

I want to commend the Treasurer on his commitment to be able to deliver these principles in a way that gets the balance right but at a competitive price point and at a modest cost, particularly when looked at comparatively with other state schemes. The LNP signed up to this federal Labor initiative, and only a Labor government in Queensland has the courage to give it life. It was going to cost Queenslanders more, but we have brought the cost down to a more realistic point and the cost will be lower than what our predecessors had contemplated—and much lower than any other state.

Sixty cents a week is a small cost to cover massive injuries. Sixty cents a week is a small price to pay for lifetime care and support for our family, friends and neighbours who may be catastrophically injured from the moment of the accident. Further, a hybrid model is critically important from an economic perspective. Only this model will preserve choice and dignity for those people who can prove fault and choose to opt out of the NIIS and access lump sum compensation.

Maintaining existing rights—by continuing to allow those people who can prove fault the ability to make their own decisions about the type of care and equipment they require for their ongoing care—is important to us on this side of the House. It is what we value. A hybrid model will allow those people who are able to demonstrate fault the ability to seek a lump sum payment for their care and equipment with proper safeguards in place—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the member is not taking your interjections and they are not adding anything to the debate. I ask that you leave the member for Pine Rivers to be heard in silence.

**Ms BOYD:**—meaning they are no longer reliant on the scheme to manage their ongoing care. A key consideration for the committee was the ability for participants who suffer catastrophic injuries to access needs based housing or transport. It was very obvious to me that this is a key consideration for people in their transition from the health system to their homes—their transition to their future, the best future that they and their families can create. A lump sum payment allows for people to retain the right to choice and dignity in being able to make their own decisions about their care needs to have the best quality of life. This is critically important for those in rural and regional Queensland. In those areas, services are harder to obtain and flexibility is critical.

We recognise that government-run schemes cannot be the panacea for all problems and that the dignity and self-determination which flows from choice will foster better quality of life and enhanced independence for participants. The LNP also know, or should know, that the scheme that is being debated this week is proposed to be rolled out at a significantly lower cost compared to other states. Unfortunately, we know that the LNP do not value the rights of injured people. We saw them do it to our state's workers compensation scheme when they were last in government, when they ripped the guts out of it—when they introduced unfair injury thresholds that slashed rights for injured workers.

We urge them to not continue to make the mistakes of the past. If the LNP are fair dinkum, they would support the hybrid model in ensuring Queenslanders have access to the best NIIS in the country that provides choice and dignity and is economically strong—which retains rights, which closes a gap in coverage and appropriately supports people who are catastrophically injured in ensuring their lifetime care and equipment needs are met. This is good legislation that gets the balance right—choice, flexibility, independence, rights. I commend the bill to the House.



**Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (4.04 pm): What can I say?

**Mr Boothman:** That was fast!

**Miss BARTON:** I do feel a little sorry for the good people in Hansard. I do wonder sometimes how they manage to keep up. All I can say to Hansard is good luck. Thank goodness they have the video replay, which is something that the member for Whitsunday would absolutely value.

I rise to join the shadow Treasurer, the shadow minister for disability services and the shadow minister for transport and main roads in, whilst supporting the concept of a National Injury Insurance Scheme, saying that quite clearly today the government have got it wrong when it comes to implementing the NIIS. I will not go through the history because both the shadow Treasurer and the shadow minister for disability services have done a very good job of explaining to the House how we got to this point.

It is worth reminding those on the other side of the chamber that it was the LNP who made sure that Queensland would be able to have an NIIS. It was the LNP who signed the heads of agreement with the Commonwealth government. The LNP does still, as the shadow Treasurer has outlined, support the implementation and the establishment of an NIIS. We just think it should be done in the most cost-effective way that does not have the most significant impact on Queensland families. It is unfortunate though that this asleep-at-the-wheel Labor government does not care about the cost of living for Queensland families and does not want to make sure that we have not only the best model in place for people who are catastrophically injured but also the most cost-effective model in place when it comes to supporting Queensland families.

What I find particularly galling about all of this is that the Labor government who say that they are a government of consultation, who want to listen to the people of Queensland, have absolutely ignored the wants and the needs and the advice of academics who work in this space and of the front-line service providers who work in this space who have overwhelmingly given us feedback that what they want is absolutely model A, which is the lifetime care option. Not only has it ignored the advice and recommendation of the insurance providers, but when the government was trying to work out the savings it was not even in a position, to our knowledge, to be able to consult with the insurance providers.

It would be nice if we knew a little bit more about the consultation that had been done with the insurance providers and the CTP companies but, as my fellow members of the education committee would appreciate, the government members used standing orders to gag Treasury from even confirming that a meeting that they said was going to happen even happened. It is absolutely ridiculous. It is this lack of understanding and credibility around not only how these savings are able to be achieved but what they even are that leads the non-government members to have significant concerns.

The shadow Treasurer highlighted the significant difference between the advice that the Treasurer gave in this House and the advice that was provided by the Under Treasurer. In introducing this bill, the Treasurer said that the savings were \$44. The Under Treasurer then told the education committee, 'No, no. The savings are up to \$36.' Who is misleading parliament? Is it the Treasurer or is it Treasury? What I want to know is what the savings actually are. When we were trying to understand that—and the member for Albert and the member for Buderim will absolutely concur—we were unable to get an understanding really of how we were going to achieve the savings. Again, what we saw was this government, who says it is a government of consultation and of talking to Queensland, gagging Treasury officials from being able to tell us what they were able to do in order to achieve the savings.

**Mr Dickson:** A government of higher taxes.

**Miss BARTON:** I take the interjection from the member for Buderim. They are a government of higher taxes. I know that the member for Buderim will touch on that in his contribution to the debate.

I spoke about the fact that there was a difference in the savings that could be achieved in terms of what the Treasurer told the parliament and in terms of what Treasury told the committee. What I fail to understand—and I was trying to get to this but, as we know, this government that is all about consultation gagged Treasury officials—is how privately listed companies like CTP insurers can be directed by a government as to what the savings are. There is no guarantee that the savings that have been identified for this financial year are going to be applicable in the forward years. That was of great concern to non-government members of the committee, because we are very concerned about the impact that the cost of the NIIS is going to have on Queensland families.

As I have said, we absolutely support the establishment of the NIIS. That is not in dispute. What we have an objection with is the way in which the Labor Party is doing it. We have a massive objection to way in which the Labor Party is doing it. I think it was the member for Townsville who said that the cost to Queensland families is two coffees a year. It is a shame that the member for Townsville is so flippant about the increased cost that is being placed on Queenslanders. Whilst it might be an \$8 differential this time, we have no idea what the increased cost of this scheme will be over the forward years.

The shadow minister for disability services made reference to the non-government members' statement of reservation at the back of the committee report. What we discovered was that, when they did a census of motor vehicle registrations as at 31 January last year, Queensland has 3,771,321 vehicles registered. Let us assume that the \$8 differential between the lifetime care model that the LNP is advocating and the hybrid model that is being advocated by the government is correct. We are not quite sure we can rely entirely on the figures, but we will assume for the purposes of the argument that the \$8 differential that has been identified is correct. I do not know that we can necessarily trust Labor with figures, but for the purposes of the argument we will give it a go. What that means is the impact to Queensland families is more than \$30 million a year. That is absolutely a slap in the face to the people of Queensland. This is a government that said there will be no new taxes. At the same time as increasing the cost of car registration by double the CPI, they are imposing a tax on all owners of registrable vehicles in Queensland that will total more than \$30 million per annum.

There were a couple of concerns, in particular, outside the costing that non-government members had. One of the things that was particularly highlighted is the possibility under the hybrid model proposed by the government for the lump sum model to be dissipated. It was really disappointing to hear both the member for Townsville and the member for Maryborough say that there is no evidence that lump sums are dissipated. Ms Williams from Headway—a fantastic organisation on the Gold Coast, and I pay tribute to them and to Russell Nelson, their managing director—gave a fine example before the committee. It is on page 19 of the committee's report. She mentioned an example that she well knows of someone who received a lump sum and used the lump sum to buy a house. As a result of a relationship breakdown, that person lost the house, is now homeless and is in the care of Headway ABI. We also saw evidence from Griffith University that there is significant lump sum dissipation. The reality is that the government does not want to hear it because it does not help its argument.

Not only are they ignoring organisations like Headway ABI and Griffith University academics in terms of the dissipation of lump sums; they have generally ignored their views when it comes to the kind of model we should have. On page 21 of the education committee's report, Mr Nelson says the following—

Certainly 75 per cent of initial views were that we should go with option A. The government has chosen option B, but our initial approach is that option A would be the preferred choice.

The Insurance Council of Australia, on page 21, say that option A is their preferred model. The Griffith University submission states that they strongly support the introduction of a no-fault lifetime care and support scheme for serious motor vehicle injuries in Queensland. On page 22 of the report, the Suncorp Group states in their submission they are disappointed that the Queensland government has chosen not to implement a full lifetime care model for individuals injured in catastrophic motor accidents. These are the same stakeholders that the member for Maryborough said did not understand the bill nor the concept of it. It is really disappointing that the member for Maryborough says that the Insurance Council and Suncorp do not understand how this will work and that the Actuaries Institute, which also made a submission, does not understand how this system would work.

I am conscious there are a number of members who wish to make a contribution to this debate so I will quickly touch on a few more matters. I note that the Treasurer has introduced an amendment with respect to contributory negligence to increase it from 25 per cent to 50 per cent. Being of the view that the lifetime care model is the preferred model, it would ordinarily render the debate around contributory negligence moot. However, given that we have the amendment before the House, it is worth noting that I think this is absolutely ridiculous. When we are talking about what a 50 per cent contributory negligence level is, lifting it from 25 per cent to 50 per cent I think is ridiculous. I am surprised that the member for Pine Rivers, given that she was a very strong advocate of scrapping any contributory negligence burden, did not seek to mention that in her contribution.

I have very significant concerns around the solvency of the scheme. Not only is this Labor government raiding the superannuation fund of Queensland's hardworking public servants; it has also made adjustments to the solvency of the WorkCover scheme. I simply do not have any faith that this Labor government is able to manage the scheme in an appropriate way.

In closing, from my point of view, we as a parliament have an obligation to ensure that there is a minimum standard and quality of life for people who are catastrophically injured. I, alongside the stakeholders who submitted to the inquiry and the other non-government members, genuinely believe that the best way to do that is not by giving someone a lump sum which they might dissipate and then go back into the scheme but by giving them a guaranteed lifetime care and support model which will ensure that for the rest of their days—whether they live for another five, 10 or 50 years—they are guaranteed a minimum standard and quality of life because that is what this is about: ensuring people who are catastrophically injured are looked after.

Clearly, what we have seen today is that this Labor government is incapable of doing that. It is incapable of offering Queenslanders the best scheme to do that. In introducing the worst possible scheme, they are significantly impacting the cost of living for Queensland families. Whilst I support the NIIS, I absolutely condemn the government's model and the hybrid scheme.

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (4.16 pm): I am very pleased to speak in support of this bill this afternoon. I come to this debate as someone who for quite some years in private practice acted as a solicitor not only for people injured in motor vehicle accidents but also for CTP insurers. In my view, this hybrid model is quite clearly the best model. I will expand on those points briefly this afternoon.

I do not often agree with the member for Broadwater, but I do agree with the last part of her contribution when she said there is a need to look after those who are catastrophically injured in motor vehicle accidents. I agree with that sentiment. It is certainly the case that having a hybrid model is the best model. What the member for Broadwater needs to understand is that you do not have to take away rights from people to give them to other people. You do not have to rob Peter to pay Paul. You can see in our workers compensation scheme and in the premium outcomes in the workers compensation scheme that have been announced recently that you can achieve good cost outcomes and also have a robust scheme that protects some of our most vulnerable in society.

We had similar claims from those opposite in relation to the quite sensible changes we made to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act in this state when we removed the unfair five per cent thresholds that were put forward by the Newman government. They have now created a fair and sustainable scheme. I quote from a media release from the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: 'Queensland retains the lowest average workers compensation premiums in countries'—

**Miss Barton** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Linard): Order! Member for Broadwater, your interjections are not being taken. You are not only interjecting but also interjecting while walking to your seat with water.

**Mr PEGG:** I would like to point out to those opposite that the current workers compensation model and indeed the model they supported when they were in government is, guess what, a hybrid model. There is a no-fault aspect to protect those who are injured who cannot prove negligence and then there is an ability to pursue a common law claim for those who are able to prove negligence, for those who are able to demonstrate fault. I find the approach that those opposite have taken to this to be very interesting. In the field of workers compensation, they support thresholds. They maintained that position during the debate on the workers compensation amendments that were put forward last year. We hear now that they are opposing all common law claims in motor vehicle accidents. We can only guess what their approach is to civil liability.

This is certainly a new thing, because when those opposite were in government they were intent on taking away the rights of those who had suffered injuries at work. They did not touch any of the motor vehicle accident legislation, but now they are seeking to remove common law. There are a lot of internal inconsistencies there as well. This leads me to question who is actually running this policy amongst those opposite. Who has come up with this idea? I had a flick through the committee report. I would like to commend, once again, the member for Townsville for all the hard work he did as chair of the committee. I saw that the statement of reservation was signed by the member for Cleveland. I say to those opposite that, if the member for Cleveland is running their policies, that is when they know they are in serious trouble.

**Miss Barton:** Duncan, if you have a look, it actually is not signed by the member for Cleveland.

**Mr PEGG:** I take that interjection. I am referring to the statement of reservation.

As I was saying, this bill enables those who are catastrophically injured to be able to be protected while at the same time enabling those who can prove fault to make a common law claim. My experience with those who receive lump sum compensation was that they acted responsibly. There are always going to be a minority of people who do not do that, but just because there is a small minority of people who may not act appropriately does not mean you undermine the scheme for everybody else. This is a sensible and prudent approach. If members have a look at the outcomes of the changes to the workers compensation legislation in terms of the effect on premiums, I am sure they will find that it is very, very economically responsible as well. Finally, I would like to point out that the money that goes into this scheme actually goes to people who are injured, who suffer catastrophic injuries and who in some cases suffer a disability. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (4.22 pm): I rise today to speak on the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. I intend to do so with a tad more passion and belief than the previous speaker. The establishment and implementation of a National Injury Insurance Scheme, or NIIS, has its roots in the findings of the Productivity Commission's *Disability care and support* report. The Productivity Commission reviewed the costs and benefits of replacing the current system of disability services in Australia with new arrangements which would ensure all Australians with significant and ongoing disabilities were delivered essential care and support.

The review highlighted shortfalls in the ability of the current system to adequately support those individuals who were catastrophically injured in motor vehicle accidents. Accordingly, the Productivity Commission recommended a national rollout of two separate schemes—a National Disability Insurance Scheme, the NDIS, similar to Medicare in that all Australians with a significant and ongoing disability would get long-term care and support; and a National Injury Insurance Scheme, the NIIS, to cover the lifetime care and support needs of people who sustain a catastrophic injury from an accident, regardless of fault.

On 8 May 2013 the Australian and the former LNP Queensland governments signed the heads of agreement on the NDIS, with Queensland's transition to the full NDIS to commence from 1 July 2016. According to the explanatory notes of this bill, this agreement required Queensland to—

... implement a NIIS for motor vehicle accidents, or, from 1 July 2016, meet 100 per cent of the costs of participants who enter the NDIS because a NIIS has not been implemented.

The former LNP government at the time understood the absolute responsibility they had to ensure that all Queenslanders who receive life-changing catastrophic injuries as a result of motor vehicle accidents had access to the care and support that would be required for them to have a quality of life, regardless of who was at fault. Therefore, the LNP Queensland government agreed in principle with the NIIS minimum national benchmarks for the provision of no-fault care and support for people who were catastrophically injured. This bill will establish a no-fault National Injury Insurance Scheme

Queensland, the NIISQ, for assessment of the treatment, care and support needed by participants and to make payments for that treatment, care and support; and a National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland to administer the NIISQ and a national insurance scheme fund.

I was a member of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee when this bill was initially referred to that committee.

**Ms Boyd:** We miss you. We want you to come back.

**Mr CRAMP:** I will take that interjection. I know you miss me; it is inevitable. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of that committee at the time and the secretariat for their efforts in working to review this bill in the short time frame that was provided to us. As I noted earlier though, it is an unfortunate fact that our committee did receive this bill at the eleventh hour for review and reporting. As I stated, the previous LNP government had signed the heads of agreement in 2013 and then worked diligently throughout the remainder of their term in government to progress the bill. Now this Labor government have floundered with this bill for the last 18 months of their term, moving it between committees until at the very last moment they sought to rush the bill through the committee process via the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee.

Government members of the committee then sought to further compromise the review of the bill via the public submission process by seeking to brush aside the right of the committee to hear from all interested parties in this bill, including representatives of the insurance industry. To ensure that proper process was followed, the non-government members of the committee insisted on hearing from all interested parties. It was fortunate that we did, as the insurance industry and, very importantly, community organisations and charities involved in caring for and supporting Queenslanders with catastrophic injuries were favourable to option A—the lifetime care support model. As it turns out, this was definitely not the preferred option of the Labor government. There was no such issue from the government members in hearing from the various groups representing the legal fraternity though who were of course in favour of the government's preferred option B, being a hybrid model involving a common law component allowing participants to engage in litigation processes obviously with the paid assistance of the legal fraternity.

Of course we cannot forget Labor's now infamous option C which came to the non-government members late one evening in the form of a photo of a hand sketched diagram with scribbled notations presented on a mobile phone screen. To even think for a moment that this hand-drawn afterthought was some form of viable option was absolutely laughable. Here was a Labor government that clearly had no idea of how they would provide Queenslanders the minimum expected quality of care and support when they needed it most. It astounds me that even after the previous LNP government had provided Labor with the framework to progress this vital bill they somehow still managed to make it a calamitous affair.

I unfortunately moved committees—much to the disappointment of my fellow committee members—prior to the final report being published.

**Mr Costigan:** Especially the member for Pine Rivers.

**Mr CRAMP:** I will take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. However, it came as no surprise to me that the report detailed that, while the non-government members support the establishment of the NIISQ, they did not have enough information available to them to make a recommendation on whether or not the bill should be passed. The non-government members did not believe their concerns had been ameliorated by Treasury's advice. The non-government members are of the view that the advice provided is lacking in credibility and not reliable, particularly in light of the inconsistencies between their advice and the Treasurer's statement to the parliament with respect to the savings achievable and the impost on Queensland families. Further, there are a number of assumptions upon which Treasury relied, particularly with respect to the savings to be achieved. However, no detail has been provided with respect to how those savings are actually to be achieved. I support these comments by the non-government members, as during my time on the committee I was witness to constantly changing information regarding this bill and the assumptions being made, especially on the financial aspects of it.

The government's initial estimation of their preferred option B, the hybrid model, was \$68 per vehicle. However, the cost identified for the lifetime care and support scheme would be only \$60 per vehicle. Treasury then identified further savings of \$36 by working with CTP insurers, which Labor boasted would reduce the cost of the government's preferred hybrid model to \$32. However, credit must be given to the member for Albert at this point as it was his questioning regarding the discount during the committee process which identified that this discount would absolutely be applied to the lifetime care model as well, reducing its cost to \$24 per vehicle.

Then we had Labor's 'make it up as he goes' Treasurer indicate that savings would actually be \$44 from working with insurance companies. However, as per usual, there was scant regard for the detail, with very little information to determine how those stated savings were arrived at and whether they would hold up to scrutiny. It is very disappointing to see so many unanswered issues in relation to the government's preferred hybrid model.

The confusion over the cost savings and questions regarding the potential for people to re-enter the NDIS or NIIS after exhausting any lump sum payments they receive as a result of going through the court was also questionable. It was even more disappointing, but not surprising, to hear earlier the member for Townsville describe the level of care that may be provided in this scheme by Labor as 'dodgy'. Labor's idea on the minimum standard of care appears to be much lower than what the LNP would provide to Queenslanders under this scheme. The member for Townsville's disregard towards any cost savings to consumers in this scheme is also a great example of the financial incompetence of this Labor government, forcing Queenslanders to tighten their belts even more every day.

Without a doubt, this bill should be an important step forward for the people of Queensland. It must, however, be a cost-efficient and effective scheme. Due to this government's continual increases in taxes and charges and their continual raids on Queenslanders' hard-earned superannuation, now more than ever the people of Queensland cannot afford any more overpriced Labor bungles.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (4.31 pm): I rise in the House to support the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. At the outset I think it is important to acknowledge the Treasury officials who came time and time again and presented evidence to the committee and answered inquiries as what was actually being proposed was shifting so that we could arrive at what is the best scheme for Queenslanders. Their hard work assisted us to get to where we are today.

The introduction of this legislation is a significant reform that will help to bring Queensland into line with other states in meeting its obligations under the national benchmarks to deliver a National Injury Insurance Scheme. This scheme will help to address a current gap in the coverage for those significantly injured in a motor vehicle accident where fault cannot be established. Currently, these people do not have any existing rights to seek compensation or assistance for their care and equipment in the event of such an accident. For those who are injured where fault can be established, people do have a right to take legal action and to seek compensation. The scheme is a safety net, and safety nets should never come at the cost of a reduction in longstanding legal rights. Queensland's compulsory third-party scheme works well. It is stable and affordable and we have not interfered with that stability or the rights within it. The legislation is another example of our government leading the way on good social policy and filling a gap to look after injured people who previously fell through the gaps and were at a great disadvantage.

The introduction of this scheme provides coverage for those injured. In implementing this scheme, it is critical that we do get the balance right and level up the coverage. The legislation brings Queensland to the point where we are able to meet our responsibility to a group of people who previously were not being provided with the necessary support to have any quality of life. The proposed model as put forward by the Queensland government achieves this balance, being a hybrid model that seeks to level up coverage whilst protecting rights. Importantly, the hybrid model not only gets the balance right; it does so for a modest cost that is significantly lower in comparison to other states that have also legislated to implement this scheme.

Our government has given life to the heads of agreement that was previously signed. It was going to cost more, but we have brought it to reality at a cost lower than our predecessors had contemplated. A hybrid model, however, is also critically important from an economic perspective. It will allow those people who are able to demonstrate fault the ability to seek a lump sum payment for their care and equipment with proper safeguards in place, meaning they are no longer reliant on a scheme to manage their ongoing care. Such a model also preserves choice and dignity for those people who can prove fault and choose to opt out of the NIIS to access lump sum compensation by continuing to allow those people who can prove fault the ability to make their own decisions about the type of care and equipment they require for their ongoing care.

Often someone who finds themselves with an unexpected catastrophic spinal injury, for example, may need to make substantial changes to their home or vehicle arrangements or, indeed, move to alternative accommodation better suited to their care requirements. Through the hybrid model, those people who can prove fault retain the right to access a lump sum payment as they can now for care and equipment, with the lump sum able to be used for the purchase of items such as appropriate accommodation or modified transport, allowing those people to retain the right to choose and the dignity in being able to make their own decisions about their care needs to have the best quality of life. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (4.36 pm): I rise to speak on the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. The 2011 Productivity Commission's *Disability care and support* report uncovered a poor, inequitable and underfunded disability support system and highlighted the inability of the current system to adequately support those individuals who were catastrophically injured in motor vehicle accidents. The Productivity Commission found that existing common law based injury insurance schemes, such as Queensland's CTP insurance scheme, were less effective and inefficient than no-fault schemes in delivering care and support, particularly to catastrophically injured people. The Productivity Commission recommended a national rollout of two separate schemes, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the NDIS, similar to Medicare in that all Australians with a significant or ongoing disability would get long-term care and support; and the National Injury Insurance Scheme, the NIIS, to cover the lifetime care and support needs of people who sustain a catastrophic injury from an accident, regardless of fault, based on motor vehicle accident schemes that operate in other states and territories.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that the people who suffer particular serious personal injuries as a result of a motor vehicle accident in Queensland receive the necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support regardless of who is at fault. In particular, the bill aims to establish a no-fault National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland for the assessment of the treatment, care and support needed by participants and to make payment for their treatment, care and support; a National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland to administer the NIISQ; and a National Injury Insurance Scheme Fund. The bill is to implement the NIISQ in parallel with the National Disability Insurance Scheme in line with the in-principle agreement between Queensland and the Commonwealth of 2013.

Many Queenslanders were not aware that because CTP is a fault based scheme it leaves some catastrophically injured motorists without cover for medical costs, rehabilitation and ongoing care if either they are deemed to be at fault in a crash or nobody is found to be at fault. The state government's Motor Accident Insurance Commission, MAIC, which regulates the compulsory third-party insurance scheme, estimates that an average of three people per week sustain catastrophic injuries in Queensland road crashes, including brain or spinal injuries, limb amputations, severe burns or blindness. Unfortunately, about half of those people are found not to be covered by CTP insurance because they are found to be at fault or no-one was found to be at fault. This means that around half of the 140 people in Queensland who are catastrophically injured in motor vehicle accidents every year are not guaranteed the lifetime care that they require. As many submissions to the committee underlined, these people then need to rely on their own assets, taxpayer funded health care and support services and family members and friends for their care and support into the future. The NIIS will provide necessary and reasonable medical treatment, rehabilitation, care and assistance to seriously injured people so that they can undertake their daily activities, maximise their independence and pursue employment opportunities.

The committee considered the two options identified in the terms of reference of the committee's inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme. The first is a no-fault lifetime care system, LCSS, where there would be no lump sum compensation for lifetime care and support costs. Instead, the claimant's lifetime care and support costs would be met by the LCSS as they arise over their lifetime. The second is a hybrid model of the existing common law scheme and the LCSS. Under this model a person who is catastrophically injured in a motor vehicle accident who can establish that the other driver was at fault for the accident would be eligible to claim for the existing CTP scheme.

I am not convinced that the government got it right by choosing the hybrid model. This was evidenced by statements made during the hearing where, in reply to questions, community life care and support services stated that 'certainly 75 per cent of the initial views were that we should go with option A', being the LCSS. Importantly, in response to my question Treasury also admitted that the government's hybrid model in the bill was the more expensive option. Per vehicle registration, the hybrid model will add at least \$32 and the LCSS would add \$24. That means a 25 per cent saving. When you are going to introduce a tax in Queensland, let us make it as cheap as possible. I would like the Treasurer to explain in detail why he has opted for the model that was not supported by 75 per cent of initial views and which is also a much more expensive version. When you look at the cost of living in Queensland, people just cannot afford it.

In short, like other committee members I support the establishment of the NIISQ. It is a much needed social reform; however, I am of the opinion that we are not being given enough information to confidently make a recommendation that this bill should be passed. Our concerns mainly relate to the inconsistencies between the Treasury advice and the Treasurer's statement to parliament relating to the savings available and the impost to all Queensland families.

Regarding the cost-of-living impact on Queenslanders, I should also note that the non-government members of the committee are concerned about the model that the government has chosen to implement. There was clear evidence to both the original inquiry and this inquiry that front-line service providers, insurers and academics believe that the lifetime care model, as adopted by all other Australian jurisdictions except Western Australia, is the most appropriate model. That speaks volumes. The lifetime care model provides those who are catastrophically injured and their families with confidence in the knowledge there will be a minimum standard of treatment, care and support for the rest of their lives. The hybrid model allows people to avail themselves of their rights under common law to seek a lump sum. Should the lump sum be dissipated before the end of the catastrophically injured person's life, after a period they may seek to re-enter the scheme for the provision of lifetime standard care and support.

It would appear that the only submitters who supported the government's hybrid model are the Queensland Law Society and the Australian Lawyers Alliance. Isn't that amazing!

While the establishment of the NIIS in Queensland is much needed reform, the Labor government has fallen short in the preparatory work that was required to confidently make the recommendation that the bill should be passed in its current form. For these reasons I cannot support the bill in its current form.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.44 pm): I rise in support of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. I would like to begin on this National Sorry Day by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. The committee chair and the members are to be congratulated on this report, and I take the opportunity to thank those who took the time to make submissions.

I have cared for many people following catastrophic road accidents, and I must admit that in this role my focus was on assisting those who had lost limbs, sustained burns or brain injuries or who had lost their vision, and my focus was on helping them to regain function and independence. Anyone at any time can be affected by a catastrophic motor vehicle accident. The impacts are devastating and generally long lasting, not just in terms of the physical impacts but also in terms of the impacts on your family, your relationships and, importantly, your finances. While I was caring for people in this situation I gave little thought to the complexities of our insurance system, but I can say that for many of the people I cared for a lifetime of ongoing care and support was a very real prospect.

What I did think about was the worry and the anguish that affects whole families when they are faced with a loved one whose injuries mean significant financial loss at a time when the family needs to find resources to fund ongoing care. This bill provides certainty for people in the immediate aftermath of catastrophic injuries, and that is why I am supporting this bill. The bill provides a safety net for all people, no matter their situation. We will remove worries about finances and allow people and their families to focus on rehabilitation. In my experience, many of the people who are affected by catastrophic motor vehicle accidents are younger, and with the right support these people will not only regain their basic functions but many will return to employment and contributing to their families and their community in many different ways. But they do need that support, and it takes resources to provide that support.

While caring for people who are recovering from trauma we strive to help the person gain dignity, independence and control. This bill recognises the independence of people and allows them to make a dignified decision about whether they want to pursue an alternative path to secure their economic future and future care needs. This bill facilitates this and puts the person at the centre of that decision making about their future; importantly, it puts many safeguards in place to protect individuals during this decision-making process.

With this bill Queensland is plotting a different path to the other states in our approach to dealing with this very complex issue. The Treasurer is to be congratulated for working with the committee and the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, which will see a net additional cost to CTP of just \$32 per vehicle. In my opinion, Queenslanders will welcome the fact that this is much lower than originally predicted. More importantly, they will welcome the creation of a system that provides safeguards for all people affected by catastrophic motor vehicles. They will also welcome the fact that this system provides dignity and choice for individuals. At a time when these people have often lost so much in their life and they face such a period of uncertainty, respecting their dignity and providing them with choice is something that I think is significant and I have seen that in action myself.

Those opposite may want to make mischief over this, but I keep in mind those people who need this scheme. They are real people for me and I can see their faces, their families, their injuries and their struggles to recover. These are people who have enough issues to focus on, and this bill will allow them to focus on recovery and rehabilitation. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (4.49 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. At the outset I thank my fellow committee members and the committee staff. I thank the previous committee members who participated in the initial inquiry and the review of the bill: the member for Gaven and the member for Cleveland, who was the deputy chair. I welcome the member for Broadwater, our new deputy chair, and the member for Buderim. They certainly hit the ground running on a very complex bill.

The National Injury Insurance Scheme has been the source of much passion and views by all those involved. As an opposition member on the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee who served on both the initial inquiry and the review of the bill, I have gained a lot of insight. As a result, I question how the costings actually eventuated.

The NIIS stems from the findings of the Productivity Commission's disability care and support review. The purpose of this Productivity Commission report was to find a system that was cost effective and delivered essential care and support for Australians with significant and ongoing disabilities. On 8 May 2013 the Australian government and the previous Newman government signed a heads of agreement for a full transition to the NDIS in Queensland by 1 July 2016.

The Productivity Commission recommended the rollout of two separate schemes. The first was the National Disability Insurance Scheme, similar to Medicare, which would allow all Australians with significant disabilities to obtain long-term care and support. The Productivity Commission also recommended the setting up of a National Injury Insurance Scheme to cover lifetime care for those involved in motor vehicle accidents that resulted in catastrophic injuries.

Under the compulsory third-party insurance, funds are only awarded when fault can be determined. This left individuals who were involved in no-fault accidents with no financial safety net, unless they had their own private TPD or income protection insurance.

As I have previously stated, the opposition's main concerns about this bill stem from the potential significant increases in motor vehicle registration costs and how the department came to these costing figures. I refer to *Inquiry into a suitable model for the implementation of the National Injury Insurance Scheme*, report No. 11. On page 30, at section 6.1, 'Estimated scheme costings', the report states—

The following estimated annual net increases in costs were calculated for the options under consideration, in 2016 values and based on long-term economic assumptions:

- **Option A—Full Lifetime Care and Support System:** a total annual net increase of **\$253.8 million**, or approximately **\$60 per vehicle** ...
- ...
- **Option B—Hybrid Model:** a total annual net increase of **\$319.5 million**, or approximately **\$76 per vehicle** ...

We can certainly break that down further—

- \$151.4 million or \$36 per vehicle for the cost of the LCSS—

lifetime care and support scheme—

for people who are not entitled claim ... CTP ...

- an increase of \$6.2 million or \$2 per vehicle to the cost of CTP premium ... and
- an additional \$161.8 million or \$38 per vehicle for lifetime care and support payable by the NDIS and recoverable from the Queensland Government, in relation to people who have exhausted their CTP lump sum for care and support.

Ms Williams from Headway ABI Australia informed the committee on Monday, 9 May about the potential ways funds can be exhausted. She stated—

He was injured, received a lump sum payment and bought a property. That is usual. The marriage broke down, he was ejected from the house and he was homeless. We ended up taking him on in Queensland—he was in New South Wales—and he has lived in our transitional accommodation for a number of years. The family have the assets. He lives in one of our houses. He is essentially homeless.

On the same day, the member for Maryborough asked—

In the cases I have read the lump sums have been quarantined.

Ms Williams replied—

That should be the case across-the-board, but I know from experience that is not always the case.

These comments further back up the original costings by Treasury, originally published in report No. 11. I refer to the introductory speech of the Treasurer, in which he referred to \$44 in savings. Forgive me for being sceptical, but why were these so-called savings found by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission not implemented earlier, thereby reducing the cost of living for families? Cost-of-living pressures are certainly evident around the kitchen table at night, when families discuss how they can

afford to pay the day-to-day bills. These are emotional circumstances, causing family stress whereby families have to simply do without. The government's duty is to ensure that any scheme is implemented using the most cost-effective approach to limit the impact on families.

I highlight comments made at the public briefing on 26 April. The department informed the committee that the savings are the same—there is just a different starting point—for option A and option B. If we apply the savings of \$44 to option B, as highlighted, it reduces to \$32. Option A's starting point is \$60. Applying the savings of \$44 takes it down to \$16. This is a far more affordable approach to be taken. I wholeheartedly support the comments made by the shadow Treasurer, seeking to do the responsible thing: lessen the impact on families. Option A is by far a cheaper option, but this government has decided to take the most expensive option—a further kick in the guts for families doing it tough.

This government is frozen at the wheel—a government paralysed by reviews, a government seeking a plan for a plan to work out a plan but a government hell-bent on pushing the cost of living through the roof to hurt those who can least afford it.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (4.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016. It would come as a surprise to most Queenslanders that 50 per cent of people who are catastrophically injured in a road traffic crash in this state are not covered by CTP insurance. If fault cannot be established, these injured Queenslanders are forced to rely on the health and disability system, the social services system and the support of family and friends in order to receive the care they require, often for the rest of their lives. The physical, emotional and financial strain on an individual and their family can be utterly devastating, and we know that a new insurance scheme is needed that will cover the ongoing care of Queenslanders in this circumstance.

Under the National Injury Insurance Scheme, drivers who are not covered by CTP will have greater certainty that their reasonable and necessary care and support needs will be met across their lifetime. This important scheme was recommended by the Productivity Commission in conjunction with the National Disability Insurance Scheme, a scheme I have been working very hard towards as Minister for Disability Services.

While the two schemes do not duplicate each other, both have been designed to provide a maximum level of choice and control over supports provided, allowing flexibility and independence for participants. Fundamentally, both schemes aim to support people to live the lives they choose, to chase their dreams with appropriate support and to not be bound by what others perceive they can achieve. They also take into account that a person's care needs change over time and, as technology advances, supports need to be able to change seamlessly.

The implementation of a lifetime care and support scheme is likely to have significant benefits to the community through improved health outcomes and improved social and economic participation by the injured person, their family and carers. Through its funding of services across the health and disability continuum, the scheme will also present an opportunity to address significant gaps in services for people with catastrophic injuries.

Last year I was pleased to host a morning tea here at Parliament House to inform disability sector stakeholders of Queensland's intention to deliver this scheme by 1 July this year, consistent with our bipartisan national commitments. I met with a number of individuals and their families who will benefit under this scheme and they were all extremely supportive. Earlier this year I also joined the Treasurer to launch our government's public awareness campaign to ensure Queenslanders better understood the limitations of the current CTP scheme and the benefits of implementing this scheme.

We know that this is a long-term conversation but were dedicated to getting that message across. The NIIS will promote early interaction with health and rehabilitation systems to facilitate improved outcomes and help individuals attain their goals, getting them back into the community and back to work. Together the NDIS and the NIIS will provide greater certainty for people with disabilities and their families that their reasonable care and support needs will be met over a lifetime. As the Minister for Disability Services, let me assure the House that the Palaszczuk government will always ensure these important schemes that support some of our state's most vulnerable are the cornerstone of our communities. This bill is about providing certainty and peace of mind that care and support will be available for every Queenslanders who has or might acquire a serious disability, and that is something that I am proud to support.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (5.00 pm), in reply: I firstly want to thank all members for their contributions to the debate on this bill. We have had a great debate but, regardless of different opinions and different models, we would all agree that this is a very important social reform. In relation to the amendments that I will move to the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016, the government has listened to the concerns raised by stakeholders directly and during the inquiry into the bill by the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee, particularly about the operation of clause 42 and the need for the bill to be clear about the responsibilities of the agency, the insurers and the outcomes for participants.

The amendments proposed respond to those concerns. An amendment is proposed to clause 42 to insert a note directing the reader to provisions inserted in the Civil Liability Act 2003 by the bill. The provisions in the Civil Liability Act are relevant to the court's ability to award treatment, care and support damages. Amendments are also proposed to be made to a number of clauses in the bill which currently make reference to payments for or liabilities related to serious personal injuries. The government's intention is for the NIISQ to be responsible for medical expenses, rehabilitation payments and payments for future treatment, care and support damages for all personal injuries resulting from a qualifying motor vehicle accident where a person is a participant in the NIISQ because of serious personal injuries resulting from that accident. The amendments remove uncertainty for insurers and participants and make clear the NIISQ's and an insurer's liability.

Concerns were also raised regarding the level of contributory negligence in clause 42 of the bill and the unfair restriction to a participant's common law rights to seek a lump sum for future treatment, care and support damages. Clause 42 has been amended with contributory negligence to now be set at 50 per cent or more. This amendment will allow participants to retain their common law rights to access a lump sum for treatment, care and support where another party was at fault at 50 per cent or more. It is expected that this amendment will only impact a small number of participants, but importantly it will retain their right to choose to seek a common law lump sum for treatment, care and support. I also table an erratum to the explanatory notes to correct a typographical error identified by the member for Indooroopilly.

*Tabled paper:* National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016, erratum to explanatory notes [\[799\]](#).

I want to take some time to respond to several matters raised by the member for Indooroopilly. Why did the government choose a hybrid scheme over a no-fault scheme? The first thing I want to make clear is that the model put forward in this bill is underpinned by a no-fault scheme, and I think that might have been lost on a few members. All persons injured in a motor vehicle accident from 1 July 2016 who qualify for acceptance into the NIISQ will receive no-fault benefits from the NIIA. What sets this model apart from the models adopted in a number of other states and territories is that it preserves the common law rights of the injured party to claim a lump sum to compensate them for future costs of care, treatment and support. This model provides greater freedom of choice and self-determination for participants. It preserves the common law rights of participants who are not at fault for a motor vehicle accident or where their contributory negligence is less than 50 per cent. It enables these participants the freedom to choose whether to receive a lump sum or to remain in the NIISQ. Common law rights allow a person who has suffered an injury through the negligence of another to get the compensation that they deserve. Preserving these rights comes at a cost of just 15 cents per week for an average vehicle. Why did the government go against the preference of most stakeholders? In relation to the preference of most stakeholders, it should be noted that while some stakeholders supported or preferred the no-fault model they did not necessarily oppose the hybrid, and I think that is another important point to be made. Aspects or concerns regarding exhaustion of lump sums raised at the committee which caused some people concern about the hybrid are in many respects addressed by the provision to seek re-entry into the scheme after five years.

I now turn to the alleged contradiction between the savings figures referred to in the introductory speech and those mentioned by Treasury officials in committee testimony. There is no confusion and there is no conflict in the statements I made in the introductory speech and those made by Treasury officials to the committee. The initial cost of the hybrid model was clearly stated at \$76. The ultimate net cost to motorists for the proposed model in this bill will be \$32 per vehicle per year. The saving I referred to in the introductory speech of \$44 reflects the difference between the original estimated cost of the hybrid scheme and the ultimate net cost to motorists proposed in this bill. What the member for Indooroopilly has overlooked is the fact that, following the committee process, an alteration to the hybrid model was proposed at an estimated cost that was \$8 lower than the original estimate of \$76. When providing testimony before the committee, the Treasury officials indicated that savings applied from this

new estimate to the net cost to motorists—\$36. Both figures are correct and the member for Indooroopilly should be aware as he quoted me directly in his speech that my reference to the \$44 was prefaced by a clear statement that this was a saving from the original estimated cost.

I now turn to concerns about the certainty of costings under the scheme. The scheme is based on actuarial advice which was tabled in the committee. It is important to acknowledge that the NIISQ will be a very long-tail scheme. While the average length of a claim under the existing CTP scheme is four years, it is expected that an average claim under the NIISQ may exceed 40 years. While the government has commissioned the best actuarial advice available, it is not possible for any person to accurately state that the levy imposed from day one of the scheme will be appropriate for time immemorial. This is true for the model adopted under this bill as it would be for a no-fault scheme proposed by the opposition. The fact is that this scheme will provide care, support and treatment for injured persons and for their families for their lifetime.

This scheme must be flexible. It must be able to accommodate future developments in medical treatment and prosthetics. It must accommodate fluctuations in the number of persons injured and the types of those injuries. For this reason, the bill before the House includes provisions to adjust the levy from time to time as is necessary to accommodate changes in experience. The levy proposed to commence from 1 October of this year is the best estimate at this time but, as with premiums for all other forms of insurance, it may need to be adjusted upwards or downwards over time. In fact, as members would be aware, a scheme review will be undertaken this year to focus on savings that may be achieved in 2017. While I would not want to commit to reductions in the levy or CTP premiums at this stage, I can confirm that the government is focused on providing the best possible scheme at the lowest possible cost to motorists.

With regard to the shadow Treasurer's comments about haste and timing, I think this is the height of hypocrisy. What did the LNP government do when it was in government? It signed the intergovernmental agreement in May 2013—over three years ago—and did nothing whatsoever to bring the scheme to life. In just over 12 months we have consulted fully about a range of models for the NIIS and we have launched a public awareness campaign, and I thank the member for Mundingburra, the disability services minister, Coralee O'Rourke, for joining us at that launch. It is a very important public awareness campaign and I think it has brought home to people just what was not available to them under the existing scheme. We have done that and we have held forums for disability stakeholders and introduced legislation so it would be active by 1 July 2016—a time frame that is consistent with the intergovernmental agreement that the Queensland government signed back in 2013.

In relation to the member for Indooroopilly's claims about costs of the scheme, I am reminded that when equivalent schemes were introduced under LNP administrations in other states they were done at considerably greater expense. In Western Australia's case it was a \$99 increase on every vehicle registration. Queensland, at a net cost of \$32 per vehicle, will be the most affordable state or territory in the country, nudging out the ACT where the equivalent scheme cost \$34 per vehicle. We are confident that there is not a person in this state who would think that around 60 cents a week is not a fair price to pay for coverage for the most seriously injured motorists in this state.

With regard to the member for Indooroopilly's apparent concerns about the process used to derive costs and deliver a hybrid model, I am advised that all actuarial reports were provided to the committee and have been tabled on the parliamentary website.

Insurers have been consulted by MAIC in relation to the costings and made aware of the process to determine their premium settings for October. I want to thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate. I thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its consideration of the bill, which included a number of public hearings. The committee heard from a large number of stakeholders, all of whom supported the introduction of a National Injury Insurance Scheme in Queensland.

I also place on the record my thanks to Treasury officials for their contribution to this bill, including Queensland's Insurance Commissioner, Neil Singleton, and members of his team, including Carmel Harkin, as well as representatives from Queensland Treasury, Geoff Waite, Wayne Cannon, John Scott and Jasmin Kennedy. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

## Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 11—



**Mr PITT** (5.10 pm): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

**Mr PITT:** I move the following amendments—

**1 Clause 10 (When a claim is finalised)**

Page 15, lines 21 to 23—

*omit, insert—*

- (a) the claim has been settled by agreement and, if the agreement must, under another Act, be sanctioned by a court or the public trustee, the sanction has been given; or
- (b) final judgment has been given by a court on an action for damages in relation to the claim and, if an award of damages under the final judgment must, under another Act, be sanctioned by a court or the public trustee, the sanction has been given.

**2 Clause 11 (References in Act to particular terms)**

Page 16, lines 3 to 6—

*omit, insert—*

- (2) In a provision of this Act about a participant in the scheme, a reference to—
  - (a) the participant's injury is a reference to the serious personal injury in relation to which the participant is accepted into the scheme; and
  - (b) the motor accident is a reference to the motor accident that resulted in the participant's injury.

**3 Clause 11 (References in Act to particular terms)**

Page 16, line 15, 'legal'—

*omit.*

I table the explanatory notes.

*Tabled paper:* National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Curtis Pitt's amendments [\[800\]](#).

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 12—



**Mr EMERSON** (5.11 pm): I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 12 (Persons eligible to participate in scheme)**

Page 17, lines 10 to 17—

*omit, insert—*

- (2) However, a person is not eligible to participate in the scheme in relation to a serious personal injury if the person has been awarded damages, under a final judgment of a court or a binding settlement, in relation to the person's treatment, care and support needs as a result of the injury.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

*Tabled paper:* National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Mr Scott Emerson MP's amendments [\[801\]](#).

I also table a copy of my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Bill 2016, amendments to be moved by Mr Scott Emerson MP [\[802\]](#).

As we indicated previously in the second reading debate, the LNP believes that option A is the way to progress this scheme, given that it is backed by the community sector and also it is of the least cost to the general community in terms of the motorists.

We believe that the cost of living is important. This option achieves the lowest impact for all Queenslanders while also backing the community sector, which supported option A over the hybrid model. I make the point again that the LNP strongly supports the NIIS scheme. This is an important issue, but we believe that option A is the better approach to take.

**Mr PITT:** I thank the honourable member for putting his amendments forward. We have had a very good debate today. I stress again that I know that all members in this House support the National Injury Insurance Scheme. I think it is extremely important that there is solid support across the chamber to ensure that we have a scheme that provides lifetime care and support for Queenslanders if they are involved in a catastrophic motor vehicle accident.

In relation to costs, I have said on numerous occasions that I will not go over all of my figures again, except to make the point that I made earlier that the heads of agreement to this scheme was signed with the Commonwealth in 2013. There was ample time to see greater progress from those opposite. We have come into government. We have picked up this issue and we are very pleased to be driving it and, of course, for the parliament to have passed this bill today. If there were going to be any offsetting of costs, we could see nothing allocated in the forward estimates. Obviously, the model preferred by the opposition comes at a slightly lower cost but, as we say, we are talking about cents a day difference. This scheme is about providing high-quality care and, very importantly, providing choice for people to still follow the route of common law. Very clearly that is something that we on this side of the House have backed for many years. In particular, we have had many debates across this chamber as it relates to workers compensation. We will have to agree to disagree. We will not be supporting these amendments. I again thank all members in the House for their contributions to this very important bill.

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

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Would the members reporting votes please rise. Will the Government Whip advise what the government votes are for the ayes or noes.

**Mr WHITING:** Forty-one noes.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Will the Opposition Whip advise what the opposition votes are for the ayes or noes.

**Mr WATTS:** Thirty-nine ayes.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Point of order, Mr Speaker. I can identify only 38 members of the LNP in the chamber.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We might just pause for a moment. Opposition Whip, would you like to check that, please?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I stand corrected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the House.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members. The Leader of the House has apologised.

**AYES, 39:**

**LNP, 39—**Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Seeneey, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**NOES, 45:**

**ALP, 41—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**KAP, 2—**Katter, Knuth.

**INDEPENDENT, 2—**Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: Miller, Nicholls.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Emerson) negated.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 13 to 177—



**Mr PITT (5.23 pm):** I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

**Mr PITT:** I move the following amendments—

**4 Clause 17 (When application may not be made)**

Page 22, line 3, 'must be'—

*omit, insert—*

may

- 5 **Clause 26 (Making support plan)**  
Page 28, line 6—  
*omit, insert—*  
injury or another personal injury resulting from the motor accident;
- 6 **Clause 26 (Making support plan)**  
Page 28, line 14, 'cost effective'—  
*omit, insert—*  
cost-effective
- 7 **Clause 28 (Making service request)**  
Page 29, lines 26 and 27, 'in relation to a participant's injury for a particular period.'—  
*omit, insert—*  
to be provided to a participant in a particular period.
- 8 **Clause 42 (Liability of agency to contribute towards damages)**  
Page 38, lines 14 to 16—  
*omit, insert—*  
*Notes—*  
1 For the awarding of damages in relation to a participant's treatment, care and support needs, see the *Civil Liability Act 2003*, chapter 3, part 2A.  
2 For the role of the agency in relation to a claim that the agency is liable to contribute towards, see the Insurance Act, part 4, division 8.
- 9 **Clause 42 (Liability of agency to contribute towards damages)**  
Page 38, line 25, '25%'—  
*omit, insert—*  
50%
- 10 **Clause 43 (Application to court for order)**  
Page 39, line 20, 'well-being'—  
*omit, insert—*  
wellbeing
- 11 **Clause 52 (Suspending participation)**  
Page 47, line 3, 'apply'—  
*omit, insert—*  
applies
- 12 **Clause 59 (General principles for performing functions)**  
Page 51, line 16, 'care givers'—  
*omit, insert—*  
caregivers
- 13 **Clause 60 (Agency may agree to perform functions of support entity)**  
Page 52, line 21, 'by,'—  
*omit, insert—*  
, by
- 14 **Clause 143 (Insurance commissioner is first chief executive officer)**  
Page 91, line 3, 'happen'—  
*omit, insert—*  
happens
- 15 **Clause 149 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A)**  
Page 93, lines 20 and 21—  
*omit, insert—*  
**motor accident** see the National Injury Act, section 4(1)(b).  
**National Injury Act** means the *National Injury Insurance Scheme (Queensland) Act 2016*.  
**serious personal injury** see the National Injury Act, schedule 1.
- 16 **Clause 149 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A)**  
Page 93, line 24 to page 94, line 17—  
*omit, insert—*  
(1) This section applies to the awarding of damages for personal injury resulting from a motor accident if the person suffering the injury is, or was, a participant in the insurance scheme in relation to a serious personal injury resulting from the motor accident.

- (2) A court can not award damages in relation to the person's treatment, care and support needs that—
- (a) result from the personal injury; and
  - (b) arise, or arose, while the person is, or was, a participant in the insurance scheme.
- (3) This section applies—
- (a) whether or not the personal injury is a serious personal injury; and
  - (b) whether or not the treatment, care and support needs are an approved service for the person under the National Injury Act; and
  - (c) whether or not the insurance agency must, under that Act, make a payment in relation to the treatment, care and support needs; and
  - (d) whether or not the treatment, care and support is provided without charge.
- 17 Clause 149 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A)**  
Page 94, lines 22 to 23—  
*omit.*
- 18 Clause 149 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A)**  
Page 95, lines 1 to 4—  
*omit, insert—*
- (a) the personal injury resulted from a motor accident; and
  - (b) the person suffering the personal injury is a lifetime participant in the insurance scheme in relation to a serious personal injury resulting from the motor accident; and
  - (c) a court decides—
- 19 Clause 149 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A)**  
Page 95, line 13, '25%'—  
*omit, insert—*  
50%
- 20 Clause 149 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A)**  
Page 95, line 14, '(c)'—  
*omit, insert—*  
(d)
- 21 Clause 150 (Amendment of sch 2)**  
Page 96, lines 6 and 7—  
*omit, insert—*  
***motor accident***, for chapter 3, part 2A, see section 52A.  
***National Injury Act***, for chapter 3, part 2A, see section 52A.  
***serious personal injury***, for chapter 3, part 2A, see section 52A.
- 22 Clause 159 (Amendment of s 39 (Response to the notice of claim))**  
Page 99, lines 15 and 16, 'the personal injury'—  
*omit, insert—*  
a serious personal injury resulting from the motor vehicle accident
- 23 Clause 159 (Amendment of s 39 (Response to the notice of claim))**  
Page 99, lines 22 and 23, 'the personal injury'—  
*omit, insert—*  
a serious personal injury resulting from the motor vehicle accident
- 24 Clause 161 (Amendment of s 42 (Payment of medical expenses etc.))**  
Page 100, line 19, 'the injury'—  
*omit, insert—*  
a serious personal injury resulting from the motor vehicle accident the subject of the claim
- 25 Clause 161 (Amendment of s 42 (Payment of medical expenses etc.))**  
Page 100, line 23, 'the injury'—  
*omit, insert—*  
a personal injury resulting from the motor vehicle accident the subject of the claim

**26 Clause 161 (Amendment of s 42 (Payment of medical expenses etc.))**

Page 100, line 25 to page 101, line 2—

*omit, insert—*

- (a) whether or not the injury the subject of the claim is a serious personal injury; and
- (b) whether or not the treatment, care and support needs are an approved service for the claimant under the National Injury Act; and
- (c) whether or not the insurance agency must, under that Act, make a payment in relation to the treatment, care and support needs; and
- (d) whether or not the treatment, care and support is provided without charge.

**27 Clause 162 (Amendment of s 51 (Obligation to provide rehabilitation services))**

Page 101, line 16, 'the injury'—

*omit, insert—*

a serious personal injury resulting from the motor vehicle accident the subject of the claim

**28 Clause 162 (Amendment of s 51 (Obligation to provide rehabilitation services))**

Page 101, line 20, 'the injury'—

*omit, insert—*

a personal injury resulting from the motor vehicle accident the subject of the claim

**29 Clause 162 (Amendment of s 51 (Obligation to provide rehabilitation services))**

Page 101, lines 22 to 30—

*omit, insert—*

- (a) whether or not the injury the subject of the claim is a serious personal injury; and
- (b) whether or not the treatment, care and support needs are an approved service for the claimant under the National Injury Act; and
- (c) whether or not the insurance agency must, under that Act, make a payment in relation to the treatment, care and support needs; and
- (d) whether or not the treatment, care and support is provided without charge.

**30 Clause 163 (Insertion of new pt 4, divs 8 and 9)**

Page 102, line 7, 'Claims'—

*omit, insert—***Claim****31 Clause 163 (Insertion of new pt 4, divs 8 and 9)**

Page 104, line 6, 'apply'—

*omit, insert—*

applies

I do not have much else to add. I think this is well canvassed territory. I am certainly happy to hear from the member for Indooroopilly. If he has anything else he would like to say I am happy to respond. I do not think we can add any more to what we have already said in what has been a robust debate, one where we have had good support for a scheme that provides no fault and, of course, we are providing extra choice. I have covered the issue of contributory negligence in the earlier references. I will leave my comments stand.

**Mr EMERSON:** We will be opposing clause 42, amendment 9. The LNP does not support this change to contributory negligence thresholds for the following reasons: consultation was not undertaken on these amendments. That is what the explanatory notes say. Similar to the move to introduce changes to compulsory preferential voting, this has been done with absolutely no consultation. Nowhere during the committee process was this put forward as a possibility. This has been plucked out of thin air, much like many of the other numbers bandied about by the Treasurer through the whole process.

During the committee process, the proposition put forward by Queensland Treasury was that the 25 per cent contributory negligence threshold was an appropriate safeguard. The Treasury advice said—

The bill provides for safeguards to minimise the risk of these lump sums exhausting. Only persons who meet the preconditions may opt out of the NIISQ. These preconditions include where the person is an agreed lifetime participant, has a CTP claim with contributory negligence less than 25 per cent and who has not been excluded from receiving a lump sum by the court.

Indeed, the government's own committee members made these points in relation to the contributory negligence in the committee report into this bill—

The government members of the committee note the advice of Treasury with respect to the consideration of the contributory negligence of the injured person. The government members believe that the incorporation of contributory negligence in determining whether a person progresses to a common law settlement is unnecessary and inconsistent with the underpinning principle of 'no-fault' policy approach of the scheme and the 2013 Heads of Agreement between Queensland and the Commonwealth.

This seems to be inconsistent with the amendment as put forward by the Treasurer tonight. For these reasons we will be opposing this particular amendment.

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

**AYES, 45:**

**ALP, 41**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 40:**

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

Pair: Miller, Nicholls.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 13 to 177, as amended, agreed to.

**Mr SPEAKER:** It is proposed that any future divisions will be of one minute's duration, unless members object.

Schedule 1—

 **Hon. CW PITT** (5.32 pm): I move the following amendments—

**32 Schedule 1 (Dictionary)**

Page 113, line 10, 'request,'—

*omit, insert—*

request

**33 Schedule 1 (Dictionary)**

Page 117, line 18, after 'part'—

*insert—*

of

**34 Schedule 1 (Dictionary)**

Page 118, line 1—

*omit, insert—*

(a) result from the participant's injury or another personal injury resulting from the motor accident; and

Amendments agreed to.

Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (5.32 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (5.32 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## ETHICS COMMITTEE

### Report

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (5.33 pm), by leave, without notice: I table report No. 167 titled *Matters of privilege referred by the Speaker on 17 March 2016 relating to an alleged threatening and disadvantaging of a member and on 21 April 2016 relating to an alleged intimidation and threatening of a member and an alleged deliberate misleading of the House*. I commend the report and the committee's recommendation to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee: Report No. 167—Matters of privilege referred by the Speaker on 17 March 2016 relating to an alleged threatening and disadvantaging of a member and on 21 April 2016 relating to an alleged intimidation and threatening of a member and an alleged deliberate misleading of the House [803].

## RURAL AND REGIONAL (DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE) AMENDMENT BILL

### Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (5.33 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding any other order, under standing order 136, the House vary the committee responsible for the consideration of the Rural and Regional (Development Assistance) Amendment Bill from the Agriculture and Environment Committee to the Finance and Administration Committee.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Sessional Orders

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (5.34 pm) by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders, the debate on the private member's motion commence immediately, to be followed by the moving of the adjournment.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### State Actuary, Report; Order for Production of Documents

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (5.34 pm): I move—

That, pursuant to standing order 27, this House orders the Treasurer to table, in accordance with standing order 31, the State Actuary's latest triennial report and all subsequent interim valuation reports and any correspondence from the State Actuary into the public sector superannuation scheme, also known as the defined benefit fund, in his possession or control by 5 pm, 27 May 2016.

This week we have seen an unprecedented move to raid the superannuation assets of hardworking public servants. The raiding of those assets is something that Labor never disclosed in the lead-up to the election. Nowhere in the *Our state. Our assets* document did the government tell Queenslanders that it would be ripping \$1.4 billion out of the long service leave funding pool, increasing debt at government owned corporations by more than \$4 billion or even freezing superannuation payments for public servants in the defined benefits scheme. That document included a whole lot of promises that they have subsequently broken. There was not one single mention of any of those short-sighted budget raids. They are short-sighted. That much has been made obvious by the independent assessment of the Auditor-General.

I encourage members opposite to read the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 10 for 2015-16, because the Auditor-General is damning in his criticism of the short-sightedness of the Palaszczuk government's first budget. In the words of the Auditor-General—

These actions are short-term strategies that cannot be relied upon indefinitely.

To reduce GGS—

That is, general government sector—

debt levels over the long term, the state will need to apply more permanent solutions.

Of course, the Auditor-General is not alone. As Michael Rice of actuaries Rice Warner put it, the Palaszczuk government has a history of using public service benefits to underpin their budget. We now know the government is back at it again. This government never learns. They have never seen someone else's money they did not want to spend.

Earlier this week the Treasurer was forced to admit that a raid on the defined benefit fund was the cornerstone of his upcoming budget. The only plan he has for the budget is raiding a fund that has been prudently managed by governments on both sides of the political spectrum for decades. Let us make no mistake: the Treasurer intended to hide this sneaky plan for as long as possible.

Now that he has been forced to show his hand, he claims that he has actuarial advice saying that that is okay. He is hiding behind that advice to justify an unprecedented raid on the super fund that was put aside to cover the costs of retirement for a large portion of public servants. If that is true, then he should release the advice. He should table all the advice he has received from the Actuary.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Indooroopilly, I apologise for interrupting your speech. Members, if you want to have a private conversation, please leave the chamber.

**Mr EMERSON:** If that is true, then the Treasurer should release the advice. He should table all the advice he has received from the Actuary. He should table the letter that Treasury officials wrote to the Actuary, asking him whether it was okay to undertake this unprecedented raid. What is the Treasurer hiding?

In making this contribution, I would like to quote from the State Actuary's last full triennial report. This is the last full report; not the interim report that the Treasurer has constantly been referring to. This is what the State Actuary actually said, before the Labor government wrote to him, asking him to change his mind—

I recommend that this surplus be carried forward and that, whilst there is considerable flexibility due to the strong funding position, the existing contribution rates (i.e. those listed in Table 27 and Table 28) be retained, since:

- the surplus will provide a buffer against adverse investment returns;
- consistency with the contribution rates in the Accumulation plan will be maintained;
- stability in budgeted contribution rates for employers is beneficial; and
- the more stringent solvency position recognised in the Government's financial statements showed an actuarial deficit at the valuation date, although this is expected to be broadly offset by subsequent strong investment returns.

Despite the Treasurer's refusal to release the Actuary's updated advice, we have heard some actuaries provide their insights into the government's latest sneaky move. The respected Institute of Actuaries of Australia has stated—

There is always a risk that reducing the surplus might mean a higher level of contributions will be needed in future years, for example, if the asset base is eroded by negative or lower than expected returns from investment markets.

They are not alone. They are not alone in warning about this unprecedented raid on public servants' superannuation funds. We call on the Treasurer to release the advice. What is he trying to hide? Why will he not release the advice?

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (5.39 pm): I rise to oppose this motion. The Palaszczuk government has a fiscal principle that we will target the full funding of our long-term liabilities in accordance with actuarial advice. People in this chamber will hear this ad nauseam for some time because it is the fiscal principle that we set and it is one we will keep.

I heard plenty of times the member for Indooroopilly say that nowhere could he see in any of our pre-election documents reference to these things. Nowhere before the 2012 election could we see any reference to the LNP supporting asset sales because they opposed them. What they did was get into office and spend three years saying that that was the only choice. It is the height of hypocrisy to suggest that we have not done what we said before the election when they have done a 180 degree turn. Apparently, we are to believe that they have done another one.

We have been open and transparent about the advice that we have received from the State Actuary. In fact, we have quoted his reports on multiple occasions since coming to government. As a reminder to those opposite, the latest published State Actuary's report indicated that the defined benefit scheme has a funding basis surplus of over \$10 billion as at 30 June 2015.

We would not hear that from those opposite. Not since the commission of audit by Peter Costello have we seen such a work of fiction as the alleged \$855 million loss the LNP claimed in question time yesterday was sustained by the defined benefit scheme. The Costello audit gave the Leader of the Opposition the script he needed to start scaring people about the state's finances and economy and to start talking down Queensland's economy all over again.

Everyone was very aware that we were apparently on a 'power dive into the abyss'. That was not helpful, Campbell! The Leader of the Opposition spent every day of his mercifully single term in office destroying confidence in our state. Then as now he cannot find any good news in any review, report or statistic.

I now turn to transparency. On multiple occasions over the last 12 months I have called for the former opposition leader, the member for Southern Downs, to make public all asset sales advice and preparatory work that Queensland taxpayers paid for. On 28 February 2015 the former opposition leader told the *Courier-Mail* that the Newman government had always planned to make public these costs. Here is a direct quote from the member for Southern Downs, putting the poor member for Clayfield on the spot once again. He stated—

The former Treasurer indicated that that information, as it was all consolidated, would be made available to the people of Queensland.

Some 453 days later those opposite still have not released these asset sales studies. Unlike the LNP, we have a genuine commitment to integrity and accountability. If the LNP had bothered to look, they would find the latest interim actuarial report as at 30 June 2015 is published on the Treasury website. Also published is the Under Treasurer's response. I also went to the additional step at last year's estimates and tabled the State Actuary's incoming letter.

In relation to the latest triennial report, the LNP, and in particular the new shadow Treasurer, have once again exposed their lack of understanding about the basics of state financial management. If they had done their homework they would have realised that the latest triennial report refers to the valuation as at 30 June 2013. This report was concluded in 2014, while the LNP were in office. Again, there is a requirement that this triennial review be published under ASIC standards which was done in June 2014. What an own goal.

If the LNP can count forward three years, which is what triennial means, they would know that the next triennial report will be as at 30 June 2016 and published in the following year. The motion very clearly refers to the State Actuary's triennial report. I know the future is a difficult concept for many of those opposite to grasp, except when they are trying to ruin it for Queenslanders.

We are absolutely committed to the transparent publication of actuarial advice, in accordance with our fiscal principle of the full funding of long-term liabilities. Our commitment to transparency is in stark contrast to those opposite. The Leader of the Opposition was repeatedly asked this week to rule out a return to asset sales. When asked his position on asset sales, the Leader of the Opposition said, 'We will be making our policies known as we get closer to the election.' When asked again he said, 'We will be making our position known in due course.' The Leader of the Opposition wants to keep the people of Queensland in the dark regarding asset sales.

We will release all relevant actuarial reports as part of the budget as we have said before. Those opposite expect us to abandon what is a long-held practice—that is, that documents related to budget deliberations remain cabinet in confidence until we reveal what is happening in the state budget. Those opposite never released things before their budget. We will not be releasing things before our budget.

I remember that the member who previously sat in this chair, the former treasurer, kept on referring to the incoming government briefs. We kept on asking him to table them. He did not. Why? He said that was convention. That is the answer today for the member for Indooroopilly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Coomera, could I ask the member for Logan to resume his seat or have his conversation outside. Other members should also follow that lead.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.45 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the shadow Treasurer. At the outset, I ask: what is the Treasurer hiding? The State Actuary would have absolutely no concern with his latest triennial report nor his interim reports being released right now. In doing so, the Treasurer would demonstrate to the people of Queensland that what he is proposing—a raid on government employees' retirement pensions—is okay. That is, of course, unless the Treasurer's decision will not pass scrutiny by experts in these matters.

Let us have a look at what the Treasurer is proposing or, more to the point, how he is coming up with his so-called surplus. The Treasurer is using the funding basis to establish his surplus. In this case he is using a seven per cent return. That means he is assuming he will receive a seven per cent return over future years.

Let us look at returns over the last five years. What is a good proxy? I know, why not use the QSuper accumulation fund. Over the last five years the cash rate was 2.54 per cent; diversified bonds, 5.76 per cent; Australian shares, 6.58 per cent; and international shares, 9.89 per cent. Let us mix them together. The moderate investment option was 6.08 per cent. The balanced investment option was 8.84 per cent. Those are the figures over the last five years. What was it over the last year? It was 2.35 per cent for the balanced fund and 2.23 per cent for the moderate investment option.

As far as returns are concerned, the Treasurer is assuming a rate of return well above cash and fixed interest and well above Australian shares over the past five years—somewhere between the actual returns of the QSuper moderate and balanced funds. The problem is that no self-respecting fund manager would dare make such assumptions for future returns on that basis. Past returns are no indication of future returns.

What do the regulators say? I refer members to the websites of the Queensland Competition Authority and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. Unfortunately, I do not have the time to tell members about them now. It is worth having a read there. There are some practice guides and papers that are very revealing.

Let us look at a more prudent option for establishing a surplus. It is called the accounting basis. It is the basis that prudent fund managers would use. By the way, who else uses that basis? Surprise, surprise, the Queensland State Actuary. In his letter to the Treasurer on 16 May 2015 he drew a comparison between the funding basis and the accounting basis. He said—

The 'accounting' basis is that used in financial statements and effectively assumes risk-free discount rates (currently around 3%). The 'funding' basis assumes that the return expectations on the assets are met—

that is that seven per cent figure we talked about before—

resulting in higher discount rates and therefore lower liabilities.

The distinction is important, as the liabilities are materially different on two bases. Based on the projections used in the February 2015 Budget Update, the accounting basis was expected to show a surplus of approximately \$1.2 billion at 30 June 2015, whilst the funding basis indicated a surplus of approximately \$10.5 billion.

That is a huge difference in those two returns. The difference in the results are 1.2 versus 10.5. A prudent fund manager would in no way go towards a seven per cent return for assumptions.

At the end of the day, it is no wonder the Treasurer has earned the nickname 'Captain Risky'. Let us have a look at his track record. The workers compensation scheme changes are an example. He put that fund's reserve at risk because, once again, a high rate of return has been used in the assumption. We will be getting an update very soon on that reserve position. My guess, based on the recent market returns, is that it ain't going to be pretty, Treasurer.

Then we had last year's budget 'brilliance'—he is going on a funding holiday! What was the bottom line? Hitting the long service leave reserves and the QSuper defined benefit fund reserves by not making contributions. Well, things are not getting any better out there in the market, are they? More and more risk has to be taken. He has to sell assets of the fund, probably at a discount, to fund his next raid. One thing is for sure, there is not anything like \$11 billion worth of cash in that fund. If there is, it has only been earning around a 2½ per cent return, nothing like seven per cent.

He is walking around saying it will not happen. I have worked in the financial services industry for many, many years. I was there for the 1987 stock market crash and in the early 1990s for the triple whammy when all funds went negative. Then there was the Asian crisis in the late 1990s and the global financial crisis. By the way, I am told the defined benefit fund went into deficit during that one. Treasurer, why don't you just put the papers on the table? Why don't you just release the report and show everybody what you are all about, 'Captain Risky'?

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (5.50 pm): I rise to oppose this motion moved by the member for Indooroopilly.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** The fish are biting.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, you are now warned under standing order 253A. You know the proper behaviour in the chamber.

**Mr PEGG:** As I was saying, I rise to oppose this motion moved by the member for Indooroopilly. The Palaszczuk government is a transparent government, in stark contrast to the smoke and mirrors and obfuscation of the former Newman government. Let us take a moment to look back at the last parliament. Those opposite did everything they could in government to avoid fiscal scrutiny—they are very quick to try to rewrite this part of their history. When the LNP came to government they delayed the budget until September of that year—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Stretton, I apologise for interrupting your speech. Treasurer and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, if you persist with your discussions across the chamber, you will also be warned under standing order 253A. I note that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is scheduled to speak on this matter.

**Mr PEGG:** As I was saying, when the LNP came to government they delayed the budget until September of that year, despite the election being in March. They did not just delay the budget; they scrapped the annual economic review, they hid reporting on the Queensland state accounts when the economy was tanking under their mismanagement and they only released the fiscal tables for the state accounts on the Treasury website under sustained opposition pressure.

The Palaszczuk government's first budget introduced on 14 July last year has demonstrated robust financial accountability. We will continue to do this through the fiscal reporting program set out by the independent Queensland Treasury. I congratulate Treasurer Pitt on all of his hard work to repair the damage of the former LNP government.

If those opposite bothered to look, there is a suite of fiscal documents presented throughout the course of the financial year. The member for Indooroopilly and those opposite have failed to do their homework, as they fail to do time and time again. Treasury and Queensland Treasury Corporation prepare a large number of public reports that provide detailed information on government borrowing.

Other items that the members opposite might like to seek include the Consolidated Fund Financial Report, published in February each year; the QTC annual report and half yearly reports, which also contain state borrowing information; the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review, published each year; reports on state finances, as required under the Financial Accountability Act; and, as promised, we released the review of state finances—and, in case those opposite missed it, it was released with the Queensland budget on 14 July 2015.

Regarding the triennial report, if those opposite had done their homework they would have realised that the latest triennial refers to the valuation as at 30 June 2013. This report was concluded in 2014, while the LNP were in office. Again, there is a requirement that this triennial review be published under ASIC standards—which was done in mid-2014. It is available right now on the QSuper website. Regarding any subsequent interim valuation reports, those are also available online. This is all in stark contrast to the lack of transparency by those opposite. We are an open and accountable government. We will release all other relevant actuarial documents as part of the budget.

I am sure the member for Indooroopilly would like an early look at the budget because he obviously did not get it in 2014 when the now opposition leader bolted in the car registration indexation that the member for Indooroopilly now so fervently opposes. The member for Indooroopilly definitely did not get a look in then. The member for Indooroopilly did not get to have a say about the budget when he was a cabinet minister in the Newman government and now he is trying to get a say in opposition.

I do accept, however, that the member for Indooroopilly needs all the help he can get in his new role. I do not think the member for Indooroopilly's immediate predecessor, the member for Surfers Paradise, will be looking to help him out too much, although admittedly I would advise the member for Indooroopilly not to follow the example set by the member for Surfers Paradise. The tenure of the member of Surfers Paradise as shadow Treasurer did not last very long. It was terminated by those opposite recently and it was terminated without fanfare.

Instead of attempting to obtain this information, the member for Indooroopilly should focus on fixing some of the mistakes of the member for Clayfield when he was the treasurer of this state. I will give the member for Indooroopilly a few clues. Sacking 14,000 public servants—not a great idea. Do not follow that policy.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I will give the member for Indooroopilly another one. Sacking nurses—not a great idea. That is probably a good policy to abandon. Taking away the rights of workers injured in this state—not a good idea. What about a state infrastructure plan? You should give that a go.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will have some quiet and then I will call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. We will wait a couple of seconds so we can all hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's contribution.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.55 pm): Seriously! I rise to support the shadow Treasurer's motion that is before the House. I have no idea what the member for Stretton was just talking about. He was certainly trying to rewrite the history books when he was talking about the state of Queensland's finances. It is like he has forgotten the Beattie and Bligh years that left us with \$80 billion worth of debt. Where did that \$80 billion worth of debt come from, member for Stretton? It came from the Labor government. I think you have to be careful when you stand in this House and try to rewrite history. I think you will always be caught out, member for Stretton.

It is incredible as well that he rambled on about these other reports that should or could be seen by the opposition. Thank you very much, member for Stretton, but the actual report that is referred to in the motion that you were supposed to be speaking about is obviously why we are here today. It is disappointing that the LNP has to move a motion and use the standing orders to compel the Treasurer in this deceitful and deceptive Labor government to table documents showing the impact of this Treasurer's raid on the superannuation assets of our hardworking public servants.

The Premier will not even tell this House how much they want to raid. How much of our hardworking public servants' money do they want to take? We have seen this all before. We saw it last year in this Treasurer's first budget when they ripped \$3.4 billion out of the long service leave fund. We on this side of the House all remember that day when he came in here for his first budget, and where did he get his money from? That is right; he ripped it out of long service leave. On top of that—I think those opposite forget—they also stopped the payments. Not only did they rip the money out the long service leave fund; they stopped the payments as well. That was \$2 billion of government contributions into the public servants superannuation fund. Then they loaded up government owned businesses with \$4 billion worth of debt. None of those options are sustainable and they are likely to cost Queenslanders a lot more in the long run rather than implementing a proper fiscal plan.

The Treasurer is even more bullish about this raid than last year. At least last year he tabled a letter from the State Actuary and told this House how much he was depriving the fund, but this year we need to use the standing orders to try to get the documents.

It is worthwhile reviewing the letter tabled last year by the Treasurer, as it did not recommend that Labor stop contributions to the superannuation scheme. It merely provided advice on the impact of Labor's decision to do that. This is what it said—I am happy to table it, although it has already been tabled—

It should be noted that any reduction in the surplus position will occur over time and, by definition, will reduce the capacity of the fund to withstand adverse outcomes ...

**Mr Walker** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection from the member for Mansfield. It does speak for itself. It will reduce the capacity of the fund to withstand adverse outcomes. We are coming up to adverse outcomes when we look at this Labor government and what they are providing this state of Queensland.

**Mr Costigan:** Nothing.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection—absolutely nothing. They are completely frozen at the wheel. They have no plan. It is only the LNP that has a plan to get this state moving. It is only the LNP that is energetic and enthusiastic, unlike the members opposite who have absolutely no plan at all. According to Labor, everything is fine; do not worry about that. We will just raid our hardworking public servants' money.

**Ms Jones** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** They are hardworking. We will take all their superannuation off them. Do not worry about the adverse years when Labor is in government when Labor wrecks our economy. They are the adverse years that we have to worry about when there will be no money left.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (6.01 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the member for Indooroopilly. This motion comes at the end of a sitting week—the last sitting week before the state budget—and it comes one day short of the first three weeks of the new Nicholls regime of the LNP. I can report after three weeks that the new-look LNP team is a veritable brains trust. The LNP is now led by a team that cannot get a motion right in this House.

The motion, as drafted, compels the government to release a report from the LNP's time in government that is already publicly available. As we have heard from my colleagues the Treasurer and the member for Stretton, it is on the QSuper website. I suggest that they look it up right now and get

hold of it. The motion is so sloppy and so shambolically drafted that it orders the government to release a wide range of documents that could date back 30 years and could include some private and commercially sensitive information. Next they will want us to release the Panama papers, such is their political genius.

I welcome the opportunity, however, to speak about the defined benefit scheme. The scheme was established by Labor. It grew under Labor and was maintained by Labor. The strength of the defined benefit scheme is a direct consequence of the prudent, economic and fiscal responsibility of decades of Labor governments. The scheme is fully funded and maintains a funding surplus. The Treasurer has repeatedly stated that, if every single member of the scheme sought to claim against the scheme at 9 am tomorrow, every single person would receive their payment in full. We know the scheme is fully funded when it withstood the waves of the 14,000 sacked public servants who drew down on it after being sent to the wall under the Leader of the Opposition.

Tonight we have the LNP brains trust in full display. This is the brains trust that made buses illegal overnight; the brains trust that re-regulated the sugar industry by mistake; the brains trust that cannot ask a question without potentially misleading the House; the brains trust that clearly told mistruths to their own party room to get elected and is now deceiving the Queensland people about their secret plan to sell our assets. Maybe they could not fool all of them, because it was only 33 per cent who got behind the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition needs to come into this House and apologise to the people of Queensland for his asset sale agenda. Is he going to do that? We are waiting. The clock is ticking. He said that it will come in due course. I am looking forward to finding out when due course is. Will the Leader of the Opposition come into this House and explain his new plans for asset sales that will happen in due course? I look forward to it transpiring as to what 'due course' means. Will the Leader of the Opposition release the documents he knows exist that show the full scope and breadth of his secret asset sales plan?

We know what Gavin King wrote, the poor man's Doris Kearns Goodwin. He wrote, 'Campbell Newman convinced his colleagues to abandon the full suite of asset sales proposed by the Commission of Audit and backed by Tim Nicholls.' The Leader of the Opposition wants to pretend that he is different; that he has changed; that there is a new team in charge of the LNP, but we all know when you lift the hood on the Leader of the Opposition you realise he is far more Newman than new man.

The government opposes this motion because we know that the defined benefit scheme is fully funded. We know that the work that will happen under the leadership of the Treasurer will ensure that we invest in the infrastructure we need to build Queensland in the future. That is why I call on the House to join the government in opposing this lightweight motion by a lightweight LNP. We oppose the lightweight Leader of the Opposition. We oppose his secret plan for asset sales.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question is that the motion be agreed to. Those of that opinion say aye; those again no.

**Mr SEENEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It appears that the Leader of the House has voted both aye and no. I am not sure that that fits within any standing order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The call is that the noes have it.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Would the members reporting votes please rise. Will the Government Whip advise what the government votes are for the ayes or noes.

**Mr WHITING:** Forty noes.

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. For the Government Whip to report 40 noes, he must have counted the member for South Brisbane. Under standing order 109(3), the member for South Brisbane I believe voted aye on the voices so 'shall not, on a division being taken, vote with the opposite side'.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. Whilst you called the ayes and noes, I was sitting in the member for Surfers Paradise's chair next to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I witnessed the Deputy Premier say 'aye' and I saw her mouth the word 'aye' when you called 'ayes', and so did the member for Aspley.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Neither I nor the Clerk nor the Deputy Clerk saw that or heard that—

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, I will come to you shortly. Member for South Brisbane, do you have a response to what has been claimed?

**Ms TRAD:** I was actually looking at a message and talking to the member for Ashgrove at the time that the vote was taken. Yes, I was talking, and those opposite may have heard me talking, but I certainly was not participating in the vote.

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. Given the rules about deliberately misleading the House in this parliament, I think it is important the member for South Brisbane indicate clearly whether she voted aye or no on the voices.

**Ms Trad:** I have.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, do you wish to clarify?

**Ms Trad:** No, I was on the phone.

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. Unless we have a definitive declaration from the member for South Brisbane that she did not vote aye, then she is out of order. She is out of order being counted in the 40 votes that the Government Whip has reported to the House under standing order 109(3). I believe that the member for South Brisbane voted aye.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Callide. For the purpose of pure clarity, Deputy Premier, did you say you cast your vote with the ayes? Sorry, I will rephrase the question. Can you clarify if you cast your vote with the ayes?

**Ms TRAD:** No.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You did not. Thank you.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SEENEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are some word games being played here. The member for South Brisbane has indicated 'no' in response to your question. I believe the question that this House needs answered is whether the member for South Brisbane voted aye or no on the voices. That would make it clear whether standing order 109 has been called into question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, I have heard your point of order. I have made my decision. The Government Whip has—

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order then, Mr Speaker. You are required to make a ruling on standing order 109.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I rule that on the information provided to me the Deputy Premier did not cast a vote with the ayes. I now call the Opposition Whip to advise the opposition votes for the ayes or noes.

**Mr WATTS:** Mr Speaker, I need your guidance because my record shows a contrary vote against the name 'Trad'. I do not know how else to record the vote.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Voting in relation to these matters is in relation to members sitting in the chair, so you are saying that the member for South Brisbane voted with—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The advice I have received is that you can only count the members on your side.

**Mr WATTS:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We are doing the best we can. It is a party vote. What is the vote of your party?

**Mr WATTS:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Speaker. My party vote is 40 ayes.

**AYES, 40:**

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

**NOES, 42:**

**ALP, 40—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2—**Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: Miller, Nicholls.

Resolved in the negative.

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

### Reporting Date; Referral

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.18 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee is to report back on the Abortion Law Reform (Woman's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016 by Friday, 26 August 2016.

Further, that, concurrent with its consideration of the bill, the committee is to consider, report and make recommendations on aspects of the law governing termination of pregnancy in Queensland to the House on options regarding:

- (a) existing practices in Queensland concerning termination of pregnancy by medical practitioners;
- (b) existing legal principles that govern termination practices in Queensland;
- (c) the need to modernise and clarify the law (without altering current clinical practice), to reflect current community attitudes and expectations;
- (d) legislative and regulatory arrangements in other Australian jurisdictions including regulating terminations based on gestational periods; and
- (e) provision of counselling and support services for women.

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

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 42:**

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

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Miller, Nicholls.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.25 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 14 June 2016.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.25 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### Crows Nest, Pedestrian Crossing; Vegetation Management Forums

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.25 pm): I would like to highlight some important community meetings which have taken place in the electorate of Nanango recently which I believe demonstrate what can be achieved when people come together to fight for a cause. Firstly, the Crows Nest community held a town meeting with me a few weeks ago to discuss the safety of their pedestrian crossing. The pedestrian crossing has been a long-term issue affecting the residents and I have been working with them to try to find a solution. The crossing is on the New England Highway and it cuts right through the middle of the Crows Nest town centre. Many elderly people use the crossing to access the main shopping district. They have to cross at the crossing to get to the local shops. Unfortunately, as the crossing is located on that busy highway, cars and trucks are not always travelling at a slower speed and sometimes they neglect to see the crossing and there have been many near misses.

While some of the works have now been undertaken to try to improve safety, the community and I were still not happy with the outcome. Carol Pearce from Chic Shoe Shop in Crows Nest—a great spot to find shoes if anyone is going to Crows Nest—decided enough was enough and organised the community meeting with me. I was happy to assist Carol by addressing the meeting along with inviting representatives from the department to attend. More than 60 interested residents came along and it was an excellent opportunity for everyone to have their say and come up with possible solutions.

I really want to thank Carol and, in particular, Leanne Hughes who emceed the meeting and all of those who attended and contributed their thoughts. The outcome has been excellent. The community has now formed a small action group. They have come up with the Crows Nest community pedestrian crossing action plan, which will be workshopped with TMR. I am hopeful that a good outcome will be achieved. I ask the minister to also consider the hard work being undertaken by this community on this issue.

I also want to thank and congratulate more than 150 people who attended the vegetation management forums in Kingaroy and in Toogoolawah. They were there to hear how these aggressive amendments to the vegetation management framework will affect their businesses. At this point I would like to thank the shadow minister for natural resources, Andrew Cripps, who travelled to my electorate to attend these meetings.

The level of concern was obvious. Right across my region landholders are reporting that the new restrictions on their properties are greater than under the previous Bligh Labor government—in particular, regrowth being reclassified as remnant vegetation and category R vegetation being regulated in my area for the first time. I appreciated the number of excellent questions and interest. We were able to help explain how landholders could provide access to these updated vegetation management maps and what action they can take to let this government know that they are not happy.

### **Paniyiri Greek Festival; Dutton, Mr P**

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.28 pm): I rise tonight to acknowledge the 40th anniversary of the Paniyiri Greek Festival, celebrated this past weekend in Musgrave Park in my electorate of South Brisbane, as it has been for the past 40 years. First celebrated in 1976, Paniyiri was founded by Father Gregory Sakellariou and the Greek community in South Brisbane to bring together Greek people from across Queensland and to share the unique Greek culture with all of Brisbane.

Over the last 40 years Paniyiri has grown to be a staple of Brisbane's cultural calendar and is now the largest two-day multicultural festival in our nation. Paniyiri now attracts over 60,000 people every year to South Brisbane to share in Greek food, drink, music and culture. Putting on a festival of this size is no easy feat and I would like to pay tribute to the thousands of volunteers who make Paniyiri such a success. People like Greek Orthodox community president Michael Anastas, honorary secretary Bico Athanasas and parish priest Father Dimitri Tsakas demonstrate selfless commitment to their community and culture. The St George Ladies Auxiliary, especially President Desley Lagos, must also be recognised wholeheartedly for their efforts. The apron that Desley sewed for me to commemorate the 40-year anniversary is something that I will cherish for many years to come. I do note that she also gave one to the Leader of the Opposition.

Growing up in South Brisbane, I have many fond memories of attending Paniyiri with my family, with my parents, as a child. Now I am very privileged and honoured to be able to take my own children to Paniyiri so that they can soak up the rich multicultural heritage of our area and celebrate the enormous contribution that the Greek diaspora have made to the state of Queensland.

Whilst I was at the festival, which occurred last weekend, I could not help but be reminded of the very distasteful and what I think were incredibly racist comments made by the federal Minister for Immigration, Peter Dutton, earlier that same week. Comments about so-called illiterate immigrants stealing Australian jobs were not only ill-informed but bigoted. Frankly, these attitudes have no place in modern Australia, let alone in our federal government.

My father and my grandfather came to this nation with very little English literacy and they made an enormous contribution to this state. They raised their families, they ran small businesses and they worked on the railways. Regardless of all of that, people like Mr Dutton and the LNP still want to denigrate them for their contribution.

## M1, Traffic Congestion

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.32 pm): I rise in the House today to reiterate the recurrent theme of my maiden speech in this House 10 years ago about the rapid population growth of the Gold Coast and the urgent need to address the problems associated with this rapid growth. I and thousands of other motorists are regularly exasperated with the daily traffic congestion on the M1. Eighteen years ago the Borbidge LNP coalition planned and delivered an eight-lane highway from Brisbane to the Gold Coast which would cater for the growth of the Gold Coast for the next 20 years.

In 2018 it will be full to capacity. Any slight accident on the highway results in major traffic jams and delays on the only route from Australia's third largest city to Australia's sixth largest city. It is now time to start identifying, planning and preparing for funding an alternate route to the M1 from Brisbane to the Gold Coast because starting today will only deliver an outcome in five years at a minimum.

I am sure that my fellow Gold Coast members will remember the incident on the M1 Nerang River Bridge in late February. A fiery truck crash brought life on the Gold Coast to a standstill. Traffic on the heavily travelled M1 was brought to a stop. The semitrailer wreckage blocked lanes of traffic and took 12 hours to be cleared, and the flow-on effect to our currently insufficient arterial roads was obvious with gridlock and delays affecting everyone who ventured near. Congestion costs our Gold Coast businesses greatly, with workers who are unable to start or who miss work altogether. Avoiding this catastrophe of traffic was nearly impossible if you wanted to travel north or south, and it stands as a firm example of the need for a secondary motorway.

Furthermore, the M1 is currently the only option for those commuting to Brisbane on a daily basis in order to enjoy the beautiful Gold Coast lifestyle outside working hours. It has nearly reached its capacity of 170,000 cars per day. The annual average daily traffic volume is just over 144,000 cars a day. This traffic, like the Gold Coast, will only continue to grow into the future. Indeed, the Gold Coast is predicted to double in population to 1.22 million within the next 35 years.

There is no Palaszczuk Labor government plan to fix the problem, and it is not mentioned in the budget papers that we have before us now or, I am sure, the budget papers that are coming up in four weeks time. But wait! On 13 March the Palaszczuk Labor government announced the State Infrastructure Plan 2016, and surely this long-term wish list would include hopes and dreams for reducing the traffic chaos which connects Brisbane to the Gold Coast. However, the creation of a north-south toll road, which is already on the transport department's plans as the intra-regional transport corridor for the Gold Coast to Brisbane, would allow not only for the Gold Coast population to grow sustainably but create a speedier option for commuters to reach their destination.

## State of Origin

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.35 pm): Mr Speaker, there comes a time every year when football tragics go weak at the knees. State of Origin is a footy spectacular that pits mate against mate and state against state. Throughout my life I have had the privilege to see some fantastic games of footy from club level through to grand finals and representative games at state and national levels. However, in my view nothing comes close to the thrill and excitement of a State of Origin game. I am proud to be a Queenslander, but there is a particular pride around being a Queenslander when State of Origin time rolls around.

It is particularly spectacular when you have the opportunity to get to the 'Cauldron' and be part of the intense atmosphere at Lang Park. One of the roles that I am delighted to fulfil in this place is co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Rugby League with the member for Everton. Yesterday in this place we had the absolute honour of hosting the Queensland Maroons here at parliament. This event was a great success and was held on the Speaker's Green. It would not have been able to be facilitated without the great work of the QRL and NRL.

Here on the Speaker's Green we were able to have conversations about the role that players are fulfilling, the challenges and opportunities that come along with it and show our support for the squad as they head into the training camp on the Gold Coast. I want to thank them for the generosity that they displayed here at Queensland parliament. There were many requests, conversations, photos and autographs, with many Origin treasures that will now go back to clubs throughout our electorates. Many members took the opportunity to bring in school students to meet the superstars, and what an opportunity that would have been.

In terms of the line-up, as a Broncos tragic I am pleased to say that we have six players in the team: Darius Boyd, Corey Oates, Matt Gillett, Sam Thaiday, Corey Parker and Josh McGuire. The Cowboys, our hot rivals at the moment, had four: Justin O'Neill at debut, Johnathan Thurston, Matt

Scott and Michael Morgan. The Storm came in with two, Cooper Cronk and Cameron Smith, our captain. Greg Inglis, Dane Gagai, Nate Myles, Aidan Guerra and Josh Papali also made the cut. I want to acknowledge the Treasurer and the Minister for Sport, who emceed the event, and the Queensland Premier, who now has a signed footy in pride of place on her mantle.

State of Origin is always a battle on the field. I want to place on the record my appreciation for the QRL and NRL, who go out of their way to facilitate our support as members in this place to get involved and active in our local clubs and support the game throughout the state. In particular, I want to thank Rob Moore and Peter Betros from the QRL; Todd Greenberg, the CEO of the NRL; and Arthur Eustace-Earle, who helps us no end. State of Origin is always a battle on the field and encapsulates and demonstrates the Queensland spirit and the 'never say die' attitude, where every second on the field counts. Go, Queensland!

### Glass House Small Business Awards

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.38 pm): Last week was Small Business Week here in Queensland, and in the Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast hinterland we celebrated in style with all the glitz and the glamour of the first ever 2016 Glass House Small Business Awards, otherwise known as the 'Glassies'. I even donned the tux as I emceed the evening—mainly to impress my wife, who joined us, because she has a thing for Hugh Jackman; unfortunately, I failed dismally—to acknowledge the job that our small business owners and employees in the electorate of Glass House deliver. It is often said that Queensland thrives on the resource, agricultural or tourism industries. In reality, particularly for places like Glass House, it is the small business industry that keeps our economies going.

I want to start by thanking the major partners of the 'Glassies': firstly the CCIQ, who came on board and sponsored the trophies for the evening and gave other awards as well as a presentation on the night; Commerce Caboolture, Glasshouse Country Chamber of Commerce, Maleny Chamber of Commerce and Montville Chamber of Commerce; and our major sponsors Spicers, Maleny Mountain Wines, *Glasshouse Country and Maleny News* and the *Hinterland Times*. Most of all I want to acknowledge the nominees in each of the categories, and especially the bronze, silver and gold 'Glassie' winners.

In the Palmwoods region the business category bronze winner was Nprint and the silver winner was 5, 6, 7, 8 Performing Arts. The employee bronze winner was Wendy Dangerfield from the Compass Institute and the silver winner was Sophie O'Sullivan from 5, 6, 7, 8 Performing Arts. In Montville, it was the Clock Shop with bronze and the Montville Cafe Bar and Grill with silver. In the employee category, Jessica Mitchell from Elements of Montville picked up the bronze and Christie Smith from fudgyboombahs picked up silver. In Maleny, Maleny Cheese took out the bronze and Rosetta Books took out the silver. In the employee category, Liam Kimball from Maleny Credit Union won the bronze and Sharon Schofield from Easton Lawyers won the silver.

In the Glass House Mountains region, the bronze business winner was Pasta d'Vine and the silver winner was Glasshouse Country Meats. In the employee category, Kylie Heading from Beerwah Hair and Beauty was the bronze winner and Jodie Pember from the Glass House IGA was the silver winner. In the D'Aguilar region, Mobile Daily Grind picked up the bronze and Adventure Alternatives the silver. Janet Ellis-Smith from Woodford Family Medical Centre won the bronze and Terry Ward from Ray White Wamuran won the silver.

In the end, it came down to the 'Gold Glassies'. The business winner was Concept IT, a fantastic IT product and service deliverer in Maleny and across the Blackall Range who have since expanded into the coffee shop realm. The employee nomination was Jodie Pember, the ever-excitabile IGA worker at Glass House Mountains. The awards were a huge success. There was a wonderful turnout of 150 on the evening. We will certainly be back next year for round 2 of the 'Glassies'.

### Mendoza, Mr D

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.41 pm): Burleigh Heads Rotary Club, of which I am a member, meets every Thursday morning at seven o'clock at the Burleigh Heads Surf Club. This week we lost one of the doyens of our club, Douglas Vernon Mendoza. Doug was a little bit hard of hearing—that is what happens when you are 92 years old—a little bit gruff and a little bit short, but we all loved him.

Doug had an interesting life. Many of us were pleased to be part of that life over the years we knew him from attending Rotary. Doug joined Queensland railways at 14 years of age. He worked his way up from shunting engines. He worked so hard that they promoted him to the railway office. They encouraged him to study engineering and he eventually got a degree in engineering. He worked his

way up the corporate ladder and eventually became the commissioner of Queensland Rail—the top dog in Queensland Rail. He occupied that position from 1983 to 1986. In 1990 that position was moved on, but Doug was at the top of his game in those years.

Doug was involved in Rotary for 51 years. He was in the West Toowoomba branch of Rotary from 1965 to 1975, he was in Brisbane from 1975 to 1990 and he spent the rest of his time in Burleigh Heads Rotary Club. There is a wide range of ages at our club—from Doug, who was about the oldest, to babies who come to our club of a Thursday morning to enjoy breakfast with their parents. Those children will miss Doug. We will all miss Doug. He was a wonderful man.

### Lytton Electorate

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.44 pm): Each and every weekend is buzzing in the beautiful Bayside with sport, the arts, service clubs and wonderful markets. It is a beautiful place to be. Sunday, 15 May this year was another such a day in the Bayside, with a wonderful celebration of our diverse, hardworking locals. The day started at the annual Rotary Club of Wynnum and Manly Family Fun Day. This event, during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, is our community's effort towards family fun and our commitment to saying 'enough is enough'. We Baysiders will not tolerate domestic or family violence.

The family fun day has been really well supported by our community. It is great to see the event supported by locals, community groups and emergency services. Everyone enjoyed the music of the Wynnum State High School band, the repainting of the WINNAM DV mural, getting stuck into the free fruit and sausage sizzle, and participating in the great games of egg-and-spoon and sack races. It was another great day, with our community family having fun together and spreading the word that we will not tolerate domestic or family violence.

I then popped into the wonderful Wynnum Choral Society 90th anniversary concert. What a lovely afternoon of music from the choral society and Savoyards singers. The Wynnum Choral Society was founded in 1926—it was originally known as the Wynnum Presbyterian Church Choir—from members of the church and the local community. The choir grew and has become part of the cultural landscape of Wynnum Manly, with numerous competition and eisteddfod wins over the years.

Life member Laurima Rabe has been a member of the choir for an amazing 52 years. Not far behind are other life members Val Jones, Jacque Sharp, Barbara Profke and Paul Claussen. I make special mention of conductor and life member Esme Gray for her tireless work with the choir for the past 24 years after her retirement as the choir's accompanist. Interestingly, there have been only four conductors during the past 90 years. I acknowledge all members of the choir: Jenny Anderson, Sherry Chen, Marjorie Claussen, Sharon Cordwell, June Daly, Jennifer Lakey, Lynette Lane, Jan Parnell, Shirley Richmond, Judy Robinson, Dorn Robson-Petch, Beryl Wheeldon, Elaine Nutley and Mary Wiseman. These members have contributed to the ongoing success of the choir, and I thank and congratulate them for the many hours of pleasure and entertainment they have provided to Wynnum Manly locals.

What a wonderful achievement: 90 years of sharing the pleasure of the song with the Bayside. We are certainly a much richer community for their contribution. The Wynnum choir's selection at the 90th anniversary concert was lively and diverse, with a program of classical and popular music. In the words of ABBA, thank you for the music!

Then I made a quick dash over to Kougari Oval to watch the second half of the mighty Seagulls' drought-breaking 62-16 win over the Mackay Cutters. It was a fantastic end to a great Sunday in the Bayside. I was the winner: I had a fantastic day. Thanks, Baysiders.

### Belmont Services Bowls Club

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (6.47 pm): I rise this evening to honour a wonderful community group within my fantastic seat of Chatsworth. The Belmont Services ladies bowling club is home to a number of wonderful women with a passion for lawn bowls and an energetic spark for life. Meeting once a week on a Tuesday for ladies club day, these vivacious women take part in social games and club competitions. I have had the pleasure of attending their social games before, and they certainly could give me and my colleagues here in the chamber this evening a run for our money when it comes to being competitive.

I am very honoured to regularly be invited to attend special events with the Belmont Services ladies bowling club. Earlier this year I had the privilege of attending the handover luncheon, where we celebrated immediate past president Sylvia Napier's time heading the club. What a great lady she is.

She put so much energy and effort into organising amazing social events for the members. This is a true testament to her character and generosity of spirit. I must also make mention of the incredible celebratory cake at this event. It was far too good to eat. It came complete with a miniature lawn bowls player, benches and seats as well as the Belmont Services crest. It was quite a cake.

In addition, I am also delighted to be invited twice a year to sponsor their famous Wednesday morning tea, which of course comes with a complimentary invite. When I attend I thoroughly enjoy meeting with each of the club members, from current president Joy Mehonoshen, who is doing an incredible job in leading the club this year, to secretary Beverley Perry and sponsorship coordinator Phyllis McDade, who are in regular contact with my office.

I must confess that I am slightly disappointed that my two sponsorship morning teas have already taken place for the year. They are a highlight of my week as my favourite Belmont bowls club manager, the wonderful Sandy, always puts on a tantalising spread of delicious treats. Sandy's unwavering dedication, enthusiasm and love for her job are so contagious and are some of the reasons I hold so many of my own functions at the Belmont bowls club.

Furthermore, as it is the month of May, it is very timely for me to wish the ladies bowling club a very happy and warm 51st birthday. This is an incredible achievement and definitely something each member of the club should be very proud of. Every time I visit the bowls club I am reminded as to why I am so proud to have this great facility and sporting group in the Chatsworth electorate. These ladies keep socially active and fit and, whilst they are very competitive on the greens, the level of camaraderie once they go back into the clubhouse is very self-evident to any guest, as the sound of laughter and supportive conversation can be heard everywhere. I again take the opportunity to wish the Belmont Services ladies bowling club a very happy 51st birthday and wish it all the very best for the next 50 years and beyond. In an era where it is difficult for sporting clubs to retain and grow voluntary membership, this club is a stellar example of how to do it right. Congratulations, ladies!

### Dairy Industry

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (6.50 pm): Dairy farmers are one of our most valued professions. A survey revealed that 89 per cent of consumers who were polled were prepared to pay extra for a litre of milk to ensure that we have a sustainable dairy industry. Whether it is 40 degrees or four degrees below zero, dairy farmers are out in the paddock working day and night week in, week out providing a fantastic product—that is, milk for cereal, for milkshakes, for cuppas. We need to support our dairy farmers. In the year 2000 there were 1,500 dairy farmers. There are now 430. When I tabled the fair milk mark bill in 2013 there were 540 dairy farmers. By the time the bill was debated in parliament, there were 496 dairy farmers. During the time it took for that bill to be debated, we had lost 44 dairy farmers. That bill was very simple—that is, if farmers were paid a fair price above the cost of production then a fair milk mark would go on a bottle which would reveal to consumers in shops or supermarkets that farmers are paid a fair price, that it was fresh milk and that it was Queensland milk. It was disappointing that the fair milk mark bill was voted down.

There are many restrictions out there and farmers are after a sustainable pricing margin. In the future I will be tabling a bill in this parliament, but it is a great shame that in this country we have to see our dairy industry and its dairy farmers on their knees before politicians can say that they are prepared to help them. I will be introducing a bill that will ensure that consumers will know when they have purchased Queensland pure fresh milk and that farmers are paid a fair price. I appreciate the fact that the Premier responded to my complaint that Lotus Glen prison was importing UHT milk and I am very pleased that the Premier stepped in to ensure that that prison and other prisons and also government departments were not importing UHT milk but providing fresh local milk. While on the subject of Lotus Glen prison, it provides services that support the community such as the Lotus Glen laundry. It continues to provide that service, but all of the other services have been shut down and now Lotus Glen's weekend service has closed.

### Woodridge Electorate

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (6.53 pm): On Friday, 13 May it was my privilege to open as Queensland's Minister for Health the new Kooky Kid Clinic in Springwood. The Kooky Kid Clinic, which is located very close to the Woodridge electorate, will help children living with Tourette syndrome. The opening of the clinic was attended by the families of children and young people living with Tourette syndrome. It was also great to meet Robyn Latimer, the national President of the Tourette Syndrome Association of Australia, who was present at the opening.

I am pleased to say that the Department of Health was the major sponsor of the 2016 national Australian Tourette syndrome conference held in Brisbane on the weekend of 14 and 15 May 2016. Tourette syndrome is a neurological impulse control disorder which affects one per cent of the population. For many with Tourette syndrome it is the reaction of others to their condition that can cause the most suffering. The Kooky Kid Clinic is a place for these kids to process their emotions in a judgement-free and safe place. I want to thank all staff at the Kooky Kid Clinic—in particular, child and adolescent psychiatrist Dr Shannon Morton, whose passion and vision brought the clinic to life. I know the families in the City of Logan and the electorate of Woodridge will benefit greatly from this clinic.

As this House knows, this week is Under Eights Week. This 60-year-old event is a fantastic opportunity for schools across Queensland to celebrate everything great about kids eight years and under. In Woodridge this event has a very positive impact on our schools and its students. Yesterday, Thursday, 25 May, I visited the Marsden State School under eight event. It was a pleasure meeting Graham and Pam, long-serving volunteers in policing who were at Marsden State School to help students make badges. I greatly appreciate the work of volunteers such as Graham and Pam who give their own time to help the community and I want to thank them for their service to the electorate of Woodridge. As always, it was good to catch up with school principal Mr Kevin Leathwaite and deputy principals Ms Suzie Stathis and Mrs Chris Czulowski. I thank these school leaders for making the day so special for Marsden State School under eights. Tomorrow I will be visiting the Burrowes State School under eights day where I will meet with more children and parents and see more of the benefits this annual event provides to children in the Woodridge electorate.

## PRIVILEGE

### Member for South Brisbane

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.55 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. Mr Speaker, I wish to clarify my response to your question regarding my vote on the voices during the private member's motion debate. I cannot say with absolute certainty whether or not I voted on the voices as several things were occurring at the time. I was reading an urgent email on my phone and responding to a question from the Minister for Education. Mr Speaker, I will be reviewing the audio files and I will be contacting you in relation to giving you an absolute certainty.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6.56 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams