



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 2 November 2016

Subject	Page
<b>PETITIONS</b> .....	<b>4011</b>
<b>TABLED PAPERS</b> .....	<b>4011</b>
<b>MINISTERIAL PAPER</b> .....	<b>4011</b>
<b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>4011</b>
<b>Kingston, Drownings</b> .....	<b>4011</b>
<b>Kowanyama</b> .....	<b>4012</b>
<b>National Partnership Agreements, Expiry</b> .....	<b>4012</b>
<b>Fraser Coast Regional Council</b> .....	<b>4013</b>
<i>Tabled paper: Fraser Coast Regional Council: State Intervention under the Local Government Act 2009, 31 October 2016.</i> .....	<b>4013</b>
<b>Red-Tape Reduction</b> .....	<b>4013</b>
<i>Tabled paper: Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council Report: Queensland Government Response and Action Plan, October 2016.</i> .....	<b>4014</b>
<b>Dreamworld, Fatalities; Moorooka, Bus Incident</b> .....	<b>4014</b>
<b>Theme Parks, Safety Audit</b> .....	<b>4015</b>
<b>Justice McMurdo, Resignation</b> .....	<b>4015</b>
<b>Overseas Trade Mission</b> .....	<b>4016</b>
<b>Playgroup</b> .....	<b>4016</b>
<b>Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council</b> .....	<b>4017</b>
<b>Queensland Rail, Interim Timetable</b> .....	<b>4017</b>
<b>National Parks, Rangers</b> .....	<b>4018</b>
<b>National Water Infrastructure Development Fund</b> .....	<b>4018</b>
<b>Advance Queensland, Bio-Industries</b> .....	<b>4019</b>
<b>MOTION</b> .....	<b>4019</b>
<b>Referral to the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee</b> .....	<b>4019</b>

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 2 November 2016

<b>HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE</b> .....	<b>4020</b>
<b>Report</b> .....	<b>4020</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 29—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 June 2016 and 30 August 2016.....	4020
<b>NOTICE OF MOTION</b> .....	<b>4020</b>
<b>CFMEU, WorkCover Queensland</b> .....	<b>4020</b>
<b>PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>4020</b>
<b>Palaszczuk Labor Government, Building Approvals</b> .....	<b>4020</b>
<b>Newman LNP Government, Performance</b> .....	<b>4021</b>
<b>Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games</b> .....	<b>4021</b>
<b>Newman LNP Government, Performance</b> .....	<b>4022</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Briefing note, signed 31 July 2013, for noting to the then minister for health, Hon. Lawrence Springborg, regarding the Barrett Adolescent Strategy Meeting. ....	4022
<b>Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance</b> .....	<b>4023</b>
<b>QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE</b> .....	<b>4023</b>
<b>New Generation Rollingstock</b> .....	<b>4023</b>
<b>Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games</b> .....	<b>4024</b>
<b>Whitsunday, Community Cabinet</b> .....	<b>4025</b>
<b>Queensland Rail, New Generation Rollingstock</b> .....	<b>4026</b>
<b>Jobs</b> .....	<b>4027</b>
<b>Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games</b> .....	<b>4027</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from the ministerial diary of the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, 1 September 2016 to 30 September 2016. ....	4027
<b>South East Queensland Regional Plan</b> .....	<b>4028</b>
<b>Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games</b> .....	<b>4028</b>
<b>Queensland Economy</b> .....	<b>4029</b>
<b>Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games</b> .....	<b>4030</b>
<b>Health Services</b> .....	<b>4030</b>
<b>Queensland Rail</b> .....	<b>4031</b>
<b>Tourism and Events Industry</b> .....	<b>4031</b>
<b>Old Mapoon</b> .....	<b>4032</b>
<b>National Parks, Rangers</b> .....	<b>4033</b>
<b>Maritime Safety Queensland, Abandoned Vessels</b> .....	<b>4034</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media release, undated, from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'Moondarewa Spit opens'.....	4034
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of media articles, various dates, regarding Trinity Inlet. ....	4034
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Photograph, dated October 2016, of a houseboat in the Noosa River. ....	4034
<b>MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL</b> .....	<b>4034</b>
<b>Second Reading</b> .....	<b>4034</b>
<b>Consideration in Detail</b> .....	<b>4045</b>
Clauses 1 to 10, as read, agreed to. ....	4045
Clause 11, as read, agreed to .....	4046
Clause 12, as read, agreed to .....	4046
Clause 13, as read, agreed to .....	4047
Clauses 14 to 17, as read, agreed to .....	4047
Clause 18—.....	4047
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Curtis Pitt's amendments. ....	4047
Clause 18, as amended, agreed to .....	4048
Clauses 19 to 21, as read, agreed to .....	4048
Clause 22—.....	4048
Clause 22, as read, negated.....	4048
Insertion of new clause—.....	4048
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Brisbane Times</i> , dated 15 October 2016, titled 'Move to rename Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium to Lang Park in legislation'. ....	4048
Division: Question put—That the amendment to the amendment be agreed to .....	4050
Resolved in the negative.....	4050
Non-government amendment (Mr Krause) negated.....	4050
Amendment agreed to.....	4050
Clauses 23 to 25, as read, agreed to .....	4050
Clause 26—.....	4050
Clause 26, as amended, agreed to .....	4050
Clause 27—.....	4051
Clause 27, as read, negated.....	4051

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 2 November 2016

	Insertion of new clause—	4051
	<i>Tabled paper:</i> Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, amendments to be moved during consideration in detail by the member for Beaudesert, Mr Jon Krause.....	4051
	<i>Tabled paper:</i> Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Mr Jon Krause’s amendments.....	4051
	Clauses 28 to 36, as read, agreed to.....	4051
	Schedule 1—.....	4051
	Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to.....	4051
	<b>Third Reading</b> .....	<b>4051</b>
	<b>Long Title</b> .....	<b>4052</b>
<b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENT</b> .....		<b>4052</b>
	<b>Rates Arrears</b> .....	<b>4052</b>
<b>MOTION</b> .....		<b>4052</b>
	<b>Order of Business</b> .....	<b>4052</b>
<b>MOTION</b> .....		<b>4052</b>
	<b>Revocation of State Forest Areas</b> .....	<b>4052</b>
<b>MOTION</b> .....		<b>4056</b>
	<b>CFMEU, WorkCover Queensland</b> .....	<b>4056</b>
	<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from the ministerial diary of the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Multicultural Affairs, Hon. Grace Grace, 1 September 2016 to 30 September 2016.....	4057
	Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.....	4063
	Resolved in the negative.....	4063
<b>WEAPONS REGULATION</b> .....		<b>4063</b>
	<b>Disallowance of Statutory Instrument</b> .....	<b>4063</b>
	Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.....	4079
	Resolved in the affirmative.....	4079
<b>MOTION</b> .....		<b>4079</b>
	<b>Revocation of State Forest Areas</b> .....	<b>4079</b>
<b>ADOPTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL</b> .....		<b>4080</b>
	<b>Second Reading</b> .....	<b>4080</b>
	Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.....	4097
	Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106(10).....	4097
	<b>Consideration in Detail</b> .....	<b>4097</b>
	Clauses 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.....	4097
	Clause 7—.....	4097
	Division: Question put—That clause 7, as read, stand part of the bill.....	4097
	Resolved in the affirmative.....	4098
	Clause 7, as read, agreed to.....	4098
	Clauses 8 to 12, as read, agreed to.....	4098
	Clause 13—.....	4098
	Division: Question put—That clause 13, as read, stand part of the bill.....	4098
	Resolved in the affirmative.....	4098
	Clause 13, as read, agreed to.....	4098
	Clauses 14 to 16, as read, agreed to.....	4098
	Clauses 17 and 18—.....	4098
	Division: Question put—That clauses 17 and 18, as read, stand part of the bill.....	4098
	Resolved in the affirmative.....	4098
	Clauses 17 and 18, as read, agreed to.....	4098
	Clauses 19 to 27, as read, agreed to.....	4099
	Clauses 28 and 29—.....	4099
	Division: Question put—That clauses 28 and 29, as read, stand part of the bill.....	4099
	Resolved in the affirmative.....	4099
	Clauses 28 and 29, as read, agreed to.....	4099
	Clauses 30 to 67, as read, agreed to.....	4099
	Schedule, as read, agreed to.....	4099
	<b>Third Reading</b> .....	<b>4099</b>
	Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a third time.....	4099
	Resolved in the affirmative.....	4099
	<b>Long Title</b> .....	<b>4100</b>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b> .....		<b>4100</b>
	<b>Gold Coast</b> .....	<b>4100</b>
	<b>James, Miss E</b> .....	<b>4100</b>
	<b>Mansfield State High School, Sports and Hall Facility</b> .....	<b>4101</b>
	<b>Banksia Beach State School</b> .....	<b>4101</b>
	<b>World Teachers’ Day</b> .....	<b>4102</b>
	<b>Telstra Business Women’s Awards</b> .....	<b>4102</b>
	<b>Vanguard Laundry Service</b> .....	<b>4103</b>

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 2 November 2016

<b>Bulimba Electorate, Church Communities.....</b>	<b>4104</b>
<b>Mining Industry; Mount Lindesay Highway .....</b>	<b>4104</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Courier-Mail</i> , dated 2 November 2016, titled '\$30 billion Delay' .....	4104
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Jimboomba Times</i> , dated 21 October 2016, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway speed cameras to be switched on in November' .....	4105
<b>Stafford Electorate, Centacare and HAND .....</b>	<b>4105</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE .....</b>	<b>4106</b>

## WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2016

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The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

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

### PETITIONS

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

#### D'Aguilar Highway, Speed Limit

**Mrs Frecklington**, from 397 petitioners, requesting the House to begin the 80km/h speed limit on the D'Aguilar Highway at approximately 500 metres west of the Kilcoy-Somerset Road intersection, adjoining the 80 km/h section currently in place into Kilcoy [[1960](#)].

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

#### Mount Lindesay Highway, Upgrade

**Mr Krause**, from 1,688 petitioners, requesting the House to fast track the upgrade of the Mount Lindesay Highway to four lanes to Jimboomba and to plan for four lanes from Beaudesert [[1961](#), [1962](#)].

Petitions received.

### TABLED PAPERS

#### MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Hon. Dr Lynham)—

[1963](#) Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission—Annual Report 2015-16

[1964](#) Queensland's Category 2 Water Authorities—Summary of Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2015-16

[1965](#) Queensland's River Improvement Trusts—Summary of Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2015-16

### MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled—

Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business (Hon. LM Enoch)—

[1966](#) Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council Report, 2016

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Kingston, Drownings



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.02 pm): Yesterday there was more tragic news for Queensland. Two young sisters, Patricia and Taya, three and four years of age, drowned in a pool at Kingston, south of Brisbane. I did not know these girls. I did not know their favourite colours. I did not know their favourite games or their favourite storybooks. I do know they should have been looking forward to Christmas with their family and friends.

I have asked the Minister for Health, as the local member, to ensure any assistance that we can provide the family and the community is provided. I also want to place on record our thanks to the ambulance, police and emergency service workers who were in attendance. I am advised by the minister that counselling for those officers will be made available.

This is a tragic reminder of the importance of the pool safety requirements imposed on swimming pools in Queensland. The standard was introduced last year to increase pool safety and simplify our pool safety laws. I urge all pool owners, especially as we go into the summer break, to double-check their pool's compliance with the pool standard.

## Kowanyama

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.04 pm): On Friday, 7 October we saw yet another tragedy in a Queensland community. When a car crashed into a group of people mourning the death of a loved one, Queenslanders were aghast. Delanne Zingle died and a further 26 people were injured, some of them critically, in this tragic incident. The community has since expressed an outpouring of grief at the death of Ms Zingle.

I know the member for Cook has been offering support to his community, and we thank him for that. Our community champion for Kowanyama, the member for Morayfield, and the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Treasurer, have also visited the Kowanyama community to offer the government's support. I would also like to pass on my thanks and gratitude to the first responders—the paramedics, the police, the flying doctors and the many others—who helped in the aftermath of what would have been a very confronting scene.

The community has also been rallying together under the strong guidance of Kowanyama mayor, Michael Yam. I have been advised that Queensland charity GIVIT has delivered furniture and whitegoods to the community and local police have been active in supervising local discos to ensure young people in the community are engaged.

It is too often we think that once the immediate consequences of a tragic incident such as this have been dealt with that the job is done. However, the community recovery phase continues for some time and its importance cannot be underestimated. I thank those working in the community to help the families, the elders and the young people move on from such tragic circumstances. I also once again thank our front-line staff from key government departments who will also continue to work with the community.

## National Partnership Agreements, Expiry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.05 pm): There are a number of national partnerships expiring in 2016-17 and 2017-18 with no indication yet from the federal government as to whether they will be renewed. States currently have limited capacity to influence federal decisions on expiring national partnerships.

The federal government's unilateral decisions on renewed funding for national partnerships causes states significant fiscal risk. Without funding certainty, we have limited ability to plan for ongoing services, contract with service providers and pursue innovations and efficiencies in service delivery. States must pick up the bill for expiring national partnerships or risk cuts to vital services.

One avenue of influence Queensland utilises is the annual joint state and territory treasurers' submission to the federal Treasurer about expiring agreements. This year Queensland is leading the submission that covers national partnerships expiring on or before 30 June 2018. The submission details those national partnerships states and territories want to see renewed beyond their expiry dates, and will be lodged with the federal Treasurer in the coming days.

Expiring national partnerships that are of particular concern to Queensland include: universal access to early childhood; skills reform; homelessness and remote Indigenous housing; and adult public dental services. The funding from these national partnerships provides vital services to the people of Queensland.

A pertinent example of the impacts of the federal government's decision to not renew a national partnership can be seen with the National Partnership Supporting National Mental Health Reform. This national partnership had provided approximately \$52 million over the five years from 2012 to 2016. However, the federal government unilaterally decided not to renew the agreement from 2016 onwards.

This unilateral decision compromises support for up to 188 Queenslanders with severe and persistent mental illness and impacts up to 31 community managed mental health organisations and their employees. This in turn has the potential to increase demand on state public hospital emergency departments and public mental health services.

To limit the impacts of the federal government's decision, my government will provide interim funding for 12 months to the affected clients. Although the federal government's response to previous joint treasurers' expiring agreements submissions has been disappointing, it is still important to continue raising the issue of expiring national partnerships.

I place on record my thanks to the Minister for Health and the Treasurer for bringing this very important issue to cabinet. We must argue for certainty and future federal government funding to our state.

### Fraser Coast Regional Council

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.08 pm): The House may be aware of the challenges facing the Fraser Coast Regional Council. Certainly the member for Maryborough has made numerous representations to me and my office over the past number of months. Today I table in the House a report from my department on the Fraser Coast Regional Council's compliance with its statutory responsibilities and its general functioning.

*Tabled paper:* Fraser Coast Regional Council: State Intervention under the Local Government Act 2009, 31 October 2016 [[1967](#)].

The report says the council is currently functioning in a way that is allowing it to perform its responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2009. It says individual councillors are not seriously or continuously breaching the local government principles, and that they are capable of performing their statutory responsibilities. The report states that 'at this point there is limited legislative justification for the removal of the council or individual councillors'.

Further, I have taken independent legal advice and it agrees with the conclusions and advice from my agency. However, the report highlights that, in particular, the relationship between the mayor and CEO is not constructive. It states—

Many of the issues are within the Council's control to deal with and resolve, with councillors needing to accept responsibility for developing and maintaining effective relationships and regulating their own behaviour.

My utmost concern is that council starts to function more professionally and effectively quickly. Ratepayers should rightly expect that their elected representatives are capable of behaving in an adult-like manner, end the infighting and act professionally in the interests of the Fraser Coast region. My director-general is currently meeting with the council to communicate the state's views and will encourage them to work together to find a way forward for the benefit of their community.

Notwithstanding the clear advice I have about the limitations on my ability to take ministerial action at this time, I do want to make it clear that elected councils have a responsibility to put their communities first. Should the situation deteriorate to the point where further intervention is required under the Local Government Act 2009, either in the form of removal of a councillor or councillors, or the dissolution of the council, my message to the Fraser Coast council is simple: this government will take action. If it proves necessary, this government will remove the council and ensure that the community has an opportunity to elect local government representatives who put the community interests ahead of childish squabbling and indulgent, egotistical behaviour.

### Red-Tape Reduction

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (2.11 pm): At the last election this government committed to consulting and working cooperatively with the private sector to grow and diversify our state's economy. That approach to implementing our economic plan is paying dividends, with hard data and a range of indicators showing economic growth is up, business and consumer confidence are up and unemployment is down. These are the results of having a comprehensive economic plan and implementing it in a careful, considered and cooperative manner over more than 18 months across two state budgets.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting and growing businesses of all sizes. Our government has implemented budgets which are business friendly and targeted at growing innovation, attracting investment and building infrastructure. These initiatives are focused on making it easier to do business in Queensland. These initiatives include: a \$40 million Business Development Fund; a payroll tax apprentice and trainee rebate to reduce the payroll tax liability for businesses—3,156 businesses claimed the rebate in 2015-16, worth \$11.745 million to those businesses; and establishing the Office of Small Business to deliver the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy with targeted programs and services to deliver growth and jobs.

Small business represents more than 97 per cent of all businesses in the state and accounts for about 40 per cent of all private sector workers. We recognise that inefficient regulation and the approach regulators take in engaging with small business have significant impacts on compliance and business costs. That is why the work of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council has been so important. Since being established in August 2015 the council has worked to identify opportunities to minimise the regulatory burden on small business.

Today, I table the Queensland government's response to the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council report tabled earlier by the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and, importantly, Minister for Small Business.

*Tabled paper:* Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council Report: Queensland Government Response and Action Plan, October 2016 [1968].

The council has consulted closely with small business stakeholders and its report makes 14 recommendations for reducing the regulatory burden on small business. The report examined three industry areas: cafes and restaurants in the hospitality industry; light metals in the manufacturing industry; and fruit growing in the agriculture industry. The government accepts or supports for further investigation all of the 14 recommendations. Today I will direct the independent Queensland Productivity Commission to undertake a program of work to provide detailed advice in relation to specific issues identified in the report. In accordance with the terms of reference, the commission will examine regulation models that promote self-auditing and streamlined record keeping, a regulatory performance framework and provide advice on implementing targeted training programs for agencies with regulatory responsibilities.

The government's response includes an action plan outlining the responsibilities of key departments in implementing the response to each recommendation. Many individual departments have already implemented a broad range of reviews and reforms to address many of the key issues raised in the report. While the report focuses on three key industry sectors, the findings may help identify reform opportunities to deliver benefits more broadly to other sectors.

The Office of Small Business has reviewed the role of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council and its Queensland Small Business Advisory Council with a view to improving performance and overall efficiencies. The establishment of the Better Regulation Taskforce, which will replace the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council, will ensure continued regulatory reform. It will undertake an ongoing examination of industry sectors.

To drive implementation, the government will provide a detailed progress report to the Better Regulation Taskforce every six months. The first of these reports is expected to be made available by April 2017. Of course red-tape reduction is linked to increasing productivity, and this will be a topic of discussion with the Commonwealth government and other state and territory treasurers early next month.

I welcome the report and acknowledge the very hard work of council members—in particular, the small business minister, Minister Enoch, as chair. I acknowledge the work of Minister Jones, who when small business minister established the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council—delivering on a promise we made as part of our Working Queensland election commitment in 2015.

### **Dreamworld, Fatalities; Moorooka, Bus Incident**

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.15 pm): The last two weeks have been incredibly tragic for this state. On behalf of all Queenslanders, I extend my sincere condolences to those families and friends of the victims, as well as those who were present when the sad events in recent weeks have taken place. The tragic incident at Dreamworld last week has shocked not only Queenslanders but the rest of the country. The Premier yesterday offered well-deserved praise to Aguek Nyok, who saved the lives of those trapped on a bus in Moorooka. I would also like to praise his quick thinking and what can only be described as heroic actions. Yesterday, two young girls tragically lost their lives in their family backyard pool. I cannot imagine what this family is going through and I would like to pass on my heartfelt sympathy to their family and friends.

I would also like to extend my praise and thanks to all of the front-line officers involved during the various tragedies over the last couple of weeks, especially at Dreamworld and Moorooka. At least 30 police responded to the tragedy at Dreamworld. That does not include the unsworn Queensland Police Service personnel who were in the background toiling behind the scenes. Along with them, 45 Queensland Fire and Emergency Services personnel also attended. In Moorooka, 16 firefighters attended the bus blaze.

We are so accustomed to traumatic circumstances being a part of a police officer's or a firefighter's job that we often forget they can also be impacted. Having met with Police Commissioner Ian Stewart on Friday, I know that he and his officers have felt the impact of what has occurred over the past couple of weeks. The Queensland Police Service and QFES officers selflessly place themselves in dangerous and emotionally challenging situations every day for the community they serve. They always step forward, and we wholeheartedly thank them for that.

I know both the QPS and QFES work hard to prevent the sustained impact on the wellbeing of staff. QFES have 103 counsellors and psychologists and 160 trained peer support officers. From July 2015 to July 2016, they helped more than 500 QFES staff and family members. In 2015-16, more than 1,200 QPS employees used their internal psychological services. I hope the loved ones of those who passed away in these tragedies know that the state is thinking of them. I hope the men and women of the QPS and QFES know that we are thinking of them too.

### Theme Parks, Safety Audit

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.18 pm): I join Minister Byrne in expressing, like all Queenslanders, my shock at week's tragic events that claimed the lives of four tourists at Dreamworld. My heart goes out to the family and friends of those affected. I also want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the first response workers in very challenging circumstances.

These tragic events are being thoroughly investigated by the Coroner, the Queensland Police Service, and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. The investigation will seek to establish what went wrong and what can be done to prevent a repeat of this tragedy. It will also ensure that any person or organisation found to be responsible for the deaths is held to account.

In addition to this ongoing investigation, workplace inspectors are conducting a month-long safety audit of Queensland theme parks. The safety audit got underway on Saturday at Dreamworld and will cover Movie World, Wet'n'Wild, Sea World, Aussie World and Australia Zoo throughout the course of November. As part of the audits, specialist inspectors and engineers will focus on records inspection, maintenance and repair and manufacturer documentation, along with ride operator training. This is about assuring theme park visitors and also ensuring public confidence in Queensland's prime tourism attractions ahead of the busy Christmas holiday season. Make no mistake: Queensland theme parks are world class. However, given the magnitude of this tragedy, we need to act decisively in the interests of both public safety and confidence in our lucrative tourism industry.

Tuesday's tragic events reverberated around Australia and the world, and no-one knows that better than our theme park operators. I have held discussions with Dreamworld and Village Roadshow representatives who have expressed their full support and full cooperation for the safety audits. I, along with the Minister for Tourism, will continue to meet with representatives from Queensland's theme park industry to discuss the safety audits and other relevant workplace safety matters.

The government will also conduct a wideranging best practice audit of Queensland's workplace health and safety systems and processes. This audit will consider whether existing penalties under the workplace health and safety regulations are sufficient to act as deterrents as well as ensuring that we have best practice international standards. I want to reiterate that we will leave no stone unturned in getting to the bottom of what went wrong at Dreamworld, as expressed often by the Premier. The families of the deceased and the general public deserve answers and they will get answers when the investigation is complete. We will do everything in our power to ensure there is no repeat of these tragic events.

### Justice McMurdo, Resignation

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.21 pm): On Monday of this week the President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Margaret McMurdo, informed me that she had written to His Excellency the Governor of Queensland resigning her commission as both president of the appellate court and as a Supreme Court justice on 26 March next year. Justice McMurdo's decision will bring to a close a remarkable career, first as a distinguished lawyer and then as an eminent jurist.

Justice McMurdo has been an exemplary servant of justice in this state. She has been a judge in Queensland for more than 25 years, since becoming the first woman appointed to the bench of the District Court in 1991. Eighteen years ago, when she was appointed President of the Court of Appeal, she became the first woman to preside over an appellate court in Australia. The tenor of Justice McMurdo's term stands as a testament to her legal acumen and leadership over that significant period. She has brought dignity, dedication and intellectual rigour to this vital role. She rightly commands the respect of the legal profession and the judiciary across this state and beyond. Justice McMurdo is a Companion of the Order of Australia and was awarded a Centenary Medal in 2003. After being admitted to the bar in 1976, she spent time as an assistant public defender and at the private bar. Justice McMurdo was also a founding member of Women Lawyers Association.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Justice McMurdo for her interactions with me since becoming Attorney-General. The relationship between a first law officer and the most senior members of the judiciary is an important one, and I would like to thank Justice McMurdo for the dignity, discretion and trust which she has brought to our dealings.

By providing extended notice of her intended departure, Justice McMurdo again has demonstrated her commitment to the efficient administration of justice in Queensland. By doing so, she ensures there will be minimal disruption to the function of the courts and a smooth transition can take place. Once again, I thank Justice McMurdo for her distinguished service to Queensland and wish her all the best for the future.

### Overseas Trade Mission

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.23 pm): I wish to advise the House of my recent trade mission to two of the world's major healthcare markets—the United States of America and China. I was accompanied by leaders of the Queensland health industry from organisations such as QIMR Berghofer, Life Sciences Queensland, Tunstall Healthcare, PresCare, the Queensland Brain Institute and James Cook University.

In the United States, I addressed the AdvaMed international reception in Minneapolis which was attended by over 300 international guests. I spoke of Queensland's growing reputation as a destination of choice for innovation and investment in the health industries, and our excellent reputation in medical research. I met with the CEOs of some of the world's best medical and health organisations and gave them a more in-depth run-down of Queensland's capabilities.

I opened the Minneapolis headquarters of Admedus, an innovative company that is translating Queensland's research, including Professor Ian Frazer's next generation vaccines, into new global products. We look forward to collaborating with Admedus in the near future. With the support of our colleagues from Trade & Investment Queensland, a memorandum of understanding was signed between Queensland Health and the Zhejiang province in China. It is expected another MOU will be signed with the Sichuan province when we host a government delegation in the coming months.

The memorandum encourages the sharing of expertise in critical areas such as policy and regulation, technology solutions, primary care, aged care and the treatment of communicable diseases. These collaborations open the door to more innovative solutions and better health outcomes for Queenslanders, and will help to connect our industries. The Asia-Pacific region is the fastest growing healthcare market in the world, with the Chinese government predicted to spend \$1.3 trillion a year on health care by 2020. There are opportunities for both our public and private providers of healthcare services and our universities and medical research institutes, particularly in the areas of aged care, telehealth, planning and training.

While on the trade mission, Life Sciences Queensland also signed an agreement with the Zhejiang Council for Health Services Promotion to stimulate direct business-to-business trade and development. Building on the work of Trade & Investment Queensland, the trade mission succeeded in building relationships focused on health with two of our most important trading partners. With an emphasis on creating the knowledge industries of the future, these relationships will bear fruit in terms of economic opportunities and completing the objectives of the government's Advance Queensland and Advancing Health 2026 visions.

### Playgroup

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (2.25 pm): I am very pleased to report to the House that more than 2,300 Queensland families have signed up to join in our free playgroup trial in the four months since we launched our Play Stars program in June last year. Twenty-six new playgroups have also been created and close to 500 families have inquired about starting a new playgroup in their local community.

Our Play Stars program gives all Queensland families with a child under one a free 12-month membership to Playgroup Queensland. We know how important the first three years of a child's life are for development, so creating more opportunities for children to learn, grow and develop through play is vital. Playgroup also helps parents connect with each other, share experiences, learn from each other and build social networks and support.

We are also rolling out new digital resources to support parents help their child learn. I want to recognise Playgroup Queensland including CEO Ian Coombe for partnering with us in Play Stars and providing Queensland children with access to quality early learning experiences. Our government is

determined to give all Queensland children the best possible start to their education and support to families and parents. Our Play Stars program, in partnership with Playgroup Queensland, will ensure more families are connected with a playgroup, ensuring long-term education benefits for our children.

### Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (2.27 pm): I would like to thank the Treasurer for his earlier statement to the House regarding the work undertaken by the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council and the Palaszczuk government's actions in relation to the recommendations from the report. This not only delivers on an election commitment but also illustrates this government's commitment to delivering tangible benefits to small business in our state. At the outset I would like to place on record my thanks to Minister Jones, who initially chaired the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council, and to the members of the council for their advice and contribution to the report. It is the first step in helping to reduce the regulatory burden for small businesses so they can grow and employ.

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce the outcomes of the recent evaluation of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council and the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council which the Treasurer touched on. As a result of the evaluation, the councils are being reformed into a single council with a Better Regulation Taskforce to be established as a subcommittee of the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council. This change will help the council to focus on identifying the red-tape hotspots impacting on small business growth and productivity and to champion new regulatory models and reforms to make it easier to do business in Queensland.

This is not the only way the Palaszczuk government is providing important support for Queensland small businesses right around the state. Last week at the incredibly successful DestinationQ forum, I opened the Accelerate Small Business Grants Program. The grants will provide \$3 million over the next three years to help innovative high-growth businesses to grow and employ. The Accelerate Small Business Grants Program will provide up to \$10,000 in matched funding to provide small, high-growth businesses with the opportunity to engage an expert business adviser or an advisory board for a period of between six and 12 months.

High-growth small businesses are a vital part of our economy and a major driver of employment and economic growth. The Accelerate Small Business Grants Program is part of our government's \$22.7 million Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy to help small business in our state to start, grow and employ. The Palaszczuk government understands the important role small business plays in our economy which is why we are providing targeted support to give them the best opportunity to succeed.

### Queensland Rail, Interim Timetable

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (2.30 pm): During this morning's peak, we achieved an on-time running result of 97 per cent against the interim Queensland Rail timetable. That result is a testament to the hardworking train crew going above and beyond to deliver for customers. However, what is painfully clear to me is that there is still not enough consistency in the interim timetable. The former CEO and former chair said the interim timetable would work. It is not working for enough people with enough consistency. The timetable needs to be the timetable. As the Premier and I said yesterday, we have instructed QR and TransLink to implement a permanent timetable for the rest of the year. I met with the acting CEO and the acting chair last night and made it clear that this is their measure of success. We lifted the LNP recruitment freeze after the LNP's devastating cuts. We are training drivers and training guards right now.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** They're laughing at the cuts.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Speaker, I can assure you that most Queenslanders do not think that these cuts are a laughing matter.

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Callide. I can hear you.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** We are training drivers and guards right now. We will open external driver recruitment. We are actively speaking to retired drivers, including those who were axed by the former government, to come back to Queensland Rail. We are fixing the new trains ordered and designed by the LNP. There is no excuse for QR not briefing and alerting to the dangers that some clearly knew

were coming through multiple reports. The independent investigation established by the Premier will handle those matters and will all be subject to the scrutiny that follows. My task is clear: fix the timetable and deliver for commuters.

### National Parks, Rangers

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (2.32 pm): The Palaszczuk government is committed to jobs and job creation. Park rangers play a very important role in protecting—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under standing order 253A for your interjections. They are disorderly. If you proceed, I will take the appropriate action.

**Dr MILES:** Park rangers play a very important role in protecting the outstanding natural places in Queensland that remain the envy of the world. I recognise that our rangers are critical to conservation and to ensuring that our tourism industry remains prosperous. Our park rangers protect our national parks—from managing fires and weeds to maintaining our beautiful tracks, trails and camping areas as well as communicating with and educating visitors about our national parks. That is why we have committed in the 2016-17 budget to rebuilding our ranger workforce over the next four years after the LNP government slashed the number of front-line rangers. Up to 31 new front-line park ranger jobs will be delivered over the next four years under a \$35.9 million investment in new national park funding and an expansion of the state's protected area estate. Up to 21 of those new jobs—or more than two-thirds—are expected to be in place by the end of June 2017. These park ranger positions will be directly involved in the establishment and management of new national parks in all corners of the state, protecting a wide diversity of flora and fauna.

In particular, I am proud of the fact that this investment will benefit regional Queensland. Fourteen new jobs will be created in north-western and central Queensland, another six in south-east and south-west Queensland, and one overseeing marine parks and coastal islands. These ranger jobs will be advertised in remote communities, providing local employment, and many small towns will benefit through the provision of goods and services. Houses to accommodate some of these new ranger staff are already under construction, with \$450,000 being spent at Undara west of Townsville, creating flow-on jobs in the construction sector. Planning is underway for a new house at Littleton National Park near Croydon.

As new fences and fire lines are built to support park management, flow-on work will be created for local businesses supplying machinery and equipment. As the popularity of our parks grow, tourism will provide longer term economic prosperity, with visitors purchasing food and fuel on their way to and from the parks. This is just the start of a new investment in our natural wonders—an investment that will deliver long-term sustainability for conservation and for regional Queensland.

### National Water Infrastructure Development Fund

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.35 pm): I would like to update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to clean up the mess that the Deputy Prime Minister made of his own federally funded National Water Infrastructure Development Fund here in Queensland. During the election, the Malcolm-Barnaby government committed nearly \$20 million towards water infrastructure feasibility studies in the state, which of course we welcomed. I also note that it was a 100 per cent federally funded program.

Mr Joyce has made a lot of noise in recent times about the Queensland government, alleging that we have stalled on these studies. Unlike other states, the majority of the successful proponents in Queensland are small organisations like councils, not-for-profits or industry associations. Mr Joyce failed to tell them that payment under his fund would be only once yearly and in arrears. This meant that some NGO and local government proponents did not have sufficient funds to initiate projects and to carry the costs.

On behalf of the proponents, I wrote to Barnaby and I tried to reason with him, urging him to unlock his safe and be more flexible with his own funding arrangements so that these studies could start. Sadly, he would not listen. Last week I announced that the Palaszczuk government would be stepping in to clean up Barnaby's mess and that we would be providing \$15 million in interim funding to the proponents to ensure these feasibility studies can proceed. Essentially, this is a loan that the Malcolm-Barnaby government will have to pay back to Queensland.

The announcement was applauded by proponents. In a media release, the headline read 'Southern Downs Regional Council welcomes intervention by Minister Bailey'. I am sure the member for Southern Downs will welcome that statement. The statement then said, 'Mayor Tracy Dobie indicated that it would have been difficult to proceed with the proposed project unless the state government had become involved, providing the necessary cash flow to progress the project.'

There was this statement from Initiative Capital, the proponent of the Urannah Dam feasibility study in Mackay: 'I am very pleased with the outcome and I think we shouldn't underestimate the effort of everyone involved with reaching this position. In addition, Minister Bailey should be congratulated for championing the more flexible arrangements.'

The Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone, MITEZ, said, 'MITEZ appreciates the Queensland Government's efforts to progress the NWIDF projects.' There is also a statement from Cape York Sustainable Futures along those lines. There is one more statement, and who do you think that is from? It is from the federal member for Flynn. The federal member for Flynn said, 'I'm pleased the Queensland government have come forward with this package to have the feasibility study done.' Even Barnaby's own Queensland colleagues are grateful that the Palaszczuk government has stepped in to clean up his mess, to get these feasibility studies moving. I sincerely thank the federal member for Flynn for his support for the Palaszczuk government.

### **Advance Queensland, Bio-Industries**

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.39 pm): The Queensland government is looking beyond its traditional industries of mining, tourism and agriculture to secure the state's future economic prosperity. That is why the state government is working to create and attract bio-industries through our \$405 million Advance Queensland program. As part of the Advance Queensland program, my Department of State Development is developing 10-year roadmaps and action plans for six priority growth sectors: bio-futures; advanced manufacturing; defence; aerospace; biomedical and life sciences; and mining equipment, technology and services. These action plans, which will be progressively rolled out in coming months, focus on collaboration between industry and research bodies to transform ideas and research into commercial outcomes, growing businesses and jobs.

Queensland's highly skilled workforce, our geographic position on Asia's doorstep, our world-class research and education systems, and stable government and legal systems are not lost on business. Understandably, Brisbane is the home of global mining giant Rio Tinto's Growth and Innovation group's hub. Brisbane is a key hub for Rio Tinto's Growth and Innovation team as Queensland is the home of many of the company's bauxite, aluminium and coal assets. The company set up the group this year to drive efficiency and optimise performance, combining its exploration, technology and innovation roles.

Currently, the Brisbane team of about 200 employees is focusing on the \$1.9 billion Amrun bauxite project in Cape York and the massive copper rich Oyu Tolgoi project in Mongolia. Amrun will require construction of a bauxite mine, processing plant and port facilities that will initially produce 22.8 million tonnes of bauxite and is expected to start production and shipping in the first half of 2019. Amrun's project is expected to provide work for 1,100 people during construction. Once operational, Amrun will help support the ongoing employment for the existing 1,400-strong workforce at Rio's Cape York bauxite operations.

Oyu Tolgoi is the world's highest quality copper project, in the southern Gobi Desert of Mongolia. This project is producing up to 200,000 tonnes of copper annually but is set to increase to 500,000 tonnes in 2027. Rio Tinto expects that by 2030 there will be 22 million new urban residents in China. GDP growth in emerging Asian economies outside China is expected to average around five to six per cent per annum over the next 15 years. This hub employing 200 people here in Brisbane will be a large factor driving future growth in this country and future growth and prosperity for Queensland.

## **MOTION**

### **Referral to the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (2.41 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee consider and report on how to improve the delivery of respectful relationships and sex education in regards to the use of technology in Queensland state schools.

The committee is asked to consider the following:

- a) the prevalence of sexualised content and the unsafe use of technology by students;
  - b) how adequately the health and physical education curriculum supports students make safe and healthy choices, and understands respectful relationships particularly given students' greater access to technology; and
  - c) consideration of other jurisdictions' approach to tackling sex education and the issue of at-risk behaviour and sexualised content creation by students.
2. In undertaking the inquiry, the committee should also consider the potential benefits of students being better informed about the risks behind the use of technology in a sexual nature.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

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

### Report

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (2.43 pm): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 29 of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 June 2016 and 30 August 2016*. I commend the report to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 29—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 June 2016 and 30 August 2016 [[1969](#)].

### NOTICE OF MOTION

#### CFMEU, WorkCover Queensland

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.43 pm): I give notice that I shall move—

That the House note:

1. the CFMEU contributed \$156,218.60 to the Queensland Labor Party between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016;
2. a *Courier-Mail* article, dated 31 October 2016, stated that the Palaszczuk Labor government was intending to appoint a former National Secretary of the CFMEU as the new CEO of WorkCover Queensland;
3. the diary of the Industrial Relations Minister, Grace Grace, published on 1 November 2016 shows that the minister personally met with two candidates for the position of CEO of WorkCover Queensland on 21 September 2016;
4. between the two meetings mentioned above, that the minister met with CFMEU official Michael Ravbar.

And calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to rule out the appointment of a former CFMEU official as the CEO of WorkCover Queensland and immediately begin the selection of an independent CEO again with a fully open, accountable and transparent process pursuant to their policy of merit based recruitment rather than union mates.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Building Approvals

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (2.44 pm): It is interesting to note the silence from the Treasurer today about the latest report into building approval figures. He has been out there talking about all these good reports, cherrypicking the results, but he has not mentioned the building approval figures today. What we see today is more evidence that Queensland is struggling under the antibusiness, anti-investment policies of the Palaszczuk government. What do those figures show today? Seasonally adjusted building approvals slipped 11.7 per cent in one month—almost 12 per cent in just one month. Compared with this time last year they have dropped 31½ per cent. If we look at the Treasurer's preferred trend measure, there was another drop in September. In fact, building approvals have been on the slide now for not just one month, not just two months, not just three months, but for eight consecutive months.

Not since the bad old days of Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser have things been this bad. Just like Anna Bligh, who axed the principal place of residence concession because she could not manage her budget, this Treasurer has hurt the industry with a job-destroying investment tax—the same tax he admitted 12 months earlier would destroy jobs and destroy investment. Is it any wonder that industry has no confidence in this minister? Is it any wonder the industry believes that Queensland is going backwards and that the property sector views this minister and this government as the worst in Australia?

We saw yesterday also members of the Labor Party here talking about how wonderful and what a great job Labor apparently is doing on unemployment. It is important to see what the figures are and what the reality is. Let us look at what Nick Behrens from the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland said. He said—

... the story that is hidden this month is that the falling unemployment rate is largely as a result of an exodus of persons from the Queensland labour market ...

...

Queensland's participation rate continued to decline in the month of September and is over one per cent lower than at this time last year ...

If the state's participation rate had held steady over the past year or those persons had not given up looking for work we would be looking at an unemployment rate well north of 7 per cent and not the 6 per cent as reported today.

We would be north of seven per cent except people are fleeing this state because of the policies of Labor. We see now an unemployment rate that is a result of Labor forcing people out of the state and a falling participation rate. We know that there is only one job Labor is focused on, only one job they are committed to keeping and that is the transport minister's job. Get rid of him and start making Queensland work again.

### Newman LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.48 pm): What a flat performance from the member for Indooroopilly, one of the members responsible for the highest level of unemployment in 11 years. That is the record of the member for Indooroopilly and that is the record of the member for Clayfield. They gave us the highest level of unemployment in 11 years and they have the temerity to come in here and lecture us about jobs. What an absolute joke!

They had three years and a record majority, so let's look at their appalling record and the record of the member for Clayfield. The cuts that came in Transport and Main Roads were draconian. We saw a cut to QTRIP of \$1.5 billion over the forwards. We saw a cut to Queensland roads of \$200 million every single year they were in power. There was \$600 million in cuts to roads and they lecture us about infrastructure. They sacked people left, right and centre. The member for Indooroopilly sacked 1,000 workers from Transport and Main Roads, 700 from RoadTek and—wait for it—1,400 workers from Queensland Rail, and they come in here and lecture us when that is their record.

They slashed 37 per cent from the TIDS budget, the fifty-fifty program with local councils for local roads right across the state. Last year in estimates the member for Indooroopilly was exposed for having a secret branch in TMR designed for contestability—Strong Choices—to privatise sections of this government. He was exposed for having a secret branch and spending \$31 million on it. At a time when they said they would not privatise government assets without a mandate, the member for Indooroopilly was doing exactly that. He also cut \$100 million from cycling and called it gold plating and, as we all know, his trophy photos with famous people destroyed his office wall. That cost \$1,400 to repair, and when I leave that office I will leave it in a pristine condition compared to the member for Indooroopilly.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the minister to continue, this gives me a chance to mention a couple of people's names. Member for Indooroopilly, you are warned under standing order 253A. Your interjections were repetitive and disorderly. Member for Whitsunday, you are also warned under 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

**Mr BAILEY:** The member for Indooroopilly also cancelled \$20 million in funding for noise barriers. I have received 16 representations for the restoration of noise barrier programs in Queensland, and do you know who eight of them were from? The member for Indooroopilly! The member for Indooroopilly has written to me eight times wanting me to restore something that he cut during the three years they were in government. Unbelievable! They are pretty quiet now. Of course we had Michael Caltabiano, who was last on their list of recommendations, and they appointed him. They cannot lecture about jobs for the boys—

*(Time expired)*

### Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.52 pm): What an extraordinary sight we saw in this place yesterday. We saw a bungling transport minister get up to deliver not one, not two, but three ministerial statements to justify this rail crisis of his own making. He came into this House in the morning full of

bravado. 'I am outraged,' he said. Like that was going to fix anything! Minister, outrage does not get commuters to work on time; outrage does not make up for the fact that you have been missing in action. 'I am outraged,' the minister said, 'but it is not my fault. I knew nothing.'

After the luncheon adjournment after the Melbourne Cup we then saw the minister slink back into the House a second time. I imagine that the minister, like many in this chamber, probably put a wager on the race, but I think the odds would have been far better had he bet on whether the trains would run on time that afternoon or not. He could have put a bet on Excess Knowledge, but after seeing his performance over the last week we know that would not be appropriate. A surer bet for the minister would have been Heartbreak City, because that is the collective feeling amongst commuters each time they sit on a platform waiting for a train to turn up that never, ever comes.

The minister came in to the House to say that he had been told there may be more disruptions to train services that afternoon as Queenslanders made their way home from work, but he could not say which services or how many. It is clear that the minister has not learned this lesson since the rail fail started. Third time lucky, the minister came into this place again just before pm peak hour to say that 20 services that afternoon would be disrupted because of 'unforeseen' driver shortages. I do not know where the minister has been for the last few days—in fact, the last few weeks—but it is pretty clear there are driver shortages in Queensland Rail. There are driver shortages in this state, and in fact it has been a long time coming. There is absolutely nothing 'unforeseen' about it at all. The minister then went on to say that it just occurred to him yesterday to ask for the reports and the advice that Queensland Rail had about this entire mess, and that is when he produced more evidence which pointed to the fact that there was no secret about the lack of drivers and no secret that this minister has had his head in the sand since day one. Commuters have had enough. It is time the Premier sacked this bungling transport minister and got the trains running on time.

### Newman LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.55 pm): Haven't we seen a collective display of amnesia from the LNP yesterday and today—well, those of us who could stay awake long enough to listen to the member for Indooroopilly and the member for Glass House. I do not know who put them on Mogadon, but you could hardly pay attention to them. Their full collective response was on display. The Leader of the Opposition had the pomposity dialled right up to 11 yesterday, lecturing to everyone about ministerial responsibility. What did he say? A minister is 'meant to ask the questions, to challenge the CEOs, to challenge his department'. How quickly they forget!

Where was his advice to his colleagues to be cautious when he was treasurer and he was sacking thousands of public servants and smashing jobs? Where was his advice to be cautious when he demanded \$100 million to \$120 million to be cut from the Health portfolio in three months? Where was his advice to challenge CEOs when officials put up the closure of the Barrett Centre? When he was treasurer where was his advice to ask the questions when the LNP was closing the Barrett Centre without a replacement? What we know is there was no briefing note held up by incompetent bureaucrats in a state authority. It was not held up in the department. There was a briefing note that went to the minister's office. It did not lie in the department: it went to the minister's office. It was written expert advice that was provided to the office of the member for Southern Downs. It is a briefing note that was exhibited at the commission of inquiry, and I table it.

*Tabled paper:* Briefing note, signed 31 July 2013, for noting to the then minister for health, Hon. Lawrence Springborg, regarding the Barrett Adolescent Strategy Meeting [1970].

It was a briefing note that went to his office on 17 July 2013. Even on his own evidence before the commission the member for Southern Downs did not bother to read it, so on 22 August what happened? The then Leader of the Opposition and now Premier came into the parliament and in this House tabled the same briefing note. What happened? The member for Southern Downs still refused to read it. He met patients from the centre; still he would not listen. There was no apology from the Leader of the Opposition for his reckless demand for savings, only pompous lectures about Westminster responsibility. There was no admission of failure from any member opposite. There was nothing from the member for Southern Downs and nothing from the Leader of the Opposition. There was no admission of failure over the ill-fated decision to close the Barrett Centre, only hypocritical calls from the LNP for others to resign. That is all they can do. What we got was a dismissive and disrespectful comment by the member for Surfers Paradise about the commission of inquiry. They called it. The only thing the LNP has said is that it was a political witch-hunt. What an insult to those Queenslanders who were hurt the most by their decision. That insult demonstrates their hypocrisy—

*(Time expired)*

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.58 pm): The bar's loss is certainly not this parliament's gain. If there was ever a demonstration of why the member for Woodridge cannot make a buck at the bar, it is because of that display and presenting as fact evidence no judge would ever accept.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, we will wait a moment. We will have some silence, please. I now call the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** That is why he hopped around. The voters of Greenslopes would not accept it as evidence, so as we all know he had to hop up to Woodridge to take a job. He may have even moved his chambers up there by now, but I am not sure because it has taken him a fair while. Then there were the affairs of the Minister for Energy and Ports, Minister Bailey, trying to distract evidence again and conveniently failing to remember the botched Solar Bonus Scheme that is costing Queenslanders \$3 billion but for which we have never heard an apology.

Worst of all, we are hearing from a transport minister who still refuses to take responsibility for his own failures. Both the transport minister and the Premier are in hiding from the media. For 48 hours they have done nothing—until 12.30 today. The only reason they had to do it today is that they sent out the acting CEO to take the flack for them and he dropped them straight in it.

This minister has spiralled from obfuscation and blame shifting to blatant falsehood, in a desperate bid to hang on to his job. Two days ago he protested that the reason for delay in the rollout of South-East Queensland's New Generation Rollingstock was so-called design issues. Lo and behold, his acting CEO told Steve Austin this morning on ABC Radio that he had sorted out the design issues last year. Steve Austin asked—

So you were aware?

The acting CEO responded—

Oh yeah, I fixed them. And the bottom line is that we were aware of all these issues on a cab mock-up. We got an independent ergonomist to have a look at the cab and they made five recommendations. Those recommendations have been implemented.

Steve Austin then asked about a cab related issue with driver sightlines. He asked whether it was a problem, as the transport minister had claimed. The acting CEO responded to Steve Austin—

Oh, I'm not going to go where the minister's gone ...

'I don't want to go there!' He continued—

... all I can say is that ... all the issues in the cabs have been ironed out.

This is an incompetent minister—a minister who cannot get the trains rolling on time. First we had trains without seats, then trains that could not go in tunnels. Now we have tunnels with no trains—

*(Time expired)*

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will finish at 4.01 pm.

#### New Generation Rollingstock

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (3.01 pm): My first question is to the Minister for Transport. Yesterday the Premier claimed there were 'hidden surprises' in the Next Generation Rollingstock project. The acting CEO of Queensland Rail, Mr Neil Scales, on radio this morning said—

The design problems aren't really problems. This is all normal process. In my previous life I used to be a manufacturer. This is a normal process.

Who is telling the truth: the Premier or the minister's acting CEO?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. It is nice of him to ask me one. The situation we have here, as is the case in any major project like this, is that there are and always will be issues in the delivery of the final product. That is the case. Since September, the first of the New Generation Rollingstock trains have commenced dynamic testing and have continued that process in and around Maryborough, on the test tracks. That is part of the process. It is absolutely fundamental that this sort of dynamic testing continues and that it operates with the processes that ensure that the teething issues I spoke about the other day and that the Premier referred to are addressed.

The acting CEO of Queensland Rail, who is intimately associated with this project, confirmed today on radio that there were issues that needed to be sorted out and have been sorted out in preparation for the changes that are required and being done on the rolling stock that has been delivered. The rolling stock that has been delivered has not addressed those issues. That is what is happening as part of the dynamic testing—as part of the ongoing process of ensuring we get this rolling stock ready and able to be applied to the delivery of services to Queensland commuters.

**Mr Seeney:** So the Premier was wrong?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** No.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, if you have a question you will be able to ask one during question time.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition has asked the question.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The statements are entirely consistent. As the acting CEO of Queensland Rail said this morning on Gold Coast radio—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, your behaviour is disorderly.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** He said in reference to my comments that the minister is right. What he was too kind to make reference to was the secret plan of those opposite to sack guards, to get guards off our rolling stock and to undersupply the people of Queensland and commuters with disabilities. That was their plan.

### **Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games**

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My second question is to the Premier. Given that the transport minister is still clearly not across the brief and has been caught out inventing problems for the Next Generation Rollingstock project as a distraction when no such problems exist, according to his own hand-picked acting CEO, why will the Premier not finally sack Australia's worst transport minister?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take the interjection of the Minister for Health. Asking the question was Queensland's worst treasurer. Those opposite have still learned absolutely nothing. They are still arrogant. They are still not listening and still not understanding basic—

**Mr Seeney:** Answer the question. Don't attack the questioner; answer the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You are still a bully.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, if you have an interjection you know the appropriate way to raise it.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let us go back in history. Under the former government, the now Leader of the Opposition and the member for Indooroopilly signed contracts—

**Mr Nicholls:** The trains ran on time.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** And you sacked 1,700 people out of Queensland Rail. You sacked 1,700 people—people who had families—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You do not want to hear the answer. Let us go through it. Your record is very clear.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, if you want to make a point of order you know the procedure. This is not an opportunity for you to ask a question and then continue trying to talk over the top of the person who is trying to answer your question, whether you like the answer or not.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It has been the usual practice in this House that when a member is attacked or named in the answer that member is allowed a certain latitude to respond to the direct attack.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. I have been more than reasonable.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Speaker, I only do it in those circumstances. It was in direct response to claims by the Premier, directly across the chamber.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. Resume your seat.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I believe I have been more than reasonable.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In response to an interjection from the Leader of the Opposition, I reaffirm to this House that 1,700 people—people who had families, who had mortgages or rent to pay, who had to feed their families—were sacked. Those opposite did not care about people. They did not care about what they did.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, one moment.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They cut 1,700 people from Queensland Rail—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I know that you might be—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—and now I move back to—

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, Premier, one moment. I would like to make a ruling. I know that you would like to talk about that, but I do not think it is answering the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is all right; I will get to that later.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Do you have anything you want to add?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, I do. I want to talk about the New Generation Rollingstock, because we know that under the former government there was a process put in place by the member for Clayfield and the member for Indooroopilly to sign off on a contract for new generation rolling stock and they affirmed to the people of Queensland that there would be no hidden surprises for taxpayers. We also know that they got the new trains for half price, and that should send alarm bells to the public—new trains for half price. They said—

A multi-billion dollar contract to deliver 75 new trains in South East Queensland will save taxpayers more than \$11 million per train.

As the transport minister has said very clearly, Queensland Rail is in the process of acquiring delivery of those trains and, yes, there have been some problems with those trains and it is fixing them. As was said very clearly today, Neil Scales said that the minister is right and we are fixing those problems.

### **Whitsunday, Community Cabinet**

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier please outline the outcomes of the Whitsunday community cabinet and visit to the Mackay region?

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Just one moment. That is not an invitation for open-slathe comments from the back corner. If I can identify the people, you will be named, and you may be named under standing order 252.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the member for Mackay very much for the question, because in fact the whole cabinet loved going to the Whitsundays for our community cabinet where we had over 100 deputations talking about a range of issues. I also want to place on record my very clear thanks to Mayor Andrew Willcox for welcoming us to the region. Unlike community cabinets in the past under the former LNP government, at the Whitsunday community cabinet the local member even turned up. Not only was the local member allowed to come in; he even conducted a press conference.

**Ms Trad:** He's like Kramer!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier, because everywhere I went as I was travelling around the Whitsundays there was the member for Whitsunday. He would pop up. He would just pop up.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Obviously he enjoys spending more time with me than he does with the—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SEENEY:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, you have quite rightly insisted that members in this House stop speaking when you rise to your feet. The Premier consistently disobeys that rule. She just did in a most blatant and obvious way. If the rest of the House is expected to comply with your very reasonable expectation, then the Premier must as well.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I note there was another person on the other side also speaking while I was on my feet. I try to be consistent and I would urge all members to speak through the chair so all members know when I am on my feet. Premier, do you have anything further to add?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, I do. As I was just saying, obviously the member for Whitsunday would prefer to spend more time with me than he would with the Leader of the Opposition, because it is very hard to find the Leader of the Opposition these days—very hard to find him at all. At the community cabinet we had the opportunity to meet with members of the chamber of commerce. The tourism minister and I also had the opportunity to inspect the new Heart hotel which is about to open. We know that in the Whitsundays, especially the Airlie Beach area, we are seeing significant increased numbers of tourists coming to that region.

The other issue that was raised at that community cabinet that I want to address is in relation to the Midge Point Progress Association. It was raising some very significant concerns about beach erosion and I thank the Minister for Environment very much for meeting with it and helping to resolve its issues. He sat down and met with it and resolved its issues.

My government will continue to have community cabinets across this state. We believe it is a very clear example of an opportunity for us to listen and to hear from members of the public. We enjoyed our visit. It was also very interesting to go to the seniors group with the Minister for Seniors. We were able to announce additional funding for the seniors helpline which will go a long way in addressing issues such as elder abuse. Seniors will be able to contact that helpline and get further information.

On behalf of my cabinet and my government, I want to thank the Whitsunday community for welcoming us with such warm hospitality. We look forward to going back to the Whitsundays many more times next year because we know that there is a significant opportunity there and we will continue to work very hard for the people of that region.

### **Queensland Rail, New Generation Rollingstock**

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. The acting CEO of Queensland Rail, Mr Neil Scales, on radio this morning made several comments in relation to the New Generation Rollingstock project. When asked, 'Were the right trains ordered?', Mr Scales said, 'Yes, we did.' When pushed on the matter, Mr Scales went on to say that he had no doubts about the purchase of the NGR stock. Does the minister agree with his acting CEO?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I want to thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for her question. I do want to acknowledge and congratulate the acting CEO of Queensland Rail on the work that he is doing—very strong work that he is doing to fix the mess. I have been working with him very closely today and indeed over the last couple of days to address these issues around the need for us to achieve a sustainable timetable to deliver the reliability and consistency that commuters expect, and rightly and justifiably should expect. That is why I have great confidence in him and the work that he is doing. I note that those opposite had great confidence in him in that they appointed him to very high and important positions in government. I do want to acknowledge his professional view that the New Generation Rollingstock was the right product for the right time. I disagree to this extent: I disagree because I know that Queenslanders will agree with me that we should have seen that project—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I know that Queenslanders will agree with me that we should have seen that project built in Queensland. Those opposite are the ones who signed the deal to see the 75 trains built overseas. They are the ones who let down workers in Maryborough and let down workers in Townsville. They are the ones who missed the opportunity to continue to see good development for Queensland. Most assuredly in the face of what we have to deliver in terms of good public service and in terms of good train services for the commuters of Queensland, they were the ones who were willing to sign up to the secret deal that meant getting rid of guards. They wanted driver-only trains to get rid of guards off our services in South-East Queensland. I am on the side of Queenslanders in going against that and seeing the changes we need to see made.

## Jobs

**Ms FARMER:** My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting jobs growth through Queensland start-ups?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Bulimba very much for that question. When we are talking about advancing Queensland and making sure that we have the right settings and diversifying our economy, we know how important it is to have start-ups happening in our state. That is why we have put out expressions all around the world to see how many people we can get investing in our state. If they come and set up in Queensland, fundamentally that means jobs for Queenslanders. Recently, I was very interested to read in the paper someone talking about jobs in Queensland. It was our old favourite, the former premier, Campbell Newman, who has come out of hiding.

**Ms Trad:** To give Tim a hand!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right, to always come out and help the opposition when it is needed most. I think we have seen more of Campbell Newman in the last couple of weeks in the media than we have of the Leader of the Opposition. If we go back to the 14,000 jobs cuts—and, of course, we know that there were a lot more than that; 14,000 was on the public record but the cuts to funded organisations flowed through and more people lost their jobs—what did the former premier have to say? He said public servants often thanked him for sacking them. I find this absolutely disgraceful. Today I would like to hear from the opposition, if they stand by the comments of their former leader, the former premier of this state, that the 14,000 people he sacked are now thanking them? I have not met one person in Queensland who was sacked by the former government who has said that they have thanked the former government for that.

Let me make it very clear: my government is focused on restoring front-line services throughout this state. That is why in Child Safety we are putting on additional child safety workers. That is why, after the gutting of Queensland Rail by the former government of train drivers, we are trying to get them back and give them employment. That is why in Health, when they got rid of over 4,500 health professionals, we are trying to get them back. More nurses, more doctors, more firefighters, more ambulance officers, more teachers, more teacher aides—that is the record that this government will stand on against those opposite. How dare they come in and lecture us. What we saw under their government and the person who is now the Leader of the Opposition were the most savage cuts to service delivery in this state.

## Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. I table the minister's diary for the month of September 2016 which shows regular meetings with TMR departmental staff and Queensland Rail staff. However, on 30 September, when the first round of 50 train services were cut, the minister's diary shows no such meeting. In fact, it shows no meetings at all and I ask: what exactly was the minister doing on this, the first day of the rail crisis?

*Tabled paper:* Extract from the ministerial diary of the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, 1 September 2016 to 30 September 2016 [[1971](#)].

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the minister I warn the member for Logan and the member for Gladstone for their cross-chamber chatter. You are on notice.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I want to acknowledge the question from the member for Glass House and thank him for the question. It allows me to clarify, firstly—just to make sure that members understand—that 30 September is when we saw that very large number of cuts to services that happened with no notice to me and to my office. I was, on that day, Friday, 30 September, in electorate appointments. I was in my electorate office meeting with members of my constituency. That is something that a lot of members do on a Friday.

What I need to make clear to those opposite, and I reiterate and I advised the House of this yesterday, is that on 30 September I experienced and learnt of and saw through the same social media notices that a lot of other people saw from TransLink—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Yes, I did, and that is part of the problem. That is what I focused on yesterday. As a consequence I sought a briefing about that and received the briefing on 1 October, the next day. I sought the briefing, I got the briefing and what did the briefing say? The briefing from Queensland Rail told me that these were issues that were a function of the back end of the SCAS, at the back end of the closure that was required for the integration of the Redcliffe peninsula line, that the first levels of testing

of the route and the training on the route, the piloting on the route, were being undertaken. That has meant that we had drivers and crews using that Redcliffe peninsula line route and the connection at Petrie. They were doing the first testing of that ahead of the opening of it the next week.

When I sought the briefing, the briefing advised around that and around shortages and highlighted that it was to do with the testing and the training. They claimed in their briefing to me that this would be over by the end of October. I sought further details about how they were dealing with this and working around this and at every one of those times, as I told the House yesterday, I was briefed by Queensland Rail that this was an issue that would be over by the end of October. I call upon those opposite to stop focusing on the politics of this occasion and start focusing on the needs of the commuters of South-East Queensland.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the next member, the member for Redlands and the member for Albert are both warned under standing order 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

### **South East Queensland Regional Plan**

**Ms PEASE:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier please update the House on how the South East Queensland Regional Plan is helping to protect Queensland rural areas and whether the Deputy Premier is aware of any alternative views?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the honourable member for the question. It is important that we absolutely protect our rural areas contained within the South East Queensland Regional Plan as productive areas. As trade minister I am acutely aware of the role that productive farming land plays in our local economy here in South-East Queensland. In fact, we have some 4,000 agricultural businesses within the South-East Queensland corner. When I was conducting the regional consultative committee with mayors, one of the things that the regional mayors did put quite clearly on the agenda is how we articulate and protect productive rural agricultural areas within the South East Queensland Regional Plan. We are a diverse region and all areas that are of primary production, great urban renewal opportunities and great ecological areas within South-East Queensland really do need to be articulated and protected, which is what has happened in the draft South East Queensland Regional Plan.

We know that Shaping SEQ has had great support from some members opposite, such as the member for Glass House who has lovingly embraced the South East Queensland Regional Plan, but still, I have to say, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and opposition planning spokesperson does not support the South East Queensland Regional Plan. In fact, she has posed the question: Why is it that more agricultural land has not been put up for development? Why is it that there are opportunities for agricultural areas within the South East Queensland Regional Plan that have not been handed over to developers for development? It is an interesting question considering that the member for Nanango has differing views depending on what is happening inside her electorate and what is happening outside her electorate. We know that when it comes to mining she does not like it inside her electorate but she loves it outside her electorate.

Similarly, when it comes to protecting agricultural land, she thinks that is okay inside Nanango, but outside Nanango is a different story. The member for Nanango wants more subdivisions on rural agricultural land in the South-East Queensland corner. On this side of the House, we understand it is important that we protect productive agricultural areas within the South-East Queensland corner, as well as provide opportunities to develop areas for our growing population in South-East Queensland. Those opposite have no idea.

### **Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games**

**Mr EMERSON:** My question is to the transport minister. I ask: was it Twitter or Facebook that advised the minister of the rail crisis?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Indooroopilly for his question. It gives me a chance to highlight and reiterate the issues of 30 September, when in the pm peak we saw a significant number of cancellations. It was through Twitter that, like so many commuters, I learnt of those cancellations. I went to the department, TransLink and Queensland Rail and asked why. Frankly, I was misled. The answers I was given by Queensland Rail proved to be wrong. What has happened? The CEO is gone and the chair is gone.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I call the minister, if you have anything further to add.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am absolutely concentrated on and 100 per cent committed to fixing this problem and making sure we deliver a reliable timetable for South-East Queensland commuters. Since the member for Indooroopilly—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, we are being disorderly. Members, the minister's answer is relevant to the question. You may not like it, but that is not an open invitation to be disorderly. Member for Callide and member for Mount Ommaney, you are both now warned under standing order 253A for your behaviour. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action. Minister, do you have anything further you wish to add?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Yes, Mr Speaker. To be clear, the tone of the question of the member for Indooroopilly shows an attempt to be flippant about an issue that is unquestionably serious. In relation to this matter, we have seen a gross level of mismanagement from Queensland Rail. The fact that they have failed to advise the shareholding ministers on the matter is a gross level of mismanagement.

However, since the member for Indooroopilly is so interested in these matters, I note the cuts that we saw under his administration. When he was the minister for transport, the member for Indooroopilly told people that Queensland Rail was going to employ more train crews. In a media release dated 15 April 2013, he said—

We will make the organisation more efficient so we can employ more train crew, deliver better timetables and add more trains to the network.

However, what was he doing at the same time? He was cutting 66 staff from the driver training unit. I am advised that, before the Deputy Premier and then minister for transport initiated recruitment, the last time there was recruitment for train drivers in Queensland was under the then minister and now premier, Premier Palaszczuk. They cut; we are delivering.

*(Time expired)*

### Queensland Economy

**Mr RUSSO:** My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise the House of the government's approach to implementing its economic plan and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the member for Sunnybank for his question. As the member for Sunnybank well knows, on this side of the House we are getting on with creating jobs as part of our economic plan. People would be very well aware that when the now Leader of the Opposition was treasurer, on a number of occasions he said that the government should be an enabler, not a doer. On this side of the House, we believe that the government should be both an enabler and a doer. We know he did not want to be a doer and he has been described as the laziest treasurer that the state has ever seen. That continues now, because still he has not come up with an economic plan. I take members back to when they were following the tired old LNP formula, which is to cut jobs, cut front-line services, sell assets and, of course, outsource anything that you can get your hands on. We know that he outsourced his first budget to Peter Costello, so he really did believe in that mantra.

On this side of the House, we encourage new industries while investing in our traditional strengths. Those traditional strengths are the resources sector, agriculture, tourism, health, education and manufacturing. Of course, we are also going into other areas. For example, the Premier is a very strong advocate for the film industry. We take seriously the things that we can do within that industry. We know that the Leader of the Opposition is a big film fan. In this House he has done a number of stunts that always revolve around movies.

I ask members to imagine for a moment that the Leader of the Opposition was involved in the film industry. Imagine if he were in charge of making a film. Can members imagine that? The film would never get made! Why do I say that? We can imagine him sitting on his deckchair, wearing a beret and holding a megaphone, all ready to go. However, he could never bring himself to call, 'Action!' He could only say, 'Cut!' All he wants to do is say, 'Cut!' No film would ever get rolled; it would just be cut. Let us go through this, as it is just like his first budget. In his first budget, we can talk about the 14,000 jobs: no, cut! Another one of their economic pillars was tourism: funding was cut! Agriculture: cut! TAFE teachers: cut! The list goes on. The Department of Transport and Main Roads staff: cut!

When he was treasurer, the only thing that the Leader of the Opposition knew was how to cut. That is why he would never be able to bring a film into production. That is why he would never make any money from it. That is why he still believes in government being an enabler and not a doer. He does not want to do anything. He was never brought to action himself, which is why he was ineffective as

the state's treasurer. On this side of the House, we are getting on with the job. By contrast, this side of the House has the budget in surplus, we have debt lower, we have unemployment lower and we have growth higher. We are powering up the Queensland economy, while he sits back there—

*(Time expired)*

### **Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games**

**Ms DAVIS:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. I refer to the minister's highly unusual three ministerial statements yesterday and I ask: can the minister guarantee commuters there will be no further cuts to services today?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Aspley for her question about cuts to services. It will give me a bit of latitude later. As I have mentioned already in the House this morning, we achieved a 97 per cent on-time running performance in the AM peak today. Again, I thank the drivers and guards and, indeed, all the Queensland Rail front-line staff for the work that they have done to help deliver those services. As I made clear yesterday at the end of my, I admit, extensive first ministerial statement, I will provide updates to the House. That is what I have done, just as I did yesterday. Let me be clear: I do not want this to roll on further. No-one does.

As the Premier and I both said yesterday, we have committed to making sure that we see a sustainable timetable delivered next week. It will be announced by the end of this week and available for commuters next week. That is the commitment I have from the acting CEO of Queensland Rail. We have heard the confidence the opposition members have expressed in the acting CEO of Queensland Rail today.

I can assure commuters that we will see a sustainable timetable put in place to replace the interim timetable, which has not been successful. It will replace the 4 October timetable that failed Queenslanders so dramatically. I absolutely make it clear to everyone that I am, as the Premier has tasked me to be, 100 per cent focused on ensuring that we see the delivery of reliable, sustainable and consistent services for the commuters of South-East Queensland.

### **Health Services**

**Mr KELLY:** My question is of the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister please advise the House of what steps the Palaszczuk government is taking to restore services in the health system?

**Mr DICK:** When we came to government the Palaszczuk Labor government had to go down the path of restoring those services in health care that were decimated as a result of the 4,400 staff who came out of Queensland Health, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. I am pleased to report to the House that we are well on the way to restoring those services. One cannot drop an anvil of austerity on the economy and one cannot put a wrecking ball through the public sector like the Newman-Nicholls LNP government did without serious consequences.

Let us have a look at some of the cuts that were presided over by the Leader of the Opposition when he was treasurer and the member for Southern Downs when he was health minister. They cut funding from Drug Arm which took away alcohol and drug prevention programs from the Sunshine Coast—of course, where the LNP has most of the members. They cut funding for the Red Cross which took away healthy eating programs in the central west. I hope the members from the central west of the state are listening.

They cut funding from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation of Queensland, which provided essentially prevention programs on the south side of Brisbane. They cut funding to the healthy tuckshop program. Schoolkids were not immune from LNP cuts. Of course, they stand condemned as the only government in Queensland history to cut funding to mental health. Not content with sacking nurses and midwives, not content with attacking doctors and forcing them onto contracts, they sacked thousands of public servants and attacked the smallest and most vulnerable groups.

Which groups did they announce they intended to cut funding to? The groups included the Advanced Breast Cancer Group, Alzheimer's Queensland, the Amputees and Families Support Group Queensland, Arthritis Queensland, the Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Support Group Queensland, the Asbestos Related Disease Support Society Queensland and the Gynaecological Cancer Society. No wonder the Leader of the Opposition is not listening. He does not want to hear about his legacy of cutting services and funding to women facing life-challenging cancer. That is his legacy.

I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk Labor government has restored funding to each and every one of those groups. Cutting services and funding is in the DNA of the LNP and it is in the DNA of the Leader of the Opposition and every one of those members looking down, looking at their computers, with their faces in their hands. They know that is his DNA. That is what he will do. He will not rule out Strong Choices. He will not rule out cuts. They all know about it. We have the blowhard from Southern Downs who cannot be quiet. They are onto him and they know.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Maroochydhore, the member for Southern Downs and the member for Beaudesert are both warned under standing 253A. Your interjections were repetitive, disorderly and not relevant. If you wanted to rise on an issue of relevance you had ample opportunity. If you proceed with your behaviour I will take the appropriate action.

### Queensland Rail

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Minister for Transport. The TransLink website states on the landing page that all services today are normal. After three links it shows the true number of services that have been cancelled or amended today being 44 different services. Will the minister commit to displaying on the landing page of the TransLink website a list of the specific services that have been cut in order to keep Queensland commuters fully informed?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Maroochydhore for her question. I would be very happy to talk through those issues with TransLink officials to determine the practicality of that sort of information being provided. The most important information that commuters are looking for is when a service is available to them. It is less interesting what service is not available to them.

As a commuter myself, I would prefer not to have confusing information but rather information that would help me achieve my journey. The TransLink website is not a place for politics. The TransLink website is a place for people to plan journeys. I will ask the question. I will clarify that and get back to the member.

This gives me an opportunity to address the issues in terms of the performance of the interim timetable. I was very disappointed about the unplanned cancellations yesterday afternoon. I communicated that very clearly to the acting CEO and the acting chair at our daily meeting yesterday afternoon. I understand that there were approximately 25 full and partial cancellations yesterday as a result of QR being short of four drivers and three guards.

I have made it clear that I expect that the new timetable that we are so focused on developing and delivering for South-East Queensland commuters needs to be stress tested so that it is able to be reliably and sustainably delivered. It needs to be stress tested. It needs to be tested. The appropriate thing to do in these circumstances is to make sure that we are continuing to make progress so that we deliver for Queenslanders. That is what I am focused on 100 per cent. I will continue to work with the acting CEO to make sure that we deliver on a timetable that delivers reliability to the commuters of Queensland for the remainder of this year.

### Tourism and Events Industry

**Mrs LAUGA:** My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events. Will the minister outline what impact the federal government's visa price hike for entertainers will have on the tourism and events industry in Queensland?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for her question and for her continued advocacy on behalf of the tourism industry in Queensland. She is consistently lobbying to support the best possible conditions we can deliver to bolster tourism jobs. We have an LNP federally that is determined at every turn to put in place measures that turn tourists away from Queensland.

First of all we had the backpacker tax. There was deafening silence from those opposite when we stood up and said that a backpacker tax would cost Queenslanders jobs. What did they do? Nothing. Then we hear in the corridors that the Leader of the Opposition wants to bring a bed tax into Queensland. Nowhere in Australia other than Queensland would there be that tax. 'Let us bring in a tax just here.' That is another crazy idea that will ruin tourism and tourism jobs.

Now the LNP federally wants to get rid of the cap that is now in place for major entertainers coming to Queensland. Currently there is a cap to ensure that we get the big acts coming to Queensland. That delivers jobs and revenue to this state. What are we hearing from those opposite? There is deafening silence. The member for Capalaba has spoken to me about this, as has the member for Keppel. They know that we will not get the big acts. I am sure the member for Callide would be

guttled if Barry Gibb did not come to Queensland. I am sure the member for Hinchinbrook would be devastated if Green Day did not come here. I am sure there are many who would love to see Amy Schumer when she comes here as well.

This is a very serious issue because we know that these major events are major drawcards and fill Suncorp Stadium and other venues here in Brisbane. This is critical for jobs, for example, in the Caxton Street precinct and other areas. In fact, Live Performance Australia has described the LNP changes, saying—

It will hit the financial viability of international tours, leading to fewer tours, reduced job opportunities for Australian performers and workers in the live performance industry, and higher ticket prices.

We know that one of the big acts that is coming in March next year is Justin Bieber. In his words, I want to say to Minister Dutton, 'What do you mean? When you nod your head yes but you wanna say no, what do you mean?' We want more jobs. That is what we have fought for. That is the stark contrast between this government and those who sit opposite.

They can sit there and criticise us all they want, but the people of Queensland know that there is only one side of politics that will stand up for their jobs and their livelihoods, and that is the Labor Party. That is what we got elected to do and that is exactly what we are doing. When you see the crocodile tears and the pomposity of the Leader of the Opposition when he comes in here—

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** He is very pompous—I take the interjection—unlike us in the leafy suburbs of the Ashgrove electorate. I say to those opposite that Queenslanders see through him. They see through his crocodile tears. They know that we will fight for their jobs and front-line services every day of the week.

*(Time expired)*

### Old Mapoon

**Mr GORDON:** My question is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and the Minister for Corrective Services. Minister, on your recent visit to the Cape York community of Old Mapoon recently and in your capacity as that community's ministerial champion, can you outline for the benefit of the House what priorities, concerns and issues were raised with you by Mayor Aileen Addo and her council and what progress have you made in relation to those issues and concerns?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. I have to say that it is a great privilege to be the ministerial champion for Old Mapoon. My recent visit was my second visit to Old Mapoon. I was very welcome, and I sat down and had some very lengthy and fruitful discussions with the people there about the challenges that they confront. I have visited a number of remote communities in the cape in the last 12 months or so, and I have to say that Old Mapoon stands in some ways as a glowing example of how communities can operate and how communities can succeed and move forward. While, like any community, they face challenges, many of which were represented to me, they are perhaps not on the same scale. The levels of employment in Mapoon, for example, are much higher than in some other parts of the cape. As well, the motivation for being there is quite clear and quite obvious to anyone who visits. They are a very proud community, one would say.

The issues that were raised with me particularly by the council and by other members of the community who I met with there related to the police presence. First and foremost, there is no police presence. For those members in the House who are not aware, Mapoon is about an hour's drive north of Weipa. It is a relatively small community and it is policed from Weipa itself. Strange as it may seem, there is one road, so when police decide to visit it does not take long for everybody to know that the police are on their way to the community. People tend to behave a little better when they know the police are in town. There was a request for a more sustained police presence.

On our way out we made representations to the district to see if we could get police officers there for a longer duration stay. That does not necessarily translate to a permanent positioning of an officer there, although that is a possibility in the future. At this moment we are trying to get three- or four-day stays at appropriate periods to give an extended presence.

The sorts of problems that were represented to me that reflect the need for policing are, at the low end, disturbances around parties and noise. Some of that has to do with previous housing policies where houses were located too close together. I have already spoken—and I know the housing minister is very aware of this issue in remote communities—about building houses too close and therefore the neighbourhood is just a bit too tight. We are certainly working on that for the future.

On the downside, while there are alcohol carriage limits et cetera at Mapoon, there is still a small element of sly grogging that influences community behaviour. More disturbingly, I heard from the health officials up there that there is the presence of methamphetamine in Mapoon. That was probably the most disturbing concern that I took away. I did not get it from the mayor but I got it from health workers. That concerns me greatly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** For the benefit of the member for Cook, I realise you do not have the resources of the government or the opposition, but the practice is that in asking a question you do not use the word 'you' to a minister. Please keep that in mind for the future.

### National Parks, Rangers

**Mr WILLIAMS:** My question is to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef. Will the minister outline what the Palaszczuk government is doing to rebuild front-line ranger services across the state?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Pumicestone for his question. It is an excellent question. I know that the member for Pumicestone gets to represent some of my favourite national parks there on Bribie Island—a beautiful spot. I know that the member for Pumicestone is very committed to ensuring that the national parks he represents, as well as our national parks right across the state, are properly resourced and properly managed as, of course, all of the MPs on our side of the House do.

We are not alone. There are even a few on the other side of the House who think that our parks should be even better resourced. The member for Burnett has said in this House that we do not have enough park rangers. Even the member for Hinchinbrook, not known for his passionate commitment to conservation, has said in relation to the important roles our rangers do that we needed to do more to manage Queensland's protected area estate, especially in relation to pests, weeds and feral animals. Even the member for Whitsunday, who I was worried had a bit of a crush on our Premier for a few days there and then I thought maybe he was joining our caucus—in the end I think he is just a stalker—said that looking for a ranger in his electorate was like looking for Yogi Bear.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The comments that are being made by the minister relate to what I said when the red army was in government before the current red army.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday, it is not an opportunity for debate. Do you find the comments personally offensive and ask that they be withdrawn?

**Mr COSTIGAN:** I find them offensive and also comical.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member has not asked that they be withdrawn. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

**Dr MILES:** Mr Speaker, I withdraw those that were offensive and stand by those that were comical.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I did not concentrate and hear all of the comments you made. I am informed that some comments you made were unparliamentary and offensive. Although the member has not taken issue with them, I do. Will you withdraw unequivocally the comments that were offensive and against the standing orders of our parliament?

**Dr MILES:** Of course I do, Mr Speaker. I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Do you have anything further to add?

**Dr MILES:** I do. They never said any of those things while the member for Clayfield was slashing the number of rangers. They have only said those things since. I can only assume that they will be very excited with our announcement today that we are bringing back 31 of those rangers, that we are rebuilding the ranger numbers cut by the member for Clayfield.

We saw last night the disdain they have for conservation programs and environmental protections, but we did not need to wait until last night. We had three years to see the member for Clayfield slashing our environmental protection programs, slashing the number of rangers. He took \$10 million out of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service salaries budget, leaving us with 60 fewer rangers, and he cut the number of nonrangers by 24 per cent, forcing our rangers to spend more time in the office and less time out there in our national parks. Of course, we know that the environment department fared far worse. The member for Clayfield slashed 20 per cent from the environment department's budget. The ramifications were huge, but this side is rebuilding our environmental programs because we care about our national parks and our state.

*(Time expired)*

### Maritime Safety Queensland, Abandoned Vessels

**Mr ELMES:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Main Roads and Ports. I table a series of media reports regarding the planned clean-up of abandoned vessels on the Gold Coast and in Cairns and a photo showing that the same issue exists in the Noosa River, and I ask: will the minister undertake to establish a similar plan to aid locals to rid our river of those unsightly and unsafe vessels?

*Tabled paper:* Media release, undated, from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'Moondarewa Spit opens' [1972].

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of media articles, various dates, regarding Trinity Inlet [1973].

*Tabled paper:* Photograph, dated October 2016, of a houseboat in the Noosa River [1974].

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the minister for one minute.

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for Noosa for his question. This is an area in which we saw absolute inaction from the previous government for over three years, so I understand that he has concerns in this regard. There was certainly no progress under the Nicholls-Newman government.

This is an area in terms of our waterways. Maritime Safety Queensland constantly patrols our waterways to make sure that navigation is ensured and safety is there for vessel owners and operators. There is an issue in various places on the Queensland coast where some people may have left their vessels in places instead of disposing of them. Sometimes those vessels are in fact still owned but may not look too good. We have removed a number of vessels in North Queensland. We are happy to look at it on a case-by-case basis, but we also do not want to give any incentives to vessel owners that their responsibilities for disposal are in any way abrogated. They have a responsibility to dispose of boats when their use-by date has been reached. If the member for Noosa has some specific information, I am happy to have a look at it and have Maritime Safety have a look at it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That is the end of question time. I remind honourable members that quite a few of you have received official warnings today. Those warnings will remain current, as is the normal practice, until the dinner break.

## MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 1 November (see p. 3998), on motion of Mr Pitt—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (4.02 pm), continuing: I am pleased to have the opportunity to continue on from yesterday in speaking about my support for the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Yesterday it was my privilege to talk about some of my personal experiences as a director of a community club, the Runaway Bay Junior Leagues Club. I also made some references to my time as one of the founding directors of the Gold Coast Titans and some of the challenges around sponsorship, and I would like to continue in that vein.

I want to again stress how important it is that we have provisions in the legislation to ensure that major events and sports events will not suffer at the hands of scrupulous organisations that would seek to undertake ambush marketing at these events. It is particularly important given that many of the major venues across the state are state government owned venues. If we look at some of the major facilities, particularly in my patch on the Gold Coast, we have the Cbus Super Stadium, which was a purpose-built facility to support the NRL bid a number of years ago. It was one of the conditions of the Gold Coast receiving its licence. Those venues cost a lot of money to operate, so protecting the sponsorship rights and the income of not only the venue operator but also the teams that will play there is so important.

If we look at the other venue on the Gold Coast, Metricon Stadium, it is a multimillion dollar facility developed by the state government in partnership with the local council. Again, it is so important to protect the sponsorship rights and the revenues attached to that venue. There is some history here that I would like to raise in respect of the venues, and some of it includes the member for Mermaid, Ray Stevens. He may remember that back in, I think, 1999 a number of us met with Terry Jackman and Paul Wyatt, who was then the CEO of the Southport Sharks AFL club. I think Geoff Smith and Roy Miller may have been there in those early days. At the time we had come off the back of a fairly miserable defeat in trying to save the Gold Coast Chargers, but we regrouped and we started working with the council on a feasibility plan to look at the possibility of securing funding for a multipurpose venue.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid. Ray and I were both very keen to be on the board of the NRL Chargers. We were co-opted in at one point as temporary directors only to be unceremoniously dumped by that evil Tom Bellew from the New South Wales Rugby League in a last-minute ditch to try to wind up what was one of the better teams to perform through the Super League war.

What came out of that was that Ray, I and others were able to secure the support of Gary Baidon and the council of the day to put up some funds for a feasibility study. The legacy of that today is that we now have some of the best stadiums in the country. We have a purpose-built Rugby League stadium at Robina. We have a revamped Metricon Stadium at Carrara. I do not believe that we would have even been a look-in for the Commonwealth Games had we not seen that investment and that work by our council at the time and subsequently with the support of the state government and then the local business community. Protecting these sponsorship rights is so important. If we look forward, in only 18 months time we will host one of the biggest sporting events in the Southern Hemisphere this decade. I am sure that Goldoc will appreciate this provision, because the last thing we need to see during the Commonwealth Games is some form of ambush marketing around the venues and events that will occur as a result of that major event on the Gold Coast.

I want to turn briefly back to the discussion around some of the licensed clubs. This is an important issue in my patch. I have quite a significant number of licensed clubs in Southport. There is the Southport RSL club, which is a significant club within the heart of my electorate. It is well run by Paul Burton, who also heads up the licensed venues alliance within Southport. There is the Tigers Rugby League club at Owen Park. It is a small club; it struggles, but what a great legacy and contribution it makes to the community. Then there is the powerhouse club of Southport Sharks, which is right in the centre of my electorate, with some 50,000 or 60,000 members. That club has gone from strength to strength thanks to the legacy of Wally Fankhauser back in the eighties and nineties. He has been a mad Aussie Rules fanatic over the years. It is a great legacy and a great community club that contributes so much not only to Southport but also to the Gold Coast community.

Even though it is just on the fringes, the Labrador Tigers AFL club is a club that the member for Broadwater and I share an interest in. In fact, I had the privilege of being their club patron for a number of years during my time in the Gold Coast City Council. I worked very closely with their board of directors as they struggled through some really challenging times around maintaining the financial stability of the club. I am pleased to report that that club has continued to thrive. It is growing and that is a great thing for the community and it is great for all the juniors who are involved there. The club also takes a very active role in supporting a cricket field with irrigation, and in the off-season it serves as a great venue for the local cricketers.

The Musgrave Hill Bowls Club is just up the hill from my office. They serve some of the best roasts of the day and all-you-can-eat buffets on the weekend. They also host a large number of charity events, with barefoot bowls on the weekend. I am very grateful for the opportunity to have been involved there.

I also mention the old Southport Workers club, and I am sure colleagues on the other side of the House would have an appreciation for the role of that club. They have been through some challenging times, but under new management and a new name—the CSi Club Southport—they have certainly gone on to thrive. I have to relay a very funny story. A new general manager was appointed at the Southport Workers club about three years ago when I was in my first term of parliament. They duly invited me down to the club for a board meeting and they wanted me to meet the new board and the new CEO. About two or three days later, I got a phone call saying, 'We would really love you to be our club patron.' I subsequently got a phone call about two days later saying, 'We didn't realise you were with the Liberal National Party. It's probably not appropriate to have you as a patron of the club so we're withdrawing our invitation.' That was a funny little incident that occurred.

The member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek, and I also share an interest in the Southport Surf Life Saving Club. We have both been members there and have both enjoyed the magnificent view they offer. It is tremendous to see the money that is poured into surf lifesaving at Main Beach and into the nippers programs to the many hundreds of young people who participate there.

These changes are important. It is only a fairly minor amendment, but I think the provision for bigger clubs to be able to take on a caretaker role or even some sort of management role without penalty, where there is the need for a larger club to get in and support a smaller club, is a significant amendment. I am pleased to be able to stand and support this particular proposal as outlined in the bill.

As I said earlier, I am particularly pleased that we are introducing provisions to ensure that there will not be ambush marketing of major events and major sporting events, and for that matter ambush marketing that would take away the value of sponsorship with some of our major facilities that the state government owns and controls across the state.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (4.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I wish to specifically speak in my role as minister for natural resources on the amendments to the Land Act 1994 and part 4 of the bill, which will facilitate the leasing of land within a functioning non-tidal watercourse or lake. The provisions apply to circumstances where it is necessary for a proponent to hold tenure over part of a boundary watercourse or lake. In many circumstances, such tenure would apply to the airspace above, or at a depth below, the actual bed and banks of a watercourse or lake.

To be clear, there are already mechanisms in existing legislation that give right of access over functioning non-boundary watercourses and lakes for various forms of public infrastructure. These arrangements already enable road and rail bridges, pipelines and other utilities to traverse any watercourse. These amendments will not apply where there are existing access rights. They will only apply when tenure over the land is required. Under the existing Land Act provisions, there is no ability for the state to allocate tenure over, and enable tenure related dealings in, a functioning non-tidal watercourse or lake.

As infrastructure developments become more sophisticated, particularly where land availability is constrained, we need to have that ability to allocate tenure in particular circumstances. We currently have a situation whereby a third party may be granted a lease by the state over a project site but not the part of the site that is within a functioning non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake. This situation lends itself to inconsistent lease management arrangements for the state across an entire site. This increases the legal and financial risk associated with the project for the state and for the proponent.

For example, the Land Act prevents the state from entering into a sublease with the Brisbane Broncos for the section of the training field that will project above the boundary of Ithaca Creek. This is a project that has a significant package of community benefits and is supported by the Brisbane City Council and the Queensland and Commonwealth governments. The project provides for the public to access the training field when it is not in use by the Broncos. The development will also facilitate the running of community programs such as the Beyond the Broncos program, which supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior high school students while they complete their secondary school studies.

What these amendments are proposing to do is not a new concept. There are already legislative mechanisms in place for infrastructure to be built in the airspace over roads and railway lines, as well as for infrastructure extending over or under tidal waterways. These amendments will provide the necessary legislative ability for a lease to be granted to the state where it may be appropriate to build certain compatible infrastructure of community benefit over or below a functioning non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake. However, importantly, a lease will only be granted if the intended use of the site is compatible with the ongoing functioning of the watercourse under the Water Act 2000. This will ensure that benefits from projects like the Brisbane Broncos and other community benefits from future projects can be realised without impacting on the flow and the natural values of the watercourse or lake.

Under the provisions in the bill, before watercourse or lake land may be leased, the chief executive responsible for the Water Act must consent to the lease taking into consideration the downstream implications for water rights and uses, and watercourse integrity such as the stability of the bed and banks of the watercourse. This consent to a lease is separate to any other Water Act approvals that could be required for the construction of infrastructure over a non-tidal watercourse or lake.

The amendments also take into account the riparian rights held by an adjoining landowner under the Land Act and the rights of the state to control or use any part of the non-tidal watercourse or lake land for a purpose under the Water Act. These riparian rights include the right of access for the owner of adjacent land over, or their right to graze their stock on, the bed and banks of the watercourse or lake.

I note the member for Hinchinbrook's query about leases in non-tidal watercourses being affected by the ambulatory nature of some of the watercourses. I believe the member is asking as to whether or not a lease in a non-tidal watercourse may imperceptibly over time become the property of the adjoining owner. It is for this very reason that the amendment has been drafted as a lease to the state, and it is intended that the number of leases issued will be limited, requiring careful consideration of the chief

executive of the Water Act. In reality, a lease under this provision cannot override the title of adjoining landholders. In fact, it can only be granted with their consent. The reality is from time to time watercourses can be affected by natural processes of erosion and accretion, but the legislation through the Water Act also provides means for adjoining landowners to undertake works to stabilise and maintain the alignment of the watercourse. I would certainly expect that to occur where these processes were threatening significant infrastructure which is facilitated under this provision.

The amendments in the bill also require the consent of the immediately adjacent landholder before the lease may be granted. The state will remain holder of the title for the land. Where the state enters into a sublease, it will be able to exercise both its statutory and lessee rights and privileges against any tenant of the state under the lease. What these amendments will do is address an anomaly in the existing legislation where tenure is not able to be given over land within the boundary of a functioning watercourse or lake. The amendments will deliver important benefits for Queensland communities by facilitating these important developments, such as the Broncos training field. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (4.19 pm): I was compelled to join this debate on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill after listening to the minister read a briefing note that obviously his department had written. I was convinced that he did not understand a word of what he read. The whole issue that the minister spoke about is but a small part of this bill. However, it is one that has been part of a debate that has been held in the field of public administration for a long time.

It goes to the definition of a watercourse and where that watercourse is a boundary of a person's property. The minister read a whole lot of material from the department, which is obviously all right—there is nothing wrong with it—but it does not address the critical question. The critical question has always been the definition of a boundary where that boundary is a watercourse, where a property abuts a watercourse and the ownership of the land changes at some point between the person who owns the riparian land and the watercourse which is not part of that riparian land holding. Where that point is, how it is determined and how it shifts over time has been a very complex issue.

When I saw this piece of legislation and that it gives the state the right to grant another tenure, if you like, over that area that is always in contention—that grey area that has caused particular problems for a number of people in a number of instances that I am aware of—I am afraid all my natural suspicions about a Labor government were enlivened. We have to ask ourselves why this particular provision has been included in this piece of legislation. What is the reason? I have difficulty accepting it is as innocent as the minister would like us to believe when he reads out the briefing note. If it were, and if it is, then I would have no problem with it. However, until—

**Mr Pitt:** What's the theory?

**Mr SEENEY:** The problem is that it does not address the fundamental issue of defining where the boundary is between the tenure that the state has already granted to a riparian land holder and the tenure that the state intends to grant under this piece of legislation over the watercourse. The whole process of defining where that watercourse boundary is has never been properly rectified. Indeed, it has been the issue of a great deal of contention, which I am sure the member for Mulgrave would remember, in particular instances and it always will be because those boundaries are naturally fluid; they are ambulatory, which is the term that is used, because they move with the forces of nature. Yet this piece of legislation is proposing that a particular tenure is created that will abut another piece of tenure on that ambulatory line.

Because of the particular stance that Labor governments have taken on this issue over time and some of the philosophies I have heard expressed in this place, I am fearful for the property rights of the riparian land holders that the right that they hold in their property is going to be eroded by a tenure that is granted under these provisions. If honourable members want to translate that into practical terms, it is where an ambulatory boundary moves inwards or takes away some of the existing riparian property. The tenure that the minister is creating will shift with that boundary. The tenure that this legislation is creating—the leasehold tenure over the watercourse—will shift with that boundary. A landholder who is a riparian land holder will see the area of land that they hold reduced as the area that is the subject of the lease that is created by this legislation is increased. As that area is increased, the landholder's land naturally has to decrease.

I have to today express my concern. I am unsure what the motivation of this government is. However, I would like some reassurances from the minister that these issues have at least been thought about by him and his colleagues and his senior departmental people in the inclusion of this particular provision in this legislation. Why on earth was it included in a piece of legislation called the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill? There are plenty of opportunities. Is there an urgency?

Why is it here in this particular bill? This contentious issue is very complicated for those of us who understand it, who have worked with it for many years. No doubt there are members on that side of the House who have never come across this particular issue and are never likely to. However, it has been an issue which has been perplexing for legislators and public administrators for a long time, so it needs to be addressed in that particular instance. Why it has been included in this particular bill would be interesting. It is a bill about major sports facilities. Obviously in my electorate the term 'major sports facilities' has a very different meaning—

**Mr Pitt:** Mine too.

**Mr SEENEY:** Yours too—from the electorate of the minister who spoke immediately before me. The part of this bill that deals with land boundaries certainly has a bigger impact in my electorate than it does in the electorate of the member for Stafford.

In that regard, can I just say that the provisions in this bill that deal with gaming machines and clubs and things such as that are particularly important. Even though they do not affect directly my electorate, they are particularly important in delivering the Gambling Community Benefit Fund grants that are so very important to the small sporting clubs right across regional Queensland. Those major sports facilities that are in country towns that country people enjoy have been enhanced in a very real way by those community benefit fund grants over a long period. It has been one of the more successful programs that governments have introduced and maintained.

The other successful program that the member for Kawana talked about in relation to local sporting clubs was the work that we did in freeing them up from the red tape of liquor licensing. That is a great example of how governments can help communities, how governments can make a big difference by applying some common sense, by some adjustment to the one-size-fits-all approach to regulation. I know when we proposed that, there was particular resistance from the department and from a range of entities, if you like, within government. However, it has made a tremendous difference to small organisations. There is still a problem with holding campdrafts, but they can hold shows and small local sporting organisations can hold their sports days and not be hamstrung by the need to get a liquor licence.

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the member for Beaudesert for reminding me that the current Labor government rejected the move to extend that to local campdrafts even though they are of the same ilk and the functions they have are of the same size and the benefit to them would be just the same as the great benefit that a whole range of other community organisations, sporting organisations and shows and race days have been able to enjoy. Our government was able to demonstrate a bit of common sense over an issue that was the result of a one-size-fits-all approach from governments that had been in place for a long time.

I would like to hear from the minister some explanation for why these particular provisions relating to the watercourse property boundaries are in this bill, why they are considered urgent enough to be here and whether the issues that have perplexed all of us for a long time about ambulatory boundaries have been considered.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.28 pm): I rise to add a brief contribution to the debate on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I might just agree with the member for Callide for a moment. I am confused why a provision to change the name of Suncorp Stadium to Brisbane Stadium should be in the same bill as other provisions relating to a transport act and riparian land and watercourses. I would like to hear and understand why these provisions are in the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I think that, when we bring legislation into this place which is important legislation and critical legislation that will directly affect people's property rights and people's ownership rights, then it deserves to have its own bill title. It deserves to be clearly heard and understood and not tucked in the back of an omnibus bill. I know that omnibus bills are part of the process that we need to go through from time to time, but I am concerned that this has been tucked in here.

Let me come to the parts of the bill that I am most focused on, and in my case the first one relates to clubs that are operating in Toowoomba. We have many local clubs operating in Toowoomba. Some are big and some are small. One very big club in my patch is the Toowoomba Sports Club. It is having challenges at the moment and it has had challenges in its history, but its challenge at the moment is finding itself in a safe night precinct. This has the potential to be a bizarre situation because at one o'clock in the morning everybody is locked out, but at three o'clock in the morning they can be welcomed back in again. I think the Cowboys and the Toowoomba Sports Club are the only two clubs

in Queensland which find themselves in safe night precincts. I am not sure why on earth the government has a policy to close the safe night precincts earlier than the suburban clubs. Obviously safe night precincts, as the term indicates, should be places that stay open the latest as opposed to suburban areas. The Toowoomba Sports Club is a great club: it helps fund six clubs in Toowoomba. It was formed many years ago and it has experienced its own difficulties. It is a really good example of why parts of this legislation are important, because it is operated under management by the Canberra Raiders. When it went into receivership they came in and managed it and brought it out of receivership, and they now have it to the point where it is contributing greatly to six of the sporting clubs and many other clubs in Toowoomba.

The legislation that we are looking at here, where the Toowoomba Sports Club and maybe the City Golf Club—two of our bigger clubs—may be able to help smaller clubs manage their licences in such a way that they can still contribute to the purpose of that club, I think is very important. One of the clubs that the Toowoomba Sports Club supports is the Toowoomba Basketball Association—an organisation with which I have a strong affiliation, having played for and represented it—so I am pleased that young children and kids in Toowoomba who want to go to state championships receive money from the Toowoomba Sports Club to enable them to do that. The City Golf Club in Toowoomba South, David Janetzki's area, is also a great club that does much good in my region and supports all manner of causes, including all of the outlying smaller golf clubs. This legislation will help them ensure that smaller golf clubs and other community associations and sporting associations in Toowoomba remain viable.

There is one part of this bill that, particularly for someone like me, is really important. The first time I came to Queensland, one of the iconic things that I did was go to the Brekky Creek and have a steak. I went over to Expo and I was driven out to Springsure—Rolleston, actually—so they could show me what—

**Mr Janetzki:** Good country!

**Mr WATTS:** Absolutely good country! I was very happy to go there although, coming from Hong Kong, like a young child in the back seat of a car I did ask, 'Are we there yet?' a couple of times. One of the other iconic things that we did was my friends took me to what they referred to as 'The Cauldron'. We went and sat on the hill and partook in a few beverages whilst watching the Broncos play. There was a ratty old tin shed on the side and they told me very affectionately and very passionately, 'This is Lang Park. This is the home of Rugby League in Queensland.' What was interesting for me is that I had been to Wembley Stadium and Yankee Stadium. I had been to all these big stadiums, but what impressed me was that this was a fairly insignificant stadium to look at—

**Mr Cripps:** Hey!

**Mr WATTS:** Hang on—but it carried such a great atmosphere. It is such a fierce place for an opposition to come. I think the name Lang Park should be respected, and there is good precedent for that. Not only does it carry the history of Rugby League here in Queensland but if we go to London we do not go to the London Stadium: we go to Wembley or Twickenham, both feared places for their respective sports. If we go to Madrid we are not going to the Madrid Stadium: we are going to the Bernabéu to play against Real Madrid. If we go to Manchester to play nobody is going to Manchester Stadium: they are going to Old Trafford. The New York Yankees do not play in New York Stadium: they play in Yankee Stadium. Cardiff play Rugby in the Millennium Stadium. There is absolutely no reason at all that 'Brisbane' should be the name of this stadium. This stadium is for the whole state of Queensland. When Queensland play and the maroon shirt is pulled on they go and play at Lang Park; they do not play in Brisbane Stadium. For sponsorship dollars it may have been called Suncorp Stadium, but that is no reason at all to change it to Brisbane Stadium. I passionately believe that the history of Queensland Rugby League must be respected and this must be called Lang Park. I have a real problem with it being called Brisbane Stadium.

By a little quirk of history one of the most successful coaches—mainly because it was only one game, but I will not mention that out loud, John—John McDonald was the first State of Origin coach and he is a great Toowoomba citizen. He coached the Maroons who fought against the Blues at Lang Park. He did not have that history at Brisbane Stadium, Suncorp Stadium or anywhere else: it was Lang Park. I absolutely think that, as the young TRL boys up in Toowoomba are practising and honing their skills to see if they can get a Broncos jersey and one day a Queensland jersey, they do not want to go and play at Brisbane Stadium. For sure they do not want to go and play in Sydney either: they want to play at Lang Park. I find it particularly strange that a government would come into this place and suggest this with no real precedent from around the world that I can find. Yes, there are a few stadiums that are named after the cities they are in, but there are a lot of stadiums that are not named after the cities they

are in which have a wonderful history. Will we change the name of The Gabba to Brisbane Stadium II? Will we change the name of any other stadium to represent its city? The fact of the matter is that if you are a cricketer you want to play at The Gabba; if you are a Rugby League player you want to play at Lang Park.

It seems a nonsense to me to trample over the top of Rugby League's history here in Queensland and define it as just belonging to one city. It does not belong to one city: the history of Rugby League in Queensland is a very strong and proud history. It comes from the regions, and Toowoomba is a very proud Rugby League region that has had many players represent it. When they represent Queensland and they come down to the big smoke to play that game, they do not play in Brisbane Stadium: they play in Suncorp Stadium or, as we all call it, Lang Park. That is where they play, and I think to call it Suncorp is a sponsorship deal. Its name is Lang Park. It should always be Lang Park, and I absolutely support the amendment to keep it as Lang Park.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (4.38 pm): I was not going to speak to this bill but I need to touch on a couple of things relating to the amendments to the Gaming Machine Act. I am personally opposed to gambling, but I recognise the benefits that come from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. I know about the flow-on effects and the many opportunities for small clubs and other organisations right throughout Queensland. I like seeing those clubs getting the benefits from that fund. I have seen the benefits in my electorate, as I am sure other members have seen the benefits in their electorates. I think we need to look beyond gambling and look at the benefits the fund brings to our local communities, local organisations and local clubs.

Board members of Stadiums Queensland should meet appropriate criteria. Over time we have had some unusual people on those boards. It is good that we will get the right sorts of people on those boards. I hope that the board appointments are not politically motivated but that the appointees have a very good understanding of what sport is about in Queensland in order to deliver the best possible benefits right throughout this state. It should always be bipartisan. It is not about getting mates tickets to go to the stadium to watch the Rugby League or another sport. The bill indicates that appointees will be well and truly scrutinised. That is another good outcome.

I refer to Queensland's sporting facilities. Chandler is a wonderful sporting facility, but we need to understand its background. The Brisbane City Council gave that facility back to the Queensland government because it was very expensive to run, and that was of great concern. It does cost the people of Queensland a lot of money to run facilities.

I touch on the new facility to be built in Townsville. I intend to put a question on notice relating to who will pay the ongoing maintenance costs of that facility. I know that everyone wants that facility to be built. If you looked solely at the financial viability of the proposal you would not build it—it will cost roughly \$300 million—but I understand why the people of North Queensland want the stadium to be built. It is a stimulus. It entices people to go to these facilities. If the minister answers my question now I will not have to ask it on notice and I will be able to ask something else. Who will pay the ongoing maintenance costs of that facility, which will be roughly \$15 million a year? I ask the minister to tell us in his reply speech where that is going to go, because I know of the substantial ongoing cost that was passed back when Brisbane City Council passed Chandler back to the state government.

The wonderful facility at Chandler has presented many opportunities. Maybe it should have been used much more for the Commonwealth Games, as opposed to building a whole lot of new facilities which are being constructed at great expense to the Queensland taxpayer. There are ways we can use existing facilities.

Earlier the member for Toowoomba North spoke about Suncorp Stadium. Yes, we have all known it as Lang Park. I remember going many times to the grassy slopes when Lang Park was not a great stadium and when Queensland never used to win playing against New South Wales. I was a very young man. These days we smash New South Wales every time. I look forward to doing that many times in the future.

I have to give up my bias relating to the North Queensland Cowboys. It was sad to see them not win this year's grand final. It was fantastic to see them win it last year. That is why we have great stadiums in Queensland. I understand why this stadium is being built in North Queensland: it inspires people. I would love to know whether the ongoing costs will be shot back to the taxpayers of Queensland, whether the Townsville local authority will pay them or whether they will be met in conjunction with the federal fund. I know that everybody is kicking in to build that facility, but I think we need an answer to the question I have asked.

It is fantastic that the government has said that it will build a great netball centre at QEII, but it was an LNP initiative. I am pleased that the Labor Party has picked up on that. It is great to see the Firebirds doing so well. Netball is a great sport. It is one of the better sports. It is good to see that ladies are really starting to be recognised. Women in sport is such an important thing to Queenslanders. I know that the same thing will happen in relation to AFL. Very shortly women's AFL will be televised. I think we as Queensland representatives need to get behind women in sport. They contribute so much to our community. It is about time they were recognised in terms of pay scales and so on. Comparing what men and women are paid, I think women are well and truly underpaid for what they do, the performances they put in and how they represent this great state. I target that comment directly at the Queensland Firebirds. What great representatives they have been. I support the government building that facility at QEII, but government members should not forget that the idea was there and the plans were there. It was sitting in my drawer when I was minister. I am glad the government took on board another great LNP initiative.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.44 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the debate of this bill and in support of the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Beaudesert regarding Lang Park. I grew up in regional Queensland and remember seeing the late, great Artie Beetson run out wearing the Queensland jersey. After so many years of him having to play for New South Wales, seeing him run out onto Lang Park—that is what we used to call it—is a memory that makes the stadium dear to many people's hearts. Of course, many people have seen games played there. In fact, the member for Condamine was there for the first game at Lang Park when Artie Beetson led out the Queenslanders and made sure we won.

**Mr Janetzki:** What a moment.

**Mr MILLAR:** It was a great moment. It is something that is of great tradition to many Queenslanders. I grew up in Emerald. Many Queenslanders in those days would refer to the stadium as Lang Park. If we could not get down to Brisbane—it was pretty hard to get down to Brisbane in those days—we would watch on TV games being played at Lang Park. We knew that when the game was being played at Lang Park there was a good chance we would win. It has a lot of history as a sporting facility that means a lot not only to Brisbane but also to Queenslanders—from the cape right down to Coolangatta and from Maryborough all the way out to Windorah. Lang Park is something special.

Sometimes we have to make sure that we preserve the history which is important to us. The history of Lang Park is something that I think is dear to everybody in this House. I do not think anybody in this House could dispute Lang Park's history with regard to Rugby League. The Broncos started off there, as did the good old South Queensland Crushers.

**Mr Pegg:** What does the act say about the Brisbane Cricket Ground and the Gabba? Tell us about that.

**Mr MILLAR:** I am talking about Lang Park. I am talking about making sure we keep the history of Lang Park and supporting the member for Beaudesert in foreshadowing an amendment that preserves the history. As an ABC rural reporter I was never allowed to call it Suncorp Stadium. I and my colleagues always had to call it Lang Park.

**Mr Janetzki:** There are no sponsors at the ABC!

**Mr MILLAR:** Now I think they do call it Suncorp Stadium, but when I was at the ABC it was always referred to as Lang Park. I call on those on the other side of the House to support the very sensible amendment foreshadowed by the member for Beaudesert to ensure we preserve the history of Lang Park.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (4.47 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their participation in the debate on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This bill amends the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Keno Act 1996, the Land Act 1994, the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 and the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994. It also makes minor consequential amendments to other legislation. In response to some of the queries about why there are so many disparate elements in this bill, clearly, it is an omnibus bill. I have been chosen to be the omni-bus driver in this instance.

The first issue addressed by the bill is related to the way gaming machine tax is calculated for clubs with additional premises under the Gaming Machine Act 1991. We have heard from a number of members that clubs are a vital part of Queensland life. They are important in terms of building and strengthening our communities. They provide opportunities for people to socialise, to connect and to recreate.

Clubs Queensland has long held the view that the current tax arrangements for gaming machine revenue discourages clubs from expanding their operations, to the detriment of local communities. This is something I took particular notice of and listened to when we consulted. Unfortunately, since 2011 some 69 clubs have closed, with few new clubs emerging to take their place.

Currently, when a club operates more than one premises, the monthly metered win from all of the club's premises are combined before the progressive tax is applied. The result is clubs with additional premises paying more tax than they would if the monthly metered win from each premises was taxed separately. To address this issue, the bill will amend the Gaming Machine Act so that the gaming machine tax is calculated on a per-venue basis for clubs with additional premises. These changes will remove disincentives for clubs to have multiple premises. This will help larger clubs amalgamate with smaller, struggling clubs and encourage these larger clubs to establish new premises in regional or greenfield areas.

The bill also proposes the introduction of multijurisdictional Keno jackpot pooling in Queensland through an amendment to the Keno Act 1996. The amendment will enable Queensland Keno licensees to enter into an arrangement with interstate Keno licensees to pool Keno jackpot contributions for certain Keno games. Interstate pooling arrangements already exist for lotteries in Queensland. The introduction of multijurisdictional Keno jackpot pooling in Queensland is intended to reinvigorate Keno and deliver a more attractive entertaining game for players through the offer of large jackpot prizes. In my electorate I see people who are very interested and keen Keno players already and hopefully this will give them something more to contend with. It will also enable the Queensland Keno licensee to provide Queenslanders with the same Keno offering already available to Keno players in New South Wales and Victoria.

Through amendments to the Land Act 1994 this bill will enable the land adjoining a non-tidal watercourse or lake to be leased where infrastructure extends into the airspace above or at a depth below the functioning watercourse or lake forming a property boundary. As a safeguard the state will be the holder of any lease and may sublease to a third party to undertake particular works or occupy a site. The lease is also nontransferable. As we know, the purpose of these amendments is to give legal tenure to the lessee or sublessee for projects requiring tenure over the part of the project site that extends over or below a watercourse or lake. This enables the land to be dealt with as ordinary land and gives the tenure holder more security. Such projects might include public or commercial viewing platforms or jetties or other types of compatible infrastructure at a functioning non-tidal watercourse or lake that forms part of a physical property boundary.

The bill amends the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to improve the administration of the act in relation to protections against unauthorised advertising during major sporting events, which is commonly referred to as ambush marketing. I will not stress the points on this area too strongly except to say that I am pleased that the committee has recommended that this bill be passed and has agreed with this being a very important element of protecting our sponsorship dollars, which we really need, to ensure that we can have world-class facilities. There has been a concern that the amendments may lead to the development of super clubs, but a club that operates multiple venues will still be limited to a cap on the number of gaming machines that may be operated across all of its venues. I note that there have also been concerns raised by some in terms of what happens in the gambling space. Of course, community impact statements are also required with applications for additional club premises unless waived by the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming. The purpose of this community impact statement is to help the commissioner assess the social and economic implications of the grant of the application. The amendment will help to ensure that the club culture in Queensland can continue to grow and serve their local communities.

There are a range of other issues that have been run through including the additional gambling related harm related to the Gaming Machine Act. We take very seriously this issue of problem gambling in our community. The voluntary Queensland responsible gambling code of practice will also continue to provide guidance to clubs that conduct gaming to ensure that they implement and adhere to the responsible gambling practices that relate to the provision of information to patrons, gambling and related exclusions, the general physical environment, physical transactions, and advertising and promotions.

With regard to the conducting of Keno draws during prohibited periods, this bill seeks to amend the Keno Act to provide Queensland licensees with the ability to conduct Keno draws during currently prohibited periods on Christmas Day, Anzac Day and Good Friday in order to synchronise with Keno draws being conducted in jurisdictions without such prohibitions. Although the amendment will allow Keno draws to be conducted in Queensland during prohibited periods, it does not allow Keno to be

played—that is, to have tickets sold in Queensland venues—during the prohibited periods. There have been a few other matters related to Keno jackpotting such as whether that will result in an increase in gambling related harm. I have addressed this issue and we think that we have the support of all of the members in this House to ensure that we do not have an increase in problem gambling and any harm that may come from that space.

There have been points made in terms of the changes to the Land Act and the functioning of a watercourse or lake. I want to thank the member for Kallangur, the member for Murrumba, the member for Mount Coot-tha and the member for Beaudesert for expressing their support for amendments to the Land Act 1994 in part 4 of the bill that will facilitate the leasing of land within a functioning non-tidal watercourse or lake. As the member for Kallangur pointed out, the amendments in the bill will enable the state to enter into a sublease with the Brisbane Broncos for the section of their new training field at Red Hill that will project above the boundary of Ithaca Creek. This project provides for the public to access the training field when not in use by the Broncos. The member for Mount Coot-tha—a very proud member in the greater Brisbane area—has already highlighted some of the many other contributions the club makes to the community.

There are already mechanisms in the existing legislation that give the right of access over functioning non-boundary watercourses and lakes with various forms of public infrastructure. The amendments in this bill will not apply where there are existing access rights. They only apply to circumstances where it is necessary for a proponent to hold tenure over part of the boundary watercourse or lake.

Picking up on both the member for Hinchinbrook and the member for Callide's query about leases in non-tidal watercourses being affected by the ambulatory nature of some watercourses, the contribution by the member for Stafford, who is also the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, has adequately responded to that. Picking up particularly on the point of the member for Callide where he was seeking to know why there was an element of urgency here, as we have said, currently the Land Act 1994 prevents the state from entering into a sublease with the Brisbane Broncos for the section of the training field that is within the boundary of Ithaca Creek. The amendments are needed at this time to ensure that the Brisbane Broncos can occupy the site and make use of the improvements that they will construct in 2017.

I am very happy that I can join some other members of this House in being a North Queensland Cowboys fan. I did appreciate the great grand final they played against the Brisbane Broncos. Whilst I want to continue to see the Cowboys power ahead, I admire the great Brisbane Broncos for the work that they do in the Brisbane area and across all of Queensland for Rugby League fans and supporters, particularly the way they are looking to grow the game. That is reason enough to ensure that we get this amendment through in a timely fashion to ensure that those further developments they are looking to bring in in 2017 will occur.

In terms of the rights of adjoining landholders, the provisions in this bill do not override the ordinary rights of riparian land holders to access their land under the Land Act. The consent of an adjoining landowner is required up-front before a lease can be granted to the state. This consent can be given conditionally. If unforeseen issues were to emerge after the granting of the lease, these issues would need to be resolved by negotiation in the first instance. In the unlikely circumstance where they are still unresolved, the state, as the primary leaseholder, has the ability to amend the condition associated with the sublease where appropriate.

It may go further to the point that the member for Callide had also raised about the ambulatory nature. If this is a new tenure and it is going to be a moving feast, if you would like to use that analogy, the state will bear the risk with the holding of that tenure. It is very important that it is able to do so and hopefully give landholders the understanding and relief that they deserve. If there are any other issues that have been raised in this debate by either the member for Hinchinbrook or the member for Callide, the intent of this bill is not to address all matters related to adjoining landowners but we would be very happy to have a conversation as to whether the long-running issue as pointed out by the member for Callide needs to be further addressed.

In terms of advising businesses of advertising restrictions within the vicinity of major sports facilities, businesses surrounding the major sports facilities are already familiar with the advertising constraints during the regular competition schedules of the major sports codes and it will be events conducted under the auspices of national sporting bodies that are regulated under the new process. Events where advertising will be restricted by the regulation are those that are generally promoted through a number of mechanisms such as television advertising, social media, club or sporting organisation distribution lists and newspapers. Furthermore, it is in the interests of Stadiums

Queensland and event hire as to widely publicise events at the state's major sports facilities. Clearly, we want the patronage and we want these to be major and successful events. We think these amendments will reduce the regulatory burden on businesses in the vicinity of stadia as advertising will be restricted for shorter periods.

Any potential impact of tolling increases are included as part of the bill. Subject to the government approval of the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project, which, as members would be aware, is our biggest market-led proposal that we have been dealing with since I announced the new process in the 2015-16 budget, this amendment to the Transport Infrastructure Act would facilitate the funding of the project through changes to the tolling arrangements. These changes are expected to limit toll increases for heavy vehicles travelling through toll points on the Logan and Gateway motorways and a new toll point for all traffic entering the toll road via new south-facing ramps at Compton Road. The proposed amendments to the Transport Infrastructure Act are specifically for the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project and relate only to the tolling declaration covering the QML network.

I want to come back to the point I made earlier about changes to the Gaming Machine Act which remove that tax disincentive for clubs to operate multiple premises. I have been pleased to hear a number of members speak very passionately about what their local clubs do in their areas and how much of a contribution they make. This is an important economic driver to see not only clubs being saved but also new clubs being built in Queensland. In the last six months we have seen the sod turned on the first new club in the North Lakes area. It is an important amendment. It is one that will give clubs the confidence to go forward and continue to do what they have been doing and that is service our local communities.

Before I conclude I turn to the amendments proposed to be put forward in consideration in detail by the member for Beaudesert. I welcome the support of this bill by those opposite. I welcome the contribution and the legislative debut, as it was phrased, of the shadow minister for sport, the member for Beaudesert. The effect of the regulation is to apply the provisions of the act and other state legislation to the facility. Initially, major sports facilities were declared using the name that was the designated venue name under a naming rights agreement for a particular venue. However, the expiry of naming rights agreements at Skilled Park and Dairy Farmers Stadium resulted in Stadiums Queensland entering into new naming rights agreements with consequent changes of venue names to Cbus Super Stadium and 1300SMILE Stadium respectively.

When a new regulation was made in 2014 the opportunity was taken to use generic names rather than naming rights sponsors' names in referring to the facilities declared as major sports facilities. The benefit of generic names is that if there is a change of a naming rights sponsor at a venue there is no need to make a subsequent amendment to the regulation. The generic names selected are names that could be also used for an event where a clean stadium free of naming rights was required. Circumstances arise, of course, from time to time where a clean stadium free of naming rights is required for a major international event at a Stadiums Queensland venue. The name Brisbane Stadium has been used for FIFA World Cup qualifying matches at Suncorp Stadium. It was also used for the 2015 AFC Asian Cup matches at the venue. The use of the name Brisbane Stadium for such globally televised international events helps to promote Brisbane as an investment location and tourism destination.

**Mr Watts:** Wimbledon is not played at London Stadium.

**Mr PITT:** Just wait. While the historical name of Lang Park has special meaning for Queenslanders, global television audiences will not be familiar with it and therefore it alone will not increase international awareness. Changing the name of the venue in state legislation to Lang Park will not change the name of the venue for its day-to-day use for major events because, of course, the naming rights agreement at the venue will continue to apply and as a consequence the venue will continue to be called Suncorp Stadium except where a clean stadium free of naming rights is required. Naming rights sponsors accept their sponsorship will not apply for a small number of major international events such as FIFA World Cup qualifying matches and they factored this in when valuing such sponsorships.

For these reasons the government's position is that it is best to use the name Brisbane Stadium when referring to the venue in legislation and we will be opposing the amendment put forward by the member for Beaudesert. However, the adoption of the name Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park) provides an alternative to the proposed amendment which is consistent with a generic approach taken at other Stadiums Queensland venues. This proposed alternative is acceptable to the relevant stakeholders. That is important because we have heard the member for Southport stressing the importance of sponsorship and what that means.

**Mr Cripps:** This doesn't affect the sponsorship.

**Mr PITT:** It certainly can, member for Hinchinbrook. We have conducted consultation with stakeholders to ensure that there would be no detrimental impact on any agreements. We have put forward this amendment in good faith because I understand the sentiment and the reasons why this amendment has been put forward. I think it would be very difficult to argue you would find a bigger fan of Rugby League in the House than me. Changing the name to Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park) in state legislation does not change it for the day-to-day use because the naming rights agreement will continue to apply and as a consequence the venue will continue to be called Suncorp Stadium except where a clean stadium free of naming rights is required.

If we go to the member for Gregory's contribution, I know that he was speaking in support of the member for Beaudesert's amendment, but he did talk about making sure that we continue to retain our history. This amendment allows us to have the geographic name included as well as retaining our history. I look forward to the support of the member for Gregory if that is his motivation for supporting the amendment put forward by the member for Beaudesert.

We have a situation on our hands where this bill has been given the support of the committee. I thank the committee for its hard work looking at it and I do appreciate and pick up on the point that sometimes omnibus bills can be a very big challenge to come through in such a short time dealing with such a variety of subject matter. In conclusion, I thank the committee again for its consideration of the bill, those members who have contributed to the debate and also all ministers, their staff and departmental staff for their continued hard work and dedication in preparing this bill. 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 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (5.06 pm): Clause 11 inserts a new section into the Land Act and provides a definition for an adjacent owner for non-tidal watercourse land and non-tidal lake land. I listened carefully to the contribution of the Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines and he indicated to the House during his contribution that an adjacent landowner's consent process means that a lease issued under the Land Act in a non-tidal watercourse will endure even if the boundaries of the watercourse in which that Land Act lease was issued change through the exercise of the ambulatory boundary provisions by the chief executive officer of the department administering the Water Act. This is very interesting advice to the House because it will effectively mean that there will be a Land Act lease with infrastructure located on it existing over the top of the property of an adjacent landowner.

**Mr Pegg:** Consented to by the property owner.

**Mr CRIPPS:** Yes. The minister indicated that that would be accommodated because of the consent of the landowner, that the consent of the landowner would be provided, and I accept that. I am not contesting that point of view. The query that I would like to put to the minister is that leases are issued under the Land Act for particular purposes. They often contain conditions associated with those purposes. It makes it quite clear, from the provisions in this bill, that Land Act leases in non-tidal watercourses will be issued in certain circumstances and for particular reasons.

I understand that the Minister for Natural Resources gave an explanation that the consent of the original landowner means that the lease will endure and the infrastructure on that lease will continue to be owned by the holder of the lease, and it may be subleased by the state to a third-party, but the purposes of the lease mean that the lease needs to be used for that particular purpose. If a lease is not being used for that particular purpose what is the status of the Land Act lease and can I ask the minister what information notice will be provided to adjacent landowners to make them aware of the ramifications of their consent to Land Act leases granted in adjacent watercourses even if those provisions within the Water Act, where the chief executive officer exercises their discretion to move the boundary of a watercourse under the ambulatory boundary provisions, come into effect and they find a lease with infrastructure on it contained within their property?

**Mr PITT:** I assume the member is picking up on the point of whether the leases are equivalent to other Land Act leases. Is that the nature of the question? I am picking up a question around the legal status of a lease issued with a non-tidal watercourse where the land may no longer be state owned land. If that is the case, clause 13 refers to the power to deal with non-tidal watercourse land. It applies to land that is the property of the state. In the almost inconceivable event where the watercourse itself shifted to such an extent that it was no longer in the watercourse, the lease would fall away. That is the most inconceivable scenario you could find. However, these considerations will be dealt with very rigorously to ensure the certainty of all parties' interests.

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** It is good to see that the member for Callide has managed to find himself again.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! The member for Callide will withdraw that unparliamentary word.

**Mr SEENEY:** I withdraw.

**Mr PITT:** These considerations will be dealt with very early and rigorously to ensure the certainty of all parties' interests. Noting that the lessee will be the state, the state will continue to oversight the lease arrangements. The state, as the lessee, has an interest in ensuring the continuation of the lease for the term granted.

As the member said earlier, the fact that you would have the state where the ambulatory nature of the watercourse is there gives more certainty that they would take on more risk. That is the intention here. As I explained earlier, this is not intended to deal with all matters related to Land Act leases. These are specific provisions with the intent of dealing with a matter of urgency as it relates to a particular provision with the Ithaca Creek. The Water Act also provides means for adjoining landowners to undertake works to stabilise and maintain the alignment of the watercourse. Certainly we have discussed those things.

It is important to note that ambulatory property boundaries have been recognised for many years; well before the 2010 amendments were put in place. However, the provisions before the House are not about revisiting those amendments. Certainly that is a conversation for another day. They are quite sensible about allowing the state to issue a lease over land that is within a watercourse or lake that is the property of the state.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (5.12 pm): For the benefit of the member for Logan who is grumbling up the back, as I pointed out in my second reading contribution to the debate my concern is about the interaction of provisions of the Water Act and the provisions of the Land Act, and whether or not, with those provisions acting independently of each other, sufficient reference is made between those two pieces of legislation to give the Land Act leases effect. I noted in my contribution to the second reading debate that I have no problem or concern about the Land Act being the correct piece of legislation for these instruments to be issued. I do not know why he is grumbling. I am trying to achieve some clarity about some concerns regarding these issues.

The explanatory notes accompanying the bill state that clause 13 inserts new sections 13AA and 13AB, confirming that Land Act leases may be issued in watercourses under the Land Act as if it were unallocated state land. However, the land within a watercourse is not going to be, in reality, unallocated state land. The concern that I have is the nature of the Land Act leases that are going to be issued. New section 13AB says that there is going to be terms for leasing non-tidal watercourse land to the state under the Land Act inserted by that section.

The question that I ask the minister is this: if there are new terms inserted by new section 13AB being put into the Land Act for the purposes of issuing a Land Act lease over land within a watercourse, does that mean that these Land Act leases are being offered on different terms than Land Act leases being issued over unallocated state land? The explanatory notes accompanying the bill state quite clearly that the land within a watercourse is not unallocated state land and then the bill goes on to provide new terms.

This is all about the security of the people holding the lease. The state, in the first instance, as the minister indicated in his second reading debate speech, will take on the risk. However, the bill provides for a third party to be subleased the original lease to the state. It is okay for the state to take on the risk, but infrastructure will be put on those leases, which is the purpose of issuing them in the

first place. What about the value of the infrastructure placed on those leases that may eventually find themselves outside the boundaries of the watercourse, because the minister has just advised the House that if that happens the lease falls away?

**Mr PITT:** I reiterate that these are not the same leases. We are not dealing with those. I understand the member's concerns about the intersection between that and some of the comments that have been made. I will be clear that the state does take on the risk and he would be aware whenever you look at subleasing that you can put conditions on those subleases, as well. The comments were made about what we would consider to be an inconceivable event—that is, that the watercourse shifted to such an extent that the lease was no longer in the watercourse. Of course, there can be movement. We have certainly touched on that quite strongly throughout the entire debate and the member himself raised it on a couple of occasions.

The state as the lessee has an interest in ensuring the continuation of the lease. Even if it is sublet, we will be making sure that we are monitoring this. I do not think that the reference to whether it is in practice unallocated state land versus what it is in law or in the title is going to be of concern. I come back to the point of what we are trying to do here. I appreciate the questions, but the member is trying to prosecute arguments that are not the intent of the bill. Today I can only give the member my statement that I do not think his concerns are warranted. I would be happy to have any follow-up conversation with the member at any stage.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—



**Mr PITT (5.17 pm):** I move the following amendments—

**1 Clause 18 (Insertion of new ss 17A to 17C)**

Page 14, lines 8 to 11—

*omit.*

**2 Clause 18 (Insertion of new ss 17A to 17C)**

Page 14, line 12, '(7)'—

*omit, insert—*

(6)

**3 Clause 18 (Insertion of new ss 17A to 17C)**

Page 14, lines 25 to 33 and page 15, lines 1 to 16—

*omit.*

**4 Clause 18 (Insertion of new ss 17A to 17C)**

Page 15, after line 29—

*insert—*

**17D Confidentiality of criminal history information**

- (1) This section applies to a person who possesses either of the following because the person is or was an officer, employee or agent of the department—
  - (a) a report or information given to the chief executive under section 17A;
  - (b) a notice or information given to the chief executive under section 17C.
- (2) The report, notice or information is **criminal history information**.
- (3) The person must not, directly or indirectly, disclose criminal history information to any other person unless the disclosure is permitted under subsection (4).  
Maximum penalty—100 penalty units.
- (4) The person is permitted to disclose the criminal history information to another person—
  - (a) to the extent necessary to perform the person's functions under this Act; or
  - (b) if the disclosure is authorised under an Act; or
  - (c) if the disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law; or
  - (d) if the person to whom the information relates consents to the disclosure; or
  - (e) if the disclosure is in a form that does not identify the person to whom the information relates; or
  - (f) if the information is, or has been, lawfully accessible to the public.
- (5) The chief executive must ensure a document containing criminal history information is destroyed as soon as practicable after it is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was given.

I table the explanatory notes for my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Curtis Pitt's amendments [[1975](#)].

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 18, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 19 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Clause 22—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! I note that the Treasurer's amendment No. 5 proposes to omit clause 22. Therefore, the Treasurer and the government should oppose that clause.

Clause 22, as read, negatived.

Insertion of new clause—

**Mr PITT** (5.18 pm): I move the following amendment—

**6 Before clause 23**

Page 16, before line 23—

*insert—*

**22A Amendment of pt 3B, hdg (Major sport events at Suncorp Stadium)**

Part 3B, heading, 'Suncorp Stadium'—

*omit, insert—*

**Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)**

**Mr KRAUSE:** I rise to speak against the minister's amendment and move the following amendment to the amendment—

**Minister's amendment No. 6—**

*Omit*

**Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)**

*Insert*

**Lang Park**

I am speaking against the amendment proposed by the minister, which is really symbolic of the government: it is a half-baked amendment that tries to have it both ways. This government cannot be straight with the people. It says one thing to miners in regional Queensland and another thing to green based people. It says one thing to the north and another thing to the south. It tries to have it both ways all the time. When they do make a decision, they get it wrong quite often.

I oppose the minister's amendment. Essentially, I think the minister is proposing this amendment because he disagrees with the opposition calling the stadium Lang Park. Perhaps the minister is worried because he failed to make the amendment himself.

We need to recognise the heritage of Lang Park and bring the name Lang Park back into the Major Sports Facilities Act. We all know what we are talking about when we say Lang Park. It is not Brisbane Stadium with Lang Park in brackets. It is Lang Park—pure and simple. That is what the amendment I have proposed will put into the act.

Whether people have been to the stadium for Rugby League, soccer or rugby union or whether they have been for a concert or a conference—and I understand there have been a lot of conferences there—it is known generically as Lang Park. For the minister to stand here and try to put some other moniker on it is ludicrous. The amendment should be rejected.

I table an article from the *Brisbane Times* on 15 October 2016 related to the amendment I have proposed.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Brisbane Times*, dated 15 October 2016, titled 'Move to rename Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium to Lang Park in legislation' [[1976](#)].

In the article it clearly sets out the fact, as the minister has acknowledged here, that the amendment will only change the description of the stadium in the act. Importantly, it will not affect the naming rights agreements entered into by the state. As I said in my speech in the second reading debate, if we took a straw poll of Queenslanders I believe they would agree with my amendment not the minister's. In fact, the *Brisbane Times* did run a straw poll that day and 80 per cent of the over 2,000 respondents supported the amendment that I am proposing here today.

This is about the heritage of our stadium. It is about the heritage of our sport. It is about the heritage of our city. It is about the heritage of our state. Lang Park has a rich history stretching back over 100 years. The opposition understands the need for and respects the naming rights agreements entered into from time to time. When we look at the act governing the stadium we should not need to flick to the schedule and read the address beside it to know that what is being referred to is Lang Park.

Let us describe it in the act as Lang Park. As I said, it is about our history, our sport, the great sport of Rugby League and, in particular, our great state. I urge all members to support my amendment to this amendment and bring Lang Park back into the act.

**Mr PITT:** As I said earlier, I appreciate the sentiment behind the amendment that was originally put forward by the member for Beaudesert. The fact that he is moving an amendment to my amendment says that there is only one person playing games here and it is not me.

**An opposition member:** Political football.

**Mr PITT:** Thanks, shadow. I do appreciate the sentiment. All in this House respect the fact that people have a lot of memories at what was formerly known as Lang Park before the naming rights of Suncorp Stadium were brought in. The Labor government contributed greatly to ensure the building of Suncorp Stadium. We know that this particular venue is known by many names. When the Maroons are there it is known as the Cauldron. We know that there are many names that we can apply.

**Mr Watts:** Lang Park (Cauldron).

**Mr PITT:** Member for Toowoomba North! The reason for this amendment is that we are not just talking to a Queensland audience when we talk about this venue and it is free of any naming rights sponsors. We are talking to an international audience. It is important in those references, including when people search for a venue, to know that it is in Brisbane. It is very important to know that that is the case. Let me be clear that we are not opposing the sentiment put forward by the member for Beaudesert. In fact, what we have done is actually try to stretch the hand across the aisle to come up with a compromise position which he may see as a reasonable thing for a government to do.

If we want to start talking about what they know about tourism and dealing with international events, we know that they have tried to claim all the credit for the Commonwealth Games when it was a previous Labor government that did the bid and won the games. It is ironic and poetic that it is a state Labor government delivering the Commonwealth Games.

We are dealing with an international audience. Wearing his hat as shadow tourism minister, I hope I hear nothing but positive support for what we have done in the two budgets that I have handed down in terms of restoring tourism funding. Having a \$100 million a year budget for Tourism and Events Queensland is very important.

I reiterate the comments I made earlier. I appreciate the support of the member for Gregory. He certainly said that we need to retain our history. I have even heard that from the member for Beaudesert. If that is indeed the reason they want this then he should withdraw this amendment. He should know that we are meeting him halfway—that is making sure we have a geographic place as well as Lang Park mentioned in this amendment.

It is a shame to see that this is the game that is being played. We genuinely offered an opportunity to put up an amendment that would work for all members of the House. Sadly, it will not be accepted. It may come down to the fact that this is the member for Beaudesert's debut, as he keeps saying. If that is the case then I do not think he realises that he has actually run on the field and that he has been clothes lined in the first five minutes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! Before calling the member for Whitsunday, I remind honourable members who have been warned today that those warnings are still in place. I do not have the list in front of me and I would not like to get the list.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, I do not need your help.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** I want to support the amendment to the amendment moved by my colleague the member for Beaudesert. I think what we have heard from the minister is quite ridiculous, to be blunt. I was listening to his contribution earlier when he talked about broadcasters. I worked for a few broadcasters. I think it is laughable to suggest that they do not know where these places are. This is an iconic venue.

**Mr PITT:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I find those comments offensive and ask that they be withdrawn. I did not say that.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday, the Treasurer found those comments offensive so please withdraw.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** I withdraw. Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. There is no doubt that Lang Park is an iconic venue not only to Queenslanders but also to those around the world.

**Ms Grace:** Thanks to Labor.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** It is not thanks to Labor. I take the interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. It is embarrassing that she can make an interjection along those lines. I expect better from the Treasurer. I would have thought he would be embracing the great work of the member for Beaudesert and in a show of bipartisanship drop the brackets. Who needs brackets? Lang Park does not need brackets. 'Rabbsy' is not going to say, 'Have a look at the brackets!' I have warmed the seat for them. I have a pretty good read on it. The brackets do not come into it for me. They do not float my boat. I believe people all around Queensland—

**Mr Hart:** You can't explain it to the international tourists.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** I take the interjection from the member for Burleigh. How do you explain this to the international tourists? Welcome to the home of brackets not the home of the Queensland State of Origin side. We hear this from the Treasurer, given his background in Rugby League. I would love to go back to the Alley Park faithful in Gordonvale and say, 'Did you know your local MP wants to have brackets around Lang Park because we all must be dills?'

Brisbane Stadium does not do it for me and does not do it for the international sporting community. Go to Elland Road in Leeds. Is it Elland Road brackets Leeds stadium or vice versa? It is Elland Road. We also have Old Trafford and Eden Park. I believe across the Tasman tonight they are laughing at us—what a bunch of morons! There are no brackets in the names of New Zealand sports stadiums. There are none for Eden Park. It says 'Eden Park'. It should be Lang Park.

That place used to be a cemetery. It is my intention at the next election—bring it on—to bury the members opposite, metaphorically speaking, and bury the government because they cannot even get the naming of Lang Park right.

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

**AYES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

**NOES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I have made this decision. I was originally inclined to support a return to the name 'Lang Park' but, after listening to the Treasurer's contribution to the debate, I believe the government's amendment is worthy of support.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Krause) negated.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question now is that the Treasurer's amendment No. 6 be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 25, as read, agreed to.

Clause 26—



**Mr PITT (5.35 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**7 Clause 26 (Amendment of s 30AM (Application of div 2))**

Page 18, lines 5 to 7—

*omit, insert—*

(3) Section 30AM, 'Suncorp Stadium'—

*omit, insert—*

Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 26, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 27—

**Mr SPEAKER:** I note that the Treasurer's amendment No. 8 proposes to omit clause 27. Therefore, the Treasurer should oppose the clause.

Clause 27, as read, negated.

Insertion of new clause—

 **Mr PITT** (5.36 pm): I move the following amendment—

**9 Before clause 28**

Page 18, before line 16—

*insert—*

**27A Amendment of s 30AN (Use of Suncorp Stadium for major sport events)**

(1) Section 30AN, heading, 'Suncorp Stadium'—

*omit, insert—*

**Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)**

(2) Section 30AN(1), 'Suncorp Stadium'—

*omit, insert—*

Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)

**Mr KRAUSE:** I acknowledge the result of the division in relation to the former clause. I would like to say that it is great to see a reference to Lang Park return to the act. I table my original amendments and explanatory notes in that regard.

*Tabled paper:* Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, amendments to be moved during consideration in detail by the member for Beaudesert, Mr Jon Krause [\[1977\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Mr Jon Krause's amendments [\[1978\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 28 to 36, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 1—

 **Mr PITT** (5.37 pm): I move the following amendments—

**10 Schedule 1 (Acts amended)**

Page 23, lines 4 to 6—

*omit, insert—*

**1 Section 142AE(4)(b)(ii), 'Suncorp Stadium'—**

*omit, insert—*

Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)

**11 Schedule 1 (Acts amended)**

Page 24, lines 1 to 3—

*omit, insert—*

**3 Section 323, hdg, 'Suncorp Stadium'—**

*omit, insert—*

**Brisbane Stadium (Lang Park)**

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) (5.37 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) (5.38 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.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Rates Arrears

 **Hon. LE DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries) (5.38 pm), by leave: I would like to advise the House that the rates arrears owed to the Bundaberg Regional Council in respect of my family home have been paid today. I have taken steps to ensure that rates notices will be paid promptly in future.

## MOTION

### Order of Business

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.38 pm): I move—

That government business orders of the day Nos 2 to 11 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Revocation of State Forest Areas

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (5.39 pm): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
  - (a) revoke by regulation the dedication of parts of a State forest; and
  - (b) dedicate by regulation the revoked areas of the aforementioned State forest as a national park, under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 as set out in the proposals tabled by me in the House today viz—

#### Description of area to be revoked

Beerwah State Forest

An area of about 744.558 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Beerwah State Forest revocation: sketch A”.

#### Description of area to be dedicated

Mooloolah River National Park

An area of about 744.558 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Mooloolah River National Park addition: sketch B”.

2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef for submission to the Governor in Council.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to a strong and expansive national park estate that represents and protects Queensland’s unique flora and fauna. We have worked with the community so that all current and future protected areas and state forests are afforded appropriate levels of protection and management. This proposal is for the revocation of approximately 745 hectares from Beerwah State Forest, which is located about 11 kilometres west of Caloundra, and subsequent dedication as part of Mooloolah River National Park. Under the 1998 South-East Queensland Forest Agreement, these parts of Beerwah State Forest were proposed to transition to protected area, subject to timber harvesting by 2024, if not sooner.

This motion will deliver a welcome upgrade in the protection of these lands that are of high conservation value. The proposed addition of about 745 hectares to Mooloolah River National Park will conserve floristically diverse old-growth forest and wetland regional ecosystems, two of which are

endangered systems and four that are of concern. This proposal takes this level of protection further by dedicating a large section of the Mooloolah logging area of Beerwah State Forest as Mooloolah River National Park. I am pleased that this biologically diverse and environmentally significant area now has the protection it deserves.

I also acknowledge that Minister Donaldson, as the minister responsible for forestry, has supported this upgrade from state forest to national park. What was previously a very contentious proposal—

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! The member for Lockyer will remain silent.

**Dr MILES:** What was previously a very contentious proposal by the previous government to develop this high conservation area as a commercial dirt bike facility now has been afforded a high level of protection and significant environmental benefits for generations to come. I recommend that parliament support the revocation of the state forest areas and subsequent dedication of the areas as national park as specified in the proposals.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.42 pm): I rise to address the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection's proposal via the Governor in Council under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 that a regulation be made requesting the revocation of a specified and declared area of Beerwah State Forest—this area being 744.558 hectares—and that the revoked and declared area then be declared an additional area of the Mooloolah River National Park.

The Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection when introducing this proposal to the Queensland parliament offered a rationale based on needing to increase the level of protection of this area for biodiversity purposes given it contained essential habitat for 15 species of vulnerable frog, including the wallum sedgefrog, and 10 species of migratory bird. Whilst there may be some conjecture with respect to this given biodiversity and ecosystem considerations by the federal environment department, I accept some of the explanation and basis for the proposal as outlined by the minister. However, there are some areas in there as far as existing infrastructure, a nursery and other areas, which give me cause for concern as to how the area itself will be managed.

Adjacent to the revocation proposal is where much needed critical infrastructure for the Sunshine Coast is to be upgraded. The \$1 billion Caloundra interchange, including expansion of the Bruce Highway to six lanes between the Caloundra turn-off and the Sunshine Motorway exit to Maroochydore and the upgrade to Steve Irwin Way, is much needed infrastructure for the Sunshine Coast. I acknowledge and congratulate many Sunshine Coast LNP members, specifically the member for Caloundra, for advocating with respect to this infrastructure over a long period of time.

The LNP will not be opposing the proposal under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 with respect to the regulation revoking the specified areas of Beerwah State Forest, but I think it is important as part of this debate to acknowledge the LNP's strong track record of support for Queensland's national parks. In 1998 the Borbidge-Sheldon coalition government recognised and addressed the chronic underfunding level inherited from the previous Goss Labor government for our national park estates with specific additional financial allocations being made by then premier Borbidge for capital works and operational management. The Borbidge-Sheldon coalition government realised and acknowledged that these special areas—our national parks—had an important role to play in the economic and social structure of Queensland quite apart from their conservation value. Premier Borbidge and his government made significant additional commitments with respect to Fraser Island and the Great Sandy National Park.

It is important to also note that the Newman LNP government in 2013 passed amendments in the Queensland parliament to cut red tape and increase protection for Queensland's national parks. These amendments meant our national parks and other natural areas could be managed more effectively, and by modernising the then legislation it made it easier, faster and less costly to respond to changes when they occurred. I acknowledge the former minister, the Hon. Steve Dickson MP, the then minister for national parks, recreation, sport and racing, for his achievements and reforms including delivering the joint management by Aboriginal traditional owners and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services of a number of national parks in Cape York.

Over many years and since becoming the shadow minister for national parks, I have visited many of our terrific and iconic national parks right across our state, including the Great Sandy National Park, Lamington National Park, Bunya Mountains National Park, North Stradbroke Island and the D'Aguiar National Park, which is located, in part, in my electorate of Moggill. Recently one of my local

environment organisations, THECA, The Hut Environmental and Community Association, held a barriers to biodiversity conservation forum at the Queensland Centre for Advanced Technologies at the CSIRO at Pinjarra Hills. I was delighted to attend that forum and hear some evidence based strategies and enhancements to our governance framework which could certainly deliver greater improvements for the management of our national parks. It was also great to see Councillor Norm Wyndham from the Brisbane City Council in attendance.

The rich and diverse range of flora and fauna in our national parks is very special, and it is vital that we protect these areas not only now but also into the future given that there are some biodiversity benefits that can be protected for future generations. In conclusion, I reiterate that the LNP will not be opposing the minister's proposed revocation declaration with respect to the specified area as outlined.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (5.47 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the motion before the House. I fully support this proposal which will see the revocation of around 745 hectares of Beerwah State Forest and the dedication of that area into the Mooloolah River National Park. As members would be aware, the upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Caloundra Road and the Sunshine Motorway is adjacent to this area. The initial design of the upgrade would have impacted around 35 hectares of the Beerwah State Forest. In later plans, this was reduced to 24 hectares. I am pleased to advise the House that the current design requires only 12 hectares which may well come down to between six and eight hectares, and is minimising the impact of the Bruce Highway upgrade on the local environment.

We have been able to reduce that impact as a result of extensive consultation and by listening and working closely with a range of local stakeholders and community groups. In particular, I would like to thank the Sunshine Coast Environment Council and the Save Steve Irwin Way Forest Group for their ongoing advocacy and willingness to work with the Palaszczuk government to deliver a better result for all concerned. When government and community groups work together, great outcomes can be achieved and this is clearly one of them.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads has been able to minimise the impact of the upgrade on the forest by using groundbreaking new interchange design. This is the first time in Australia that a diverging diamond interchange will be used. It is this innovative planning that has delivered improved environmental, traffic and congestion outcomes as well as road safety outcomes. For those members who are not familiar with it, it looks more like some entwining ribbons than it does a big clover leaf. If you have not seen one, there are plenty on YouTube. There have been about 60 of them in the US over the last six years. They are a very interesting design—slightly counterintuitive but much more efficient with traffic outcomes and use a lot less land.

The Palaszczuk government was elected with a commitment to genuine consultation and community engagement. The improved interchange upgrade and the expansion of the Mooloolah River National Park is a clear example of the Palaszczuk government delivering on that commitment. I would like to sincerely thank my colleague Minister Miles, the Minister for Environment, his staff and his department for their excellent work in working with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the community groups for this excellent outcome. The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to better outcomes on the Sunshine Coast and its hinterland. This is a clear example of us working closely with Sunshine Coast and hinterland residents and communities.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (5.50 pm): There are a couple of things I would like to touch on relating to this parcel of land. After looking at the map, I have found it quite intriguing to see that there are a number of roads going through this and dissecting it into five separate pieces. I understood that when you created a national park it would be lovely to get it all in one chunk. In this instance, it is quite intriguing to see that a lot of private property indents into this brand-new national park. One particular parcel of land is gazetted to become a big water park and it will have powerlines running to it and there will be underground water. I am concerned about this and I hope the minister takes this on board because those pipes may have to go through the proposed national park.

Let us remember what this area is called. It is the Mooloolah logging area and it has been logged four times in the last 100 years, with the last time being 2004. My great concern is that if we start to dedicate land as national parks we will need to have some sort of scoping work done to justify why it should become a national park. I am concerned that my backyard may become a national park and somebody else in Queensland may have their backyard become a national park. I have been told by numerous people that there are 400-year-old trees in this proposed national park. I would love to meet those loggers who have been there four times in the last 100 years and have left one 400-year-old tree behind, because those trees are not there. There are no 400-year-old trees in this area.

The minister needs to take into account that this is encompassed by a pine forest that was sold by the Beattie-Bligh government to overseas people who are probably going to develop that land some time down the track into a great big residential estate. Who knows what will happen. That land was sold by a government which is opposed to selling assets. It is in their DNA, and they are going to come back and do it again.

I need to explain a few more issues to the House with regard to this parcel of land. There is a really large telecommunications site right up on top of the hill in the middle of this brand-new national park. I know that it is very difficult to expand telecommunications facilities in national parks; it can take a number of years and there are a lot of processes to go through when dealing with the federal government. I hope the minister has taken this into account. They have just designated land on the Sunshine Coast for future development under their new regional plan scoping, and I think these people will want telecommunications. I am concerned that maybe the government has not taken that on board or the minister is not aware that this facility is on the site. It probably would have been beneficial if he had driven to the facility. I have been right through the whole lot of this land, and it concerns me greatly that this telecommunications site may be impacted.

There are a couple of other problems that I need to throw into the mix. People ride their motorbikes and drive their four-wheel drives there every day of the week and every weekend. I am not talking about one or two people; I am talking about hundreds and hundreds of people who ride their bikes through this area. The minister may be able to come back to us at some stage and let us know how much it will cost to erect the fencing that will need to be put around this facility to stop people riding in there. Will there be national park rangers policing this facility? I know the minister said today that the LNP government was supposed to have laid off all of these front-line rangers, but that did not happen. I think the minister must have gone to sleep and had a bit of a fantasy and then came into parliament today and said, 'I think they laid off all of these front-line services.' We did not actually do that. There were some internal staff who were paid redundancies.

I have some questions for the minister. Will there be rangers based at this brand-new national park to look after it? That is the first question I have. How will the minister keep the motorcycle riders and four-wheel drive vehicles out of this proposed national park because it has access routes all over it? I need to ask the minister these questions because I think he needs to answer them. This is very, very important to the people of Queensland if they are to have any confidence in the Minister for National Parks. I know that he is serious about revocating this land, but if we think that this land is a logging area by itself and that it has been logged four times in the last 100 years, then that must get the grey matter moving around in his skull and it must make him think, 'Maybe this actually is a logging area.' However, I do not think that has sunk in for the minister at this time.

I know the minister likes to take credit for lots and lots of things, but I am sure in the long term he will not want to take credit for this. The minister has taken credit for Raine Island and saving the green turtle species. He put out a media release yesterday trying to praise the ALP government for all of the good work they have done. That is a mistake because it is misleading the people of Queensland. That work was not done by the ALP; it was done by the previous LNP government.

I would also like to touch on the three gateway centres—David Fleay, Walkabout Creek and Mon Repos. The government talks very highly of these areas, and I would like to thank the previous LNP government for all of the hard work they did. These are real areas that need to be catered for and have rangers there looking after them. They are areas that we need to dedicate for the future, particularly the David Fleay Wildlife Park. It is a fantastic area that should be protected, but it is one whole piece, unlike this particular facility. I am very happy to show members now on this map I am holding here. This is the private landholding where the big water park is going to go, and I can show members where all of the motorbikes go around the tracks too.

On a very, very serious note, the minister does need to come clean. This is a dirty deal between the Labor Party and the Greens—that is what this is about. This is about buying votes; it is about nothing else. This is very straightforward: 'I will pay you something by turning this into a national park.' I can tell the House now that this would not qualify as national park anytime, anywhere, in any regime. It is not equivalent to the Daintree in North Queensland or to Fraser Island. Those places are extremely special to the people of Queensland. There are many places that should qualify as national park, but I find this very, very difficult to accept.

I am trying to save the government money by actually letting the minister know that these different problems are going to arise and they will be ongoing problems for a very long time. The minister might want to stand on his feet and let us know how he is going to cater for it and what the cost of the fence will be. I think it could cost many, many millions of dollars to encase this area. The minister knows very

well that under the previous LNP government we were looking to build a motorcycle facility on this particular piece of land. I am sure many people will say, 'Maybe it's not such a great idea,' but we keep finding people dead in forests and national parks where they ride these motorcycles because nobody can find them. Nobody has ever gone to the trouble of putting in a dedicated facility like Wyaralong, which a previous lord mayor of Brisbane, Campbell Newman, had a lot to do with. I think the minister needs to take this on board too. If he is going to kick these people out of this proposed national park, where are they going to go? They will go onto private property or into other national parks or forestry areas and they will probably run into a tree and break a pelvis or something like that and we will have to send in people to find their rotting carcasses. That is what is going to happen.

The minister needs to come clean. He needs to put something on the table as to where these people will be relocated to. I am sure he has already done that work. It is called consultation, but I thought I would remind him about that. It is what should be done with this type of process. I do not think this process has been followed very clearly. The process that the minister has gone through has many weak and flawed areas and I would greatly appreciate it if the minister could come back at some stage and answer those few questions we have. Let us know where the 400-year-old trees are growing. That would be lovely to start with. Let us know where the motorcycles and the four-wheel drives that drive in there quite frequently are going to be relocated to. Let us know about the telecommunications site that I spoke about earlier. Please alleviate the problem for the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, and the Deputy Premier may wish to be made aware of these things. All of the development that this government is looking to approve on the Sunshine Coast will need telecommunications into the future, and this is one of the prime sites that we get that telecommunications from.

I place this upon the minister and I ask him how we are going to expand that site. Is it going to be easy to do or is it going to be difficult to do? Will the minister bend the rules to make it happen? I do not understand how the minister could have thought this through because many people are going to be placed in a difficult situation. I think he needs to come out and let the Sunshine Coast motorbike riders know that they will no longer be able to go into this facility. I am sure the Labor Party are looking to take the credit for that and that would be great for the member for Glass House, because not one motorcycle rider who is living in the minister's electorate will vote for him. I would be very happy about that and I would be very happy to see him lose many votes from these people.

It is a very, very expensive sport and something has to be done to cater for these people in the future. All I hear is deafening silence from those opposite. I suppose it is no different to the Queensland Rail problem that we are facing at the moment. The government does not think things through; they do not deliver outcomes for the people of Queensland. This is no different to Queensland Rail. Nothing will be delivered on time. There will be no fence put in place. There will be no facilities for those motorcycle riders to go to. We will probably not be able to talk to people on the coast in the future when we need to expand those telecommunication facilities because we know how difficult that is to do under national park legislation. The environmental impacts from federal government legislation which then will tie into this is going to make it so difficult. The government may wish to explain that to the people wanting to build that brand-new tourism facility. The tourism minister may wish to jump on board on this one and let us know why she is opposed to seeing tourist facilities built on the Sunshine Coast, because that is more than likely the impact that this national park revocation will have.

Debate, on motion of Mr Dickson, adjourned.

## MOTION

### CFMEU, WorkCover Queensland



**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move—

That the House note:

1. the CFMEU contributed \$156,218.60 to the Queensland Labor Party between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016;
2. a *Courier-Mail* article, dated 31 October 2016, stated that the Palaszczuk Labor government was intending to appoint a former National Secretary of the CFMEU as the new CEO of WorkCover Queensland;
3. the diary of the Industrial Relations Minister, Grace Grace, published on 1 November 2016 shows that the minister personally met with two candidates for the position of CEO of WorkCover Queensland on 21 September 2016;
4. between the two meetings mentioned above, that the minister met with CFMEU official Michael Ravbar.

And calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to rule out the appointment of a former CFMEU official as the CEO of WorkCover Queensland and immediately begin the selection of an independent CEO again with a fully open, accountable and transparent process pursuant to their policy of merit based recruitment rather than union mates.

This motion goes to the heart of the relationship of the CFMEU—and the intimidating behaviour of CFMEU officials—and the Labor Party, particularly the Queensland branch and more particularly the Minister for Industrial Relations. I have to start off by correcting a misrepresentation I made in the House some time ago. It was the fault of the honourable member for Hinchinbrook, of course. He told me that Duncan Pegg, who is sitting over there, was the union enforcer of the Labor Party Queensland branch. I was as surprised as he was at the time but—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! Member for Kawana, you will use the member's proper title.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. He might want to be Treasurer, but I think he has more chance of being transport minister this week. We know the member for Brisbane Central is, in fact, an actual union enforcer herself, so it came as no surprise to me to hear that the incoming CEO of WorkCover is a former national secretary of the CFMEU. At the outset I say that the appointment of Bruce Watson, former national secretary of the CFMEU, to WorkCover Queensland is totally inappropriate and the opposition does not support his appointment. We are told that this appointment either went to cabinet on Monday or it is going to cabinet next Monday. If it is going to cabinet next Monday the minister has an opportunity to take the cabinet submission out. If it went to cabinet on Monday, it will be going to Executive Council tomorrow. She has an opportunity to take it off the agenda for Executive Council. If she does not do that, then Bruce Watson, former CFMEU official, should reject his appointment; he should not accept the appointment. This is what we do know. Since the article ran on Monday in the *Courier-Mail* the minister has not said a word—not a peep. We know her office could not find her, could not locate her, did not know where she was. I guess now we know that unless Twitter tells them what is happening in the government they do not know. Maybe Steve Wardell should have tweeted the story and then Grace would have seen it. If he had tweeted his story the minister would have seen it just as the transport minister gets his guidance—

**Mr Minnikin:** There he is!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Tweet it now, Steve; the minister will see it. This is something we do not have to tweet because this is the minister's own ministerial diary, and I table a copy of the ministerial diary and there are a couple more pages to go.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from the ministerial diary of the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Multicultural Affairs, Hon. Grace Grace, 1 September 2016 to 30 September 2016 [1979].

On 21 September the minister met with a candidate for WorkCover. On 21 September, a couple of meetings later, she also met with a candidate for WorkCover. One, why is the minister meeting potential candidates when there is a panel set up? The minister is going to get up in a minute and say, 'Glenn Ferguson, the chair of WorkCover, he's your man. It's your panel. It's your board.' I will tell honourable members about the panel. Jim Murphy, the Under Treasurer, is on the panel and he is certainly not a supporter of LNP politics in Queensland. The minister will stand up here in a minute and say, 'It was your panel, your board. You selected them.' No, wrong.

**Mr Minnikin:** There goes your speech.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** If I were the minister, I would change my speech. Of course we see the minister met with Michael Ravbar for the CFMEU between those two meetings. Was the first person the minister met one Bruce Watson, former CFMEU national secretary? If he was not, why was Michael Ravbar just coincidentally meeting a minister? Mind you, he is a man under police investigation at the moment. What was Michael Ravbar meeting the minister about? Had it nothing to do with the CEO appointment of WorkCover? Is the minister going to get up here in a second and say it had nothing to do with it; it was about portfolio matters? Did the minister discuss the CEO appointment with Michael Ravbar of the CFMEU? I bet she did. We have videos of CFMEU thuggish behaviour. We have federal judges like Judge Jarrett of the Federal Court saying that there is repeated and wilful contraventions by the CFMEU and they choose unlawful means to further their industrial actions. The minister has an opportunity today to rule out the appointment of Bruce Watson. She should not stand up here and say, 'It was a panel appointed by the LNP,' because we know this appointment has had political interference by the minister's office, just as Brad O'Carroll had political interference with his appointment when the minister put him in her department on a contract. She should rule it out; if not, Bruce Watson should not accept the appointment.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.05 pm): I rise to oppose this motion in all of its forms. The member for Kawana is never short of a conspiracy theory. He is always baking up ideas, making accusations and can never debate a proper issue in this House without stooping to personal attacks, which is exactly what he is doing in this House right now and it is disgrace. The member for Kawana has asked a question about whether anything like this was discussed with the CFMEU. Let me say to him categorically on the record here in this House that at no stage was a CEO of WorkCover discussed at that meeting with the CFMEU. I repeat: absolutely at no stage.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** It is interesting because those opposite ask me in this House, 'Have you spoken to the union? Have you told them that they are doing the wrong thing? Are you meeting with them?' Here they are out of control, so you are damned if you meet with them and damned if you do not. If I do not meet with them, I am not doing anything and if I do meet with them, they say, 'You're disclosing all of this information.' Can I say on the record that was a total, absolute coincidence. There is no conspiracy theory as thought up in the head of the member for Kawana.

Let's go through this appointment because the WorkCover CEO is a significant appointment and an important appointment in this state. It is a significant appointment. I do not intend today to breach cabinet confidentiality. As a former minister, the member opposite should know the processes. I am concerned that before this matter has gone to cabinet and a decision has been made and signed off by the Governor in Council, this has been leaked and the media have been informed. That is a situation of its own.

**Mr Bleijie:** By your office.

**Ms GRACE:** I will take that interjection and I will totally reject that my office leaked this or informed the media in relation to this CEO. Let us go through the process. The process was managed by an external executive recruitment company Davidson. The selection committee comprised the chair, Glenn Ferguson. Let us look at the issue of Glenn Ferguson. He and I have actually worked quite well together in a professional manner. Glenn Ferguson was not appointed by us, the Labor Party; Glenn Ferguson, who is a member of the LNP and holds several committee and policy positions of the LNP, a Sunshine Coast solicitor known very well to the member for Kawana, was appointed by the member for Kawana. If the member for Kawana has lost confidence in the chair that he appointed himself, I suggest that he look at himself again. This board was headed by the chair, Glenn Ferguson, and included Under Treasurer Jim Murphy and board member Flavia Gobbo. I was contacted by the chair in early September and advised that, after an extensive round of interviews, the short list was down to two. At the request of the board, the recruitment company arranged for both candidates to meet me on 21 September. Following this meeting I had a discussion with the chair and we agreed that one candidate was clearly superior to the other. I am told that the candidate was invited—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, one moment. Pause the clock. There is too much debate across the chamber.

**Ms GRACE:** I am told that the candidate of choice was invited—and I am not going to name who it is—to attend a meeting of the full board, appointed by the member for Kawana, on 18 October. Immediately following that meeting the chair wrote to me—

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

**Ms GRACE:**—advising that the board appointed by the member for Kawana—the total board—had unanimously agreed to recommend the candidate that I will be taking to cabinet to be endorsed by the Governor in Council. If the member for Kawana has lost faith in his own board appointments then that is his problem: not mine. This process was open and transparent, but he knows nothing about that because if you look at his appointments—like the Chief Justice in this state—what a disgrace that was. You talk about leaking conversations, you talk about doing something that was completely outside of the moral and professional way that it should have been done—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise on two points of order: firstly, there is a Westminster convention that you do not reflect on a judicial officer. Justice Carmody is an existing judicial officer of the Supreme Court of Queensland. That is my first point of order. My second point of order is that I take complete offence at what the minister said and I ask her to withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, will you withdraw?

**Ms GRACE:** I withdraw. I was referring to the appointment process—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I would urge you not to provoke the opposition and the member for Kawana and to stick to the matter that the motion is about. Time has expired.

*(Time expired)*

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the shadow minister, the member for Kawana. The Palaszczuk Labor government should rule out the appointment of any former or current CFMEU official to be the CEO of WorkCover Queensland or to lead any other statutory authority in Queensland for the following reasons. The actions of the CFMEU and militant unions in Queensland are jeopardising our construction and building sectors. The Palaszczuk Labor government is so beholden to union influence that it is now owned and dominated by the stench of illegality, bullying, intimidation, lawlessness and corruption. Thousands of jobs in Queensland are being denied to ordinary people because of excessive construction costs due to inappropriate stop-work meetings and inflated pay rates as a result of militant unions. A Deloitte Access Economics report that was recently commissioned by Master Builders found that labour costs on building and construction projects are being pushed up by 11.9 per cent in Queensland, adding \$279 million a year to the state government's capital works budget.

Our Crime and Corruption Commission should investigate the links between organised crime, unions and the Australian Labor Party as a matter of urgency. Premier Palaszczuk can no longer continue to protect illegality, bullying, intimidation and lawlessness by unions. If you look at the industrial relations minister's meetings in relation to two candidates—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock one moment. Minister for Police and Minister for Industrial Relations, I would urge you not to persist or you will be warned under standing order 253A.

**Dr ROWAN:** They do not like hearing the truth. They like to lecture us on this side of the House, but what they do not like is transparency and openness in government—

**Mr Byrne** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I apologise, member for Moggill. Minister for Police, you are now warned under standing order 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

**Dr ROWAN:** They do not like hearing the truth about openness and transparency when it comes to merit based recruitment. They meet with two potential candidates to head up WorkCover Queensland, and in between that, as we have just heard from the minister, it just so happens that she also meets with a senior official from the CFMEU. It is highly unusual and highly irregular. We need openness and transparency in relation to the appointment of all key leaders and CEOs of our statutory authorities here in Queensland.

Recently we have seen some disgraceful actions by militant unionists who targeted a charity home for the families of sick children. The Ronald McDonald House, which is being built in South Brisbane—the electorate of the Deputy Premier—was among up to six worksites targeted by the CFMEU for a two-day stop-work meeting. The Palaszczuk Labor government professes to care about vulnerable and disadvantaged children but on the other hand fails to repudiate the disgraceful delay of a project that has the capacity to assist hundreds of vulnerable children and their families whilst these children are being treated for a range of health conditions at the nearby Lady Cilento hospital.

Union vandalism and industrial warfare is also affecting Queensland's preparations for the Commonwealth Games, with the velodrome at Chandler also targeted by militant unions as well as the \$550 million Commonwealth Games village. The Sunshine Coast's \$1.8 billion university hospital is also being targeted. It is not a far stretch to see evolving concerns between criminal gangs, money laundering, fraud, terrorism, unions and the Labor Party, who are soft on crime and soft on—

**Ms GRACE:** I rise to a point of order. Looking at the motion that has been moved, I really struggle with relevance here. They are talking about the actions of a particular union. It is not in the motion, and I draw your attention to relevance in relation to this matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will allow the contribution.

**Dr ROWAN:** The Palaszczuk government and the industrial relations minister support union bullying, union intimidation and union harassment. When we look at the recruitment of the new CEO for WorkCover Queensland, as we have said, the industrial relations minister meets with a key CFMEU

official, Michael Ravbar, who is under investigation by the police for inappropriate conduct and behaviour, and then between meetings with two of the candidates she just happens to have a scheduled meeting with him. We ask again what was discussed at that meeting, what was the purpose of the meeting and—

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Dr ROWAN:** I take that interjection. The industrial relations minister does not like to hear the truth about these matters which are very important to the people of Queensland. Premier Palaszczuk and her ministers are beholden to union bosses and union influence. We know that coercion, intimidation, unlawful industrial action, right-of-entry breaches and illegal activities have become the modus operandi of the conjoint union movement and the Australian Labor Party. We only have to look at the findings of the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption. Look at Commissioner Dyson Heydon's findings in relation to what he found at that time.

The shearers of Western Queensland, the founders of the Labor Party, would be aghast. They would be rolling in their graves over the evolution of the modern Labor Party. There needs to be leadership within the Labor Party who will stand up and repudiate the actions, the illegality, the corruption and the inappropriate conduct and behaviour in relation to union officials. I call upon those members opposite to repudiate criminality and thuggery. You should provide transparency and accountability in government, and you should support this motion tonight which was moved by the shadow minister and the member for Kawana.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (6.18 pm): I rise to oppose this motion. Just when you thought they could not any sink any lower, along comes the member for Kawana. He is like a broken record launching yet another anti-union crusade, but this time it comes with a new twist. He wants to drag WorkCover into the mud—Queensland's very own workers' compensation scheme which is the best of its kind in Australia. WorkCover has the lowest average premiums of any Australian state or territory and provides outstanding coverage and benefits to injured Queensland workers. It should be beyond politics, but sadly the member for Kawana is willing to undermine confidence in WorkCover because of his own blind hatred for unions.

As I understand it, the appointment of the new WorkCover CEO is yet to be finalised. Clearly there is a process to be followed, and the Minister for Industrial Relations is following that process. Of course the industrial relations minister meets regularly with key stakeholders including business, employers and unions. These meetings are outlined in her diary extracts. They are all aboveboard and there is nothing to hide. Her meetings with the WorkCover CEO candidates were entirely appropriate. They were totally separate and unrelated to her meeting with the CFMEU state secretary. To suggest otherwise is simply not true, but the member for Kawana has never let the facts get in the way of a good story, nor has he ever been known for following due process. He presided over a spectacular series of ministerial bumbles during the sad period of the previous LNP government.

On behalf of all of us here, I put on the record our thanks for his handling of those issues. His botched handling of the Chief Justice appointment leaves him without a shred of credibility when it comes to matters like this. There were many other disastrous bumbles by the member for Kawana when he was Queensland's worst ever industrial relations minister and attorney-general. Let us look at some of the Bleijie bumbles.

I refer to the boot camp tenders. In April 2015 Queensland's Auditor-General raised concerns about favouritism and cost blowouts after examining the Newman government's youth boot camp program. The report tabled in parliament—

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order relating to relevance. I ask that the member be brought back to the subject of the debate. I would like your ruling, please, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I would urge the member to make his contribution relevant to the motion we are debating.

**Mr WHITING:** In his speech the member for Kawana accused us of political interference. The report tabled in parliament said that the Fraser Coast and Lincoln Springs boot camp providers were chosen even though suitable, lower cost options were available. It all happened on the member for Kawana's watch.

Certainly the member has accused someone on this side of the House of leaking information. I refer to the sorry fiasco brought about once again by the member for Kawana's loose lips, when the government was forced to settle a defamation case with a Gold Coast law firm over comments about—

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would urge you to rule again on relevance to the topic at hand.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a further point of order. The member ought know that that matter is currently subject to a Crime and Corruption Commission investigation. Ministers have been subjected to that investigation. I would ask that the member tread very carefully in what he is about to say on that matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Murrumba, I would urge you to make your contribution relevant. I think you have strayed outside the subject of the motion we are debating. I ask you to come back to the topic we are debating, please.

**Mr WHITING:** This motion is another attempt by the member for Kawana to undermine a workers organisation that is crucial in protecting the lives of Queenslanders. The CFMEU protects Queenslanders who work on construction sites from injury or death. We need their vigilance because Queenslanders are dying on construction sites at an unacceptable rate. As I said earlier this year, there have been no fatalities on Queensland CFMEU sites since 2008 but there have been 74 deaths on non-unionised sites. In the seven years that the ABCC was around there were 255 deaths on Australian construction sites and 356 within the construction industry.

I oppose this motion because I think it is absolutely crucial that we reject what has been said and implied about interference in this process. All organisations and stakeholders—whether they be employers or unions—have a legitimate right to meet with and talk to ministers about a variety of issues.

In closing, we should not be listening to a man whom the former president of the Bar Association described as ‘an inexperienced and undereducated and, in my view, incompetent Attorney-General’ who headed ‘insidious attacks’ against the legal profession. That is why I believe that the motion should be opposed.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Mount Ommaney, in relation to the matters that may be the subject of a Crime and Corruption Commission investigation I have received advice that that is not sub judice.

**Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by my colleague the member for Kawana. If you have to give the Minister for Industrial Relations credit for one thing it is that she holds dear to her heart the old adage ‘you don’t bite the hand that feeds you’. We know who is feeding this minister. It is none other than her union mates and her union masters, especially the CFMEU.

The minister asked why former CFMEU state secretaries should not get this role—a plumb Public Service role. Let us look at the types of characters that run with the CFMEU. I refer to what came to light last week about what Joe McDonald and his mates said. I know that the member for Sandgate loves to monitor Twitter. He might like to look at YouTube, because it is there for everyone to see. Do members know what they said? They said—

... we all know how we’ve felt for a long time about the ALP but what we’re actually going to do is take ownership of the ALP.

Frankly, I think I have missed something. Everybody on this side of the House finds it extremely important that since 2000 the unions have donated over \$55 million to the ALP. Now we find out that over \$156,000 was contributed to the Queensland ALP from January to June this year. I do not think that was for a Christmas party; I think it was just another payout to secure a public role. That is not buying influence; it is owning a political party. Each and every one of the 42 members on the other side of the House is owned and controlled by the unions.

Let us look at why CFMEU officials are not appropriate appointments. Brian Parker and Darren Greenfield are accused of consorting with underworld criminal figures; using standover men, bikies and career criminals; engaging in intimidation; and making death threats—and the 42 members opposite say, ‘There’s nothing wrong with that.’ Who can forget what happened on 8 September, when Jade Ingham is quoted as saying, ‘We just like a [expletive] blue.’ At that very same rally, which disrupted the whole of Brisbane, Michael Ravbar is quoted as saying, ‘I love a [expletive] revolution.’ On a side note, I do not think that language is necessary.

Time and time again we have seen corruption, even within the membership of the ALP. There was Bill Shorten and the \$40,000, and Cesar Melhem signing up the Australian netballers. What about the Deputy Premier’s very good friend Eddie Obeid? What happened to Eddie? I think there was a \$5,000 donation to the Deputy Premier, but we do not want to talk about that, do we? Apparently when

the minister meets Michael Ravbar there is nothing going on and nothing to see. What about the 113 officials before courts? Those officials are from one organisation and one organisation only: the CFMEU. There are some 1,100 charges but, 'No, there is nothing to see here!'

It is a sad situation for government members that at the end of the day they cannot make a decision, they cannot deliver any benefits for their electorates and they cannot represent their constituents because they are beholden to the unions. Why is the minister making the final decision on such an important appointment? We all know why.

**Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (6.29 pm): The member for Mount Ommaney could have just tabled the *Sunday Mail* article and saved us all five minutes—a copy-and-paste job! Tonight I rise to speak against the motion. Here we are again. The member for Kawana is on his feet and, predictably, it is another attack against the CFMEU. Wouldn't you hope that they might focus on things that actually matter and maybe provide us with a fresh approach? No, it is the same old chestnut of union bashing—the CFMEU. We have been waiting for this to come after the highly informative expose by the *Sunday Mail*, and here it is and isn't the timing curious? The member for Kawana is doing the bidding for his federal counterparts with a vote on the ABCC legislation imminent. Are those opposite ramping it up in concert with the Murdoch media just in time for the ABCC legislation? It is pathetic and it is predictable, but I suppose the Prime Minister needs all the help he can get with Bob 'The Bankrupt Builder' Day's resignation now formal. It seems that the call to arms has gone out.

This is from a former government whose track record on attacking workers is absolutely priceless. The member for Kawana was part of a government that sacked 14,000 public servants and ripped away the rights and conditions of hardworking council workers. The Newman government's so-called award modernisation process was simply a way of attacking the rights and elements of local government workers and it was shameful. Yes: as if attacking the judiciary, the union movement and our doctors was not enough, he also managed to cover off on our council workers. The member for Kawana was a part of a government that took away common law rights for injured workers and put workers' lives at risk by barring access to workplaces without 24 hours notice. The member for Kawana was part of a government that gave up the negotiations with our public sector workers and left them without a pay increase for over 16 months—although apparently, according to former premier Campbell Newman, a lot of those sacked public sector workers were thanking him. Can members just imagine it for a second: 'Thank you, former premier, for my sacking.' Give me a break! When it comes to industrial relations, the things that really matter—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members, I am having difficulty hearing the member for Capalaba. He is not as loud as the member for Mount Ommaney, who has a very powerful voice, so I would urge you to—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I can certainly hear the member for Mount Ommaney. I would ask members for a little bit of tolerance.

**Mr BROWN:** When it comes to industrial relations, the things that really matter for families sitting around the kitchen table are ensuring that workers have decent wages and conditions, that they are safe at work, that they are protected from unfair treatment and that they have some measure of job security. I am proud of a government that has restored the rights of Queenslanders injured at work by restoring access to common law. We have improved safety for Queenslanders at work by restoring the right to access workplaces. We have given certainty to the state's public sector workers and finalised enterprise bargaining negotiations with multiple agencies including nurses, teachers and police. We have acted to reverse the loss of conditions and entitlements facing council workers and we have established a forum for workers and their families affected by workplace fatalities and serious injury.

We are getting on with the job and are doing our utmost for working people and their families in our state. These workers and their families are not obsessed with antiworker rhetoric—like those opposite. These workers and their families are not interested in anything that smacks of union bashing, and I only have to remind members of Work Choices and the glorious effects that that had. We hear nothing from those opposite on issues that actually impact working people's lives such as exploitation from the labour hire industry, job security, conditions and ongoing employment. Could we just give up on the union bashing and stop wasting the parliament's time? This is a ridiculous motion—a motion that essentially argues that an IR minister should not meet with a union secretary. Give me a break! What are we going to be debating tomorrow—that the education minister cannot meet with P&Cs Qld or the health minister cannot meet with the AMA? This is an absolutely ridiculous motion and one that no-one in this House should support.

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

**AYES, 41:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**NOES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

Resolved in the negative.

Sitting suspended from 6.39 pm to 7.40 pm.

## WEAPONS REGULATION

### Disallowance of Statutory Instrument



**Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (7.40 pm): I move—

That part 3 section 16 of the Weapons Regulation 2016, subordinate legislation No. 131 of 2016, tabled in the House on 16 August 2016 be disallowed.

Tonight we are speaking about a regulation that should have been changed in a once-in-10-year opportunity with a review of the Weapons Regulation. The reason that we are here tonight is because we have a police minister who has refused to consult properly with the law-abiding gun owners and dealerships in this state. We have seen a record of this in a number of engagements that the minister has had with the sector. He has been in a lot of ways forced to deal with the sector and they have found it incredibly frustrating. The minister has refused to deal in any meaningful way whatsoever with these people who do the right thing, who are serious about making sure that our gun regulations are workable and that guns only appear in the hands of those people who are law-abiding.

We know the record of the minister in this area. When we have previously spoken in this House about category H gun licensing for those law-abiding primary producers who for decades have used handguns responsibly, it has been recognised in the Queensland parliament that this was a proper use of handguns by primary producers. The minister has failed to recognise the workplace health and safety issues associated with the practical aspects for primary producers of using these handguns.

**Mr Byrne** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection from the police minister because what I am endeavouring to argue is that this minister has had no serious engagement whatsoever with law-abiding firearms owners and dealerships. He has made comments about our primary producers and called them lone cowboys. We know the minister's record in this area. He had no problems discharging a firearm in a residential property in a suburb of Rockhampton.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. Rats, was it?

**Mr Rickuss:** The size of Alsations!

**Mr MANDER:** Rats the size of Alsations!

**Mr Cripps:** Allegedly.

**Mr MANDER:** Allegedly. We are talking about this because we have a minister who has no respect for law-abiding gun owners, people who have proven over the years that they are responsible with firearms, that they have used them in their usual workplace and used them very responsibly. Now we have a once-in-10-year opportunity to disallow a regulation that is unworkable. The regulation states that if a gun dealership licensee dies that licence is immediately suspended. There are an incredible number of impracticalities that are associated with that. Rather than it being attached to a dealership or a business, by being attached to a licensee, an individual, there is a major disruption that takes place to business if the person who has that licence passes away. The gun dealers have been wanting to tell

the minister this but they have not been given any meaningful way of doing that. The result of that is that this once-in-10-year opportunity that the minister has with regard to reviewing these regulations has been missed.

There are some really serious potential consequences of this regulation. Some of these gun dealerships are major multimillion dollar businesses. Some of them have contracts with the defence department and store Defence weapons. Imagine the disruption this might cause to national security if the licensee died. With the week or two of red tape and the bureaucracy associated with that we can only imagine the disruption that that would cause. Jobs would be lost for that period of time. There is no doubt that this opportunity has been missed and it has simply been missed because this minister refuses to consult with the industry.

Various speakers from this side of the House, particularly our regional members, have been approached by owners of dealerships in their areas. Right across-the-board this issue has been of great concern. They are dismayed that this opportunity has been missed. We feel that the only responsible thing to do is to bring this disallowance motion to the House tonight. My appeal to the minister is to have serious engagement with the people who live and breathe these regulations on a daily basis, the people whose livelihood is associated with the workability of these regulations. It seems to me it is common sense to make sure that we are engaging with those people who live and breathe this every day, who are experts in this area, who are concerned that law-abiding gun owners and dealerships should not be affected because the licence is attached to a particular person. We argue that for all those reasons this aspect of the regulation should be disallowed.

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (7.49 pm): I rise to speak against the disallowance motion moved by the member for Everton. I will start by explaining the particular regulation. In 2016 the Weapons Regulation 1996 expired and was required to be renewed. As we know, subordinate regulation needs to be renewed on a 10-yearly basis. In the 10 years of this weapons regulation's existence, there have been no policy changes made between the Weapons Regulation 1996 and the Weapons Regulation 2016, which became effective on 1 September 2016. The 2016 regulation was modernised, which involved renumbering and minor wording changes to reflect modern drafting standards. That is typically what happens when you renew subordinate legislation that has been working. For example, in clause 13(1) the word 'or' has been removed and replaced with a comma between 'suspended' and 'revoked'. That is a small demonstration of what has changed between the 2006 and 2016 regulations. That specific provision was enacted as section 13 of the Weapons Regulation 1996 by the Borbidge coalition government. The provision has remained in existence without amendment since that date.

The system for the changeover of representatives has operated successfully since its enactment in the Weapons Regulation 2006, which was superseded by the regulation of 2016. Regardless of section 16 of the Weapons Regulation 2016, upon the death of a licensee, section 20(6)(b) is applicable and any licence previously issued is cancelled. Currently, a licence held by a body is held in the name of the representative who has the ability to nominate associates to the licensee who can carry out the duties of the representative, such as dealers or employees. Should the licensee be subject to criminal charges due to the loss of firearms or a failure to carry out their duties correctly, the representative is the person who is criminally responsible. Police have advised that any new representative would be required to seek an entirely new licence with supporting information, resulting in firearms being surrendered for safekeeping for long periods of time and further information being sought over the ownership of the firearms. Essentially, if this section is removed it will create an issue for dealers. As the process stands, the removal of this particular section would impact dealers significantly, particularly in terms of the time taken for the new applicant to go through the process to become the dealer.

Ultimately, the LNP is showing that it is soft on guns and soft on crime. Maybe they are following in the footsteps of their brothers and sisters in the New South Wales parliament and also what we have seen in the Commonwealth parliament lately, where an attempt is being made to water down the national gun laws. Those gun laws were put in place following the tragedy of the Port Arthur massacre. I well remember being in Brisbane on a cold winter's afternoon in 1996 when I heard the breaking news about that terrible massacre, yet tonight we are debating this regulation.

Last month, the police minister met with his state and territory counterparts. A key issue on the agenda was the reclassification of lever-action shotguns, specifically, the controversial Adler A110. It has been widely reported that all but one jurisdiction was prepared to re-categorise lever-action shotguns from category A, which is easy to acquire, to category B for a magazine of five rounds or less and to category D for a magazine greater than five rounds. At that meeting, Queensland presented its case that as a short-range rapid-fire weapon, the Adler was potentially dangerous and categories B and

D were the minimum that should be considered. The seven-shot Adler shotgun is banned from Australia until the states and territories can agree on how to classify the gun and the permit that a gun holder would require to use the weapon.

Lately, there has been some media interest in firearms, which is what we are discussing in the disallowance motion before the House tonight. Today I did a bit of research. No doubt rural members such as the member for Gregory—I remember him as Lachie—would know farmers who are very concerned about the importation and use of Adler guns, and the meaning of this proposed change to the regulation. Peter Lucas from Wyandra said—

We don't use a shotgun out here. We can't get close enough to use a shotgun to shoot any of those feral pests. We just use a normal large calibre rifle, a .22-250—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): One moment, member for Ferny Grove.

**Mr RICKUSS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is totally irrelevant to the disallowance motion that we are talking about. This is not about Adler shotguns.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** With respect, member for Lockyer, given that we are talking about gun regulations, a discussion around some weapons has to be allowed.

**Mr RICKUSS:** If I want to talk about popguns, I should be right.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lockyer, during the discussion on a disallowance motion with respect to weapons regulations, I do not think it is unreasonable that there be discussion about particular types of weapons. I am listening very closely to what the member for Ferny Grove is saying.

**Mr FURNER:** Thank you for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. Mr Lucas went on to indicate—

We do have shooters come from time to time—

No doubt those shooters use firearms that are regulated by the weapons regulation—

but none of them use a shotgun to my knowledge.

Mr Lucas went on to suggest that he is unimpressed with the issue being politicised. One cannot blame a farmer for being unhappy that something he uses to regulate his land is being politicised. That is not a good thing for rural landholders.

In my opinion, the only knowledge that the member for Everton and the member for Lockyer have about firearms would come from holding a water pistol. I have had some experience of firearms. Listen up, member for Everton. I was a member of the Virginia shooting range. I held a concealable weapons licence, which I handed in as that is a requirement under the regulation if you are no longer a member. I have never held a concealable weapon. I had no wish to go down that path. However, many years ago I had a .22 magnum rifle. At Al Minhad military weapons range in Dubai I was privileged to fire a Steyr. I have fired a 12.7 millimetre deck-mounted machine gun on the Armidale patrol boat, HMAS *Bathurst*. In fact, Peter Dutton was with me on that particular day, attending a defence program. I had to show him how to use it, because he was pretty clueless. Once again referring to firearms, when I was employed by Armaguard I carried on my right hip a .357 Smith & Wesson and, in many cases, a .38 Smith & Wesson.

To be honest, when it comes to this issue half the people opposite are hypocrites. On the one hand, they come in here and talk tough on crime and talk tough on the use of firearms. Tonight, by disallowing this particular regulation they want to make it more difficult for dealers. They want to go down the path of making shotguns such as the Adler more accessible, putting people in our communities at risk. On that basis, I oppose the disallowance motion before the House this evening.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (9.58 pm): I support the disallowance motion moved by the member for Everton. I have been sitting here and listening to the member for Ferny Grove's speech for the last 10 minutes. This has nothing to do with the Adler. This has nothing to do with Port Arthur. This is about the concerns of law-abiding firearms dealers that they will be forced to shut down following the death of a gun dealership licence holder. This is about red tape. It is about bureaucracy. This is what is so disappointing. I am not speaking from any notes or from a prepared speech—

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** I take the interjection from the member for Gladstone. I plead with him to listen just once to this issue. I am sick to death of this side of politics, primary producers and farmers continually being criticised and bashed over their position on guns. I am absolutely sick to death of us being demonised. Where do those opposite get off demonising us, primary producers, farmers and graziers over guns? What thrill do they get out of that?

**A government member:** That's not true.

**Mr MILLAR:** If you listened to the member for Ferny Grove he talked about Adler and Port Arthur. It is not about that. It is about red tape. It is about listening to gun dealerships. It is about understanding an issue that they have. They need to be taken notice of.

Law-abiding firearms dealers are concerned that stores will be forced to be shut down following the death of a gun dealership licence holder. What does that have to do with Port Arthur and Adler—not a damn thing? The law which recently took effect means that if a dealership gun licence nominee dies the store would be deemed to be trading illegally. That is what we are dealing with here.

We are dealing with small businesses that have a right to be small businesses. Many of these small businesses, including those in my area such as Wallaby Jacks in Emerald, Glen Rural Traders in Longreach and Halls Fire Arms in Rocky, are important. They contribute to the economy. They pay their taxes. They are small businesses. We are looking at a bureaucracy and a regulation that needs to be fixed. That is what the member for Everton is trying to fix.

I am calling on the government to be prepared to consult with these firearms dealers and to do this properly. That is what we are asking for. This has nothing to do with what the member for Ferny Grove was talking about. It frustrates those of us in Western Queensland and in regional areas that when we talk about these issues those opposite bring in other issues that have nothing to do with it. It is about small business being able to operate successfully. That is what this is about. If the person who owns the store is the licensee, that person dies, they lose the licence and that shop or dealership is considered to be trading illegally, what do you think happens there?

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** Why would you want to shut a business down in regional Queensland when you are the member for Gladstone? Why would you want to shut a business down, especially in Gladstone? Why would you want to shut a business down? Please tell me why you want to shut businesses down.

They contribute to the economy. They pay people's wages. Those people who get paid wages from those small businesses pay mortgages. They contribute to the economy. This is what we are talking about. We need to make sure that these businesses will not be trading illegally. We do not want these businesses trading illegally. I call on those members opposite to support this disallowance motion and fix up this issue.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** That just shows that you are not looking at this issue from a red tape point of view. Law-abiding firearms dealers are concerned stores will be forced to shut down following the death of a gun dealership licence holder.

**Mr Byrne** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** It has nothing to do with that. I take the interjection from the police minister, but it has nothing to do with that. It is about supporting small businesses in regional areas. I know that that is a new concept for those opposite, but we have to support everybody in regional areas.

I support the shadow police minister's disallowance motion. It is important that we make sure that these businesses—these law-abiding firearms dealers—are not forced to shut down because the government failed to consult with them and failed to understand the issue. All they want to do is continue trading. They are law-abiding people.

The issue of firearms continues to be an issue in my seat of Gregory. Not only are we dealing with this, but we are also dealing with the reclassification of H class licences—licences for concealable weapons. We use those H class licences for practical reasons.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** The member for Logan shows that he has no understanding whatsoever of this issue, but he is prepared to interject and not listen. This is a serious issue. This is not about what the member for Ferny Grove was talking about.

This is about law-abiding firearms dealers who are concerned that they will be forced to shut down following the death of a gun dealership licence holder. The law which recently took effect means that if a gun dealership licence nominee died the store would be deemed to be trading illegally. That is what we are talking about. It will force the police to immediately seize all guns and the dealership to close its doors for months until a new licence can be given to a nominee. That is what we are talking about.

**Mr Byrne:** Who's told you that?

**Mr MILLAR:** That is what we are talking about. It is about sitting down with these law-abiding firearms dealers, talking to them about this issue and finding a way through so that the licensee is the business and the business can continue to trade. These businesses employ people. Wallaby Jacks, Halls Fire Arms and Glen Rural Traders do not just sell firearms. Wallaby Jacks is a great store in Emerald. It is a success story. They sell camping gear and swags. They are a successful business. A part of their business is that they are law-abiding firearms dealers.

I believe a simple way to fix this is to sit down with them and have a chat. We need to try to support small businesses in regional areas. It is important. This is an issue that can be easily fixed. I call on the Minister for Police and the Palaszczuk government to sit down with these people and fix this problem. It is not a technical issue. It is not a hard issue to fix.

If the gun dealership licence holder dies the gun dealership licence should be easily transferred to the business so that the business can continue to operate. It is about supporting small business in rural and regional Queensland. It is not a hard thing to do. I call on those opposite to support the disallowance motion moved by the member for Everton.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (8.07 pm): This is truly a disturbing and misguided disallowance motion moved by member for Everton tonight, and I will not be supporting it. It is ironic that a referee is moving a disallowance motion. I find that strange. The opposition is trying to move an amendment to a technical clause of the Weapons Regulation regarding the suspension of a licence if the endorsed representative loses authority to represent the firearms dealership.

Those members opposite, including the member for Gregory, may be interested to note that Minister Byrne has established a number of weapons consultation forums to ensure that Queensland's weapons policy framework reflects the diverse needs of key stakeholders, including police, victims of crime organisations, the legal community, the agricultural industry, the firearms industry and sporting and recreational shooters. These forums have provided a constructive mechanism for full and open consultation with stakeholders regarding Queensland firearms policy and regulatory settings, including the NFA review, and will continue to meet into the future.

**Mr Millar:** That is what we are looking forward to.

**Mr BUTCHER:** You just said that there was no consultation for those people. I will take that interjection. He has been there. Those forums are there. In 2016 the Weapons Regulation 1996 expired and had to be renewed. I note that the Weapons Regulation 1996 was introduced by the Borbidge LNP government following the terrible events in Port Arthur.

The advice of the Queensland Police Service is that there has been no policy changes made between the changes from the Weapons Regulation 1996 to the Weapons Regulation 2016 which became effective from 1 September this year. Do not take my word for it. Take the word of the Queensland Police Service. The 2016 regulations were modernised to reflect modern drafting standards such as renumbering and making minor word changes. You have to ask: given that these changes are so minor, why is the LNP wasting the time of the House with such a bizarre disallowance motion here tonight? I will get to that in a moment. First, let us run through how the regulation has worked for the past 20 years and will continue to work into the future.

Currently, a licence held by a body—that is, a firearm's dealership—is held in the name of the representative. In circumstances where the representative dies or their authority is otherwise revoked, the licence would be suspended until a new representative is nominated. In such cases, Queensland Police Service Weapons Licensing would liaise with the dealer's associate to ensure all weapons remain in secure storage. Furthermore, the dealership would be provided the necessary assistance, where possible, to ensure that their business remains in a position to trade. The Queensland Police Service would then work with the business to ensure a new representative could be appointed at that time. This process has worked perfectly since it was first introduced in 1997.

Let us step through what would happen if section 16 were disallowed, as asked for tonight. The Queensland police advise that, should section 16 be removed from the regulations, it will have the effect that, if a representative dies or their authority is revoked, the licence will be cancelled without the ability to nominate a new representative. That leads to more down time and, as the member for Gregory said, less service to the community and the people involved in the dealership.

Any new representative would be required to seek an entirely new licence with the supporting information, resulting in firearms being surrendered for safekeeping for long periods of time. If section 16 is disallowed, it will create significant issues for those firearms dealers who want to take over. In particular, it would substantially increase the time taken for the 'new applicant' to go through the process in order to become the dealer.

If those opposite want to make life more difficult for firearms dealers, go ahead and disallow section 16, but do it with the knowledge that you will actually be, pardon the pun, shooting firearms dealers in the foot. The simple fact is that this debate is not about a technical section of the Weapons Regulation. What we are seeing tonight is the LNP being patsies of the gun lobby as part of a coordinated campaign to pressure governments right across Australia to go soft on guns.

The LNP are hopelessly divided on guns. Two weeks ago we saw the LNP in New South Wales sabotaging efforts by every other jurisdiction in Australia, including their fellow LNP governments in Western Australia, Tasmania and the Commonwealth, to reclassify the Adler shotgun. You have Senator Bridget McKenzie undermining the position of federal Justice Minister Keenan. You have Western Australian Liberal MP Ian Goodenough undermining the position of his own Premier, Colin Barnett. The LNP are tearing themselves apart over guns. The Nationals are fighting with the Liberals over guns. The far right are fighting with the moderates over guns.

My twin brother is a senior sergeant based in Gladstone and has been a police officer for more than 20 years. In that time he has seen more trauma than we can possibly imagine, being the first on the scene of a fatality, delivering news to loved ones or simply fronting up to work day after day, year after year not knowing what he might be confronted with—the ever-present danger that he might be injured or worse. In the words of Police Commissioner Ian Stewart, 'No matter how experienced, skilled, equipped, or courageous an officer may be, at times fate and circumstances will conspire, resulting in the serious injury or the tragic death of an officer.' Police officers put their safety aside for the betterment of the community they serve and, as the brother of a police officer, I want to say that this sacrifice is acknowledged and appreciated.

I have talked to my brother on many occasions and the fear for their safety is a real issue that they face every day or night when they clock on for their shift. I will not stand for this state to be flooded with tens of thousands of high-powered, high-capacity firearms such as a seven-shot Adler shotgun which can be used by those with nefarious motives. I do not want him and his colleagues to face criminals armed with stolen, high-powered, high-capacity firearms. I do not want him and his colleagues to have to respond to heinous crimes caused by these weapons being in the hands of the wrong people. While the LNP might be happy to throw away longstanding principles supporting the tough gun laws brought in by their former leaders Rob Borbidge and John Howard, the Palaszczuk government will never go soft on guns.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Before calling the next member, I remind members to be careful about using the collective 'you' and perhaps addressing individual members using the term 'you'.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (8.14 pm): I rise to support the disallowance motion on the Weapons Regulation 2016 moved by the member for Everton. I think it might be of interest to this House to know that there are more people who die from mosquitoes than from weapons dealers. I think that is particularly important. You really should be taking aim at the mosquitoes, not the weapons dealers.

**Mr Dickson:** Zika virus.

**Ms LEAHY:** Absolutely, and Ross River. Previously it was the case that the dealer's licence was attached to the business itself, not the individual. Suspending a dealer's licence could have major implications for that dealer and the equipment that they supply, not to mention the effect that this will have in many rural and regional communities. I walked into one of my local dealers in Charleville the other day. He explained to me how primary producers are coming to him because they have to hand in their category H weapons for destruction. They may well be two hours outside of Charleville but, because of the actions of Weapons Licensing and this government, they now have to hand that weapon

in and their only choice is for the weapons dealer to make sure that weapon is destroyed. This is the case. It is a direct result of this Labor government's lack of consultation and disgraceful attitude towards law-abiding licensed weapons owners.

In the way this regulation stands there could be very detrimental effects in rural and regional areas and to small businesses. There are very few small businesses in my electorate who are simply just a weapons dealer. They are a combined weapons business. They might be selling sporting equipment, for instance, like the one at Roma. They might be selling lawn mowers like the one I was in at Charleville. It is the weapon dealer's licence which is combined with other small businesses. This change would have a detrimental effect on those small businesses in those communities.

It does not surprise me that members opposite have little understanding of how far some of the people in my electorate would have to travel to deal with their local weapons dealer. I know many of you have not been there and perhaps you should visit. It is also not known how long it would take to revoke the suspension and what happens during a period of suspension. This part has changed in the regulation and that is clearly because of the inadequate consultation by this Labor government. It has failed to pick up on this error in this regulation. Again, as always with this government, there is a distinct pattern here, and there are concerns in relation to how arrogantly this government has decided that it will not consult with members of the community who are directly affected by the regulations and the legislation it is putting in place.

Primary producers in my area, who have been very unfairly labelled and vilified by this Labor government as lone cowboys, are greatly concerned. They are properly licensed weapons holders who are responsible weapons owners who use category H weapons day in day out as tools of their trade. It is very unfortunate and very disrespectful that they should be labelled lone cowboys. Their only other choice if they do not have a category H weapon is to use a pocket knife.

I also want to highlight the importance of appropriately licensed weapons dealers in rural and regional areas. I will give you an example that I am aware of. The minister may be interested to learn a little bit about this particular situation. Where there is a farming couple on a property and the husband is the licensed weapons owner and he, due to whatever circumstances, passes away, the situation occurs where the spouse is living in the home and she does not have a weapons licence. What happens in these situations is that, unbeknown to the spouse, the police generally turn up on the doorstep. We may well have a situation—and I am aware of some—where an 80-year-old lady is living on her own and the police turn up totally unannounced and they start to literally interrogate that person in relation to what they have done with their weapons.

She is really not in a position to have a weapons licence and is not the sort of person at the age of 80 who is going to do the training to make sure that she has a .410 shotgun to shoot the snakes around the house. They have to make arrangements either to hand their weapons into a dealer—if there is no dealer in their community, that is very difficult to do at a time when they are grieving—or to hand them to the police or arrange for the transfer of that weapons licence and those weapons to another family member. All this happens without a single piece of correspondence from Weapons Licensing acknowledging their loss and the fact that under legislation they have to make some changes.

Those women and those spouses rely very heavily on the advice of their local weapons dealer. I would be very disappointed if this government made it harder and harder for those weapons dealers to hold their licence and to put threats in place like this regulation does, which is one of the reasons why we are moving this disallowance motion. I do not want it to be any harder for those licence dealers and those small business people to go about the very important community service that they do. They do not just make money from weapons. They provide a community service and advice which is particularly important in many situations, particularly where there is a bereavement, which I have outlined.

I urge the government to support this change and this disallowance motion. It is easy to fix this. It is not that hard. I can also assure members that they have nothing to fear from licensed, law-abiding weapons owners and dealers in Queensland, particularly those people in rural and regional Queensland who do a lot more community service work than selling weapons.

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (8.21 pm): I think the best advice that I can give tonight, to start off with, is to say that I will not be shooting from the hip. I am here to speak against the member for Everton's motion to disallow section 16 of the Weapons Regulation 2016. I was a member of this parliament when the LNP Borbidge government implemented this regulation, and it is a bit disappointing to see that his own party now wants to disallow this regulation which will be of benefit to people who find themselves in a place of need.

It is a bit concerning that for no discernible reason the opposition wants to do this. Although the member for Everton claims to be working in the interests of gun dealers, removing this section would hamper firearms dealers' ability to operate. Based on advice from the Queensland Police Service—I see we have an officer here tonight, and I would rather accept the advice of a Police Service member than members of the opposition—your motion, even though you will not accept it, will significantly increase issues for dealers. There is absolutely no logical reason behind this move to amend a technical clause of the Weapons Regulation 2016.

The QPS advised that there has been no policy change made between the Weapons Regulation 1996 and the Weapons Regulation 2016, which became effective on 1 September 2016. The wording of the 2016 regulation was simply modernised as a common practice. It happens every 10 years. Let me lay out the exact changes for the opposition, which either chooses not to read the regulation or could not comprehend the regulation. In section 13(1), the word 'or' has been removed and replaced with a comma between 'suspended' and 'revoked'. In 13(2) the wording has been slightly changed but the meaning has remained the same as the new section. Even though the words may have changed a little, the intent is still the same.

Section 16 of the Weapons Regulation 2016—previously section 13 of the Weapons Regulation 1996—provides for the automatic suspension of a firearms dealer's licence in the event the representative whose name on the licence dies or their authority as the representative is suspended or revoked. If this occurs, QPS Weapons Licensing works with the dealership to ensure all weapons remain in secure storage and would help, where possible, to ensure their business could continue trading. I think that is necessary. The police have to come in and make sure all the weapons are locked away and everything is protected. They would work with whomever the new licensee may be to get them back on the road as quickly as possible. I just cannot see it being done any other way.

Should section 16 be removed from the regulation and a representative dies or their authority is revoked, the licence will be cancelled without the ability to nominate a new representative. This means a new representative would be required to seek an entirely new licence—a much longer process that is drawn out over a period of time. It would also significantly increase the time taken for the new applicant to go through the process to become a dealer, and you would expect that the Police Service would put a new applicant through that process to make sure that we have the right person taking over the dealership.

I am unsure how the member for Everton and the opposition can explain how making firearms dealers' jobs harder aligns with his supported intention to support firearms dealers. Shooting holes in this proposed amendment is as easy as shooting fish in a barrel. It simply makes no sense. That is because this change is not really what this motion is about. The LNP, unsurprisingly, has an ulterior motive which has been demonstrated in this place a few times today. This is a ploy from a party desperately trying to gain the favour of the gun lobby, desperately trying to secure votes. While the LNP takes its advice from the gun lobby, the Palaszczuk government takes its advice from the QPS. While the LNP chooses to take on board only the gun lobby's views, this government chooses to consult with AgForce, Crime Stoppers, Homicide Victims' Support Group, the Queensland Law Society, firearms dealers, sporting and recreational shooters, and others by implementing two consultation forums. I want to say to the minister that I think that is a great move.

The Palaszczuk government supports consulting all stakeholders because its priority is community safety. In fact, this regulation was put in place by the LNP Borbidge government in 1997 following the tragic gun massacre at Port Arthur. John Howard and Rob Borbidge were willing to stake their political futures to ensure community safety. I was here at that time. I always had a lot of respect for Bob Borbidge. He earned a lot more respect from me because he had the guts to stand up and do what was right when it came to gun laws. I have to say—and I do not like to make anybody feel uncomfortable—that it is quite clear I am not a Tory, but I know when the LNP has done the right thing and I know when they are doing the wrong thing, as they are right now.

Everybody in this place knows that I was raised on the land. I am a strong supporter of those on the land who have a licensed firearm. I understand why they need a firearm—mainly for the destruction of stock that need to be taken out of this world but also for wild animals like pigs and kangaroos. It is a necessity for a farmer or landowner to have a good firearm. Being raised on the land and growing up as a young, good-looking lad, I had the opportunity to learn about how to grow crops. I was involved in running sheep and cattle. I learnt how to ride a horse and how to fall off a horse. Most importantly, I learnt about the safe use of firearms.

I remember how much trouble the two sons of a property owner and I got into for setting fire to a haystack. While we had slug guns given to us by the property owner, we were not the best shots around. A stack of rats had gone into this hayshed and the property owner was giving us a penny a rat to take them all out, so the three of us had a quick meeting and we came to the conclusion that the best way to get the rats out of the haystack was to set it on fire. I can say that there was certainly no risk assessment done. It was a fine day because we all finished up copping a good flogging from our parents.

Living on the land also gave me the opportunity to learn how to use and carry a firearm; how to load and unload safely; where to stand when using or being in the presence of another person using a firearm; how to get through a fence carrying a firearm; and how to get on the back of a vehicle and off a vehicle while carrying a firearm. I went from the land to national service and I was introduced to military firearms where I had some great experiences. While personally I do not wish to have a firearm, I am not concerned about those people who are decent Queenslanders who want to have a weapon for the right reason, who understand the implications of not looking after that weapon and who make sure it is locked away so that people who want to do the wrong thing are not able to get their hands on a weapon.

The disallowance motion before the House is not necessary. It is a shame that people on that side have got it wrong. If opposition members disallow this tonight, they will actually cause more heartache and more problems for firearms owners.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (8.32 pm): I rise to make a short contribution in support of the disallowance motion that was moved by the member for Everton and shadow police minister. I am very much looking forward to the contribution by the minister later in this debate. While I want to keep my comments brief, I want to hear the sureties that the minister will give the House and the gun dealers across Queensland that they are protected by this particular regulation.

I have had many representations, particularly from gun dealers and licensed gun owners, with regard to this particular matter. They do have concerns and I think they are legitimate concerns. If the minister had had the will through this process to consult more broadly and meet with some of these gun dealers, he could have avoided some of the problems that have been represented to me. I am certainly a law-abiding gun owner. I have a weapons licence. I am a primary producer and we use them on a regular basis. The scaremongering, the demonising and the views that have been put forward tonight about gun owners simply do not represent the facts about the many, many gun owners we have not only in the Gympie electorate but particularly across Queensland.

I want to get to the point of consultation and the view that was put forward to me as I mentioned earlier with regard to gun dealers and having the licence directly with the dealer and not with the individual. Perhaps, Minister, it may have been a good opportunity to look at this. I do not believe it will provide for the proliferation of weapons across this state. It is about an administrative process that I believe could have been sorted through with proper consultation and some extra work from the minister. The views that have been put forward do create uncertainty within the business.

**Mr Byrne:** It is a statutory review.

**Mr PERRETT:** I understand that, Minister. It is a statutory review and perhaps consultation—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Order! Member for Gympie, I will get you to direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr PERRETT:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. Perhaps if that process had been a little clearer and the consultation a little broader, then these issues would not have been raised directly with many members from this side of the House. The process that should have been put in place was a process where that individual contact and representation was taken seriously. That certainly does not appear to be the case. As I indicated, I am looking forward to what the minister has to say to give surety to these dealers that there will be continuity of business in the unfortunate situation where the licensee does pass on. The minister seems confident, and we will listen to what he has to say. I am prepared to stand in this House and put forward those views. If the minister can provide that surety, then the broader gun dealers across this state will be a little more comforted, but I am not certain that will be the case.

Weapons are a very important part of rural and regional Queensland. Obviously I represent a regional seat, and they are very important for primary producers. They are also very important to sporting shooters within our region. While members opposite have raised concerns about the use of weapons in Queensland, from my experience the clear majority of weapons owners and licensees across this state abide by the laws that are in place. I indicated earlier that I was going to keep my

comments brief, and I will certainly do that. I look forward to what the minister has to say with respect to this. In the absence of anything further in what the minister says, I support the disallowance motion that has been put forward by the shadow minister.

**Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (8.36 pm): I rise to speak against the disallowance motion moved by the member for Everton. Tonight is all the evidence we need to say that the death of the Liberal Party in Queensland is complete. Here we have the member for Everton, my neighbour in the leafy suburbs of Brisbane, coming into this parliament to water down the exact same regulation that was put in place by the Borbidge government in 1997. I just want to give members a bit of context. Remember that in 1997 the premier was Borbidge—a very well-respected man, as we just heard from the member for Mirani. I was 18 years old and I would have never thought—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** That is right. It is hard to believe I was 18 years old then. Here we are now and we fast forward and we are debating this legislation. We are debating a regulation that was put in by the Borbidge conservative government at the time. We have already heard here tonight from a number of members opposite, and as the minister has made very plain, that there are no policy changes put forward in this regulation.

**Mr Mander:** That's the point.

**Ms JONES:** I take the point from the genius from Everton. So why is he disallowing it? He does not agree with the regulation, or he does agree with the regulation.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** The interjection from the honourable member was that he just acknowledged that there is no difference in policy or intent from the regulation introduced in 1997 that we are updating here today, yet he is voting against it and wants it disallowed.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** I feel like I am in a time warp—I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer—because at the time when this was first introduced and passed by this government, introduced by your predecessors when you were last in government for one term, the music on the radio was *Spice Up Your Life* by the Spice Girls and *Doctor Jones* by Aqua, and I particularly liked that song.

The evidence here tonight by the member for Everton is what we always knew—that the only way that Tim Nicholls became the Leader of the Opposition was by getting in bed with the extreme right of the LNP. We all knew that. We knew that it was a three-horse race and that he only just scraped over the line as the leader, and we knew that happened because he had to appeal to the extreme right of his party. I am very pleased because I will be tweeting all of the people of Everton to tell them that the member for Everton came into this parliament to water down the reforms that came into Queensland from John Howard. I am pretty sure that at that time all of those opposite were talking about how responsible John Howard was, what a great Prime Minister John Howard was and that he was the best Prime Minister Australia had ever had—except for those members who still remember Menzies, which is quite a few of them. What we are seeing here tonight is the death of the Liberal Party here in Queensland. We have heard tonight from Jim Pearce—

**Mr Mander:** The LNP.

**Ms JONES:** That is right, the LNP, the takeover of the Liberal Party by the National Party, orchestrated by the member for Southern Downs. I once again acknowledge the member for Everton acknowledging that it was a National Party takeover of what was the Liberal Party here in Queensland. It is the death of the moderates on the conservative side of politics in Queensland and we have seen that time and time again in this parliament. I call on the Leader of the Opposition to stand by the values that he pretends to have when he is outside of this parliament, when he is going around talking to his constituents in his community, going to the Halloween party in the member for Everton's electorate in Mitchelton.

**Mr Mander:** I am glad you are watching Facebook. I am glad you are following my Facebook.

**Ms JONES:** Yes, because I will be putting on Facebook tonight that the member for Everton watered down John Howard's legislation when it comes to gun protection in Queensland.

**Mr Mander:** You probably noticed you were missing.

**Ms JONES:** I was out doorknocking—trick or treating with my son.

**Mr Mander:** You're taking your son now?

**Ms JONES:** That is the kind of mother I am.

**Mr Mander:** Campaigning?

**Ms JONES:** No, trick or treating. It was Halloween. This is the thing about the member for Everton and why no-one trusts referees. They always say one thing in one forum and another thing in another. He likes to walk around in our local community claiming that he—

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Chatsworth, you are now warned under 253A.

**Ms JONES:** In the beautiful leafy suburbs where we live, the member for Everton likes to walk around pretending that he is a progressive, that he is enlightened—

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** I take the interjection. Thank you very much. I will make sure I get that out there. Then he comes in here and does the dirty work of the extreme right of his party. What member of the LNP in Queensland does not support the reforms put in place by John Howard when he was prime minister that were applauded by many in our community?

**Mr Mander:** It's irrelevant.

**Ms JONES:** If it is irrelevant—

**Mr Mander:** It is totally different. You have no understanding of it.

**Ms JONES:** Thank you, member for Everton. This is so much fun. The member for Everton said at the beginning of his remarks that the reforms we are debating tonight are exactly the same as what was put in place in 1997. What was the genesis of the regulation in 1997? It was the reforms of the national gun laws. That is exactly right. Jim Pearce knows because he was here, unlike the member for Everton.

**Mr Mander:** Or you.

**Ms JONES:** It hurts, doesn't it?

**Mr Mander:** What, being rude?

**Ms JONES:** The death of the Liberal Party—having to acknowledge it tonight. No-one in the press gallery would believe that today the LNP would vote to water down the regulations put in place by John Howard, something that has been universally applauded internationally. I never thought I would see the day—

**Mr Cramp** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Gaven, you are now warned under 253A. Your interjections are not being taken either.

**Ms JONES:** I never thought that I would ever have to come into this parliament and defend John Howard against the Liberal Party and National Party of Queensland, but here we are. Wonders never cease. Here I am today defending the record of John Howard against the right-wing zealots. When members opposite talk to ordinary Queenslanders out there, no matter where they live in Queensland, they will find that they support the regulations that were put in place by John Howard. We have heard time and time again that the regulations that the honourable member for Everton has moved to be disallowed are the same as what was put in place under the regulations in 1997. What we are seeing here is scaremongering by those opposite, appealing to their base and the absence of any real agenda to move Queensland forward or to create Queensland jobs.

**Mr Byrne** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister for Police.

**Ms JONES:** What we are seeing here is scaremongering by the LNP to appeal to their extreme right-wing base in the absence of having any policy to put in front of the people of Queensland, in the absence of having any policies to create jobs for Queenslanders. While our government gets on with the work of creating jobs for Queenslanders—

**Mr Mander:** This is about jobs.

**Ms JONES:** That is not true. All the members of the LNP talked about is that it was all about jobs and supporting farmers. The member for Everton has to pick his argument. I do not know whether he was not listening to his own members but every one of his own members who has made a contribution tonight talked about the importance of the work that farmers do and the jobs that they do. Does he not think farmers have jobs? Does he not think that being a farmer is a job?

**Mr Mander:** You have no idea. You are embarrassing yourself.

**Ms JONES:** No, I am not. What is embarrassing is the member pretending that he is a really easygoing progressive in his leafy suburb and he comes into parliament and he waters down John Howard's laws. That is what we are seeing here tonight. It is shameful and I do not think anyone in his local community would support the move that he is making here tonight.

**Mr Mander:** That's very nasty, Kate. That's very hurtful.

**Ms JONES:** I am sorry if he finds it hurtful but if his hypocrisy is hurtful—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. When there is silence we will continue.

**Ms JONES:** I really do apologise if the member for Everton finds that his hypocrisy is hurtful, but I am sure the people of his community would find it hurtful that he would come into parliament at night-time and move a motion to water down the regulations that keep us safe, the regulations that were put in place by the Borbidge conservative government in 1997.

I will finish how I started. In 1997 when I got my Labor Party form I would never have believed that I would be standing in the parliament—

**Mr WATTS:** I rise to a point of order. The standing orders dictate the time allowed for disallowance motions.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is correct and we still have time.

**Ms JONES:** Oh dear! As I was saying, I never thought when I got my Labor Party form that I would be standing here all these years later having to defend the Borbidge government of Queensland or, indeed, having to defend the legacy and record of the former prime minister of our country, John Howard, but here we are. Wonders never cease in politics. I call on all members of parliament to stand by the regulations that were put in place under the Borbidge government in 1997 that have been modernised by the honourable minister. As has been repeatedly said to the honourable members of this House, if they actually read the regulation they will see that there have only been minor amendments to update it. There has been no policy change. It has exactly the same intent that was indicated in 1997. Spice up your life.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (8.46 pm): It is such a pleasure to follow the member for Ashgrove, who is such a big supporter of the National Party of Australia and Queensland as well. Thank you, member for Everton; they were wonderful words. I think some clarity needs to be brought back here, particularly after listening to that last speech—it was unbelievable—and some of the speakers on the other side who talked about the danger of guns and police and who said that guns are the worst thing in the world. I bring to the attention of the House that smoking kills many people, cars kill many people, drugs kill many people and we sell alcohol and that kills many people. Tonight what we are talking about is the fact that every 10 years we get an opportunity to change a regulation. This is about logic and common sense. We change many things in this parliament.

The clarity that we on this side of the House are looking for tonight relates to a particular issue. Gun shop owners have also come to me—and I am registered gun owner—and I have a few questions that I am going to put to the minister tonight and I hope he can answer them in his summing-up. The gun shop owners have requested that we ask the minister questions surrounding the transition period when a person who owns a gun shop passes. What we are looking for the minister to come back with is a better use of that period of time so that the business can easily transition in a very synthetic way to whomever is to take it over. It could be a brother-in-law, a mother or an uncle. It needs to be done in a very expeditious way so that many thousands of people who will buy weapons from that gun shop can still go about their everyday business. Is that not what the government is about: making sure that every business operates effectively and efficiently? That is what the shadow minister is asking tonight. We want the minister to let us know how he can harmonise this particular piece of legislation so that it works for all of the gun suppliers throughout Queensland. It is very simple. It is not complex at all. That is one of the questions that we would like answered by the minister when he sums up tonight.

I would also like to know about category H weapons relating to rural property owners. I am being told that the minister is no longer renewing their permits. I need to know if that is fact or fiction. I would like him to answer that in the summing-up if he does not mind because many rural landholders are very concerned. If it is not true he can stand up in the House tonight and say that everything is the same as it was: rural landholders continue to be able to own category H weapons. The minister knows himself that when rural landholders are out on their property sometimes they are on a motorbike. They are not able to carry a long-arm weapon on a motorbike. They use these weapons for putting down feral pests

and others things that should not be on their property. Occasionally, they run across a beast that may have been injured or has something wrong with it and they need to put that animal down. These are just common things that landholders need to do on a day-by-day basis.

I heard a few things tonight from those on the other side of the House about the police being scared of people having guns, but the police are not scared of people having guns. One of the members at the back spoke about it earlier. Recently on the Sunshine Coast we held the Australasian Police and Emergency Service Games, and I was quite shocked that nobody from the government turned up to open those games. I was there because I have a great deal of respect for the police force. The emergency services minister was not there, and I do not think any representative of the government was there. I was sad and disappointed to see that because the whole of Australia was represented as well as New Zealand, Fiji and many other countries. There was no-one there from the Labor government, and that was a great disappointment. It shows great disrespect for the police force—and there is one of them sitting in the corner there—and all emergency—

**Mr POWER:** I rise to a point of order. I fail to see any relevance to the disallowance motion before the House, so if we could return to the disallowance motion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Member for Buderim, I will bring you back to the subject of the disallowance motion.

**Mr DICKSON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am grateful for that. When we get to the issue of firearms and who owns them and who does not, all we are looking for from the minister is to give Queenslanders clarity. I heard some rubbish thrown across the floor tonight, and I do apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker, because most of that was also outside the scope of the bill. They were talking about 'terrible, bad people' that own weapons, but they are not terrible, bad people. These are people who follow the law, who pay their fees and charges and who go to the local gun club. They are category H owners and they are category A and B owners—I am one of those as well—and there are many, many people such as doctors, lawyers, politicians and garbagemen who represent a cross-reference of the whole of society. Do you know why they do this? It is just target shooting; it takes their mind off other things. It is no different to being a race car driver, or somebody who makes kites or somebody who has other hobbies. Tonight I would ask the minister to clarify whether we are going to stop people from doing this. It is a legal sport, it is an Olympic sport and it is a Commonwealth Games sport.

I understand where the minister is coming from, but I am responding to comments that came from the other side of the House tonight demonising people who own firearms. I listened to the member for Ashgrove earlier and I am responding directly to the member for Ashgrove, who seems to think that it is the worst thing in the world for anybody to own a gun. It is not; it is just a simple sport. I will leave the House with one thing tonight and, Minister, I hope you will take this on board: get police officers to train more often than once a year. Once a year is not good enough. They should be out there training maybe 10 or 15 times because, as many Labor members said—and also say on our side—we want to make sure that they come home after a night at work. You never know what they are going to run up against, and if they have to draw that weapon then make sure they do not miss.

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (8.53 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker Furner, I am glad to see you sitting in the chair, because I rise on this disallowance motion to highlight the fact that it is not about the Adlers and it is not about pistols; it is about the unintended consequences that were put into law back in 1996. It is about the lack of consultation that this minister has undertaken.

I have in my hand here the Queensland government's response and action plan to the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council's report. This is about getting the red tape right. They got it wrong; they did not consult. This is about getting it right and it is about improving things. I know the member for Ashgrove was living in a time warp back in 1996, remembering how as a 20-year-old she voted Labor because she had a heart. Now she is a 35-year-old, she is still voting Labor and she has not realised that she does not have a brain; that is the real problem.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lockyer, you can withdraw that comment.

**Mr RICKUSS:** I withdraw. This is really about unintended consequences which have to be sorted out. I have had a store trading in my area that—

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Member for Lockyer, take your seat. Member for Callide, do you want to repeat what you just said to me?

**Mr SEENEY:** I did not say anything.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, you did. You are now warned under standing order 253A, and if you continue your disrespect for the chair you will be taking a walk. I call the member for Lockyer.

**Mr RICKUSS:** As I said, this is about unintended consequences, proper consultation and getting it right.

**Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (8.54 pm): This has been a pretty wideranging debate which has gone round and round the mulberry bush, none of which has been particularly relevant to the motion, but it has been very enlightening. It has been interesting for me to go through the speakers list. With the exception of the member for Everton, whose background and political allegiances I am a little unsure of, what we have is a whole raft of what I would classify as ex-National Party, One-Nation-exposed ultraconservative urban agrarian socialists. That is what we have out there. Not one person on the other side of the chamber who is identified as being part of the old Liberal Party that stood for something in terms of decent public policy and was not running around on the right fringe of One Nationesque—

**Mr WATTS:** I rise to a point of order. I wonder if the minister could explain where in the long title of the bill it is relevant where someone's political allegiances may have lain in the last 10 or 15 years.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the Minister for Police.

**Mr BYRNE:** Let us deal with the facts first before I take the opportunity to address a few other matters. What has transpired is there has been a statutory review of the regulations. There were no substantive changes to the previous existing regulations. In fact, this was remade or subject to nine extensions from 2006, so virtually for the entire period of the last Liberal National Party government they have had ample opportunities to do whatever it is they want to do with their forums with these regulations, but there have been extensions one after another up to this point where we have done the review. What happened as a result of the review? Nothing. There were no changes to the regulation.

Let me make it clear: the Queensland Police Service have advised that there was no policy change whatsoever made between the Weapons Regulation 1996 and the Weapons Regulation 2016. Nothing! There is no change. There is no change to what has effectively been in place for 20 years. The 2016 regulations were simply modernised. They are effective regulations that have been in place for 20 years since Port Arthur under the National Firearm Agreement, completely intact and completely appropriate. There have been no policy changes from government and no policy changes from police—none whatsoever. We get this nonsense tonight where the Liberal National Party, trying to appeal to the ultraright of its own political spectrum, are trying to make a political point.

Let us have a look at the changes which the Liberal National Party sees fit to waste the time of this House on and the key piece of subordinate legislation that was implemented under John Howard. The actual technical wording of this regulation has already been explained earlier by one of our speakers. The point is that this regulation has worked very successfully for 20 years. Not one of the speakers opposite could stand in this House and give one example of a heinous consequence of this regulation not being continued with and not one single example of the nonsense being put up here tonight. You would think that, after 20 years and the Liberal National Party's vast network of associates, they could at least bring forward one example of where this claim that is being made about this regulation can be substantiated, so that just shows you what a vacuous argument this has been. We have heard their completely lightweight, helium-headed contributions. If they took their shoes off they would float away. That is what we are seeing from those opposite. There is not a skerrick of substance in anything that has been said.

For the benefit of the members opposite who clearly do not understand the effect of disallowing section 16, if you win the vote tonight what do you think is going to happen? What do those opposite think will happen if they succeed in disallowing this motion? Not one of those opposite gave an indication of what would occur. Let me tell you what will happen.

Section 16 of the Weapons Regulation 2016 provides for the automatic suspension of a firearms dealership's licence in the event the representative whose name is on the licence dies or their authority as a representative is suspended or revoked. This regulation requires that a firearms dealership must have an individual as its representative. If a representative dies, QPS Weapons Licensing would liaise with the dealership to ensure all weapons remain in storage. Furthermore, QPS would then assist the dealership's associates through the process to nominate a new representative. This is the kill shot, for anyone who is listening. QPS advises that this process is rapid and could take place—and has—within 24 to 48 hours after the death of the principal.

Those opposite have espoused this huge, horrendous concern. In the event of the death of the principal, the owner of a business, within 24 to 48 hours—that is the advice of the Queensland Police Service—the business continues under normal circumstances. Those opposite are prepared to get up in this House and make a racket about something that is not a problem at all and that has worked incredibly effectively.

What will happen if we get rid of the regulation? If the representative dies, their authority is revoked. The licence will be cancelled, not suspended. If those opposite win this vote tonight, the licences will be cancelled. A new representative will have to be nominated. They will be required to undertake an entirely new process, with the supporting information having to be provided. That will take a very long time. That is what those opposite are espousing: make sure this regulation gets knocked over and put a major jam into dealers across the state. Is that what those opposite are after—to make sure this regulation does not proceed, even though it has worked and been effective for nearly 20 years? They cannot give a single example of how this regulation has been problematic. That is the LNP's understanding of where we are at. I think it is an absolute disgrace—making a shallow, opportunistic argument simply to get on the record and talk about guns.

If the proposal of those opposite gets up, it will result in the firearms being surrendered for safe keeping for a long period of time. QPS advises that if this section were removed it would create very significant issues for dealers. The fact is that if this section is disallowed it will undo the regulation put in place by the Borbidge government which actually makes life much easier for firearms dealers. It is a good piece of subordinate legislation. It works incredibly well. There is not a single example of it not working.

Let us be clear: while nominally this debate is about technical aspects of the Weapons Regulation—even though the debate has been pretty broad—that is not really what we are debating here this evening, as my colleagues have alluded to. What we are debating is whether we want Queensland firearms laws to be dictated by certain elements of the gun lobby. That is exactly what this is about. The member for Everton earlier said that whoever he has been talking to fears retribution, that they have Defence contracts and that the defence of the realm is being threatened by this regulation. That is the most nonsensical thing I have heard among a lot of nonsense.

The Liberal National Party has form when it comes to outsourcing policy development to special interest groups. That is what they did when they were in opposition. When they were in opposition last they got their mines and environment policies written by the mining industry. The job of opposition members is to be objective, not simply outsource policy development to the key proponents of an industry that is trying to promote its own interests.

This is an orchestrated and long-running campaign by the gun lobby across Australia to put pressure on every single government to wind back gun laws since the Port Arthur massacre. Some of the comments made by those opposite this evening indicate a deep-seated resentment of those regulations and laws that came in under the National Firearms Agreement. In fact, I suspect that those opposite do not support the National Firearms Agreement. Not one of them spoke about it. Not one of them spoke about their commitment to the maintenance of the National Firearms Agreement. Not one of them spoke about the National Firearms Agreement being the minimum standard for weapons and how weapons are managed in this country—not the maximum standard to be aspired to but the minimum standard from which any jurisdiction can make its own tougher regulations as it sees fit.

That is the position of the Queensland Labor government. We have always supported the lawful use of firearms. We have no problem with people going about their lawful business with firearms—in any way, shape or form. We had no policy settings suggesting otherwise. We will not be intimidated or bullied by or subservient to elements of industry that are prosecuting their own ends.

Yesterday I became aware of the fact that the Firearms Dealers Association, the lobby group headed by Australia's biggest gun dealer—the very dealer that has imported over 22,000 Adler shotguns into this country—has been making false allegations about changes to the Weapons Regulation to partisan media outlets. Is it a coincidence that these sorts of allegations hit the media yesterday and, lo and behold, the member for Everton has moved this disallowance motion tonight? Is it a complete coincidence that this sort of nonsense gets put out by special interest groups with a very deliberate stake in it and then the member for Everton comes in here and runs an argument that has no base whatsoever? It is a disgrace that the member for Everton would allow himself and his party to be manipulated by such elements.

This motion is proof that the LNP has outsourced the development of its own weapons policy to the gun lobby, or at least extreme self-serving interests within the gun lobby. As I said earlier, it did the same for its mines policy in opposition. While the LNP is taking advice from the gun lobby, I take my

advice from principally the Queensland Police Service in the interests of all Queenslanders. That is my job. Those opposite stand up and espouse their loyalty to and support for the emergency services and the Queensland Police Service, but they are prepared to come in here and question Weapons Licensing, which is undertaking its duties in a responsible and thorough fashion. Opposition members are prepared to say in this House tonight things that Queensland police officers out there will be looking at and cringing over. They will be thinking, 'These people pretend to be a government?' This mob on the opposition benches are pretending that they are an alternative government and that they have the best interests of the Queensland Police Service at heart, yet they stand in this House and denigrate officers of the Weapons Licensing branch.

I assure members: there is no dead or heavy hand of government driving the direction of Weapons Licensing and preventing it from doing its job objectively and independently. My job is to support it and make sure it has the right choices. I do not make decisions and I do not direct the branch in that way. That is the way it is supposed to work in a democracy, particularly a parliamentary democracy. I can assure and give confidence to the House that the Queensland Weapons Licensing branch is doing exactly what every mum and dad, every Queensland, expects it to be doing. That is its job. It is a professional part of the Queensland Police Service that is undertaking its responsibilities in a diligent and professional fashion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Order! There is too much noise in the chamber.

**Mr BYRNE:** Let us call a spade a spade. The Firearms Dealers Association has a huge financial incentive to make guns—in particular Adler shotguns—as readily available as possible.

**An opposition member:** Irrelevant.

**Mr BYRNE:** It is completely relevant, because they are the same people who are talking to the LNP about this motion. They are exactly the same people who are putting their hand up the back of the member's shirt. They will do everything in their power, and use their deep pockets to fight tooth and nail, to resist any strengthening of the National Firearms Agreement.

I recently attended a meeting with my state and territory counterparts at which the key issue on the agenda was the reclassification of lever action shotguns, specifically the controversial Adler 12 gauge—the same Adler shotgun of which the head of the Firearms Dealers Association and one of Australia's wealthiest gun dealers has imported in excess of 22,000 units. Some 22,000 units of a dangerous weapon have been imported into this country.

As has been widely reported, all but one jurisdiction in this nation was prepared to recategorise lever action shotguns from the easy to acquire category A to category B for magazines of five rounds or less and for category D for magazines greater than five rounds. That was what every jurisdiction in Australia wanted to do with the exception of one. Who was that? That was New South Wales. The good old National Party of New South Wales is prepared to jam a National Firearms Agreement when every other jurisdiction in the country is prepared to land a consensus position for the good of the country—but not the National Party, with some of the acolytes speaking here this evening, and what a disgrace it has been. Unfortunately, that one dissenting jurisdiction—the Liberal National Party of New South Wales—wanted to have everything free range and be as liberal as it possibly could, and I got the impression that there was not a firearm in manufacture on the planet that worried it in terms of circulation in the public domain.

The fact is that we have not seen one Liberal stand up in this House tonight and defend the position being taken by those opposite—not one—and I would look forward to it by one of the known Liberal identities. It is the same as the sugar bill, isn't it? Not one Liberal and not one genuine person who is under the threat of One Nation has stood up and said something sensible. This is a complete ambush from those opposite. What we are seeing is them doing the bidding of special interest groups in the gun sector. The fact is that their own speaking list demonstrates how completely divided they are. Half of the members opposite are so scared of losing votes—and I note that the member for Buderim has invited One Nation over.

I do not know what Liberal principles still exist on the other side of the chamber, but I can tell members this much: there is not a family in Queensland that is going to respect what has tried to be done here this evening. It is an absolute embarrassment to every single member of the opposition. They had three years. They basically rolled the regulation over. They had three years with their fantastic forums working. They did not touch it then. They did not want to know about it then. They did not want to know about it, but, no, they want to get on board and reach out to their ultra conservative and ultra

right wing minority influences. The fact is that this party—the Labor Party—has no problem with a lawful weapons list. We have no weapon policies going forward that change anything. We are committed to the National Firearms Agreement.

This regulation has a direct lineage back to 1997 to Borbidge and to what Howard did. As the Minister for Education said, we completely support that. It is ironic that a Labor administration in this chamber supports the work done by John Howard. I would disagree with John Howard on quite a number of issues, but the observation needs to be made: the Liberal National Party cannot have its cake and eat it. The agenda here, which is clearly evident to anyone if you look at this openly, is about liberalisation of gun laws. It is about liberalisation and more availability of, for example, rapid fire, high-density Adler shotguns. That is what this is about.

Let us not be confused at all about this. Let us not be confused at all about what is really going on here. We have a manipulation of weapons policy in this nation being exercised by elements of the weapons industry. Those opposite have allowed themselves to lose their moral fibre and stand up for good, honest working relationships and good, honest working legislation, because that is what this has been. It is an absolute disgrace that this motion was moved and the fact that they think that it is in some way changing things, that it is in some way going to alter the way in which dealers operate, is just a reflection of their modus operandi, of their motives. This was simply about getting up and being able to belt people completely and utterly based on falsehoods—falsehoods about interpretations and misinformation that have been circulated by vested interests. This evening I have seen a disgraceful exhibition from the Liberal National Party. I oppose the motion.

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

**AYES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

**NOES, 42:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 1**—Gordon.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## MOTION

### Revocation of State Forest Areas

Resumed from p. 4056, on motion of Dr Miles—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
  - (a) revoke by regulation the dedication of parts of a State forest; and
  - (b) dedicate by regulation the revoked areas of the aforementioned State forest as a national park,
 under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 as set out in the proposals tabled by me in the House today viz—

**Description of area to be revoked**

Beerwah State Forest

An area of about 744.558 hectares, as illustrated on the attached "Beerwah State Forest revocation: sketch A".

**Description of area to be dedicated**

Mooloolah River National Park

An area of about 744.558 hectares, as illustrated on the attached "Mooloolah River National Park addition: sketch B".

2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef for submission to the Governor in Council.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (9.21 pm), in reply: In returning to the debate on the motion, I thank the speakers for their contributions, Minister Bailey for his support for this outcome and the opposition spokesperson for indicating the support of the opposition. In terms of local representatives, I would like to thank Narelle McCarthy from the Sunshine Coast Environment Council and Stella Wiggins from the Save Steve Irwin Way Forest Group who both worked very collaboratively with us to deliver this outcome. I commend the motion.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADOPTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 14 September (see p. 3480).

### Second Reading

 **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) (9.23 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 amends the Adoption Act 2009 and the Commonwealth Powers (Family Law-Children) Act 1990. The bill expands the eligibility criteria for people who may express an interest in being assessed for suitability to be an adoptive parent. The bill also removes the offence and associated penalty for a breach of a contact statement for adoptions finalised before 1 June 1991 and improves access to adoption information.

These reforms have been guided by extensive consultation with community—in particular, with people who have been touched by adoption, including people who have been adopted, parents subject to past forced adoption practices and people who, because of the sex of their partner, have been barred from even considering adoption in Queensland. Through the consultation Queenslanders continued to support the guiding principles remaining in the act. The wellbeing and best interests of an adopted person, both throughout childhood and the rest of his or her life, are paramount. The bill reaffirms this fundamental principle by removing outdated and discriminatory provisions that can stand in the way of the department being able to act in the best interests of an adopted person.

I am so proud that the Palaszczuk government with this debate today is moving to overturn discriminatory laws to make it legal for same-sex couples to adopt children in Queensland. As part of our wideranging review of the operation of the state's Adoption Act, we are seeking to remove the last discriminatory barrier that prevents LGBTI Queenslanders from being able to adopt a child. It is time for Queensland to join other Australian states and territories to remove this discrimination from our adoption laws. Every other state and territory, other than South Australia and the Northern Territory, now support same-sex adoption.

I note that the South Australian government in September introduced a bill to allow same-sex couples to apply to adopt. While Queensland will not be the first to break down this barrier, I am determined that we will not be the last. We as a society do not tolerate discrimination. It is time to end this discrimination. Queensland's Family and Child Commissioner agrees. Queensland's Anti-discrimination Commissioner agrees. Australia's Human Rights Commissioner called for this almost a decade ago. It is time. For too long Queensland's LGBTI community has been barred from even considering meeting the needs of a child through adoption as an option.

Earlier this year I met an incredible couple from Noosa, Julie Carrington and her partner, Lee Sanson. Together they are bringing up their six-year-old daughter. Any thought of adoption has, up until this point, simply been off the table for this family. Should this House pass this legislation today, the discrimination against Lee and Julie will end. I implore this House not to let them down today. Queensland children requiring adoption deserve to have the widest and best possible pool of potential adoptive parents. Queensland families, including step and blended families, deserve equal right to meet the needs of a child through adoption irrespective of their sexuality.

Along with allowing same-sex couples to adopt, the bill broadens the eligibility criteria to allow single people and people undergoing fertility treatment to have their names entered into and remain on the expression of interest register. We heard during the committee process some people do not believe that this is in the best interests of a child and that a child's best interests can only be met by having both a mother and a father. On this issue I note the committee highlighted the research literature is highly contested due to a range of limitations and questions of ideological bias and this was

acknowledged by submitters on both sides of the debate. What I will say is that while it is contested it cannot be argued that the evidence is equally credible. Research that was cited by some included the work published by American professor Mark Regnerus. His work has been widely discredited for serious methodological flaws and bias, including by the American Sociological Association, the American Medical Association, a US federal court and many other fellow scholars.

Meeting the best interests, needs and wellbeing of a child is not dependent on whether a child has parents who are of the same gender, opposite gender or even whether they are raised by a single parent. In fact, there is clear evidence that, regardless of the gender and sexuality of a child's parents, it is positive relationships and a supportive, nurturing and loving home that provides the best outcomes for children. This is based on a number of sources of evidence, including reports by the Australian Institute of Family Studies and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, feedback from the community and empirical research studies from Australia and overseas. We have also drawn evidence from inquiries and reviews in other states and territories, such as the review of the South Australian Adoption Act 1988 and findings of the New South Wales Standing Committee on Law and Justice in relation to adoption by same-sex couples.

The same criteria and rigorous selection and assessment processes that currently apply to heterosexual couples will also apply to same-sex couples and single persons who express interest in being assessed to adopt a child. The department only selects persons for assessment if they are likely to be able to meet the anticipated placement needs of children requiring adoptive placements. The assessment of suitability is a rigorous process. The department gathers information from a range of sources to determine suitability, including seeking expert advice about their health; obtaining information on any criminal or domestic violence history; child protection history; traffic history; certain investigative information from the Queensland Police Service; requesting references from nominated referees; and undertaking home study interviews which are conducted by an adoption officer or adoption contract worker.

The preferences of a child's birth parents are taken into account in the selection of prospective adoptive parents. As outlined in the act, this may include matters such as the child's religious upbringing, characteristics of the adoptive parents and adoptive family, and the degree of openness that they would like to see in the adoption arrangement. Consideration of the birth parents' preferences is important to promote a positive relationship between all parties to an adoption and facilitate open adoption where possible.

Mr Thomas Clark of the LGBTI Legal Service summarised the argument for expanded eligibility criteria perfectly. At the committee's public hearing for the bill, he was questioned on the optimal environment or family unit for an adopted child to be placed in. He said—

If it is a loving couple who looks after that child for its entire life in the best way possible, that is the optimal family situation. It does not have a gender requirement for that to exist.

These amendments will help to better meet the needs and best interests of a child by providing greater diversity in the register from which people are selected to have their suitability to adopt a child assessed.

The committee also heard from people about a very significant change proposed by the bill to remove the offence and associated penalty for a breach of a contact statement that refers to an adoption that occurred prior to 1 June 1991. The bill retains contact statements. Current contact statements remain in place and birth parents will continue to be able to make contact statements. However, the bill does remove the potential fear and trauma cause by the risk of an offence being committed for the breach of a contact statement for people who were involved in adoptions occurring before 1 June 1991.

This offence provision is associated with past practices and responses that are no longer appropriate. Their removal will further honour the apology given to Queenslanders impacted by past forced adoption practices, which was provided by this Legislative Assembly on 27 November 2012. It is important to acknowledge that the anniversary of the apology will occur this month. This year's anniversary will provide a special opportunity to reflect on the reforms we are making in this bill. This change brings Queensland into line with other Australian states and territories such as Victoria and Western Australia.

A common misconception is that contact statements prevent a person from receiving information. That is not correct. Section 272 of the act does make it an offence to use information to attempt to contact a person who does not wish to be contacted where the person is aware that there is a contact statement in place. However, this section does not preclude the department from complying with a request for adoption information. My department will continue to work closely with adoption stakeholder groups and support services to communicate these changes as broadly as possible.

Being able to access information about your own history and life story is important for everyone. The bill extends the circumstances in which an adopted person, birth parent or adult relative can access and consent to the access of adoption information. The chief executive will now have discretion to release information without the consent of a relevant person in exceptional circumstances. This recognises the difficulties in tracing family members who have lost contact with the department and the importance to people over generations to gain this information in order to preserve their family history and their own personal story. The meaning of 'relative' will be extended to include grandparents, grandchildren and people who are recognised as parents and children under Aboriginal tradition or island custom. This will allow more people who are connected to the adoption by family ties to request information or consent to the request for information about the adoption.

I thank the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its detailed report on what is a very emotive and complex area of the law. I note that the committee was unable to reach a unanimous decision to support the bill. I also note that non-government members opposed to the bill did not provide a dissenting report.

If passed, these changes will bring Queensland into line with New South Wales, the ACT, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia in allowing adoption by same-sex couples and single persons. I urge all members to support these changes. I remind members to be mindful that their contribution to the debate tonight is being watched by many directly impacted by the discrimination we are seeking to remove. This is an opportunity to make sure that our legislation is up to date and reflects the needs and experiences of children requiring adoption now and into the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (9.34 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This bill was introduced to the House on 14 September 2016 and referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, which was asked to report back to the parliament by 26 October 2016. The bill we are debating tonight is the result of a review into the Adoption Act, which was the most significant overhaul of Queensland's adoption system that we have seen since the 1960s. Because of the scale of the Adoption Act, the act requires a legislative five-year review period, which lapsed in 2015.

The review process was undertaken over a six-month consultation period that saw a total of 356 individuals and organisations participate in the public consultation, including 216 responses to an online survey, 77 written submissions and 63 individuals participating in interviews or focus groups. The objectives of the review were: to determine the extent to which the act has improved birth parent consent requirements, including to what extent the introduction of the decisions made at the Childrens Court provide for an additional and independent oversight in an adoption process; the operation of the eligibility criteria of the act and how the operation of the act has impacted on couples expressing an interest to adopt, including those excluded from expressing interest; the operation of the act as it provides for how children can be adopted by a step-parent; open adoption practices in Queensland; and how the operation of the act has impacted on parties and eligible relatives to an adoption accessing adoption information, including the operation of contact statements.

As members would be aware, adoption in Queensland must comply with the requirements of the Adoption Act 2009 and the Adoption Regulation 2009. Adoption can only be arranged through Adoption Services, which is part of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. It is an offence to privately arrange an adoption in Queensland. Adoption services are provided to parents considering adoption for their children, children requiring adoptive placements, people seeking to adopt children and people seeking information or to lodge a contact statement in relation to a past adoption.

This bill makes a number of changes to the management of adoptions in Queensland, including seeking to broaden the eligibility criteria to enable single persons, same-sex couples and persons undergoing fertility treatment to have their names placed on an expression of interest register. It removes the offence for a breach of contact statement for adoptions that occurred before 1991, while retaining departmental obligations as a safeguard. It enables the chief executive to consider the release of identifying information to persons under 18 years of age in exceptional circumstances without consent from adoptive or birth parents, and it broadens the definition of 'relative' to include future generations of kin.

The bill requires the court to be satisfied that exceptional circumstances apply to allow a change of a child's first name in the final adoption order. It enables the chief executive to facilitate contact between parties to an adoption during interim orders. It streamlines processes for adoption by a step-parent. It makes minor technical amendments to clarify the intent of the existing provisions and it makes consequential amendments based on the endorsed policy objectives. The bill enables guardians of

children on long-term care orders in the child protection system to be considered for adoption, which was a recommendation of the Carmody inquiry, and it requires a further review of the act in five years time.

From the outset, I highlight that adoption in Queensland can be considered as a very divisive issue with its history invoking a broad range of emotions due to a chequered past. I acknowledge the work done by the former LNP government in rightfully apologising in this House to those people who were affected by past forced adoption practices. The apology reflected recommendations made earlier that year by the Australian government Senate Committee Inquiry on the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices that a formal statement of apology be issued by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments to people affected by forced adoptions. We issued that apology to ease the pain of those affected and to make other Queenslanders aware of the history of forced adoption. When considering any changes to adoption legislation in Queensland, it is important that we always acknowledge those who have been affected by past adoption practices. Adoption is an emotive issue and any significant changes to the Adoption Act and the way that adoptions are administered in Queensland inevitably bring with them public commentary.

I know that many members may have received a notable volume of correspondence about this issue, with firmly held beliefs surrounding what people from different backgrounds consider the best way forward for adoption in our state. What we must always consider when reviewing how our state administers adoptions is how we can ensure children are provided the best possible care and placed into loving homes so that they can have the upbringing they deserve.

Unfortunately, whilst this bill is supposed to be a once-in-five-year chance to improve our adoption system, it contains a number of unresolved issues which are a result of this bill being rushed through the parliament. Whilst supporting the passing of the bill through the second reading, the opposition will divide on specific clauses that seek to expand the eligibility criteria for adoption to single people and same-sex couples.

The government has not demonstrated the need to expand or grow the number of eligible adoptive parents based on very limited numbers of children needing adoption in Queensland each year. The fact remains that, despite all of Labor's talk on this issue, they have not addressed the fact that there is no demand for adoption in Queensland. Because of this, any expansion of the right to adopt to single people and same-sex couples will do nothing but create an unrealistic expectation amongst these Queenslanders that they will have easy access to adoption.

In reality, only 48 adoption orders were finalised, of which only 21 were Queensland adoptions, last year, 2015-16. There are a small number of children in Queensland who require adoptive placements compared with the number of persons interested in adopting a child. On average the department receives fewer than 10 expression of interest applications for local adoption and fewer for intercountry adoptions per month. In 2013-14 there were 34 children adopted in Queensland comprising nine children subject to a local final adoption order. In 2014 there were 139 couples on the expression of interest register and 45 on the suitable adoptive parents register for Queensland adoption.

Current restrictions under the act stipulate that to lodge an expression of interest to be added to become a prospective adoptive parent: the person's spouse must not be the same gender; the couple must have been living together as spouses continuously for two years and be currently living together; at least one member of the couple must be an Australian citizen; the female spouse must not be pregnant; the person must not be undergoing fertility treatment or have undergone fertility treatment within the previous six months; the person must not be an intended parent under a surrogacy arrangement; if they were previously an intended parent, the arrangement must have ended more than six months earlier; and the person must not have custody of a child under one year of age or who has been in their custody for less than one year, other than custody of a child in a capacity as an approved carer under the Child Protection Act 1999.

Even with all these strict guidelines for prospective adoptive parents, there is still a situation in this state where prospective parents are waiting years to adopt children after getting on the waiting list, meaning that there are not enough children seeking adoption to warrant a relaxation of the eligibility criteria. On this sort of data, couples who apply today to adopt a child in Queensland may not have their application finalised for a number of years into the future, yet this government wants to expand the number of people eligible to adopt in Queensland without demonstrating the need to.

As we all know, Labor's record on this issue is inconsistent. Labor are out running the line that these amendments are in line with New South Wales and Victoria, yet it was Labor in New South Wales that changed the law in 2010, not the current Liberal-National coalition—as if this is some justification for Queensland just following. Of course, their position today is very different from their position in the former Labor government, in which many of today's cabinet served as ministers.

As members who held their seats during the 53rd Parliament may recall, in 2010 the Labor child safety minister, Phil Reeves, who was also from the Left of the party, said at the time that altruistic surrogacy was different from adoption because the biological mother made a personal choice about who the parents of her child would be. He said altruistic surrogacy was an individual choice that the government does not seek to influence.

In the case of adoption, however, according to Reeves, it is the role of the state to place a child with parents. At that time, Reeves said the majority of adoptions in Queensland resulted from intercountry arrangements with overseas countries, none of whom accepted applications from same-sex couples. Current intercountry adoption services have not shifted significantly in the last six years and this position would still be relevant today. Reeves said in 2009—

In an environment when you have such a small number of babies and such a large number of couples seeking to adopt, the onus is on the state to make a judgement about the best possible placement for a child and the prospect of that being anything other than opposite sex couples, we think is very low.

Not much has changed since 2009. Adoptions are at record low levels, yet this Labor government's position has suddenly shifted without justification, unless we count the fact that the Left faction of Labor is now running the show. Queenslanders should be rightfully concerned about the way in which this Labor government is attempting to pass this bill through the parliament following a rushed committee process with very little consultation.

It should be highlighted that, after its examination of the bill and consideration of the information provided by the department and from submitters, the committee was unable to reach a majority decision as to whether the bill should be passed. The committee's deliberations and investigations largely centred on the submissions from stakeholders and members of the public surrounding the expansion of adoptions to single people and same-sex couples.

As I have said before, this is an emotive issue which brings with it very strongly held beliefs, and this was reflected in the committee hearings. I am encouraged, however, that despite the very strong views on either side of this debate surrounding same-sex and single parent adoption, submitters were united in their view that we must legislate to protect the rights and the best interests of the children involved.

As was noted in the committee report, some contestability surrounding the methodology of research which was drawn from by those on both sides of the debate ensued during the public hearing. Some submitters noted the ideological bias surrounding both sides of the argument, and the way that one's world view will affect their own opinion on this debate.

In addition to the more widely publicised aspects of this bill, a number of more minor and technical amendments, including those surrounding a future review, are included. This includes changes made to correct an oversight regarding a person's eligibility to remain on the suitable adoptive parents register when transitioning the suitable adoptive parents register from the former act to the register under the act, such that persons transferred from the register of the former act who are no longer eligible may be removed from the suitable adoptive parents register.

The bill also corrects an oversight to allow long-term guardians under the Child Protection Act 1999 to be selected for assessment of suitability to adopt a particular child, in the same way that approved carers under the Child Protection Act 1999 may be selected. It amends preconsent time frames in section 19 to reflect the difference between the date when a person has received preconsent counselling and the date when a counsellor swears a statement confirming the counselling has been received.

It clarifies that the chief executive may place a child awaiting adoption in the care of one or more of the child's parents under section 60(1)(b) if it is at least 30 days since at least one parent's consent, rather than each parent's consent, for adoption was obtained or the need for their consent has been dispensed with. The bill clarifies that the chief executive's guardianship does not end when the chief executive is a child's guardian under section 57 at the time the child dies, such that the chief executive may act in relation to matters such as religious ceremonies and burial, taking into consideration the preferences of parties to adoption where appropriate.

Through the introduction of this bill and the subsequent committee consideration it remains unclear how far the department intends to take recommendations of the Carmody inquiry for children in long-term guardianship arrangements to be considered for adoption where reunification has failed. We now have more than 9,000 children in out of home care and over 5,870 with long-term guardianship orders, of which 4,241 were to the chief executive.

It was Carmody's recommendation that further consideration be given to the use of adoption for these children under long-term guardianship orders where reunification has failed or is not possible. The government has not properly explained how this bill will address that and what impact it will have on the child protection system. In fact, when we asked a question on notice on this very issue, the minister advised that no records of existing expressions of interest are even kept.

In summing up, the opposition recognises the importance of reviewing our adoption practices in Queensland through a legislative review. It is encouraging that we are both reviewing this legislation today and providing for a future review in several years time. We must never forget that, whether it is adoption or child protection, our actions must be guided by the guiding principle of the best interests of the child. Adoption is not about appeasing someone wanting to adopt but is about finding a child the best possible home in which to grow up happy and healthy.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (9.49 pm): I rise to speak to the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The bill implements the key findings of the review of the operation of the Adoption Act 2009 which found that the act is operating as intended but that aspects of the legislation—such as expanding the eligibility criteria, removing the offence and associated penalty for a breach of contact statement, improving access to information, retaining a child's identity, facilitating contact during interim adoption orders and improving the process for adoption by step-parents—could enhance the act.

I would like to acknowledge from the outset that adoption is a deeply personal issue that generates often intensely held and differing views and affects people in profoundly different ways—of course, none more so than those who have lived experience of adoption. Queensland's adoption laws have changed significantly since the Adoption of Children Act 1964, which was significantly changed by the Adoption Act 2009, which introduced a contemporary framework for the adoption of children in Queensland and from overseas. The act brought Queensland's adoption laws into line with other Australian states and territories by introducing open adoption, which allowed the child, adoptive parents and birth parents to know each other and the circumstances of the adoption, along with a range of other amendments.

Given the significant changes made by the 2009 act, the amendments contained a statutory requirement to review the act five years from its commencement. In September of last year, the department commenced this review, spanning 12 months and culminating in the tabling of the final report in the House on 8 August this year. The review found, as mentioned earlier, that, while the act is continuing to work effectively, there are opportunities to enhance the legislation. The bill currently before the House is designed to ensure that the act continues to provide a contemporary legislative framework to support adoption practices in Queensland.

Adoption Services, within the department, holds responsibility for managing adoption applications, assessing the eligibility of those seeking to adopt and processing applications in accordance with the act, with final adoption orders determined by the Children's Court. In 2015-16, there were 48 final adoption orders made in Queensland of which 26 were intercountry, 13 step-parent adoptions and nine local adoptions within Queensland. The main objective of the act is to provide for the adoption of children and for access to information about parties to adoptions in Queensland in a way that promotes the wellbeing and best interests of adopted persons throughout their lives.

Section 269 of the act provides that a birth parent or an adopted person who is at least 17 years and six months old may give the chief executive a signed contact statement document setting out their wishes about being contacted by another person, or people, to the same adoption. They may not wish to be contacted at all or may wish for contact to only occur in a particular way. During the department's extended consultation the department heard strong views about contact statements, particularly from those who had been impacted by forced adoption policies and practices. Contact statements under the act currently operate differently depending on whether the adoption order was made before or after June 1991.

The department noted that feedback received throughout the review consultation process revealed that 'people feel quite intimidated and fearful of the inclusion of such an onerous penalty provision in the legislation about contact statements'. Further, people who are parties to adoption,

including adoptions that happened within that pre-June 1991 time frame, have said to the department that they respect another party's wishes in terms of a contact statement that may be in place and that they did not feel that there was the need for there to be an offence provision contained in the legislation. Stakeholders impacted by past forced adoption policies and practices have expressed particularly strong views in this regard.

Consistent with changes in other jurisdictions and community feedback, the bill retains contact statements but removes the offence and associated penalty for a breach of a contact statement. The bill also seeks to improve access to information by enabling the chief executive to consider the release of identifying information without consent from adoption or birth parents in exceptional circumstances; broadening the definition of 'relative' for the purposes of accessing or consenting to the access of information, to include future generations and persons recognised as parents and children under Aboriginal tradition and island custom; and expanding when information about a person who may be an adopted person's biological father may be provided to them.

The department noted that throughout the review process stakeholders highlighted the importance of enabling parties to adoption to access information about themselves because, as the minister said earlier, 'it tells them a story about their birth and adoption experience'. The provision of greater and more flexible access to information to support open adoption processes was also widely favoured by submitters to the inquiry.

The amendments in the bill improve support to adopted persons to enable them to learn about their birth family, history and the circumstances of their adoption by improving access to information, while continuing to acknowledge and respect people's right to privacy. It extends the definition of 'relative' as it relates to people who may access information on behalf of another person and who may consent to the release of information on behalf of another person. 'Relative' is extended to include grandparents, grandchildren and people who are recognised as parents and children under Aboriginal tradition or island custom.

The bill also makes some important changes to assist adopted people with retaining their identity by replacing section 215 to better emphasise the importance of preserving a child's birth name and provide greater guidance as to the limited circumstances in which it may be acceptable for a child's first name to be changed in the order. The bill makes it clear that the court should only consider changing a child's first name in exceptional circumstances. Submitters broadly supported the amendment as 'an important measure to ensure a child's identity—including language, cultural and religious ties—is preserved by law'.

The bill also removes any doubt that face-to-face contact between a child and their birth parents can occur during an interim adoption order through the use of an adoption plan. This will support a child's transition to adoption, while retaining oversight by the chief executive and only facilitating contact if it is in the best interests of the child. Submitters generally expressed support for the amendments and the 'removal of doubt' and 'much needed clarity they provide'.

Under section 75 of the act, the chief executive is required to keep a register of persons who have expressed interest in adopting a child. Currently, to make an expression of interest, a person must have a spouse and must make the expression of interest jointly with their spouse. The current eligibility criteria under the act does not allow single people, same-sex couples and people undergoing fertility treatment to make an expression of interest to adopt a child. The bill proposes to amend these eligibility requirements to allow single persons, same-sex couples and persons undergoing fertility treatment to express their interest and have their names entered and remain in the EOI register, and to be assessed and selected as prospective adoptive parents.

The same rigorous assessment process applied to couples will still apply to single persons. This includes considerations such as financial position, health and attitudes to children and parenting. During the review of the act, it was reported that there was broad support to improve the fairness and equity of the eligibility criteria, with the majority of respondents who commented on same-sex adoption supporting a change to allow adoption by same-sex couples.

The proposed amendments to eligibility criteria were the primary focus of the overwhelming majority of submissions to the committee's inquiry on the bill. A significant number of submissions addressed these amendments exclusively, with the core of their focus on the eligibility of same-sex couples. Although strong views were expressed both for and against the amendments, submitters were united in their emphasis on legislation to protect the rights and best interests of children. Supporters of the amendments submitted that there is no empirical foundation for discriminatory beliefs or stereotypes about same-sex parenting, citing key research findings and reviews published by the New South Wales,

Tasmanian and Victorian law reform commissions, the Australian Institute of Family Studies and the University of Melbourne that found that children raised in same-sex parented families are healthy, happy and well adjusted.

Submitters' respective positions on single-parent eligibility largely mirrored those outlined in relation to same-sex parent eligibility. Few submitters expressed views on the proposed extension of eligibility to adopt to persons undergoing fertility treatment. In response to submitters to the committee inquiry, the department stated that the amendments reflect 'the best available evidence', which indicates that meeting the best interests, needs and welfare of a child is not dependent on whether a child has a mother and father, same-sex parents or a single parent, but rather is met by the quality of the environment within which a child is raised.

I certainly appreciate how divisive conversations of this nature can be, but I have to say that, as someone who was raised in a single-parent household myself, I know personally that arguments such as those received by the committee that single-parent families lack a relationship model and complementary parent dynamic or the necessary family stability and security to provide an ideal environment for an adoptive child are incorrect. Some submitters expressed a concern for possible disruptive effects for children of single parents, echoed for same-sex parents, in relation to any short-term partner relationship their parent forms. I think this assumes much. It diminishes the stability, love and security that can be present in such relationships and overstates that which may apply in others simply by nature of their traditional form.

As is often the case where the interests and wellbeing of children and families are involved, there was impassioned commentary both in support of and against the bill's proposals, drawing on distinct research findings and personal experiences of adoption. While government members were supportive of the proposed amendments, after considering the submitted evidence, the committee was unable to reach a majority decision on the bill.

In recognition of the continuing evolution of adoption practices and community expectations, the bill contains the requirement to once again review the operation of the act in five years time. The review will enable the government to look at the effects of the changes made by the bill and ensure that they are having their intended impacts on the children and families who are party to adoptions in Queensland.

On behalf of the committee, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to those individuals and organisations who lodged written submissions and appeared at the committee's public hearing, and to those who contributed to the department's more detailed review of the act. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (9.59 pm): People are often genuinely surprised when I tell them that same-sex foster carers cannot adopt the children they care for. We all know that foster carers do an incredible job. Some of them happen to be in same-sex relationships, but that is no barrier to them being able to foster a child. It is no barrier to them being able to care for them, feed them, clothe them or help them with their homework. It is, however, a barrier to eventually adopting them and formalising the families they have created.

It is no wonder that foster carers with children in their care for a long time, often from birth, frequently express a desire to adopt these children. For the children in this situation, it makes sense that they would feel a true part of the family they have lived with for a long time, but same-sex foster-parents are explicitly excluded from adopting their foster-children. I know one of these couples. Out of respect for them, I will change their names so as not to identify their son. James and Adam had been together almost 10 years when they started talking about children. After being engaged for a year, they became the first male couple to get a civil union in Queensland. They turned up at the registry at dawn hoping to be the first, but they were beaten by a lesbian couple who had camped out overnight.

When they decided to expand their family, they discussed altruistic surrogacy and all the wonderful friends who had offered to help them over the years, but ultimately they decided they were in a good place to help a child who really needed it. They decided to become foster carers and open their home to a young boy with a sad history. I will call him Lewis. Being a foster carer can be very rewarding, but of course we know it can be challenging, not least of all because almost all of the children will eventually return home if they can re-establish positive relationships with their biological family.

They understood that Lewis was not their child, but they were there to love him and care for him anyway, and soon he started to call them dad and daddy. He would correct them sharply if they mixed up those monikers. Lewis went to school as normal but struggled with his work. James spent most afternoons working with him on his handwriting, his spelling and his maths. After a life of inconsistent care, he had fallen behind and they had to work hard to help him catch up.

He was no angel and, like all children, he got into his fair share of trouble. It started with running away, not because he did not like his new home but simple tasks like brushing his teeth, having a shower or eating his breakfast seemed so overwhelming to him. Introducing new routines and expectations brought out so much anxiety, fear and trepidation in him that quite often his natural instinct was to run. Off he would go down the stairs, on his bike or on foot, trotting out of the house as fast as his little legs would take him. James and Adam always ran after him and after a while he stopped running.

They loved him in spite of some of his worst behaviours and after a short time you could see him really begin to feel and understand that. He became their son, and now they live together as a family. For children, that is so important. They do not care if their parents are gay; they care whether their parents love them. In fact, the Australian Institute of Family Studies' key research into this topic found that children in same-sex-couple families progress emotionally, socially and educationally at the same rate as their peers from heterosexual families.

In James' and Adam's case, however, they discovered this on Lewis's first day of school. A few days before his first day they were making dinner in the kitchen as he asked a million questions about what to expect on his first day. They assured him that they would be there to support him, and his face fell and they knew why. They knew at some point there would come a day where he might be embarrassed by them. They just did not think it would come so soon. They had watched him meet new kids before and do the explanation, 'That's my dad and that's my other dad'—never with any shame, always with pride or just nonchalance. So they asked him, 'Why are you worried about us both being at school tomorrow?', and he replied, 'If I turn up to school and everyone sees me with two dads, they are going to know I am a foster-kid and they will think I'm weird.'

To this day, Lewis is proud of his two dads and they have spent the last five years caring for him and working with him to overcome his sad past. As it turns out, he is in the percentage of foster-kids who will not be going back to their biological family, and his biological family is very supportive of him being adopted by James and Adam. Most importantly, though, Lewis wants to be adopted by them, and why shouldn't he be allowed to when they have built this beautiful, caring family?

This bill will give that possibility to so many same-sex families and possibly encourage more of them to be foster carers, which is a wonderful thing too. This bill will also bring Queensland into line with the rest of the country. In fact, the Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction without either legislation in place or a bill before the parliament. We will join 25 countries around the world which already understand that loving families come in many shapes and sizes and that we should support those families. I congratulate the minister for bringing this important bill to the House. It is yet another reform she can rightly be very proud of. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (10.06 pm): I rise tonight to speak on the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. As noted in the committee report, adoption is a legal process that provides a recognised avenue to establish a permanent legal family for children who for various reasons cannot live with their birth family. The process transfers all legal rights and responsibilities for the permanent care of a child under 18 years of age from a child's birth parent or parents to their adoptive parent or parents. Accordingly, when an adoption order is finalised, the legal relationship between the child and their biological parents and family ceases, and any legal rights from birth regarding the birth parents, such as inheritance, are removed. In relation to the adoptive parent or parents, the adopted child assumes the same legal rights as a birth child and may also assume the surname of the adoptive family. A new birth certificate is issued for the child which records each adoptive parent as a legal parent of the child and records the new name of the child if their name is changed. In Australia, adoption is regulated under state and territory laws, with state and territory government agencies or approved adoption agencies also responsible for managing adoption processes.

This bill aims to broaden the eligibility criteria to enable single-sex persons, same-sex couples and persons undergoing fertility treatment to have their names placed on the expression of interest register; remove the offence for a breach of contact statement for adoptions that occurred before 1991 while retaining departmental obligations as a safeguard; enable the chief executive to consider the release of identifying information to persons under 18 years of age in exceptional circumstances without consent from adoptive or birth parents and broaden the definition of 'relative' to include future

generations of kin; require the court to be satisfied that exceptional circumstances apply to allow a change of a child's first name in a final adoption order; enable the chief executive to facilitate contact between parties to an adoption during interim orders; streamline processes for adoption by step-parents; make minor technical amendments to clarify the intent of existing provisions and make consequential amendments based on the endorsed policy objectives; enable guardians of children on long-term care orders in the child protection system to be considered for adoption—a recommendation of the Carmody inquiry; and require a further review of the act in five years time.

It is disappointing that the government has not demonstrated the need to expand or grow the number of eligible adoptive children based on the very limited numbers of children needing adoption each year in Queensland. This is in consideration of the latest figures that detail there are nearly 200 Queensland couples currently seeking to adopt, with only 10 Queensland children actually adopted last financial year. This is far too small a number of children in Queensland being made eligible for adoptive placements compared with the number of persons interested in adopting a child.

The Labor government has clearly rushed this bill through the parliamentary committee process, allowing only three weeks for submissions to be lodged. The changes proposed build further delays and potentially will increase unrealistic expectations for parents interested in adoption. On this sort of data, new applicants under the changes will not be considered for adopting a child for a number of years into the future.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (10.11 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill makes some important reforms that will mean that more kids will be able to grow up in supportive environments in loving families. Parenting, as we know, is a joy. Every time I am with my kids I am either consciously or subconsciously reminded that my wife, Kristie, and I have an important responsibility to set them up for the future. It is a responsibility that we take incredibly seriously—to nurture, support and encourage. As every parent here knows, there are ups and downs. There are tantrums and rollercoaster emotions, grazed knees and broken bones. Then there are moments of pure joy—those times when you cannot stop laughing while you are playing; those times of seeing all those firsts, the first steps, catching their first waves and the first time they win an award. The joy is in the journey, in all of the ups and downs. Today in this place we have the chance to spread that joy of parenthood to many other people—people who have every right to be able to share in that joy of parenting and take on the responsibility of creating safe and secure pathways for our kids.

I know that there are some in the community who believe that a person's sexual orientation should prevent them from doing certain things. For centuries we have accepted this view in our laws, creating systemic discrimination, denying people the right to fully engage in our society. To me and to most of us, this does not make sense. The gender of the person that you love should not be a hurdle for your full participation in our community. Through this bill, we recognise that.

This is a series of Labor reforms to remove discrimination against LGBTI people from our laws in this state. There should be no roadblock to gay couples adopting children, just like any other couple. What counts—and this is always the important thing—is the love that parents give to their kids. It is the amount of care, love and dedication that really counts. What we have done through existing discriminatory laws is to deny kids in need loving environments on the basis of outdated beliefs that being gay is something that people should be ashamed of. It is a wrong and selfish view. It is a view that has caused significant damage to the lives of so many. It is a view that has led to gay people being bashed and murdered. It is a view that led to delay in action on HIV/AIDS, causing young gay men to die needlessly in the shadows. It is a view that has denied gay people their rights in the workplace as well. It is a view that has led to too many people struggling to come to terms with their sexuality to take their own life.

When Bill Shorten and the federal ALP talk about not supporting a wasteful plebiscite on gay marriage, it is because too often kids feel being gay is something they should be ashamed of. We have a responsibility to those young kids. We cannot undo the damage of the past, but changes like those presented before us today do set us up for a future where people are not discriminated against. I am not going to cop people saying that gay people cannot be loving parents. I am not going to cop a view that denies children a loving environment on the basis of that discrimination. This bill also addresses similar roadblocks that exist for singles and couples undergoing IVF treatment. We are stopping loving, caring and dedicated people from becoming parents and that simply is not acceptable by any modern community standard.

This bill will also improve the process for step-parents to adopt their stepchildren, which is also a long overdue reform. I want to congratulate the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth and Minister for Child Safety for her hard work in progressing these important reforms. These changes complement the work and progress of this government in reinstating civil partnerships, they complement the progress of this government in investigating the best way to expunge previous criminal convictions for homosexuality, and they complement the work of this government in standardising the age of consent. I would like to acknowledge all of those who have worked so hard in our community for advocating for LGBTI reform for so many years. This government is proud to be governing in the best interests of all Queenslanders, including LGBTIQ people in this state.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (10.15 pm): I rise this evening to speak on the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 which is in essence a legal process that provides a recognised avenue to establishing a permanent, legal family for children who, for various reasons, cannot live with their family. The adoption process transfers all legal rights and responsibilities for the permanent care of a child under 18 years of age from a child's birth parents to the adoptive parent or parents. The adoption bill needed to be amended to ensure a fair and equitable process is in place when going through the adoption process. At the very heart of this is the children themselves who rightly, due to whatever circumstances, should be placed in those families who want to provide a loving, meaningful, safe family environment where the child can be loved, nurtured and raised throughout their childhood years. Who would not want this to occur?

I have relatives, albeit interstate, who due to certain circumstances have been unable to have babies. However, they have taken on the very demanding role of raising five foster-children who also want to be raised in a safe and loving environment. They are long-term foster carers, and I have seen them go through the painstaking, slow process of exploring adoption. I do hope that through the amendments of this bill the process in Queensland is somewhat easier to navigate and is a smoother process time wise for those good people wanting to seek adoption of children in our state.

I certainly commend the minister and her department for making these amendments which will provide more people the opportunity to apply for and go through the adoption process should they wish to. These amendments go to same-sex couples and single parents, and I say why not? As a modern society, we should, as I said in the committee process, just get on with it, in particular reference to allowing same-sex couples to go through the adoption process. Apart from the opposing views of some—and as a committee member we must respect the views of all—I personally believe this particular amendment is well and truly due because I think, as previously stated, providing a loving, caring, nurturing and safe environment is core to raising a child, regardless of gender, so again let us just get on with it.

The main objective of the act is to provide for the adoption of children and for access to information about parties to adoptions in Queensland in a way that: promotes the wellbeing and best interests of adopted persons throughout their lives; supports efficient and accountable practice in the delivery of adoption services; and complies with Australia's obligations as a ratifying country to the 1993 Hague convention on protection of children. The relevant legislation in Queensland is the Adoption Act 2009, which commenced in February 2010, replacing the former 1964 Adoption of Children Act. A statutory requirement of the act was that the minister review its operations five years from its commencement. That review commenced in September 2015 and was completed in August this year. The review found the act, whilst operating as it intended, had opportunities to enhance the legislation to provide a stronger and more effective framework for adoption in Queensland. There was significant consultation during the review, where 216 individuals responded to an online survey, 77 individuals and organisations provided written submissions and 63 individuals participated in focus groups or interviews.

Other jurisdictions—New South Wales and South Australia—have also reviewed their adoption legislation and we have seen a Commonwealth Senate inquiry into former adoption policies and practices. New South Wales and Victoria have made notable changes following their reviews and a bill sits before the South Australian parliament seeking similar reforms. Our bill is consistent with these and other recent legislative amendments in most Australian states, particularly extending eligibility criteria to same-sex couples and for single persons to adopt. Our committee heard from a range of organisations like the Australian Christian Lobby and Family Voice Australia, who in particular supported allowing single-parent adoption but only in exceptional and extraordinary circumstances.

With regards to eligibility for the expression of interest register, the same rigorous assessment process that applies to heterosexual couples will apply to same-sex couples and single people who express an interest in adopting a child. At the first stage things like personal history checks, domestic

violence, traffic checks and child protection history for all adult members are conducted to ensure there is no unacceptable risk of harm to the child. If couples are assessed as meeting the basis of suitability, they must participate in a minimum four to five face-to-face interviews in their home for the chief executive to consider.

Broad community expectations have shifted in line with evolving notions of family. There is evidence that same-sex couples and single parents can indeed provide long, loving and nurturing environments in which to raise a child. The bill recognises the need to provide fairness and equity and amends eligibility criteria in the adoption process. I would like to thank the minister, fellow committee members, the secretariat and the department for the work to date in the development of this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (10.20 pm): I will speak only briefly on the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and I wish to speak on only one aspect of it. That is not because I do not think its reforms are important. I think the amendments represent community views; I think they reflect the building principles of the act, which are that the wellbeing and best interests of an adopted person both through childhood and the rest of his or life are important. The amendments are incredibly important and they clearly represent the evolving notions of family in our society. I commend the minister and the department for everything they have done to conduct the review of the current act to ensure this bill we are now considering is consistent with legislation in other Australian states and territories. It is a true reflection of community expectations.

The thing I do want to talk about in particular tonight is that this bill is another strike against discrimination in our state. In broadening eligibility criteria to enable same-sex couples to have their names placed on the EOI register for adoption; in amending the act to remove the requirement that a person has a spouse of another gender to be eligible to have his or her name entered or remain on the EOI register; in ensuring that the same rigorous assessment process including considerations such as financial position, health and attitudes to children and parenting that is applied to heterosexual couples will also apply to same-sex couples—in doing all of these things, we are reinforcing the strong message which the Palaszczuk government has been so steadfastly sending since we were elected. That message is that in Queensland we consider everyone to be equal, that we are intent on righting the wrongs which have been inflicted on members of the LGBTI community for so long: that they should live in a community which has considered them to be illegal people, which has said that the love that they have for their partner is somehow of lesser value than the love between heterosexual partners and that because of their sexual preference they are somehow not capable of providing a loving and nurturing environment for a child.

I do not even know how I could survive such ignominy. On top of now introducing the civil partnerships bill, standardising the age of consent, the referral to the Queensland Law Reform Commission of the question of expunging convictions for homosexual activity and the announcement that we intend to remove the 'gay panic' defence, we are saying with this bill that members of the LGBTI community are equal, that they do have the same rights as anyone else to adopt a child, and it is about time. It seems that lots of other Queenslanders think the same way. We read from the various reports of the review of the current act, which specifically denies same-sex couples the right to adopt, that when it went out to broad consultation in the process of being reviewed there was strong support to improve the fairness and equity of the eligibility criteria with the majority of respondents who commented on same-sex adoption supporting a change to allow adoption by same-sex couples.

I know that when this bill was first introduced and I spoke about this in my own local community, people were really shocked because they actually did not realise that Queensland was so far behind the times. With this bill we will be in line with other Australian states and territories. We will be consistent with the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and, most importantly, we will be in line with humanity. This is not an issue about the pool of children who require adoption. This is a statement of who we are as people in Queensland. That is why I consider this bill so important.

I want to congratulate the committee on their deliberations on this bill. It was obviously an incredibly complex and highly emotive issue for them to be considering and I congratulate them on their work. I congratulate the minister on the way in which he has progressed this incredibly important issue for our community. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (10.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I support the Palaszczuk government overturning discriminatory laws to make it legal for same-sex couples to adopt children in Queensland. I am proud we are removing one of the last discriminatory barriers that prevents lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Queenslanders from being able to adopt a child. It is time Queensland joined other Australian states

and territories to remove this archaic chapter from our adoption laws. As a society we do not tolerate discrimination. It is only fair that members of the LGBTI community have the same rights as any other Queenslanders and that includes the right to raise a family with an adopted child.

The statutory review of the Adoption Act asked Queenslanders to share their experiences of adoption and how they thought the process could be improved. Queenslanders were overwhelmingly in support of the removal of additional barriers that prevent single people and couples undergoing fertility treatment, such as IVF, from adopting children. I am proud to support this bill which will widen the eligibility criteria to allow those groups to adopt. The reforms will bring Queensland into line with New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia and Victoria in allowing adoption by same-sex couples and singles.

Adoption provides a permanent family and legal identity for children in Queensland who cannot live with their birth family. Since the review began in September 2015, more than 350 Queenslanders and organisations have had their say on the state's adoption legislation. This review has given us the opportunity to make sure the legislation is up to date and reflects the needs and experiences of children requiring adoption now and into the future.

The reforms also remove the offence and penalty for a breach of contact statement for adoptions prior to June 1991, facilitate face-to-face contact during interim adoption orders between an adoptee and their birth family, improve access to information and streamline the step-parent application process. During consultation, stakeholders impacted by past forced adoption policies and practices expressed strong views about contact statements, reporting the offence provision and its penalties cause considerable trauma and fear.

I support the removal of the offence and associated penalty for a breach of a contact statement for adoptions that occurred before June 1991. The removal of the criminal offence and associated penalties brings the legislation into line with other jurisdictions. Up to two years imprisonment is an excessive penalty which causes unnecessary trauma and fear and that penalty has discouraged individuals from accessing adoption information. The legislated penalties are also felt by some to be another rejection and an inappropriate state intervention in the life of adoptees and birth families. The removal of the penalties provides a more appropriate balance, while still providing the necessary safeguards. I recognise those people in the gallery this evening who have been impacted by forced adoption policies and practices.

Contact statements are not being removed by the bill because many people entering into an adoption still wish to have a formal record of their wishes with regard to contact. However, the same provisions will apply to everyone affected by a contact statement regardless of when the adoption occurred. These amendments balance the rights and interests of people who wish to have access to information with the ongoing use of contact statements to establish a person's preference not to be contacted and protect their right to privacy.

I am very proud to support this bill today because I can speak from experience when it comes to adoption. When I was a child, my aunty and uncle, Peter and Mandy, or affectionately known by my family as Aunty Diddy and Uncle Pongy, adopted four beautiful children, my cousins, Edwin, Ingrid, Alex and Vanessa, from Columbia. My Aunt Mandy and Uncle Peter are two people full of love and they love family.

They have always been there for me throughout my life and loved me like their own daughter. They had a deep desire to have a family of their own, so they chose to adopt Edwin, Ingrid, Alex and Vanessa from Colombia and raise them in Australia. Edwin, Ingrid, Alex and Vanessa are my cousins, and they were raised by loving, dedicated parents. Mandy and Peter were also active foster carers and their foster-children Melinda and Julie, also my cousins, were raised with the same love and affection. It was wonderful having adopted cousins from Colombia. I learned a lot from them. We had a lot of fun growing up together, spending Christmases, birthdays and family events together. Edwin is an avid golfer, Alex taught me a lot about cooking fish and Vanessa and Ingrid were always good fun to hang out with. I would argue that my aunt and uncle cared for, loved, nurtured and raised my adopted and foster cousins.

I support same-sex couples and adopted children having the same opportunity to be a family. We understand that, although we are not blood related, the love and respect we hold for another one is what makes us a family because blood does not define family. Even though we may not have the same hair or eye colour, or in fact skin colour, it has never felt like my adopted and foster cousins were not my family. Our family is unconventional for a lot of reasons, but at the end of the day we are just

like everybody else. In preparation for the debate on this bill I spoke to both my aunt and uncle about their opinion as adoptive parents and foster carers. Both my aunt and uncle said that they whole-heartedly support the ability for same-sex couples to adopt.

I support this bill because the formula for a happy family is not a heterosexual relationship. The research shows that the formula for a happy family is communication such as listening to each other, togetherness, spending time together, sharing activities, sharing memories, celebrating together, supporting one another, affection, caring about each other, acceptance, respect, commitment, feeling safe, trust, having rules and resilience such as talking things through, being there for each other in the tough times and pulling together in a crisis. The happiness of family is not dependent on the gender mix of the family. A happy family is not about a man and a women; a family is about love and safety. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (10.32 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The bill before the House seeks to make changes to the Adoption Act 2009 as a result of a review of the act as required by the legislation. As we speak about adoption in this House it is important to reflect on the history of adoption in this country.

The early years of adoption in Australia were marked by a period of closed adoption. This included people being subjected to unauthorised separation from their children, which then resulted in what was often called forced adoption. It was not until the 1970s that there were reforms to overturn the secrecy around previous adoption practices, although until further changes were made over the next two decades information on birth parents was not made available to adopted children or adults. The current legislation was the product of such advocacy to further move to full open transparent adoption.

The bill before the House has a range of objectives relating to the adoption framework in Queensland. They include the broadening of eligibility criteria to enable single persons, same-sex couples and persons undergoing fertility treatment to have their name placed on the expression of interest register. The bill proposes to remove the offence for a breach of contact statement for adoptions that occurred before 1991 while retaining departmental obligations as a safeguard. It will also enable the chief executive to consider the release of identifying information to persons under 18 years of age in exceptional circumstances without consent from adoptive or birth parents and broaden the definition of 'relative' to include future generations of kin. Other proposed amendments include requiring the court to be satisfied that exceptional circumstances apply to allow a change of child's first name in a final adoption order, streamlining the process for adoption by step-parents and enabling guardians of children on long-term care orders in the child protection system to be considered for adoption. This was a significant recommendation arising from the Carmody inquiry.

There are other questions arising from the Carmody inquiry as to how far the department intends to take recommendations relating to children in long-term guardianship arrangements being considered for adoption where reunification has failed. We now have more than 9,000 children in out-of-home care and over 5,800 with long-term guardianship orders in place. I note Carmody's recommendation that further consideration be given to the use of adoption for these children.

There are a number of concerns with the proposed bill and the rushed consultation and committee reporting process that was undertaken which, for instance, allowed only three weeks for submissions to be lodged. I note that the shadow minister for child safety has outlined these concerns in her contribution to the bill.

There has been no demonstration for the need to expand or grow the number of eligible adoptive parents based on the limited number of children needing adoption in Queensland each year. I note that there appears to be little demand for adoption in Queensland, with only 48 adoption orders finalised in 2015-16, with 21 of these adoptions Queensland adoptions and the remainder constituted by international adoptions. As canvassed, there are a range of issues that need to be addressed by the government in relation to aspects of the bill and the rushed consultation and parliamentary committee process.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (10.36 pm): I support the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This bill was triggered by the previous legislation, which required an update. As a state and a nation we have made grave mistakes in the area of adoption which have had significant negative consequences for many people. These negative consequences are well documented and have been the subject of apologies. I was recently privileged to have a visit by Trish Large from the Adoption Loss Adult Support Service, and it reinforced for me the damage that has been done to many people. The life of pain and suffering that Trish has endured was evident, but I was very much inspired

by the 48-year fight that Trish has put up for justice—not just for herself but for others—and I would like to thank Trish for sharing her story. It reinforced to me that we must be very careful about adoption legislation to ensure that we do not repeat past mistakes.

This bill does a number of things to improve our current practices and ensure that these mistakes are not repeated: improved access to information; facilitating contact between children and birth parents during an interim adoption order; requiring the Childrens Court to be satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist before including a change to a child's first name in a final adoption order; removing the offence and associated information penalty for breach of a contact statement for adoptions that occurred before June 1991; and requiring a further review after five years. I would like to focus on information sharing, as I think that is particularly important.

One of the ongoing and enduring enjoyable experiences in my life has been learning about my family history and the family history of my wife's family. My parents, sisters, brothers, uncles, aunties, cousins and grandparents have all contributed to this, as did my in-laws and family friends. I have enjoyed watching my own daughters learn about our shared history. Just tonight as we do often we got out of the lifts here on level 5 and saw the beautiful picture of Isla Gorge, and I was able to reconnect them to the history around Taroom.

**An honourable member:** Taroom, yes!

**Mr KELLY:** Absolutely! I take that interjection. That family history gives us a great sense of who we are and a sense of why we are like we are.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr KELLY:** Indeed I am. However, while my family history is reasonably well documented there is a gap in my wife's family's story. One of her grandparents was adopted, and now there is no way of fulfilling that part of the story for our daughters.

I was touched by those submitters who raised similar issues that were much closer to home and much more recent—for example, the tale of the elderly mother who wanted to know about her biological grandfather before she died, purely to know who he was, know what he did with his life and know his nationality, his religion, his illnesses, his pastimes and his enjoyments. That is why the aspects of this bill to improve information sharing are so important and have my full support.

This bill also improves processes for adoption by step-parents. That is sensible and I support it. The bill expands eligibility criteria for people to go on the list to be adoptive parents to same-sex couples, single persons and persons undergoing fertility treatment. Many other speakers have covered these aspects of the bill extensively, but I will say a couple of things. In my personal experience, people undergoing fertility treatment have thought deeply about parenthood. It is also my experience that these people have tried for long periods of time and have tried many different approaches to obtain the opportunity to have children join their family. It seems to me fair and just that we extend this right to this group.

Expansion of eligibility to single people and same-sex couples has dominated the hearings and debate of this bill. I want to stress that it is only one part of this bill, albeit a very important part. The evidence suggests that, when it comes to ensuring the interests of a child are well met, a family's overall functionality is much more important than its form. I want to close by relating a couple of personal experiences to illustrate that.

I have close relatives who have what I guess you would call a blended family—a man and a woman who are not married who have three children. Two of those children are theirs together and one is from a previous relationship. Based on testimony before the committee, they would not necessarily be considered by some who gave testimony to be suitable to be adoptive parents, but I have watched them raise children from birth or accept the responsibility of raising children from a little after birth. These kids are well adjusted, high achieving and extremely fun to be around. I cannot for the life of me see why this couple, if they choose to, would not make excellent adoptive parents.

I also want to talk about another couple in my community: a same-sex couple who have two children. Those children have been at child care and school with my children, and they will probably end up at high school together. I do not have any idea whether their children are adopted or not. I have never thought to ask and I do not think many people in our community have. This family and these kids are just part of our community. They are no better or worse than any other family. They are just trying to get along and be the best possible family. Not only have I never thought to ask; my daughters have

never thought to ask. This family is just like every other family in our street. They show up at junior sporting events, they are active in our P&C and they are good fun to be around. They are what I would consider to be excellent and model parents. If they made a decision that they wanted to go on the list to be eligible to adopt, I think they would make excellent adoptive parents.

We must take great care with adoption laws. The total number of children and families involved in adoptions each year is very small. Even if that number is just one, we must get it right. This bill does that and I commend it to the House.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.43 pm): As the mother of an adopted daughter together with my husband, Michael—we deeply love her—I rise to speak in support of the Adoption and Other Legislation Bill. For too long Queensland's adoption laws have lagged behind those of other parts of Australia. Sadly, same-sex couples, single people and those undergoing fertility treatment are being unfairly discriminated against when it comes to adoption. This troubles me greatly, because it means that Queensland's existing laws are leaving many people facing unfair barriers when it comes to adoption. I believe that this is an unequal and unfair situation that needs to be changed, and I commend the minister for bringing this bill before the House.

We should be encouraging more Queenslanders to adopt children where they have a clear desire and a demonstrated ability to raise children in a loving family environment. That is exactly what I have done as the mother of a beautiful, wonderful and absolutely loved adopted daughter, and it is what many other Queenslanders want to do but they are being held back from doing this under our current laws and that must change. This bill offers a fair and workable way to address this injustice. I believe that most Queenslanders support this bill, particularly, I believe, the majority of my constituents in Brisbane Central.

The bill amends eligibility criteria to enable same-sex couples—I acknowledge members of the LGBTIQ community in the gallery this evening—single people and people undergoing fertility treatment to adopt a child. I could not think of a greater gift to give these people. I cannot think of a single reason to prevent this from happening. I have not heard a single convincing argument from those opposite as to why it should not happen.

I am not feeling very well at the moment. I am actually feeling quite poorly. When I woke up this morning I thought, 'I had better go to the doctor and get something to address not being well.' When I walked in I saw the family that is the main reason I want to vote in favour of this bill. Robert was there with Lily, who was not feeling very well. Robert and Andy, two constituents of mine, have raised Lily since she was a baby. She is now in high school and is a beautiful, well-adjusted, wonderful young woman. Robert and Andy, two professional men—Andy is a nurse at Lady Cilento hospital—have raised Lily since she was a baby. This morning when I saw Robert at the doctor with Lily I said to him, 'You won't believe this, but this evening we will be debating the adoption bill that will provide the opportunity for same-sex couples to adopt.' He was beaming. This is the reason these laws need to change.

This is about equality. This is about human rights. This is not about whether there are enough children to go around. This is not about whether we have demonstrated a need to put more people in the pool. This is not about there being not enough time to debate the bill. This is about basic human rights—equality out there for everybody—and not denying Robert and Andy the ability to legally adopt and have Lily as their child when they have cared for her for many years.

Adoption is not something to be swept under the carpet. Adoption is not something to be put in the cupboard. Adoption is a life journey. Anything we can do in legislation that makes it fair, that makes it transparent, that gives everyone the ability to obtain information—to not be punitive, to not make people feel like they are second-class citizens—is a step in the right direction. I support every single change in this bill.

Our family is currently going through the process of obtaining identifying information in relation to my daughter. We want to get as much of that information as we can. These laws will enable us to do that. My daughter deserves that right. We respect that right and we will be with her every single step of the way. This bill does all of that.

I commend the bill to the House. I see no reason we should not support it. I urge members opposite whose conscience may be niggling them a bit in relation to same-sex couples, single people and others to cross the floor, vote with us and see this bill passed because it is about equality, about human rights and about making sure that people who want to be able to adopt into a loving family are able to do that, regardless of their sexuality, the fact that they do not have a partner or the fact that they are undergoing fertility treatment. I commend the bill to the House.

 **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) (10.49 pm), in reply: I want to thank all members for their contributions to today's debate of the Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This is indeed an emotive area and, as we have heard here today, each person is affected differently by their own unique experiences. Although adoption numbers in Queensland are small and have been consistently low since the commencement of the Adoption Act in 2010, the impacts of adoption are far reaching. Adoption has a legacy which we must never forget. The Adoption Act made enormous progress to provide an open, modern framework for adoption in Queensland. The thorough review of the operation of the act found that there are opportunities for us to go further and to improve Queensland's adoption laws. The bill will bring Queensland into line with reforms in other jurisdictions and responds to extensive feedback we received during the review process.

The opposition said that the government has not made a case to expand the number of persons who are eligible to express an interest in being assessed for suitability as adoptive parents due to the small numbers of children requiring adoption. The Queensland government has made a strong case for change. Indeed, it is the people of Queensland who contributed to our surveys and our request for feedback that have made that strong case for change. It is not a matter of supply and demand, as the member for Mudgeeraba has so crudely put it. It is a matter of fairness. It is a matter of removing unfair discrimination from the Queensland statute books. This is why the Queensland Family and Child Commissioner supports the change. It is why the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner supports the change. It is why the Australian Human Rights Commission has called for this change, and the people of Queensland have made this case for removing discrimination. Eighty per cent of those who commented on eligibility during the consultation process told us that the current rules were unfair and do not continue to meet the needs of children who require adoptive families. Rightly so, the act will continue to hold that the wellbeing and best interests of adopted persons throughout their lives are paramount.

Expanding the pool of persons who may express interest in adoption in Queensland will provide government with a more diverse range of people who may be selected for a child. The member for Mudgeeraba said that adoption is not about appeasing those who want to adopt; it is about finding the best possible home for a child to grow up in. I could not agree more. Expanding the eligibility criteria will provide a wider and richer pool of people so that we can ultimately find the right home for each child who requires adoption. I also want to acknowledge the beautiful story that the member for Mount Coot-tha shared with us tonight, clearly making the point that loving families come in many shapes and sizes. The member for Mount Coot-tha quite rightly pointed out that same-sex couples are just as able to provide a stable, loving and caring home as any other couple.

The member for Mudgeeraba also queried why the bill does not address recommendations of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry's 2012 report about the adoption of children from out-of-home care and I will seek to clarify this for the member for Mudgeeraba to address her confusion. Adoption from out-of-home care is already provided for by the Child Protection Act and the Adoption Act except of course by foster carers who are in same-sex relationships. As the member for Mount Coot-tha also pointed out, this must change. The member for Mudgeeraba may be aware that the Queensland government is progressing wideranging reforms to the child protection system and through a number of initiatives under these reforms we are improving permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care. Legislation is not the solution to every problem and we are making significant advances through improvements in policy, processes, practice and culture.

The members for Mudgeeraba and Gaven said that this legislation has been rushed, which is absurd. It is beyond belief that they would make this claim. We conducted a review of the Adoption Act over a six-month period from September 2015 to March 2016. The public was invited to comment by making a submission or responding to an online survey. We held targeted focus groups with 63 individuals who had personal experiences with adoption. Stakeholders have been consulted at every step of the way throughout the development of this bill. The Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee examined the bill. The legislation has not been rushed. It has been carefully developed based on what Queenslanders told us and based on what the evidence tells us is in a child's best interests.

The bill responds to our community, adoption stakeholders, operational staff and research from around Australia and overseas to ensure the adoption framework in Queensland promotes the best interests and wellbeing of adopted persons throughout their lives. Again, I want to extend my thanks to the committee for its examination of the bill as well as the honourable members who contributed to

today's debate. I also want to thank the hardworking staff from my department for their excellent work on this bill. Finally and most importantly, I want to thank the adoption stakeholders and individuals who contributed to the committee process, the review of the operation of the act and the development of the bill before this House. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106(10).

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—

 **Ms BATES** (11.03 pm): I indicated that the opposition will not be supporting changes to the eligibility for adoption being proposed in this bill. This clause deals with who can make an expression of interest. It is the view of the opposition that this should remain as it currently stands. At last count there were 22 local adoptions in 2015-16, nine local and 13 to step-parents. There is no demand, therefore there is no need to expand the eligibility. It is also unfair to build unrealistic expectations of any Queenslander wishing to adopt. The opposition will be opposing this clause and clauses 13, 17, 18, 28 and 29 that deal directly with eligibility.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** The indication from the member for Mudgeeraba that the LNP will not be supporting wideranging changes to the eligibility criteria in the Adoption Act flies in the face of 80 per cent of Queenslanders who were involved in a six-month review process of this act making the statement that this needed to change. The best available evidence indicates that meeting the best interests, needs and welfare of a child is not dependent on whether a child has both a mother and father, same-sex parents or a single parent. These are important amendments to this act. It removes discrimination. It aligns Queensland with other jurisdictions. We know, as we have heard in this debate tonight, that a loving, nurturing and safe environment is in the best interests of the child. Gender orientation is no barrier to this.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

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

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Expanding the eligibility criteria provides a wider and richer pool of people so that we can ultimately find the right home for each child who requires adoption. This is about removing one of the last pieces of discrimination from our laws. The Family and Child Commissioner has called for this change. The Australian Human Rights Commission has called for this change. The Anti-Discrimination Commission has called for this change. I urge all members of this House to think about the best interests of a child and support these amendments to the eligibility criteria of the Adoption Act.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I am seeking the guidance of the House. I understand there are a number of divisions. Do we want to have all divisions of four minutes or do we want to have them of one minute? Members want four minutes for this one. Ring the bells for four minutes.

Division: Question put—That clause 7, as read, stand part of the bill.

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** While we are waiting for the count, the gentleman in the gallery, could you please be seated. Thank you.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, I am not intimidated.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41—**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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2—**Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the ayes.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—

Division: Question put—That clause 13, as read, stand part of the bill.

**Mr SPEAKER:** A division has been called. Ring the bells for one minute, by agreement.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the ayes.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 17 and 18—

Division: Question put—That clauses 17 and 18, as read, stand part of the bill.

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I will have to check who is on notice of a warning and what warnings there are. I give members notice now that if you are disorderly I will take the appropriate action.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the ayes.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 17 and 18, as read, agreed to.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I clarify who is on a warning at the moment. We have the member for Coomera, the member for Callide, the member for Gaven and the member for Chatsworth.

Clauses 19 to 27, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 28 and 29—

Division: Question put—That clauses 28 and 29, as read, stand part of the bill.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the ayes.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 28 and 29, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 30 to 67, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.24 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Will the government whip advise what the government votes are for the ayes or noes?

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Will the opposition whip advise what the opposition votes are for the ayes or noes?

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

**Ms Trad:** Disgraceful. Bigots.

**Mr WATTS:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I would like to have the statement withdrawn that I am a bigot. I take personal offence to it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Will whoever made the comment withdraw the comment.

**Ms TRAD:** I withdraw.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—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, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 43:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 2**—Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Bailey, McArdle.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the ayes.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.28 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.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.29 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### Gold Coast

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (11.29 pm): With glorious golden sandy beaches, picturesque emerald hinterlands and crystal blue skies, what is there not to love about the Gold Coast and South-East Queensland? This reputation is revered far and wide across our great nation and is a magnet for singles, families and retirees who want to live and experience the best part of the planet.

The lust to live within this region is the driving force for the massive population explosion on the northern Gold Coast and southern Logan City. Parts of this region are growing at rates of 20 per cent per year. This population growth is placing enormous, unsustainable pressures on our local road infrastructure. Furthermore, the failure of local governments to upgrade local roads that become thoroughfares only exacerbates the problem of getting motorists to and from their destinations.

On Monday, 31 October 2016 an accident at exit 34, Beenleigh North, paralysed the M1 motorway for motorists heading north. This caused extensive delays for motorists, with traffic queuing for many kilometres. These traffic congestion events are becoming regular in nature as we funnel more vehicles onto roads that are already at capacity. Therefore, I echo the comments made by my good colleague the member for Mermaid Beach in a speech on 1 November when he talked about the desperate need for an alternate arterial link between Logan, Brisbane, Ipswich and the Gold Coast—the inter-regional transport corridor.

Every time there is an accident on the M1 motorway, the road network goes into meltdown. Therefore, we desperately need an alternative arterial link that crosses the major rivers of the region, the Coomera and Logan, especially for residents who live on the east of the M1 motorway. This new arterial link would help reduce traffic loads on the M1 and help relieve massive congestion at our motorway off-ramps.

Pretty pictures in some planning scheme brochure have little meaning for average residents subjected to traffic jams every morning and afternoon. Residents are placed in dangerous situations trying to exit the motorway at exit 45, Ormeau, and 49, Pimpama, or subjected to queuing and road rage at exit 57. The continued policy to push more residents into these areas without adequate infrastructure is a contentious issue for our residents. I ask that the planning of this new road be brought forward.

### James, Miss E

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (11.32 pm): I rise this evening to present an extract of an essay written by Elena James, a year 10 student from Pimlico State High School. The larger essay forms Miss James's submission to the National History Challenge 2016 where this year's theme was 'Triumph or Tragedy?' where she won this year's state competition. The extract states—

A triumph is a great victory or success. Gough Whitlam was a triumph throughout his political career and beyond, regardless of what those on the opposite side of politics might believe. His life changing reforms truly made Australia fundamentally fair and egalitarian and shaped the nation that we are today. In terms of healthcare, one of the main achievements of the Whitlam government was the creation of Medibank, Australia's national health insurance system. Whitlam sought to reduce the amount of money families had to spend on medical services by providing free access to hospitals and health coverage for those who could not afford private health insurance. Whitlam also made sure that low income earners were not disadvantaged—before Medibank, richer Australians were paying less for health insurance than poorer Australians.

Education for all, regardless of wealth, was another factor that Whitlam strongly believed in. By abolishing university fees, Whitlam gave all students a chance to have a free tertiary education and allowed them to explore and study the subjects they would later use for employment in high paying areas. Free education particularly helped women.

As an environmental advocate, Whitlam protected the natural heritage of Australia by passing the Seas and Submerged Lands Act, preventing the planned oil drilling on the Great Barrier Reef and creating the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The park acted as a safeguard against any destructive activities posed towards the reef and is still operating today, preserving the beauty of the reef for the future generations.

However, one of the most significant achievements of the Whitlam government was the fight for the rights of Indigenous Australians. On August 16, 1975, Whitlam returned the traditional lands in the Northern Territory to the Gurindji people, ending their nine year battle for land rights. As Whitlam poured soil into Vincent Lingiari's hand, he said "Vincent Lingiari, I solemnly hand to you these deeds as proof in Australian law that these lands belong to the Gurindji people, and I put into your hands part of the earth as a sign that this land will be in the possession of you and your children forever." This marked the beginning of the reconciliation process with the Indigenous which was a considerable turning point in Australian history.

With such bright young women like Elena James in our schools right across Queensland, I can safely say that our future is in safe hands.

### **Mansfield State High School, Sports and Hall Facility**

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (11.35 pm): Of the many great schools within the Mansfield electorate, two of the larger schools—Mansfield State High School and Mansfield State School—are co-located on the corner of Broadwater and Ham roads in Mansfield. I am sure that is an area that many in the House would be aware of as it is quite a busy thoroughfare. I was pleased to be able to sponsor a petition on behalf of those two schools in respect of building a hall that services those two schools. I tabled that petition here on 12 October in the House. In under a month, 1,157 local people signed that petition. It is clearly an important issue amongst that school community and amongst my community more broadly.

The facts upon which the petition are based are these: neither Mansfield State High School, which has at the moment approximately 2,300 students—and that number is increasing—nor Mansfield State School, which has approximately 900 students, have a hall in which all of the students can gather together at the one time. Mansfield State High School's current hall was built way back in 1983 and the student population then was less than half what it is today.

We know that money for infrastructure programs is tight at the moment. That is why these two schools have, I believe, put forward an innovative proposal that one hall be built to service both schools. If that one hall were built, it could be built to a size in which either school could congregate in that hall under the one roof and all of the students be together. I thought that was an innovative approach from the communities, and they have been working on that for some time. I was pleased therefore to bring their petition to parliament and to put it to the education minister for consideration.

I wrote to the education minister during that time respectfully asking for a meeting. It was disappointing to me and to my constituents that the education minister stood on the very day the petition was presented and responded in a very political way about the overcommitment of her budget, blaming the former government for all of her woes. It is not only trains but school halls as well apparently. That was an unacceptable and disappointing political reaction for my constituents. I have met with them in the meantime. I have encouraged them not to lose hope and faith and I am sure that on calmer thinking about it the education minister will listen to their concerns and consider what I believe to be the strong case that they wish to put to her.

It is a big project but it is one which serves two schools in the electorate and the broader community. Not only will two schools be served by one hall; the hall will also be available for use by the larger Mansfield-Mount Gravatt community, which already use many of the schools' facilities. I have written to the minister seeking a meeting. I hope that she or her officers are prepared to meet with us within the time limit to answer the petition. I look forward to her being available to address the concerns of my constituents.

### **Banksia Beach State School**

 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (11.39 pm): I rise with great pleasure in the House to inform the House of the success of the Banksia Beach State School in my electorate of Pumicestone. Last Friday they found themselves up against Mansfield State High School in Showcase 2016. Having been unrelenting in quality performances, the Banksia Beach State School won hands down. Our state primary schoolchildren triumphed over another high school.

Honourable members will recall that I have risen on a regular basis to talk about this outstanding state primary school. They won the 2016 Showcase Award for State School of the Year. I feel their achievements leading up to Showcase warrant a mention. In the performing arts, they were the winner of the Queensland Youth Music Awards—Concert Band; they were the silver winner of the Australian

International Music Festival—Concert Band; they won the St Columban's College Concert Band Spectacular; they won the Brisbane City Bands Festival; they were the regional Fanfare winner; they were the winner at Brisbane Schools Music Festival; and they were the winner of the Sunshine Coast Junior Eisteddfod—Advanced Choir.

In sport, they won the Jack Reed Cup, the Billy Moore Cup and the NRL Development Cup, which last year was played at Suncorp Stadium. They were the district winner of the NRL Development Cup this year. They won the AFL Brisbane Lions State Cup at the Gabba last year. They won the St Columban's Primary Touch Football Cup. They were the winners for the district in cricket, netball, softball and cross-country. They were the winners for the state school district in athletics. They are an outstanding school.

Culturally, they won the Modern Language Teachers Association Indonesian speech competition. The NAPLAN test shows that in numeracy they are six per cent above the national average; 12 per cent above the state average; 13 per cent above the national mean; and 27 per cent above the state national mean. In reading they are nine per cent above the national score and 10 per cent above the Queensland score. I could go on and on, but I will not. I commend Principal Jacqui King, the staff, community and parents for their efforts as this school achieves academically, culturally and in sport. Last Friday we won comfortably over Ian Walker's school in the electorate of Mansfield, and there was not even a question about the separation of powers.

### World Teachers' Day

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (11.42 pm): Every day Queensland teachers are making a difference educating and inspiring young people all across our state. This year for World Teachers' Day I took the opportunity to acknowledge teachers in my electorate and say thanks for the significant contributions they make in our classrooms and communities. With bags full of cake and cookies from the very famous Gold Coast Goldsteins Bakery, I visited some of the top schools in my electorate and took the opportunity to chat with teachers experienced and new. Most importantly, we also handed out around 200 'Sensational Southport' beach hats—just the thing for the playground and sports activities. We all know too well how important sun safety is. As they say, 'No hat, no play.'

We kicked off the morning by dropping hats and morning tea in to Arundel State School for Principal Michael Kelly and his team. Then at Southport State High School, our first independent public school, it was amazing to be surrounded in the sports hall by almost 100 enthusiastic teachers and deputy principals Kate Shepherd, Rachel Cutajar and Kathleen Janecek. Packed into the school's sports hall, there were staff awards galore and the praise that was showered on the teachers was absolutely outstanding.

At Musgrave Hill State School I caught up with Principal Julie-Anne McGuinness and delivered morning tea for their 40 teachers and ran into some familiar faces who played a huge role in the education of my four boys. With my four sons, I had the pleasure of being a Musgrave Hill parent for the best part of 15 years. I can assure the House that we all sang with gusto the school song at the end-of-year graduation ceremonies. Needless to say, I am very proud of each of the boys. They have all worked very hard and they had such a great grounding as a result of the excellent education provided at Musgrave Hill.

At Southport State School, the school I attended as a child, I was greeted by Principal Sevil Aldas, Deputy Principal James Howden and many of the school's teachers for afternoon tea. I personally appreciate the many sacrifices our teachers make to educate and care for our kids and young people. We live in a complex and sometimes challenging world. Our teachers deal with the best and sometimes the worst of life. I especially want to thank those teachers who not only educate our kids but also often arrive early before school to feed them, sometimes clothe them and on many occasions advocate for them, many of whom come from very perplexing homes.

I did want to read out one of the postcards that was given to Kate Shepherd, the Deputy Principal at Southport High, from one of the students. On the back it just said, 'You're cool; you're great; you da boss.'

### Telstra Business Women's Awards

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (11.45 pm): Every year we see more and more vibrant Australian businesswomen pushing the boundaries and challenging the status quo. From police commissioners to young entrepreneurs, CEOs, professors and Navy officers, the Telstra Business Women's Awards have been championing brilliant businesswomen for more than two decades. Now in their 22nd year,

the Telstra Business Women's Awards are Australia's longest running and most esteemed women's awards program in Australia. They recognise and reward the courage, leadership and creativity of brilliant businesswomen.

I was very pleased to nominate 10 amazing women from Central Queensland for the 2016 Telstra Business Women's Awards. I was even more pleased that two of the women I nominated won in their respective categories. Patrice Brown took out the 2016 Telstra Queensland Business Women's Entrepreneur Award. Patrice is a woman of many passions: a business and commercial property owner, cattle producer, mother of three, and advocate for the protection of environmental and cultural values and land rights. I am proud to call Patrice a friend and my former boss.

With qualifications in engineering, science and business, she is passionate about the future of regional Australia and the need to trust science in the race to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Patrice established CQG Consulting, which provides practical environmental planning, precision drone services and engineering professional advice to clients throughout Australia and South-East Asia in the tourism, mining, agriculture, development and industrial sectors. Patrice is also a director on the CQUniversity Council, the Gladstone Area Water Board, and a founding director of two start-ups. Northern Ventures is a company that supports Aboriginal groups to achieve economic independence and Fortitude Infrastructure Development is a company formed to deliver green technologies.

Inspector Virginia Nelson took out the 2016 Telstra Queensland Business Women's Public Sector and Academia Award. Inspector Nelson has been a police officer for more than 26 years, having joined the Queensland Police Service at 18. She has served in regional and metropolitan locations and has worked in front-line policing, prosecutions, the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence and the Office of the State Coroner. Now, as an inspector, she is in charge of a patrol group of more than 150 officers in the Capricornia police district. As a commissioned officer and senior leader, Virginia shapes strategic thinking in the organisation by inspiring a shared sense of purpose and direction for her patrol group. She builds organisational capability and ensures crime trends are identified and operational responses are delivered to the community.

Patrice and Virginia are brilliant, passionate and courageous women who are thriving in their chosen fields. Not only do they have the courage to challenge the status quo; they also demonstrate exceptional business acumen and strong leadership skills. I wish Virginia and Patrice all the very best of luck when they travel to Melbourne for the national awards judging, culminating in a glittering gala dinner on the night of Wednesday, 16 November 2016. Congratulations, Virginia and Patrice; we are all so very proud of you.

### Vanguard Laundry Service

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.48 pm): Tonight I rise to air Toowoomba's dirty laundry and speak to the pioneering work of Vanguard Laundry Service in the heart of Toowoomba South at Harristown. Vanguard Laundry Service is the name given to a social enterprise project that will set the template for future social entrepreneurship in Queensland. The building is almost complete and the laundry equipment is about to hit Australian shores. Together with award-winning social entrepreneur and executive director of the Toowoomba Clubhouse, Luke Terry, I was delighted to show the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield, around the nearly constructed laundry last week.

**Mr Watts:** I was there too.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I should not forget the member for Toowoomba North, so I will take that interjection. No dirty laundry from Toowoomba North either. I also recognise Vanguard's chairman Jan Knox, the general manager Shane Walters, and Jo Sheppard, the CEO of the Toowoomba Clubhouse, who does an incredible job leading that organisation.

Vanguard is a commercial laundry business that will employ over the next three years up to 100 Toowoomba and Darling Downs people with mental health problems, providing a supportive workplace and a link to mainstream employment. The total cost of mental illness has reached nearly \$200 billion per annum in Australia, with nearly 20 million absentee days attributed to mental illness each year. What is most extraordinary about this community project is the local support and national philanthropic commitment to it. We have 55 local partners, including 104 individuals who have made contributions, 26 cash donors and 28 pro bono partners with local blood in their veins, like Hallmark Property, Clive Berghofer Land Sales, Precinct Urban Planning and Heritage Bank. Notably, Vanguard has a nine-year contract to supply laundry services to St Vincent's Private Hospital in Toowoomba, a long-term customer with the courage to back a pioneering project.

This will be Australia's largest mental health employment project. In recognition of this fact, the Paul Ramsay Foundation recently invested \$600,000 in its first social enterprise. The federal government has also contributed \$1 million to kickstart this project. Although not as high profile as his accomplishment of delivering the second range crossing, the retired member for Groom, Ian Macfarlane, has played an enormous role in achieving the completion of this laundry. 'Changing lives one wash at a time' is the tag line, and that is exactly what will happen. Social enterprise models deliver strong investments in social impacts—whether creating jobs or investing in education, disability support or social housing. Toowoomba is leading the way in reimagining what society thinks of 'charity', and I look forward to advocating for innovation in social enterprise into the future.

### **Bulimba Electorate, Church Communities**

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (11.52 pm): There are many things I am proud of about the Bulimba electorate, but I think one of our most wonderful features is the strength of our community. Many people say that we are a lot like a country town—how everyone knows everyone, how we love getting out and about with each other, how we rejoice in each other's achievements, how we look after each other when things go bad. I firmly believe that one of the reasons we have this strength is the almost 200 community organisations that operate in the electorate, looking after their own special network of people and making sure everyone is okay.

The church communities of our electorate are an incredible example of that. We have so many vibrant, active parishes operating in the Bulimba electorate, each with its own personality and each offering its message and support in its own individual way. Two of these church communities are currently undergoing a transition, and I want to use this speech tonight to acknowledge the very special people who have been the stewards of their flock and those who will be taking over from them.

After many years serving the magnificent Morningside Uniting Church, Reverend Alan Anderson has recently said goodbye. This is a church which is deeply embedded in its local suburb, and Alan has been a huge part of that. I know I am going to miss his gentle message at the Morningside Christmas carols event, his reverent address to all those who gather at the dawn service at the cenotaph at the Morningside School of Arts, and the joy he takes at every Morningside Festival, of which his church has always been such an integral part. Most of all, I am going to miss his wisdom, his ability to see to the heart of people, his own big heart and his unending enthusiasm to keep learning about the world around him. I thank him for the impact he has had on so many of us and I wish him the very best and hope we will all still be fortunate enough to see him around. I am looking forward to working with his successor, the Reverend David Kim.

The Bulimba Uniting Church has been the centre of our local universe since the time of the first settlers in Bulimba. I have spoken in this House before about this magnificent church and the place it holds in our local history. It has defined our local community in so many ways. It never skips a beat and it continues to be incredibly important to all of us today. Reverend Rod Fisher, who left the church earlier this year, provided the most inspiring leadership for the church and the broader community in the time that he was with us. From his partnership with local schools and other church leaders, his support for the chaplaincy committee, his role in the Bulimba Anzac memorial service, his all-pervasive presence where there was need—somehow he was always there when he was needed most. He will be deeply missed by members of the parish, who are the most loving group of people. They are not afraid to challenge who we are as human beings and to make sure we are always at our best. Rod championed that and helped us all to grow as human beings. I wish Rod and his family the very best for their next exciting challenge. I am so much looking forward to working with Beatriz Skippen, his successor in this wonderful parish.

### **Mining Industry; Mount Lindesay Highway**

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (11.55 pm): Yesterday we saw hundreds of workers from New Hope's Acland mine rally outside parliament demanding that this asleep-at-the-wheel government take steps to protect their jobs. As we have heard in other debates this week, there is a dire threat to Queensland jobs posed by Labor's new laws which will apply retrospectively to proposed mine expansions at Acland and in other places. Labor needs to stop letting the Greens write their agenda in exchange for inner-city Greens preferences and realise that Queensland, at this time and for a considerable time into the future, requires a reliable coal supply. Households, farmers, small business and industry all need a reliable and, most importantly, affordable energy supply. I table an article from today's *Courier-Mail*.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 2 November 2016, titled '\$30 billion Delay' [[1980](#)].

It refers to a business in Beaudesert, AJ Bush & Sons, a meat-rendering plant that employs about 100 locals. That is 100 families and countless businesses in the region that benefit from this local employer. Its business is under threat if Acland closes because it needs coal—72 tonnes a day—and the steam it produces to keep operating. It performs an essential role in breaking down animal waste into useable products like fertiliser that will be sold locally or overseas. The rendering process prevents considerable carbon and methane emissions that would occur if animal waste products were not processed, an operation that is threatened if it cannot buy coal to run its process. This government needs to stop demonising industry that requires affordable energy, stop putting roadblocks and green tape in the way of resource developments that our economy requires and let Queensland industry like AJ Bush & Sons get on with the job of creating jobs.

Early next year, SCT, Australia's largest private rail company, will begin operations at a freight facility in Bromelton near Beaudesert. This development will bring hundreds of jobs to the region and was supported by a \$10 million grant from the federal LNP government. Eventually, Bromelton will be a spoke on the inland rail to Melbourne. Inevitably, this will bring increased truck movements on the Mount Lindesay Highway. Earlier today, a petition I sponsored was tabled in the House calling for urgent work to improve this road, signed by 1,688 residents from the Jimboomba and Beaudesert region.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** This issue is not just about population growth; it is about jobs and economic growth for our region. I call on the government to put in place a real, achievable and fundable plan to deal with this growth. All we have seen from this government is plans for more traffic lights and a new speed camera. I table an article from the *Jimboomba Times* about this.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Jimboomba Times*, dated 21 October 2016, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway speed cameras to be switched on in November' [1981].

**Mr KRAUSE:** This demonstrates a lack of any real plan to improve this road for the future. What a crock. Congestion is the issue on this road for much of the day, not speed, yet the government puts in a speed camera. The Draft SEQ Regional Plan confirms the Jimboomba region as one of significant growth, so I again call on the government to get real about the Mount Lindesay Highway, to utilise the \$10 million funding package committed by the federal LNP government to tangible improvements and to get a real plan in place for the Mount Lindesay Highway.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Stafford and Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, I warn the member for Logan under standing order 253A for your interjections. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action.

### Stafford Electorate, Centacare and HAND

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.58 pm): I rise to speak on the great work Centacare and HAND are doing in the Stafford community through their work in support of locals living with a disability. HAND is a not-for-profit organisation based in Wilston which is focused on supporting people with disability by enhancing their leisure and lifestyle opportunities. HAND aims to support people with a disability to lead a personally fulfilling and valued lifestyle with the same choices and options that are available to others. Their programs range from leisure activities and life skills to drama classes. These programs support adults 18 years and over who have a mild to moderate disability.

I recently attended the CentaCare HAND Awards with my wife, Pam, where I met a young man with Down syndrome named Lincoln Inger—remember that name. During the awards, Lincoln spoke quite eloquently to the audience about what HAND meant to him and the opportunities the drama program he is taking part in provided to him. Later when I was chatting with Lincoln, he shared his ambition to be an actor. Lincoln's uncle starred in the much-loved BBC TV sitcom *Dad's Army*. Before his uncle died, he said it was his wish that Lincoln should follow in his footsteps. Lincoln's story is a great example of someone who is not letting their disability hold them back in life. I have no doubt that Lincoln is going to have great success in realising his ambition.

With the support of organisations such as HAND and Centacare, Lincoln's focus is like any other young man: to achieve his dreams. I want to put a call out to the media, to the film industry and the movie production studios that we are so proud of here in Queensland to give Lincoln a go. Look on my Facebook page, call me or my office and we will happily put anyone in touch with Lincoln. He is a very talented young man.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that every Queenslanders has the opportunity to achieve their best. This is why reforms such as the introduction of the NDIS are something this side of politics is very proud of. I know that my colleague the Minister for Disability Services has continued to work tirelessly to roll out this program across the state. We should always focus on people's abilities and never seek to limit someone's dreams and opportunities based on their disabilities. With the good people of Queensland's help, I look forward to seeing Lincoln in Hollywood.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.00 am (Thursday).

## **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, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McEachan, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams