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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 16 May 2019

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THURSDAY, 16 MAY 2019

 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

REPORT

Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General report No. 19 of 2018-19 titled *Education: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 19: 2018-19—Education: 2017-18 results of financial audits [777].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Cystic Fibrosis

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, cystic fibrosis is an incurable genetic disorder affecting mostly children and young adults. Cystic Fibrosis Month is recognised each year during May when cystic fibrosis organisations around Australia hold a series of events to raise awareness and funds for people living with this incurable disease.

All members have been provided a red, heart-shaped, lapel pin courtesy of Cystic Fibrosis Queensland. They have asked that members consider wearing them throughout the month of May to raise awareness of cystic fibrosis and the challenges faced by the nearly 1,000 Queenslanders with this often fatal disease.

School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Talara Primary College in the electorate of Kawana and St Margaret's Anglican College in the electorate of Clayfield.

Kippin-O'Connor, Ms VA

 **Mr SPEAKER:** This morning I was honoured to host the family and friends of the late Vicky Kippin-O'Connor for refreshments prior to their attendance here today for the condolence motion. I welcome here today the late member's brothers Geoff and David, sisters Anita and Sue, and her daughter Liz, along with other family and friends of the late member.

Until recently my electorate of Mulgrave took in large parts of the former electorate of Mourilyan. Hence I wish to pay tribute to the late Vicky Kippin-O'Connor for her service to the Far North community. A life well lived is a life to be celebrated and remembered.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Kippin-O'Connor, Ms VA

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 am): I move—

1. that this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late Victoria Ann Kippin-O'Connor, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland; and
2. that Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased lady the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, on the loss they have sustained.

I rise to honour the memory of Vicky Kippin-O'Connor, who served in this House as the member for Mourilyan from 1974 until 1980. It gives me enormous pleasure to welcome her family members and friends, many of whom have travelled a long way to be here today: Vicky's daughter Liz Kippin; her grandson Bradley Keough and his partner Skye Marley; her granddaughter and grandson, Ella and Daniel Keough; her brothers Geoff and David Cox; her sisters Anita Lethbridge and Sue Faulkenhagen; her cousin Cheryl Cox; and her friends Elizabeth Gonzo and Lorna Fichera, who was the wife of Vicky's campaign manager—that just shows how enduring are the friends we make in a political life. Many other friends are also here: Richard and Jacki Clayton, Alessandra Atkinson, Robynn Morro and Shirley Cameron-Kirk. It is a real pleasure to welcome you all here to the parliament today, to the House where Vicky served her community so dutifully.

Victoria Ann Kippin-O'Connor was born in Ayr on 7 September 1942 and was educated at Kalamia and Ayr state schools and St Anne's Church of England Grammar School in Townsville. Later she studied at the University College of Townsville, as James Cook University was then known, and also at the University of Queensland. Vicky Kippin-O'Connor worked as a high school teacher from 1964 to 1966 before marrying and having a family.

Then, in 1974, she was preselected by the National Party to contest the seat of Mourilyan at the next state election. At that time, Mourilyan had been held by the ALP since its creation in 1949, but as history records, Vicky Kippin-O'Connor won the seat, defeating Peter Moore, at the state election held on 7 December 1974. Vicky was quite a trailblazer. The 1974 state election saw the third and fourth women ever elected to the Queensland parliament—Vicky Kippin-O'Connor, and Rosemary Kyburz who won the Brisbane seat of Salisbury. Indeed, Vicky Kippin-O'Connor was the first woman to be elected to a seat outside of the south-east corner, with our first female member, Irene Longman, holding the seat of Bulimba and our second female member, Vi Jordan, holding the seat of Ipswich West. In fact, the Speaker and my colleague, the member for Bulimba, the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women, recognised the 90th anniversary of Irene Longman's election to this House in a ceremony here on Monday night.

In February 1975 when the parliament opened after the election, Vicky Kippin-O'Connor was given the honour of moving the address-in-reply motion to the Governor's opening speech to the parliament. I think one of her highlights as a member in this place would have been when she represented Queensland at the Australian Constitutional Convention in Perth in 1978. Not content with serving her community in the state legislature, Ms Kippin-O'Connor also served as a councillor on the Johnstone Shire Council from 1982 to 1985.

Sadly, Victoria Ann Kippin-O'Connor passed away in March this year aged 76 years and a funeral service to commemorate her life was held in Innisfail on 3 April 2019. I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service Ms Kippin-O'Connor gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community. On behalf of the government I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Ms Kippin-O'Connor's family and friends.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.37 am): I rise on behalf of the entire opposition to express our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Victoria Kippin-O'Connor, known as Vicky, member for Mourilyan from 1974 to 1980. As the Premier noted, today we are joined in this House by family and friends of Vicky, including Liz, her daughter; Geoff and David Cox, her brothers; Anita Lethbridge and Sue Faulkenhagen, her sisters; Ella, Daniel and Bradley Keough, her grandchildren; Cheryl Cox, her cousin; Skye, Bradley's partner; and many friends, including Elizabeth, Richard, Jacki, Alessandra, Robynn, Shirley and Lorna. As has also been noted, Lorna was the wife of Vicky's campaign manager. She said to me 'My husband was actually the campaign manager, but I think I did most of the work', which I think is quite often the case. It is lovely to have so many friends and family in the gallery here today.

It is indeed an honour to stand in this place and remember the great legacy of Victoria Kippin-O'Connor, the first woman from the National Party to be elected to any Australian parliament. She was the first non-Labor candidate to represent the seat of Mourilyan, winning the seat on two occasions.

Vicky had a country background and was a voice for rural and regional Queensland. As has been noted, she was born in the North Queensland town of Ayr in 1942 to parents Vivian Henry Cox and Enid Parry, nee Trower. She grew up on a grazing property in the Burdekin district. Before entering politics, Vicky was a foundation student at the University College of Townsville, the forerunner of James Cook University. She later worked as a secondary school teacher at several schools including Fairholme College in Toowoomba.

Vicky co-managed cattle properties and a transport business in North Queensland. It was here that she was taken under the wing of Edna Cunningham, the mother of Jacki, who is in the gallery today. Edna Cunningham encouraged Vicky to attend her first political party meeting. She went and, of course, the rest is history. Vicky's experience prior to being a member of parliament stood her in good stead to provide a rural and regional voice for Queensland. She was not a career politician, but she was passionate about bridging the divide between the north and the south of Queensland to ensure that everyone had the same opportunities. Vicky played a prominent role in the redrafting of major legislation relating to vital issues across regional Queensland. Those included electricity supply, the commercial fishing industry, education, family welfare and land tenure.

Vicky was also dedicated to changing society's view of women. Vicky believed it was vitally important for society to support women with children and backed the introduction of kindies. The views that she shared in her first year as a member in this House coincided with International Women's Year, which was declared by the United Nations in 1975. Vicky addressed the difficulties experienced by the beef and sugarcane industries, and the need for repairs and upgrades to the Palmerston Highway and the Ravenshoe-Mount Garnet Road in North Queensland. Vicky was a strong woman who paved the way for females in politics. In her maiden speech in parliament she said—

As one of the few women to have been elected to this State Parliament, I am deeply conscious of the responsibility I have, not only to my party colleagues and my electorate, but also to the women of Queensland.

Following her departure from politics, Vicky remained a very active member of the North Queensland community as a councillor on the Johnstone shire council. In 1984 she became administrator of the Northern Australia Development Council. Vicky remained active in primary industry organisations and was president of the Zonta Club in Innisfail. Vicky also ran her own PR business and still found time to grow bananas.

Vicky was the loving mother of Robert, now deceased, and Liz and the beloved wife of Shane O'Connor, also deceased. I take this opportunity to place on record the thanks of the Liberal National Party in Queensland for the many years of service Mrs Vicky Kippin-O'Connor gave to this House and the Queensland community.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (9.42 am): I rise to add my support to the motion of condolence and respect for Mrs Vicky Kippin-O'Connor. I acknowledge in the gallery today a number of Vicky's family members and friends who have made trips from all over Queensland to be here with us today. As we have heard, Vicky, who was born in Ayr, came from a large farming family based in the Burdekin so, of course, the sugar and beef industries were an important part of her life. That has continued with her relatives sitting in the gallery today, whose strong attachments to both the sugar and the beef industries continue.

In December 1974, Vicky was elected as the National Party member for Mourilyan. In March of the following year she entered parliament. Together with the Liberal member for Salisbury, Rosemary Kyburz, Vicky was one of two women elected to the same parliament for the first time in Queensland. Vicky was well ahead of her time. By looking through *Hansard*, it is easy to see that she fought for an electorate and a region that faced many of the same issues that they face today. Her maiden speech highlights the importance of women in the regions. It is very appropriate that one of the first women in the Queensland parliament spoke on that important topic during International Women's Year.

Vicky was a foundation student of the university college of Townsville, the institution that would later become James Cook University and she taught in Toowoomba. Therefore, it is not surprising that she spoke in support of the preschool correspondence program, which was a precursor to today's eKindy program. I know that the Minister for Education is aware of requests to grow that program in my electorate. It is an honour to know that Vicky would support that expansion now, just as she did in 1975.

Vicky's maiden speech, which was that parliament's address-in-reply, touched on the need to support the beef industry, the need for the right infrastructure to support the growing sugar industry and the need to improve roads. She spoke of the need to ensure services such as health were provided to remote areas just as they were in the south-east. More than 44 years later, we continue to fight for those same services, just as Vicky would want us to do. Four road projects were also mentioned in that speech, including the need for major works on the Palmerston Highway and the Ravenshoe-Mount Garnet Road. Vicky fought for those projects throughout her service in this place and it is fitting that a bridge on the Ravenshoe-Mount Garnet Road was named in her honour.

Throughout her parliamentary career, Vicky kept up with the pressure for new preschools in Ravenshoe and Mount Garnet, to name but a few. She ensured Queensland schoolchildren throughout the state benefitted from a textbook allowance to help them achieve all that they could. She stood up for the rights of farmers and graziers to manage their land.

Upon her departure from parliament, Vicky was very active in many areas of North Queensland life. In 1981 she received the inaugural Commercial Fisherman of the Year Award in recognition of her contribution in the reorganisation of the Queensland Commercial Fishermen's Organisation. She served as a councillor on the Johnstone shire council and was appointed chairman of its health committee. In 1984 she became the Queensland administrator of the Northern Australian Development Council and in that same year she started her own business in Townsville.

Vicky remained active in primary industry organisations and was the inaugural president of the Zonta Club in Innisfail. She remarried in 1989 and returned to her family property with her husband, Shane O'Connor, where they had cattle and grew bananas and lychees. She served as a director and president of the Australian Banana Growers Council from the late 1990s until 2007. Former council president Len Collins said that Vicky put in a lot of effort, she was thorough and gave her everything. Vicky received an award of honour in 2009 from the banana industry for her contributions at both state and national levels

Vicky Kippin-O'Connor was an advocate for the north of our great state, an advocate for primary producers, a supporter of families and a fighter for Queensland children. As I mentioned earlier, she was well ahead of her time. Her maiden speech focused on her experience and how that experience highlighted the needs of her constituents. Vicky's last speech in this place was on 24 September 1980 when she asked the minister for transport if Queensland would adopt photographs on drivers' licences and how that would be implemented in country areas. Haven't we come a long way since then!

In short, Vicky fought for regional Queensland. If we are to truly honour Vicky, all in this place must stand up for the regions and stand up for Queensland families. That would be truly honouring the life and work of Vicky Kippin-O'Connor.



Mr BOYCE (Callide—LNP) (9.47 am): Mr Speaker—

He was the Red Creek overseer, a trusted man and true,
Whose shoulder never left the wheel when there was work to do;
Through all the day he rode the run, and when the lights grew dim
The sweetest wife that ever loved would wait and watch for him.
She brought him dower of golden hair and eyes of laughing blue,
Stout heart and cunning bridle-hand to guide the mulga through;
And when the mob was mustered from the box flats far and wide
She loved to mount the wildest colts that no one else would ride.

That is the opening verse of the epic *Riding of the Rebel* by Will Ogilvie. I like to think it was written about the sister of the man from Snowy River, the quintessential bushwoman. Victoria Kippin-O'Connor was such a woman. She was kind and gentle. At the same time, she was a fierce advocate for and a loyal and devoted supporter of rural Queensland. In fact, she was the first woman from the National Country Party to be elected to any parliament in Australia. She stands beside Irene Longman, the first woman to be elected to the Queensland parliament; Sallyanne Atkinson AO, Brisbane's first female lord mayor; Joan Sheldon AM, Queensland's first female treasurer; Yvonne Chapman, the first woman to hold a cabinet position; Dame Annabelle Rankin DBE, the first Queensland woman elected to the federal parliament; Naomi Wilson, the first female parliamentary secretary in Queensland; Joanna Lindgren, the first Indigenous female to represent Queensland in the federal Senate; our own Fiona Simpson MP, the first elected female Speaker in Queensland; and, of course, our very own effervescent and persistent Deb Frecklington MP, the first female leader of the Liberal National Party in Queensland.

Vicky Kippin-O'Connor stands with these women. They all represent conservative politics in Queensland and Australia. Vicky Kippin-O'Connor was first. She was a leader, a groundbreaker, a trailblazer. She went where no other would go so that others might follow. She lived in a time when giants walked the earth, and, what is more, she was one of them. She stood among them and held her ground. I have the greatest admiration and respect for women who arrive at their destination, achieve their goals, show the way—all by their own strength and merit. They are there because they are the best—by no other way or influence.

I would like to acknowledge Vicky Kippin-O'Connor's extended family who are with us today in the gallery, especially her sister, Anita Lethbridge. We have known each other well and have spent many days at council sitting side by side. In fact, we are neighbours at Taroom, where I live. Anita and

family, what I speak now is for you, for Vicky is gone and we are left. The history books will remember Vicky as a summit on the mountain range of achievement on which we might climb. On behalf of the 56th Parliament of Queensland, ave atque vale—hail and farewell—Vicky Kippin-O'Connor 1942-2019.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (9.51 am): I rise to pay my respects to the late Victoria Kippin-O'Connor, better known during her time in this parliament as Vicky Kippin. She was a fighter for the north and for rural and regional industries. Most of all, she represented her local community. She was also a loving family member, as we have heard here today and as her funeral notice so sweetly acknowledged. It read—

Beloved Wife of Shane (dec'd). Loving Mother of Robert (dec'd), and Liz, Besotted Grandma of Bradley, Ella, and Daniel, Daughter of Viv and Enid Cox (Both dec'd), Treasured Sister of Jim, Geoff, Anita, Sue, and David, Loved Sister-in-law and Aunt of their Families. Loving Step-Mother of Christopher, Nicole, Kelleigh, Riley and Families.

I also acknowledge her family and friends in the gallery today.

Elected on 7 December 1974, it was an historic parliament that Vicky was elected into as the member for Mourilyan. She was elected alongside another first—Queensland's first Indigenous MP, National Party member for Cook, the later Eric Deeral. My late father, Gordon, was elected in the same year for the seat of Cooroora. It was a watershed year. It was a time of great turmoil and political upheaval. It saw a tremendous swing to the National and Liberal parties in Queensland, with these members being some of those who were elected and creating these firsts.

This is a significant week to be remembering Vicky Kippin-O'Connor for the trailblazer that she was. It is 90 years and five days since another trailblazer, Irene Longman, was elected into this parliament as Queensland's first woman MP for the Country and Progressive National Party, one of the predecessor parties of today's conservative parties. By the time Vicky was elected 45 years later, taking the title as the first elected female member of the National Party, there had not been many women elected since Irene Longman took her seat in this parliament. Vicky believed in championing ability and the fact that women were equally capable and should be judged on their merits and not excluded from the leadership table based on their gender. She ensured that she was never silent in speaking up for and representing her people and Queensland.

We have heard a number of accolades in respect of her service during her time in politics and post politics. I always believe that there is something particularly significant when you hear about the continued service of people even when they no longer have the formal title of member of parliament. She was the Commercial Fisherman of the Year award winner in 1981, the chairman of the Innisfail Regional Promotion Bureau in 1981, Queensland administrator of the Northern Australian Development Council in 1984 and the inaugural president of the Zonta club of Innisfail. She grew beef, bananas and lychees with her second husband, Shane O'Connor. She was director and president of the Australian Banana Growers' Council from the late 1990s until 2007.

I remember many times hearing Vicky in the media championing these industries and these causes. As she did during her time as an elected member, she was never silent and was always very straightforward as an advocate for those industries and causes. She was also respected as a person. I know in talking to the people who knew her well how she was loved and respected as a person not just for her achievements. She was truly a person people respected and loved, with good reason.

In acknowledging Vicky in this condolence motion today, we know that she leaves a legacy that lasts beyond the time she served. It is a powerful legacy. It is one, as has been noted, that leaves us to not just ponder the past but strive to create a better future, knowing that there are those who worked to create opportunities for all. Vale to Vicky Kippin-O'Connor. Our condolences to all her family and friends.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (9.55 am): I rise on behalf of the KAP today to express our sincere condolences to the family and friends of former member for Mourilyan, Vicky Kippin-O'Connor. I am also proudly speaking as the current member whose electorate takes in almost the entirety of Vicky's former electorate. This includes the former Johnstone and Herbert shires which are now the Cassowary Coast and Tablelands regional councils. I express my heartfelt thoughts and wishes to the family and friends already mentioned who are in attendance today.

We are all aware that Vicky comes from a well-known and highly respected pioneering farming family in the Burdekin district. History has shown, no doubt from her family genes, that Vicky displayed leadership, negotiating skills and the ability to forge outcomes for the benefit of the community. It is no wonder and inevitable that with these qualities Vicky would become a member of parliament from 1974 to 1980.

I remember vividly when I took up my new seat of Hill how excited Vicky was to be in my ear constantly about the issues affecting the region. She was certainly passionate about getting her point across, but she always had a vision, a plan and an outcome. For years I would regularly hear Vicky on the weekly *Country Hour* show talking confidently about the agriculture and banana industries and eradicating black sigatoka.

One of her main achievements was the upgrade of Palmerston Highway. As members of parliament we celebrate with the community when we receive funding. Vicky went far beyond this. Vicky laid the foundation, turning the Innisfail to Millaa Millaa road, commonly known as the old Palmerston track, spanning 54 kilometres, into the major arterial highway it is today. Thousands of prime movers, grey nomads and locals use this road daily. It has given access from the coast to the Tablelands, the gulf and North-West Queensland. This highway is a road I commonly use to get from one end of my electorate to the other.

We all have Vicky to thank for what is known as the Palmerston Highway. The Vicky Kippin-O'Connor Bridge is a tribute to her never-say-die attitude in laying the foundations for this important road infrastructure to North Queensland. While Vicky was ill she still went out and about in her community with the same passion and drive.

It was around eight months ago I caught up with Vicky at the East Palmerston navua sedge and wild dogs meeting. I asked her this question: 'Vicky, how did you do it—get the funds for the Palmerston Highway upgrade?' She said, 'I drove Russ Hinze, the former transport and main roads minister, up the wall. I knew that if I could get him to come up to the region he would be persuaded.'

Vicky went on to say that she finally convinced the minister to visit. She said that she had organised some yummys for when they got to the top including scones with locally produced fresh cream and cheese. When Vicky and the minister drove from the bottom to the top these goodies would be waiting for him, including the entire Millaa Millaa community. However, she also cleverly arranged while they were driving up the range for them to pass a convoy of milk tankers and long haul timber trucks on their way down, making their journey pretty long and difficult to put it mildly. By the time they got to the top the minister told the community that was waiting, 'I have got the message. You will have your road.' God bless you, Vicky, for what you did for the north.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, will you please indicate your agreement by standing in silence for one minute.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

PETITIONS

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

Hinchinbrook Electorate, Ecotourism Development

Mr Dametto, from 259 petitioners, requesting the House to support eco-tourism development in the Hinchinbrook electorate [[778](#), [779](#)].

Petition received.

TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Premier and Minister for Trade.(Hon. Palaszczuk)—

[780](#) Overseas travel report: Report on Trade and Investment Mission to the United Arab Emirates, Germany and the United Kingdom by the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, 5-15 April 2019

MEMBER'S PAPERS

The following member's papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Pumicestone (Mrs Wilson)—

[781](#) Nonconforming petition regarding removal of anti-pelican devices from the lights on Bribie Island bridge

Member for Toowoomba North (Mr Watts)—

[782](#) Nonconforming petition regarding long-term parking needs of Fairview Heights State School

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Federal Election

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.02 am): Queensland has a big decision to make this Saturday. We need Bill Shorten as our next Prime Minister. We need a stable federal government. We need a united federal government. Most of all, we need a better deal for Queensland.

Time after time I have told this House about how the Prime Minister has left us short-changed: the \$182 million cut this year from our schools; the over \$300 million cut from our hospitals; the cut of \$1.6 billion from remote and Indigenous housing, ending a 50-year agreement of working together. What have those opposite done about this? Nothing. What have they said about it? Nothing. What are they doing for Queensland? Nothing.

This state knows only too well the cuts and chaos of the LNP. How can the state LNP pretend to want to create jobs when they sacked 14,000 people? How can they pretend to care for the sick when they sacked nurses and doctors and midwives? How can they pretend to care for our elderly when they closed nursing homes? How can they pretend to care about our kids' education when they tried to close and sell off their schools?

We learn today how Scott Morrison plans to pay for his election promises—with yet more cuts. This morning's *Age* newspaper reveals Treasurer Josh Frydenberg will, in the dying hours of this campaign, announce \$1.2 billion in savings. To me that sounds like another \$1.2 billion in cuts to schools and hospitals that Queensland cannot afford.

Compare that with Bill Shorten. Bill backs our Cross River Rail—the key to freeing up our rail network and unclogging our roads. It is because of Bill Shorten that we have a National Disability Insurance Scheme. Because of Bill Shorten there was a commission of inquiry into banks and financial institutions ripping off their customers. Bill Shorten also accepts the science of climate change and that we need to do something about it.

How do we know if a vote for Scott Morrison is not really a vote for Peter Dutton's next challenge for the leadership? I need Queenslanders to do what we do best: stand up for ourselves. On Saturday we need Queensland to vote them out.

Works for Queensland

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.04 am): My government's \$600 million Works for Queensland program has the runs on the board when it comes to jobs and infrastructure across regional Queensland. This vital funding is about getting people into work and is being used by councils for new parks, gardens, roads and other community facilities that are improving many regional towns and cities. In fact, I had a delegation of mayors in just this week once again talking to me about how important the Works for Queensland program is.

Today I am pleased to announce the next wave of projects being funded under the program, creating jobs and boosting local economies for our regional councils. Nearly 500 infrastructure and maintenance projects have been approved through the 2019-21 round of Works for Queensland which will have an enormous and positive impact in regions, towns and cities outside the south-east. Councils estimate that these projects will create or support more than 4,500 jobs, which is a fantastic result for regional Queensland families.

Some of these new projects include: upgrading the Mareeba swimming pool filtration system and replacing Anzac Avenue Bridge in the electorate of Cook; upgrades to play equipment and soft surfaces in Gregory Terrace Park, Kuranda, in the electorate of Barron River; upgrades to the Esplanade Plaza in Cairns; footpath replacement in the Murgon CBD in the seat of Nanango; construction of a new ferry terminal in Townsville; upgrades at Northview Park and Bluewater Lagoon playgrounds in Mackay; zoo improvements with the construction of a new reptile enclosure and construction of fishing platforms along the Fitzroy River in Rockhampton—we know how the residents of Rocky love their fishing; construction of the Emu Park Community Arts Hub in the electorate of Keppel; security upgrades to the Charleville Airport in the Maranoa; and upgrades to the aquatic centre in Maryborough—I know that the member for Maryborough will be jumping for joy with that.

I have seen firsthand the direct benefits our communities receive through Works for Queensland. I would like to congratulate councils on their successful projects.

Australian Olympic Team Appeal

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.06 am): Tonight we will help Queensland's Olympic hopefuls on the road to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, with \$600,000 towards the Queensland Olympic Council fundraising appeal. The Queensland Olympic Council's campaign to raise funds for the Australian Olympic Team Appeal will be launched here at Parliament House. Queensland's target is \$1.1 million out of a total of \$8 million nationally. I am pleased to announce that my government's \$600,000 contribution gets the campaign underway.

We will also support Queensland athletes selected for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games with a \$2,700 grant each. I look forward to hosting them again at the Queensland Premier's athletes Tokyo 2020 dinner one year from today.

Competing at the highest level on the Olympic stage is one of the very highest achievements for our elite able-bodied athletes and para-athletes. They showed last year at the highly successful Gold Coast Commonwealth Games that they are an inspiration to us all. This Olympic fundraising appeal is a great way for Queenslanders to show their support for the next stage.

We are also working with the Queensland Olympic Council for Olympians to travel across Queensland into schools and communities. They are sharing the Olympic spirit, promoting healthy living and recreation, and supporting our next generation of Olympians. The Olympics Unleashed program began in September. Olympians, Paralympians and athletes aspiring for Tokyo 2020 are visiting our primary schools until July next year. They are talking to years 4 to 6 students about goal setting, building resilience and overcoming challenges.

I thank our athletes for this program. I urge Queenslanders to return the favour by contributing generously to the Olympic appeal. I thank the Minister for Education and the Minister for Sport for working so collaboratively on this great program that is going throughout our schools.

Queensland Economy

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.08 am): The latest Queensland State Accounts show that the Queensland economy continues to record solid growth, despite challenging global conditions. Queensland's trend gross state product grew by 0.5 per cent in the December quarter 2018, well above the 0.2 per cent growth experienced in the rest of Australia. Over the year, the Queensland economy grew by 2.6 per cent, again higher than the 2.2 per cent growth in the rest of the nation.

Queensland's continued solid economic growth has been underpinned by the performance of our trade sector, with high demand for our goods and services around the globe. In fact, the latest ABS merchandise export data shows that Queensland exporters continue to break records. We exported more than \$84 billion worth of goods in the year to March—an increase of more than \$13 billion over the year prior. More trade means more jobs, with one in five Queensland jobs supported by trade.

March marked the 12th consecutive record-breaking month for Queensland exports, which are now worth more than the exports from New South Wales and Victoria combined, as the Premier likes to continually remind the House. Importantly, Queensland's regional areas led the charge, with strong results from a range of industries across the state—such as coal exports from the Bowen Basin, coal seam gas production in the Surat Basin, metal production in North and North-West Queensland, and strong beef prices helping cattle farmers around the state. Queensland's new powerhouse industry, LNG, continues to support our strong export performance, with annual LNG exports increasing 47.5 per cent over the year to March 2019. The first LNG cargo departed Curtis Island in January 2015. Now, just over four years later, Queensland is exporting over \$15 billion of LNG each year.

These vital export dollars support jobs and businesses across our economy, but that is not all that Queensland has to offer. Services exports also continue to grow strongly. Record numbers of visitors, both from other states and overseas, are coming to Queensland to experience our beautiful state for themselves. We are also seeing a continued increase in the number of students travelling to Queensland to learn from our world-class universities.

The Palaszczuk government has worked hard to cultivate respectful relationships with our trading partners. Our strong relationships are reflected in our strong export numbers, which in 2018 have catapulted Queensland's economic growth above that of the rest of Australia. In turn, we expect a federal government that respects Australia's trading partners, that does not dismiss them as 'customers' but treats them as vital allies in continuing Australia's economic growth. The Palaszczuk government

looks forward to working with a federal government that nurtures these relationships and remains committed to growing our economy and creating more jobs for Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk Labor government is looking forward to the election of the Bill Shorten Labor government come this Saturday.

Federal Election

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (10.12 am): This weekend all Australians have a choice. On the one hand we have the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison-Truss-Joyce-McCormack perhaps Joyce again-Hanson-Palmer coalition government. It will be an experiment the likes of which Australia has never seen—a heaving, unstable coalition, as described by retiring Liberal minister Kelly O’Dwyer, of homophobic, anti-women climate change deniers. They will be propped up by a constellation of dodgy preference deals—one with a morally bankrupt businessman, another with the standard bearer of xenophobes, MPs who spend their weekends with Neo-Nazis and other right-wing extremists.

We know their record. They have put Queensland into an infrastructure freeze. There is no money for Cross River Rail. They want to cut the end off the Gold Coast Light Rail. In their last budget, they put more money into a rail line in Sydney than into all the roads in Queensland, including the Bruce Highway. It is a federal coalition that is yet to deliver a budget surplus in nearly six years of government, whereas the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered four in a row. They are a government with an Attorney-General who said ‘people have a right to be bigots,’ a Prime Minister who would not vote for marriage equality and a home affairs minister who boycotted the national apology. They are a government who cut health when they promised they would not. They cut education when they promised they would not. They cut the ABC when they promised they would not. They have even proudly delivered an underspend on the disabled. What is next? Who knows what culture war will be prosecuted next by a government that has nothing but a record of cuts and a future of chaos.

On the other hand, there is a better way for Australia—a strong united Shorten Labor government that will invest in infrastructure, support manufacturing and create jobs. There will be more money for the Bruce, \$2.24 billion for Cross River Rail to improve our rail network and investing to upgrade and widen the Ipswich Motorway. A Shorten Labor government will invest in the jobs of the future—free TAFE for more students, a billion dollars for a new hydrogen industry to be led by Queensland that will boost jobs and protect the environment for our kids. There will be national leadership that treats people with respect regardless of their sexuality, gender, religion or ability. A Shorten Labor government is the federal government that Australia deserves and Queensland needs. I urge all Australians to make the right choice for Queensland and support a federal Shorten Labor government.

Federal Election

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (10.15 am): In two days time the people of Queensland have a clear choice—a government that will work with the state to deliver better infrastructure and services for Queenslanders or another three years of cuts and chaos under the LNP. Today I am proud to say that excavation on the \$3.6 billion Queen’s Wharf Brisbane site has reached more than 80 per cent and is on track to be finished by the end of this year. No matter where you look around our state, this government here in Queensland is delivering projects that will improve our tourism offering and livability for locals. We are having to do the heavy lifting on our own.

In the north, planning is now underway for a visitor centre on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait, there are upgrades to the port and convention centre in Cairns, and construction has now started on the Wangetti Trail, which will generate \$300 million in additional revenue for tourism in that region. In Townsville, of course, we are building a stadium, but the Palaszczuk government is also delivering \$2.5 million for new underwater art projects to diversify the tourism products in Townsville.

In the Whitsundays, we have our world famous Great Barrier Reef islands coming on line. We have Daydream Island set to open next month and Hayman set to open in July. In the outback, we are investing more than \$10 million in new attractions, including a new artesian baths experience at Julia Creek, which I saw firsthand, camping parks in Barcaldine and upgrades to the Riversleigh Fossil Centre in Mount Isa. Along the Capricorn Coast, we are delivering \$25 million to deliver power and water infrastructure on Great Keppel Island. Only federal Labor has pledged to match this commitment.

On the Sunshine Coast, we have just announced a new wildlife camping experience to boost accommodation options on the Sunshine Coast with the Irwins at Australia Zoo. On the Gold Coast, it is our state government that is partnering with the council to build a world-class dive site that was talked up so much by the Assistant Treasurer of our country but never delivered.

Imagine how much we could achieve for the tourism industry and all industries of Queensland if we had a government in Canberra that was committed to giving Queensland their fair share, a government that would not short-change us on major infrastructure projects, like the M1, Cross River Rail or Gold Coast Light Rail. Labor even has a billion dollars set aside for a new tourism infrastructure fund for our country, an initiative never adopted by the federal government. If nothing else, Queenslanders know that if they vote for Bill Shorten they will get Bill Shorten. A vote for the Morrison government means they will get Dutton or Abbott or Hanson or Palmer or Morrison.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the minister.

Ms JONES: We know that a vote for Morrison means the only way he could possibly form government is with a Hanson, Palmer, Morrison mishmash—another guaranteed three years of chaos, cuts and right-wing extremists.

Electoral Donations, High Court Decision

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (10.18 am): When the Palaszczuk government was elected, we made a commitment to bring back transparency and accountability in our electoral system. One of this government's first acts was to reduce political donation thresholds. This was further enhanced by introducing and leading the country in creating a real-time disclosure system for political donations and banning developer donations. The Palaszczuk government introduced this ban off the back of recommendations from the Crime and Corruption Commission to ban developer donations to local government.

To circumvent that ban, the former LNP president sought to challenge it in the High Court and the Morrison LNP government amended the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 in what can only be described as an appalling abuse of power. Although the High Court's decision was released on 17 April, the reasons were reserved at the time. I can now advise the House that the reasons were released yesterday, and I would like to table a copy of those reasons.

Tabled paper: Order of the High Court of Australia regarding *Spence v Queensland* [2019] HCA 15, dated 17 April 2019 [\[783\]](#).

The court's reasons show how the LNP at state and federal levels tried to work together to line their coffers and keep their donations secret by attempting to overrule not just Queensland's developer donations ban but also the \$1,000 threshold and real-time disclosure. The court found that the purpose of the Morrison LNP government's amendment was to ensure that political entities may receive donations to fund any activities from any donors who would otherwise be prohibited by state or territory electoral laws from making those donations. Furthermore, the court cited a submission from the federal LNP government that their ultimate purpose was to ensure that political parties had the money to influence the way electors vote in the federal elections.

This High Court decision represents a significant win not only for Queensland but also for the other states and territories and validates the actions of the Palaszczuk government in ensuring that we have the most transparent electoral laws in the country. The Palaszczuk government welcomes the decision and the reasons handed down by the High Court. While the LNP thought they were above the law, it is clear the highest court in the nation disagrees.

Cancer Treatment

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.21 am): Queensland's population is growing and ageing. Our state has grown by 840,000 people over the past decade, and of that population growth about 230,000 people are aged 65 or older. While cancer can strike at any age, living longer makes it more likely that people will be diagnosed with, live with and possibly die from cancer. One in two of us will be diagnosed with cancer in our lifetime. Think about the person sitting next to you. Chances are that one of you has had or will get cancer. It means that pretty much every one of us has lost a loved one to this dreaded disease and we all know people who are fighting it right now.

Thanks to cutting-edge research and the work of our fantastic hospitals and health staff, the rate of deaths from cancer has been slowly but steadily decreasing. Too often the cost of treating cancer is astronomical for both the patients and their families. For Scott Morrison to say that cancer treatment is free just demonstrates how out of touch he is.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to fighting cancer on every front. We have been investing in infrastructure, services and research. There is nothing more heartbreaking than childhood cancers. That is why we are investing \$20 million building a new inpatient ward with six additional

oncology beds at the Queensland Children's Hospital. With Sony we are building a special place for adolescents to fight cancer together at the RBWH. We are refurbishing accommodation lodges for regional cancer patients in Townsville, Toowoomba and Brisbane, which will ease the financial and emotional strain cancer patients experience. Because Queensland is a world leader in research, we are investing \$25 million in the Queensland Genomics Health Alliance. More than 30 medical science research projects are underway through this initiative, studying cancers like lung cancer and melanoma. We know that one-third of cancers can be prevented and another third can be detected earlier, which is why the Palaszczuk government has invested in preventive health measures and making sure Queenslanders keep up to date with lifesaving cancer screening programs.

Too often people suffer through cancer hidden away. That is why I am so pleased that Labor has made health services for cancer patients and the need to invest in those to provide world-class care an election issue. Fighting cancer is hard enough. People should not have to go broke to win the fight of their life. Last week Bill Shorten announced that, if elected, he will invest \$60 million to expand cancer services at the RBWH, giving Queenslanders faster access to cutting-edge cancer care. This new investment is part of federal Labor's \$2.3 billion Medicare cancer plan, the most important boost to Medicare since Bob Hawke created it.

Scott Morrison and Greg Hunt should realise that when you cut health services you cut short the lives of Queenslanders living with cancer. Every Queenslander deserves the very best care. Only Labor has demonstrated a commitment to our health system to make this a reality.

Water Supply

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.24 am): I am pleased to inform the House that an \$18 million upgrade to strengthen the Leslie Harrison Dam's main embankment and spillway has been completed three months ahead of schedule. This is the first major upgrade in more than 30 years and will enable the dam to better withstand extreme weather events. Leslie Harrison Dam provides about 25 per cent of the Redland city's water supply and will continue to be an important asset for the growing community. This project, which provided nearly 60 full-time jobs, is just part of the Palaszczuk government's \$863 million commitment to water infrastructure since December 2017 that has created 1,643 jobs for Queenslanders.

Dams are lifelong assets and require ongoing periodic assessment, monitoring and maintenance to ensure the delivery of safe and reliable water solutions for customers. Both Seqwater and SunWater are seeking to meet the state and national dam safety guidelines. Over the past 18 months Seqwater and SunWater have delivered a combined investment of \$63 million and supported 151 full-time jobs. SunWater has a budget of \$35 million for dam improvements this year for Fairbairn Dam. Planning has also commenced for improvements and spillway upgrades at Burdekin Falls, Paradise and Teemburra dams. Seqwater plans major upgrades over the next five years including \$23 million for the second stage of Ewen Maddock on the Sunshine Coast, set to begin this year, and \$127 million for Lake Macdonald, set to begin in March 2020.

The Palaszczuk government takes our water infrastructure very seriously. Careful planning and consultation and ensuring projects are economically and environmentally responsible are crucial and, sadly, this is simply not the case at the federal level. We have the Deputy pm—what's-his-name—sashaying around the state sandbagging seats. They have a dam promise in every seat west of the great divide. They have waved cash at the member for Kennedy for Hell's Gate Dam. There are feasibility studies from Cape York to Stanthorpe. In fact, a feasibility study is being prepared at the moment showing that feasibility studies, stacked end to end, go around the world three times!

It was the member for Kennedy who let the cat out of the bag as to the Commonwealth's motives. The member for Kennedy said—

Have they bought my vote? I'd say if they have, they've paid a bloody lot of money for it.

There is chaos from the federal government. We have chaos, confusion and a dam coming to a creek—name a creek, any creek—close to you. There is only one answer on Saturday and that is Labor.

Infrastructure, Federal Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.27 am): The Palaszczuk government is investing a record \$21.7 billion in Queensland infrastructure over the next four years, our third record infrastructure spend over four budgets. Unfortunately, our record infrastructure investment in Queensland has been undermined by the cuts from the chaotic

Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government. In 2017-18 the federal LNP's contribution to Queensland was cut by more than six per cent. Infrastructure investment has gone backwards under the federal LNP in Canberra, but Queensland now has the best chance in years to get a fair share from Canberra under a Shorten Labor government.

Bill Shorten is already \$2.2 billion ahead of Scott Morrison, thanks to his Cross River Rail commitment. Cross River Rail is Queensland's No. 1 infrastructure priority, and Bill Shorten has backed it while Scott Morrison has consistently ignored it first as treasurer and now as Prime Minister. Bill Shorten and his team have committed more than \$15.6 billion to projects that will make a difference to Queenslanders right across our state. There is almost \$2 billion to extend the Gateway Motorway from Bracken Ridge to the Pine River and upgrade the Bruce Highway between the Gateway Motorway and Deception Bay Road. There is \$500 million under federal Labor to continue the next stage of the Ipswich Motorway upgrade, which had its first stage funded the last time we had a Labor government in Canberra. There is \$500 million from federal Labor for an inland roads package for the Darling Downs and Western Queensland—another sign of Labor's real commitment to regional Queenslanders, not cuts. There is \$852 million for the Rockhampton ring-road, \$800 million for the Cooroy to Curra bypass on the Bruce Highway, \$144 million for stage 5 of the Townsville ring-road after consistent campaigning from our Townsville MP and more than \$467 million for Far North Queensland. There is \$100 million extra to upgrade the Mount Isa rail line, one of our key job-creating mineral rail freight routes in North Queensland and North-West Queensland.

The Morrison government has ripped funding out of the important Cape York regional package, a move that will set back progress on sealing roads in the peninsula and cost local and Indigenous jobs and training opportunities. Bill Shorten will protect that plan, putting an extra \$125 million into that package to ensure we continue sealing roads to keep the momentum going and securing the economic future for those communities. Bill Shorten will support our \$2.3 billion plan for four M1 upgrades and has backed level crossing and park-and-ride projects across South-East Queensland, including \$48 million for the exit 45 interchange on the M1 and \$50 million across exits 41 and 49 at Pimpama—double the LNP commitment. The choice for Queenslanders in this federal election could not be clearer: more division, more dysfunction, more chaos, more infighting like we saw yesterday from Barnaby Joyce from the LNP; or a united Bill Shorten Labor government to make a genuine investment in Queensland, to back Queensland, to back our economy and to back jobs in our state.

Education, Federal Funding

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.31 am): On Saturday, Queenslanders will vote in the federal election at their local polling booth, many of which are located in local schools. It is an opportune reminder of what is at stake at this election when it comes to education. The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government ripped \$2.1 billion in education funding away from Queensland when in 2017 it tore up the National Education Reform Agreement. This equals a cut of \$182 million in funding for Queensland this year alone. Despite its hollow rhetoric about fair funding, the LNP created a \$1.2 billion slush fund for non-government schools in the Choice and Affordability Fund but failed to provide a similar funding boost for public schools. Perhaps the LNP's greatest failure with regard to education funding is the lack of a long-term funding commitment to universal access to kindergarten in the year before school. Instead, since 2013 we saw six short-term funding extensions—an absolute disgrace.

Queensland schoolchildren would be well served by the election of a Shorten Labor government. Bill Shorten has already committed nearly \$650 million for Queensland state schools over three years from January 2020. He has also committed to providing an additional \$300 million to ensure students with a disability get the support they need at schools—a great commitment. Labor has also committed to a new five-year \$1.75 billion national partnership funding agreement for kindergarten and extended universal access to kindergarten for three-year-olds from 2021. This is the long-term vision and funding commitment the sector has been crying out for and exactly what we need to give our children a great start in life.

The election is also a referendum on wages. Real wages have been stagnant for years, something of which the Morrison government is proud. Finance minister Mathias Cormann described this as a deliberate design feature of our economic architecture. Thousands of Queensland workers in retail and hospitality have been hit by the ongoing cuts to weekend penalty rates, straight cuts to take-home pay of up to \$6,000 a year for low-paid workers. Bill Shorten and federal Labor have made a commitment to restore penalty rates within 100 days of being elected and to establishing a national

labour hire licensing scheme and a small claims jurisdiction along with the Fair Work Commission to give workers an easy path to claim unpaid wages and superannuation. This is great news for Queensland workers and for the almost 27,000 workers in the Central Queensland area who, as reported in the media today, are being robbed of their superannuation entitlement, worth around \$50 million per year. When it comes to matters of education and industrial relations, Queenslanders would be well served by the election of a Shorten Labor government. It is time.

TAFE Queensland, Funding

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.34 am): Over this term, the Palaszczuk government is investing more than \$130 million to make sure TAFE Queensland students have access to world-class training facilities. This includes upgrades already underway at the Townsville, Toowoomba, Cairns, Mount Gravatt, Caboolture and Loganlea campuses. Recently I attended the Loganlea TAFE to announce \$3.2 million towards expanding veterinary science and nursing training, where we saw a surge of more than 16 per cent in enrolments in the past year. It was great to see federal Labor also commit a further \$1.3 million towards the Loganlea campus if elected.

Queensland needs a partner in Canberra, and that is why it was fantastic to partner with a future Shorten federal Labor government in announcing a new \$40 million SkillsTech TAFE in North Lakes. This new trades campus will provide vital training for up to 3,300 Queenslanders in the growing northern Brisbane region that includes Pine Rivers, Caboolture, North Lakes and Caloundra. In total, federal Labor has committed more than \$45 million for TAFE in Queensland. What has the LNP promised? Zip, zero, nothing, not a cent. In comparison, federal Labor has shown what real national leadership looks like for TAFE.

We have seen federal Labor support TAFE investments in not just North Lakes and Logan but also in Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton, Mount Gravatt, Acacia Ridge, Whitsundays, Bowen, Redcliffe and Eagle Farm. A Shorten Labor government is also willing to partner with our Free TAFE initiative by investing in 100,000 Free TAFE places and \$330 million to deliver 150,000 apprenticeship subsidies in areas with skills shortages. This is what a fair share for Queensland looks like, and it is needed.

After the chaos of Abbott, Turnbull and now Morrison, more than \$3 billion has been ripped out of skills and training. Scott Morrison has not even said the word 'TAFE' this campaign let alone visited one. After the federal skills minister, Senator Cash, unilaterally declared war on electric vehicles in week 1 of the campaign, she has not been seen or heard from since. It is about time that Queensland got its fair share of federal funding for training, and it is clear that only a Shorten Labor government will deliver for TAFE.

Electric Vehicles

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (10.37 am): When it comes to delivering action on climate change, only Labor has a realistic and sustainable strategy to take Australia to a carbon-neutral future. The Palaszczuk government has also set clear and meaningful targets including zero net emissions by 2050 and 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. To help deliver on these targets, the Palaszczuk government established the Queensland government's Electric Vehicle Transition Strategy. It was not even that hard to develop and deliver an emissions reduction policy in this place. We just had to believe that climate change was real and be united enough to do something about it.

I inform the House that we are on track to deliver on the transition of eliminating petrol vehicles from the Queensland government fleet within 10 years. We have signalled to the next-generation vehicle industry that Queensland is open for business, providing a steady stream of sales as a foundation to enable all Queenslanders to be able to choose a quality low-emission, low-cost vehicle.

On Saturday, Queenslanders will choose between the chaotic Morrison-Hanson-Palmer coalition that has its sights firmly set on the past or a united Shorten Labor government that believes Australia and in fact Queensland can have a vehicle manufacturing industry. In April, Bill Shorten set a target of 50 per cent of new cars on the road being electric by 2030 and 50 per cent of the federal government's fleet being electric by 2025. We know this can be done, because QFleet is already doing it. Under Labor, Queensland businesses can deduct a 20 per cent depreciation for private fleet electric vehicles worth at least \$20,000. Under the Palaszczuk government's Electric Vehicle Transition Strategy combined with a Shorten government, Queensland low-emission vehicle manufacturers have a bright future.

Predictably, though, Scott Morrison has been wound up by his coalition's climate change deniers and is intent on crushing Australia's electric vehicle industry and shackling Queenslanders to the high costs of fossil fuels for generations to come. The Prime Minister claimed that embracing 21st century technology would take four-wheel drives and SUVs off the road. The Prime Minister is wrong. Ford has just invested in an electric vehicle manufacturing company that builds only utes. Reports say that the company is investing \$11 billion to have 40 new electric vehicle options on the road by 2022, including SUVs and utes.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh.

Mr de BRENNI: Hydrogen power is the next big export opportunity for Queensland, with hydrogen vehicles poised to be the next addition to the Queensland fleet. In backing renewable energy for the next generation of vehicles, a Shorten Labor government has committed more than \$1 billion to build the hydrogen industry to provide clean energy for our vehicles. The choice this Saturday is clear: a Shorten Labor government that is prepared to take action on climate change or three more years of the government that deliberately killed off Australia's automotive manufacturing industry.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders. I gave you guidance.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.40 am): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 11 June 2019.



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (10.40 am): The opposition does not agree with this motion. It would mean that we come back in a few weeks time but this House still has important matters to debate and discuss this week. Therefore, I suggest that we sit on Friday. If members do not support this motion then we will automatically sit on Friday. I will outline the reason I am suggesting that.

Earlier in the week, when we debated the Business Committee motion, the Leader of the House talked about how great the process is working in that the opposition had negotiated an outcome in relation to the blue card bill of eight hours of debate, being six hours of second reading debate and two hours of consideration in detail. If one looks at the *Notice Paper* today and sees that the program includes private members' statements, debate of committee reports and question time, one comes to the conclusion very quickly that there is only two hours and 45 minutes available for debate of the blue card bill. The total debate time will be nothing like eight hours—nothing like six hours for the second reading and then two hours for consideration in detail. There are many amendments to be moved.

It is important that this House has additional time to have appropriate numbers of members speak in that debate. The speaking list has 29 opposition members yet to speak on that bill. I suggest that the crossbenchers want time to speak on this important bill. That is just for the second reading debate. That does not take into account consideration in detail, where there are numerous amendments foreshadowed by both the government and the opposition. There is not enough time today to deal with that along with the other orders of business.

A few weeks ago the Leader of the House was on the Steve Austin program on the ABC talking about the efficiency of this Business Committee process and how everyone still gets a say. I say to Steve Austin: this is a clear example of this being not true. It is not happening. On Tuesday we agreed to a time limit of eight hours for debate of this bill. The Leader of the House said, 'This is plenty of time for everybody to have an opportunity to speak.' Debate of the bill only started late yesterday afternoon and there will be less than three hours of debate time, without consideration in detail.

We have seen constantly that ministers have not even been able to move their own amendments because they have run out of time. Ministers have been gagged and guillotined in debate of their own bills—as the Liberal National Party opposition is always, as we were yesterday. A Liberal National Party member was on his feet speaking to the natural resources bill but was gagged under the order of the House from Tuesday.

Not only are there 29 opposition members yet to speak on the blue card bill; there are 12 government members yet to speak on the bill. If the Leader of the House is not going to defend the right of Labor members to speak on the bill, I will. I will defend the right of crossbench members to speak on the bill. I am the best friend that Labor Party members have in this House in terms of their democratic right to speak. I believe—

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take that interjection!

Mr BLEIJIE: I thought the Premier was going to say that I had offended her. I nearly objected to my own words. I nearly took a point of order on myself as I saw the amusement on your face, Mr Speaker. I am here fighting for the rights of Labor Party members to speak on government bills. I know that they will be forever grateful to me for doing that—as will the Liberal National Party members and the crossbenchers. When the Leader of the House is silent, I will not be.

We should sit tomorrow. We should have another question time tomorrow. We should sit tomorrow to talk about rail fail, health fail, watch house fail, detention centre fail, jail fail—all the fails and crises of this government under the leadership of the member for Inala. That is what we ought to be doing tomorrow. The Liberal National Party is happy to stay here all night and tomorrow. We are happy to debate these issues tomorrow. Fundamentally, there is not enough time to deal with the very important issue of the blue card bill. We will oppose this motion because we believe that every member should have the right to speak on the important blue card bill, and that will not happen today. It should happen tomorrow.

Hon. JA TRAD (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.46 am): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the Leader of the House, which is about adjourning the House so we can come back in a few weeks time to debate the Queensland budget. I think those opposite are incredibly—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms TRAD: We know that the LNP has issued an order for every single member of the LNP state parliamentary party to stay in the House and not be out campaigning for the federal election. We know that they are more of a problem for the federal campaign than they are a benefit.

This is not about the right of members to participate in debate, because nothing takes away the right of members to participate in debates in this House. There is a business program, and those opposite cannot manage their business. This is about making sure that the member for Oodgeroo is nowhere to be seen in the federal election campaign. It is about making sure that the member for Whitsunday, who is still on 'Team LNP' can I say, is nowhere to be seen on the last day of the federal election campaign.

Ms Jones interjected.

Ms TRAD: I take that interjection. This is really about making sure that the Premier is not out there campaigning for Bill Shorten and Labor, because we know how effective that is.

This is the most ridiculous position I have seen put by one of the most ridiculous members of this House. On the eve of the federal election, those opposite do not want to be out there campaigning for Scott Morrison. What is the member for Everton going to do? He supported Peter Dutton all the way to Kirribilli, and now he will be stuck in here debating on a Friday. That is what he wants—not to support his close friend Peter Dutton, the person who Paul Keating said was the meanest politician he had ever seen in his long history in politics.

For goodness sake, this is the most ridiculous thing to be debated on the eve of a federal election. I ask everyone in this House to support the Leader of the House's motion and to treat the Manager of Opposition Business's motion exactly how it should be treated, and that is with total ridicule.

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

AYES, 45:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

NOES, 42:

LNP, 36—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Costigan.

Pairs: Boyd, Batt, King, McArdle.

Resolved in the affirmative.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.55 am): Before we move on to question time today, I would just ask for your guidance as to whether, due to the delays as a consequence of the debate today, question time will now finish in less than one hour because as per previous rulings—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, we have just had a debate. I do not think we need another one.

Mrs D'ATH: As per previous rulings by former Speaker Wellington, I understand that, other than for condolences, any additional time taken up in debates prior to question time is included in the time actually allocated for question time in those proceedings. I ask for clarification and guidance from you before you announce what time question time will finish.

Speaker's Ruling, Questions Without Notice, Time Allocation

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the House. I have taken into consideration the fact that we have had a debate. I always allow additional time prior to question time just in case we do have something—maybe not as long as the debate we just had. Including the division and other times, we are approximately close to 10 minutes. I will be cutting question time shorter by five minutes today on the balance of ensuring that we continue to have robust question times. Question time will be five minutes shorter than usual. Therefore, question time will conclude at 11.52 am.

Youth Detention

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.57 am): My question is to the Premier. This week it has become clear that the Premier and her department knew for months of the rapidly escalating crisis in our watch houses that experts have referred and compared to Nauru and Third World conditions. When similar issues were uncovered in the Northern Territory's Don Dale centre, a royal commission was established. Will the Premier today establish a royal commission into the appalling human rights crisis in Queensland's watch houses?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. My recollection is that the Leader of the Opposition cared so much about human rights she voted against the Human Rights Bill. That is point No. 1. Point No. 2: yes, I am more than happy to address these issues about youth justice, as I have in the parliament. Let me recap: we are giving the largest injection ever seen in youth justice in this state, looking, as I said, across the whole spectrum. I am really glad that the Leader of the Opposition raised this issue today because Matt Wordsworth on the ABC news last night referred to a report talking about issues about pressures in the youth justice system being raised as far back as 2013. I now have a copy of this secret report and this report talks very clearly about rapidly changing profiles of children—issues that I have been discussing in this House today.

It says that 75 per cent of children are presenting in youth detention with mental health and behavioural problems and that more children are presenting with increasingly complex issues such as drug and alcohol use, poor mental and physical health, low levels of education, exposure to violence during childhood, and severe and long-term neglect and family dysfunction. This report also talks about the Barrett Adolescent Centre. It talks about how the Barrett Adolescent Centre was closed. It also talks about the issue of watch houses, and this report was from 2013 and 2014. It says—

Young offenders on remand can be held in watch houses prior to appearing in court, meaning they would remain in the custody of the Queensland Police Service. Negotiations are currently underway with QPS to hold young people in watch house facilities pending beds becoming available in the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre.

This report talks about building extra capacity at the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre. What did the LNP do at the time? Nothing. It is all in here. The members opposite had the report. Options were canvassed. What did they do? The member for Kawana, the minister responsible, put in place boot camps.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Coomera!

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is absolutely embarrassing for them.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you are warned under the standing orders for being nonresponsive to a request from me to cease your interjections. Premier, do you have anything further to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Absolutely. It was all detailed in that report. They put in boot camps that did not work. The member for Kawana stood in this House and talked about—

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I am happy to keep talking, because it has to be put on the public record.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier's time has expired.

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House): I move—

That the Premier be further heard.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This week in this House we have heard the member for Kawana talk about opening new facilities at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. I am quite sure that everyone heard the member talk about that. Who was the government that put up the money for the expansion at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre? It was the former Labor government. I have a press release from Karen Struthers talking about an investment of \$170 million for the expansion of the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. Who cut the ribbon on that project? The member for Kawana. That infrastructure was funded under the former Labor government. This report, commissioned by the former LNP government, warned the Newman government of the pressures in the youth justice system and it failed to deliver. It did nothing.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. It cut youth justice conferencing in this state. It also closed down the Murri court. It closed down the special circumstances court. It closed down the Barrett centre. This report clearly talks about the Barrett centre. It canvasses options to deal with capacity and the members opposite did nothing. They got the report. They sat on the report. It is a secret report and they did absolutely nothing.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The former LNP government was warned about the complexities and did nothing. In fact, it axed things. That is the—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nicklin and member for Buderim, I warn both of you under the standing orders. The tenor of the interjections was directly aimed at members opposite and quite personal.

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yesterday, Labor's Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships said, 'I do not take responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children coming into the child protection system.' I ask the Premier: will the Premier explain why her minister refuses to acknowledge her charter letter responsibility to ensure that the rights and wellbeing of Indigenous children are safeguarded?

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question, but the preamble is getting rather lengthy. On that basis, I will give some latitude in terms of the response.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. The Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships takes all of her responsibilities extremely seriously. In fact, the Deputy Premier has been working closely with me and other members of the government in terms of our youth justice response. Let me make it very clear that, of course, we are concerned about the overrepresentation of Indigenous young people in our youth detention centres.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you can leave the chamber for an hour. You are already under a warning. That means no interjections.

Whereupon the honourable member for Coomera withdrew from the chamber at 11.05 am.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, warnings under the standing orders are not hollow. I have made my position very clear. They are not given out lightly either.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have said it in this House and let me say it again: I have had local Indigenous elders from my community tell me that they were banned from going into the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre and seeing young people who had been sentenced there, to look at a comprehensive approach to dealing with them and rebuilding their self-esteem and talking about getting a job because the members opposite refused them access. That is their record.

As I said very clearly, the member for Nanango might want to sit and talk to the member for Kawana about the report that was handed down and given to them in 2013 that talked about the pressures and also canvassed very clearly that all of these issues needed to be looked at in terms of the complexity of young people coming into the juvenile justice system. I read out very clearly the associated factors that are involved. It is a very serious issue. That is why our package is not just about a capital infrastructure; it looks at all different aspects, as we should.

It is incredibly important that we do everything we can to break the cycle of crime. How did those opposite want to break the cycle of crime? They decided to set up a failed boot camp. There was an Auditor-General's report handed down that talked about the way in which that boot camp was administered. Once again, the member for Kawana was responsible. I do not think any backbench member opposite should be under any illusion about the damage that the member for Kawana did to the Newman government. In fact, here is the *Blueprint for the future of youth justice—have your say March 2013*. The member for Kawana—

(Time expired)

North Queensland Stadium

Mr HARPER: Mr Speaker, much like you, I am a proud North Queensland Cowboys supporter and I am excited to ask my question without notice of the Premier today. Can the Premier please update the House on the construction of the North Queensland stadium and any other new initiatives?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Thuringowa. I know that the member for Thuringowa is a proud representative of his community. He knows the importance of the delivery of the Townsville stadium. Every time I go to Townsville—and I will be there next week—I see the structure being formed. We know that that stadium will serve the whole North Queensland community.

We have committed \$140 million to this important project, supporting 750 jobs during design and construction. As at the start of this month, almost 560,000 construction hours have been completed. Of the 56 trade packages awarded so far, 79 per cent have gone to local businesses. Next year when it opens we will be talking at length about the possibility of an opening concert. I cannot say anything more about that at the moment. Discussions are underway.

I want to raise with the House that the member for Thuringowa has written to me about something else that could be added to the Townsville stadium. I have given this due consideration. I can tell the member for Thuringowa that, after his very strong advocacy, there will be a statue honouring Johnathan Thurston built in time for the opening of the Townsville stadium next year. This is great news for the community. I know that Johnathan Thurston will be very pleased and honoured. He was a former Queenslanders of the year.

This does not preclude the QRL at some future date, if it chooses to do so, erecting a statue of Johnathan Thurston at Suncorp Stadium. I know how important JT and his family are to the Townsville community. I want to thank the member for Thuringowa for taking the time to personally write to me. I thank the Minister for Sport, Mick de Brenni, who has been talking to me about how we could make this happen. Today I am very pleased that Johnathan Thurston will be in bronze outside the new Townsville stadium, a great tribute to him and to the community.

In relation to any opening acts for the Townsville stadium, we are currently in discussions and at some future time we will make a further announcement in relation to that. In the meantime we will see Townsville stadium come out of the ground. Today is a great day. I thank the member for Thuringowa.

Youth Detention

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the statement from Damien Atkinson QC, chairman of the Youth Advocacy Centre, that not one initiative from the government's recently announced youth justice package is designed to remove children from watch houses. Why does the Premier not have a single initiative to immediately remove children from watch houses and end this current human rights crisis?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Everton for the question and I ask the member for Everton when he was a cabinet why they took no action when they had a report.

Ms Trad: He was too busy kicking people out of public housing!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. He was too busy. I have been reminded of what happened. He was trying to get people in public housing to share with complete strangers. As I said very clearly, the opposition knew about these issues way back when they were in government and did nothing. They commissioned a report that clearly outlined everything that the government needed to do and they failed. They went down the option of boot camps. We had the glossy brochure from the member for Kawana.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, I am having difficulty hearing the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Unfortunately, those opposite ask questions and do not want to listen to the answers. They are very disrespectful. They do not like the answer because it involves them. As I said, the LNP commissioned the study, then failed to do anything. It failed to plan and build infrastructure and it has taken Labor governments to build infrastructure for juvenile criminals in this state.

Mr Langbroek: So we did too much, then we didn't do enough?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. You did not do enough; you did nothing.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, please, comments will come through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am glad that the member for Surfers Paradise interjected because it reminds me of the schools he wanted to close when he was the education minister. I thank him for interjecting. The member for Surfers Paradise had a list of schools to close. The 'for sale' signs went up.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118 on relevance. The Premier has not answered the question, which is about the crisis now. Instead, she has gone on to a diatribe about the member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr SPEAKER: As I have said previously, if a minister responding to a question asked is responding to interjections they will be given some quarter to respond to those interjections. If there are multiple interjections it may well take us off track from what the original course of the question was. That is why I have strongly cautioned members against interjecting.

However, Premier, you have 23 seconds remaining on the clock. I ask you to come back to the core of the question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, we have a whole range of initiatives that are focused on getting young people out of watch houses. The minister responsible talked about community youth responses to crimes in Brisbane, Ipswich and Cairns, community based supervision by Queensland police for high-risk young people on bail, eight specialist multiagency response teams—

(Time expired)

Federal Election, Funding Commitments

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on the federal government's plan to fund its election commitments and the potential impacts on Queensland?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. As the Premier has informed the House this morning, on the eve of this federal election the current federal Treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, has advised that some \$1.2 billion worth of savings has been identified and will be essentially rolled out should the government win the next federal election. We know that when Liberals or Nationals talk about savings measures they are really talking about cuts—cuts to front-line services—as we have already seen in Queensland.

More than \$316 million was cut from our public hospitals. If we apply those cuts to Queensland, on the basis of our population levels, this means that \$240 million will be further cut from Queensland on top of the cuts we have seen in terms of GST and on top of the cuts we have seen in terms of national partnership agreements expiring, such as the remote Indigenous housing agreement.

Queenslanders cannot afford Scott Morrison and the Liberal National government. We cannot afford to continue to see cuts to skills and training. We cannot afford more cuts to education. We have been talking a lot about the cuts that we have seen under the Abbott then Turnbull then Morrison governments.

A government member: It's hard to keep up.

Ms TRAD: It is hard to keep up; I will take that interjection. Today we have also seen a tremendous amount of chaos. The Liberal Party and the National Party in New South Wales are saying 'Do not follow the ticket above the line on the Senate ballot. Vote below the line.' We have seen Jim Molan stealing campaign workers from Tony Abbott because Tony Abbott is going down the gurgler. Barnaby Joyce was on Radio National this morning telling voters to ignore the Senate ticket and vote for the National Party candidate below the line. This is like a train crash episode of *Married at First Sight*. The coalition between the Liberal and National parties is a train wreck. Queenslanders cannot afford this chaos in Canberra for another three years.

We deserve a government that is focused on our future. We deserve a government that is focused on making our economy better and our lives better and that is only Bill Shorten and Labor.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Broadwater, you are warned for persistent interjections.

Youth Detention

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the Premier. Six months ago Amnesty International wrote to the Premier asking her to urgently visit the watch houses in Queensland. Can the Premier advise why she has refused to visit Queensland watch houses with Amnesty International to witness firsthand the unfolding human crisis facing youth in watch houses?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have agencies that have been visiting the watch houses.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. We allowed in the Public Guardian and the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, and the minister herself has been up there.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; I take that interjection. This is an opportunity for serious agencies to have access. It is not a visual experience for people. These are serious and complex issues. As I have said, we are building the infrastructure that the LNP failed to build. We are addressing all issues around the young person. In fact, we are clearly managing the demand for youth justice services. One report states—

The developmental maturity of young people and the complex causes of crime mean that the young people involved in the youth justice system need more intense responses than adult offenders to break the offending cycle.

That is what we are tackling. What am I quoting from? I am quoting from a 'Have your say' document from Jarrod Bleijie titled *Blueprint for the future of youth justice*.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I ask you to please use members' correct titles.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Kawana acknowledged that it is a complex problem, but the LNP failed to do anything except set up boot camps. As I have said in this House all week, we have committed the largest investment. The report commissioned under the LNP government clearly shows that watch houses were an issue back in their day.

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southport, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, I will not lose my voice raising it over constant interjections when I am giving an answer. It is disrespectful and rude.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I am listening to the debate. Provocation is also happening. I will allow a balance on that basis.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is why we are addressing—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you will cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They closed the Barrett Adolescent Centre, which had dreadful consequences for young people with complex—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to answer the question, but I will not be constantly—

(Time expired)

Jobs

Mr MADDEN: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister please advise of any new initiatives to connect skilled jobseekers with vacancies in his portfolio and is he aware of any other approaches to recruiting and filling vacancies, including during the federal election?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Ipswich West for his question and for his commitment to jobs and developing the Queensland economy. I am pleased to inform the House that today is the first day of the Brisbane Truck Show, which is the largest on-road transport event in the Southern Hemisphere. It is also the largest business-to-business event in Queensland and brings in over \$32 million to our economy over four days. I am pleased that it is sponsored by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Today at the Brisbane Truck Show, the trucking industry will launch an online job portal that will make it much easier for workers to get a job in manufacturing or a supply job in the heavy vehicle industry. That portal starts today. It will list vacancies for jobseekers. It is a great initiative of the truck industry and I compliment them for it. We are very pleased to support the trucking industry and this initiative through my portfolio.

There are other ways to advertise for jobs online. There is Seek, Gumtree and Facebook. This week Facebook has an ad for 'promo work', handing out forms at schools located in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne at \$28 an hour from 7.45 am to 6 pm on Saturday. A respondent who contacted the promoter, Ms Kim Gaston of Gaston Management, was told the job was 'to hand out polling forms for—could be—United Australia Party or the Liberals'. Fair enough, Ms Gaston, because what is the difference? In the morning they will have on blue shirts for the Liberal Party and in the afternoon they will have on yellow shirts for the UAP. It will be just like we saw this week in Western Australia, when federal Liberal minister Ken Wyatt was seen carrying around UAP corflutes. He wants the votes. It is nice work if you can get it.

I encourage all jobseekers to get independent legal advice before signing up with Clive Palmer for a job. He tipped out 800 people. He still owes workers \$70 million from when he collapsed Queensland Nickel. At Coolum victims of Palmer, including Ms Maree Frecklington, are still camping out by candlelight in the mosquito infested tip that that resort has become because he does not care about them. He does not even care about Australia. In the lead-up to the election he is in Fiji, maybe getting tips on how to take over the Senate.

I say this: it is a truck show today, but it will be a train wreck on Saturday if the Morrison-Abbott-Turnbull-Truss-Joyce-McCormack-perhaps Joyce again-Palmer-Hanson coalition gets up. That is the choice. It is chaos and cuts or a strong, stable and certain Shorten Labor government.

Human Rights Act, Youth Detention

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women. Can the minister advise the House what steps her department has undertaken in preparation for the commencement of the Palaszczuk Labor government's Human Rights Act with respect to kids in watch houses? Is she satisfied that her department will comply with it?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question. I guess it is better late than never. They did vote against the Human Rights Bill, so it is good that they are showing a bit of interest in it now. You always hold out hope for people.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Theodore, you are warned under the standing orders. I remind members who are under a warning not to interject and I remind all members that interjections are not helpful to the House. I will start to look more closely at each member who is interjecting.

Ms FARMER: It is great to see their interest in human rights. I am not sure, but I think that the member was here during the last sitting when I—

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Toowoomba South, you have just asked the question. You are warned under the standing orders. I thought you would like to hear the answer.

Ms FARMER: The Palaszczuk Labor government has announced an investment of over half a billion dollars to reform the youth justice system now and into the longer term. That includes investment in infrastructure and it includes investment in noninfrastructure, which will mean we are breaking the cycle of reoffending. That is our goal. That is the way that we will move young people out of watch houses.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms FARMER: It really is a bit rich for them to be asking about this. The Premier has already referred this morning to the youth detention centre demand management strategy that the LNP members put out. They were warned that there was an impact on the detention centres. They did absolutely nothing about it. They were warned that breach of bail and removal of detention as a last resort would increase youth detention centre demand. They were negotiating with the QPS to facilitate longer term remand in watch houses. They even suggested putting young people who could not get into the detention centre into the Brisbane Childrens Court with no beds and no hygiene facilities. They said that was 'suitable'. They also said that building temporary accommodation at the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre was not suitable.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, I appreciate there is some provocation. Leader of the Opposition, you will put your comments through the chair. That will be my final warning to you today.

Ms FARMER: They knew the profiles of those young children—mental health issues, cognitive deficit, foetal alcohol syndrome. They did absolutely nothing. These issues are not ones that can be addressed in a flash. They are long-term issues.

On top of that, they ripped the guts and money out of housing, they ripped money out of health, they ripped money out of education—they ripped it out of every single program that would have supported those young people and their families. They closed the Barrett centre. Every single lever they could have pulled to address the issues around those young people they failed to pull. It is absolutely rich of them to be coming in here now and asking about this when we have made this major commitment.

Tourism Industry

Mr BUTCHER: My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister please update the House on the government's commitment to growing tourism in Central Queensland and the government's leadership on these commitments?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for his question because he is also dedicated to growing tourism in Central Queensland. In actual fact, under our watch we have seen significant growth in the tourism industry, particularly when it comes to cruises in Gladstone. I have had the privilege of seeing that for myself. We are also seeing new initiatives on the islands in the Great Barrier Reef, including Heron Island in that part of the world. I look forward to going there soon.

It is not just in Gladstone but all across Central Queensland where we are seeing growing investment in tourism and tourism infrastructure, supporting jobs and regional Queensland right along Queensland's coastline. I am very proud to be part of this government—the only side of politics that is delivering \$25 million towards the revitalisation of Great Keppel Island. This is because of the strong

advocacy of the member for Keppel. I can confirm today that environmental investigations, including marine impact studies and geotechnical testing, will soon get underway. This is being done very much in partnership with the Livingstone Shire Council. I thank the mayor for his leadership in this regard.

We have seen federal Labor match this commitment with \$25 million going towards this. This is a very strong commitment from our candidates up there. This is in stark contrast to the current sitting member for Capricornia, Michelle Landry, who has had more positions on this than they have had leaders of our country under the LNP's watch. Firstly, Michelle Landry said she did not think the project was worth it. Then she said she did not know about the project—nothing to see here; asleep at the wheel again. Now she seems to be indicating in the Rockhampton bulletin, 'I only have enough money for one project for the next three years.' That is how much they care about Central Queensland.

Then we see Matt Canavan, who is meant to be the person standing up for Central Queensland in the Senate, bagging this in Cairns saying, 'No, no, no; we do not support that.' He says one thing when he is in Central Queensland and another thing when he is in a different media market.

We have also seen today Tony Abbott give an indication and insight into the kind of chaos that will continue under an LNP government if they are elected on Saturday. 'Don't vote for our ticket,' says Tony Abbott. 'Don't vote for our ticket, mate. Go below the line,' he says. We know that he likes being below the line. That is his character.

We know that this is the kind of chaos that Morrison cannot contain in his own party. He has two elected representatives out there saying, 'Don't vote for our ticket.' If you cannot vote for the ticket then you cannot govern. We know that if Scott Morrison were to get over the line he would only get there with the support of Hanson and Palmer. We do not need Hanson and Palmer controlling Australia and our economy.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, member for Lockyer and member for Moggill, you are all warned under the standing orders.

Galilee Basin

Mr LAST: My question without notice is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. I refer to Jangga people elder Colin McLennan, who stated that, in relation to the Galilee Basin, it will be war if Labor stops resources development as it will condemn regional Queenslanders to unemployment. Will the minister support Indigenous jobs and economic development by advocating for Labor to open up the Galilee Basin?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for the question. I note that this is the same member who petitioned for this government to consider all of the conservation issues and the environmental impact of proposed resource activities in his own electorate. I find it curious that the member for Burdekin is picking and choosing which side of the debate he is on depending on where he is. When he is back in his electorate he has one position, but when he is here he clearly has another position.

Ms Jones interjected.

Ms TRAD: I take the interjection from the tourism minister. It is the same with the Leader of the Opposition. There is one position around resources projects in her own electorate, but when she is down here it is a totally different position—anti mining in Nanango and pro mining in Brisbane.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms TRAD: Let me say very clearly that the Palaszczuk Labor government has presided over record employment growth in the resources industry since we were elected in 2015—7,700 jobs since we were elected in 2015. I ask members to compare that to the record of those opposite. How many jobs were lost in the resources sector under the Liberal National Party when they were in government? Some 2,800 jobs were lost in the resources sector because of those opposite. We went backwards. Queensland went backwards under the Liberal National Party here in this state.

I can report to the House further good news in terms of employment data. We have recorded another month of jobs growth. Some 5,300 jobs were created in Queensland last month, and 1,200 of them were full-time. Since the Palaszczuk Labor government was elected, 199,000 jobs have been created in Queensland. We want first nations Queenslanders to get jobs in our state in all industries. That is why we are doing things that those opposite did not do or dissembled, like Skilling Queenslanders for Work, like Works for Queensland and jobs in Indigenous communities. I will stack up our record compared to theirs on jobs any day of the week.

Electoral Donations, High Court Decision

Mr WHITING: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Can the Attorney-General advise the House of the High Court's decision in matter of Spence v State of Queensland and any other issues relating to electoral integrity in this state?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Bancroft for his question because he understands the importance of having integrity in our electoral system. As I said earlier this morning, the High Court has now released its reasons for finding in favour of the Palaszczuk government's strong laws and finding the Commonwealth laws completely invalid when it comes to trying to take away the rights of states and territories in legislating for proper transparency and accountability.

I think it is important when voters are going to the polls on Saturday that they understand what their current Prime Minister and their current Liberal government have been doing at a Commonwealth level with their taxpayers' dollars. The comments from the High Court are extraordinary. They say—

The Attorney-General of the Commonwealth, although formally no more than an intervener in the proceedings ... became—because of their Commonwealth amendments—

a principle protagonist.

They became a 'principle protagonist' in those proceedings. The High Court went on to say—

The Commonwealth supported the validity of s 302CA of the Commonwealth Electoral Act.

As you would expect them to do—go in there and fight the good fight for their Commonwealth legislation—

The Commonwealth chose also to support some aspects of the plaintiff's independent challenge to the validity of the amendments introduced by the Queensland Amending Act.

In other words, the Morrison government used Commonwealth resources, being taxpayers' dollars, to go to the High Court and argue on behalf of an individual's claim—who happened to be the former president of the LNP—so that they could look after their mates, particularly here in Queensland, in the lead-up to an election and get the donations in the door and not have any disclosure. How appalling!

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southport, you can leave the chamber for an hour. You were already under a warning. That means no interjections.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southport withdrew from the chamber at 11.40 am.

Mrs D'ATH: My question to Scott Morrison is: how much did they spend of taxpayers' dollars running the case for the former president of the LNP and the LNP in Queensland? He needs to come clean with the people of Queensland. Gary Spence has been ordered to pay costs. The current calculation is that it is about \$635,000. It is going to come close to \$700,000 of taxpayers' dollars in Queensland that had to be spent defending our laws because of the challenge of Gary Spence, which the Commonwealth joined in and supported. It is absolutely shocking.

The people of Queensland and the people of Australia need to know how much money, being taxpayers' dollars, they wasted trying to uphold their dodgy legislation and supporting the LNP. At the same time they can explain the foreign donations that they accepted a matter of three weeks before they put their own laws through.

(Time expired)

Police Service, Conduct

Mr WATTS: My question is to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. Public confidence in our Police Service has been questioned with the outgoing commissioner stating there are 'bad apples' in the service. What advice has the minister received about these alleged 'bad apples' and what action has the minister taken?

Mr RYAN: As is the case with allegations about any police officer, they are referred to the appropriate body for investigation. I receive regular updates from the commissioner about matters that might reflect on the conduct of police officers, and the commissioner assures me that every single time those matters are fully investigated. They are referred to the Ethical Standards Command. In some instances they are referred directly to the CCC.

Those opposite are signed up to a bipartisan bill before the House. I will not go into the detail, but it is about a new police discipline system. They signed up to it. Guess who else signed up to it? The Queensland Police Service, the Queensland Police Union and the CCC signed up to it. It is a revolution when it comes to improving our police discipline system. Those members signed up to it. I assume that, by signing up to it, they support it. We will see when it comes to the debate.

When it comes to allegations about our officers, of course we expect high standards. Those matters are referred to the appropriate body for investigation, as they should be, and where those allegations are substantiated appropriate disciplinary action is taken. I have full faith in those integrity measures, and we are building on those integrity measures through the police discipline bill, which will be brought before the House.

Electricity Assets

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Will the minister confirm the government's policy on public ownership of electricity assets? Is he aware of any alternative policies?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Rockhampton for the question. Queensland has the trifecta: the lowest average electricity prices in the national energy market, a reliable supply and a smooth, planned transition to our 50 per cent renewable future. Why? It is because we own our assets.

In Central Queensland, the member for Capricornia has lined up with five other LNP dynamos—no-one can name them—to push their energy divestment legislation. This so-called big stick legislation gives Canberra the power to sell Queensland's power station, to sell our poles and wires. Just last week we had the federal member for McPherson doubling down on their privatisation theme. Apparently we need to sell our assets like New South Wales did so we can get our fair share of road funding. The member for Capricornia's plan would achieve higher electricity bills and the loss of our electricity assets to private owners in the Cayman Islands. Her goal is to drive down power prices in the Cayman Islands, not in Capricornia.

It is not as if the LNP are good at this electricity thing—they are not good at all. Under Labor, electricity prices in regional Queensland are set to fall for the second year in a row. For the second year in a row we have falling prices in regional Queensland. Under the LNP, there was a 43 per cent increase.

Mr Bailey: How much?

Dr LYNHAM: A 43 per cent increase. Every time we hear them talk about electricity, they jump up and say, 'Electricity prices have doubled in 10 years.' The reason they use 10 years is that they have to go back to when they were in government, otherwise it would be much lower. They have to go back to 2012 when they were in government.

In fact, a typical household power bill in Capricornia is lower than in Angus Taylor's own electorate. Well might the people of Capricornia ask: if Angus Taylor, the energy minister, is so smart and supports privatisation and thinks it is such a great idea, why are power bills in his electorate much higher than in the electorate of Capricornia?

They have had 13 energy policies in six years. It is killing investment in generation. Just today one of the nation's biggest financiers AMP Capital said policy uncertainty is holding back renewable energy development in our nation. A Morrison-Dutton-Palmer-Hanson government—just keep adding them all on—offers nothing but chaos and confusion on energy policy.

Ingham, Dialysis Services

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Life for residents in Ingham requiring life-saving health services like dialysis means travelling 250 kilometres round trip three times a day to the Townsville Hospital. Local community groups are willing to help joint fund a local service. Will the minister commit to working with the community to bring dialysis services to Ingham?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for his question. Certainly delivering the full range of renal services across a state like Queensland is very challenging. We are in the final stages of concluding a renal plan that focuses on delivering more and better services, particularly in the north of the state.

I am certainly very happy to meet with the member and with members of the community, and perhaps ask the HHS to meet with them also, to see how more and better services can be delivered in Ingham. I would emphasise that it is not just a question of dialysis services but also what other support for renal patients can be provided at different stages of their treatment needs. I am always willing to work with any member of this House to ensure that their community gets the health services that they need.

Robina Hospital, Incident

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister confirm that last week there was a major security breach at the Robina Hospital that resulted in multiple drug overdoses with patients taken to intensive care and police sniffer dogs called in as part of a major police investigation?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for her question. I can confirm that there was an incident at Robina that was investigated by police at the time. They did identify an empty package that likely did contain a substance that some patients had consumed. All matters are being fully investigated by the police and by the health service, as is entirely appropriate. I would be happy to organise a briefing for the member once those investigations have been concluded.

Police Service

Mr MELLISH: My question is to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. Will the minister please inform the House of the strength of policing in Queensland and how their efforts support the work of federal law enforcement agencies?

Mr RYAN: As this side of the House knows, there are more police in Queensland than ever before because of the investment of this Palaszczuk Labor government—the investment in the front line, the investment in personnel, the investment in resources. We have more police stations, more police, more police vehicles and more police equipment. Our police work side by side with their federal colleagues on some pretty major things. They work side by side on national security, drug trafficking, boiler room fraud and child sex exploitation, trying to crack down on some of those most heinous crimes.

Two days before the election, it is important to see what the federal LNP do when it comes to security, public safety and public order because they like to talk the big game but they never walk the walk. Let us have a look at their budget documents from only a month or so ago. What did they say in the budget document? They said, 'There is an expected decrease of 11.5 per cent'—is everyone sitting down for that? It is 11.5 per cent—'in real terms in the budget for other public order and safety.' That is cuts. The cuts of the LNP are back again. Where have we seen some of their cuts already delivered? This was a report from earlier this year—

Mr Batt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr RYAN: Border Force insiders had to admit that ships on Border Force activities were not conducting their normal patrols because they had to save money on fuel. There are cuts from the LNP when it comes to national security. What did we see last year? The Australian Federal Police Commissioner, Andrew Colvin, confirmed that the cuts to the AFP budget would mean that their work on fraud, organised crime and antinarcotics would have to be scaled back and that it would actually contribute to the loss of almost 600 AFP personnel.

Our government is increasing the budget for police. Since being elected, the budget has increased 13 per cent. We are investing in the front line, we are investing in our police. However, we are seeing the federal government doing what the LNP does best—that is, cuts to public services, cuts to public order, cuts to public safety.

There is a big decision for Queenslanders, particularly those voters in the electorate of Dickson because Peter Dutton is the minister responsible, the minister for home affairs, who has overseen these cuts. He has overseen Border Force having to scale back Border Force activities because they cannot afford the petrol for the boats. Queenslanders can vote Labor on the weekend and get rid of Peter Dutton, get rid of this Morrison government and stop the cuts and the chaos. We need to elect a Shorten Labor government.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.53 am): Mr Speaker, I wish question time to be extended and I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 36:

LNP, 34—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Costigan.

NOES, 45:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Pairs: Boyd, Batt; King, McArdle.

Resolved in the negative.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.58 am): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The Minister for Child Safety earlier in question time today referenced that the member for Kawana had plans to accommodate offenders in watch houses. I table the same ABC report she referred to.

Tabled paper: Article from *ABC News* online, dated 17 September 2014, titled 'Qld youth detention centres operating "permanently over safe capacity" and system in crisis, draft report says' [\[784\]](#).

I quote the member for Kawana saying—

... there are no plans to accommodate young offenders in watch houses, Children's Court cells or alternate purpose rooms.

Mr Speaker, I will be writing to you about this misrepresentation and misleading of the House.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Ministerial Responsibilities

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (11.59 am): In yesterday's question time and again today in question time, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have criticised me and sought to infer that I am neglecting my responsibilities as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships in relation to both youth justice and child protection. Today the Leader of the Opposition has selectively quoted from my ministerial charter letter. For the benefit of the House, the complete line that I believe the member was referring to says—

Work with the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence to develop legislation to recognise Torres Strait Island traditional adoption, which ensures that the rights and wellbeing of children are safeguarded.

I take my responsibilities very seriously as the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. As the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, both I and my department advocate to increase opportunities to remove barriers and close the gap in disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this state. The assertion that as minister I am responsible for every interaction that first nations Queenslanders have with the state government simply shows that the LNP do not understand what reconciliation and closing the gap is all about. Every single minister in the Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to ensuring that their departments do all they can to increase opportunities for first nations Queenslanders and close the gap in disadvantage. Closing the gap is everybody's responsibility and should be a bipartisan endeavour.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN (RISK MANAGEMENT AND SCREENING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 15 May (see p. 1695), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (12.01 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. The main policy objectives of the bill are to give effect to the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to amend the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, the WWC Act, to improve the safety of all Queensland children. The bill exemplifies the Palaszczuk government's continual commitment to shaping the future of Queensland's wonderful children through stronger and safer services, as well as improving job satisfaction and employment across Queensland in the sector, through the improved online application process.

The changes introduce automated blue card application processes to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending—the no-card no-start election commitment. The bill will also implement the recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission report *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system and Recommendation 28 supplementary review: a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services*.

These objectives will be achieved by establishing a register for recording and reporting on child related employment or business conducted from the home; requiring all adult household members of a stand-alone care service to hold a blue card; and amending the WWC act to include DoE within the definition of 'notifiable person' so that it receives notifications about changes to the blue card status of individual family day care educators and adult household members. This register is not designed to replace existing information exchanges between agencies but is to be used as an additional tool to provide more comprehensive information to help facilitate information sharing between relevant government agencies to promote the safety of all children accessing these home based care service providers.

Whilst the no-card no-start approach is contrary to the findings of the royal commission in its 2015 working with children report in which it recommended allowing participants to start regulated employment while the application is processed provided appropriate safeguards are in place to protect children, the no-card no-start implementation will guarantee the safety of all Queensland children through these extra precautions and will strengthen the system. At the same time the amendments to the legislation will not slow down or deter educational professionals' employment opportunities. The reduced time frames and streamlined blue card application process will allow educational professionals to seek employment and apply for the blue card without an up-front link to an employer. These streamlined changes, along with the development of the online organised portal, will enable organisations to more efficiently and effectively manage their blue card obligations. The implementation of all these provisions will help alleviate any added difficulties that may be implied with the no-card no-start changes.

The new Queensland blue card system mitigates past, present and future risks to children through screening people working with children and deeming people ineligible to work with children based on their known police or disciplinary information. It also introduces an electronic interface with Queensland Police for changes in blue card holders' and applicants' Queensland police information to monitor this information on a daily basis and legislatively requires child related organisations to implement policies and procedures to manage risks to children.

This bill delivers another of the Palaszczuk government's election commitments and illustrates the serious commitment made by the Palaszczuk Labor government to improving education for all students throughout Queensland.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.05 pm): I, too, rise to speak on this bill, and it is a very important bill. It is the most important duty of the state to look after the citizens of the state, and there are no more vulnerable citizens than our children. Most of us in this chamber understand that when you have children of your own that concept takes on new focus. It is vital that the community have

confidence in the blue card system. However, the honest truth is that they do not have confidence in the blue card system because we have seen failings—very prominent failings—over the years. It is important that we tighten up the system to ensure that those who ought not have access to children never have access to children.

Labor's performance in this sphere has been disappointing. We have heard speakers before me, most notably the shadow Attorney-General, the member for Toowoomba South, speak quite eloquently about Labor's persistent failure in this area: lots of talk but limited delivery. He tabled a litany of press clippings which exposed time and time again failings in the blue card system which have led to the abuse of children, and we do not want to see any more of that. We also heard the shadow Attorney-General talk at length about occasions over the past 20 years or so when the conservative side of politics have demanded improvements. What we saw, to use the shadow Attorney-General's own terms, was a papering over of the cracks. We have seen spot fire after spot fire put out, but we have not seen the wholesale fixing of the system that is required. I still have my doubts about whether that will be achieved here. Talking about no-card no-start, I have my doubts about whether the government, which has in the past shown its ineptness in introducing IT systems and streamlining processes, will be able to accomplish that here. I will wait to see the proof in the eating of the pudding.

My most serious concerns are about disqualifying offences. I note that the government introduced a number of amendments, which is a good thing. I would say that the LNP can take credit for putting those forward and the government following suit because there were serious omissions in the bill previously. We still see with disqualifying offences—

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from my good friend the member for Cairns. There are some good things in there; I acknowledge that. I look at the disqualifying offences and I see that there are some glaring omissions. Where do the disqualifying offences include convictions for incest, rape, drug-dealing offences, cruelty to children and unlawful carnal knowledge? These are glaring omissions which we feel really should—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order, members. You can get on the speaking list if you want.

Mr LISTER: I believe that every Queenslanders out there feels that people who are convicted of these sorts of offences should never have access to children. I am quite happy to stand in the real world outside parliament and talk about this. I know that people on the street would say that people who have convictions for those offences ought never have access to children.

We also have concerns about the international criminal history of people. Again, I have heard all of the excellent reasons why we should not look at that—all of the reasons why it would be impossible to administer and so forth. Again, I think of cases like the notorious French national with rape convictions who came out here and obtained a blue card and the concerns about the case that the shadow Attorney-General mentioned of a refugee who arrived here with no identifying documentation at all. Four years later he had a blue card and was later convicted of offences relating to his treatment of children. That is something we really should be looking at. I am sorry to see that the government has not put forward any amendments in that regard.

I will cut short my contribution because I am mindful of the guillotining of the debate. I want to make sure there is ample opportunity for consideration in detail and the discussion of the clauses. We do support the bill apart from those few matters I just mentioned.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Before I call the next contributor, I remind the House about those members on a warning until the lunch break. They are the members for Burleigh, Coomera, Nicklin, Buderim, Broadwater, Southport, Theodore, Toowoomba South, Warrego, Southern Downs, Lockyer, Moggill, Chatsworth and Bundaberg.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (12.10 pm): I start by acknowledging and thanking Cheryl Vardon, the Principal Commissioner of the Queensland Family and Child Commission, for her work in child safety. For many years now, Queensland has led the way in providing safe environments for children through the blue card system, Queensland's term for working with children checks. The system works alongside other laws and processes to help keep children safe. It has wide reach in the Queensland

community. Almost one in every five adults is subject to daily monitoring because they have a blue card or have applied for one. Organisations across a variety of sectors are required to identify and manage the risk of harm to children.

The system does not currently have the capacity to keep up with the needs and expectations of the people who use it or rely on it. It provides robust processes for screening those people who wish to work with children, but we know that the processes need streamlining and that it is overdue for investment if it is to remain one of the best in Australia. These reforms will be even more critical now that the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has commenced.

The working with children check is only one of many ways organisations can create environments where children are safe. These checks will only prevent people with particular categories of known offences or issues from working or volunteering with children. Even the best screening systems cannot accurately predict which people will offend against children in the future. Queensland needs to restructure its laws, policies and resourcing to change the way we think about children's safety, as we rely too much on working with children checks. The best way to keep children safe is to focus on education and ensure Queensland has child-safe organisations in conjunction with the best blue card system. This is where we need to direct our attention.

Throughout the review process, stakeholders highlighted the need to reform the blue card system to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both to improve participation in employment and to make kinship care accessible. Achieving better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples requires change at every level of the process. We need to provide opportunities to actively involve Indigenous people in decision-making and we need to improve the system's capacity to understand different cultural approaches. However, in doing so we must also remain vigilant in keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children safe in their communities.

In acknowledging the need for us to do more, we propose some amendments that expand the range of disqualifying offences, remove the eligibility declaration and of course compel applicants to disclose their international criminal history. Queensland's blue card system has two key components. It imposes obligations on organisations to adopt child-safe organisation approaches through risk management strategies to keep children safe and to ensure that volunteers' working with children checks are done. Information on blue card holders and applicants is monitored on a daily basis to identify changes in criminal activity.

As a regulatory scheme, the blue card system has a unique reach in the community. The continued eligibility of over 700,000 blue card holders and applicants is monitored on a daily basis. This equates to approximately one in every five Queensland adults. The blue card system is part of a much broader framework for keeping children safe in our community and complements the criminal justice system and the other laws and strategies that work to protect children. These include laws for managing offenders who have committed child related offences as well as systems for child protection and regulation of early childhood education and care. These are designed to help support parents, carers and families who have primary responsibility for keeping children safe.

To ensure that other members in the House have an opportunity to speak, I say in closing that there are some concerns with the bill. I am sure that consideration of the amendments will give us an opportunity to discuss those further. I congratulate everyone who put forward amendments to make this legislation stronger as well as everyone involved. Keeping our children in Queensland safe must be our priority. That is why in supporting the bill we look forward to ensuring that children in Queensland are safe.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.15 pm): I do not think anybody or any political party has a monopoly on being horrified and disgusted by people who harm children. Certainly no party or individual has a monopoly on wanting to keep children safe. I have held positions as a volunteer coordinator, paid and unpaid, in many organisations over many years going back to the 1990s. In the 1990s I would have welcomed a system such as the existing blue card system. It was certainly something that kept you awake at night, wondering whether the volunteers you put into a position of great trust were fulfilling and meeting such trust. When the blue card system was touted and brought forward, I thought it would be a fantastic step forward. We evolved from having no system to having a system of being able to check if people were safe to work with children. This shows that all systems evolve. This bill represents another evolution in the blue card system.

Tonight my children will play touch football with volunteer coaches. Tomorrow night they will go to scouts with volunteer leaders. I will not be there; my wife will not be there. On Saturday we will drop them at music lessons with paid teachers, and of course they go to school every day with paid professional teachers. Like all parents and carers, I at times entrust the care of my children to other people. I am totally in awe of the dedication of volunteers at such groups as Victor Scouts and the Metropolitan District Touch Association. I am always in awe of our paid professional teaching staff in terms of their dedication and professionalism—they have empowered my children to develop skills, gain confidence and build independence—but, like all parents, I know that with independence comes risk. I know that one bad person can inflict a lifetime of damage on my children. That is what this bill is trying to prevent.

Like all members of this House, I support the long and well-established blue card system. I support any sensible changes to improve this system. The proposed changes stem from several reviews and an election commitment by the Palaszczuk government. This is yet another example of this government delivering on its promises.

Ensuring people cannot start work until they have a blue card is a very logical step, as is placing a photograph upon the blue card. Allowing people to apply for a blue card at any time regardless of whether they have an actual job offer—uncoupling the job from the accreditation—is an incredibly important step. I worked for much of my working life in a regulated profession. It was normal for an employer to expect anybody showing up for a job interview as a nurse to provide up-to-date registration papers. It was just an industry standard. Most people would not bother coming to an interview without the appropriate accreditation. Generally there was no delay in starting work; in fact, I went to job interviews and started work within an hour or two of completing the interview because my registration was up to date and I had appropriate qualifications. However, if there were a problem with a nurse's registration it was in the interests of the nurse, patients and the employer that they not start work until those registration issues were sorted out via proper accreditation.

Allowing people to apply for a blue card at any time makes more people who are seeking to work in this industry job ready. I think it will also mean less administration for employers. I have been in situations where people have started work and we have had to track those people, put extra things in place for those people and then follow up. If someone can walk in fully accredited, with a blue card with their photo on it, and be ready for work it will reduce administration. The establishment of a register of home based care services and requirements for adult household members to hold a working with children card are really important improvements. They will certainly lead to greater safety for children. I fully support these measures.

I turn to the opposition's statement of reservation, if I could call it that. To me, again, this is just an exercise in opposition for opposition's sake. We see through the amendments that have been foreshadowed by the Attorney-General that she has listened to a range of voices, has listened to any good suggestions and has sought to incorporate them into the bill. I commend the Attorney-General for listening to people and doing that. Beyond that, the best I could get out of this statement of reservation is that we are going too slow on this change. Just two days ago we were criticised for going too fast; now we are being criticised for going too slow. It seems that, whatever we do, the opposition will criticise it. Opposition members will put forward an argument to fill time and then whinge about not having enough time.

We copped criticism for going too fast in relation to the bill we debated yesterday. I found that surprising, because many of the members opposite were part of the Newman government, which certainly got things wrong when it went too fast in relation to important bills. To see this you only have to look at the failed sex offender laws introduced by the former attorney-general, the member for Kawana. That bill was passed on 16 October. Concerns were raised by Mr Tony Fitzgerald, whom we have discussed in this place many times, by the end of October. On 14 November the Queensland Bar Association wrote to the attorney-general recommending the repeal of the laws. On 6 December the Court of Appeal found that the laws were incompatible with the institutional integrity of the state's highest court and declared the laws invalid. On 9 December the former attorney-general said, 'I'm going to seek some legal advice on that.' By 16 January, just three months into the process, the laws were scrapped. That is what happens when you move too fast.

I commend the Attorney-General for taking the time to get this right. This is complex. This is a massive change in how we manage this system in Queensland. It is extremely important that we get this right. The Attorney-General and her staff are to be commended for engaging with stakeholders so effectively and deeply. Perhaps that is why there was near universal support from stakeholders, as noted in the report.

This bill will lead to greater safety for kids and more efficiency for employers, workers and volunteers. I think it is the greater safety for kids that most of us in this House absolutely support and want to see. I urge those opposite to stop playing politics and opposing for the sake of opposing and to support the Attorney-General's excellent work so that we can get on with keeping kids safe. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.22 pm): I rise to speak to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and, more importantly, to speak in support of the amendments to be moved by my colleague the member for Toowoomba South. Protecting children from the vile creatures who mean them harm must be a priority for any government. As a parliament we must make no apology for ensuring the laws in Queensland that protect our future generations are the strongest possible. While I welcome the government's efforts at protecting children, we simply must do more.

While I will not be opposing the bill, I implore all members to properly consider the amendments foreshadowed by the LNP, because their sole intent is to strengthen protections for our children. All of us in this place have heard stories of our most vulnerable being left even more exposed and vulnerable due to the failings of the current blue card system. If protecting children with the strongest possible blue card system is not a priority and a reason to put constituents ahead of political allegiances, I do not know what is.

This government took the no-card no-start policy to the last election, but here we are, over a year later, still waiting for that policy to be enacted. One can only question why it took so long. It is a fact that in the last financial year alone 21 disqualified offenders started working with children. In the past three financial years, 66 disqualified people have had access to children. That is 66 offenders too many working with Queensland children. We must act to prevent this number being added to. I would encourage the Attorney-General to ensure these provisions are enacted as soon as possible, not at some stage in the future. While we must ensure that the people working with our children are thoroughly checked, we must also ensure that we are not left with reduced services due to delays.

While this bill adds to the list of disqualifying offences, it does not go far enough. Of course murder or the rape of an adult should disqualify someone from working with children. Of course kidnapping, abduction and child stealing should disqualify an applicant. Surely a bestiality conviction should prevent someone from working with children. So, too, should manslaughter, choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting, torture, kidnapping, child stealing, cruelty to children under 16, incest and trafficking in children.

As I mentioned earlier, I will not be opposing this bill, but the reality is that the LNP amendments are not only needed but also essential. It is the LNP amendments to the bill that will expand the range of disqualifying offences and prevent convicted offenders from ever obtaining or even applying for a blue card. It is the LNP amendments that will ensure applicants who have committed heinous crimes overseas never work with Queensland children.

The fact is that any member of this House who does not support the LNP amendments simply does not want the strongest protections for the next generation. Any member who is contemplating voting against these amendments must search their conscience and ask why they put party politics ahead of Queensland's children. Any member who votes against these amendments must do so knowing that their constituents will hold them accountable.

People who work with children in Queensland play a key role in guiding future generations. We must ensure not only that our children are safe but also that they have the best role models possible. As a society we accept that those who have committed offences involving drugs or violence will face consequences such as licence suspension. If we accept that these people cannot operate a vehicle until their charges are heard and dismissed, why do we allow them to work with children?

We must acknowledge that the current system is not working. We must acknowledge that Queensland families and Queensland children deserve better protection. Let us once and for all stop violent child killers from even having the right to apply to work with children. Let us close those loopholes once and for all. The amendments proposed by my colleague the member for Toowoomba South are practical and reflect current community concerns: amendments including the removal of the current eligibility declaration process, in accordance with the blue card review report, meaning that there will be no avenues for a disqualified person to apply for or receive a blue card—as it should be; amendments such as noting that the chief executive is not required to decide a person's application while a charge for a serious offence is pending against the person or if the person has been convicted

of a serious offence—as it should be; and an amendment to the Youth Justice Act to ensure that a child is not held in custody at a police station, establishment or watch house for more than 72 hours after the child's arrest—as it should be.

I make no apology for wanting the strongest possible protections for Queensland children. I implore all members to support the LNP amendments. Put politics aside and make the strongest possible statement to those who mean harm to Queensland children—that we as a parliament will put our future generations first. I support this legislation, but make no mistake: any member who opposes the amendments foreshadowed by my colleague has let down Queensland children.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. In doing so, I would like to acknowledge and commend the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee. I thank the committee secretariat; the committee chair, the member for Nudgee; and committee members for their hard work and contribution to the examination of the bill.

This bill was initially introduced into the Legislative Assembly on 13 November 2018 and was first referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee before it was transferred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee on 15 November 2018. On 20 November 2018 the committee invited submissions from stakeholders and subscribers. The committee received 10 submissions in total, one of which commented on both the working with children amendment bill 2018 and the private member's bill, Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018.

On 16 January 2019 the committee held a public briefing with the department and a public hearing about the government bill and the private member's bill to hear from invited witnesses. Both bills propose amendments to the issuing of blue cards, although the private member's bill relates only to blue cards in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The policy objectives of amendments to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 are to give effect to the government's election commitment to amend the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000; introduce automated blue card application processes to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending, the no-card no-start election commitment; and implement recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission reports *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* and *Recommendation 28 supplementary review: a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services*, or the supplementary review. Recommendation 28 of the When a Child is Missing report required the QFCC to undertake a supplementary review of legislation, policies and practices relating to information sharing between all parties as responsible agencies for undertaking internal risk assessments and decision-making about the safety of all children in home based care services. The policy objectives will be achieved by amending various aspects of the bill to strengthen the blue card system.

The blue card is an important aspect to protecting the most vulnerable in our society—our children. It is critical for our government to take the appropriate measures to ensure that our children are protected from the various levels and degrees of harm. As members of the 56th Legislative Assembly, it is up to us to support this legislative reform to enforce strong future legislation to uphold the safety and wellbeing of all children living in Queensland. The purpose of the blue card system is to contribute to the creation of safe and supportive environments for children and young people when receiving services and participating in activities which are essential to their development and wellbeing such as child care, education, sport and cultural activities. The working with children act refers to these core activities as regulated employment and regulated business.

As a working mother of three children, I know the challenges that come with juggling work and family and this often becomes a huge balancing act. My kids went to day care and school, including after-school care, and their love for playing sports had them engaged in after-school sporting activities as well which became part of their everyday norm. Outside school hours training sessions and club games were all part and parcel of their growth and development. As any working parent would know, you want to fully guarantee your child's safety and security at all times in your absence. This is the greatest concern of any parent. Sadly, though, the risk of harm to our children is real and it is up to us as members of government to ensure the right measures are in place to protect all Queensland children.

I would be the first to applaud the selfless work of the hardworking day care workers, teachers, coaches and volunteers who do an amazing job to keep our children safe in their care. I strongly believe that the amendments contained in the working with children bill will help protect our kids. Queensland's blue card helps protect our children through screening people working with children and deeming people ineligible to work with children based on their known police or disciplinary information; monitoring all blue card holders and applicants on a daily basis through an electronic interface with the Queensland Police Service for changes in their Queensland police information; and legislatively requiring child related organisations to implement policies and procedures to manage risks to children.

While we on this side of the House do everything to protect Queensland's most vulnerable through enforcing strong measures through the blue card system, those opposite continue to use fear and scare tactics to undermine Queensland's blue card system. The fact of the matter is the QFCC found that Queensland's blue card system has always been one of the strongest in Australia. The Palaszczuk government made a commitment to implement a no-card no-start policy during the election held in late 2017. Practically, implementation of a no-card no-start rule can only be implemented together with the fully automated system due to come into effect in early April 2020. To do otherwise would place unnecessary strain on the framework.

Unlike those opposite, we do not rush significant reform of this magnitude. Moving a completely manual system with 740,000 card holders to a fully automated system is a significant task. We have listened to stakeholders who have requested that we do not rush implementation of the recommendations because those organisations need to be ready for the automated system also. Protecting some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders—our children—is an important responsibility of all members in this place. This bill will take further steps to protect our most vulnerable Queenslanders who are also the future of our community and this great state. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (12.34 pm): Before I start, mindful that we are talking about kids this morning, I have just recognised the uniform of the children in the gallery as that of Talara state school, which is not in my electorate but is a fine school on the Sunshine Coast in the great electorate of Kawana. Looking at all of those cute faces up there, it is a timely reminder of how important the bill that we are discussing today is. I rise to make a contribution to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. As I said in the chamber yesterday, and as many others have said before me, the highest priority of any government is to keep its citizens safe, particularly our most vulnerable. Innocent, defenceless young kids are certainly some of our most vulnerable and unfortunately can too easily become targets for predators. That is why it is vital that governments do all they can to protect our kids.

This bill is important in helping us to do everything we can to ensure we are taking appropriate measures to do just that. I want to acknowledge our shadow Attorney-General, the honourable member for Toowoomba South, and the LNP members of the committee who examined this bill and identified glaring deficiencies and loopholes in the original proposed legislation that was tabled in this House and thank them for the sensible amendments put forward. Once implemented, the bill will expand the number of offences that will disqualify a person from receiving a blue card in Queensland. I support the parts of the legislation that improve safety through the expansion of the range of disqualifying offences. I also support legislation within the bill that creates a no-card no-start requirement, as it will help prevent people from starting or continuing employment without first obtaining a working with children clearance. It also requires an employer to ensure an employee does not start or continue in regulated employment without a clearance first.

One of my concerns lies with the time frame and the poor delivery of a promise. When will these changes be implemented so that we can better protect our kids? In 2017 this government committed to the no-card no-start policy. It is now mid-2019 and I am looking at a bill—looking at words on paper—that did not prevent blue cards from being awarded to rapists and murderers since 2017. How many blue cards have been awarded to people who would be disqualified under this bill? The answer is that even if one disqualified person is working with our children it is one disqualified person too many. In my past job I was exposed to the horrific stories of child abuse and the long-lasting negative effects it has on those victims. The negative impacts do not end there with the abused child; they continue into adulthood, negatively affecting the victim, their families and our wider community for many years down the track. One instance of child abuse can have a large effect and we do have a duty to do everything in our power to prevent even one disqualified person from being in a position of trust and authority with our children.

What is most upsetting to me is that this government has had years to enact the no-card no-start policy. In the meantime, convicted child rapists and child murderers who have failed to disclose their convictions have been able to work with children. It has been left to the police to notify Blue Card Services of their offences. We know that at the end of last year almost 3,000 people were able to work with children pending the outcome of their blue card application. Most of these applicants would not have been serious criminals, but some of them certainly were. During the 2017-18 fiscal year, 21 disqualified offenders started working with our kids as soon as they applied for a blue card. It is those individuals who pose a dangerous threat to our children. I know I would not want any disqualified person being in a position of trust or authority with my children and I know my constituents feel the same way. However, disqualified persons and offenders with other violent convictions continued to work in settings where kids were present, and this is simply unacceptable. In addition to how long it has taken this government so far to protect our kids, I am concerned that these proposed changes do not go far enough.

A young Canadian girl has been doing some relief work in my office. She is an international student at the University of the Sunshine Coast. She told me how easy it was for her to apply and receive a blue card. She wanted to do some voluntary work. She also told me how easy it was for other people she knows from the university, who are on student visas, working visas, or other temporary visas, to get a blue card. There is no question that asks them to disclose any criminal convictions from overseas. We are taking someone's word that they have not committed an offence simply because they have lived most of their life in another country before relocating here. When it comes to the safety of our kids, it makes sense to screen temporary residents to the same standards as we screen permanent residents and citizens. As well, a number of other offences that should disqualify people from receiving a blue card were not included in the original bill. I again thank our shadow Attorney-General and the LNP team for identifying the deficiencies in the bill and working hard to plug the hole—to fix another lazy Labor bill—to protect our kids.

Although the duties in my previous role were much different from what they are now, as a member of parliament one thing remains the same and that is the duty to protect those who are unable to protect themselves. In this instance, as a member of parliament, it is protection through legislation and policy to create safer places for our kids. It is important that this bill is implemented quickly and effectively to better protect our kids. Without pre-empting debate on the proposed amendments, ideally, this government should consider the LNP's suggestion to strengthen the overseas record check requirement and extend the range of disqualifying offences. However, if it does not, it will be up to this government to explain to the victims of child abuse why a few extra amendments, which could have taken kids out of harm's way, were not considered.

 **Hon. CJO'Rourke** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors) (12.41 pm): I rise to contribute my views on and support for the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This bill continues Queensland's long history of providing world-class protection for our children through the working with children check. Through my previous profession as an early childhood teacher and now currently as a member of parliament, I am passionate about the enhancements to the blue card system, because I know what it means for our children and their families. I have spent a lot of time at various children's sporting and cultural activities. I know the benefits that children get out of being able to explore their physicality and their creative side within a safe community environment.

As the minister for disability services, I am committed to the bill, because children with disability who participate in activities that are essential to their development will benefit from those activities. Every time we make the places safer where children go, we make our community better. We make it a place where we all thrive. This bill will also have some flow-on effects within the yellow card system because people with a blue card can currently access an exemption from the yellow card process. Consequently, any strengthening of the blue card system is a strengthening of the yellow card system.

This bill will assist us in implementing the recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission's *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* report and the *Recommendation 28 supplementary review: a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services* report. These are important reforms so that the way we screen people who work with children remains robust and protects children and is also modern and contemporary. Expanding the list of disqualifying and serious offences makes sense. We are not saying that people with these histories cannot work anywhere; we are saying that they cannot work with Queensland children. Convictions for offences such as abduction or kidnapping of a child in contexts that are not familial, or bestiality offences, are disqualifying.

I am also pleased that this bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment of no-card no-start. Although this initiative will take some work and some getting used to for both employees and employers, it is a required change that prioritises child safety and strengthens the system. I am confident that the work that is planned to reduce the application processing time frame and a stronger identity check system will mean valuable enhancements to our system. Automating the application process for blue cards will be a significant step and create great efficiencies for both the applicants and those who administer the system.

Where possible, I am working hard to make sure that the yellow card system within my portfolio benefits from all the learning and progress made within the blue card system. Although the systems are for different purposes, there is much that they can share and I continue to work with the Attorney-General to ensure that Queensland has the best screening systems possible. In conclusion, the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 creates change that will have a lasting impact on our communities. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.44 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. As members of parliament, we may differ with our politics, but we are united in the love of our children. Working with kids is a distinct privilege. Many years ago, before I was in politics, I was a football—or soccer, as some heathens would refer to the football code—coach and absolutely loved it. It was a true privilege to work with not only my own son but also the sons and daughters of other families in that wonderful little football team. Equally, from a club perspective, I am aware of the devastating consequences that can happen when someone, unfortunately, slips through cracks. Unfortunately, some of the ramifications of those consequences can last for many years.

As has been said by previous opposition speakers, the LNP will not oppose the bill. I will certainly be supporting the amendments as proposed by the shadow Attorney-General. The policy objectives and the reasons for the shadow Attorney-General's amendments are, first of all, to strengthen the blue card system by expanding the range of disqualifying offences; to prevent all disqualified persons from being eligible to apply for and hold a blue card; to establish a new framework that applies to blue card applicants and holders charged and convicted of a serious offence; to broaden the scope of criminal history disclosure and criminal history checks; and, finally, limit the time that children are held in custody at a police station, police establishment or watch house.

On 14 February this year the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee recommended that the bill be passed. The objectives of this bill are very similar to what I have just outlined in terms of the amendments to be moved by the shadow Attorney-General. The policy objectives of the bill overall are to be achieved by expanding a range of disqualifying offences.

Given the fact that we are probably pressed for time because of the number of speakers, I want to zero in on some key facets of the bill and also the proposed amendments. I note that 15 stakeholders made submissions to the committee and all of them were supportive—understandably—of strengthening the blue card system. It is a system that all Queenslanders should be very proud of. I echo the sentiments of some of the previous speakers on both sides of the chamber. Indeed, the blue card system is one that we can all be extremely proud of. It is essential to protecting the most vulnerable Queenslanders of all, our kids.

The issues raised by the stakeholders have been touched on, but I want to reiterate that one of them was the lengthy delays in communication. A common concern among school organisations in particular was the lengthy details in the school being advised that an employee was issued with a negative notice. I am looking forward to this gap being closed when this bill is passed. The Queensland Teachers' Union and the Independent Education Union of Australia also raised concerns about the inefficiency of the blue card system—the BCS. They provided examples of where negative notices had been posted weeks after the notice was issued.

I know that other speakers have touched on this matter, but there was that example of a letter that was personally addressed to a principal and marked 'private and confidential'. I believe that this issue was raised yesterday in this debate. It was outlined that, unfortunately, the principal had commenced long service leave and school staff, believing the letter to be personal, posted it on to the principal's private residence where it was collected around about a month later. Obviously, that is an area of concern. It feeds into that whole issue of a slow turnaround in blue card services. Some of the stakeholders also complained about the slow turnover in relation to wanting more efficient outcomes delivered. It is also incredibly important that this bill will go a long way towards plugging that gap.

The LNP's amendments, if they are supported, will strengthen the blue card system. Yesterday, the shadow Attorney-General spoke about this in detail, but I want to reiterate that these amendments will expand the range of disqualifying offences and prevent offenders convicted of disqualifying offences from ever obtaining a blue card. The shadow Attorney-General's amendments will move the eligibility declaration process to prevent all disqualified persons from ever being eligible to apply for and hold a blue card. That is a very sensible and straightforward recommendation. It will prevent offenders charged with or convicted of a serious offence from working with children. That is self-evident and self-obvious. It will compel applicants to disclose international criminal histories in line with the QFCC recommendations.

The range of these disqualifying offences will be expanded to include, amongst many, manslaughter, under section 300 of the Criminal Code; torture, under 328 of the Criminal Code; cruelty to children, under section 364 of the Criminal Code; choking; incest of an adult; attempt to commit rape of an adult; assault with intent to commit rape of an adult; and sexual assault of an adult. I know it has been touched on, but I think it is important to note that other Australian jurisdictions, such as New South Wales, include these offences as disqualifying offences.

In terms of the eligibility declaration, the LNP's amendments as foreshadowed by the shadow Attorney-General will remove the eligibility declaration to ensure that a disqualified person will never work with children. In relation to those charged or convicted of a serious offence, the LNP will ensure that a person who holds a blue card will have their blue card suspended if charged with a serious offence, again self-evident and very practical and important. A person's application will also not be considered while a charge for a serious offence is pending against the person or if the person has been convicted of a serious offence. A blue card is a privilege, not a right. In relation to international criminal histories, the LNP will require Blue Card Services to conduct international criminal history checks thoroughly. This was, I point out, recommendation 31 made by the QFCC.

In relation to the Labor Party's contribution to the debate, as has been pointed out, back in 2017 an election commitment was made to introduce the no-card no-start policy which would mean that no person can start paid employment without an approved blue card. Until the no-card no-start policy is implemented, convicted child rapists and child murderers who have failed to disclose their convictions can work with children and continue until such time that the police notify Blue Card Services. In November 2018 it was revealed through question on notice No. 1611 that there were 2,917 applications for paid employees who were entitled to commence work pending the outcome of their blue card application. That is just under 3,000 people. Any of these nearly 3,000 people—2,917 to be precise—could be disqualified from working with children. Further, question on notice No. 964 in August 2018 revealed the number of disqualified offenders who started working with children as soon as they applied for a blue card: in 2015-16 there were 25 disqualified offenders; in the 2016-17 financial year there were 20 disqualified offenders; and in 2017-18 there were 21 disqualified offenders.

In relation to the bill, I believe that whilst the Attorney-General has done a great deal to pick up some of the points that the shadow Attorney-General has discussed with her, I do believe that it is inexcusable under Labor's bill that violent child killers, child manslaughterers and child rapists could still apply for and possibly hold a blue card. I note that the amendments to be moved by the Attorney-General are seeking to remedy this, but it is still unacceptable that a person guilty of child cruelty, torture, choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting can apply for a blue card or still could apply for a blue card.

I assure the House that at the end of the day no-one has a mortgage on the protection of kids. While there will no doubt be some argy-bargy in relation to the bill, the amendments and the shadow Attorney-General's amendments, one thing is sure: at the end of this debate all members of this chamber will be able to go home to their families knowing that in some shape, way or form they have contributed to ensuring that in the future the precious lives and safety of our most vulnerable Queenslanders has been strengthened.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.54 pm): I am pleased to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This legislation proves that the Palaszczuk government takes the safety and wellbeing of children seriously by strengthening Queensland's blue card system. Queensland has one of the strongest blue card systems in Australia. We have the proud legacy of being one of the first jurisdictions to introduce a working with children check scheme. At the last state election the Palaszczuk government made a commitment to introduce a no-card no-start policy, which would require all individuals to hold a blue card before they can commence work in child related employment. We are delivering on that election promise and by

doing so we are standing by the principles of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act—that is, to ensure the welfare and best interests of a child are paramount and that every child is entitled to be cared for in a way that protects them from harm and promotes their wellbeing.

A child being harmed by someone caring for them undermines the community's trust in institutions that are meant to protect children. In an age of declining trust, it is up to us to strengthen those institutions responsible for protecting the most vulnerable members of our society. The Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and the reforms to the blue card system have created a system that strengthens that trust. Everyone now accepts as the norm that if you are working with children, either as an employee or a volunteer, you must have a blue card.

With the no-card no-start policy there now is no longer an excuse to not have one while you are employed. As we have heard, there are over 725,000 current blue card holders and applicants in Queensland. This is a great comfort to many families who have entrusted their children to other people's care. I would like to pay tribute to all of those volunteers in my own community, in organisations such as the Girl Guides, the Scouts and the numerous outside school hours care and other organisations that work with children. I know what a difference they make. I pay special tribute to the men who volunteer in these organisations. I know that they often can be scrutinised slightly more than women working with children. Those men who volunteer their time are terrific mentors, particularly to young boys who may not have other positive role models in their lives.

This bill has two objectives: to implement the no-card no-start election promise that we have made to prevent people without a blue card commencing paid work; and to implement the recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission's blue card review report and its supplementary review. The bill is consistent with the QFCC's recommendations and also the national standards being negotiated with the Commonwealth government and other states and territories. It forms the first stage in a series of reforms to the working with children legislation in Queensland and it establishes foundations for other reforms to be implemented over time. There is strong stakeholder support for the no-card no-start policy. We have listened to stakeholders with regard to making sure we have a system in place that can accommodate the new processes outlined in this bill.

The Palaszczuk government is committed and ready to deliver \$17 million over the next three years to implement the no-card no-start scheme, as well as other improvements to the blue card application process such as developing and implementing an online automated application process and an improved alternate manual process. Once this system goes online in late March to early April 2020, the application process for applicants and organisations will become quicker and more efficient. The development of an online organisational portal will also greatly assist organisations to manage their blue card obligations and help them to focus more on child safety and spend less time completing paperwork.

One of the changes the bill sets out is the removal of the requirement for a person to have an agreement to work with an organisation prior to applying for a blue card. This change allows applicants to apply for a blue card in advance of finding employment so that they can show potential employers that they are job ready and have been cleared to work with children. Employers will also strengthen the new blue card system by ensuring that employees must hold a blue card prior to commencing work. Failure to do so will be an offence. This protects children by preventing anyone with a criminal history from commencing work in child related employment whilst their blue card is being processed. Employers and employees will both be liable for offences under the framework with severe penalties imposed on high-risk employees as well as employers who take on high-risk employees. High-risk persons will no longer be able to rely on an exemption under this bill, meaning that volunteer parents or volunteers under 18 who have been otherwise issued a negative notice cannot engage in child related employment.

I am greatly pleased to see this bill establish a register of home based care services. This means that all adult household members of these services will need to hold a blue card and be notifiable to the Department of Education should there be any changes to their blue card status. The LNP may use fear and scare tactics to undermine Queensland's blue card system, but the fact remains that Queensland's blue card system has and always will be one of the strongest in Australia. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Howard, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Water, Cost-Reflective Pricing

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.00 pm): Last week I hit the road to travel through Queensland and meet with farmers to discuss their concerns about the rising costs of water and the current water pricing review being undertaken by the QCA. I was joined by my colleagues the members for Callide, Bundaberg, Burnett, Hervey Bay and Gympie as we met with farmers in Biloela, Monto, Gayndah, Bundaberg and Maryborough.

From the outset, widespread frustration was expressed by farmers in Callide, who are staring down the barrel of substantial water price increases under the Palaszczuk Labor government's move towards cost-reflective pricing for water currently being considered by the Queensland Competition Authority. Under cost-reflective price estimates calculated by the Queensland Farmers' Federation, farmers on the Callide irrigation scheme are staring down the barrel of a \$74.58 per megalitre increase. Those on the Three Moon Creek scheme near Monto will experience a \$33.52 per megalitre increase and those on the Upper Burnett around Gayndah and Mundubbera will experience a \$23.27 per megalitre increase. Even though price increases are capped at \$2.38 per megalitre per year plus inflation, this will mean that Callide irrigation customers are staring down the barrel of at least 25 years of consecutive water price increases. The story was not much better for farmers in the Wide Bay region around Bundaberg and Maryborough. Under cost-reflective pricing, Bundaberg will experience a \$34.69 per megalitre increase and the lower Mary River irrigation scheme around Maryborough will see a \$44.81 per megalitre increase.

The projected price increases are unacceptable and should be of major concern to farmers and the rural communities whose economies are centred on agriculture. If the Labor government wants to move to cost-reflective pricing for water, it has a lot more work to do to ensure that SunWater is providing value for money to its rural customers. It is clear that Queensland farmers are currently getting a bad deal with SunWater and its Queensland government owners. The proposed cost-reflective pricing in these schemes has the potential to wipe out irrigation in the region.

Water is the lifeblood of our agricultural industries and the communities they support. The message that we are hearing from local farmers is that the costs of water and electricity are already too high and need to be reduced. It is farcical that Labor would consider raising the cost of already unaffordable water. There is no point in having water sitting unutilised in water storage facilities. We need it out there growing crops, creating jobs and keeping our economy afloat. Without water, communities such as Biloela, Monto, Gayndah, Bundaberg and Maryborough will lose production, which leads to fewer jobs and more expensive food and fibre for all Queenslanders. If you have water, you have opportunities. It is time for this government to step in and guarantee the future of all irrigated agriculture across Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Rockhampton, I inform members that joining us in the gallery are students from Talara Primary College in the electorate of Kawana. I welcome you to the people's House.

Rockhampton Art Gallery

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.03 pm): Previously I have put on the record my thanks to the Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, and the Minister for the Arts, Leeanne Enoch, for their support in funding \$8 million towards our new art gallery in Rockhampton, in addition to the \$2 million already committed. I have been a strong advocate for this funding. I also put on the record my thanks to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, Cameron Dick, for the \$5 million in funding from Building Our Regions funds to build the art gallery in Rockhampton. That will make a total commitment of \$15 million from the Palaszczuk government for a \$31.5 million project that I have been passionate to secure for the people of Rockhampton and Central Queensland. The funding will enable a new art gallery to be built that will be seven times the size of the existing space. The project will support 104 construction jobs. The project will deliver significant community and economic benefits to Rockhampton and the wider Central Queensland region.

The current Rockhampton Art Gallery, which was opened in 1979, lacks the space to house and display the gallery's nationally significant collection. The new gallery will feature two large flexible gallery spaces, three educational spaces, permanent collection storage, a restaurant and a retail shop, with a

total floor area increasing from 650 square metres to 4,711 square metres. The new gallery will lead to local economic growth and jobs creation by attracting more cultural events to the region and it will support ongoing work in Rockhampton's arts and recreational services sector.

This is about unlocking employment and investment opportunities for our city, with the development contributing to the revitalisation of the CBD. The gallery will prove a huge drawcard for locals and visitors, and it will bring people back into the Rockhampton CBD, from art enthusiasts to young children, school groups and families. Everyone who lives in or comes to Rockhampton will be attracted to that fantastic new gallery. The gallery will be a boon for small businesses and it will revitalise our city centre. We have a vibrant and diverse region from our resources and agriculture, through to tourism, culture, sports and arts. This investment shows that the Palaszczuk government supports and understands what a great place Rocky is.

National Volunteers Week

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (2.06 pm): As Greek philosopher Aristotle observed over 2,000 years ago, the essence of life is to serve others and do good. Next week we celebrate National Volunteers Week, when we recognise the volunteers in our communities. We all know that volunteers are the backbone of our communities. That is a fact that I came to know through 17 years working as officer in charge of the Police Citizens Youth Club in Nambour. PCYC is one of the many organisations across Queensland that relies heavily on our volunteers—everyone from committee members to coaches and grounds people. Those volunteers help keep all of our organisations across Queensland afloat. Next Friday I am holding my very own, very first Nicklin community volunteer awards, to pay tribute to them.

Often when I talk to groups of volunteers to thank them, I relay the story of Charlie Plumb. Charlie Plumb was a fighter pilot stationed on the USS *Kitty Hawk* during the Vietnam War. He flew missions over Vietnam. He was shot down, but parachuted into enemy territory. He was kept a prisoner of war for six years, but was eventually liberated and made it back to America.

Several years later, Charlie Plumb was having dinner with his wife in a restaurant when he was approached by man who introduced himself. The man said, 'You're Charlie Plumb from the USS *Kitty Hawk*.' Charlie looked at the man and shook his hand, but he did not recognise him. He asked, 'Do I know you?' The man said, 'I packed your parachute.' For a moment he thought about this guy working to pack his parachute to keep him safe. The guy said, 'I guess it worked.'

Over the coming days, Charlie Plumb thought about that night. He thought about the sailor working in the bowels of the ship, day after day. Plumb was an officer, so he may have passed him in a corridor but he would not have recognised or acknowledged him. He thought about that man and all the people who pack our parachutes throughout life. Charles Plumb is one of the most sought-after speakers in America. When he relays that story, he challenges everyone to think about who is packing their parachute; who are the unsung community heroes working behind the scenes.

That is what our volunteers do. They work behind the scenes. Often their work is unseen. Often their work goes unthanked. Often the community benefits from their work without even knowing about it. To those volunteers, on behalf of the Nicklin community that benefits from your work, on behalf of all of those people who benefit but may never thank you, I say thank you for your service to Nicklin. In anticipation of National Volunteers Week, I thank all the volunteers across Australia. I urge all members to thank the volunteers in their communities next week.

Federal Election

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.09 pm): This weekend our community, our state and our country has an important choice to make and the contrast could not be starker. We have a choice between the Shorten Labor team, united in their goal to ensure that our first home buyers can afford to buy homes, our kids get the best possible education and our cancer patients can focus on recovery not on their medical bills, or the LNP Morrison-Abbott-Palmer-Hanson-Turnbull government focused on I do not know what.

In the Mount Ommaney electorate, however, we are lucky to already have two amazing Labor members in Graham Perrett, who is such a great advocate for his electorate of Moreton, and Milton Dick, our tireless member for Oxley. I have been the member for Mount Ommaney for just on 18 months now and in that time I have worked with Graham and Milton on a number of key projects.

Graham has lobbied tirelessly for key infrastructure upgrades in the community, but none are more important to Mount Ommaney than the Ipswich Motorway Rocklea to Oxley upgrade. This stretch of road is used by more than 90,000 vehicles each and every day. Graham's lobbying was instrumental

in securing federal government funding to upgrade this road last time the country had a federal Labor government. Since then work has been underway. We will soon be ready to upgrade the second stretch from Oxley to Darra.

The second stretch falls into Milton Dick's electorate of Oxley, and also needs upgrading desperately. Milton has secured a federal funding commitment from Bill Shorten for the second stretch of the Ipswich Motorway from Oxley to Darra. This project will be such a boon not just for Mount Ommaney residents but for Ipswich residents and beyond.

That is a major piece of infrastructure and a great example of how Milton, Graham and I have been able to work together to secure infrastructure. It is not just the big projects that matter. Milton and Graham have equally turned their minds to the smaller local projects that help our community—projects like the expansion of the hall at Jindalee State School, allowing their already huge outside school hours program to grow, or the \$500,000 commitment by a future Shorten Labor government for a clubhouse that will serve the Jindalee Jags AFL club, Centenary Little Athletics and the Centenary Netball Club.

I am also excited about the \$18 million in funding for the tennis excellence program that Graham Perrett has secured funding for, which will be well used by the amazing students at Corinda State High School who already have a tennis excellence program. That is just a small taste of what they have done for our community.

I wanted to share a little bit about what drives these impressive blokes to be in politics. Milton Dick is somebody I have known since I was a teenager, when I first acted as a mother's help for his cousin Toni Dick. I know how important family is to Milton. He was often around Toni's for special family events. Sadly, Toni passed away from cancer almost 20 years ago. She leaves an impressive legacy. I know that Milton is deeply passionate about Shorten's commitments to funding cancer treatments. I am lucky to be able to work with both these wonderful men. I look forward to continuing to do so on 19 May.

Navua Sedge; Babinda, Ambulance Service



Mr KNUTH (Hill—KAP) (2.12 pm): I rise to speak on two important issues facing my electorate. The first is the spread of navua sedge, a destructive weed which is causing devastation to the agricultural and cattle grazing land on the Tablelands and is rapidly spreading across the state. In city concrete jungles those lucky enough to have a little patch of grass simply pull out a weed or spray it with a chemical and it is gone. In regional centres where there are thousands of acres of land it is not so easy, particularly when there are rules and regulations on what land can be cleared for agriculture and grazing and then people have to battle against a weed that invades the land that can be used.

Cattle will not eat navua sedge. Even goats, which eat just about anything on earth, will not eat it. No known chemical, including sempra, has been effective in halting the spread of navua sedge. It is a fast-moving, farming land killer which chokes our native grasses and flora.

People travelling to North Queensland and the Tablelands would wonder at the green pastures in some areas and not realise that it is the highly destructive weed navua sedge. If not stopped it will become an economic and environmental disaster to Queensland and the nation.

There is a glimmer of hope though. I acknowledge the state government for initially providing \$250,000 to launch research into a treatment agent to halt the spread of this noxious weed. DAF have also committed resources and worked with agriscientists and the Malanda Beef Plan Group in testing biocontrols to combat the spread of navua sedge. DAF principal entomologist, Dr Dhilepan, is travelling to Africa in June to test two possible control agents for navua sedge. However, more needs to be done. It is estimated that \$1.2 million is required over five years to fully test and approve a control agent to combat navua sedge. The minister along with affected councils, graziers, industry groups and DAF are all in agreement that more needs to be done.

I also express my appreciation to the state government for applying to the federal government for further funding. The future of the agricultural and grazing industries in this state are at stake. We cannot afford to drop the ball on this. We must keep the momentum going to fight against navua sedge.

The second issue I raise is also important. I table a nonconforming petition signed by 300 people of the small township of Babinda.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding a permanent ambulance service for Babinda [785].

The petition calls for a permanent ambulance service in the centre. Babinda is an ageing population, with more than 25 per cent of people over 65 years of age. This heightens the risk of injury and illness, which then requires immediate access to emergency medical services. Waiting times for ambulances can mean the difference between life and death. I implore the minister to act on the petition and implement measures for access to a permanent ambulance service in the Babinda township.

Keppel Electorate

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.15 pm): I rise today with some fantastic news for Central Queensland. Central Queensland is set for a major jobs boost with hundreds of new jobs supporting Works for Queensland projects now funded. Some \$1.5 million is being funded by the Palaszczuk Labor government for the Yeppoon Aquatic Centre at Cooe Bay. I have been lobbying for upgrades to this centre for years. I met with Helen and John Auriac from the centre a couple of months ago.

The pool badly needs upgrading. This funding will go towards renewal of the pool to include eight lanes and a new access ramp, to raise water depth to competition standard and also the renewal of the wading pool, including the installation of small leisure features and simulated rock profiles, and a renewal of the filtration systems for both the pools. I spoke with Judy from the centre today. She was over the moon with respect to the \$1.5 million commitment that we are making through the Works for Queensland program.

I recently received correspondence from Jordan McCann, a champion swimmer from the Yeppoon Sharks Swimming Club, who was advocating for this upgrade. I am really pleased. I cannot wait to speak with Jordan personally and tell him the news.

Some \$800,000 has also been funded from the Works for Queensland program for the Emu Park community arts hub. Keppel Coast Arts met with me and Mayor Ludwig a couple of months ago advocating for this project. I was really pleased to be able to go and lobby on behalf of them for this funding. Leanne Smith from Keppel Coast Arts will be incredibly pleased.

The Rockhampton Heritage Village is also being funded \$300,000 to replace and upgrade lighting and electrical infrastructure. I know that the friends of the heritage village and the council will be so pleased to receive this funding, especially given that this month they are celebrating their 21st birthday. I am sure it will be a welcome birthday present for the Rockhampton Heritage Village.

Livingstone Shire Council Mayor Bill Ludwig and Rockhampton Regional Council Mayor Margaret Strelow have both hailed the Works for Queensland program saying that it has immediate and dramatic impacts on our local communities. I have seen firsthand a number of the projects, including the sealing of Svendsen Road to Coorooman Creek boat ramp. The local boaties I saw over Easter are incredibly pleased to see that that road is now sealed after years. The Palaszczuk Labor government came to the rescue by committing funding and that road is now fully sealed. The residents of Zilzie are pleased because they were putting up with all the dust from Svendsen Road.

This vital funding is about getting people into work. It is being used by our local councils for new parks, gardens, roads and other community facilities that are improving many regional towns and cities, including in Central Queensland. Councils estimate that the 494 new projects that are funded under the program in this round will create or support more than 4,500 jobs in regional Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of delivering infrastructure, creating jobs and working with councils. We are delivering on our election commitment to continue the Works for Queensland program. I cannot wait to see work started on these projects.

Federal Election, Health Funding

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.18 pm): Australians wholeheartedly rejected Labor's 'Medicare' campaign during the 2016 federal election. We have seen Bill Shorten, federal Labor frontbenchers and Labor candidates dashing across the state over the past few weeks from Cairns to Coolangatta trotting out the same mistruths and falsehoods about health funding and anything else they can make up to try to win the upcoming federal election.

It is 'Medicare' mark 2, which Queenslanders are seeing through—like they did last time. It is the same tactic we saw from Queensland's own embattled Labor health minister last year, but that train of misinformation has well and truly run out of steam. We all know the health minister is a fraud, a phoney and a fake, and Queenslanders have seen through his 'dog ate my homework' excuse. It is time that Labor stopped playing politics with our public health system and started focusing on better patient care.

Let us look at the facts. We only have to look at the breakdown of funding increases under the federal coalition compared to Queensland Labor for Queensland public health services. This is done by comparing data through the National Health Funding Pool. Between 2014-15 and 2017-18, there was an increase of 40.2 per cent of funding from Canberra and just 12.1 per cent from Queensland Labor. That is an increase of \$1.23 billion from Canberra compared to \$747.7 million from Queensland

Labor. Despite that, we see the same old blame Canberra rhetoric from the Palaszczuk Labor government because they can never accept the facts. They would rather take their advice from spin doctors rather than the real doctors.

Let us have a look at the LNP's record in Queensland—something this government is obsessed with. Between 2012-13 and 2014-15, the former Queensland LNP government increased total state government funding from \$5.158 billion to \$6.172 billion—in just two years an increase of more than \$1 billion. That is compared to \$747 million in the first three years of this state Labor government.

While we are comparing health spending, let us look at the Queensland Health capital budget under the LNP government in Queensland compared with the Palaszczuk Labor government. In comparing the Queensland Health capital program, including capital grants, the LNP spent \$688.47 million per year more than the Palaszczuk Labor government. I table a comparison for the benefit of all members.

Tabled paper: Chart, undated, titled 'Queensland Health Capital Program Budget (\$m)' from 2012-13 to 2018-19 [786].

The Palaszczuk Labor government's record in public health services, particularly since the 2017 state election, has been one of crisis management. Hospitals are at breaking point, promised hospital upgrades are years away from completion, emergency departments are overcrowded, ambulance ramping has continued to increase, waiting lists are blowing out, we are seeing a bush baby crisis and assaults on staff have skyrocketed. Queenslanders should not be treated like fools by Labor. They will reject 'Mediscare' mark 2 when they vote to re-elect the Morrison coalition government this weekend.

(Time expired)

Federal Election

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (2.21 pm): The decisions that are made in this parliament and in Canberra have real-life consequences to families like mine. My dad battled melanoma cancer for many years which left my family thousands of dollars out of pocket in medical expenses. My brother, Callum, has Down syndrome, which has made schooling, finding a job and living independently more difficult than it was for me. Universal health care, the NDIS and needs based education funding are not just political slogans. They actually provide hope for families like mine.

Last week I was genuinely shocked and concerned to read in the paper that the new LNP candidate for Moncrieff, Ms Angie Bell, was 'inspired' by Tony Abbott and his cabinet colleagues to get involved in politics which she went on to clarify was at an event in Canberra for the delivery of Joe Hockey's budget.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Mudgeeraba, you have had your go.

Ms SCANLON: I am curious as to which aspects of that budget inspired Ms Bell's active involvement in LNP politics. Was it the deep cuts or the long string of broken election promises or was it the depiction of hardworking people in our community as 'leaners'? I remember that budget well because it also motivated me to get involved in politics due to its savagery that hurt so many families in our community. It dumped Gonski school funding, cutting billions of dollars from our education system. It cut billions of dollars from our hospitals and increased out-of-pocket expenses for visiting a GP or getting an X-ray or scan. It cut funds from preventative health and increased the cost to medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. It cut over a billion dollars worth of concessions to pensioners. The list goes on. These are the cuts that the new LNP candidate, Ms Angie Bell, was inspired by.

To make matters worse, the only LNP minister we have on the Gold Coast shockingly admitted at a chamber of commerce meeting last week that the reason the Gold Coast did not get our fair share of M1 funding was that we did not sell public assets. That is what Karen Andrews said, and I quote—

It was an entirely different funding commitment in New South Wales. A lot of that was because New South Wales sold assets. The Queensland state government did not sell assets and they had access to an entirely different funding block.

That was her response when asked why New South Wales received 80 per cent of funding for the M1 while we only got 50 per cent.

We have a choice at this election: a federal Labor government that will invest \$2.3 billion to dramatically slash out-of-pocket costs for cancer patients, a team that will build a new mental health facility on the Gold Coast and invest in education, or an LNP Morrison government who would rather give billions of dollars worth of tax cuts to the top end of town. I think the choice the clear.

Chiba Park, Flying Foxes

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (2.25 pm): I rose in this House a little over a month ago and told the tale of woe that is Chiba Park in Coombabah in my electorate for those residents who are living with the nightmare of an infestation of bats that is causing their health, their mental state of mind and their lifestyle a great deal of stress at the moment. I want to update the House. Unfortunately, Mr Deputy Speaker, it is not good news. I would like to tell you that things have got better than when I spoke in the House on 20 March, but they have not.

On 26 April an audit was done by the council. The council believes that there was in the order of about 3,000 bats. Just one week later that number had escalated to 6,000 on their count. It had doubled in a week. Sadly, it has continued to get worse over the last fortnight. I want to read some comments from some of my constituents so members in this House know what they are going through. This is from Peter—

The bats this morning are totally out of control. The activity, the noise, the smell have again escalated. They were active for the entire weekend—and I mean the entire weekend—with peak times at 10 pm, midnight, 3 am, 5 am, 7 am, 10 am and midday. It did not stop.

This is from Rex—

The animals appear to be in greater numbers than ever before. They are roosting in greater density in the trees closer to our property and the school. The smell and the noise is intense and the droppings are fouling our property. Any rainwater harvested from our roof to our tank is unable to be used for fear of bacteria. We are being deprived of sleep, with resulting anxiety and depression.

We must act. These residents are not asking for the bats to be killed; they just want them moved on. All it needs is a pragmatic approach where the government allows the council to come in and undertake the tree clearing that needs to be done—and I am not talking about tree clearing to wipe out the trees. This is about removing the roosting area. We had the situation just last week where the local school that adjoins this park put out a newsletter to the school advising the kids not to use a portion of the back oval behind the hall.

Enough is enough. I understand the need to protect species but I also understand the need to protect people. These families are going through living hell. The buck-passing must stop. The culture in the department must change. People must come before bats. Families must come before flying foxes. Enough is enough.

Aquaculture Industry, Pacific Reef Fisheries

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.28 pm): Since January 2015 more than 192,000 jobs have been created in Queensland by the Palaszczuk Labor government. We are working hard to make sure that this number keeps growing. It is only the Labor Palaszczuk government that is ensuring that industry is being developed in regional Queensland. We know that as a government the future prosperity of our region relies on having a diverse economic base. It is the Labor Palaszczuk government that is supporting agriculture, aquaculture, mining, advanced manufacturing, tourism, and small, medium and large businesses of all kinds. We are supporting industry.

I had the pleasure of meeting with representatives from Pacific Reef Fisheries, the proponents of a \$120 million aquaculture project which will generate 2,700 tonnes of North Queensland black tiger prawns annually. This project is a step closer to service after being granted prescribed project status by the Queensland government. The Guthalungra aquaculture project is located 40 kilometres north of Bowen and is adjacent to the Elliot River. It will be the second North Queensland aquaculture project for Pacific Reef Fisheries, which is already operating a facility in Ayr.

The project is expected to support 130 jobs during construction and a great 220 jobs once operational. The employment opportunities range from bioscientists to pond caretakers and a wide range of tradespeople and apprentices. This will give the local youth an opportunity to be able to stay in their home towns with sustainable jobs and careers. The high-quality black tiger prawns are the same ones on sale in our big supermarket chains in Queensland. They are grown for Queenslanders and sold in Queensland. All Queenslanders love a good prawn.

I must say that I am impressed by the sustainability of this company. This project will set a new global benchmark for aquaculture and water remediation, with algae to be used to remove nitrogen and phosphorous from waste water so the facility operates at zero net discharge. They also use algae ponds to produce fertiliser and health food products. This is a win-win for the project and for the environment. The prawns will be grown using a world-first bioremediation technology created in conjunction with our local Queensland James Cook University.

Southern Downs Electorate, Drought

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.31 pm): I rise to speak in the House about an important issue in my electorate of Southern Downs—and that is the drought. We have experienced an extreme drought for some time now. There has been very little meaningful rain throughout Southern Downs over the last few years and it is really starting to bite now. It is particularly so in the Granite Belt and Warwick parts of my electorate where an absence of rain has led to an absence of inflows into the water storage dams which provide drinking water for Warwick and Stanthorpe. There are three dams of concern—the Leslie Dam, the Connolly Dam and the Storm King Dam. They are at 6.8 per cent, 43 per cent and 33 per cent capacity respectively, but the last two dams are quite small.

We are facing in effect the possibility that we will run out of drinking water in the next 12 months. To put that into context, it is not just about the inconvenience suffered by householders in not having a water supply to their houses; it is also the small businesses and the industry throughout Southern Downs that depend on a town supply to be able to work—the hospitality businesses, the accommodation and, importantly, the big industrial players like meatworks and so forth that need town water in order to process their meat. There are hundreds or perhaps thousands of jobs at stake so it is of great concern to me.

I have written to the Premier and asked her to take on board the concerns felt by me and the Southern Downs Regional Council. I know they have been in contact with the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy asking them for every possible assistance to solve the problem. I have also asked for a briefing on how the government might be able to supplement the water supply for these towns and, if worse comes to worst and we run out, some sort of emergency measures—whether it be sending water up in trains in bladders or some other mechanism. I am hoping that the Premier will respond positively to that.

The drought has impacted us economically already. On the Granite Belt in particular, there is a lot of irrigated, high-value agriculture and the absence of rain means a direct reduction in the output. Last year we only had about half the number of itinerant workers come through town for the summer season, and that has really hurt the main street in terms of a lack of people in town and in the businesses. The irrigators who rely on water are actually having to truck water around the electorate to their farms, which is an extraordinarily expensive thing to do.

I ask that the state government be as flexible and as understanding as possible in handling the applications for state government based drought assistance packages. I get a lot of concerned constituents saying that they feel their applications for emergency water infrastructure grants and so forth appear to be denied on specious grounds. I would ask the minister and his department to please take that on board and offer every support and understanding to my constituents as they deal with this extremely difficult drought.

Early Childhood Education, Puuya Foundation

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.34 pm): Our children are our future and giving them a good start in life is critical for their growth and development. Education is the key to success and it is vital that it starts as early as possible. I particularly want to talk about the Puuya Foundation in the Lockhart River community in Cape York. I have had the pleasure of meeting with Puuya Foundation staff and members a few times now since coming into office, with my most recent visit being just last week with the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Minister Bailey, the ministerial champion for Lockhart River.

Puuya Foundation offers a range of programs in the community for the young to the old, but I cannot tell you enough of the drive and passion they have to invest in the early childhood years. Puuya started in the early 2000s with a group of dedicated individuals employed by the Queensland government. One could say that the Puuya Foundation was born out of the shock of disadvantage this community faced and the potential that it had for community led change. Puuya Foundation offers early childhood programs in the community with a long-term vision and aspiration to achieve positive educational outcomes and close the gap for educational disparity in the community. What is most inspiring is the work they put into providing a safe space for small, non-school-age children to learn, engaging parents in their children's learning as a way to build family capacity and close involvement in their child's education journey.

Puuya Foundation provides a safe haven for the children of Lockhart River to learn, experience and encounter education from a very young age. Children learn from everything they see, do, hear, feel, smell and taste and everyone they interact with—those they talk, play and laugh with. This builds their social confidence, resilience and positive social skills.

Denise Hagan, a pioneer of the Puuya Foundation, still lives in Lockhart River and is very committed to the children and people of this community. I would like to thank Denise, Aunty Dotty and the Puuya Foundation board members and staff for their ongoing commitment to influencing change in this community. I feel extremely proud of the Lockhart River community, a discrete remote Aboriginal community in my electorate which is leading the way to address social disadvantage by investing in our children from a very young age.

Sunshine Coast, Public Transport

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.36 pm): More than 40,000 people have come to live on our beautiful Sunshine Coast in just the last five years. That is about 8,000 extra citizens moving to the coast every year. Yet there are 120,000 fewer people using our bus network on the Sunshine Coast than five years ago. That is 328 fewer people per day, or 2,307 fewer people per week or about 10,000 fewer people per month using our public transport bus network. That means extra congestion and clogging on our roads. There is something terribly wrong when a public transport network has actually seen such a falloff. While there has been some improvement in the last year, that still is a stark contrast to the real increase in the population.

I welcome the news of a joint state and council integrated transport study for the Sunshine Coast to design the best network and modes to carry the coast passengers into the future. However, there is an urgent need to address the failure of our bus network now. The feedback I am receiving is there is real concern about public safety on our public transport, where parents will not let their kids go on the public transport because they worry for them. There is a real problem about costs and a real problem about connection. There is a need for express bus services between our towns, rather than the hours it takes between some of our towns which are not that far away. Is it any surprise then that people get in their cars?

There must be a full audit of the failures and that will therefore give an opportunity to look for the best solutions. I have mentioned some of them based on the feedback I have received from consumers, passengers and those who wish they could use these services. It is time that an overhaul was done. There are fixes that must occur now. The network must progressively grow to meet the needs of our growing community, rather than go backwards in the way that it has in the last five years compared to the population.

The Sunshine Coast railway line duplication is absolutely essential. It was such a disgrace when the Anna Bligh government misled the public after the election in 2009 and put that backwards. There is also a need to question how this government said they had fully funded Cross River Rail in Queensland in their budget yet now they claim they need that \$2 billion to be funded by the federal government and federal Labor if they win. Something does not stack up. It is obvious they did not really fund it and they have mucked up their budget.

Over \$3 billion less per year was spent on infrastructure over the first three-year term of this state Labor government. There is a backlog of construction and maintenance, which is impacting on congestion and those black spots. We need funding for the Mooloolah River interchange as well as assistance for the Brisbane Road upgrade, the Sunshine Motorway and the Bruce Highway.

Macalister Electorate, Junior Sport

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.39 pm): My electorate of Macalister is based around the former regional township of Beenleigh. Many here in the House, particularly those representing outer urban areas, will recognise these types of towns—previous farming and trading pioneer outposts that also became boom areas in the postwar period. Young populations in that area meant schools, roads, civil infrastructure as well as junior sporting clubs flourished.

Two sporting clubs in Beenleigh are central. The Beenleigh Netball Association—the Beenleigh Bees—and the Beenleigh Junior Rugby League Football Club—the Beenleigh Lions. In Queensland—certainly the Queensland that I grew up in—they were the two sports we could play at school. While kids these days have a lot more options, netball and Rugby League are still the predominant junior sports in Macalister. When I was first elected I made it a priority to meet with these two clubs. I was dismayed to find that the club facilities were well below par. Whilst the netball courts themselves are first class and the two footy fields are a credit to the team of volunteers that curate them, the club facilities—the bricks and mortar—are well over 30 years old and many parts of them are no longer serviceable.

My passion for junior sports and, in particular, girls participating in sport is something I proudly wear on my sleeve. While female participation in netball is significant, as honourable members would expect, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Beenleigh Lions, who have one of the largest representation of girls playing footy in South-East Queensland. The club boasts five girls teams competing in various grades and age levels—in total, over 100 registered girls playing footy. The sad reality for these teams is that the facilities are just not up to scratch for the 21st century. Providing adequate change facilities for women and girls is key to increasing female sporting participation. In a society where we face growing health concerns and childhood obesity rates, we must look at every avenue to keep all people active and participating.

These clubs are run by a team of dedicated volunteers and management, the type that dig into their own pockets to pay registration fees for kids whose families are doing it tough. For decades they have focused on access to sport and not fancy clubhouses. I am more than pleased to advocate and fight for funding for these clubs so they can focus on what they do best: providing sporting opportunities for kids.

I was pleased to be joined by our federal Labor candidate for Forde, Des Hardman, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Tanya Plibersek, to announce a federal Labor commitment of \$2.45 million to build a new joint clubhouse for these clubs. The clubhouse will provide players from both clubs with new change rooms and showering facilities, first aid and officials facilities. It will provide administrative and operations facilities, function rooms and clubhouse social space to host events. This represents the biggest investment in these two clubs since their current clubhouses were built in the 1980s.

I would like to thank our federal candidate, Des Hardman, for securing this commitment. I would like to thank the community for getting behind this commitment. I know that when it comes to Saturday, they will be making the right choice for Hammel Park.

Crocodiles

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—Ind) (2.42 pm): Rarely does a week go by in Central, North and Far North Queensland when we do not see or hear a report of a crocodile in our waterways, on our beaches or off our beaches. In fact, it was only yesterday there were reports of another sighting just off a beach that you may be familiar with, Mr Deputy Speaker, Bucasia in the southern part of my electorate and the beautiful northern beaches. Less than 24 hours later—this morning—there were reports of a three-metre monster on Harbour Beach in the city I represent in Mackay—basically the other side of the electoral border. Not surprisingly, this has been reported already in the *Daily Mercury* and other local media. I want to acknowledge Dyllan Kidman, the lifeguard who saw this crocodile, who set the authorities onto the case this morning. What is next? This was near the flags on Harbour Beach. It is a growing menace—a three-metre crocodile—and what do we see from the Palaszczuk Labor government? Diddly-squat!

Not that long ago we saw the Safer Waterways Bill debated in the parliament. It was voted down 83-5. I ask: why do we not see some politicians putting public safety and community safety first? I am not trying to wipe out the species. I have never advocated for a free-for-all. I do not want everyone in North Queensland walking around with handbags. I am not David Attenborough. I am not an expert on crocodiles, but I did sit on that committee and I heard from some of the leading authorities about what needed to be done. As I say, there is a growing menace. I remind people in Central, North and Far North Queensland that when it came to the crunch with that bill the LNP voted with Labor and the Greens, hence, the vote was 83-5.

Mr Kidman reminded the *Daily Mercury* readers today that around Christmas time there was a crocodile at nearby Lamberts Beach. He said—

The croc that time was about 3m as well, and it actually launched out of the water to try and grab someone's dog.

This is going to be a continual problem for the people of North Queensland. It is a worry for our tourism industry. I can tell honourable members now that I do not want to be on the phone to the BBC, CNN or Al Jazeera in damage control trying to mitigate the damage to our tourism industry on the back of a fatal attack. I have said today in the media with great passion, if I may say so, that there will be blood on our beaches if corrective action is not taken. The first job of any government—local government, state government or federal government—is to protect its citizens and our tourists. The TTNQ people who look after tourism in the far north—Tourism Whitsundays and tourism operators—are running scared. They are terrified of something bad happening. It is not a matter of if it will happen but when.

I spoke to Sweet FM in the Burdekin and I reminded them that the local MP also voted against that bill. It is a disgrace. Something needs to be done.

Federal Election

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.45 pm): Today I will speak again on the importance of the election of a Shorten Labor government on 18 May. I would first like to deal with the cuts to Queensland public hospitals. Let us be clear about this. Sadly, the Morrison government is ripping \$160 million from Queensland hospitals while giving a \$65 billion tax handout to big business. Let us see how that will impact on the hospitals on the south side. The QEII Hospital is to be cut by more than \$3 million; the Princess Alexandra Hospital is to be cut by more than \$13 million; the Mater Hospital is to be cut by more than \$4 million; the Mater Mother's Hospital is to be cut by more than \$2 million; and the Queensland Children's Hospital is to be cut by more than \$6 million.

In terms of the Morrison government ripping \$160 million from Queensland public hospitals, let us boil it down to what this means for patients in Queensland. The \$160 million cut is equivalent to 240,000 emergency department visits, 44,000 cataract extractions, 6,150 knee replacements or 26,500 deliveries of newborn Queenslanders. While Morrison is fighting for a tax handout for the top end of town, Labor is fighting for better hospitals.

Under Morrison, our local doctors, nurses and hospital staff are all overstretched and underresourced, but Morrison does not care; he is too busy being a show pony to show any empathy to the sick and vulnerable in the state of Queensland. It is time for Morrison to stop looking after the big business end of town. He needs to do something about the profits that the big health insurers are making and address the needs of ordinary Queenslanders.

I will now deal with education. Labor believes that Australian schools should be the best in the world, and every Australian child deserves the best start in life. Bill Shorten and Labor will fully reverse Mr Morrison's cuts so that every school can be a great school. Labor will invest in the next generation including preschool for three- and four-year-olds so that Australian children get 15 years of world-class schooling. Queenslanders never voted for Scott Morrison to cut \$17 billion from schools, but that is what he did. As treasurer, Scott Morrison was behind the worst of the Turnbull government cuts—the cuts to schools, hospitals and Medicare—so they could take care of the big end of town.

On 18 May when a Labor Shorten government is elected, Labor will ensure that no matter which school a child attends, all children will have the same opportunity.

Condamine Electorate

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.48 pm): Since the middle of September 2018 the Condamine electorate has had three major project announcements that would provide significant employment opportunities and major investment in the local economy. All of these projects will take advantage of Australia's newest and only privately owned airport, the Wellcamp airport constructed by the Wagner family as well as the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing once fully completed.

In mid-September 2018 the FKG Group announced that it had submitted plans to the Toowoomba Regional Council to develop Queensland's first intensive greenhouse project of this size. The project is set to be developed on 64 hectares of land on the western side of Toowoomba, with expected yields up to 15 times the volume of vegetables a broadacre cropping system can produce. In a time when our population is increasing rapidly, this project could lead the way in how our food will be produced in the future. The project will employ almost 500 people and, once fully operational, with 42 hectares of greenhouses built over four stages, FKG will submit plans to the local council for a 150-megawatt solar-gas power plant to power the greenhouse development, with the carbon dioxide in the greenhouse being carbon neutral.

On 27 September 2018, Qantas announced that its first regional pilot training academy would be located at Wellcamp airport. This is a great boost to our area and highlights the confidence that business has in regional Queensland. The Wagner family committed to constructing the training facility, and work on the site has commenced, with completion expected by late 2019. In the construction stage the project is expected to create 100 direct and 300 indirect jobs, with 160 ongoing employment positions once the facility has opened. An investment of approximately \$35 million is envisaged for the project. Aviation students at the University of Southern Queensland can take advantage of this training facility on their doorstep.

The Canadian company Asterion has committed to developing the world's largest medicinal cannabis farm near Toowoomba. The proposed greenhouse facility will be located on 75 hectares of property adjacent to the Wellcamp airport, with projections once this is fully operational of harvesting

approximately 500,000 kilograms of cannabis annually. The project is expected to employ 1,200 full-time permanent staff to manage everything from planting the seed, harvesting and packaging of the final product and everything in between. This means that there will be a huge population boost on the western side of Toowoomba. I once again call on the Minister for Education to look at the proposal for a new high school on the western side of Toowoomba.

Mining Industry

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.51 pm): Mining has been a big part of my family tree for many generations. In fact, my great-grandfather Walter Davidson was one of the original miners in Mount Isa after John Campbell Miles discovered copper ore in the area. I table this photograph of Walter with John Campbell Miles.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting prospector John Campbell Miles and the first staff of Mount Isa Mines Limited in 1924 [\[787\]](#).

Wally, as he was known, was so well regarded that Mount Isa Mines named a mine shaft in his honour, the Davidson Shaft. It does not stop there. My older brother entered the mining industry. Following his work in iron ore and gold mines, he became manager of the Lady Loretta Mine, a zinc-lead mine in the Mount Isa region. I am very proud of my brother and his achievements in that industry. I am told that his peers and fellow workers also held him in high esteem.

On Labour Day last week I had the opportunity to visit Dugald River mine, a zinc-lead mine around 60 kilometres north of Cloncurry. Site manager Sam Rodda had great pride in showing me around the mine and introducing me to several workers at that site. I thank Sam for taking time out of his very busy schedule to assist me as a visitor on his site. During that time, Sam outlined the specific steps the mine takes to protect the environment, specifically to ensure run-off is expertly managed. This was especially essential during the recent monsoon rain event. In fact, many of our conversations were based around environmental protection and management. I have since learned that Dugald River mine is one of the leading mines for effectively managing its local environment in terms of having some of the highest levels of mineral output.

Perhaps one of the best aspects of the mine visit was meeting a past student, Paul Matamua. Paul now towers over me, at around six foot three in the old scale—a little different to when he was sitting opposite me in my office as a mischievous 14-year-old. I am extremely proud of what Paul has achieved. Sam Rodda spoke very highly of him as well. Around 50 per cent of the 500 workers at Dugald River come from Townsville. With Olive Downs coalmine coming into the mix and the Resolute goldmine expansion project, Townsville is well placed to support the 1,400 jobs that will be created in just these two mines.

Over 7,000 mining jobs have been created in the last five years, worth over \$20 billion. I back mining and I back the opening of the Galilee Basin as long as it stacks up environmentally, because it will create future jobs for thousands of people like Paul Matamua.

Crime; Youth Detention

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.54 pm): Here in Queensland under the Palaszczuk Labor government we have a crime and detention crisis. This week we saw the Premier express confidence in her minister, despite a police fail. The budget is down and crime is up. We have a jail fail. Another minister is protesting against this minister to ensure QCS staff are paid correctly. They have been beaten up and cannot properly run the jail, because they are doubled up and it is overcrowded. Of course, going forward this situation will affect recidivism. There is a pay fail for those officers, but a wider law and order and detention fail is occurring. This week we heard of some terrible stories about our watch houses under this Labor administration. Members opposite should be horrified and embarrassed to have stood in this place and passed human rights legislation while breaching just about every section of it in terms of what is occurring half a kilometre or a kilometre down the road.

I really urge the minister and the Premier to take a serious look at that watch house. I am seriously concerned for the welfare of young people accommodated there awaiting charges and/or sentencing. I also am extremely concerned about the police officers serving in that place not only in terms of being assaulted but also in terms of the mental pressure they are under. They are not trained child psychologist specialists and our people in the Queensland Police Service do matter. We need a minister to take responsibility to address, sooner rather than later, what is occurring in that facility.

The fails do not stop there. There is a boots-on-the-ground failure. There was a promise at the last election about police being put out on the beat, but that is not happening at the rate at which it should. Does anybody think: is that not enough? No. Some 1,500 people who marched on the south side of Brisbane were complaining and wanting crime stopped, because enough is enough.

We think that surely that must be the end of the woes in crime and crisis in Queensland and our detention centres but, no, the bikies are back. The minister had strong words about the legislation he introduced to this place, but there were almost no charges. There is a jail fail, a watch house fail, a law and order fail, a pay fail and a crime and detention crisis in this state. The minister needs to take responsibility but, most of all, the Premier needs to take responsibility for the welfare of the officers and of the juveniles in the watch house.

Jobs

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.57 pm): One of the challenges of speaking last is that sometimes one's thunder is stolen. When I was going to talk about jobs created by the Palaszczuk Labor government, I thought that thunder might have been stolen by someone on this side of the House. I am sad to say that the member for Condamine beat me to the punch by delivering a speech about all the jobs created by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Come on over, member for Condamine. The member can be part of a government that has as its No. 1 priority the creation of jobs. We all know that the mercifully short-lived Newman government also had jobs as a priority but that its priority was different—it got rid of jobs and certainly did not create them.

I like to start my days paying careful attention to ministerial statements. I encourage all members of the House to do that, because they will learn many things about how to create jobs. The member for Condamine outlined many of those issues, but when 192,000 jobs were created since our election there is much to talk about. I am sad that today I have only a few minutes to do so.

The Premier and the Minister for State Development outlined our commitment to the resources sector and to projects like the Olive Downs project. Not only are those projects creating jobs thanks to laws passed by the Palaszczuk Labor government but they also create local jobs in local communities. As a proud trade unionist, I always will be proud of that achievement.

The minister for tourism outlined \$10 million spent over 15 outback tourism infrastructure projects, creating jobs in outback Queensland. I thought the 'champions of the bush' would have come in here and recited some poetry about that, but they have been mercifully silent. The reality is that they will leave the hard work of creating jobs to this side of the House.

I turn to the Health portfolio. Recently I went to the Queensland study day for the Australian Rehabilitation Nurses' Association. Even there, as we got a briefing on the STARS program at Herston, they were talking about the jobs we were creating. I turn to the Education portfolio. There are 13 new schools and 2,000 more classrooms than there were four years ago. This is creating more jobs. I have met the people who have benefited from Skilling Queenslanders for Work in my electorate. I refer to the cruise terminal near the electorate of Lytton. This will result in construction phase jobs and ongoing jobs.

There is just so much to speak about. Elvis has entered the building and has brought 900 jobs with him. There is so much happening. I could spend another five, 10, 15 or 20 minutes—even a couple of hours—speaking about the jobs being created by the Palaszczuk Labor government. I committed to the people of my electorate to create jobs. When you create jobs anywhere in Queensland it is good for all Queenslanders.

STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.01 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report No. 29 titled *Consideration of the Auditor-General's report 8: 2018-19—Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits* tabled on 2 May 2019.

Every year we see these types of audit reports. They always make interesting reading. When we spoke on last year's audit of our water entities we were critical—the QAO took note—of the security of Queensland's water entities. At the time I outlined how in the old days, when councils owned water entities, there was fairly easy access. The water reclamation plant, clarification plant or sewage treatment plant was just another council depot down the road. Things were a bit more low key. It was pointed out that if we want real security for these very important pieces of infrastructure we need to make sure that systems are automated, passwords are regularly changed, there is physical restriction of access to computers and there is comprehensive disaster preparedness and documentation.

This audit shows that this Queensland infrastructure is, thankfully, more secure than it was last year. That is a great thing. We have better control systems, better control frameworks for our water entities and better internal financial controls. We have seen a great improvement for our water entities in terms of security of infrastructure. I commend our water entities on that.

We talk a lot about water and energy in this place. I will outline the finances our water entities generate. They have revenue of \$3.3 billion and expenses of \$2.8 billion. They get a lot of money in, but nearly all of it goes out. Last year SunWater held back its dividend because it needs to build some very expensive infrastructure. We know that money goes into maintaining and rebuilding infrastructure. It is not a case of just putting things in place and leaving them there with no more money needing to be spent. Water infrastructure needs to be constantly renewed and built—from replacing pipes and whole pump stations to installing new water storage facilities. I remember from my Caboolture council days that we built a new reverse osmosis reclamation plant at Murrumba Downs. That cost \$44 million 10 years ago. That one piece of infrastructure was very expensive.

There are net assets of \$7.9 billion but total assets of \$23.3 billion. The sector is very highly geared and carries a lot of debt. That is typical in this sector. That is what we want to see and how it survives. We asked whether the debt-to-equity ratios of the water entities meet industry standards, and we were assured that they are quite typical for the industry. Despite having total assets of \$23 billion and revenue of \$3 billion, total profit was only \$346 million. I think that indicates that Queenslanders are getting real value for money out of all of the water systems throughout our state. There is an enormous amount of infrastructure right across our state to make sure water comes out of our taps.

We also asked about the income streams to councils from water entities. What was listed were tax equivalents, which are paid to themselves in lieu of paying the Commonwealth, and participation returns, which is money for owning the entity. Last financial year this was \$166 million. It is quite a substantial amount of money. We know that there is a third tranche of payments going to councils. They receive income for owning those financial instruments that hold the debt for some of this infrastructure. Councils still hold that, even though the infrastructure itself is held by a different entity. For Queensland Urban Utilities and Unitywater there is about \$62 million coming in. That is on top of the \$166 million. I say to councils that it would be great to see more transparency of the income they receive from water entities.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (3.06 pm): I rise to speak to Auditor-General's report No. 8 of 2018-19 titled *Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. The Queensland Audit Office 2017-18 financial audit report shows that dividends paid by state owned water companies to the Queensland government have surged by 490 per cent in just one year, accompanied by a 62 per cent increase in profits after dividend payments since 2016. Let us put that into perspective. This government has profited more than \$347 million from Queensland water customers on the back of recent water price increases. This is clearly a case of this Labor government profiting from water while Queenslanders continue to battle the rising costs of living.

We have already seen South-East Queenslanders slugged with water price increases of between \$50 and \$90 over the next three years. When it comes to rural water, the QCA review into irrigation water prices is looking at going the same way for regional Queensland customers, with early estimates in certain schemes looking at significant price blowouts. Labor's inclusion of dam safety and flood mitigation costs in the referral notice to the QCA will see these costs directly passed on to irrigating farmers through significant water price increases. All of this is happening while SunWater remained the main cash cow for the government, making up 88 per cent of the \$468.8 million in dividends paid to the state's coffers.

All we are seeing from this government is continual water price increases being put back on Queenslanders while profits continue to surge. The LNP firmly believes that our water utilities should not be used like our electricity generators have been, as revenue cash cows. Instead of profiting from surging water prices, the government should be giving back to Queenslanders through lower water costs.

SunWater—and the state government, as its sole owner—must be held to account for the role it has been given to effectively manage water assets. Rural irrigation customers are currently staring down the barrel of significant price increases through the QCA price review. A major factor driving that price increase is SunWater's management of the expenditure that will be passed on to customers. For example, SunWater has seen a 112 per cent blowout in non-routine expenditure across all schemes from the QCA target for 2013 to 2018 totalling \$69,160,000 compared to the actuals/forecast totalling \$146,566,000 for the corresponding period.

SunWater has seen a 59 per cent increase in non-direct costs for irrigation customers from an actual \$11.1 million in 2017 to a forecast \$17.6 million in 2019, representing a \$6.5 million increase in two years. SunWater's operations expenditure relating to irrigation—and this is the one that concerns me—increased from an actual \$39.6 million in 2017 to a forecast of \$47.2 million in 2019, a \$7.6 million increase over two years. Couldn't our irrigators and our farmers do with those costs being passed on to them in the form of savings or reduced water costs? It is our farmers who produce our food and fibre. They are doing it tough. They are battling rising power prices as well. On top of that, they are now paying these exorbitant costs for water for irrigation purposes.

Dam safety costs and high electricity pumping costs, as well as cost blowouts, are the main drivers of the cost increases, a costing that the LNP has called for not to be passed on. This report highlights that there are some serious issues with regard to the management of water in this state. If these continual price rises continue to be passed on in the future, then we are going to get to the stage where we are going to see our dam water storage facilities full and not being utilised to their full extent. That of course means a loss in production and a loss in jobs in Queensland.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.10 pm): I rise to outline the findings of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee's consideration of the Queensland Audit Office's report No. 8 for 2018-19 that was tabled on 2 May 2019. The committee's task was to consider the Auditor-General's findings in relation to its financial audits of the government's main water sector entities, including bulk water suppliers and distributor-retailers, across south-east and regional Queensland. These suppliers and distributors include the Mount Isa Water Board, the Gladstone Area Water Board, Queensland Urban Utilities, Seqwater, SunWater and Unitywater.

I was particularly interested in the Auditor-General's findings in relation to Seqwater, as this authority's head office is based in the great city of Ipswich and its dams include Wivenhoe Dam and Somerset Dam. Seqwater is a Queensland government statutory authority responsible for providing safe, secure and cost-effective bulk drinking water supply for 3.1 million people across South-East Queensland. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate David Hamill, the former state member for Ipswich, on his appointment as chair of the Seqwater Board. The Hon. Dr David Hamill AM is a professional non-executive company director with an extensive track record and board experience. As well as chair of Seqwater, he is a director of Brookfield Business Partners and chairman of Act for Kids. Among his former roles, Dr Hamill was chairman of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, chairman of the Gladstone Airport Corporation, chairman of the board of the Queensland Museum, director of Brookfield Infrastructure Partners and a member of the governing body for the University of Queensland, otherwise known as the Senate.

As the member for Ipswich in the Queensland parliament from 1983 to 2001, Dr Hamill held the portfolios of Treasurer from 1998 to 2001, minister for education from 1995 to 1996, and minister for transport and minister assisting the Premier on economic trade development from 1989 to 1995. He is a Rhodes scholar and Dr Hamill is a graduate of both the University of Queensland and Oxford University, where he obtained a masters in arts. He is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport, a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and in 2009 he became a member of the Order of Australia for his service to parliament, to the community and to business.

As chair of Seqwater, Dr Hamill is overseeing the multimillion-dollar upgrade of the Mount Crosby Water Treatment Plant. The Mount Crosby Water Treatment Plant includes a heritage listed pump station that was built in 1890 and the multimillion dollar refurbishment will secure the site's sustainability for the next hundred years. Recently, project director Michael Saxby gave me a tour of the facility and outlined the works required with the master plan. These works include construction of a new vehicle bridge across the Brisbane River and turning the existing Mount Crosby weir bridge solely for the use of bicycles and pedestrians. The proposed high-level two-lane bridge is wonderful news for the residents of Karana Downs, Lake Manchester and Mount Crosby as it will allow them an alternative Brisbane River crossing to Ipswich when the Colleges Crossing causeway is flooded. In closing, I want to thank my fellow members of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, the committee secretariat and the staff of the Auditor-General's office as well as the government's entities that were examined by the Auditor-General's report.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.15 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the *Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*, report No. 8 for 2018-19, as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. The audit stated that water entities generally had effective year-end close processes, producing timely and high-quality financial reports. The report shows that expenses have remained stable and three of the six entities have profits after

income tax that are greater than prior years. For the third consecutive year, the water sector has maintained operating profits. However, profits after income tax have declined slightly for three of the six water entities driven primarily by Unitywater's one-off tax adjustment. Dividends to the state government have increased in the current year to \$47.8 million compared with \$8.1 million in 2016-17. The increase is mostly due to SunWater declaring dividends in 2017-18 and retaining profits in 2016 for future dam improvement works, and we will believe that when we see it! Due to operating costs, Seqwater continued to make no dividend payments to the state in 2017-18.

Participation returns of water made by the distributor-retailers to their participating local governments amounted to \$166.5 million for 2017-18 compared with \$201 million in 2016-17, down by \$35.3 million. SunWater receives community service obligation payments from the state government. In 2017-18 it received \$9 million in CSO payments, of which \$3.2 million was in recognition of rural water pricing policies and SunWater's underrecovery of costs. Seqwater also received CSO payments from the state government. In 2017-18 Seqwater received \$2.1 million to facilitate the provision of water to rural irrigators. For 2018-19, the state government has budgeted a total of \$10.7 million in CSO payments to SunWater and Seqwater. This amount includes CSO payments for channel irrigation schemes that may be transferred to local ownership as part of the Water (Local Management Arrangements) Amendment Act 2017. Once a scheme transfers to a local management arrangement, there are no further CSOs payable for that scheme.

The current rural irrigation price path for SunWater commenced on 1 June 2012 and currently applies until 30 June 2019. A number of extreme weather conditions and increased costs have occurred since SunWater's current rural irrigation price path commenced. Current cost targets set by the Queensland Competition Authority in the irrigation water price path do not reflect a rise in operating costs—that is, they do not recover the costs of supply—above the consumer price index nor do they reflect any provision for flood repairs. In 2018-19 the Queensland Competition Authority is expected to review SunWater's irrigation price path from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2024 and I know that some rural members affected by that want to speak about that.

Dam improvements are a significant cost to the entities and are funded through retained profits, additional funding, additional borrowings and the current and future water price. At 30 June 2018, SunWater estimated the future cost of its dam improvement program at \$1.3 billion. In 2016-17, the estimate was \$9.02 million. Future projects include Burdekin Falls Dam wall raising and hydro-electric power station, Paradise Dam spillway improvements, and Fairburn Dam spillway improvements. These projects are likely to significantly influence SunWater's financial performance and net flows to the government over the next 10 years.

In the 2016-17 state budget, as part of its debt action plan, the state government announced measures to reduce general government debt, which included arrangements with government owned corporations. Seqwater carries debt of \$2.8 billion associated with our assets along with ongoing maintenance responsibilities. The majority of those loans are held with the Queensland Treasury Corporation and have variable interest rates. The risk of interest rate movements can have a significant impact on interest payments and, therefore, the ability of Seqwater to pay other ongoing operating expenses in the future.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Auditor-General's report titled *Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. In doing so, I would like to thank the committee. I would also like to thank the QAO for its wonderful work. Certainly, over the last little while the committee has been keeping the officers of the Queensland Audit Office busy. It is always fantastic and very illuminating to read through the products of their hard work.

Firstly, I want to touch on the part of the report that most affects my electorate of Mount Ommaney, and that is Seqwater. According to the report, over the past few years Seqwater's profits have been quite stable. In 2016, profits were around the \$214 million mark. In 2017, profits went up to \$386 million. This financial year, profits have stabilised and slightly decreased to \$347 million. That fall is attributed largely to a bit of a drop-off in developer contributions. It was really great that the officers of the Queensland Audit Office were able to explain that reduction so clearly to the committee and the good people here. As the chair of the committee has previously alluded to, that means that we are also seeing a steady reinvestment in assets in Seqwater to make sure that those profits are being returned in infrastructure and assets to the people of Queensland.

We know it is important that we maintain our water assets. I recall a time when dam levels were down to around 10 per cent in South-East Queensland. I recall the campaign that was run on maintaining those water assets and also on water usage. The four-minute shower campaign was so

successful in encouraging people to watch their water usage. Our water bills give people a benchmark so that they can see how their household water consumption compares to the water consumption of other households. I think that is really useful. I know that Queenslanders are a competitive lot. It certainly encourages me to say to my kids, 'This is where we are. We can do better. Let's lift our game for next time.' Seqwater ensures that we are maximising the use of our water asset by making sure that each and every householder is an informed consumer.

I want to touch on an issue of gender equity as it pertains to category 2 water boards, which came up this week in the debate on the NROLA Bill. The QAO report refers to this issue on page 6 under the heading 'Sector overview'. I think it is really important that we have gender equity on boards and that we encourage, wherever humanely possible, gender diversity on those boards. I encourage my good friends on all sides of the House to reconsider their opinions. I know that sometimes it can be tough to attract women to boards, but it is really worth persisting. I encourage all of us wherever possible to reach out and find those talented women and encourage them to come onto boards. I think it is really important that we continue to see improved gender diversity on boards such as category 2 water boards.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.24 pm): My contribution to the consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 8 will be on a number of issues but predominantly about the impact of the cost of water on high-value irrigated agriculture and the continuation of the success of these irrigated schemes. The report talks about profits and revenue. The report acknowledges the huge investment of taxpayers' money in the sustainability of these water assets. My biggest fear is the continuation of cost-reflective pathways for irrigated water to be made available to the regions. A lot of regions rely much on irrigated water, the security of irrigated water but, more importantly, the cost being reflective of what sustainable agriculture looks like.

The Auditor-General's report talks about water assets—the assets held, the cash and the sustainability. It is really important to consider the current price path being proposed for irrigated agriculture. We are talking about a cost for irrigated water that is well above CPI increases. I have to point out that, for my region, raising another \$38 a megalitre, which is a 20 per cent to 40 per cent increase, is just not sustainable. I want to tell members what I have been made aware of over the number of years that I have been lucky enough to be in this place. The cost of water relates to productivity and the sustainability of farming. If we stop using irrigated water on production, particularly in the areas that I live in, productivity decreases. We cannot afford a scenario where we go back to dryland farming, particularly for sugarcane farmers, who have the biggest investment in ensuring that these assets are productive and affordable.

I give a big shout-out to organisations such as BRIG and others that continually make submissions to the Auditor-General and the Queensland Competition Authority on our assets, particularly SunWater in my part of the world, and the long-term prospects of our industries. I have real fears if we continue down this path that has been proposed of cost-reflective tariffs on our assets. I wonder why, with the large profits that are being reported in this current Auditor-General's report, which refers to a \$346 million profit, we need to continually increase water prices so savagely.

It is great that this report refers to opportunities for Paradise Dam. I remind members that, currently, there is an opportunity for safety audits. It concerns me that the Auditor-General did not pick up in this report the potential loss of water once the safety audits are completed on the Paradise Dam and the Burdekin Falls Dam. I know that scenarios have been considered by experts and we are all waiting for the results of that. It is important for my part of the world that Paradise Dam is included in this report. It is also important to note that 100 megalitres is not allocated out of the Paradise Dam. Again, that is another revenue source that could offset costs. That could be given as profits to the government. More importantly, that revenue could be returned to the farmers in that area who are seeing their water prices increase astronomically.

When we see the option of a 40 per cent increase in the price of water, we have to talk about the serious effect that price increase could have. Cost-reflective pricing for water is a no-go. We have to get away from that. The government has to start talking sensibly about what it is going to do to make sure that agriculture continues in all of our productive regions. The government has to get on top of this bad deal that the farmers in my region are getting from SunWater. The cost-reflective prices of these schemes have the potential to wipe out irrigation. If we wipe out irrigation and we start to see industries collapse, what happens to those water assets? These assets are taxpayer owned and taxpayer built. Taxpayers deserve to receive the dividends that come from these assets.

We cannot afford to have stranded assets in our regions. Water is the lifeblood of our agricultural industries. That is why I look forward to seeing further Auditor-General reports, particularly relating to water. We must make sure that those farmers who rely heavily on irrigation do not go back to the days of dryland farming. I conclude by calling on the Labor government to consider not raising these prices arbitrarily on the back of the QCA's recommendations and look at what affordable water could look like for the regions and that the attack on farming families stops.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.29 pm): In 1943 Maslow described his hierarchy of human needs. At its foundation are our physiological needs: air, water, food, shelter and sleep. Once we have air to breathe the next two needs are water and food, but what is really clear is that no matter what food we are going to eat we need water to grow it. Anyone who has grown vegies or farmed knows that you cannot grow anything without water. As I have said in this House before, if our farmers do not have water they cannot grow crops to feed us and they cannot earn income to pay their bills.

I am pleased to speak about the Auditor-General's report No. 8 of 2018-19 titled *Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. As is outlined, this Labor government has profited more than \$347 million from Queensland water customers on the back of recent water price increases. The Queensland Audit Office's 2017-18 financial audit report showed that dividends paid by state owned water companies to the Queensland government have surged by 490 per cent in just one year, accompanied by a 62 per cent increase in profits after dividend payments since 2016. This is clearly a case of the Labor government profiting from water just as it does from electricity while Queenslanders continue to battle the rising costs of living.

Labor's inclusion of dam safety and flood mitigation costs in the referral notice to the Queensland Competition Authority will see these costs directly passed on to our irrigating farmers through significant price increases. This might be okay for irrigation-only schemes but when the dams are a combination of flood mitigation, irrigation and urban storage then it is wrong that the irrigators should be asked to foot the bill.

All we are seeing from this government is water price increases being imposed on Queenslanders while profits continue to rise. The LNP firmly believes that our water utilities should not be used like the electrical generators—as revenue cash cows. Instead of profiting from surging water prices, the government should be giving back to Queenslanders through lower water costs. This will allow farmers to employ more people which would help the 6.1 per cent unemployment rate—the second worst in Australia.

The Queensland Competition Authority rural irrigation water price review is underway and a draft report is due in August with prices coming into effect next year. In Lockyer our irrigators have been made aware of Seqwater rudely suggesting that 95 per cent of their costs should be charged as a fixed price. That is ridiculous, especially when one considers that Lake Dyer is operating at 30 per cent, which is only one year of water in three; Atkinson Dam is at 19 per cent, which is one year of water in five; and Lake Clarendon Dam is operating at 11 per cent, which is one year of water in 10. How can farmers be expected to pay for water when there is no water available?

Queensland irrigation customers are facing more significant price increases across several schemes due to the move to make the water price cost reflective. What is cost reflective? This is a very interesting concept. In Lockyer it will mean that we will be paying an extra \$38 a megalitre. It also means that we will be paying an extra \$50 a megalitre in the Central Lockyer and Morton Vale schemes. That term 'cost reflective' is really concerning when we see the CEO of SunWater received a \$92,000 increase in salary. These corporate costs should not be being passed on to irrigation customers. This is just ridiculous, especially when one considers the locations of their businesses and the additional costs in real estate that they are paying. Our farmers who are struggling are being asked to pay these bills.

The message that we are hearing from our local farmers is that the cost of water and electricity is too high and needs to be reduced. Without water in our community of Lockyer we will lose production and that will lead to fewer jobs and more expensive food for everyone in South-East Queensland. It is time that the Labor government stepped in and guaranteed the future of irrigated agriculture and I call on the minister to assist us.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.34 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Auditor-General's report No. 8 of 2018-19 titled *Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. The Auditor-General's report summarises the financial audit results of six water entities: Seqwater, SunWater, Gladstone Area Water

Board, Mount Isa Water Board, Queensland Urban Utilities and Unitywater. Within South-East Queensland Seqwater sells treated bulk water to 12 local council regions, either through the distributor-retailers Unitywater and Queensland Urban Utilities or directly to councils, for example, Gold Coast City Council and Logan City Council, which operate their own retail operations.

Seqwater also provides bulk water directly to large corporations and irrigators. The distributor-retailers, or councils that operate their own, then onsell the water to households and businesses. Bulk water prices are set by the state government with an oversight by the Queensland Competition Authority. Notwithstanding some of the taxation treatments adopted by Seqwater, it is no surprise that the water sector has still maintained its operating profits and made a significant contribution to state government coffers through dividend payments.

The 2017-18 financial report of the Queensland Audit Office showed that the dividends paid by state owned water companies to the Queensland government have surged by 490 per cent in just one year, accompanied by a 62 per cent increase in profits after dividend payments since 2016. This Labor government has profited more than \$347 million from Queensland water consumers on the back of recent water price increases.

Labor established the bulk water price path to reach a common price across councils. As part of this process it means that many residents are likely to see further price increases for households and businesses. The state government has accepted the QCA's second recommendation which proposed smoothed pricing for all council areas, including Redland City, Sunshine Coast and Noosa, setting the bulk water prices until 2021. Mums and dads in Redland City, Sunshine Coast and Noosa can expect further increases in the price of their household water. This option increases prices on a linear path for each council between 2017-18 and 2020-21. That means that the price to your household, the price to your business, is on the way up, up and up.

Just like energy supply, household water is an essential service. Consumers always need water. This is a captured audience and unfortunately one that represents a soft target to extract higher prices. I am disappointed with what we see from the Labor government opposite as detailed in this audit report. This is *deja vu* of electricity prices. Just like the electricity dividends that the Queensland Labor government is so intent on harvesting, so too will it harvest the dividends from consumers' water. This is yet another impost on consumers to prop up the member for South Brisbane's hopeless financial management of the state budget.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Minister and government members, if you wish to speak to this there is plenty of room on the speaking list.

Ms LEAHY: Meanwhile, mums and dads and businesses are paying through the nose for the essential service of household water. This is clearly a case of the Labor government profiting from water when Queenslanders continue to battle the rising cost of living. It is clear that the Palaszczuk Labor government does not care about the battlers; it just keeps slugging them with increased electricity prices and higher water prices. We have already seen South-East Queenslanders slugged with a water price increase between \$50 and \$90 over the next three years for their water. This is not acceptable. This audit report exposes this government's appalling and atrocious water price increases that in turn place even more pressure on mums and dads and their cost of living.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (3.39 pm): I rise to speak on the Auditor-General's 2017-18 water report. As I listened to the contributions of members on my side and members on the other side, I noted the stark difference in understanding about the value of irrigated agriculture. I doubt whether anybody seated to my left has visited a property that relies on irrigated agriculture. Judging from their contributions, I think that is backed up. What we are seeing, which does not surprise us much, is this Labor government persistently using state owned instrumentality as a cash cow or a secret tax so it can waste money on other things.

I will point something out to the government: irrigated agriculture is vital to our economy. If you allow it to function with reasonably priced water, it will flourish, grow and employ people who pay taxes and employ other people. It makes the economy tick along nicely. We are seeing a sustained attack on the cost base of irrigators in my electorate and the electorates of my good friends the member for Lockyer, the member for Scenic Rim and the member for Warrego. We understand that water is money. Water is jobs. Water is economic security.

This government is extracting a rapacious take from SunWater. According to the report, dividends have risen by an astonishing 490 per cent in one year. That sort of tax take might be hidden from your everyday Queenslanders, but it is hurting them nonetheless. We have very efficient world-class irrigated agriculture in the electorates I have just mentioned and elsewhere in Queensland. We need to have reasonably priced water. We cannot afford to have arbitrary price increases that impact producers' bottom lines and hurt the economy. We see that Labor included the dam safety and flood mitigation costs in their referral notice to the Queensland Competition Authority. That too will see significant price rises for farmers.

I have looked through the statistics and I note that the Macintyre Brook irrigation system will be facing a 34 per cent price increase, based on the Queensland Farmers' Federation's analysis of this report. Currently rural irrigation customers are staring down the barrel of significant price increases through the QCA review. A major factor driving those price increases is SunWater's mismanagement. If there was a 34 per cent increase in the price of water, perhaps it would be easier to swallow if it were not for the fact that it was being necessitated, apart from the tax gathering of the state government, by SunWater's mismanagement. SunWater had a 112 per cent blowout in nonroutine expenditure across all schemes from the QCA target for 2013 to 2018, totalling \$69 million compared to the actuals forecast totalling \$146,566 for the corresponding period. That is just one example.

I heard the carping from the member for Mount Ommaney, urging us all to embrace the government's reforms regarding the composition of boards for class 2 water authorities. I think the people in Labor have no idea what a class 2 water authority is. Those boards meet at the kitchen tables in people's houses. They are unpaid positions. The members of a board work together to provide administration for the supply of water in their area to the ratepayers who require that water. This is not just a question of composition in terms of gender. Those boards are lucky to attract anyone at all, be they male, female or non-binary. The members of those boards work very hard. They are unpaid. They get up in the middle of the night to roll up their trouser legs and clear ditches. They replace pipes and turn on valves. Those are the responsibilities of a director on a class 2 water authority. They have come to me aghast at the way that they have been treated by this government.

Gender equity on boards is a noble and very defensible goal and I have no problem with it. However, those who pay the social security bill in this country are being subjected to ludicrous political correctness. As I said, you cannot get enough people on the boards no matter how hard you try, because those board positions are unpaid, they require hard work and they are not prestigious. It is not as if it is a position on the board of a cultural centre trust or Queensland Rail. I think this is another example of how little this Labor government understands water.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.44 pm): I rise to speak briefly to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee's report titled *Consideration of the Auditor-General's report 8: 2018-19—Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. The committee looked at the Auditor-General's findings regarding main water sector entities, including bulk water suppliers and distributor-retailers across south-east and regional Queensland. The issues raised at the committee's public hearing included the participation returns for local governments from the water entities, the significant increases in costings for dam improvement programs, dividends paid by SunWater, the utilisation of assets held by water entities and developer contributions to water entities in the form of cash or donated assets.

Affordable water used wisely and sustainably is essential to agricultural production. Common sense dictates that we need good planning from government for future requirements. Instead, we see a government dragging the chain to build new water infrastructure. At the same time, the government has profited from more than \$347 million from Queensland water customers on the back of water price increases.

According to the Audit Office's 2017-18 financial audit report, dividends from state owned water companies to the government have surged by 490 per cent in just one year. I repeat: in just one year, they have increased by 490 per cent. That is accompanied by a 62 per cent increase in profits after dividend payments since 2016. There is only one conclusion: this government is riding on the back of profits from water price increases while Queenslanders are struggling with the cost of living. The report noted that—

At the public hearing, QAO advised that returns to the state government increased to \$47.8 million in 2017-18 from \$8 million in the previous year.

Over the next three years, South-East Queenslanders will be slugged with price increases of between \$50 and \$90 for their water. It looks like the same will happen to regional customers, with early estimates looking at significant blowouts. The inclusion of dam safety and flood mitigation costs will mean that those costs will be passed directly onto irrigating farmers through significant price increases. In the Gympie region, Cedar Pocket will need to experience a \$340 per megalitre water price increase to reach what they call 'cost reflectivity'. The Pie Creek distribution scheme is also facing significant fixed cost increases. More than 100 years of price increases is unacceptable. Responsibility for this issue rests with the state government and it needs to step up and solve it. As I said earlier, we need good planning for water requirements.

The government will hand down a new price path from July next year. Currently, the Queensland Competition Authority is reviewing irrigation water prices, with a draft report due in August. In a response about the utilisation of assets, the Queensland Audit Office sector director for water infrastructure, Vaughan Stemmett, told the committee it would be—

... included in the current pricing forecast which has come out through the QCA. Their next determination occurs 1 July 2021.

Unfortunately, it looks like it will provide little satisfaction for farmers.

The committee was interested in why SunWater paid \$39.7 million in dividends this year when it did not declare any last year. The QAO advised that 'last year SunWater was directed to hold back dividends ... whereas this year they were instructed to pay dividends'. It is clear that farmers are getting a bad deal from SunWater. We all know water is the lifeblood of our agricultural industries. Without it, communities that rely on agricultural production will lose products, meaning fewer jobs and more expensive food and fibre for all Queenslanders. The government has to put on hold water price increases.

Even though price increases are capped at \$2.38 per megalitre per year, by factoring in inflation increases are closer to \$2.90 per megalitre. Based on those prices, the reassessment of cost reflectivity every two years means that irrigation customers in the Lower Mary River are staring down the barrel of at least 15 years of consecutive water price increases. Under cost-reflective prices, the Lower Mary River will be hit with a \$44.81 per megalitre increase.

Water price increases have a flow-on effect to the whole of our community. Our residents and businesses that struggle under cost-of-living increases can least afford it. Water utilities should not be used, like our electricity generators, as revenue cash cows.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Transfer of Responsibilities, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Report

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.49 pm): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing orders 136(3) and 136(4), that the committee responsible for reporting on the Medicines and Poisons Bill be varied from the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee and that the committee report by 11 July 2019; and that the committee responsibility for reporting on the Therapeutic Goods Bill be varied from the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee and that the committee report by 11 July 2019.

The committee has resolved pursuant to standing order 194B that the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 17 of 2018-19 titled *Managing consumer food safety in Queensland* be referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee; and the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 18 of 2018-19 titled *Local government: 2017-18 results of financial audits* be referred to the Economics and Governance Committee; and the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 19 of 2018-19 titled *Education: 2017-18 results of financial audits* be referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee.

MOTION

Amendments to Sessional Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.50 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the amendments to the sessional orders circulated in my name be agreed to.

After Sessional Order 1.

Insert—

“Budget Week—Days and Hours of Sitting and Order of Business

1A. The days, hours of sitting and order of business for budget sitting weeks (as identified in the sitting calendar) are as follows:

Tuesday

*9.30am—10.15am—Preliminary Business **

Prayers

Messages from the Governor

Matters concerning privilege

Speaker's Statements

Appointments

Petitions

Citizen's Right of Reply

Notification and tabling of papers by the Clerk

Ministerial Papers

Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.15am—11.15am—

Question Time

11.15am—1.00pm—

Government Business

1.00pm—2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm—until adjournment moved

Government Business

** (If completed before 10.15am, Question Time will commence earlier and continue for 1 hour with starting times for all other items, except lunch breaks, in the Order of Business adjusting accordingly.)*

Wednesday

*9.30am—10.15am—Preliminary Business **

Prayers

Messages from the Governor

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Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

Notice of motion for debate during Private Members' Motion (5.00pm—6.00pm) (Notice may be stated in the House and delivered to the Clerk)

10.15am—11.15am—

Question Time

11.15am—11.35am—

Business Program Motion (in accordance with Sessional Order 2B)

11.35am—12.00pm—

Introduction of Private Members' Bills #

12.00pm—2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm—3.00pm—

Private Members' Statements (Total time 60 minutes, 20 members x 3 minutes each)

3.00pm—5.00pm

Government Business

5.00pm—6.00pm—

Private Members' Motion (motion for which notice was given immediately prior to 10.15am to take precedence)

6.00pm—7.00pm

Government Business

7.00pm—7.30pm—

Automatic Adjournment

* (If completed before 10.15am, Question Time will commence earlier and continue for 1 hour with starting times for all other items, except lunch breaks, in the Order of Business adjusting accordingly.)

(If there are no *Private Members' Bills* to introduce, or any introduction to complete, the next item of business to commence with starting times for all other items, except lunch breaks, in the Order of Business adjusted accordingly.)

Thursday

9.30am—10.15am—*Preliminary Business* *

Prayers

Messages from the Governor

Matters concerning privilege

Speaker's Statements

Appointments

Petitions

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11.15am—1.00pm—

Government Business

1.00pm—2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm—6.30pm

Government Business

6.30pm—7.30pm—

Dinner break

7:30pm—*until adjournment moved*

Government Business

* (If completed before 10.15am, Question Time will commence earlier and continue for 1 hour with starting times for all other items, except lunch breaks, in the Order of Business adjusting accordingly.)

Friday*From 9.30am—10.00am—*

Prayers

Messages from the Governor

Matters concerning privilege

Speaker's Statements

Appointments

Petitions

Citizen's Right of Reply

Notification and tabling of papers by the Clerk

Ministerial Papers

Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.00am—10.30am—

Question Time

10.30am—1.00pm—

Government Business

1.00pm—2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm—6.30pm—

Government Business

6.30pm—7.30pm—

Dinner break

7:30pm—until adjournment moved

Government Business"

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEES**Estimates Hearings****Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.51 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, in accordance with standing order 177(5), the dates for each portfolio committee's estimates hearing and the dates by which each committee is to report to the House as set out in the order circulated in my name be agreed to.

2019 ESTIMATES COMMITTEES—ORDER SETTING DATES FOR HEARING AND REPORTING

(1) The dates for each portfolio committee's hearings and report dates are as follows—

Portfolio Committee	Speaker	Date of hearing	Date of Report
Economics and Governance Committee	Speaker	Tuesday 23 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019
Portfolio Committee	Ministers	Date of hearings	Date of Report
Economics and Governance Committee	Premier and Minister for Trade Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Tuesday 23 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019

Portfolio Committee	Ministers	Date of hearings	Date of Report
State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee	Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries	Wednesday 24 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019
Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee	Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence	Thursday 25 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee	Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services Minister for Fire and Emergency Services	Friday 26 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019
Transport and Public Works Committee	Minister for Transport and Main Roads Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport	Tuesday 30 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019
Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee	Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts	Wednesday 31 July 2019	Friday 16 August 2019
Education, Employment and Small Business Committee	Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development	Thursday 1 August 2019	Friday 16 August 2019

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN (RISK MANAGEMENT AND SCREENING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1740, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.51 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for communities, disability services and seniors and shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I have previously spoken in this place on the absolute importance of protecting Queensland's youngest and our most vulnerable from a range of physical, sexual and psychological harms. Recently when addressing the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Bill 2018 I said that any abuse, especially the sexual abuse of a child, is an unthinkable, horrific crime. It is a crime perpetrated on the most vulnerable in our society at a time when they must rely on the trust and support of those around them to help guide and nurture them through life. It is quite simply a fundamental breach of trust.

In Queensland, a key pillar of the state sanctioned system of trust, a safety net afforded to parents and carers of children—indeed, providing some semblance with respect to peace of mind—is our blue card system. Sadly and tragically, in more recent times we have had cases and examples where our blue card system has not been as strong as it could and should be here in Queensland.

Let me be clear: the blue card system is not infallible, but it is surely incumbent upon all of us in this House as legislator to ensure that our blue card system is as strong and robust as it can be and that we make sure that it keeps up with community expectations. To deliver an enhanced blue card system and meet the community's expectations, significant and important changes are required.

This is not a new revelation. In fact, it has been well known for a significant amount of time and yet it is only now, in the middle of May 2019, that these changes have finally been put before the Queensland parliament. Quite simply, the process by which the Palaszczuk Labor government has sought to implement these changes is nothing short of an absolutely indictment.

As we know, following the tragic death of Tiahleigh Palmer, an innocent child in foster care, a comprehensive review of both the blue card and foster care systems was carried out by the Queensland Family and Child Commission, following a request made by the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on behalf of the Premier. This comprehensive review was spearheaded by principal commissioner Cheryl Vardon. I take this opportunity to thank Commissioner Vardon and her expert panel and review team for their thorough, professional review and contribution to ensuring a strengthened blue card system here in Queensland.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission review noted that Queensland's blue card system has always been one of the strongest in the country. In fact, we can be proud that the overall strength of our system has been viewed favourably by other jurisdictions around the world—so much so that Queensland's blue card system has served as the model by which other jurisdictions have sought to build and strengthen their own worker screening processes.

Nevertheless, and as the Queensland Family and Child Commission found, while our blue card system has served as a strong foundation for creating safe environments for children, there is scope to make it stronger and more efficient. In its review of the blue card system report, which was handed to the Labor government in 2017, the Queensland Family and Child Commission ultimately made some 81 recommendations in order to introduce significant changes to the blue card system. On these recommendations, the Queensland Family and Child Commission said—

The recommendations are intended to strengthen and streamline the blue card system. They will also build capacity of and support for organisations and people involved in it. Ultimately Queensland's children will be safer doing activities that help them grow, learn and develop.

That was in July 2017. We are almost two years to the day since these important and vital recommendations were handed down and yet it is only now that they are here before the Queensland parliament.

A senior Liberal National Party official in the western suburbs Paul McMonagle says—

The lazy Socialist Palaszczuk Labor Government should always be condemned for its delayed and inadequate legislative agenda as well as its lack of adequate resourcing in child safety and failed infrastructure spending, particularly in the western suburbs of Brisbane.

Why the significant delay on this legislation? Let us not forget that it was in fact this Labor government's own election commitment in 2017 to introduce the no-card no-start policy so that no person can start paid employment without an appropriately approved blue card. This is another key policy, another key election commitment that the Palaszczuk Labor government made to the people of Queensland, which they only then put on the backburner.

Sadly, when this Labor government finally decided to do something about strengthening our blue card system some six weeks ago we saw the embarrassing scenes here in the Queensland parliament where the Labor government chose to instead delay this important debate. Why was that? It was because we on this side of the House—the members of the Liberal National Party—made it clear that we intended to bring forth a number of sensible and critical amendments to make sure that the Labor government got changes to the blue card laws right and that they were in the interests of the public of Queensland. We owed that to Queenslanders, especially our youngest and most vulnerable Queenslanders. We owed it to them to make sure that we held this lazy Palaszczuk Labor government to account and to ensure that the changes made to our blue card laws were as robust and efficient as possible.

That is why we flagged our intent to introduce amendments that would strengthen the blue card system where the Palaszczuk Labor government would not by: firstly, expanding the range of disqualifying offences and preventing offenders convicted of disqualifying offences from ever obtaining a blue card; secondly, removing the eligibility declaration to prevent all disqualified persons from ever being eligible to apply for and hold a blue card, in line with the Queensland Family and Child Commission's recommendations; thirdly, preventing offenders charged or convicted with a serious offence from working with children; and, fourthly, compelling applicants to disclose international criminal histories, in line with recommendations of the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

With reference to the legislation that is finally before the Queensland parliament now and with reference to the contribution made by my colleague the Liberal National Party shadow Attorney-General, the member for Toowoomba South, David Janetzki MP, the Liberal National Party supports the bill, but we will be moving a number of amendments to strengthen the legislation. I note that the policy objectives of the bill are to: firstly, give effect to the government's election commitment to amend the Working With Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and introduce an automated blue card application process to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending—the no-card no-start election commitment; and, secondly, implement recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission's report *Keeping Queensland children more than safe: review of the blue card system* and *Recommendation 28 supplementary review: a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services*.

As the Liberal National Party's shadow Attorney-General perfectly articulated, the Liberal National Party in Queensland has a strong and proud history, particularly over the last 10 years, of supporting whilst in opposition and delivering when in government positive reforms that have always sought to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of Queensland's most vulnerable. Our consistent advocacy for a stronger blue card system, our support of this bill and the government's amendments only build on that history.

After an inexcusably long delay, I am pleased that we are finally seeing such important reforms to our blue card system. Yet the Labor government's bill and its delayed amendments are far short and still do not meet the expectation of all Queenslanders.

As Queensland contends with more Labor failures and crises—the unbelievable and outrageous crisis in our youth detention system, a child safety system that has been in crisis and a health minister more concerned with renaming the Lady Cilento hospital than delivering for the young patients contained within—Queenslanders have rightly lost faith that this Labor government can deliver for our youngest and most vulnerable. The Labor government and its Premier are taking no responsibility for the human rights crisis in our watch houses. Today in question time and also following question time we have seen ministers not take one skerrick of accountability or responsibility for that disaster that is looming in our watch houses.

Queenslanders have seen this all before. Queenslanders remember former Labor premier Peter Beattie calling a snap election in 2004 following the failure of his then minister Anna Bligh and the Queensland department of families with respect to serious abuse of children in foster care. What does Labor always do? They promote a failed minister to become premier, as they did with Anna Bligh and now with Anastacia Palaszczuk. Queenslanders have also seen Labor's failure in health under Beattie and former health minister Wendy Edmond and now under the current Minister for Health as well.

In returning to the long title of the bill—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Moggill has the call. There is far too much chatter in the chamber. Just before you finish, member for Moggill, 'lazy government' has been termed unparliamentary before. I ask you to withdraw.

Dr ROWAN: I withdraw that term. It is only the Liberal National Party that will always put the interests of Queensland children first and foremost. We will always deliver for safe communities. Whilst this bill is positive, there are certainly more amendments needed and it could go further than it does. The Liberal National Party will always stand up for our most vulnerable here in Queensland.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.01 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I think we would all agree that one of the most fundamental beliefs that is held by our community, and by

everyone in this House for sure, is that we have a responsibility to protect our children. The community has absolutely no tolerance for those who inflict harm on the most vulnerable people in our state—and that is our children.

Unfortunately, it is the staff of my department who are probably confronted with the worst of those offences, the worst of the terrible things that people do to their children. I want to acknowledge the work that they do and the way they put themselves on the line every day to protect our kids. I am sure that there are some things that they can never erase from their hearts, and I want to thank them for the wonderful work that they do.

The Palaszczuk government has a strong record of commitment to child focused outcomes. We give the highest priority to the protection of children and young people. We want to make sure that our children and young people have every opportunity to thrive. Our investment in the child safety system demonstrates that quite clearly, and I want to talk about that a little later on. Our response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse demonstrates it. Our blue card system demonstrates it. This system is the most robust of its kind in Australia and is recognised as such right across this country. The amendments that we are proposing demonstrate that commitment.

However, despite that stringency, we need to continue to monitor all of the systems that we have in place to make sure that we are leaving no stone unturned. Certainly in my department we have had to do a lot of soul searching. We have had to examine our own internal systems and look to the independent reviews of our systems to make sure that we are doing the best that we can possibly do. That has been a huge body of work for us over the last few years. I am pleased to say that we are progressing with the implementation of those review outcomes. We need to make sure that the regulatory environment in which we operate is the best possible environment. The regulation of blue cards must be based on the unalterable principle that the safety of children is paramount.

We are implementing our no-card no-start election commitment. With these amendments we are expanding the list of disqualifying offences under the blue card system. Disqualifying offences will now include choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting. I feel particularly strongly about this. This is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month and we know what non-lethal strangulation in that setting means—that a victim is seven times more likely to be killed in a domestic homicide. That is why strangulation of both a child and an adult is a disqualifying offence.

Other disqualifying offences include: servitude offences if the victim is a child and provide that they are a serious offence if the victim is an adult; bestiality; kidnapping of a child outside a familial context; kidnapping for ransom of a child outside a familial context; child stealing outside a familial context; abduction of a child under 16 outside a familial context; torture of a child; attempt to commit rape of an adult; assault with intent to commit rape of an adult; cruelty to children under 16; trafficking in children; and domestic trafficking in children.

Unlawful homicide and rape are currently disqualifying offences if they are committed against a child, although I think a number of members on the opposite side of the House do not realise that. The bill will make them disqualifying offences irrespective of the age of the victim.

The government is opposing the opposition amendments that seek to make sexual assault of an adult, torture of an adult and incest of an adult disqualifying offences. Rather, the government will maintain the status quo of these offences as serious, recognising the range of offending behaviour captured by these offences and consistent with ongoing national work. The government will oppose the opposition's amendments which propose the removal of the familial qualifier to the kidnapping, abduction and child-stealing offences, consistent with the recommendation of the Queensland Family and Child Commission in its review of the blue card system and ongoing national work. I know that the Attorney-General is going to speak in detail about the government's position.

I do want to refer to some of the comments that have been made by members opposite. I have to say that I have been a little bit shocked, although I should not be, by the number of members who do not seem to have read the bill, the explanatory notes and/or the committee report because they seem to be in high dudgeon about a number of things that are simply not true. I guess we should be used to that. I was most interested in the comments made by the member for Mudgeeraba yesterday and by the member for Nanango. We had the member for Mudgeeraba yesterday referring to no-card no-start, saying that this gaping hole should have been closed years ago and that the Queensland blue card system has been a laughing stock.

Both members disgracefully used the tragic death of Tiahleigh Palmer to make their political grandstanding. The member for Nanango said that she was appalled at the number of people under the government's watch who applied for a blue card and were working with children who were later to

be found with disqualifying offences. Why has it taken so long to close the loophole? These amendments should have been at the top of the government's agenda. This is the system that is lauded across Australia for its robustness. What neither of them talked about was the fact that under their government 48 people were allowed to work with children while their applications were processed and later were discovered to have been convicted or charged with a disqualifying offence.

Ms Pease: An inconvenient truth.

Ms FARMER: Yes. I take that interjection. It was a very inconvenient lapse of memory. The changes that they made to the blue card system under the Newman LNP were literally just to reflect changes in the Commonwealth legislation. Most of those amendments related to offences committed outside of Australia. They closed not one of the loopholes that the member for Mudgeeraba said should have been closed years ago.

Mr Deputy Speaker, worst of all, when they talk about what did or did not happen under the blue card system, let me tell you who was granted a blue card under the LNP government. It was Rick Thorburn. They are trying to make mileage out of that terrible and tragic death of Tiahleigh Palmer. Let me tell you that they have some lessons that they need to learn. How dare they make a case out of that when in fact they were so lax in their treatment.

What is perhaps even worse is what they did to totally emasculate the child safety system in this state. They ripped \$200 million out of the child safety system and they cut 225 child safety staff when they were in government. They cut from health, education, housing and nearly every single sector of government—the very support systems that ensure those families which are at risk can actually look after their children. The LNP are relentlessly negative about our child safety staff. They cut more than \$241,000 from Foster Care Queensland—who even does that—and they complained when we wanted to run a campaign to recruit more foster carers.

What is required in child safety to protect our system is long-term investment. That is why the Labor government has invested over \$550 million in the system and added more than 480 child safety staff. We are starting to see the results. What could have happened if we did not have to make up for all of those staff being cut and all of that money being taken from that system? We could have helped even more children. Despite the fact that our intakes are up more than 10 per cent compared to this time last year, we are now at the lowest case load for nine years. In terms of responding to the most urgent cases within a 24-hour period, I can say that 92.5 per cent had their investigation commenced within the time frame, which is up almost 11 per cent since June 2010. This is what happens when a government invests in child safety in terms of both a regulatory point of view and the people who are working their hardest to make sure our children are safe. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (4.11 pm): Having worked in Police Citizens Youth Clubs for the last 17 years prior to my election, I have had a lot of experience with the blue card system—engaging employees and volunteers to work with children and managing our responsibilities around the protection and safety of the hundreds of children in our care. The frustrations I found with the system are echoed in some of the submissions by other stakeholders to this committee, particularly in the time lines for the return of notices.

The no-card no-start policy came into effect for volunteers some time ago. A typical scenario we faced at PCYC was that a keen volunteer would want to come and help out at PCYC so they would have to submit the necessary forms and then the long wait would begin. Sometimes it was months before we could allow that volunteer to start with us. I recall early on that the system was the only remaining use for our old fax machine at the PCYC. We would pull it out of the cupboard because the department concerned at the time would only take faxes and not even emails. Our young staff had never seen a fax machine before, but out it came from the cupboard because that was the technology they were using to run the blue card system.

We see daily in this House the poor management of various departments by the various ministers in this government. One can only hope that, if these new amendments pass the House, the resources and necessary policies and procedures will be made available to ensure timely processing of the blue cards—especially now with the no-card no-start being extended to paid employees, which we support.

Whilst we support the no-card no-start policy for paid employees, if we experience the previous wait times, this will impact heavily on service providers. Usually when you advertise for a paid position, it is necessary to fill that position in a timely manner. For example, at the PCYC, you could have a paid gymnastics coach position that needed to be filled urgently because the staff member had left and there

were children who wanted to keep up their training without having to pause classes. In that case, you sometimes need to fill that position within a very short window of time. Thankfully, many experienced workers with children already have a blue card, but that is not always the case. I encourage the minister responsible to ensure that the system is improved and timely for the service providers and employees who will have to navigate it.

I believe that the no-card no-start policy for paid employees was initially not part of the blue card system when it first started with those timeliness concerns in mind. We rightly recognise in this House that the safety of our children does outweigh those delay concerns and it is too important to be lax about this. However, it is 2019 and we should be able to have both. We should be able to deliver a system that gives very timely notices and blue cards, and I hope the minister has plans to make significant improvements in this regard. I note that in the Queensland Family and Child Commission blue card and foster care systems review report they recommended—

The current (largely paper-based) application process needs to be updated. This should reduce the time, cost and inconvenience it currently imposes on the people and organisations that use it.

Opportunities to streamline the blue card system include:

- developing an online system with appropriate proof of identity arrangements to improve efficiency
- developing an organisation portal to help regulated organisations meet their obligations electronically
- automating risk assessment, file management and information-sharing processes.

These will require up-front investment.

That outlines what I have been saying. It is 2019. Hopefully, we are not on faxes and having to wait months for these to come through. Hopefully, the necessary investments will be made so that organisations can have their employees processed and starting employment in a timely manner.

The protection of our children is paramount. We saw in the royal commission into institutional child abuse recently, and certainly I saw it in my time as a police officer, how predators attempt to gain access to our children. These predators look for opportunities to put themselves in positions of care and trust with children, and we need to be vigilant so that those who have shown through their previous offending that they pose a risk to our children are excluded from those opportunities. The blue card system is just one important way we can do that, but obviously service providers must also have additional risk management strategies around the safety of children. The Queensland Family and Child Commission agreed, stating in their report—

Queensland needs to restructure its laws, policies and resourcing to change the way we think about children's safety. We rely too much on working with children checks. The best way to keep children safe is to focus on education to make sure Queensland has child safe organisations in conjunction with the best blue card system. This is where we need to direct our attention.

It is important that the exclusion of people working with children includes every appropriate offence. Certainly, the Labor bill initially dropped the ball in that regard, and the amendments proposed by the LNP seem to have spurred some action to plug these gaps but as always we are happy to help. The expanded offences in the bill should certainly include the following: manslaughter, if the offence was committed against a child and was not a result of a motor vehicle accident, which is section 300 of the Criminal Code; torture, which is section 320A of the Criminal Code; cruelty to children under 16, which is section 364 of the Criminal Code; choking, suffocating or strangulation in a domestic setting, which is section 315A of the Criminal Code; incest of an adult, which is section 222 of the Criminal Code; attempt to commit rape of an adult, which is section 350 of the Criminal Code; assault with attempt to commit rape of an adult, which is section 351 of the Criminal Code; and sexual assault of an adult, which is section 352 of the Criminal Code. These are some of the offences that were neglected in the first bill put to us, but as I said we are happy to help.

Other Australian jurisdictions such as New South Wales include these offences as disqualifying offences. When we read through some of these offences it beggars belief why they were not included in the original bill. As I said, we are happy to help.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission report also rightly noted that—

The blue card system is currently too focused on the actual "blue card" or WWCC. It is only one tool in the broader system for keeping children safe. ...

WWCCs cannot predict whether people will offend against children in the future. They do not guarantee that children will be safe from harm when interacting with people who hold blue cards. In fact, over-reliance on the WWCC may create risks for children, as parents and carers may assume their children are safe when left with people holding blue cards.

This is certainly the case, as we have outlined.

The safety of our children is paramount and we must do everything we can to ensure the safety of all children in Queensland by having robust and efficient systems. If this bill is passed by the parliament, it will be up to the government to ensure that the system is capable of delivering what it needs to in a timely and efficient manner. Given the government's track record, this is a major concern moving forward.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (4.20 pm): I rise to speak on the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Obviously, as other members in this House have said before me, ensuring the safety of Queensland children is the Palaszczuk government's highest priority. This is why we made a commitment during the 2017 election campaign to implement the no-card no-start policy—the first state government to do so. It is a pleasure to once again speak to another piece of legislation that gives effect to another election commitment. There is one thing that the people of Queensland can be sure of and that is that this government will continue to deliver on its promises.

The bill will introduce automated blue card application processes to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending. In addition, the proposed amendments implement recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission's report—the QFCC—*Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* and a number of other reviews and recommendations. As the Attorney-General has previously stated, these amendments represent significant shifts for the blue card system. Despite all the pontificating by those opposite, this is a serious issue. This is one issue which I am very happy to know we all agree to introduce.

As Minister for Education, I have a department and schools in my portfolio. They are one of the biggest employers of people who work with children, and this is particularly significant in the area of education. With approximately 740,000 blue card holders in this state, that means about one in six Queenslanders are cardholders and so rushing into changes was not an option for this government. In the development of this bill extensive consultation was carried out with key stakeholders. When it comes to consultation, that is obviously something that those opposite do not readily understand.

As recommended by the QFCC, the Blue Card System Review Implementation Reference Group was established to monitor the blue card reforms. This implementation reference group was consulted in addition to a significant number of non-government stakeholders. I would like to thank and acknowledge the work of the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee and its chair, the member for Nudgee, Leanne Linard, for the thorough consideration given to this bill. If ever there is a bill that needs thorough consideration it is this one, and you can be darn sure that under the chair, the member for Nudgee, and those committee members—from both sides—it received that consideration. This is a reflection of the careful consideration and consultation that informed the development of this bill.

It is important to highlight that just because this bill proposes amendments to the current system that does not mean that the whole blue card system in Queensland is completely broken. We do not rest on our laurels on this side of the House. We understand that if things can be made better, if there are committees and commissions that look at this issue and believe that even though we have one of the strongest blue card systems it could be made even better, that is something that this government will always be willing to do. I commend the Attorney-General for the hard work that has been done to implement the no-card no-start scheme.

Despite the extensive work that has gone into this bill, I am aware that those opposite think that the government have been too consultative because they complained that the changes have taken too long to be implemented and they would fast-track them. This is not something that we can fast-track. This has a significant bearing on a number of people. We hear from those opposite, 'Blah, blah, blah. You're taking too long. Get moving,' or whatever. There were 81 recommendations in that report that we had to work through and that should not be done quickly. We do not just rush into significant legislative change. We have to do it properly. It has to be considered so we get a balanced outcome because there are people and children who will be affected by the decisions that we take.

When those opposite were in government we saw them bring in a number of amendments. They rushed them through this House. There were High Court challenges on IR; those amendments were found to be unconstitutional. That was great work! The Bar Association told them that amendments keeping sex offenders in jail were going to be deemed invalid, and what did the Court of Appeal do? It deemed them to be invalid. There were a number of other things that they did in government—fast-tracking things—that they got wrong—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for McConnel, pause for a second. There is an awful lot of noise in here. Some of it is cross-chamber; some of it is just chatter. I ask for a bit of quiet.

Ms GRACE: If there is one thing I know for sure it is that when we list for those opposite the amendments and the things they did wrong when in government, they do not like it and they do not want to hear about it. However, they are going to hear about it because when we do things on this side of the House, we do them properly; we do them through consideration. We do not engage in political grandstanding.

Mr Powell: Ha, ha! Even the member for Cooper doesn't believe you on that one.

Ms GRACE: We do not come in here and use cases to demonstrate a particular event. There is no need for the member for Glass House to laugh.

A government member: It's serious.

Ms GRACE: At the end of the day this is a very serious piece of legislation. It is about working together, agreeing which way we go and implementing the best systems we can to protect our kids. As Minister for Education, I know for sure that the Attorney-General has given due consideration to every single issue that has been raised. There is not one that was not explained to us on this side of the House. We have taken a considered approach. We have thought about, looked at and examined all of the unintended consequences. We have consulted, we have taken the advice and we have understood the unintended consequences of some of the amendments of those opposite. That is unlike those opposite, who rush in to engage in political grandstanding. They say things like, 'We're going to have the toughest laws, not only in the world and the universe but also into the black hole that has just been discovered and beyond.' It is just crazy and irresponsible and epitomises the reason they sit on the other side of this House.

The Department of Education has also implemented a number of system changes. It is all right, Mr Deputy Speaker; the member for Gregory will never upset me when I am speaking. I will let a secret out; I actually probably like him too much. We will move on.

The Department of Education has recently implemented a range of system enhancements to proactively monitor while this is happening. The department is looking at how they can reform, how they can do things better. They are training and regional HR teams are producing weekly blue card reports. We have system upgrades because this is going to be an incredibly big job to put what is largely 740,000 manual entries into another computer system. We are ensuring, for example, that new employees who have submitted an application for a blue card cannot be entered onto our payroll system and that new employees who have not submitted a linking form—

Mr Powell: Computer says no.

Ms GRACE:—cannot be entered into DoE's payroll system.

I think I am going through quite a few significant, important things in this speech and it really is disturbing to hear those opposite do nothing but laugh. They think it is so funny. They think it is such a political game when talking about the blue card system that all they do throughout the whole discussion is laugh. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that every single one of them sitting opposite is a man; there is not one woman sitting there. No wonder they see it as a big joke. All the burly men—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for McConnel.

Ms GRACE:—who come to this place—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for McConnel.

Ms GRACE:—who laugh and interject—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for McConnel! I would ask for a little bit of quiet. I would ask the member for McConnel to come back to the long title of the bill and we will all get through this last one minute and 40 seconds very nicely.

Ms GRACE: It is interesting that, instead of listening to the debate in relation to a very significant piece of legislation, all the men opposite can do is laugh. That is how funny it is. If they want jokes, they should go somewhere else. I commend the Attorney-General for providing a number of disqualifying offences—I believe that the Minister for Child Safety investigated the issues surrounding a number of those amendments that arose from consultation. Here they are once again, grandstanding—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: You are welcome, it was our idea—just absolutely ridiculous. Members opposite need to get over themselves. They are not that good and that is why they sit opposite. The bill strengthens a number of elements of the blue card system. I believe that this is a balanced approach. We will not accept any further amendments due to their unintended consequences. This bill will provide the best blue card system in the country. The Attorney-General should be congratulated. I am very happy that we have support for the majority of this bill, but from what those opposite said you would not know it. As Minister for Education, I believe this legislation will be among the best in ensuring the safety of children. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr BERKMAN (Maiwar—Grn) (4.30 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This bill does several things, including giving effect to the government's election commitment to introduce an automated blue card application process that implements the so-called no-card no-start election commitment. It implements recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission report *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system*. The government also foreshadowed amendments to make several further changes, most significantly to add offences to the list of disqualifying offences under the working with children act, some transitional arrangements to facilitate no-card no-start, and some technical amendments.

The opposition has foreshadowed amendments to add extra disqualifying offences which we will not support. I understand that the opposition will also move amendments which attempt to address the crisis with children being held in our watch houses, proposing to ensure children are not held in watch houses for more than 72 hours. The Greens would support those amendments, but 72 hours is 72 hours too long. On Tuesday this week, I called for an emergency response to the children in watch houses crisis, a three-stage approach that would address the reasons that children are in adult lockups. Firstly, we need to raise the age of criminal responsibility—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I bring the member back to the long title of the bill.

Mr BERKMAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am sure you can understand my having some reservations about whether there will be an opportunity to speak to these proposed amendments and whether or not we reach consideration in detail. Obviously, the blue card system is recognised by all stakeholders as one of Australia's toughest. Importantly, it is only one part of a successful system for protecting children. Like any system, it is imperfect and relies on complex judgements of fact based on individual circumstances. There are many examples of people who would be fantastic role models for children being denied a blue card for offences in their past or for offences against adults which do not present any risks directly to children. As some submitters raised, there is a fairly concerning lack of data about how effective this system is at actually preventing serious incidents.

I turn to the bill directly. I acknowledge that the government's no-card no-start policy is an election commitment from Labor and that both Labor and the LNP will support it, meaning it will pass today. I must register the Greens' strong reservation about this measure. It was not explicitly suggested by the Queensland Family and Children Commission in its recommendation 20. We are concerned that this change has not been thought through, that it will shut out people who have minor criminal histories from getting a foothold in social service jobs and that it will have an outsized impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who already face especially high and well-recognised barriers to getting and keeping blue cards. This view is shared by Sisters Inside and by LawRight, both of which have extensive experience working with people using the blue card system. As Sisters Inside told the committee—

In our experience, many organisations are already very reluctant to employ adults with a criminal history, either on a paid or voluntary basis. Sisters Inside does not support the 'No Card' 'No Start' amendments as, in our view, it effectively establishes a presumption against employment for criminalised women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

They go on to say that in their experience—

... staff members with lived experience of criminalisation or imprisonment are often the most successful in building effective support relationships with criminalised women, girls and their families.

The government has said that sitting alongside this bill will be a range of initiatives to streamline the blue card process and reduce processing times which in itself is highly commendable. That is especially so since some matters can take many months to finalise if there is an appeal or any complicating circumstances. LawRight observed that—

... no guarantees are provided that these initiatives [to streamline applications] will be adequate for vulnerable people who may already be in tenuous employment and do not find it easy to navigate "self-help" and "stream-lined" systems. Our Blue Card Services clients include people who struggle with literacy, may not speak English as a first language, or have other impairments which reduce their capacity to engage with government services.

Expressing similar concerns, Sisters Inside said—

In our experience, many criminalised women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people lack the financial resources to apply for a WWCC before securing paid employment. Additionally, we note women and many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are discouraged from applying as they are often required to undertake an extensive application process (i.e. required to respond to 'show cause' requests and make written submissions).

We also have serious concerns about the changes proposed which would effectively strip final decision-making power from QCAT under this bill. On this point, LawRight said—

The impact of this amendment on our clients will be that, after navigating a lengthy and stressful QCAT process, which can in some cases take up to 12 months, they will be further prevented from commencing regulated employment notwithstanding that QCAT have made a decision in their favour.

There are very well recognised barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander folks accessing the blue card system which can and does lead to some incredibly discriminatory outcomes, especially in communities where almost every government job requires a blue card. Recommendation 73 of the QFCC report proposed—

... the Department of Justice and Attorney-General develops and implements a specific strategy and action plan to provide more support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and build cultural capability in the blue card system including: identifying ways to partner with other agencies for consistency with other Queensland government initiatives designed to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; establishing a reference group made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to co-design the strategy and action plan; and considering ways to empower communities to be involved in decisions about their community.

While this bill implements some of the recommendations that QFCC made and expands on another to implement no-card no-start, it fails to create any legislative basis for action on recommendation 73. Again, referring to Sisters Inside and its submissions on the bill—

The Government Bill imposes significant new obligations for people applying for WWCC authorities. However, it does not provide for any corresponding legislative guidance to support criminalised adults or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Recommendation 73 of the Queensland Family and Child Commission's report ... recommended developing guidelines to embed an appropriate consideration of culture in working with children check decisions, and considering ways to empower communities to be involved in decisions about their community.

I emphasise this final point—

In our submission, these mechanisms should have a legislative basis and must be implemented at the same time as amendments that significantly tighten the WWCC system.

They went further, noting that—

... we have been disappointed by Blue Card Services' decisions especially in relation to ATSI people. In our view, the decisions of which we are aware did not give sufficient consideration to the contextual factors of criminalisation, especially the over-representation of ATSI children and adults in the criminal legal system and the child protection system.

In closing, this week has laid bare for us just how concerning are the consequences and the realities of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our criminal justice system. While we obviously need a careful mind for protection of children—and the blue card system does in many ways a great job in doing that—we need to ensure that we are not disproportionately burdening those already disadvantaged communities and preventing them from reengaging in the workforce in ways that will help break the cycle of poverty and criminalisation that affects so many of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples around the state.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (4.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The purpose of the blue card system is to contribute to the creation of safe and supportive environments for children and young people when receiving services and participating in activities that are essential for their development and wellbeing such as child care, education, sport and cultural activities.

Queensland's blue card system mitigates past, present and future risks to children through: screening people working with children and deeming people ineligible to work with children based on their known police and disciplinary information; monitoring all blue card holders and applicants on a daily basis through an electronic interface with the Queensland Police Service for changes in their Queensland police information; and, just as importantly, legislatively requiring child related organisations to implement policies and procedures to manage risks to children.

People with no known police or disciplinary information are automatically issued with a blue card. Where a person has known police or disciplinary information, the chief executive undertakes a thorough assessment which is underpinned by a robust decision-making framework, which is essential. When

making a decision about an application, the welfare and best interests of a child are of paramount consideration. The working with children check is one tool in the broader system for keeping children safe.

The bill will deliver on the government's no-card no-start election commitment. On 14 November 2017 it was announced that a re-elected Labor government would introduce a no-card no-start policy which would require all applicants to hold a blue card before commencing work in regulated services. The implementation of no-card no-start is a core safeguard which strengthens the system by ensuring that all persons working in child related environments have been issued with a working with children clearance prior to them commencing that work. This election commitment is consistent with recommendation 20 of the blue card review report, where the QFCC recognised that, if processing time frames can be reduced for applicants with no or simple criminal history, a no-card no-start approach will provide a stronger safeguard and build on the blue card system's long history of mitigating risks to children.

To minimise adverse impacts to jobseekers and employers, the no-card no-start requirement will be accompanied by a suite of initiatives to streamline the blue card application process, reduce processing time frames and assist people seeking paid employment to be job ready by allowing them to apply for blue cards without an up-front link to an employer. This is absolutely essential, before people have an employer to quote or write down. It is very important and contributes to the job growth program of the Palaszczuk government. In addition, the development of an online organisational portal will enable organisations to more efficiently and effectively manage their blue card obligations, including linking and delinking to applicants and cardholders.

The bill also simplifies the provisions in relation to the withdrawal of applications while retaining the ability for the chief executive to withdraw applications in the following situations: when the identity of the applicant cannot be established within a stated period of time; when the applicant fails to comply with particular requests, including for additional information or submissions; or when the applicant is charged with a disqualifying offence.

The bill brings working with children exemptions into line with working with children clearances and imposes a term of three years. This requirement means that police officers and registered teachers will be required to renew their exemption every three years. Compelling exemption notice holders to renew their working with children exemption will allow the chief executive officer to: monitor and maintain quality assurance; modernise and strengthen the identity check process for this cohort through the inclusion of a photograph, which will also reduce the chance of persons fraudulently using another person's card; and obtain up-to-date information about the person and whether they are still engaged in regular employment. Importantly, a working with children application will continue to have no prescribed fee. All existing positive exemption notice holders will be afforded a three-year grace period from commencement to make a working with children exemption application.

The bill will enable communications between the chief executive and organisations to be made through an online organisational portal. All of the current interactions between organisations and the chief executive are authorised under the working with children act. For example, organisations are responsible for notifying the chief executive of each new person's employment with them. In addition, organisations must notify the chief executive about a range of other issues including when an employer or volunteer leaves the organisation. This is self-regulating.

I acknowledge and thank my committee colleagues. I also acknowledge the hard work of our chair, who does an outstanding job. She could almost be working in the Middle East, bringing peace to the world. I also acknowledge the hard work of the secretariat, which does an outstanding job. I also acknowledge all of those people who appeared before the committee or who, just as importantly, contributed in writing in some way, shape or form.

Speaking not just as a member of this chamber but, like many in this chamber, as a proud parent, I know that there is an expectation from our community that we will ensure this legislation protects our children. I am confident that it does. I am proud to commend this bill to the House. I also acknowledge the hard work of the Attorney-General and congratulate her and the department on this outstanding and well-improved legislation.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (4.45 pm): I rise to speak about the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill as a member of the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee. I echo the words of the members for McConnel and Cairns about the committee chair and members. I acknowledge all of the stakeholders who appeared at the public hearings. I thank the Attorney-General's departmental staff who answered

our questions. There was a lot of toing and froing with the Attorney-General in the process of finding out more about this bill, and I can say that her office was absolutely outstanding in ensuring all of the facts were given to us.

The bill will deliver on the government's no-card no-start election commitment. On 14 November 2017 it was announced that a re-elected Palaszczuk Labor government would introduce a no-card no-start policy which would require all applicants to hold a blue card before commencing work in regulated services. No-card no-start is a core safeguard that strengthens the system by ensuring all persons working in child related environments have been issued with a working with children clearance prior to commencing work. This election commitment is consistent with recommendation 20 of the blue card review report, where the QFCC recognised that, if processing time frames can be reduced for applications with no or simple criminal history, a no-card no-start approach will provide a stronger safeguard and build on the blue card system's long history of mitigating risks to children.

The bill removes the requirement for a person to have an agreement to work with an organisation before they can apply for a working with children check. This allows people to become job ready before engaging in child related employment. The bill streamlines the application process to provide sufficient flexibility so that the applications can be made manually or through an online process. That takes us into the digital age. The bill also enables communication and notifications between organisations and BCS to be made through an online organisational portal. It also introduces photographs to the working with children card. I think that is a great move. We have photographs on our licences and everywhere, so putting photographs on blue cards is a fantastic move.

I think everyone in this House has the safety of children as their No. 1 priority. Those on the other side of the House think they have the mortgage on that, but the safety of children and youth comes first for all members of this House. No-one in this House exemplifies that more than the Attorney-General. I thank her for that.

As a parent myself, although my children are now getting to the age where they are not children but young adults, the Queensland blue card system is one of the best systems in Australia, if not the world. The member for Toowoomba South said that there have been changes to the blue card system. Yes, there have been changes because changes have to be made to reflect the community now. We are not driving EH Holdens anymore! We have moved on in terms of advancements in motor vehicles and households, so of course there are going to be changes to this legislation over the years because it has to reflect community expectations. The community is changing. Things are changing daily, if not hourly, in the community. I echo the sentiments of the chair of the committee in that I am proud to be part of this government which always puts the safety of children first at all times. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (4.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Many of the changes being implemented through this bill recognise the important work that was undertaken by the Queensland Family and Child Commission through its comprehensive review of Queensland's working with children act in 2017. Blue cards were introduced in Queensland under the last Labor government and today they are in the hands of over 700,000 Queenslanders. Since their implementation, blue cards have served as an important tool to keep our kids protected from dangerous predators.

Importantly, this bill delivers on Labor's election commitment to introduce a no-card no-start approach towards persons seeking to work with kids. These changes ensure that no person in this state can commence work with children in child care or education, sport or cultural activities without first meeting the eligibility requirements to obtain a blue card prior to starting. This bill introduces a number of important measures that will help make blue cards a more effective tool to protect kids. The addition of a photograph of the cardholder on their blue card is a measure that will make it virtually impossible for a person to fraudulently misuse someone else's blue card.

Notably, one of the important measures this bill seeks to implement is the widening in the range of disqualifying offences to include some of the most heinous crimes that currently are not listed such as bestiality, kidnapping and child abduction as well as rape and murder of adults. By expanding these disqualifying offences, it will be made unambiguous that predators of these highly serious offences will be unable to seek employment around kids.

The changes being made in this bill and the recommendations made by the QFCC that helped in the formation of this new legislation will improve all Queenslanders' confidence that their kids are in safe and protected environments when they are in the care of a person trusted to look after them. This

bill, which is the first in a series of bills that will come through the House over a period of years, is an important step towards strengthening our children's protection mechanisms in Queensland and ultimately will help keep kids safe, as they should always be. I commend the bill to the House.

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.53 pm), in reply: In rising to reply to the debate on this bill, I thank all members for their contributions on what is an important piece of legislation. I am disappointed that a number of members on the other side have falsely referred to offences, stating that people will still be able to continue to work with children on the basis that they are not disqualifying offences when in fact they are. Some of the offences that have been referred to are already in this bill or are already in the act as disqualifying offences. I will be going back and looking at all of those speeches because they have been misleading. If there is any indication that members have deliberately misled this parliament in making those statements, then I will be writing to the Speaker on that.

In responding to some of the issues that have been raised, I do take issue with the member for Toowoomba South and others who followed his lead in referring to the history of this legislation and the piecemeal way that things have been added on over the years. Conveniently, the member for Toowoomba South went back many years—I think about 20 years—but skipped over a certain period, strangely enough from 2012 to 2015. He went straight over that when it came to—

Mr Janetzki: I talked about Carmody.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection; the member did refer to Carmody. However, he did not in any way indicate whether the LNP when in government had made any substantive changes to the blue card system because of, in their own words, the serious loopholes that exist in this legislation that urgently need to be addressed. In fact, as we heard from the member for Bulimba and the minister, the amendments made by those opposite to blue cards were very minor—I know they changed the name of the act—and, yes, they increased the disqualifying offences to mirror what was being done in the Commonwealth.

I have no problem with that. In fact, that is the right way to do this—that is, lining yourself up with what is happening at a Commonwealth level and what is happening around this country, and that is what this government is doing. We have worked through these issues very methodically with states, territories and the Commonwealth as a consequence of the royal commission into institutional child sex abuse and also the QFCC reports. We have listened to its advice. We have included the disqualifying offences that it recommended and we are also putting forward additional ones in amendments, and I acknowledge that we are moving amendments that, in part, mirror the offences that are referred to in the proposed LNP amendments. However, we do so on the basis that they were amendments to be brought forward in the near future once we finalised the negotiations at a national level because they are in line with the national standards that are currently being discussed. It is appropriate to bring them forward now on the basis that we know that we would have been bringing them forward in the near future anyway.

I am very disappointed that very few—the exception being the member for Chatsworth—members opposite acknowledged that this is a very good system, but many on the other side talked this system down. They kept saying that it was flawed with major failures. They said that there were loopholes and they were talking about all of these criminals working with kids. It is astonishing that those opposite would refer to a question on notice and use the stats in that question on notice but fail to actually tell this chamber all of the stats that were in that question on notice from 2012 through to now. No, they started at 2015 conveniently. I want to say this, particularly in relation to the speech by the Leader of the Opposition: it is very easy to be outraged in opposition and it is what you do in government that counts, and this government time and time again has stepped up and made sure that we have strong laws in this state to protect children. When in government, those opposite did not see a problem with this system—did not ever say it was a failure, did not say it had major loopholes that urgently needed addressing.

In fact, yesterday during this debate the member for Mudgeeraba interjected when those on this side called out and said, 'You didn't do anything in government on blue cards.' The interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba was something along the lines of, 'We were busy fixing Child Safety.' If I get their interjection right, they are saying that they were too busy fixing Child Safety and they could not change the blue card system to make children safer. That was the great contribution yesterday in the interjections. It is important that we acknowledge that, when it comes to the figures that those opposite have talked about, those people who commenced work while their application was pending and were, when the criminal history report was received, identified as having disqualifying offences that meant that they must immediately cease working with children was 48 while the LNP was in government.

I am not criticising them for that; I am just asking them to be honest and not to come in here completely outraged and say how awful it is and that we must stop this immediately when it happened when they were in government because it is the system that exists. That is why we are introducing no-card no-start—to stop this happening. The members opposite should not complain about our delays when they never even contemplated it while in government.

The member for Toowoomba South specifically referred to the explanatory notes of the bill and, to summarise his words, said that they did not adequately address the issue of estimated costs; they merely said that the government had allocated \$17 million in the budget to implement this bill. Apparently, \$17 million is not adequate to say that we are properly funding this—

Mr Janetzki: It is a question of accuracy.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection. I absolutely agree with the shadow Attorney-General that it is a matter of accuracy. In relation to the estimated costs for the government, the amendments circulated by the opposition state—

It is expected that there will be an increase in cost in relation to international criminal history checks, however it is not possible at this stage to estimate the exact financial implication.

That is the second version of the explanatory notes to the amendments. According to the bottom of the page, it is actually version 3, but we never got to see version 2. Version 1 of the explanatory notes to the amendments says that there are no additional costs for the amendments and that included the cost of the international criminal histories. Someone went away and said, 'Seeing we are changing our explanatory notes anyway, maybe we should try to be a little bit more accurate about this in terms of costs.'

I will help the member out. He is not sure of the costs. He says he picked up the recommendation of the QFCC for international criminal histories out of its report. If the member had turned the page in that report, he would have seen the cost of the system in relation to New Zealand criminal history checks. This cost is purely based on the cost of applying for a criminal history check. It does not include the additional resources, processing time and all of those costs. If only 15 per cent of our 740,000 card holders, or over 260,000 applicants a year, are from New Zealand, the costs would go from \$67.6 million under the current paper based system to \$75.7 million. When we go to a full online application process, the costs will go from \$40.6 million to \$60.3 million. That is \$20 million extra over 15 years, which does not include all of the other on-costs that come with establishing a whole new process. The other issue is that those opposite have not done any research. They have done no consultation whatsoever. I know that because we consulted with all the key stakeholders about the opposition's amendments. There were real concerns about the international criminal history check and how it would occur.

In relation to the comments that have been made about the New Zealand criminal history checks, those opposite failed to mention that there are a number of issues that have to be worked through. Every application for a paid employee costs NZ\$23 or NZ\$8.50 for volunteers. Currently, our volunteers, or the community organisations, do not pay for blue cards. That cost is going to have to be borne by someone. New Zealand has a clean slate scheme. That means that, after seven years, people have a clean slate on their criminal history apart from certain offences. Sexual offences against children and young people or mentally impaired people will still show up on a person's criminal history. However, the clean slate scheme will apply to other serious offences, such as the possession of child exploitation material. If someone had been charged and convicted of possession child exploitation material and that had occurred more than seven years ago, it would not show up on the criminal history check anyway. There are a lot of things to work through that those opposite have failed to even look at.

Our amendments are evidence based. We have looked at this issue based on the discussions at a national level, the royal commission's recommendations, the QFCC's report and all the feedback that we have had from stakeholders. We have taken all of that and brought forward the bill and the amendments that I will be moving in consideration in detail.

There will be questions to the shadow Attorney-General about some of the statements that have been made, such as, 'How on earth could you let people convicted of child homicide work with children?' Those opposite sat through the whole debate on child homicide that we had. They know the range of offences that come under the offence of manslaughter of a child and why there needs to be a discretion. They heard it. They have seen it in the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's report. Once again, they ignored it. Time and time again the members opposite continue to ignore the evidence. They ignored the QFCC when it said that there needs to be a discretion when it comes to disqualifying offences. The members opposite ignored the advice of stakeholders, including legal stakeholders, who say that it is important to keep that discretion. The members opposite ignored the QFCC's report on

costings in relation to the international criminal history check. The members opposite never, ever come in here to explain any of those facts or circumstances, or even explain why they have chosen not to follow any of that advice.

We will not be supporting the amendments being put forward by the opposition, because they are not considered and they are not evidence based. It is cheap politics—a race to the bottom—just trying to get a headline and not thinking through the unintended consequences of those amendments. Time and time again we see legislation or amendments being brought before this parliament by those opposite that have unintended consequences that they never, ever answer to. I welcome the opportunity to ask questions of the shadow Attorney-General today, because I believe that questions should be answered about why the members opposite have not taken into account those unintended consequences. 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 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—



Mr JANETZKI (5.08 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 **Clause 13 (Amendment of s 169 (Who is a *disqualified person*))**

Page 17, line 26 to page 18, line 7—

omit, insert—

omit.

Mr JANETZKI: I table the explanatory notes to the amendments.

Tabled paper: Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Mr David Janetzki's amendments [\[788\]](#).

This amendment relates to the eligibility declaration, which we foreshadowed that we would be seeking to move. I note the Attorney-General's advice in respect of recommendation 29 of the QFCC report. However, as we previously outlined during the second reading debate, we believe that there are serious issues. In fact, the QFCC recommended against the eligibility declaration process. We believe that there were significant issues with the process. That is why we continue to seek the removal of the eligibility declaration from the process. The safety of our children should be paramount. There remain significant concerns with the process and the possibility of those convicted of disqualifying offences being able to work with children.

Mrs D'ATH: In speaking against this amendment—and I know that there are a number of amendments so I will not get up and speak to each of them that go to the eligibility declaration—the shadow Attorney-General said they are seeking to remove the process. We need to be clear here that what they are seeking to do is to remove any discretion whatsoever. Anyone who has committed and been convicted of a disqualifying offence will have no right of review and will never, ever, for the remainder of their life, ever be able to work or volunteer in any areas that require a blue card. It does not matter how many years have passed, it does not matter the circumstances, it does not matter that they were not sentenced to prison; they will never, ever be able to work with children. If they committed that offence as a juvenile at 17 and 30 years later, with no other offences in their life, they have turned their life around, they are now helping others and have gone on to be a good citizen and rehabilitated, they will never, ever be able to work in any of these jobs or even volunteer with a community organisation.

I am sure we have all met people who have done wrong in their life and turned their lives around and are now giving back to the community. My question to the shadow Attorney-General is, in the case of a mother who has been the victim of domestic violence for many, many years, whose child died at the hand of their partner but who was convicted of manslaughter because they failed to provide that child with the care they needed, or in the case of a father who accidentally left their child in the back of the car and that child passed away from dehydration—in both these instances they were sentenced to imprisonment—do you believe—

Mr Bleijie: We will ask the questions, thank you.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection. The Manager of Opposition Business interjected that they will ask the questions. This is the opposition's amendment and I have the right to ask questions of the opposition.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I see. I can ask the question but they are not going to answer it. I can understand why they would not want to answer it. I give the shadow Attorney-General more credit than that. I think he will answer the question about why in these circumstances these people should never, ever, in their entire working life, be able to work with children or volunteer with a community organisation. That is the reality of these amendments if they were to pass.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—



Hon. YM D'ATH (5.13 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 17 (Replacement of ch 7, pt 4, hdg and div 1)

Page 25, line 3, after 'who is'—

insert—

a

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments. In doing so I advise that those amendments are minor and technical in nature.

Tabled paper: Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to amendments to be moved during consideration in detail by the Hon. Yvette D'Ath [\[789\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Mr JANETZKI: I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 17 (Replacement of ch 7, pt 4, hdg and div 1)

Page 26, line 22, 'chapter 8, part 1, division 2 and'—

omit.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 18, as read, agreed to.

Clause 19—



Mr JANETZKI (5.15 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 Clause 19 (Insertion of new ch 8, pt 1, div 1)

Page 28, lines 10 to 13—

omit, insert—

19 Replacement of ch 8, pt 1, divs 2-8

Chapter 8, part 1, as inserted by this Act, divisions 2 to 8—

omit, insert—

Mrs D'ATH: In rising to speak to this, which is in relation to the eligibility declaration, I am disappointed that the shadow Attorney-General has still not sought to respond at all. I can only assume that is on the basis that they do not have an answer because they do not want to explain the unintended consequences of the amendments they bring to this House. They probably did not consult with any of the stakeholders in relation to these amendments because they knew exactly what they would be told. They also know, when they quote the QFCC report, that the QFCC recommended the removal of the process but the retention of the discretion to allow those people who have disqualifying offences in certain circumstances to be able to apply. I once again ask the shadow Attorney-General to address the question I have put.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, you have already spoken on this so you cannot speak again. Only the minister gets to speak multiple times. Movers of amendments do not get to speak again unless they take that opportunity at the moving of the amendment.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Clause 19, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 20 to 22, as read, agreed to.

Clause 23—



Mrs D'ATH (5.17 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 23 (Amendment of s 181 (Eligibility declaration taken to have been issued))

Page 30, line 26—

omit, insert—

omit, insert—

This is a minor and technical change that I do not wish to speak to.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 23, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 24 to 26, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mrs D'ATH (5.19 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 After clause 26

Page 32, after line 11—

insert—

26A Amendment of s 208 (Deemed withdrawal of consent to employment screening if charged with disqualifying offence etc.)

Section 208, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

26B Amendment of s 217 (Deemed withdrawal of application if person charged with disqualifying offence etc.)

Section 217, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

In speaking to this amendment, I speak collectively to amendments 3 to 8 that provide for the new framework for blue card applicants or holders charged or convicted of a serious offence. The amendments provide that if a blue card holder is charged with a serious offence, the person's blue card will be suspended and they cannot engage in child related work. If an applicant for a blue card is charged with a serious offence, the person's application is withdrawn and if an applicant for a blue card has an existing conviction for a serious offence the person cannot start in paid child related work unless the person is granted a blue card.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I clarify that you are moving amendments Nos 3 to 8 or just amendment No. 3?

Mrs D'ATH: Just amendment No. 3 at the moment. I was speaking collectively as I will not rise at the moving of each and every amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 27, as read, agreed to.

Clause 28—



Mr JANETZKI (5.19 pm): I move the following amendments—

12 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)

Page 32, line 16—

omit, insert—

After section 176L, as inserted by this Act—

13 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)

Page 33, lines 19 to 27—

omit, insert—

- registered teacher; and
- (d) if the applicant has been charged with, or convicted of, an offence under a law of a jurisdiction outside of Australia—to state the offence and the jurisdiction; and
- (e) to declare whether or not the applicant has lived or worked in New Zealand for a cumulative period of 6 months or more.
- (3A) If the applicant states in the application that the applicant has been charged with, or convicted of, an offence under a law of a jurisdiction outside of Australia, the application must be accompanied by a copy of a criminal history report, for the jurisdiction, about the applicant.
- (4) Also, the approved form must state it is an offence for a disqualified person to make a working with children check application.

14 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)

Page 36, lines 11 to 14—

omit, insert—

This part applies to a working with children check application.

15 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)

Page 37, line 14, '182(1)(a) or'—

*omit.***16 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)**

Page 37, line 19, '182(2) or'—

*omit.***17 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)**

Page 38, line 1, '182(1)(b) or'—

omit.

Later I will speak further about criminal histories outside of the Australian jurisdiction, but I will not speak further on it at this point.

Non-government amendments (Mr Janetzki) negated.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendment—

4 Clause 28 (Insertion of new ch 8, pts 2 and 3)

Page 38, lines 13 and 16, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

In doing so, I refer to my previous comments that this goes to the framework for the blue card applicants and holders in relation to serious offences.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 28, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 29 to 37, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mrs D'ATH (5.21 pm): I move the following amendment—

5 After clause 37

Page 43, after line 8—

*insert—***37A Amendment of s 240 (Suspension of a positive notice if charged with disqualifying offence or subject to temporary or interim order)**

Section 240, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

37B Amendment of s 241 (Ending of suspension under s 240 and issue of further prescribed notice)

Section 241(9), before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 38 and 39, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mrs D'ATH (5.21 pm): I move the following amendment—

6

After clause 39

Page 43, after line 16—

insert—

39A Amendment of s 269 (Deemed withdrawal of consent to employment screening if charged with disqualifying offence etc.)

Section 269, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

39B Amendment of s 279 (Deemed withdrawal of application if charged with disqualifying offence etc.)

Section 279, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 40 to 46, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mrs D'ATH (5.22 pm): I move the following amendment—

7

After clause 46

Page 47, after line 1—

insert—

46A Amendment of s 298 (Suspension of a positive exemption notice if charged with disqualifying offence or subject to temporary or interim order)

Section 298, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

46B Amendment of s 299 (Ending of suspension and issue of further exemption notice)

Section 299(9), before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 47, as read, agreed to.

Clause 48—



Mrs D'ATH (5.22 pm): I move the following amendment—

8

Clause 48 (Insertion of new ch 8, pt 5A)

Page 48, line 30, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

Amendment agreed to.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendment—

9

Clause 48 (Insertion of new ch 8, pt 5A)

Page 50, line 23, 'see'—

omit.

This amendment is a minor and technical change that was identified as necessary post the introduction of the bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendment—

10

Clause 48 (Insertion of new ch 8, pt 5A)

Page 52, lines 9 and 12, before 'disqualifying offence'—

insert—

serious offence or

Amendment 10 provides that the chief executive is not required to consider a person's application to lift the suspension on their working with children authority while a charge for a serious offence is pending against the person or if the person has been convicted of a serious offence and the appeal process has not finalised.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 48, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 49—



Mr JANETZKI (5.24 pm): I move the following amendment—

21 Clause 49 (Replacement of s 310 (Application of div 2))

Page 66, lines 21 to 26—

omit, insert—

- (f) for a person who holds a negative notice—

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Clause 49, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Mr JANETZKI (5.24 pm): I move the following amendment—

22 After clause 49

Page 66, after line 33—

insert—

49A Insertion of new ch 8, pt 6, div 4A

Chapter 8, part 6—

insert—

Division 4A Obtaining information from jurisdictions outside Australia

320A Requesting further information about convictions and charges in jurisdictions outside Australia

- (1) This section applies if a working with children check application states the applicant—
 - (a) has been convicted of, or charged with, an offence under a law of a jurisdiction outside Australia; or
 - (b) lived or worked in New Zealand for a cumulative period of 6 months or more.
- (2) If subsection (1)(a) applies, the chief executive may ask a representative of the government of the jurisdiction for a criminal history report, for the jurisdiction, about the applicant.
- (3) If subsection (1)(b) applies, the chief executive must ask a representative of the New Zealand Government for a criminal history report, for New Zealand, about the applicant.
- (4) The chief executive's request may include the following information—
 - (a) the person's name and any other name the chief executive believes the person may use or have used;
 - (b) the person's gender and date and place of birth.
- (5) To remove any doubt, it is declared that this section applies in relation to—
 - (a) a conviction of a person whether the conviction happened before or after the commencement; and
 - (b) a charge against a person whether the offence to which the charge relates was committed or alleged to have been committed before or after the commencement.

Again, this amendment refers to obtaining information from jurisdictions outside of Australia. I will dwell a little more on that later on.

Mrs D'ATH: I appreciate that the member is going to speak to this in more detail later, but in relation to international criminal history checks those opposite have failed to do their due diligence in looking at the complexity and the issues that were raised in the QFCC report. More broadly, if they had had any consultation with stakeholders they would be aware of all of the difficulties in obtaining those checks. It is not as simple as putting a new line on a form that asks people to self disclose. Not surprisingly, those from other countries who want to do harm to and have serious offences against children are not likely to self disclose.

If you need to get a criminal history check from another country, there is no central international criminal history check system that you can access. It requires individual applications to countries whose offences will not necessarily mirror the offences that we have in Australia. We would have to try to identify those offences and look behind them, so that once you get the criminal history report you understand what the offence actually means. What happens if a male has been charged with a sex offence because they are homosexual? We know that that exists as an offence in other countries. We have to be able to look behind those histories.

The cost has been completely ignored by those opposite. There has been not one mention of cost by opposition members in their speeches on the bill, even though the QFCC said that you can look at another \$20 million at least. That is the fee to apply for New Zealand checks, let alone other jurisdictions. What do you do when it takes at least 20 days to get that back from New Zealand? What happens if it never arrives? Do you never process that application? How are you going to deal with it? None of those things have been worked through. There are no answers to those questions.

How do you deal with a situation where the person cannot obtain the check from their country of origin because of changes to the laws and the system? Of course, in some countries you can actually pay to have your record wiped. There is corruption in some countries. How do you validate and verify it, unless you are getting it from a third party? That is why the QFCC made the recommendation that work is done with the Commonwealth. There needs to be information sharing with the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth also collects this information. When someone enters the country on a visa or becomes a permanent resident, they have to fill out information about their criminal history. That information needs to be shared with the Queensland Police Service, so that it can be utilised through the blue card system. However, none of that is in place yet. No other jurisdiction has it. No other jurisdiction has been able to figure out how to do it and make it work.

We are committed to looking at this and seeing what we can do to obtain people's international criminal histories, but there is a lot of work to be done. None of it is done by the opposition simply putting this amendment up because it sits as a recommendation in a report. They have failed to address all of the other issues raised by the QFCC.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Clauses 50 to 52, as read, agreed to.

Clause 53—



Mrs D'ATH (5.28 pm): I move the following amendments—

11 Clause 53 (Insertion of new ss 344A and 344B)

Page 70, lines 4 and 6, after ':'—

insert—

or

12 Clause 53 (Insertion of new ss 344A and 344B)

Page 71, line 16 to page 72, line 3—

omit, insert—

- (e) is required to lessen or prevent a serious threat to the life, health, safety or welfare of an individual, or the health, safety or welfare of the public; or
 - (f) is required by a law enforcement agency to prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute or punish an offence; or
 - (g) is required for a proceeding in a court or a tribunal; or
 - (h) is authorised under a regulation or another law.
- (4) In this section—
- law enforcement agency** means—
- (a) an entity mentioned in the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, schedule 5, definition *law enforcement agency*, paragraph (b); or
 - (b) an enforcement body within the meaning of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth).

Amendment No. 11 is a minor and technical change so I will not speak to that. Amendment No. 12 addresses the submission of the Office of the Information Commissioner to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee. Amendment No. 12 amends section 344B, as inserted by clause 53 of the bill, by removing the references to the information privacy principles and in its place

explicitly prescribing additional circumstances in which a person may use, disclose or give access to information obtained under new section 344A. This is a sensible and practical amendment to provide greater certainty.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 53, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 54, as read, agreed to.

Clause 55—



Mrs D'ATH (5.30 pm): I move the following amendment—

13 Clause 55 (Replacement of ch 8, pt 7, div 1 (Replacement notice))

Page 78, line 34, 'section 220(2)'—

omit, insert—

section 220(3)

This amendment is minor and technical in nature.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 55, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 56 to 59, as read, agreed to.

Clause 60—



Mrs D'ATH (5.30 pm): I move the following amendment—

14 Clause 60 (Replacement of ch 8A (Criminal history checks, and assessing suitability, of persons employed in the department))

Page 84, lines 28 and 29, after ';'—

insert—

and

Again, this is a minor and technical amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 60, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 61 to 65, as read, agreed to.

Clause 66—



Mrs D'ATH (5.31 pm): I move the following amendments—

15 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 93, after line 16—

insert—

552A Effect of pre-commencement charge for serious offence

For applying this Act in relation to a person the subject of a charge for a serious offence that has not been dealt with on the commencement, the person is taken to have been charged with the offence on the commencement.

552B Applicant in paid employment convicted of serious offence

(1) This section applies if—

- (a) before the commencement of the amendment Act, section 28, a prescribed notice application was made about a person under section 199; and
- (b) the application relates to the person's employment, or proposed employment, in regulated employment other than as a volunteer; and
- (c) the application has not been decided or withdrawn; and
- (d) the chief executive becomes aware that the person was convicted of a serious offence—
 - (i) if the person held a positive notice when the application was made—after the application was made; or
 - (ii) if the person held a positive notice that expired before the application was made—after the person's notice expired; or
 - (iii) otherwise—before or after the application was made.

- (2) The chief executive must give the person a written notice that states—
- (a) the person is not allowed to perform work that is regulated employment before the person's application is decided; and
 - (b) it is an offence for the person to perform work that is regulated employment, or to start in regulated employment, unless the person is issued a positive notice.
- (3) If the chief executive gives the person a notice under subsection (2), the person must not, unless the person is issued a positive notice—
- (a) if the employee is employed in regulated employment when given the notice under subsection (2)—perform work that is regulated employment; or
 - (b) otherwise—start in regulated employment.
- Maximum penalty—500 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.
- (4) If the chief executive gives the person a notice under subsection (2), the chief executive must also give each notifiable person for the person a written notice that states—
- (a) the person is not allowed to perform work that is regulated employment before the person's application is decided; and
 - (b) it is an offence for an employer to allow the person to start or continue to perform work that is regulated employment unless the person is issued a positive notice.
- (5) If the chief executive gives a person (an **employer**) a notice about another person (the **employee**) under subsection (4), the employer must not allow the employee to start or continue to perform work that is regulated employment unless the employee is issued a positive notice.
- Maximum penalty—200 penalty units or 2 years imprisonment.
- (6) An employer may not dismiss the employee solely or mainly because the employer is given a notice under subsection (4).
- (7) Section 356 applies in relation to the employer as if a reference in that section to this chapter includes a reference to this section.
- (8) This section applies despite chapter 8, part 4, division 4.

16 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 93, line 17, after 'New'—

insert—

serious offences and

17 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 94, after line 11—

insert—

new serious offence means an offence that—

- (a) is a serious offence; but
- (b) was not a serious offence immediately before the commencement.

553A Effect of conviction or charge for new serious offence

- (1) For applying this Act in relation to a person convicted of a new serious offence, it is immaterial as to when the offence was committed or when the person was convicted of the offence.
- (2) This Act applies in relation to a person who is charged with a new serious offence even if the charge, or the acts or omissions constituting the alleged offence, happened before the commencement.
- (3) For applying this Act to a current positive notice or current positive exemption notice held by a person immediately before the commencement—
 - (a) a person convicted of a new serious offence before the commencement is taken to have been convicted of the offence on the commencement; and
 - (b) a person the subject of a charge for a new serious offence that has not been dealt with on the commencement is taken to have been charged with the offence on the commencement.

18 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 94, line 24 to page 95, line 2—

omit, insert—

- (3) For applying this Act to a current positive notice or current positive exemption notice held by a person immediately before the commencement, a person the subject of a charge for a new disqualifying offence that has not been dealt with on the commencement is taken to have been charged with the offence on the commencement.

554A Effect of conviction for new disqualifying offence on existing positive notice or positive exemption notice

- (1) This section applies if—
- (a) a person held a current positive notice or current positive exemption notice immediately before the commencement; and
 - (b) the person was convicted of a new disqualifying offence before the commencement.
- (2) For applying this Act to the person's positive notice or positive exemption notice, the offence is taken to be, or to continue to be, a serious offence despite the enactment of the amending Act.
- (3) Without limiting subsection (2), if the person applies for another positive notice or positive exemption notice after the commencement, or section 557 or 558 applies in relation to the person—
- (a) the person's conviction for the offence is taken to be, or to continue to be, a conviction for a serious offence; and
 - (b) the person is taken not to be a disqualified person or relevant disqualified person in relation to the person's conviction for the offence.

Amendment No. 15 inserts a new section 552A which sets out the relevant transitional arrangements for the new framework for dealing with applicants and cardholders who are the subject of a charge for a serious offence that has not been dealt with on the commencement. In particular, it provides that a person who is the subject of a charge for a serious offence that has not been dealt with on commencement is taken to have been charged with the offence upon commencement.

Amendment No. 15 also inserts new section 552B. New section 552B provides that if a person has a blue card application for paid child related work which is made before the commencement of the no-card no-start requirement and the chief executive becomes aware that the person was convicted of a serious offence, the person must not perform child related work until the person is issued with a blue card. Under this new section the chief executive is also required to give a written notice to the notifiable person which states it is an offence for an employer to employ the person to start or continue to perform child related work unless the person is issued a blue card.

Amendments Nos 16 and 17 amend the transitional arrangements of the bill to facilitate the introduction of new serious offences. In particular, the insertion of new section 553A provides for how a conviction or charge for a new serious offence—that is, an offence which is added to the list of serious offences in schedule 2 under the amendments—will be treated under the working with children act. Under new section 553A(3) in applying the working with children act to the holder of a current positive notice or current positive exemption notice, a person convicted of a new serious offence before commencement is taken to have been convicted of the offence on commencement and a person the subject of a charge for a new serious offence that has not been dealt with on commencement is taken to have been charged with the offence on commencement.

Amendment No. 18 makes changes to section 554 of the bill as introduced to provide that a current blue card holder at commencement who is the subject of a charge of a new disqualifying offence that has not been dealt with on commencement is taken to have been charged with the offence on commencement. Amendment No. 18 also inserts new section 554A which provides that a current blue card holder at commencement of the changes to the disqualification framework, which I indicated in my second reading speech is anticipated to be 1 July 2019, who has previously been convicted of a new disqualifying offence will not be treated as a disqualified person or relevant disqualified person under the working with children act.

In other words, these cardholders will not automatically be disqualified from working or volunteering in child related work. Rather, in order to provide fairness to those cardholders who have been rigorously assessed by Blue Card Services, their historical convictions for a new disqualifying offence will be treated and assessed as a serious offence. This treatment will apply into the future for renewals. However, new offences will be taken into account in relation to any criminal history. In doing so, it is about making sure that all of those individuals who now fall into the disqualifying area who have cards and have held cards for a number of years will immediately be reassessed to ensure their suitability for working with children.

Amendments agreed to.

Mr JANETZKI: I move the following amendment—

23 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 95, lines 3 to 22—

omit.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendments—

19 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 96, line 15, 'governing board'—

omit, insert—

governing body

20 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 96, lines 16 to 25—

omit, insert—

558 Existing positive notice or positive exemption notice held by person convicted of new serious offence or new disqualifying offence

(1) This section applies if—

- (a) immediately before the commencement, a person held a current positive notice or current positive exemption notice; and
- (b) before the commencement, the person was convicted of—
 - (i) a new serious offence; or
 - (ii) a new disqualifying offence that is taken to be a serious offence under section 554A(2).

(1A) Section 322 does not apply to the person in relation to the person's conviction for the offence.

(1B) The chief executive must—

- (a) consider whether it is appropriate to cancel the person's positive notice or positive exemption notice under this section because of the person's conviction for the offence; and
- (b) give the person, and each notifiable person for the person, a notice stating that, because of the enactment of the amending Act, the chief executive is considering under this section whether the person should continue to hold the person's positive notice or positive exemption notice.

21 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 97, after line 11—

insert—

- (6) If the chief executive decides not to cancel the person's positive notice or positive exemption notice under this section, the chief executive must give the person, and each notifiable person for the person, a notice stating that the chief executive is satisfied, having considered the enactment of the amending Act, the person should continue to hold the person's positive notice or positive exemption notice.

Amendment No. 19 addresses the minor issue identified by the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board in its submission to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee. The amendment clarifies that the accreditation board must be given a written notice about the withdrawal of a prescribed notice or exemption notice application under new section 557(3) if the person is a director of a school's governing body.

Government amendment No. 20 provides for further changes to the transitional arrangements of the bill so that those current cardholders immediately before commencement who have a previous conviction for a new disqualifying offence or new serious offence will be reassessed upon commencement of the amendments. The chief executive will be required to consider whether it is appropriate to cancel the person's blue card because of the person's conviction of the offence. The chief executive will also give the cardholder and each notifiable person for the cardholder a notice stating that because of law changes the chief executive is considering whether the person should continue to hold a blue card. No further information about the reassessment will be provided to the notifiable person as is the normal course.

The existing cardholders will be assessed under the presumption that a negative notice must be issued unless it is an exceptional circumstance. This is the case that applies to all convictions for serious offences. The cardholder is not required to cease child related work while the reassessment is occurring. If following the reassessment the chief executive issues the person with a negative notice, the person will be able to seek a review of this decision by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Amendment 21 provides that if, following the reassessment, the chief executive does not cancel the person's blue card, the chief executive must give the person and each notifiable person for the person a notice that states the chief executive is satisfied that the person should continue to hold a blue card.

Amendments agreed to.

Mr JANETZKI: I move the following amendment—

24 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 101, after line 9—

insert—

Division 3A Serious offences

565A Effect of charge for serious offence

- (1) The amended Act applies in relation to a person who is charged with a serious offence even if the charge, or the acts or omissions constituting the alleged offence, happened before the commencement.
- (2) For applying the amended Act to a current positive notice or current positive exemption notice held by a person immediately before the commencement, a person the subject of a charge for a serious offence that has not been dealt with on the commencement is, if the context permits or requires, taken to have been charged with the offence on the commencement.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendment—

22 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 101, after line 22—

insert—

exemption card, for a person's positive exemption notice, means a card issued to the person by the chief executive as evidence of the person's positive exemption notice.

In speaking to this amendment, I also speak to those amendments through to No. 29 which all relate to minor and technical changes. In particular, amendments Nos 24 and 25 insert new arrangements to ensure the most effective transition to the issuing of working with children cards post commencement of the government's no-card no-start laws.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr JANETZKI: I move the following amendment—

25 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 102, lines 23 to 30—

omit, insert—

- (1) Subsections (2) and (3) apply if, immediately before the commencement, an eligibility application had not been decided or withdrawn.
- (2) On the commencement, the application is taken to have been withdrawn.
- (3) The chief executive must refund a fee that accompanied the application.
- (4) An eligibility declaration that, immediately before the commencement, was in effect for a person stops having effect on the commencement.
- (5) In this section—

eligibility application means an eligibility application within the meaning of section 178(1) as in force immediately before the commencement.

eligibility declaration means an eligibility declaration within the meaning of section 177 as in force immediately before the commencement.

Non-government amendment (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendments—

23 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 103, line 22 and page 104, line 6, 'part 2, division 1'—

omit, insert—

part 4, division 2

24 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 104, after line 12—

insert—

568A Transitioning to issuing working with children card for clearance that includes holder's photograph

- (1) This section applies if the chief executive approves an application for a person to which section 568 applies.
- (2) The chief executive may comply with section 232A for the person's working with children clearance by issuing the person a positive notice blue card that the chief executive would have issued before the commencement to a person who holds a positive notice.

- (3) The document mentioned in subsection (2) is taken to be a working with children card issued to the person under section 232A for the person's working with children clearance.
- (4) Despite schedule 7, definition *working with children card*, it does not matter that a document issued under subsection (2) does not include a photograph of the person.

25 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 105, after line 21—

*insert—***571A Transitioning to issuing working with children card for exemption that includes holder's photograph**

- (1) This section applies if, within 6 months after the commencement, the chief executive approves an application for a person to which section 571 applies.
- (2) Despite section 289, a working with children exemption is issued to the person for the term that ends 3 years after the commencement.
- (3) The chief executive may comply with section 290A for the person's working with children exemption by issuing the person an exemption card that the chief executive would have issued before the commencement to a person who holds a positive exemption notice.
- (4) The document mentioned in subsection (3) is taken to be a working with children card issued to the person under section 290A for the person's working with children exemption.
- (5) Despite schedule 7, definition *working with children card*, it does not matter that a document issued under subsection (3) does not include—
 - (a) a photograph of the person; or
 - (b) the expiry date of the person's working with children exemption.

26 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 106, lines 23 to 27—

*omit.***27 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)**

Page 109, line 14, 'section 300(b)'—

omit, insert—

section 300(1)(b)

28 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 111, line 3, 'Definition'—

*omit, insert—***Definitions**

Amendments agreed to.

Mr JANETZKI: I move the following amendments—**26 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)**

Page 111, lines 6 and 7—

*omit.***27 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)**

Page 111, lines 15 and 16—

*omit.***28 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)**

Page 111, line 26 to page 112, line 16—

*omit, insert—***582 Things done before commencement in relation to prescribed notice or exemption notice**

- (1) This section applies in relation to a thing done by the chief executive or another person under this Act before the commencement in relation to—
 - (a) a prescribed notice application or exemption notice application; or
 - (b) a prescribed notice or exemption notice.
- (2) The thing is taken to have been done under the amended Act in relation to—
 - (a) for a thing done in relation to a prescribed notice application or exemption notice application—the transitioned application for the application; or
 - (b) for a thing done in relation to a prescribed notice or exemption notice—the transitioned authority for the notice.

29 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)

Page 112, line 21 to page 113, line 17—

*omit, insert—***583 Obligations or powers arising before commencement in relation to prescribed notice or exemption notice**

- (1) This section applies if—
- (a) before the commencement, the chief executive or another person was required or permitted under this Act to do, but did not do, something in relation to—
- (i) a prescribed notice application or exemption notice application; or
- (ii) a prescribed notice or exemption notice; and
- (b) on the commencement, the period within which the chief executive or other person was required or permitted to do the thing has not passed.
- (2) The chief executive or other person must or may do the thing under the amended Act in relation to—
- (a) for a thing required or permitted to be done in relation to a prescribed notice application or exemption notice application—the transitioned application for the application; or
- (b) for a thing required or permitted to be done in relation to a prescribed notice or exemption notice—the transitioned authority for the notice.

Non-government amendments (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Mrs D'ATH: I move the following amendment—**29 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 11, pt 19)**

Page 114, line 30, 'this Act or a'—

*omit, insert—***Act or**

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 66, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 67 to 69, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—

**Mrs D'ATH (5.40 pm):** I move the following amendment—**30 After clause 69**

Page 120, after line 9—

*insert—***69A Amendment of sch 2 (Current serious offences)**

- (1) Schedule 2, entry for the Criminal Code—
insert—

315A Choking, suffocation or
strangulation in a
domestic setting

- (2) Schedule 2, entry for the Criminal Code, section
300, all the words in column 3—
omit.
- (3) Schedule 2, entry for the Criminal Code (Cwlth),
section 270.6 Sexual servitude offences—
omit.
- (4) Schedule 2, entry for the Criminal Code
(Cwlth)—
insert—

270.5 Servitude offences

271.4 Offence of trafficking in
children

271.7 Offence of domestic
trafficking in children

69B Amendment of sch 3 (Repealed or expired serious offences)

Schedule 3—

insert—

3 Criminal Code (Cwlth)

Provision of Act	Relevant heading	Qualification relating to the provision of the Act
270.6	Sexual servitude offences	only if an offender was or could have been liable as mentioned in section 270.8, as the provisions were in force from time to time before their repeal by the <i>Crimes Legislation Amendment (Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking) Act 2013</i> (Cwlth)

In speaking to amendment No. 30, I will also speak to amendments Nos 30 to 34, which amend schedule 2 'Current serious offences' and schedule 4 'Current disqualifying offences' to include additional offences to these schedules. For the benefit of members and before I go into detail on the specific amendments, I would like to outline the important distinction the working with children act makes between serious and disqualifying offences.

Disqualifying offences are those offences so high level that they automatically disqualify a person from even applying for a blue card. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended that only a discrete set of offences should be disqualifying. The QFCC echoed this sentiment.

Serious offences are not automatically disqualifying. However, the bar is set very high for a person convicted of a serious offence to be able to obtain a blue card. For a person who has been convicted of a serious offence, a strict decision-making framework applies and Blue Card Services must issue the person a negative notice unless the person can demonstrate exceptional circumstances.

It is important to understand that all disqualifying offences in schedule 4 of the working with children act are also listed as serious offences in schedule 2 of the act. The reason for this is so that the decision-making framework that applies for serious offences—that is, that a negative notice is issued unless there is an exceptional case—can also be applied to persons who have a conviction for a disqualifying offence with no imprisonment order imposed and who apply for an eligibility declaration.

The net effect of amendments Nos 30 to 34 is that the following offences will be elevated to disqualifying under the working with children act: attempt to murder; conspiring to murder; choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting; torture if the offence was committed against a child; cruelty to children under 16; attempt to commit rape where the offence was committed against an adult; assault with intent to commit rape where the offence was committed against an adult; Commonwealth servitude offences if the offence was committed against a child; Commonwealth offence of trafficking in children; and Commonwealth offence of domestic trafficking in children.

Further, manslaughter, whether committed against a child or an adult, which is currently neither a serious nor disqualifying offence, will be elevated to a serious offence. The elevation of these offences is entirely appropriate.

For clarification for all of those members who wonder why we specifically say that attempted rape and assault with intent to commit rape against an adult are being included as disqualifying offences and we are not referring to children, it is because those offences against children are already in the disqualifying offences schedule. That is why in this instance we are specifically referring to adults.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 70—



Mrs D'ATH (5.43 pm): I move the following amendments—

31 Clause 70 (Amendment of sch 4 (Current disqualifying offences))

Page 120, line 12, after entry for section 211 Bestiality—

insert—

306 Attempt to murder

309 Conspiring to murder

315A Choking, suffocation or strangulation
in a domestic setting

320A Torture if the offence was committed against a child

- 32 Clause 70 (Amendment of sch 4 (Current disqualifying offences))**
Page 120, line 12, after entry for section 363A Abduction of child under 16—
insert—
- 364 Cruelty to children
under 16
- 33 Clause 70 (Amendment of sch 4 (Current disqualifying offences))**
Page 120, line 16, 'entry for the Criminal Code, section 349'—
omit, insert—
entries for the Criminal Code, sections 349, 350 and 351
- 34 Clause 70 (Amendment of sch 4 (Current disqualifying offences))**
Page 120, after line 18—
insert—
- (4) Schedule 4, entry for the Criminal Code (Cwlth), section 270.6 Sexual servitude offences—
omit.
 - (5) Schedule 4, entry for the Criminal Code (Cwlth)—
insert—
- 270.5 Servitude offences if the offence was committed against a child
- 271.4 Offence of trafficking in children
- 271.7 Offence of domestic trafficking in children

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 70, as amended, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Mrs D'ATH (5.44 pm): I move the following amendment—

- 35 After clause 70**
Page 121, before line 1—
insert—
- 70A Amendment of sch 5 (Repealed or expired disqualifying offences)**
Schedule 5—
insert—

3 Criminal Code (Cwlth)

Provision of Act	Relevant heading	Qualification relating to the provision of the Act
270.6	Sexual servitude offences	only if an offender was or could have been liable as mentioned in section 270.8, as the provisions were in force from time to time before their repeal by the <i>Crimes Legislation Amendment (Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking) Act 2013</i> (Cwlth)

Amendment No. 35 moves the now repealed Commonwealth offence of sexual servitude to schedule 5 of the working with children act which lists the repealed or expired disqualifying offences.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 71—



Mrs D'ATH (5.44 pm): I move the following amendment—

- 36 Clause 71 (Amendment of sch 7 (Dictionary))**
Page 123, line 22, 'issue'—
omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 71, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 72 to 84, as read, agreed to.

Clause 85—



Mrs D'ATH (5.45 pm): I move the following amendment—

- 37 Clause 85 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))**
Page 133, lines 28 and 29—
omit.

Amendment No. 37 amends clause 85 to omit the definition of 'working with children exemption' from chapter 5, part 6, division 3 of the Public Service Act 2008.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 85, as amended, agreed to.



Mr JANETZKI (5.46 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 41:

LNP, 36—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 2—Dametto, Katter.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Costigan.

NOES, 45:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Pairs: Boyd, Batt; King, McArdle.

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 86—



Mr JANETZKI (5.52 pm): I move the following amendments—

36 Clause 86 (Acts amended)

Page 134, line 8, 'Acts'—

omit, insert—

Legislation

37 Clause 86 (Acts amended)

Page 134, line 11, 'Acts'—

omit, insert—

legislation

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

AYES, 38:

LNP, 36—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Costigan.

NOES, 49:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

Pairs: Boyd, Batt; King, McArdle.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendments (Mr Janetzki) negatived.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with the business program agreed to by the House, the time for consideration of this bill has expired.

Question put—That the minister’s amendments Nos 38 to 45, as circulated, be agreed to and clause 86 and schedules 1 and 2, as amended, stand part of the bill.

Amendments as circulated—

38 Schedule 1 (Amendment of Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000)

Page 145, line 14, ‘chapter 8,’—

omit.

39 Schedule 1 (Amendment of Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000)

Page 150, after line 24—

insert—

76A Section 356(1), after ‘provision of’—

insert—

chapter 7 or

40 Schedule 2 (Acts amended)

Page 161, line 23, ‘of’—

omit, insert—

for

41 Schedule 2 (Acts amended)

Page 162, line 17, ‘application for prescribed notice’—

omit, insert—

working with children check application

42 Schedule 2 (Acts amended)

Page 162, line 27, ‘section 175 does’—

omit, insert—

sections 175 and 176A do

43 Schedule 2 (Acts amended)

Page 163, lines 16 to 20—

omit, insert—

Note—

See section 148C of this Act and the Working with Children Act, section 14 and schedule 1, section 24 in relation to a nominee or director of a corporation carrying on the business of a licensed care service being taken to be carrying on a regulated business under the Working with Children Act.

44 Schedule 2 (Acts amended)

Page 178, lines 23 to 26—

omit.

45 Schedule 2 (Acts amended)

Page 179, after line 15—

insert—

14 Section 26(5)—

insert—

working with children clearance see the Working with Children Act, section 220(2).

working with children exemption see the Working with Children Act, section 282(2).

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 86, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 and 2, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

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

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Fishery Quotas

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.59 pm): I rise to table three petitions which support the fact that Labor's proposed change to the crab, trawl and inshore fishing quotas will reduce allocations and result in massive losses of income for our commercial fishermen. The first petition has 400 signatures, and it states—

Labor's proposed changes to crab, trawl and inshore fishing quotas will reduce allocations and result in massive losses of income for our commercial fishers.

I table that.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding Queensland fishing industry [790].

The second petition is an e-petition, and it states—

We, the undersigned, call on the Palaszczuk Labor government to reconsider their unfair proposed changes to the Queensland Fishing Industry. The proposed changes to crab, trawl and inshore fishing quotas will reduce allocation and result in massive losses of income for commercial fishers. These unfair changes fail not only commercial fishers but also the coastal communities they support.

I table that.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding local seafood [791].

The third petition states—

We ask the Queensland government to stop adding fishing restrictions that are reducing commercial fisher's ability to supply the community with fresh local seafood.

Seafood consumers who want to eat local wild catch are being deprived of this community resource in shops and restaurants.

I table that.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding commercial fishing [792].

As members know, Hervey Bay has always been known for its seafood. It has sea scallops and things like that. I would like to invite everyone to come to the Hervey Bay Seafood Festival on 11 August to see how important the Seafood Festival and the seafood industry is.

Dr Robinson: I want to stay at your place.

Mr SORENSEN: Beautiful—you can pitch your tent in the backyard at home. That is no trouble at all. The Seafood Festival is really amazing because thousands of people come to Hervey Bay every year to attend that festival. Without the seafood industry, the unemployment rate in Hervey Bay would be huge. We have the add-on effect of the manufacturing of the seafood, and some of that seafood is sent overseas. It is a very important industry in Hervey Bay, especially the scallop industry, like I said. The Hervey Bay scallops is a brand name. I hope we can support our fishermen to make sure they can make a viable living so that it is not so cruel for some of the fishermen who come to see me.

Federal Election

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.02 pm): This Saturday my electorate of Mansfield has a clear choice: the choice between a stable Shorten Labor government or more cuts and chaos of a Morrison-Turnbull-Abbott-Hanson-Palmer government. I urge my Mansfield electorate community to vote for Jo Briskey—Labor for Bonner.

Jo is a fantastic person—intelligent, hardworking, a strong community advocate—and a qualified psychologist. For the past five years Jo has been the executive director of The Parenthood, Australia's peak advocacy organisation for over 63,000 parents, so Jo understands the challenges that face our local families and mature age residents. As such, she has announced much needed commitments to our Mansfield electorate should we elect her this Saturday.

As many members are aware, education has been my career, my life and my passion to ensure that young people have the opportunity to achieve their personal and professional goals for a better future. The Mansfield electorate is undergoing a significant transformation. Education is the key reason

why young families move to my electorate. With 19 high-performing schools, it is a hub of educational excellence. Only Labor and Jo are committed to early education. Labor has a plan to guarantee 15 hours of kindy a week for every three- and four-year-old—4,200 Bonner children—the biggest investment in early education in Australia's history.

A Shorten Labor government will restore a \$14 billion cut to Australian schools. Labor will inject a further \$18.84 million into state schools in Bonner: \$2.6 million for Mansfield State High School; \$1.6 million for Rochedale State High School; \$890,000 for Mansfield State School; \$270,000 for Mount Gravatt East on top of the \$630,000 committed to Wishart State School, and as part of our Fair Funding plan Labor will also pledge \$360,000 for a new playground at Wishart; \$430,000 for Upper Mount Gravatt State School; \$830,000 for Rochedale State School; \$370,000 for Mackenzie Special School; and \$120,000 for Mackenzie State School.

In addition to our great state schools, a federal Labor government will invest \$460,000 into Mount Gravatt TAFE after local apprentice numbers have plummeted under LNP cuts. A federal Labor government will deliver 56,000 new apprenticeships and TAFE places with no up-front fees for Queenslanders as part of our Queensland skills guarantee. Labor also has a plan to reverse the LNP cuts to universities to give the next generation the best start to their tertiary studies and ensure a bright future that is so important to my aspiring community who value education.

I am proud that Jo Briskey—

(Time expired)

Theodore Electorate, Law and Order

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (6.05 pm): I rise tonight to thank our local police officers for the wonderful work they do on the northern Gold Coast. My community is forever grateful for the work they do in keeping us safe. We know they work long hours responding to calls for service and dealing with those who do not care about the rights and liberties of others, yet they continue to turn up to work in the knowledge that they are being placed in harm's way.

Earlier this year one of my local officers was seriously assaulted in the line of duty. The absolute contempt some in our community have for our police and other emergency services is horrid. Crime is a sad reality of our modern society, but should it be? We read in our local newspaper, the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, that even our local shopping centres are becoming crime hotspots with theft, fraud, assaults, handling stolen goods, drug offences, traffic related offences, good order offences and other property offences. Furthermore, earlier this year I spoke to residents about assaults at our train stations and heard their frustration. I also heard from one elderly resident whose home was broken into multiple times. That resident was so scared to live in her own home that she was forced to sell it. Her precious jewellery, handed down from her mother, was stolen along with the precious memories that can never be replaced.

These residents do not blame the police. They know they are doing the best job they can with limited resources. Yes, we certainly do need more police on the northern Gold Coast and at Coomera—a lot more—we have been begging for it. However, the underlying issue remains: we need stronger deterrence—tougher sentencing that meets community expectations. I am sure everybody in this chamber would agree that we do need a degree of rehabilitation, but the community has a right to feel safe and see these individuals punished in line with community expectations, therefore, limiting the chance of those individuals reoffending and potentially destroying another person's life.

I have always supported the tough stance the LNP has had on crime, tougher sentencing and stronger legislation. As one of my constituents, a social worker, once said to me at one of my community roadsides, 'There are some in our society who can't be rehabilitated and will always be a threat and prey on the vulnerable.' Therefore, our local communities are demanding tougher action. It is our responsibility as members of parliament to actually meet those expectations and bring in measures of punishment that are in line with community expectations.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Jobs

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (6.08 pm): Whether someone is a plumber, concreter, electrician, carpenter, builder or a subbie, being a tradie is a great job. Tradies in our neighbourhood want a fair go so they can provide for their families, pay their staff, pay their bills and maybe have a few

bucks left over at the end to live life a bit. Since January 2015 nearly 30,000 construction jobs have been created under the Palaszczuk government's economic settings. They include a record investment by the Palaszczuk Labor government in schools, hospitals, housing and business attraction initiatives.

I also hear in my community of Springwood what tradies from Mount Cotton to Rochedale South say about those jobs. They say that they have to be fair and safe, they have to be decent jobs and they have to get paid for the work they do. I am very proud of the work we have done with our local tradies to find a way to do just that. Thanks to the advice of tradies like Kent, who is a gasfitter from Shailer Park; Mick, who is a concreter from Rochedale South; and Murray, who is an electrician from Mount Cotton, Queensland is leading the way in reforming the construction industry. It is this government that has stood up for a fair go for small business construction firms so they can have the confidence to employ more Queenslanders. Labor is delivering a fair go for tradies with our security-of-payment reforms including project bank accounts that ensure they get paid in full, on time, every time.

Over 100 projects to date, in fact 124 projects, have established PBAs, with 51 of Queensland's top building firms on Queensland government projects valued at around \$500 million. This includes the \$4.2 million Rochedale State High School teaching centre, which is now underway. On this side of the House, we believe that when you do a hard day's work you deserve to be paid; it is only fair. Federal Labor also committed to protecting tradies and ensuring they get paid through the Tradie Pay Guarantee. A Shorten Labor government will establish a \$7 million tradie litigation fund to give justice to those tradies who have been ripped off. A Shorten Labor government will take action to eliminate phoenix operators who hurt honest small businesses and our hardworking tradies, including fines of up to \$200,000 or five years in prison.

In contrast, the Morrison government has no plan to support workers in the construction industry. Let us look at its record. The coalition ignored the recommendations of Kate Carnell, the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, who recommended that trust accounts such as project bank accounts be mandated for all work and construction projects. The Morrison government voted 26 times against a royal commission into the finance sector and poured \$130 million of taxpayers' money into the ABCC, which only ever investigated one subcontractor nonpayment.

This Saturday, Queenslanders have a clear choice between a Labor government that backs tradies or a Morrison-Hanson-Palmer coalition that backs the high street financiers and the top end of town.

Small Business

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.11 pm): Speaking of paying people, we believe that government has a responsibility to pay its contracts in a timely way. That is why under an LNP government we introduced a fair pay policy for businesses to be paid within 30 days, something that had not been done before. As a state opposition, 12 months ago we announced that that policy needed to be updated and that a fair pay policy under an LNP government would see small businesses paid within 20 days. So, 12 months later I was delighted last night to hear the Deputy Premier announce our fair pay policy for small businesses. They deserve to be paid in a timely way, in a way that provides the cash flow to do business and employ more people. It is not enough just to have a policy; it must be delivered. Unfortunately, with what we see on the latest late payment data on the government's website, it is evident that Labor is miserably failing even with the 30-day policy procedures to achieve the existing payment policy. The department of local government late payment report for March 2018 to March 2019 showed that 20.55 per cent of payments were late. The Department of Education report for January to March 2019 showed that 18.3 per cent of payments were late, and it goes on.

As one goes through the open data website, department after department and agency after agency pays small businesses late. It does not end there. Labor is actively removing late payment data from the open data website, watering down transparency and accountability. What we have is not an open data website but a not-so-open data website. I table a copy of a letter from the member for Mudgeeraba to the Speaker that includes information no longer available on the open data website.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 December 2018, from the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Curtis Pitt, regarding question on notice No. 1668 [\[793\]](#).

The information that was there is no longer available but is contained in this letter. We know for a fact that this data is compiled and is available, yet Labor hides it because it avoids scrutiny and shirks accountability. We will champion small businesses and their not being the cash cow or bank of government. We will see those contracts paid in a timely way, but it is not enough to have a policy; it needs to be delivered. There must be transparency and accountability. I am delighted that this

government has adopted our policy of a 20-day period for contract payment of small businesses, but it needs to go further. The government needs to release the data, put it back on the open data website and ensure that it achieves it—pays people on time. Small businesses deserve our support, not just this government's lip-service.

Logan Hospital; Federal Election

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (6.14 pm): I rise tonight to speak on an issue that is a key priority for my constituents in Waterford: funding for the Logan Hospital. Many people in my community rely on the Logan Hospital to provide quality health care for them and their family. Under federal LNP cuts to health care, more than \$6 million was ripped out of our local hospital. It is an absolute disgrace. Logan is one of the fastest growing communities in the state of Queensland, and we need investment in our front-line services. We do not need more of the LNP's cuts and chaos. The Palaszczuk Labor government is doing its fair share of the heavy lifting by investing \$281 million to increase the capacity of Logan Hospital from 448 to 640 beds, but we need the federal government to come to the table. Most importantly, we need a federal local member of parliament who will stand up for us and for the Logan Hospital.

This election has proved that only one local candidate is willing to do that. This week, the federal Labor candidate for Forde, Des Hardman, announced that a federal Labor government would invest \$29.1 million in the hospital to build an extra floor and a 32-bed ward. Des has secured \$33.4 million for an urgent and specialist care centre to help treat patients who present at emergency. This will provide vital relief to the Logan Hospital emergency department, one of the busiest in the state. Forde needs a local member like Des Hardman who knows what is needed to fix these problems. As a radiographer at Logan Hospital over 14 years, he saw firsthand the issues this hospital faces. He knows what happens when we leave our hospitals in the hands of the LNP. He saw the impacts of the Newman government cuts which saw 1,800 nurses across the state sacked.

Logan Hospital cannot afford another three years of LNP government. This is why this Saturday voters in Waterford and across Logan have a choice. Do we want more funding for our Logan Hospital? Do we want someone who stands up for our families, who knows firsthand the issues of health care and who ensures that no matter where you live or how much money you have you can get first-class healthcare treatment at the local hospital? The only candidate this Saturday in the election is Des Hardman for the Labor Party. I have known Des for many years and am incredibly proud to call him a good friend. I know that he will absolutely deliver for our families in Waterford and across Logan. It is absolutely time to support Des Hardman and Labor this Saturday.

Moggill Electorate; Federal Election

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.17 pm): We are less than a month away from the 2019 Queensland state budget and, as hardworking residents and families in the electorate of Moggill have seen over previous years, often very little or in fact nothing of substance is allocated by this Labor government. We have traffic congestion, overcrowding in schools, higher cost-of-living pressures and a failed South East Queensland Regional Plan under this state Labor government which is leading to overdevelopment in the electorate of Moggill and, more broadly, the western suburbs of Brisbane. Residents in the electorate of Moggill are growing tired of this Labor government, a government that continually and actively goes out of its way to not invest in infrastructure and services in the electorate of Moggill and, again more broadly, across the western suburbs of Brisbane. Labor refuses to invest in local traffic congestion-busting infrastructure and is more than happy for motorists and public transport users to sit idle in traffic along Moggill Road. It is simply not good enough for this to continue.

Labor refuses to invest in our local schools. There is overcrowding in local schools. The ageing Kenmore State High School hall needs to be upgraded. We need additional library facilities, and classrooms are urgently needed. More bathroom and toilet facilities at Moggill State School must be a priority and we need parking solutions at Pullenvale State School, just to name a few.

The Moggill electorate is also suffering because of the Labor government's shocking track record when it comes to economic mismanagement in Queensland. The unemployment rate is the second worst in the country. Cost-of-living pressures have skyrocketed. There is also Labor's five new taxes, which are ripping \$2.2 billion out of the Queensland economy.

There are also many crises under this government. There is the health system crisis in relation to ambulance ramping, bed block, longer waiting lists and the disgraceful renaming of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. There is the youth justice crisis, with children being held in watch houses for

excessive periods. It has really become a horror show, with sleep deprivation and long periods of incarceration being called out by human rights groups and the Office of the Public Guardian. Ministers do not want to be responsible, let alone accountable, for this situation in Queensland. We also have 'rail fail', the child safety system crisis—the list goes on and on.

Can members imagine the national disaster it would be if Labor were elected federally this Saturday? There will be union chaos, economic mismanagement, more taxes, higher debt and fewer jobs. Only a Morrison LNP federal government can build a stronger economy and secure our future. The federal Liberal-National candidate for Ryan, Julian Simmonds, has the capacity to be an outstanding representative in Canberra. This was clearly evident at the candidates forum that was held last week in Kenmore. He has already promised \$25 million for upgrading the Indooroopilly roundabout, \$12.5 million for upgrading the Kenmore roundabout and \$1.5 million for a Kenmore community hub. What does Labor have? Labor has nothing to offer but \$387 billion in new taxes including a retiree tax. Vote LNP this Saturday and ensure the re-election of the Morrison federal coalition government.

Federal Election; Brisbane to Sunshine Coast, Rail Corridor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (6.20 pm): I am pleased to rise in the House this evening to support two great local champions in the electorate of Woodridge: Jim Chalmers, the federal Labor member for Rankin, and another great local champion in Logan, Des Hardman, the Labor candidate for Forde. They are part of Bill Shorten's federal Labor team, a team that will bring an end to the cuts and chaos we see coming out of Canberra. They have made some great announcements—great announcements that will benefit the electorate of Woodridge and the city of Logan—as part of the election campaign, particularly in public health care, an area that always suffers damaging cuts implemented by the LNP.

Thanks to Jim and Des, Bill Shorten's Labor team has committed \$29.1 million to build an extra floor and a new 32-bed ward at Logan Hospital, along with \$33.4 million to build an urgent and specialist care centre at the hospital. This complements the Palaszczuk Labor government's election commitment of almost \$300 million to redevelop that hospital by delivering 190 new beds—something I was delighted to be able to deliver when I served as Queensland's health minister.

Federal Labor will also deliver a new headspace centre for Logan, providing more early intervention mental health services. Other essential community support groups in our area will be supported by federal Labor, including additional funding for YFS, Access Community Services and Multilink, which all serve the Woodridge electorate.

A Shorten Labor government will also help local schools including Marsden State High School, which is poised to receive \$465,000 for oval upgrades, new lighting and scoreboards. I am also delighted that other local sporting groups, such as the Logan City Netball Association, based at Ewing Park in Woodridge, will receive \$150,000 for lighting improvements—an election commitment delivered by Jim Chalmers. I am delighted to be able to support these great candidates. On Saturday I urge all local voters to put Woodridge first, to put Logan first and to vote Labor—Jim Chalmers in Rankin and Des Hardman in Forde.

Yesterday I stated that the federal LNP government had not matched federal Labor's funding commitment in relation to the rail corridor between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, in particular Nambour to Beerburrum. To clarify, Labor has committed \$390 million to that project in the rail corridor, as has the LNP. For the benefit of all members, the relevant federal Labor commitment, which remains unmatched by the Morrison government, relates to the road corridor between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. In particular, federal Labor has committed \$1.152 billion to the Bruce Highway for improvements between the Gateway Motorway and Dohles Rocks Road and between the Dohles Rocks Road interchange and Deception Bay Road. I call on the federal coalition to support these important federal Labor commitments.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance; Federal Election

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (6.23 pm): I want to highlight some areas that the government could address in the June state budget to ease infrastructure and other problems that have developed over the past 4½ years in the Cleveland district, Oodgeroo electorate, Redlands Coast and bayside, south-east Brisbane region. The Redland City Council and LNP federal government have done a good job in our region. Federal members Andrew Laming in Bowman, Ross Vasta in Bonner and Bert van Manen in Forde are hardworking members who have achieved much, and I look forward to their re-election this Saturday.

Sadly, at the state level we have fallen behind as we have not got our fair share of state resources. A range of fails must be addressed in the state budget. Labor's 'rail fail' continues, with 42 services cut on the Cleveland line and only one restored—41 to go just to break even. Sadly, the Cleveland line remains the 'misery line', according to Robert Dow of Rail Back on Track. He and Cleveland locals such as Nina Blackwell have done a great job in holding the government to account on behalf of frustrated locals. Labor's disruptive cuts have resulted in overcrowded carriages and have forced commuters back into their cars, increasing the daily chaos and congestion on our roads.

In terms of health, Labor's Redland Hospital crisis is getting worse, with no state upgrade in sight. Patients are waiting up to three days in ED. This is completely unacceptable. No upgrade in the state budget is no answer and an insult to Redlands people. I am grateful for 'ScoMo' and Andrew Laming, who have announced a \$30 million commitment to an upgrade of the hospital plus up to \$18 million for the car park. The LNP is leading the way with health in Redlands.

Then there is the dam and water fail. Sadly, Labor decided to not replace the gates to the Leslie Harrison Dam, reducing the amount of potable water dramatically. Labor's water policies have cut capacity, reduced drought readiness, increased the once-cheap cost of Redlands water and led to maybe an overreliance now on the Straddie aquifer.

In terms of education, despite my repeated calls to keep the STEM classrooms at Ormiston State School the minister has not ruled out removing the buildings. I again call on her today to rule out her STEM cuts for girls and boys at Ormiston State School.

In terms of Straddie, Labor's ETS is stalling as resource sector jobs end this year due to Labor's harsh laws. Traditional owners and other locals are protesting the slow pace of transition and lack of consultation. Minister Jones promised 400 ecotourism jobs. They have not happened. The Deputy Premier promised 1,000 construction jobs at Toondah Harbour. They have not happened. The people feel abandoned. The state budget is an opportunity for the Treasurer to invest in Dunwich harbour now that the master planning is done. The whale interpretive centre would be a better outcome at the Dunwich cultural centre.

There is a failure to invest in major road upgrades and duplications. There is a range of other fails such as cuts to the fire ants program in Redlands, the dragging out of the Cleveland breakwater—a whole range of other things. The people of Redlands, Brisbane and Queensland do not need more Labor this Saturday. Only a vote for the LNP will ensure we do not get wall-to-wall bad Labor governments in Queensland. Enough is enough.

Federal Election

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (6.26 pm): It is a pleasure to rise this evening to talk about the amazing, strong, intelligent Labor women candidates being run in Queensland at the federal election, particularly in my area: Anika Wells in Lilley, Ali France in Dickson, Susan Lamb in Longman and, last but certainly not least, Corinne Mulholland in Petrie.

Corinne is a long-term resident of the Petrie electorate. She bought her first house in Redcliffe when she was 21 and has continued to live and work locally in the Moreton Bay region, along with her mum and sister. She grew up in this region and has loved and thrived in the region. She has seen all of the changes that have happened over many years and understands the pressure placed on local infrastructure and front-line services.

Corinne has significant experience working across government and policymaking. She has worked in a senior local government role, where she has built a strong reputation by working with local communities, sporting and business groups to deliver for her community. Corinne will use this experience to fight for the roads, the infrastructure and the services we need in our growing community. Corinne knows that Petrie needs an MP who has the energy and vision to help build a stronger future. That is why Corinne will fight to reverse the unfair cuts to penalty rates and the LNP's cuts to the Redcliffe Hospital.

Corinne has made commitments to see Labor deliver over \$20 million in extra funding for local schools in Petrie, including many in my local area of Redcliffe. She has committed to stage 2 of the Moreton Bay university project. An amount of \$50 million will be invested in building a state-of-the-art living lab, supporting 1,500 jobs during construction. This is critical. We will have a university that sits right on the train line that we built—federal Labor and state Labor—and we will see opportunities opening up right across the Moreton Bay region for young people and mature age students to go on to university. That is absolutely fantastic.

Corinne has been such a strong advocate in the health space. She led a successful campaign—although the federal member is trying to claim it now; that just shows how successful she is—putting pressure on the coalition government to issue an MRI licence, which it has now done. Corinne had the pleasure to announce, along with me and Minister Steven Miles, that that MRI is being funded and delivered to Redcliffe Hospital. The other day we had the great pleasure, with Bill Shorten, to announce an additional CT coming to the Redcliffe Hospital. That is fantastic.

(Time expired)

The House adjourned at 6.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson