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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 4 September 2019

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WEDNESDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2019


 The Legislative Assembly met at 10.30 am.

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


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

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

NRL Cowboys House


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to thank all members who came out to NRL Cowboys House this morning for the barbeque breakfast. NRL Cowboys House provides supported accommodation for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote North Queensland communities, enabling them to access quality secondary education opportunities in Townsville. For the organisation of the barbeque breakfast event, I thank Jeff Reibel and Vicki Romano from the North Queensland Cowboys. I also wish to place on record my thanks to all the staff at NRL Cowboys House including general manager Rochelle Jones and Steve Tupers from the Cowboys Community Foundation.

Straw No More

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, during this sitting of parliament in Townsville, on the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef, I am pleased to announce that I have directed the Queensland parliament to take the Straw No More pledge. The Queensland parliament has made an ongoing commitment to stop using single-use, plastic straws in its day-to-day operations, not just for this regional parliament but in Brisbane as well.

The Straw No More campaign was established in 2017 by then nine-year-old Cairns girl Molly Steer. Molly was concerned about the effect that the half a billion disposable, plastic straws used every day across the planet were having on our oceans and waterways. At the end of every youth parliament I always encourage students to become active in their communities and to take a stand for issues that matter to them. Molly is a great example of doing just that. I commend her for her passion and willingness to champion this issue. I would also like to thank the member for Cairns for bringing this initiative to my attention.

School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that today we will be visited in the gallery by students and teachers who are participating in our regional parliament education sessions. From the Mundingburra electorate, we will have students from the Annandale State School, William Ross State High School, Annandale Christian College, Enkindle Village School and Cranbrook State School. From the Thuringowa electorate, we will have students from Rasmussen State School. From the Townsville electorate, we will have students from Pimlico State School, Townsville West State School, St Joseph's Catholic School The Strand, St Margaret Mary's College, Marian Catholic School, which I visited last week, and Townsville South State School. From the Traeger electorate, we will have students from Millchester State School. Welcome all.

TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Trad)—

[1422](#) Overseas travel report: Queensland Treasury Corporation and QIC Limited, Roadshow meetings in London, Paris and New York, 26 July-4 August 2019

MEMBER'S PAPER


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

Member for Glass House (Mr Powell)—

[1423](#) Nonconforming petition relating to the installation of traffic lights at Campbell's Pocket Road and D'Aguilar Highway

MINISTERIAL PAPER


Revocation of State Forest Areas

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (10.34 am): I lay upon the table of the House a proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 and a brief explanation of the proposal.

Tabled paper. Revocation of state areas: Proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 and a brief explanation of the proposal, relating to Murray Upper State Forest [\[1434\]](#).

NOTICE OF MOTION

Revocation of State Forest Area

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (10.34 am): I give notice that, after the expiration of at least 14 days as provided in the Forestry Act 1959, I will move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 the setting apart and declaration as State Forest of the area as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

Description of area to be revoked

Murray Forest	Upper State	State	An area of 6.497 hectares described as lot 190 on SP218278, as illustrated on the attached "Murray Upper State Forest revocation: Sketch A".
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2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts for submission to the Governor in Council.

The proposed revocation of part of Murray Upper State Forest is required to allow the grant of Aboriginal freehold land under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 in accordance with Indigenous land use agreement commitments between Abraham Muriata on his own behalf and on behalf of the Girramay people, the Girramay People Aboriginal Corporation, the Cassowary Coast Regional Council and the state of Queensland. I would also like to acknowledge that there are representatives of the Girramay people here in the chamber with us today.

RESOURCES SAFETY AND HEALTH QUEENSLAND BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.36 am): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from His Excellency the Governor recommends the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

RESOURCES SAFETY AND HEALTH QUEENSLAND BILL 2019

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, PAUL de JERSEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

An Act to establish a statutory body called Resources Safety and Health Queensland to regulate safety and health in the resources sector, establish an employing office, provide for the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health, and to amend this Act, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Explosives Act 1999, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Public Service Act 2008, the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Regulation 2019 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes


(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 29 August 2019

Tabled paper. Message, dated 29 August 2019, from His Excellency the Governor recommending the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 [[1424](#)].

Introduction

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.36 am): I present a bill for an act to establish a statutory body called Resources Safety and Health Queensland to regulate safety and health in the resources sector, establish an employing office, provide for the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health, and to amend this act, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Explosives Act 1999, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Public Service Act 2008, the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Regulation 2019 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper. Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 [[1425](#)].

Tabled paper. Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019, explanatory notes [[1426](#)].

The re-identification of coal workers' pneumoconiosis and the six mining and quarrying fatalities that have occurred in the last year highlight the need for continuous monitoring and improvement of the regulatory framework and the importance of a transparent, independent regulator. As the minister responsible for resources safety and health, I am committed to maintaining the most effective regulatory framework possible to ensure every worker in Queensland's resources industries goes home safe every day.

The Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 establishes a revised regulatory framework that aims to engender worker trust, ensure appropriate independence and transparency, and enhance independent oversight of the performance of the regulator. The bill has arisen from the recommendations of the independently led Project Management Office, which was established by the Palaszczuk government to examine and develop for implementation key recommendations of the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee. I thank the committee for their input.

The bill establishes Resources Safety and Health Queensland, or RSHQ, as a statutory body, ensuring genuine independence of the regulator—which was at the core of the select committee recommendations and the government's response. The focus of the new statutory body will be the safety and health of Queensland's resources industries workers. RSHQ will include inspectorates for coalmines, mineral mines and quarries, explosives and petroleum and gas. RSHQ will also include the Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station, or Simtars, and the Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme.

As a statutory body, RSHQ will be a separate legal entity from the mines department. RSHQ will not be part of, or subject to, oversight from an administering department. This will ensure that the function of protecting workers is separate from government's function of growing and facilitating mining and exploration projects and the resources sector as a whole.

RSHQ will have its own executive officer who will be appointed by the Governor in Council and will report directly to the minister. RSHQ will be able to enter into contracts, charge fees and deal with property in its own name. This will provide operational and administrative independence and will enable RSHQ to continue a range of government activities, including work carried out by Simtars. The bill further ensures RSHQ's accountability by making the regulator subject to the Crime and Corruption Act

2001, the Financial Accountability Act 2009 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982. Transparency will be achieved through legislative reporting requirements and the preparation of RSHQ's own annual report.

The bill establishes a separate Resources Safety and Health Queensland employing office to engage public sector staff to undertake functions for RSHQ through work performance arrangements. This will enable RSHQ to pursue its activities while ensuring staff continue to be employed under the Public Service Act 2008, thus retaining existing entitlements and conditions.

The bill establishes an independent Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health with functions across all resources sectors, not just mining. The role of commissioner will be established separately to RSHQ. The commissioner will provide impartial advice to the minister about safety and health matters and will monitor, review and report on the performance of RSHQ's functions. The commissioner will also chair the coal and mining safety and health advisory committees and engage with representatives from the explosives and petroleum and gas sectors. The commissioner will act independently, impartially and in the public interest at all times. The role will replace the existing Commissioner for Mines Safety and Health position.

The bill will enhance the functions of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee to provide a more strategic focus in identifying critical safety and health risks. In addition to providing advice to the minister, the advisory committees will develop and evaluate progress against five-year strategic plans and develop action plans to achieve measurable targets. Strategic plans will identify, quantify and prioritise safety and health issues facing the mining and quarrying sector. These priorities will inform appropriate actions to be taken by government, industry and workers. The enhanced functions of the advisory committees further strengthens the oversight, monitoring and transparency framework provided for in the bill and will build on proven tripartite working arrangements.

The bill also provides for an independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor established under the Work Health and Safety Act to prosecute serious offences under resources safety legislation. Only the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor will be able to prosecute serious offences, while other offences may be prosecuted by the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor or the chief executive officer of RSHQ. Utilising the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor will enhance transparency and independent decision-making in relation to prosecutions and promote efficiency of process.

The bill amends resources safety legislation to define serious offences that would be prosecuted by the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. For mining and quarrying, a serious offence will be an offence where a person on whom a safety and health obligation is imposed contravenes the obligation and the contravention causes death, grievous bodily harm, bodily harm or involves exposure to a substance which is likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm or an offence prescribed by regulation. The bill adopts similar serious offence provisions for explosives and petroleum and gas. Individuals will have the ability to submit a written request to the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor seeking that a proceeding be brought in relation to a particular act or omission which constitutes a serious offence.

The reforms made in this bill will establish an independent regulatory framework that workers can trust and will help reaffirm Queensland as one of the safest places to work. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. AJ LYNHAM (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.44 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee

Mr SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee.

HEALTH TRANSPARENCY BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.44 am): I present a bill for an act to facilitate the publication and collection of information about public facilities and private facilities that provide health services, and to amend this act, the Health Ombudsman Act 2013, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999 and the Public Health Act 2005 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Health Transparency Bill 2019 [\[1427\]](#).

Tabled paper: Health Transparency Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[1428\]](#).

I also table a draft Health Transparency Regulation 2019 and a draft Hospital and Health Boards (State Aged Care Facilities) Amendment Regulation 2019. If the bill is passed it is intended to make these regulations. The regulations are being tabled so that parliament and stakeholders can consider the proposed framework holistically.

Tabled paper: Draft Health Transparency Regulation 2019, Subordinate Legislation 2019 No. [\[1429\]](#).

Tabled paper: Draft Health Transparency Regulation 2019, Subordinate Legislation 2019 No., explanatory notes [\[1430\]](#).

Tabled paper: Draft Hospital and Health Boards (State Aged Care Facilities) Amendment Regulation 2019, Subordinate Legislation 2019 No. [\[1431\]](#).

Tabled paper: Draft Hospital and Health Boards (State Aged Care Facilities) Amendment Regulation 2019, Subordinate Legislation 2019 No., explanatory notes [\[1432\]](#).

This bill deals with three main issues. The most significant of these is to establish a legislative framework for obtaining and publishing comparative information about public and private health facilities and residential aged-care facilities. The bill also introduces requirements for public residential aged-care facilities to maintain a minimum nurse and support worker skill mix ratio and a minimum number of hours of care per resident each day. The bill also improves the operation and efficiency of Queensland's health complaints system by implementing recommendations made by the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

On 11 July our ambos at triple 0 received a phone call from a then little known aged-care facility on the Gold Coast: Earle Haven. The caller said the staff had gone home and they would need QAS to pick up about 60 residents. The QAS operator, though very professional, was audibly shocked. It is no small operation to move 60 or more frail and elderly people to new residences or hospitals. It is the kind of call you get in an emergency. It is the kind of request that our ambos have only seen in the event of a cyclone or a bushfire. But, as it turned out, the people running the centre walked out over a contract dispute.

It is only because of the expertise and professionalism of our paramedics and health services that almost 70 frail, elderly people had somewhere to sleep that night. When our ambos arrived the scene was chaotic. The few staff who stayed behind out of compassion for their patients did not know what had happened. They were only told they would not be paid and that they should leave. People were stripping the centre of equipment, including: fridges, food, spare bedding, telephones, medication, patient files, the mops and buckets and even the gloves the staff used to take people to the toilet. Our incredible health services set up a triage and worked long into the night to find each and every resident somewhere to stay and to transport them there.

I went there to see the operation firsthand and it broke my heart. Dementia patients were confused as to why they needed to leave their home at night. Residents were scared to leave all of their belongings behind. Some of them cried and some begged to stay, but with no food, no medication and no telephone line there was no safe way to let them do that. I want to thank the member for Gaven, who was there all afternoon and into the night helping out by feeding people who were hungry and helping families get connected with their loved ones. She even arrived with as many coffees as the local McCafe could produce.

I especially want to thank our incredible paramedics and health staff. I know that some of you cried too because this should never have happened—not to our parents and grandparents, who deserve more respect than being abandoned by a company they paid to care for them. It was not until the dust settled that we learned the federal government knew Earle Haven was in trouble. This disaster has shone a light on how badly the Morrison government has dropped the ball on regulating the private aged care—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Everton, your comments will come through the chair.

Dr MILES: This disaster has shone a light on how badly the Morrison government has dropped the ball on regulating the private aged-care sector.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr MILES: The ones you wanted to sell?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, the same warning will apply to you as went to the member for Everton. Comments will come through the chair. Members, I will not tolerate interjections on the member on his feet.

Dr MILES: The corporations—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Everton is warned under the standing orders.

Dr MILES: The corporations have been allowed to run amok—putting profits before people, feeding residents on \$6 a day and letting staffing levels fall dangerously low.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call. Those to my left will cease their interjections. Please continue, Minister.

Dr MILES: On this side of the House at least, Mr Speaker, we believe Queenslanders deserve better than this.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, it would also be helpful to ensure that we are introducing the bill and being non-combative. It does not assist the tenor of the House.

Dr MILES: This is precisely why the Palaszczuk government is introducing new measures for private nursing homes to disclose their staffing hours. If your parent or grandparent gives their life savings to a company to care for them in their old age, you deserve to know what they are paying for.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba.

Dr MILES: Are they paying for enough staff with the right skill mix to care for them? Disturbingly, the Morrison government opposes this bill. They wrote a lengthy and detailed submission opposing this bill to make the sector more accountable. Our bill seeks to mandate the minimum percentage of nurses—50 per cent of staff—in public aged-care facilities, the—

Opposition members interjected.

Dr MILES: This is about state run aged-care facilities.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Burleigh will put his comments through the chair.

Dr MILES: The bill seeks to mandate the minimum care hours per resident and it will get private facilities to report their care hours to the public. This is about making sure our parents, grandparents and loved ones are treated with respect, dignity and appropriate levels of care. How on earth can the Morrison government oppose that? They are letting dodgy contractors and greedy owners off the hook so that they can continue to exploit vulnerable—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked you to cease your interjections.

Dr MILES: They are letting dodgy contractors and greedy owners off the hook so that they can continue to exploit vulnerable Queenslanders for profit. Their claim that this will create some kind of regulatory burden is beyond ridiculous. Do they really think providers do not even know how many staff they have or that it is unfair to ask them to count them? Their position is indefensible, but that has not stopped the LNP from trying in vain to defend a government they are too scared to stand up to.

We are in a position right now where in private facilities one nurse can be covering 50 patients or one nurse is covering two facilities 10 minutes apart. Does the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition really think they can defend this to Queenslanders? Maybe it is because of the tens of thousands of dollars the LNP has received in donations from these companies. Maybe it is because—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to standing order 129(3)(d) on the introduction of bills by ministers. That states that the minister may deliver 'a speech explaining the Bill ("explanatory speech")'. I put to you, Mr Speaker, and the House, that the minister is not explaining the bill. He is debating the bill, which will happen at the appropriate time after consideration in detail.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, I want to hear the member for Kawana's point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that the minister is debating and anticipating debate on the bill which should go through to the committee. The minister is simply introducing the bill and I ask him to be called to order under 129(3)(d) of the standing orders.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I will rule on your point of order. This is certainly not the first time that I have heard a bill introduced where the explanatory speech is requiring contextualisation of the circumstances that led to the development of the bill, and that is what I am hearing from the minister.

I have also warned members under the standing orders that there is to be no interjection. There is no cause in the standing orders for any interjections, and I am hearing continued and repeated interjections. My advice to all members of this House is that this bill will go to a committee and it will come back from a committee, and I ask that the debate on this bill occur at that time. I ask members to cease their interjections and allow the minister to continue his explanatory speech.

Dr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You can understand those opposite interjecting, I suppose, given they did try to close every single one—

Mr SPEAKER: No, Minister! The minister will resume his seat. Minister, I have already given you some guidance in terms of the delivery of your introductory speech. I ask you to heed that advice or I will sit you down.

Dr MILES: This bill enables a regulation to require public and private residential aged-care facilities in Queensland to provide information about nursing and personal care provided at aged-care facilities and the staffing for care at the facility. Initially, we will ask residential aged-care facilities—both public and private—to report quarterly on the average hours of daily care provided to each resident by nurses and support workers. This metric is set out in the draft Health Transparency Regulation tabled with the bill. In future, the reporting requirements for aged-care facilities can be expanded by regulation, if needed.

The Palaszczuk government is stepping in to ask public and private aged-care facilities to report on the care hours provided to residents so that elderly Queenslanders and their families can make comparisons and informed decisions when selecting an aged-care provider. We have consulted the aged-care industry on this bill and, disappointingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, many operators are not supportive of the increased transparency this bill will bring. Surely it is not too much to ask for facilities to provide open and transparent information about the hours of care provided to residents at their facility.

Nurse-to-patient ratios are used in hospitals, educator-to-child ratios are used in child-care facilities and teacher-to-student ratios are used in schools. All these important sectors have improved reporting and openness. It is time we applied the same logic to the elderly who are equally deserving of our respect and care. A properly funded and staffed aged-care system will relieve pressure on our public hospitals. We need to ensure frail and elderly Queenslanders who are waiting for an aged-care place can be moved as quickly as possible both to free up hospital beds for those who truly need hospital care and to provide a better environment for them.

The bill includes an opt-out option for private aged-care providers who do not wish to provide information requested of them. However, we make no apologies for the bill also providing that the decision to opt out will be publicly reported. I hope the federal government, as the regulator of the sector, starts using its powers to hold private aged-care providers to account, because I never want to see a scene like Earle Haven again.

To demonstrate that Queensland is truly leading the way in the aged-care sector, this bill will also introduce new minimum standards for public aged-care facilities in this state that we still own. We know that nurse-to-patient ratios provide higher quality care to patients, safer workloads and increased job satisfaction for frontline nursing and support workers, saving lives and money. This builds on a

legislative framework introduced in 2016 to mandate minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in prescribed public hospitals under the Hospital and Health Boards Act. The bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act to require residential aged-care facilities operated by Queensland Health and owned by the Queensland government to meet minimum nurse and support worker skill-mix ratios and minimum average daily resident care hours.

Queensland has a world-class health system with a strong culture of safety, and we are proud to tell you about it. Research shows that transparent information about health care leads to better patient outcomes, increased safety and higher quality care in hospitals and other health facilities. That is why this bill also provides a framework for obtaining and publishing a wide range of comparative information about both public and private health facilities which will be made available on a user-friendly website. It is like Trip Advisor but for hospitals. The website will publish a range of quality and safety information. This will—

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Nicklin is warned under the standing orders. I have already asked you to cease your interjections and to put your comments through the chair. Please continue, minister.

Dr MILES: This will include hospital accreditation, information on elective surgery procedures—including the number of procedures performed and the average time spent in hospital—information about patient outcomes, and information about hospital-acquired complications. Patients will be able to view and compare information about facilities to make better informed decisions about their health care. For both clinicians and health facilities, transparency of information will help to identify variations in care and outcomes.

The bill also makes significant changes to the Health Ombudsman Act. The responsibility for dealing with health complaints in Queensland is shared between the Office of the Health Ombudsman, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the national boards responsible for specific health professions. The bill amends the Health Ombudsman Act to implement recommendations made by the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee in its inquiry into the performance of the Health Ombudsman's functions.

The reforms will require the joint consideration of matters about registered health practitioners by the Office of the Health Ombudsman and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and will reduce the incidence of matters being split between the two agencies. To increase efficiency, the bill will also give the Health Ombudsman the discretion not to accept a complaint if the complainant has not attempted to resolve the complaint directly with the health service provider or if the complaint is more appropriately dealt with by another body.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to better health outcomes, increased safety and higher quality care in public and private hospitals, health facilities and aged care. Transparent information is an integral part of that commitment. This bill will increase Queenslanders' access to information about health and aged-care facilities and drive better quality care. Our seniors, the hardworking Queenslanders who built this state, deserve to be looked after. They deserve a better aged-care system than the one they are getting now. This bill will help make that a reality. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.04 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.


Referral to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

Mr SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS)
AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Resumed from 3 September (see p. 2628), on motion of Mr Bailey—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (11.05 am): I rise to speak in support of this bill. This bill addresses a number of important road safety issues. It delivers some crucial improvements to sentencing and rehabilitation of drink-drivers. Road safety is everyone's business. One of the most important aspects of that road safety message is education of young drivers. I will share a story about one of my past students at Northern Beaches State High School, an only child, the only daughter of some wonderful parents. Her name was Kaitlyn Wright. One fateful Saturday night she accompanied three of her friends as they went out and watched a couple of videos, back in the day, out at Pallaranda. On the way home, those four kids did not make it home. Four kids from school. This was an only child, a beautiful child, who did not make it home that day. I am sure the member for Broadwater can remember that night; it was terrible. Four young kids killed on a street in Pallaranda. There was no alcohol involved, but we did see changes to road safety.

The laws and the rules that we make today impact each and every driver but, more importantly, we have a number of future young drivers in our audience today. These laws that we make will impact on them and how they operate cars. I never want to see another situation like the one at Pallaranda in which Kaitlyn Wright and her three friends were killed. When I talked to the parents, they blamed themselves. They can never do that. We need to ensure that the future drivers in our gallery today and in the future get every opportunity to operate their vehicle in the safest way. In Townsville, the Department of Transport and Main Roads Road Safety Unit, including the Indigenous Driver Licensing Unit, deliver or facilitate a number of road safety initiatives. Mr Deputy Speaker, I know that your children are not at that driving age but, when you are fortunate enough to be the supervising parent for those magic 100 hours, they can be some of the most stressful times that you will go through with your child. I know there are a number of other members in the House who have been through those 100 hours—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr STEWART: Thank you member for Chatsworth, yes, a lot of us have endured those driving times.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr STEWART: Pulled your hair out for it, member for Chatsworth, I can see that! Something to remember is that, when we are in that car teaching our child how to drive, they are learning how to drive. They are replicating what we do in the car, because when we are behind the wheel in the car they watch how we drive. Every time we get behind that wheel, we model what driving looks like. Do not drive angry. Make sure that you are aware of how you drive.

More importantly, while all in this House have the ability to complete those 100 hours of driving time with their children or grandchildren, as it may be, there are many people in our community who for a range of reasons do not have the ability to do that supervised 100 hours of driving.

The department of main roads' road safety unit works with a number of services, including Queensland Youth Services, to deliver the GR8 Expectations initiative, assisting disadvantaged clients and at-risk youth to become safe, compliant and licensed drivers. This program is about more than just teaching people how to drive. This is about giving them the opportunity to then get a job, because a lot of work here in the north requires people to travel. An independent worker who has their own licence can travel. That becomes a real asset to the employer. The work that is happening through this is absolutely brilliant.

The road network on the great Palm Island in my electorate stretches for a total of about five kilometres. Members can imagine doing the supervised 100 hours of driving on five kilometres of road on Palm Island. I am sure they would know every single bump and rock in the road. They would know every square inch of those Palm Island roads. This is about providing opportunities for our future drivers to learn the skills to operate machinery that can travel at great speeds on our roads—100 or 110 kilometres per hour.


Students, particularly the primary school students joining us today, are aware of our school crossing supervisors. Those people do an amazing job keeping our kids safe every morning and every afternoon as they travel to school. More importantly, every time I have seen kids using those crossings I have seen the school crossing supervisors greeting the kids, saying g'day and asking how their day was. They are the kick-off and finishing point for school each and every day. I thank every single one of our school crossing supervisors across the 37 schools in Townsville. The work they do is amazing. They are unsung heroes in our community. They do an outstanding job not only keeping our kids safe but also building their capacity. It takes a village to raise a child. In Townsville, two road safety officers coordinate those crossing supervisors. They also work with the Department of Youth Justice to deliver supported learner licence testing as part of the Transition 2 Success initiative, a great program being run here in Townsville.

Safety also requires significant investments in infrastructure—good, safe roads. When we have good, safe roads we have better drivers. The Queensland government, in partnership with the Australian government, is currently delivering more than \$550 million worth of major road upgrades on the Bruce Highway between Townsville and Ayr, at the Haughton River and between Mailman Road and Mackenzie Creek. Usually the drive from Townsville to Ayr takes about an hour. At the moment it takes between an hour and 20 minutes and an hour and 30 minutes because of all the roadworks—short-term pain, long-term gain. These upgrades include wide centre line treatments, intersection upgrades and overtaking lanes and will deliver significant improvements to road safety between Townsville and Ayr.

The Queensland government is also planning to deliver further safety upgrades on the Bruce Highway north of Mackenzie Creek. Why did we do this? It is because we in the north deserve it. We deserve high-quality, good roads to keep our kids and every road user safe. That is exactly what we are committed to. TMR is currently reviewing planning for this section based on recent crash history and will complete its review by early 2020.

The Queensland government is committed to continuing targeted road safety upgrades, including overtaking lanes, road widening and wide centre lines, at locations where crashes are more likely to occur. However, the best thing we can do is run an education program designed to make sure that our future road users—and, in fact, our current road users—have the capability, the capacity and the skill set to make really good choices when using our roads. This bill is about providing the skills, capacity and capability of road users to make good, informed decisions—to make sure they are safe and everyone around them is safe as well.

As announced in the recent state budget, the Queensland government has allocated an additional \$205 million over four years for safety upgrades, boosting Queensland's targeted road safety budget to \$900 million. That is absolutely sensational. I support this bill. This is great news for us. This is great news for our future road users. I am sure I can speak on their behalf in thanking the minister for this initiative. I thank all those who are wearing red socks today. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (11.14 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. The LNP has and always will advocate for measures to make Queensland roads safer. Therefore, the LNP will not be opposing the bill. However, there are questions surrounding point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits and whether these will be clearly signed for road safety purposes, which is the LNP policy position.

The bill proposes amendments to various transport acts and other acts in order to achieve its stated objectives, which include expanding the existing interlock program to include mid-range drinkers; introducing the requirement for first-time drink-driving offenders, as well as repeat offenders, to complete a brief education program; allowing the operation of point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits; and applying a drug-testing regime to people interfering with the operation of a vehicle.

Every year, death and serious injury on Queensland roads costs \$5 billion. These accidents place an enormous expense on the community through hospital and healthcare costs, lost productivity and the use of emergency services. Most importantly, they create devastating losses for individuals and families. Improving safety on our roads must be of priority, and the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 proposes road safety amendments with the intention of reducing these accidents, thereby helping meet road safety objectives, saving lives and the costs associated with these accidents.

It is no secret that speeding continues to be a significant factor in crashes. It is recognised that speed cameras play a genuine role in the implementation of speed limits. Road safety studies have indicated that point-to-point cameras, which are part of the Camera Detected Offence Program, have been found to be more effective at reducing speeding over longer stretches of road than fixed or mobile cameras. Currently, these point-to-point camera systems can only be used on lengths of road where there is a single speed limit. Amendments have therefore been included in the bill to allow the operation of point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits.

In rural and regional communities there is almost continual roadworks of some description occurring, often over an extended period. Sometimes this work can take over 12 months to complete, meaning that speed limits are reduced for a long time and over a significant length of roadway. Mostly, the speed limit is reduced to 60 kilometres an hour, which is completely acceptable when works are taking place; however, there are many occasions when work is not being done—on public holidays and weekends—and the speed limit remains at 60 kilometres an hour. There are no workers onsite and the road conditions are more often capable of having vehicles travel at 80 kilometres an hour, yet the reduced speed limit remains. This is often where speed cameras are placed, purely as revenue earners.


Mr Krause interjected.

Mr WEIR: I take that interjection. I do get complaints about this issue. One instance involved parents taking their son to play Rugby on a Sunday morning. They came across a section of roadworks where the works had not yet commenced—there were no activities underway—yet the speed limit was reduced to 60 kilometres an hour. They rolled on through, but there was a speed trap there and the father lost his licence. He had to immediately vacate the driver's seat and sit in the passenger seat. Luckily his wife was with him so she could drive. That raises the issue of why those reduced speed limits are still enforced over the weekend when there is no activity. When there is activity, I understand it. An uncle of mine was a road worker. He was clipped by a car and had his hip broken. Obviously, safety is paramount when works are happening, but in the case where works have not yet commenced or they do not hinder the road, the question needs to be asked whether the speed limit could be increased. I have dealt with that issue in my office more than once.

An important objective of this bill is to strengthen the attitude to drink-driving, which is a significant factor in many road accidents. Although it is well recognised by the general community, there is complacency at times to having a drink and then hopping behind the wheel. Unfortunately, in conjunction alcohol and speed are a deadly cocktail. Despite the introduction of the alcohol ignition interlock program for high-risk driving offenders, along with many other road safety messages including random breath tests, fines and licence disqualifications, drinking drivers are still involved on average in one in five fatalities on Queensland roads. The bill proposes to enhance the interlock program to encourage and increase participation, align the interlock program with best practice programs to motivate drink-drivers to separate their drinking from driving and to introduce education programs for drink-drivers.

Regarding the interlock program, TMR advised that the program aims for long-term behaviour change and a survey showed that Queenslanders found the interlock system to be a key deterrent in drinking and driving. The bill makes amendments to introduce a performance based interlock program. This means that a person will not be able to have their interlock condition removed until they can show that they can separate their drinking from driving. If a person fails to comply with the performance criteria, which includes having a positive breath test during the last four months of their prescribed period, they will be subject to an automatic extension of four months and that will continue until the person can successfully separate their drinking from driving.

During debate on this bill we have heard numerous cases of members who have friends or associates who have been involved in accidents through drinking. I will admit that coming from a country area I grew up in a culture where it was basically the accepted norm back in those days. Thankfully it has come a long way. After speaking to local police officers, they say that it is not as common now as it used to be, particularly the range. Unfortunately, one thing that we are seeing increasing is drug driving. That seems to be a continuing scourge on our roads at the moment and anything that can be done to alleviate that is very much appreciated and encouraged. We support the bill, but I do have concerns about the issue relating to roadworks.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (11.22 am): For so many of us road safety is not an academic issue. It is not one of statistics or counts. We feel it very viscerally every time a community member is hurt or killed on our local roads. Not so long ago I was at my son's soccer training at the Park Ridge Panthers and I sat down next to another father who seemed particularly quiet, so I asked if he was okay. He quietly told me that the afternoon before he had been travelling down the Mount Lindesay Highway

when he came upon a car that had lost control and crashed. He got out of his car and sat in the passenger seat of the crashed vehicle with the seriously injured driver, holding his head until our emergency services arrived. He was very shaken by the experience of the injury of a perfect stranger and the moment that he was forced to share. However, for someone the stranger was of course dearly loved as a father, a husband, a son.

Each statistic of injury or death on our roads has a story like this—a connected web of people deeply hurt, not just by injury but by a loved one's hurt or even that of a perfect stranger. I particularly want to note our first responders—our police, our firefighters, both rural and urban, and of course our paramedics. They serve us by being first on site of an accident and shouldering that emotional burden of these traumatic events. So often some—perhaps those on the other side or even those in public or the media—belittle our public servants. However, whenever we hear this sort of commentary it is worth remembering that if we are ever injured then it will be a public servant who is the person who will be at our side.

Mr Harper: Ambos are great.

Mr POWER: Paramedics indeed are fantastic people who have to stand up at these moments of trauma. I also want to remind those young people in the audience that one of the most dangerous times in their lives is when they make the transition from being a passenger, usually accompanied by an older adult, to being a driver or driving with other new and inexperienced drivers. It is really worthwhile remembering that this transition is extraordinarily dangerous and they need to take that responsibility very carefully.

This transport legislation proposes worthwhile changes to a variety of traffic and transport acts and will add to the good work the minister has done in funding our safer roads. In Logan Village and Yarrabilba road safety is vital and nothing is more important than investment in Waterford-Tamborine Road. As the minister knows very well, we have finished building the four lanes from Hotz Road near Yarrabilba through to Anzac Avenue, making it much safer. Currently, we are also building the four lanes through the North Street intersection, with the lights turned on, and already we are seeing a reduction in that traffic hotspot. Today I am pleased to announce that we will continue building those four lanes beyond the intersection to have four lanes through to Anzac Avenue, so that means families travelling home to Yarrabilba and beyond will have four lanes, starting north of Logan Village and continuing all the way through beyond Hotz Road. This will reduce the congestion that used to back up as far as Stegemann Road by, we are told, 80 per cent, and that will make for a smoother and safer journey home. I thank the minister for visiting that site with me and his continual monitoring of that construction.

No doubt locals here in Townsville remember the LNP cuts to roads and investment, but I want to let them know that the LNP's cuts to road funding were not just in North Queensland but throughout our state. For example, in the 2011 QTRIP budget documents there was \$150 million of funding in the budget to be invested in the Mount Lindesay Highway, but that was cut. These cuts have made the Mount Lindesay Highway less safe. I have worked with the transport minister to restore some of the funding to the Mount Lindesay Highway because this government values investment in that highway. Unfortunately, the member for Nanango was making budget decisions in the Newman government and at that time they did not value the Mount Lindesay Highway.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 236 relating to relevance. There was a ruling yesterday in relation to my contribution with regard to an audit report and I fail to see the significance of this particular aspect of the contribution by the member. In terms of relevance, I seek your advice.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There has been a very broad licence throughout this debate on both sides in terms of the debate which has been set well and truly for all speakers.

Mr MINNIKIN: There is already a point of order before the Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Thank you, shadow minister. I have been allowing a degree of latitude, particularly where people are using emotive examples to illustrate points, but I would ask the member to come back to the substantive points of the bill.

Mr POWER: I do note that the bill delivers some crucial improvements in the sentencing and rehabilitation of drink-drivers—drivers who are on local roads. For locals in Logan, they need to think of these changes as being valuable and important in terms of the new roads that we are building on the Mount Lindesay Highway. I note that many members on the other side have spoken about some other projects, but they have obviously made the clear connection between this bill and the rehabilitation of

drink-drivers and the important safety improvements or the need for safety improvements on local roads. I will continue to make that clear and vital link to this legislation and the safer roads that this government is working on.

We are currently making North MacLean safer by building the service lanes in Chambers Flat through the Greenbank Road intersection. Those intersections are going to be ones where drivers who are perhaps impaired by alcohol are going to have a safer way to get through. Those who are coming down the service lanes out to Stockleigh Road connecting Casuarina Road and Wharf Street will not be coming across Mount Lindesay Highway traffic because of the investments we are making. We are also doing the North MacLean safety project involving the Greenbank Road intersection which was identified as a safety issue and one of the 10 most dangerous. We know that it is impaired drivers who are not ready for difficult intersections who get into these accidents, and that is why this bill is so important and also why that investment is so important.


I was disappointed by the speech given by the member for Chatsworth. When looking back to the last contribution by the LNP, he had to go back to 1996 to find anything positive. That is an acknowledgement that, during the term of the Newman government, there were no safety measures implemented, especially on the Mount Lindesay Highway where we know the LNP cut \$150 million.

We have also put in place the Repeat Offender Education Program for repeat drink-drivers. Obviously, these are people who have a substance-abuse problem. They need strategies to cope and change their behaviour as a driver. We can deliver this program for those in rural areas face to face but also, if that is not convenient, via videoconferencing. I hope that drivers who are driving along the new four-lane investments on the Mount Lindesay Highway get that experience, because we want them to change their behaviour, especially when they are driving on the new four-lane section from Rosia Road through to and beyond the Stoney Camp Road interchange. This project should have been completed as part of the roadworks that were budgeted for in 2011 but, during the term of the LNP government, it was cut, leaving a gap where motorists have to merge just before the Granger Road exit instead of after it where there is less traffic. I note that, when the minister first saw the jumble of signs at that point of the merge, he said, 'Something has to be done.' He has pushed this vital safety improvement that will make that road much safer.

Work will also start on a section of road at Jimboomba, putting in four lanes from Camp Cable Road through to the intersection of Tamborine Street. This work will reduce incidents when drivers returning home are perhaps a little tired—and this safety bill is very much about that. Drivers will be able to travel in the left-hand lane all the way from north of Camp Cable Road to Tamborine Street without any congestion or pinch point. It also means that the danger of flooding, which occasionally means that residents need to divert from the Mount Lindesay Highway to get home, will be much reduced as the road is going to be elevated.

When it comes to road safety in the Logan electorate, these are really important investments. There is a clear difference between the commitment of this government and this minister and the commitment of the former LNP government, which cut funding from the Mount Lindesay Highway and had no investment in new four-laning on Waterford-Tamborine Road. We have put together these projects of cutting congestion through four-laning to make these roads safer. The difference is clear: cuts and inaction from the LNP versus building and progress under this government.

When it comes to road safety in the Logan electorate, I have so much more to do. Although I appreciate the minister's commitments so far, I will continue to push him to do even more. The residents of the Logan electorate never want to go back to the cuts of the LNP, which made roads in the Logan electorate less safe. Logan residents value road safety. They value the initiatives in this bill and we will continue together to fight for road safety through this legislation and investment in our road network. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (11.32 am): In speaking to the road safety bill, I would like to acknowledge the officers of Main Roads. They have a lot of work to do. They constantly have to use their discretion and their intuition. The officers of Main Roads have to make an assessment of the complaints from landowners who live along main roads. A lot of landowners along a main road will say that they would like to see the speed limit out the front of their property reduced from 100 kilometres an hour to 80 kilometres an hour because it is very dangerous for them when they drive out from their property onto that road.

It is fair enough to reduce the speed limit on a main road as a result of a petition or because a community is concerned about the high speed limit on a road that is in front of properties. I remember that, back in the 1970s, it was much quicker to drive from Townsville to Cairns than it is now, because

the speed limits were not changed. In regard to road safety, I believe that we need to use our discretion. We cannot continue to say, 'All right. We will drop the speed limit to 80 kilometres an hour because there is a concern.' That concern has to be warranted.

I refer to the intersection of East Feluga Road and the Bruce Highway. I acknowledge that the minister went out there, assessed it and considered it to be a safety priority. There have been a high number of deaths at that intersection. People turn off to East Feluga Road to go to the schools. The overtaking lanes on the Bruce Highway were located just before that turn-off. All of these cars were overtaking, picking up speed and the next minute, bang, they are coming to a dead stop because there were no turning lanes. I really believe it is important that that intersection be fixed. I know that the minister has submitted an application for that, but we have not heard anything. I hope the department can give feedback on where it is up to and where the federal government is up to in regard to funding for that intersection, because I hear a lot of complaints about it.

Yesterday, during his speech the member for Mount Isa appeared to be ridiculed for suggesting that we increase the speed limit on some of our rural roads up to 130 kilometres an hour. If drivers are coming from the Northern Territory, the speed limit there is 130 kilometres an hour. The next minute, when they drive into Queensland, the speed limit goes down to 100 kilometres an hour and, all of a sudden, they commit this massive crime if they are still travelling at 130 kilometres an hour and they have the potential to lose their licence. I believe that there needs to be some discretion, particularly on those rural roads.


I acknowledge that rural roads are very different from what they were in the 1970s, the 1980s and the 1990s. At that time, rural roads were bad: they had potholes, they were not wide and a number of trucks were driving along them. Now, rural roads are of much better quality. I think we need to have a bit more courage to say, 'Yes, we can increase the speed limit.' When drivers are travelling for long hours—seven or eight hours—and they are sitting on 100 kilometres an hour, it can get pretty boring. Our vehicles are a lot different from what they were in the 1970s. Sometimes that brings about fatigue. There should be the discretion to say, 'We can work together to increase the speed limits on these roads to the same speed limit as there is on roads in the Northern Territory.' I believe that is very important.

In regard to roads in general and the quality of the work done in maintaining them, I commend the people from RoadTek. I admire their work. They do good-quality work. I think the bosses come down on them if they do not do good-quality work. I have seen a lot of poor-quality roadworks, particularly in the Wet Tropics, where there is a massive amount of rainfall. Southern contractors and West Australian contractors have undercut and screwed the price for roadworks down to the lowest common denominator. Those contractors get the contract, but they do not understand the region. Three months later, we have to go over the same work they did to fix it. It must be stressed to those contractors, wherever they come from, that, if they do not do a quality job, they will not be asked back.

It is vitally important to have Main Roads working with local contractors. Those local contractors do not have the points system in place so that they can apply for big road maintenance jobs. We have to give those local contractors some form of leeway so that they have an opportunity to tender for those Main Roads jobs. Those local contractors know that, if they do not do a good job, they are going to get flak from the community and they will never get that work again. I really believe that that is a priority as it is a matter of road safety. I referred earlier to roads in the Tablelands in the Wet Tropics. I believe that a little bit of money has been allocated to them. There would be at least 80 to 90 potholes within a two- to three-kilometre area from Millaa Millaa to Malanda. There really needs to be some investment in the Millaa Millaa-Malanda Road. It needs to be a quality job to ensure safety for road users in that area.

Recently, there was a little bit of flak in the newspapers about residents along the Cassowary Coast who have outstanding SPER debts of about \$4.5 million. To some extent, I think that was a little bit too harsh, because there are a lot of different factors, such as the increase in the number of hidden speed cameras and the increase in speeding fines. A lot of rural residents have PO box numbers. They will be sent a fine to that box number. They may have gone on holidays for three months and would not know that they have been sent a fine to that box number. Because those people do not have a residential address, the fine notice is sent back. All of a sudden, they have lost their licence and they do not even know about it, or they have a fine and they do not even know about it.

Rural areas are a lot different to the cities. Rural residents have PO box numbers. If they go on holidays for three months they may not know they have been sent a fine. They do not have a residential address. The letter will be sent back and then all of a sudden they have lost their licence or they have a fine and they do not know about it. I bring to the attention of the House that this is a problem that needs to be addressed.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (11.40 am): Road safety should be of everyday importance to all of us. So many lives are lost on our roads. So many lives are lost needlessly. So many of those tragedies could be prevented. This bill will help make Queensland roads safer. The bill amends the transport legislation to bring forward key road safety initiatives. The bill will reform drink-driving laws. The bill will amend point-to-point camera system requirements. This bill will enable testing of passengers for intoxicating substances where the passenger is suspected of interfering with the operation of a vehicle in a dangerous manner. Road trauma on Queensland's roads is devastating for individuals, families, the broader community and our emergency responders. It costs the Queensland economy over \$5 billion each year.

This bill is aimed at supporting this government's 2020 target of reducing deaths and serious injuries that occur on our roads by 20 per cent. During this year's National Road Safety Week the Queensland Police Service partnered with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to promote important initiatives about road safety. The campaign included outdoor billboards at high-volume, high-speed locations on the Queensland road network, including the Bruce Highway, the Warrego Highway and the Captain Cook Highway. Road Safety Week also included the Move Over, Slow Down campaign with a targeted social media and outdoor road safety campaign reminding drivers to behave safely when passing roadside emergency responders and their vehicles. The essential message is this: road safety is everybody's business, every day of every year. Our government is determined to do everything possible to support this through a concerted effort to reduce high-risk road user behaviour, including the Fatal Five of speeding, fatigue, drink-driving and drug driving, failing to wear seatbelts and driving while distracted.

The Queensland Police Service continues to examine ways to actively promote safe road use and reduce the likelihood of incidents resulting in injury or death. This bill will support their endeavours. The bill will enhance many aspects of the alcohol ignition interlock program, including by introducing education programs for drink-driving offenders which research shows is an effective and cost-effective way to reduce alcohol related harm. These education programs will be mandatory for first-time drink-drivers if they want to get their licence back. Education programs for drink-driving offenders will help keep our roads safe and help ensure that drink-drivers are given appropriate education to understand the devastating impacts of impaired driving on our roads.


The interlock program will also be expanded to be available for mid-range drink-drivers who account for more than a quarter of all offenders and have a crash risk, as we have heard, of up to 20 times greater than someone who has not had a drink. Queenslanders want these drink-driving reforms and the Queensland police know that drink-driving, as one of the Fatal Five, is one of the biggest contributors to road trauma in Queensland.

Drink-driving is the No. 1 contributing factor in approximately 30 per cent of fatal crashes in Australia. Driving under the influence of drugs and drink continue to be needlessly contributing to fatalities on our roads. In 2018, 245 people were tragically killed on Queensland roads and more than 5,600 people were seriously injured. Of these 245 people, 119 people were killed on Queensland roads as a result of drink-driving or drug driving. That is almost 50 per cent of the total 2018 road toll.

It is a major concern that some drivers continue to get behind the wheel of a vehicle and drive after using illicit drugs. Even more concerning is that some passengers would interfere with the operation of a vehicle when they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. These behaviours are unacceptable and our police are committed to ensuring the safety of road users by continuing to conduct operations to target drink-drivers and drug drivers and now also passengers suspected of dangerously interfering with the operation of a vehicle.

Speeding also continues to be a major factor in serious and fatal traffic crashes. This bill will enable road safety camera enforcement of speed limits on sections of road where multiple speed limits are displayed. If there is a crash risk on a particular road, these amendments mean point-to-point speed cameras can be deployed along that road, reducing instances of speeding and improving traffic flow.

We know speeding kills on our regional roads in North Queensland and these changes will help to keep our regional Queenslanders safe from drivers who continue to disregard the safety and wellbeing of others. Improving safety on our roads must be and is a priority for this government. Queenslanders here in North Queensland and all over the state need to see this bill passed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (11.46 am): I am pleased to make a contribution to this important debate. I support the bill. Living in the seat of Gregory, a part of Queensland where driving is a necessity, the people I represent would support anything that improves road safety. The LNP will always advocate for sensible measures to reduce our road toll. Road safety is always going to be an ongoing

effort because the population of drivers renews and refreshes each year. In the process we are getting better at it. There was a time when the *Courier-Mail* was running a campaign to reduce road fatalities to 550 people per annum. This would horrify us today, but it would have been a major achievement back then. Improvements to road design and signage design, improvements to how we educate and test our learner drivers and improvements to the safety design of our vehicles have all played a part in reducing that road statistic.

Two of the biggest road safety initiatives have been the compulsory wearing of seatbelts and random breath testing. Young Australians when they start seeing the world are often shocked to discover seatbelts are not compulsory in every country around the world. Due to good habits, most young Australians when they are overseas still put them on even when they are optional. Australia was and is a world leader in passing seatbelt laws. The laws were based on scientific studies that proved seatbelts made a major difference. At the time many people resented the change, but statistics do not lie. The wearing of seatbelts is not only widely supported now but it has been a major factor in the rapid adoption of child restraints. Indeed, it is not uncommon for families to have child safety restraints in all their vehicles and the vehicles of the grandparents.

Similarly, Australia is a world leader and continues to lead the way in RBT programs. Again the outcomes are measurable. As a University of Queensland study reported in 2015, not all RBT programs are equal. RBT programs in Australia vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. This particular study rated the New South Wales RBT program as No. 1, with Queensland coming a close second. In presenting the findings to a conference the same year, researcher Dr Jason Ferris commented that RBT programs may benefit from being tailored to the population size and geography of each jurisdiction. This is highly relevant to Queensland because our population settlement patterns create very different contexts for drivers: going from wide open spaces to unsealed roads to multilane roads to urban motorways. Dr Ferris also said the findings of the study suggested that RBT ratios in alcohol related traffic crashes are also influenced by factors such as education programs, RBT publicity, penalties and rehabilitation programs.

We have made some progress since the days of campaign 550, but in 2017 there were still 247 people who lost their lives on Queensland roads. A further 6,462 people were seriously injured, many whose lives will never be the same due to permanent injuries. This may impact every aspect of their lives, from mobility to employment opportunities to physical and financial security and, of course, mental health. Many crash survivors struggle with survivor guilt and with chronic pain. This can lead to further issues, all caused by road accidents.

Drink-driving has been shown to be a significant factor in 20 per cent of fatal road crashes, so we continue to maintain and improve the measures we take to deal with it. Those include RBTs, fines, licence disqualifications and government advertising. Queensland has also introduced alcohol ignition interlock programs for high-risk drink-driving offenders with blood alcohol concentrations of .15 or more. In my opinion, the interlock program is successful because it is a very powerful tool. It prevents further offending in the most practical way. It also gives the driver education through feedback on their condition. For many people, that is a powerful learning tool. However, we cannot rest on our laurels just yet.

I was very concerned to read that, in the five years to the end of 2017, almost 25 per cent of drink-drivers involved in a fatal crash had only mid-range blood alcohol readings, that is, readings between .1 and .149, yet research tells us that those drivers have a crash risk 20 times that of someone who has not had a drink. Sensibly, the bill will extend the interlock program to include mid-range drink-driving offenders. This is a practical step and I congratulate the minister.


I am also very pleased to see that the bill will introduce education programs for first-time offenders and repeat offenders. I hope that such programs will help offenders to consider whether they have an alcohol addiction and assist them to reach out for help. Drink-driving convictions can be an indicator of deeper problems and the programs offer an opportunity to help that type of offender. This is potentially a powerful force for good.

The bill also addresses another serious contributor to our road toll, which is speeding. Members will know that as the member for Gregory I spend a lot of time in the car covering a large electorate of 460,000 square kilometres. I have had to work seriously hard to resist the temptation to speed and to resist the temptation to drive tired. Both of those could easily be fatal. While doing my rounds, the most frequent drivers I share the roads with are our heavy transport drivers. They are champions who keep regional Queensland operating. We give little thought to how heavily supervised they are in terms of regulations and logbooks, which aim to prevent both speeding and driving tired.

The challenge in urban settings is different. Speed cameras do play an important role, but this is where the LNP differs. We look at the desired outcome and what it achieves. If the desired outcome is to reduce speeding, then fixed and permanent speed cameras with clear warning signs have been shown to work. Placed at road safety black spots, they permanently reduce speeding. Like cardboard cut-outs of police officers and police cars that are used in many countries around the world, the permanent fixed speed camera works better when signs warn drivers that it is there. It reduces speed even when it is switched off or is not issuing fines. Indeed, you have to wonder if the signs alone would work. My first caveat on the use of point-to-point speed cameras is that they should be used with clear warning signs telling drivers that their speed is being monitored from point to point.

The second caveat is a plea for clearer signage for variable speed limits on roads. Many people from my part of Queensland get caught driving through Toowoomba to the Gold Coast for Christmas holidays. They go from the M7 to the M2 to the M1 and the speed changes constantly. People will tell you that they panic because the signage is not frequent enough to tell them what speed they should be doing. I have no objection with point-to-point monitoring. It is the equivalent of a truckie's logbook. It is the only way to enforce the speed limit and will educate people in better driving. However, I stress to the minister that neither point-to-point nor fixed speed cameras should be seen as revenue raisers. Their purpose is actually to reduce the road toll by reducing speeding. We will certainly see the evidence when we see the road toll continue to go down.

Finally, these are fantastic initiatives and we need to do everything that we can. However, another initiative that we need to look at is improving our roads. When the Department of Transport and Main Roads is telling the Auditor-General that it has calculated the backlog for the renewal of its road network at \$4 billion, it is clear that we need a government to invest in those roads. We need proper funding and road maintenance for our road construction. Many Queenslanders, including those in North Queensland, use our roads on a continual basis. We need to ensure that we continue to invest in the maintenance of those roads. It will be interesting to see how the maintenance backlog will be fixed, because if the current funding level continues the underfunding for road maintenance will grow to \$9 billion over the next decade. That outcome will be measurable, both in statistics and in road fatalities.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (11.54 am): When it comes to road safety, we all have a responsibility to keep ourselves and those around us safe. Today I rise to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. Specifically, the bill proposes to make amendments to the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 to enable the introduction of a range of measures aimed at improving road safety. I acknowledge the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, the Hon. Mark Bailey; the committee chair, Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah; committee members; and the committee secretariat for their valuable contribution in examining this bill. The committee has recommended that the bill be passed with one additional recommendation that an amendment be made to the bill to include the definition of the sigma symbol, which is included in clause 39 of the bill.

According to Queensland police data, across Queensland we have a death toll of 141 cases. Of those 141 cases, 33 are specific to North Queensland and Far North Queensland. The Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015-2021 sets the ambitious target of reducing death and serious injury by 30 per cent by 2020, meaning that we need to reduce road fatalities to under 200 and serious injuries to under 4,700. In 2017, 247 people were killed and an estimated 6,462 people were seriously injured on our roads. The bill proposes road safety amendments that are intended to help achieve the 2020 target. The data speaks for itself. What is most concerning is that this number will continue to rise in Queensland unless we take road safety seriously. Deaths and serious injuries on roads continue to cause significant devastation for individuals, families and the broader community, costing Queensland over \$5 billion every year. Improving road safety on our roads must be a priority.

A few weeks ago, my 15-year-old son brought home a class assignment to research road safety on Queensland roads, to identify the most common causes of road fatalities, examine current government policies and make recommendations to the government about what could be done to enhance road safety on Queensland roads. It was reassuring to engage in a conversation with him about responsible behaviours when operating a motor vehicle. When the conversation turned to drink-driving, he questioned why people would consider operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. According to him, it is just not right, especially if it is going to bring harm to others.

Being so young and innocent, I want my son to continue to grow up with the attitude that drink-driving is not right. Unfortunately, situations like those are all too common and can result in devastating impacts on individuals, families and communities. As a parent I can teach my son all the risks associated with road fatalities and why it is important to foster safe practices when operating a motor vehicle. I hope to instil in him a more accepted and positive attitude towards maintaining road

safety practices. At 15 years of age, he is already excited about the day he will be able to obtain his driver's licence. Like any parent, when that day comes I want him and the next generation of road users to be safe on Queensland's roads.

In 2017, the Department of Transport and Main Roads released a public discussion paper canvassing a range of options for reducing drink-driver reoffending, including education reforms and enhancements to the interlock program, which are in this bill. It attracted over 3,000 survey responses and nine written submissions from interested stakeholder groups. With such an overwhelming response, it is clear that road safety reform is well overdue and that more needs to be done to prevent road fatalities every year.

The bill includes legislative reforms designed to enhance the existing alcohol ignition interlock program. Broadly, these amendments will introduce education programs for new and repeat drink-driving offenders, extend the current interlock program to include mid-range drink-driving offences, extend the current interlock program sit-out period from two to five years and provide access to work licences for mid-range offenders participating in the interlock program. The intent of the package of reforms is to reduce road trauma, to address behaviours associated with drink-driving and to provide the means by which offenders can learn to separate their drinking from driving.

I firmly believe in an intervention program as a way to shape people's attitudes and behaviours to ensure road rules and regulations are followed and safety of self and others are maintained. Education programs will be introduced for drink-driving offenders where first time drink-drivers will be required to complete a brief intervention education program prior to them being re-licensed. This program will be delivered online and give people strategies to separate drinking and driving and outline why it is important. Repeat offenders will be required to complete a more intensive multisession education program. This program will be undertaken while the offender is participating in the interlock program and will need to be successfully completed before the interlock condition can be removed from their licence.

As we all know, there are many risk factors associated with road fatalities and hospitalisations. This bill considers each factor carefully. Allowing camera enforcement of speed limits on sections of road where multiple speed limits are displayed is another intervention measure included in this bill. For point-to-point camera systems, these amendments provide for the use of a formula to calculate the average speed limit where there are different speed limits and it is practicable to calculate an average speed limit. The amendments also allow the highest speed limit between two camera points to apply as a default speed limit for camera enforcement on a section of road where multiple speed limits may be displayed or for point-to-point camera systems where it is not practicable to calculate the average speed limit.


A further amendment relating to camera detected offences is to provide the ability for persons issued with infringement notices to nominate the actual driver of a vehicle at the time of the detected offence by an online portal without requiring a statutory declaration. The bill also includes amendments to allow passengers expected of interfering with the operation of a vehicle dangerously to be tested for intoxicating substances. The intent is to enhance the accuracy of information for courts when sentencing persons accused of interfering with the operation of a vehicle dangerously while adversely affected by an intoxicating substance.

This bill is about doing what is right for all Queenslanders. Statistics clearly show that something needs to be done now, not later. Something needs to be done right now. We all have a responsibility, whether it is teaching our kids road safety from a young age, being positive role models ourselves or engaging in intervention programs. At the end of the day it is about making informed, responsible decisions. We all want our children to be safe on roads when operating a motor vehicle. That includes putting in place appropriate intervention measures to encourage safe practices that would keep them and others around them safe. I commend the bill to the House.

Interruption.


DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Questions on Notice

 **Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Pugh): Before I call the member for Bonney, I remind all honourable members that questions on notice today must be provided to the Clerk by 1 pm. Also, I reiterate the Speaker's statement from yesterday that questions on notice can be emailed to the Table Office. Emailed questions are the most convenient and efficient method for the Table Office to process, especially in this regional sitting week.

**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS)
AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Resumed from p. 2652.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (12.02 pm): I rise today in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. Any sensible measure that makes our roads safer is one every member in this House should support. Back home on the Gold Coast we have seen far too many accidents caused by driver recklessness and carelessness. In April, a 20-year-old with a blood alcohol level four times the legal limit crashed on the Gold Coast Highway. In June, a car crashed at Southport and the drunk driver tried to run away when the police arrived. These are just a couple of cases and they are nowhere near as tragic as some of those detailed by other members in their contributions so far.

The devastation road accidents leave in their wake is felt by every region and in every electorate. It is not just the devastation that road fatalities and accidents cause. It is estimated that death and serious injury on Queensland roads cost us \$5 billion every year—that is in hospital and healthcare costs, lost productivity and the costs of emergency services. There is an impetus for us to keep looking at what measures are most effective and what can be introduced to improve the situation. Significant effort is needed if we are to get close to the government's 2020 target to reduce death and injury on Queensland's roads by 30 per cent.

In Queensland, the influence of alcohol and drugs contributes to approximately 30 per cent of fatal crashes. Speeding is also a major cause of many fatal crashes. In 2017, speeding was the cause of around a fifth of fatal crashes in this state. The changes in this bill will help address these two contributing factors. Changes, as we have heard, will increase the non-driving period from two to five years if someone chooses to not participate in the interlock program. We have also heard that the interlock program will be extended to mid-range drink-driving offenders. These are drivers who have a 20 per cent greater cash risk compared to non-drinkers. I support these changes as they are important to keep dangerous drivers off our roads.


With regard to the amendment to allow point-to-point cameras on roads with differing speed limits, I do think we need to ensure that these cameras are clearly signed. It is not just the members here who have to agree on our efforts to reduce road accidents. We need the community support behind us. Where there has been covert placement of cameras, the perception becomes that this is just about revenue raising.

On a recent drive up the M1 to Brisbane—which takes just under an hour on a good day—I went past six speed cameras. They included a fixed camera on the Smith Street Motorway, a covert trailer camera near Helensvale on the M1, another one of these trailer cameras near Pimpama, the fixed camera at Logan, another trailer camera near Mount Gravatt and the fixed camera on the south side of Brisbane. Only the permanent cameras here were properly and obviously signed.

At the end of the day, these cameras are there to promote road safety and enforce the road rules. They are not there to line the government's pockets. In 2017-18, revenue from speed camera fines was \$160 million and it is forecast to grow to over \$200 million. That only fuels the perception in the general public that this is a cynical move from the government to raise money.

On our side of the chamber we have repeatedly said that we need to stop using covert speed cameras and that increasing signage is a more effective deterrent than a fine. Just to finish on signage, I am very happy to say that we will now have flashing school zone lights installed on Turpin Road next to Labrador State School. I wrote to the minister twice about this—the second time after school captain Matilda Grant got in touch with me wanting to improve road safety around the school. I thank the minister for approving that signage recently.

Finally, it was welcome to see some action being taken on marine pollution in our waterways through this bill. I am proud to live just a couple of streets back from the beautiful Broadwater and to represent a small part of it with the Labrador channel section that goes along Marine Parade as well. We see far too many houseboats and other vessels, many of them unseaworthy, sink and become hazards in that waterway. They leak oil, chemicals, garbage and even sewage—and that is in waterways that we all enjoy swimming in. Every effort should be taken to recover the cost to taxpayers, so I support the changes in this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.07 pm): Road statistics get reported in the news all the time. The effect and the horrific impact need to be taken on board by everyone. On 23 August we woke in Mackay to read, splashed across our local media, this story—

'My heart is broken': Tributes for teen killed in crash

A Queensland community is reeling from the death of a school student in a horror single-vehicle crash.

Emotional tributes are pouring in for the Mackay Christian College student who tragically died last night in a single vehicle crash at Mount Pleasant.

Heartbroken family and friends are reeling as they struggle to come to terms with the loss of the 18-year-old taken too soon and described as a "loyal, caring and respectful" young man.

My deepest condolence to the family and friends of Jack Dunwoodie. I hope that the laws we pass in this parliament today spare other families, friends and communities the pain of losing a loved one.


Last night the member for Traeger was talking about having different rules for isolated roads. The community of remote Queensland have long distances to travel. That is the nature and beauty of where they live. We must remember that their family, friends and community will be just as devastated as city people by a road fatality. I hear reports in the media of single-vehicle crashes on country roads all the time. We must consider what is the cause of the crash, not what is the most convenient.

Road accidents can happen at any time. Most of the time the fallback from the community is 'It's the road's fault.' Roads do not kill or cause accidents; it is the driver of the vehicle not driving to conditions. When we all drive to conditions, fewer accidents will occur and people will not have their lives turned upside down. Road deaths and accidents need to be reduced. We want our loved ones to be with us.

I have been at the scene of a fatal accident on a rural road. An inexperienced driver eased out from behind a bus just to have a peep to see if they could pass. A utility was coming in the other direction. This caused a head-on collision right in front of my car. The driver of the ute died on impact. In the young driver's car were her mother, sister and a family friend. It flipped over and caught alight. My husband and I could not get anybody out of the car. We were greatly affected by this accident for a good 12 months. The emergency workers who attended had been to many fatal crashes that year and they were emotionally fatigued and wrung out. All of these deaths could have been avoided.

When I travel between Mackay and Townsville I can see the condition of the roads has improved. There are many more overtaking lanes. There are also wide centre lanes so you can look out to see if there is something coming and pass safely. Our roads are getting better.

The primary purpose of this bill is to bring forward innovative and legislative reforms designed to reduce road trauma in our state. Death and serious injury on Queensland roads cost Queensland over \$5 billion every year and causes devastation to individuals, families and the broader community. Queensland's Road Safety Strategy 2015-2021 sets an ambitious target to reduce deaths and serious injury by 30 per cent by 2020, meaning that we need to reduce our road fatalities. I am really pleased to hear that everyone in the House is committed to reducing fatalities and injuries on our roads. It is time to make our roads safer. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (12.12 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. The changes in this bill are designed to reduce road trauma in Queensland and improve road safety. The proposed changes include: bringing forward road safety initiatives such as improvements to the interlock program; introducing a new education program for drink-driving offenders; applying an alcohol and drug testing regime; enabling the recovery of costs from responding to marine pollution incidents; and making heavy vehicle inspection fees part of the normal annual indexation process rather than requiring separate manual processes. It will also ensure that point-to-point camera enforcement applies on roads which have multiple speed limits displayed.

Given that \$160 million was raised from speed camera fines in 2017-18 and that this is expected to rise to \$237 million in two years, it is no wonder that many Queenslanders believe that speed cameras are a cash cow and they are not used for road safety. A practical measure would be to display cameras with a sign stating they are there for road safety measures.

The Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015-2021 aligns with the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020. It has a vision of zero deaths and serious injuries. It has a target to reduce death and serious injury by 30 per cent by next year, 2020.

Death and serious injury on our roads costs \$5 billion every year. It devastates individuals and families. Its impacts are not isolated to those families: it ripples throughout communities and the state. There is the financial cost of health care, hospital treatment and the cost to have emergency workers

attend an incident. In some cases, there is a lifelong cost of ongoing care and treatment. There is also an emotional and social cost. It costs emergency workers who have to attend traumatic events, it costs health practitioners and it costs the community in lost productivity.

In 2017, 247 people were killed and an estimated 6,462 seriously injured in road crashes in this state. Two of the most significant factors influencing road safety come back to drivers' behaviour: speeding and drink-driving. One in five—20 per cent—of fatalities involve drink-driving. This is despite random breath testing, fines, licence disqualifications and the alcohol ignition interlock program for high-risk offenders—those who have a reading of more than .15. In the five years from 2012 to 2017, almost 25 per cent of drink-drivers involved in fatal crashes had a mid-range reading from .1 to .149. Drivers in this group have a crash risk 20 times greater than someone who has not had a drink. This is why the interlock program will now be extended to include offenders in this group. An education program for first-time and repeat offenders will be introduced.

The other ingredient in the cocktail of risky behaviours is speeding. Speed cameras are an important tool in enforcing speed limits. It has been found that point-to-point cameras are more effective than fixed or mobile cameras in reducing speeding over longer stretches of road. At the moment, point-to-point systems can only be used where there is a single speed limit. This bill will allow them to be operated on roads with multiple speed limits.

The representation of rural and regional areas in the number of road fatalities is disproportionate to the population. Gympie is not immune. Too often our community is confronted with serious road accidents which should never have happened due to the sheer stupidity or recklessness of dumb drivers who put themselves, their passengers and other road users at risk.

In its submission the Queensland Traffic Offenders Program raised the urgent need for road safety education programs in high schools. More than a third—35 per cent—of their attendees charged with traffic offences are in the 18- to 25-years age bracket. Gympie's not-for-profit organisation Roadcraft does a remarkable and outstanding job in reducing road trauma by educating these young drivers with practical defensive driving skills. They are taught to understand just how quickly things can go wrong due to high-risk behaviours including tailgating, drink-driving, fatigue and distraction. These courses are designed to teach vehicle control skills and techniques such as good forward observation, good steering, correct posture, low-risk driving and time and space.

Roadcraft does not just work with young drivers: it caters for drivers of all ages. In fact, the Queensland Ambulance Service sends all of their drivers to Roadcraft for training. The shadow minister for transport and main roads, the member for Chatsworth, saw firsthand the work of Roadcraft when he visited their operation with me. We met with the chief executive officer, Sharlene Makin, and the board. Roadcraft fulfils a valuable role in making our roads safer by making drivers more aware through knowing, understanding and applying the key principles of low-risk defensive driving.

The latest reports of risky driving on rural roads is concerning. Last month the Australian Road Safety Foundation released research showing that one in three Queensland drivers admit they are more likely to undertake risky behaviour on rural roads. Even having a child in the car is not a deterrent. It said that drivers take these risks because they think they are less likely to get caught or they think there are fewer dangers.

While the main culprits on these roads are metropolitan drivers, rural drivers were worse when it comes to speeding. Across the country regional road deaths account for a staggering two in every three in the national road toll. This is despite only making up 16.5 per cent of the Australian population. The regional road toll has jumped 13.8 per cent since last August. It is a fact of life that we have to use a car to get to most places. Many Queenslanders do not have the luxury of relying on public transport services to get around. That is why it is critical to maintain our roads. That is not happening. Currently Queensland is not even maintaining what we have. We are playing catch-up.

At estimates we learnt that the maintenance backlog on state controlled roads has blown out to \$5 billion. The Auditor-General says at this rate the backlog will reach over \$9 billion in the next 10 years. During a committee hearing the member for Callide asked—


The Auditor-General in his report No. 4 has identified a projected \$9 billion shortfall to the maintenance programs throughout the road network in Queensland and has stated that this will significantly affect safety outcomes on some of those roads. Have you taken that into account and would you care to comment on that?

The deputy director-general for customer services at the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Mike Stapleton, said—

You are asking me if the condition of the road is a factor in speed limit setting. Yes, it is a factor in speed limit setting.

I receive numerous representations from constituents concerned about the state of our roads. Every day, local families, retirees and workers have to deal with sharing our roads with large vehicles, trucks and holiday-makers. Gympie's roads are part of a major transport corridor to the north and south through the Bruce Highway and west on the Wide Bay Highway. With reduced government services, residents often travel long distances to access the same services and facilities that those in the south-east corner take for granted. Safety is compromised when traffic from western areas frequently backs up at Bells Bridge at the intersection of the Bruce and Wide Bay highways. Last month we had yet another incident there and the driver had to be airlifted from the site.

Making roads safe is the responsibility of both the driver and the government. One is about behaviour and the other is about delivering the best possible conditions to reduce risk. Governments need to make our road network safer so that families, children, workers and retirees can return home, and drivers need to remember that getting behind the wheel of a car is a privilege granted by the community. It is not a right but a responsibility. Road tolls are a sad reminder. They are not a record we should aim to beat. I do not oppose the bill.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (12.21 pm): I rise to speak on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. Each and every one of us has a responsibility to be serious about reducing death and serious injury on our roads. This bill delivers amendments that are the critical next steps towards reducing death and serious injury. Nyree Manion, her mum and her sister are all amazing baysiders and they know, sadly, firsthand the impact that a serious accident can have.

In 1989 Nyree's sister survived a serious traffic accident and has lived in residential care for more than 26 years as a result of the serious injuries that she sustained in the accident. Nyree saw a need to raise awareness of the long-term impact of traumatic head injury and to empower young people to create, communicate and implement safe driving practices, so in 2015 she established Make it Home Safely Inc. This fabulous project was first launched in schools to educate young people on the importance of driving safely. The following year, the Make it Home Safe 100 program was launched to support young learner drivers without access to a supervisor or registered vehicle to complete their logbook hours.

It is estimated that each year 11,000 Queenslanders will acquire a brain injury. Of them, 4,000 develop a serious disability, and motor vehicle accidents will be responsible for 70 per cent of these traumatic brain injuries. Of this number, 70 per cent will be young people aged between 16 and 24 and two-thirds of them will be male.

Last week during road safety awareness week, the bayside community gathered with Nyree and her team of dedicated volunteers to hear of the great work they are doing in educating bayside young people about safe driving practices. It was particularly great to catch up with Pete and Graham who between them have over 60 years of driving experience. They have shared their experience and knowledge by mentoring local young people. Over the last two years, they have very proudly got eight young people to qualify for their Ps.

Our bayside community is really committed to road safety awareness. The community, corporate and local stakeholders—including Bartons, Caltex, Port of Brisbane, BABI, Bendigo Bank, Hemmant flexi school, Wynnum Manly Rotary, Wynnum Manly Leagues Club and many locals—all stand together to support the work of Make it Home Safely. Nyree told us that, whilst the number of deaths on Queensland roads is trending downwards—in fact, it is the lowest in five years, which is great—there is still more to be done and we all agreed.


The decision of Queenslanders not to put road safety first carries with it fatal and long-term consequences. We are still seeing drivers, riders and pedestrians distracted by their phones and other devices; drivers and riders are speeding as they rush to get to work or home or to appointments; motorists are getting behind the wheel under the influence of alcohol or drugs; and drivers and passengers are not buckling up. I often talk about and sadly witness the lack of courtesy on our roads and the ignorance of basic road rules. Sometimes when we look at road safety, we talk about the number of people killed but we can often overlook those who are seriously and often permanently injured, just like Nyree's sister.

This bill will introduce education programs for drink-driving offenders and will provide the opportunity to influence and encourage positive behaviour change by providing people with strategies to separate drinking and driving. The aims of the programs are to reduce the incidence of reoffending and to ultimately keep people safer on our roads. The bill will expand the current alcohol ignition interlock program to include first-time mid-range drink-drivers because mid-range drink-drivers represent a significant road safety risk. The interlock program reinforces the seriousness of the offence and provides an opportunity for this group to learn to separate their drinking from their driving.

As we know, speed on our Queensland roads continues to be a significant road safety factor. This bill enables further development of point-to-point camera systems on stretches of roads with multiple speed limits. These cameras are known to be effective deterrents against speeding over long sections of the road network.

May I at this point acknowledge the great work our first responders do each and every day in their job. They are truly to be commended. I am fortunate to have the training centre in my electorate at Whyte Island and I have been out there and witnessed firsthand the amazing work of the first responders, QFES and the ambulance officers. I thank them very much.

Things need to change and the amendments in this bill are a step in the right direction. I call on all of us to follow the road rules. Please do not drive distracted, please do not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, please buckle up, please do not drive tired and please do not speed. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (12.27 pm): I rise to speak of my concerns with the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. As some from the opposition have previously indicated, aspects of this bill present as manifestly vindictive and will very likely prove to be counterproductive. While I fully recognise that abuse of alcohol is a scourge on society and I wholeheartedly support stronger rehabilitation and education for repeat offenders, I do however question the need to lengthen the interlock program from 24 months to five years following one—just one—mid-range RBT. This measure has to be questioned.

If we widen the scope of making one mistake and applied that to the behaviour of those in this House, I would suggest that this government would be hard up finding fit and proper members to fill the cabinet. Heaven knows how much legislation has been passed in this House by members who are inadvertently over the limit on return from lunch or dinner. Winding up over .05 is sometimes only a couple of extra drinks or misjudging the strength of drinks and then for one reason or another leaving early. One mistake and five years is a high bar.

Furthermore, has the government considered the increased costs of interlock equipment, particularly the need to recalibrate the equipment regularly? Having interlocks fitted for five years in many cases will mean having to reinstall the interlock equipment when people replace or change vehicles. In regional areas, the impost is likely to prove significantly higher. Worse still, these amendments may wind up causing long-term barriers to attaining and keeping employment. Five years is a long time to be parked up in unemployment as a result of a single bad choice on just one occasion.

Mrs McMahon: So is death.

Mr ANDREW: That is true. Once unlicensed and uninsured, people succumb to the pressure of having to remain a functional part of society and are more willing to take chances. Sadly, these people too often descend deeper into outright criminality, and society has to then accommodate an even bigger mess. I would strongly recommend the government review the measures and reassess whether the existing rehabilitation and education measures can be managed better without resorting to the big stick approach straight up. Even though I have those reservations, I do commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (12.29 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. I know that the explanatory notes to this bill list a vast number of amendments to a range of pieces of legislation. I fully support and endorse the range of initiatives contained in this bill, including the extension of the interlock program, the introduction of education programs targeted at drink-drivers across a range of contexts and the mechanisms to allow traffic camera enforcement in variable speed limit zones. I note the infrastructure we can see being installed along the M1 at the moment. I am especially appreciative, and I am sure members of the general public will be, of the introduction of an online portal to nominate other drivers for camera infringement notices rather than completing the statutory declaration.

I intend to speak about a particular clause that not many members have addressed—indeed the committee, whilst understandably having a large amount of amendments to consider, gave it but a brief mention in the report—namely, clause 35 which amends section 80 of the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995. If ever there were a section of a piece of legislation that I could talk about underwater, it would be section 80 of what we affectionately refer to as the TORUM. I honestly could not calculate how many hours I have spent over the years explaining section 80 to hundreds of recruits. It is probably the one lesson I specialise in, so I ask members to bear with me as I condense hundreds of hours into fewer than 10 minutes.

Every police recruit receives at least 10 hours instruction on drink-driving legislation, not including their practical work and assessment work. It is bread-and-butter policing. Every member has stood up in this House and offered bipartisan support generally to our drink-driving legislation. They have spoken about the impact of drink-driving and acknowledged the work of our officers in detecting, investigating and prosecuting drink-drivers. We all have section 80 of the TORUM to thank for that. Section 80 gives police officers the power to require a specimen of breath on the roadside. Section 80 gives police the power to take that driver back to the police station for further testing, and it gives them power to require a specimen of breath for analysis on an approved breath-analysing instrument as well as the power to issue paperwork and certificates in relation to suspended licences and evidence.

It is a remarkable piece of legislation but not one that is easy to navigate. I know that section 79 of the act is where all the love is, because that is where the traffic offences are. That is where we find our UIL offences and our mid-range and high-range drink-driving offences. I give a shout-out to subsection (7), which includes our horse riders and bicyclists who get charged for drink-driving. Section 79 goes for only 23 pages; section 80 goes for a staggering 38 pages. It never used to be that big. In fact, it does seem to grow almost every year, because throughout the years we have increased the provisions of drink-driving to include matters like saliva testing and drug testing. This amendment bill will add to section 80. While it may not seem big, its amendment will have its uses. Allow me to elaborate. Section 80(2) currently allows for police to require a specimen of breath from any person found or suspected by an officer to have been driving, attempting to put in motion, or being in charge of a motor vehicle. This amendment will allow for police to require a specimen of breath from someone who operates or interferes with the operation of a motor vehicle in a dangerous manner.

Any police officer could tell a range of drink-driving investigation stories. I could tell the one about the time I got two drivers out of the one car who were drink-driving, or where we caught a drink-driver twice within one hour, or that time on the Gold Coast Highway where we had so many drink-drivers caught in the space of 20 minutes we did not have enough time to process them all. However, I will relay the impact that this clause will have when it comes into effect.

One evening I was detailed to attend a single-vehicle traffic crash into a pole on Compton Road at Underwood. There were two male occupants. After establishing who was the driver, we breath-tested the driver, found that he was over and said that he would be coming back with us to the station for further testing, as allowed by section 80. In sorting out the vehicle to be towed, we attempted to establish the reason for the crash. It is a straight stretch of road, it was a clear night and the results were not that high. Not every drink-driving incident results in a crash. We had a chat to his passenger and it was established that the passenger decided, for a lark, to grab on to the steering wheel of the vehicle as it was being driven, thus resulting in the car being wrapped around the pole—and by the grace of God they both walked out of that vehicle.


We ended up charging the driver for drink-driving and we charged the passenger with dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, because the provision allows for the interference with a vehicle. We could not breath-test the passenger, even though I could say right now that he would have been higher than the driver. That is the loophole that clause 35 will close, because that passenger who took control of that steering wheel, causing the car to crash, was in fact at the wheel at the time the vehicle crashed and could therefore be tested under the new section 80.

Everyone here has spoken about or provided some example of the impact of road crashes and road trauma. It is interesting that we now use the words 'road trauma'. I note some of the changes to the way we describe road incidents. We used to call them 'traffic accidents'—that inferred that these things just happened by accident—but the reality is that it is driver behaviour, more often than not, that is the cause of a traffic crash. Therefore, now we use the terms 'road crash' or 'traffic crash'. The term we are starting to use now is 'road trauma', because not only is it the physical trauma but also there is a mental trauma that goes alongside. Many members spoke about the impact of crashes not only on the victims who survive but also on the family.

My job exposed me to traffic crashes and road trauma on an unimaginable scale. When I stood in the House to make my first speech I said that I would be a champion for general duties police officers. They are the front line in attending our road crashes, often getting there before our ambos and paramedics and often being the only person holding someone's hand as they take their last breaths. Obviously, I thought that after years and years I would be immune to this, because we put our professional hat on and do our job, but we do not account for what happens when it affects us personally. I know of cases—and I read about it regularly in our regional areas—where police officers attending traffic crashes find out that the victims are actually family. I could not think of anything worse.

This is probably the first and hopefully only time I will mention this, but a number of years ago I was involved in a fatal traffic crash. I was the only survivor of the traffic crash. The driver who caused the crash had, as it turned out following the autopsy, a blood alcohol concentration of .185. That is over the middle limit but under the high limit. The member for Mirani just stated that it was unfair that someone over the middle limit but under the high limit has an interlock device fitted for just one incident. Fitting an interlock device would not have made a difference in the example I gave because that driver had not had a previous incident, but saying that someone who has just misjudged by having a few extra drinks and who is over the middle range limit does not deserve to have an interlock device fitted is not right.

Those are decisions that people make for which there are consequences. I am sorry if it means that people might have trouble with their employment, but the decision to take those extra drinks and the impairment of judgement it causes has far-reaching consequences that are greater than potentially having trouble finding or keeping a job. Those decisions kill. That is why we have a piece of legislation. That is why we have section 80. That is why we have section 79 of TORUM. It does a job. It is there as a consequence, because there are far worse consequences than losing your licence. There are far worse consequences of drink-driving than having trouble finding a job. The number of Queenslanders we lose every year because someone made the wrong decision is appalling. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.39 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. I have listened with interest to the contribution of many members. I have learned a bit in the process. I commend the member for Macalister for her contribution.

It has been said by a number of speakers that road safety is everyone's responsibility. That rang a bell for me. I remember as a youngster the bumper stickers and the signs around the place with a finger pointing to the reader saying 'Road safety: finally it's up to you'. That stems from a conversation that former transport minister Don Lane had with former treasurer Llew Edwards. Sir Llew had said to him, 'Isn't it odd that you get blamed as minister for transport every time someone dies on the roads? It must be the government's responsibility.' He made the point that that was odd because, in his opinion, road safety is everyone's responsibility. From about that time society began to accept that that was the case.

The Queensland Road Safety Council adopted that particular strategy—'Road safety: finally it's up to you'—for about a decade. I think you can see that in that period the road toll started to fall. There were a lot of things happening. Lollipop ladies, as we used to call them—crossing supervisors—were introduced around schools. I certainly remember that. That helped to reduce the road toll. We had improvements to roads. We also saw the introduction of random breath testing, which was a very unpopular measure at the time. The prospect of having a sanction against you for driving whilst over the limit has reduced the amount of drink-driving. We know that one in five fatalities on our roads involves a vehicle operator with a blood alcohol content in the medium range. That is a damning statistic, even today. We have better, safer cars. We have also seen driver education.

At the time that campaign first started, about 700 people a year were dying on Queensland roads. At that time there were about half as many vehicles on the road as there are now. Compare that to where we are at today. The most recent report, for 2017, shows 247 tragic deaths. Whilst that number is still far too high and we will all do what we can to reduce it, it shows how far we have come.


This bill aims to make Queensland's roads safer. For that reason, the LNP and I will be supporting the bill. It aims to expand the alcohol ignition interlock program to those who have been found guilty in the mid range. It introduces the capacity for point-to-point speed cameras to be used where there are varying speed limits between two points. Whilst I accept the evidence for the value of speed cameras—speed enforcement is a crucial part of keeping the road toll down—I share the concerns of some of the speakers before me that it is vital for the community to have confidence in the system and to not perceive that the purpose of having speed cameras is to raise revenue. I do not believe that revenue raising is the purpose of speed cameras, but it is vital that community confidence in the government's motives be maintained. For that reason, the LNP and I believe that the position of speed cameras should be signed as a way of proclaiming to the community that enforcing speed limits is important and to show the community that the government has nothing to hide.

The bill applies a drug and alcohol testing regime for people interfering with the operation of a vehicle—the member for Macalister spoke about that; clarifies evidentiary provisions relating to placard loads that exceed a threshold quantity; updates existing evidentiary provisions for applying heavy vehicle inspection fees and driver licence disqualifications; provides for evidentiary certificates to

confirm the identity of a road toll operator; enables certain exempt activities to be published on the department's website rather than by gazettal; and, interestingly, enables the state, on behalf of prescribed entities, to recover costs and expenses incurred in responding to a marine pollution incident. I think that is a step in the right direction.

The member for Mackay made the point that it is people who cause crashes, not roads. Whilst that is true on one level—we are all responsible for driving to the conditions we are presented with—it cannot be said that investing money into improving our roads does not reduce the road toll. In my electorate, the Gore Highway, the Cunningham Highway and the New England Highway have stretches that are notoriously uneven and urgently require fixes. We all deserve safe roads. There needs to be a sustainable maintenance program to allow that. The Auditor-General's 2017-18 report titled *Integrated transport planning* summarised that the state was \$4 billion behind in renewal of the road network. That was two years ago now. If current trends continue, the state will be \$9 billion behind. That will be really difficult to recover from. In electorates like mine, road safety includes having safe roads. It does everywhere. If we are to be honest with ourselves, we need to do this as well as provide safer roads—making sure that the roads we have are maintained in the best possible condition.

My sister is a paramedic who works in Stanthorpe. I know that she and her colleagues share the difficult job that the member for Macalister and other speakers alluded to in responding to traffic crashes. It behoves us all to think about those emergency services personnel who have to deal with the memories and the effects of fatal road accidents. They are not pretty at all. It is not something they do occasionally; it is something they do as part of their job. We owe it to all of them to do all we can to reduce the road toll. The government aims to reduce the road toll by 30 per cent by 2020. That is a very ambitious target. No-one holds that against it, of course. We all do our bit. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (12.47 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill. As many other people who have risen to speak in this debate have said, the statistics show why this legislation needs to be passed. We heard many times today and yesterday that road deaths and injuries cost Queensland \$5 billion each year. We have heard that over 30 people have lost their lives in North Queensland this year. In 2017, 63 Queenslanders were killed in crashes specifically involving drink-drivers or drink-riders.


Today I want to focus on the drink-driving and drug-driving reforms. I am proud of how far Queensland has come regarding drink-driving behaviour. In my lifetime I have seen how behaviour and attitudes have changed remarkably. Road safety ads from the 1970s and 1980s were not as hardline as they are now. There was a bit of finger wagging by authorities and police. The ad may have featured an almost comical response from the person who was caught. In recent decades ads have emphasised that drink-driving is a deadly risk. These ads have been grim and realistic and they have been getting the message through that drink-driving is a killer.

It is really pleasing to see that attitudes to drink-driving throughout Queensland have changed. When I was a kid in the seventies we would go with our dads to the pub or the club but we would stay in the car. We would sit in the car and the fathers would give a red lemonade to the kids to drink in the car. We would wait a little while and then we all drove home. In later years when we would go out the mums would drive home. People were beginning to realise that they did not want to risk the lives of their families and behaviour changed. Attitudes have changed in recent times because we have put out the message about the Fatal Five. That is getting through to nearly all Queenslanders, yet we need to keep on training Queenslanders on the Fatal Five. The schoolchildren in the gallery today need to remember what the Fatal Five are—that is, speed, alcohol, fatigue, seatbelt and distraction. It is really important that they remember those.

We really need these laws because, no matter what we do, there is always a hard core of recidivists. There are always a small group of people in our communities—in our society—who, for whatever reasons, still persist in their behaviour despite all of the warnings that we have delivered. That is what this bill is doing—that is, changing their behaviour or keeping them off the road. First-time drink-drivers will be required to complete a brief intervention education program prior to them regaining their licence, and that program will be delivered online and give people strategies to separate drinking from driving. However, for repeat offenders it will be harder in that they will be required to complete a more intensive multisection education program. This program will be undertaken while the offender is participating in the interlock program, and that will need to be successfully completed.

The interlock time frame contained in this bill is well worthy. The bill is increasing the current two-year interlock period to five years. That means that a person cannot drive for five years if they choose not to participate in the interlock program. I really do welcome the expansion of the interlock

program to include mid-range drink-drivers, and the member for Macalister gave a very heartfelt and pertinent speech about that. Mid-range drink-drivers account for more than a quarter of all offenders and have a crash risk 20 times greater than someone who has not had a drink. Finally, I welcome the fact that the bill will clarify that if a person has been disqualified by a court in another state their licence in Queensland will be cancelled from the date that that person became disqualified. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.52 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution to this very important legislation, the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. I say at the outset that I am very supportive of any measures that make our roads safer for everybody travelling on them. However, I also highlight that it is a privilege to have a driver's licence in order to drive on our roads—it is not an expectation; it is a privilege—and when we do the wrong thing that privilege should be taken away.

Like other members of the opposition, there are certain issues with regard to this bill even though I am supportive of it. When it comes to point-to-point speed cameras, we have to ensure that signage in those areas with regard to speed limits is clearly marked so that motorists who traverse those roads are well informed about their obligations in terms of the speed limit they need to travel at. All of our communities have been touched by the terrible tragedy of motor vehicle accidents. My community—the former electorate of Albert and the current electorate of Theodore—has also been touched terribly. I have had families come to my office and speak about the loss of a parent, the loss of a child, the loss of a family member. These stories are very difficult for all members to sit down and listen to because your heart goes out to those individuals.

Many of these issues come down to reckless behaviour—madness for a short period of time—whether it is speeding, being impatient and wanting to overtake in an area which is not appropriate and also when people drink and drive. I do support the idea that when individuals drink and drive there should be tougher punishments dealing with them. I also want to highlight the fact that at a recent community event in a neighbouring electorate I had law enforcement officers and community members expressing their concerns about the way people behave on the water. The Theodore electorate has the Coomera River running through the middle of it and it is a popular area for boaties. I want to highlight the simple fact that if someone is caught drink-driving on a motor boat that does not carry across to a car licence. Someone could be completely and utterly out of their brain drunk driving a boat, yet that does not carry over to their vehicle or car licence. That is something that we need to look at as a community, because if that is the attitude of an individual in charge of a boat that attitude might be carried across to our roads.

Returning to the bill, an individual with a mid-range blood alcohol limit has a 20 times increased chance of having an accident. The science and the research is out there in that we have to understand our responsibilities as a motorist to other people, not just ourselves. With regard to speeding offences, about 12 months ago in my electorate a group of young people were speeding through a very precarious section of Tamborine Oxenford Road and the driver lost his life. He had a car load of his mates and the driver lost his life. That was a sad time for all of those families involved, especially the parents of the individual who had his life taken away. That highlights the fact that we need to continue to drum these rules into all motorists—not just young motorists but all motorists—to ensure that they know their responsibilities on our roads.

Recently Upper Coomera State College had a great program dealing with road safety. The staged performance was quite gruesome in order to highlight to the students the importance of understanding the dangers on our roads and how important it is not to muck around and play up. To highlight this further, this issue costs our economy \$5 billion each year. That is not just for ongoing care but for hospitals and our emergency services who attend to these individuals. I want to thank the member for Macalister for her contribution. As a former police officer, she would have seen some of the most horrific accidents possible. Again, we need to drum into young people the importance of understanding their obligations to do the right thing.


In the lovely Theodore electorate there are some roads which need a bit of attention. I am not referring to the main interchanges but am talking about Tamborine Oxenford Road. There are certain sections of Tamborine Oxenford Road that need attention, as does Maudsland Road. One local resident along Maudsland Road near the intersection of Beaudesert Nerang Road highlighted to my office recently—and we wrote to the department—that his driveway is very close to a blind corner where the speed limit is 70 kilometres an hour. He was pleading with the department to reduce the speed limit to 60 because he has a gravel driveway where it goes across Main Roads land and he is very concerned about that. I can certainly understand why he would be concerned, because once you leave that chicane

cars accelerate quite rapidly. Therefore, it is very hard for him and his family to judge the distances of those vehicles coming towards them when they are trying to exit their driveway. There are some other roads in the area which certainly do need attention, and that is something I will be fighting for over the next 12 months until the next election.

Interruption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Red Socks Project, Photograph in Chamber

 **Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Pugh): As the time is now 1 pm, it is time for the House to rise for lunch. However, I remind all members that the red socks photo will be taken in the chamber at 1 pm. If anybody has located my socks—they seem to have gone walkabout—I would very much appreciate their return or a replacement pair.

Mr LANGBROEK: Here, Madam Deputy Speaker. Here you go. There's a pair.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, member for Surfers Paradise. Much appreciated. It is time for the red socks photo, so I would ask all members to assemble for the photo.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—Ind) (2.30 pm): In my view, the bill before the House, the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill, is a non-contentious piece of legislation that has been flagged accordingly by a number of honourable members who have spoken in the course of the debate here this afternoon. By and large, I echo many of the sentiments that have been expressed by a number of my parliamentary colleagues during this significant week as the parliament finally returns to North Queensland, to what is, in many ways, my adopted city of Townsville. It is great to be back here on the shores of Cleveland Bay.

As has been noted by a number of speakers, road safety is everyone's business. When I said 'a number of speakers', I looked at the member for Townsville. The comments that he made before the luncheon adjournment resonated with me and, I would have thought, almost everybody else. Road safety cuts across the political divide, because it is everyone's business and everyone has a role to play.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the work of some of the people in my own electorate and the wider Mackay-Whitsunday region who have played a role. I see the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. We are here hot on the heels of Road Safety Week. I acknowledge the work that the minister and his department have carried out in their space and the awards that were given out in Brisbane not long ago. It was wonderful to see the Road Accident Action Group, headquartered in Mackay, comprising community members and headed by Brett Hoskin, who I understand is the acting chair, again being recognised for its leadership and excellence in road safety.

On a day like today, where we have members coming forward to speak to this bill, I want to acknowledge the late Susie Whitehead. The rest area at Nebo carries her name. She certainly made a great contribution to road safety in the Nebo district. That memorial rest area that carries her name is significant and rightfully recognises a wonderful lady who left a lasting legacy in promoting road safety to the wider community. I also want to recognise the late Bob Sim of RACQ CQ Rescue fame, who also played a leading hand in RAAG, as it is called—the Road Accident Action Group headquartered in Mackay—and also Graeme Ransley, who was the pied piper in the eyes of many people in the community. He might be embarrassed with me calling him that, but he very much engaged the local community and got people fired up about road safety.

In terms of a number of aspects of this bill and the perception of revenue raising, it is out there. There is no doubt that people are concerned about being pinched here just for the sake of putting money into Treasury's coffers. Most people—if not 99.9 per cent of the community—want to do the right thing, but the fact of the matter is that there is a perception of revenue raising with some people,

particularly in terms of point-to-point cameras. I think the member for Theodore made a good contribution when he spoke about people who have had a few drinks and so forth behind the wheel of a boat. Whether it is a boat, a bike, a horse, a car—no pun intended—that just does not pass the pub test. It is unacceptable.

The member for Condamine talked about how it used to be in the old days when it was Rafferty's rules. Times have changed. The community at large is now switched on about the importance of road safety, the carnage on our roads and the need for government, the community and key stakeholders to work together to make a difference to curb the road toll. I know in my part of the world there are roadside rest areas on the Bruce Highway. We all agree that we need to continue to upgrade our roads. My part of the world is no different, with the Bruce Highway, the Capricorn Highway and the Peak Downs Highway, which is such a critical connection between the Bowen Basin and the coast for coalminers, workers and contractors. There is also the Flinders Highway, the Kennedy Highway and other highways that I am familiar with, because I spend a lot of time on our highways and byways—driving about 80,000 kilometres a year, mostly in the course of my duties.


In those parts of Central, North and Far North Queensland a lot more work needs to be done. In fact, when I was campaigning the first time around as the candidate for the electorate of Whitsunday there was not a single overtaking lane between Mount Ossa in the heart of my electorate—about 45 kilometres from Mackay, the city that I represent—and the Burdekin 'Silver Link', that iconic bridge spanning the iconic Burdekin River. That is a significant section of the Bruce Highway. That part of the highway has been rectified, but more work needs to be done, particularly in the area of roadside rest areas.

There is one at Mount Gordon, which is a legacy of the former Bjelke-Petersen government. It is just adjacent to the Big Mango, which is a famous landmark in North Queensland. Mr Deputy Speaker, you are probably familiar with that, along with plenty of other members of this House and people who are in the gallery today as we sit here in Townsville. It is just 200 kilometres south of here. That rest area has been refurbished. That is a great tick. So, too, was the Palm Tree Creek Rest Area, near Kuttabul in my electorate, refurbished some years ago, which pleased me no end. Governments of both sides have played a role in refurbishing these rest areas.

In terms of making a difference on the issue of road safety, the argy-bargy comes in as to where the priorities lie. It would be remiss of me—and I know that I would probably be tapped on the shoulder by RAAG if I did not—to not again advocate for the need for a roadside rest area for heavy vehicle drivers, grey nomads, Joe Blow, at Bloomsbury, which is halfway between Mackay and Bowen. That stretch of road at Bloomsbury is a concern for a lot of people. Certainly, it is a concern for my constituents. I think we need to do something about it. I know that, in the past, Graeme Ransley and his colleagues from RAAG have spoken at length about it as did, I recall, the late Bob Sim. He thought it was important as well.

As I say, a number of issues have been canvassed in the course of the debate on this bill, particularly in relation to roadworks and speed restrictions when there is nobody around, but there is a camera. No-one wants to be flooring it through areas where there are road workers doing their job and placing the lives of those people at risk. No-one in their right mind wants to be doing that—or should be doing that—but we cannot have a situation where there are speed restrictions on a road where no-one is within cooee, there are no workers at all, and people are being stung. It becomes a nuisance. It gets people fired up.

As I say, I spend a lot of time on the road. Prior to the luncheon break the member for Condamine articulated this issue. I share his sentiments. As I say, there is a perception of revenue raising. I would have thought that was something that the government needs to be wary of and manage. That is the first thing that a lot of my constituents would be thinking. They want to make a difference. They genuinely do. They want to do the right thing. As I say, road safety needs to be considered by all people—road users, government, community groups; the lot. We all have to have buy-in to make a difference, otherwise we are going to have more tragedies on the road. No matter where we are on the political divide, no matter where we sit, we do not want that. As I say, this bill is not a contentious bill. I wanted to flag some of those concerns and acknowledge some of those key people who have made a difference in relation to road safety in my wonderful electorate of Whitsunday.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.38 pm): It is an absolute pleasure to be in the beautiful city of Townsville, only 300 kilometres south of the capital. I rise to make my contribution to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. Specifically, the bill proposes to make amendments to the Transport Operations Act to enable the introduction of a range of measures aimed at what we have been discussing here, which is the most important issue of ensuring that we see far greater statistics in relation to the challenges we have on our roads.

It would be remiss of me not to take into account the contributions of members on both sides. I found the statements from the member for Macalister empowering. People who have experienced this, who have seen it at the coalface, would recognise the importance of it. Whilst I have never served in the police force I have unfortunately been involved in these incidents and I recognise the indelible imprint it leaves on us. This very important piece of legislation has the single goal and objective of making our roads safer. There are a variety of challenges that go with that. I acknowledge that death and serious injuries on Queensland roads continue to cause significant devastation for individuals, families and our broader community. As has been mentioned, we put a monetary value of around \$5 billion on it.

Improving safety on our roads must be and continues to be a priority for the Palaszczuk government. It is at this stage that I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the minister and the committee. I also acknowledge that the minister was in Cairns last week for Road Safety Week looking at some of the infrastructure around town, which I enormously appreciated as the state member for Cairns and certainly people in our community acknowledged that. Like other regional cities, once you get out of our CBD we are on open roads and it is important to ensure that we keep people thinking of the importance of safety.

Queensland's Road Safety Strategy sets an ambitious target, and why not? It should be ambitious. The goal is to reduce death and serious injury by 30 per cent by 2020, meaning we need to reduce road fatalities to under 200 and serious injuries to under 4,700. In 2017 the unfortunate figure of 247 people lost their lives and an estimated 6,462 people were seriously injured on our roads. This bill proposes road safety amendments intended to help achieve that 2020 target. I have heard it said by others in this chamber, and I would agree emphatically, that the attitude to drink-driving over the years has changed and that we need to ensure that change continues. Growing up in the seventies and eighties I can tell you that it needed to change, as a lot of us would be aware.

In 2017 the Department of Transport and Main Roads released a public discussion paper canvassing a range of options for reducing drink-driving reoffending, including education reforms and the enhancement of the interlock program that are in this bill. It is important to acknowledge that it attracted over 3,000 survey responses. There was strong community engagement, which is absolutely terrific. Sometimes a topic is put out into the community and it does not get a lot of feedback. This is obviously a very important matter and that is reflected in the overwhelming numbers of survey responses, in addition to the nine written submissions from interested stakeholder groups. It is worth noting that all proposals received majority support.


The bill includes legislative reforms designed to enhance the existing alcohol interlock program. Broadly these amendments will introduce education programs for new and repeat drink-driving offenders, extend the current interlock program to include mid-range drink-driving offences and extend the current interlock program sit-out period from two to five years and provide for access to work licences for mid-range offenders participating in the interlock program. The intent of the package of reforms is to reduce road trauma and address behaviours associated with drink-driving and to provide means by which offenders can learn to separate their drinking from driving. This is about the science. This is about getting down to the granular detail. It is absolutely essential that people recognise the fundamental differences.

This bill will also allow for camera enforcement of speed limits on sections of road where multiple speed limits are displayed, for example, where variable speed limit signs are in use on managed motorways or where speed limits have been reduced for roadworks. It is at this stage that I would like to remind everybody, not just here but everybody listening, that it is legislated that any moneys raised by those speed cameras has to go back into road safety campaigns. The perception that government is a bit low on some coin and we need to whack out some speed cameras is far from the truth. There is a science to this. The legislation ensures that that money goes back into the program. I find myself regularly reminding people of the importance of this issue.

At this juncture I would also like to add that the bill contains a range of amendments that are not just related to road safety. This includes extending the existing ability of the state to recover the costs and expenses incurred in responding to a marine pollution incident beyond just port authorities to prescribed entities such as local governments and may I say, if you did not know, coming from Cairns I can tell members that our marine environment is an absolutely essential part not only of our economy but also of our lifestyle and this is very important and welcomed legislation. The bill also makes minor and technical amendments, including the evidentiary provisions, for clarity and to improve efficiencies and streamline the process.

The education programs that are being introduced for drink-driving offenders will focus on first-time drink-drivers. They will be required to complete a brief intervention education program prior to them being re-licenced. Driving a car comes with responsibilities which everybody needs to acknowledge. I am confident that these programs will remind people of the responsibilities that they have. Repeat offenders will be required to complete a more intensive, multisession education program. This program will be undertaken while the offender is participating in the interlock program and will need to be successfully completed before the interlock condition can be removed from their licence.

There are a number of key aspects that are absolutely vital. The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, the RACQ, the Queensland Law Society, the Queensland Trucking Association, the Transport Workers' Union, Transurban and the Local Government Association of Queensland were all consulted. As I said, over 3,000 parties were involved. The people of Queensland expect their government to protect them in a range of areas and we are doing that. Safety on our roads is an enormous challenge and this piece of legislation reflects that we are listening, we understand the importance of it and we are doing the right thing in understanding the science and educating people on it.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (2.46 pm): It is my pleasure to rise and speak to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. I thank the shadow minister for his contribution. He has been very busy here in Townsville, as has the minister. It is a very important bill. All members of the House in a bipartisan way have concerns about road safety. In Queensland in 2018, 245 people were killed on our roads. I remember being at university in the 1980s in Queensland when we had Campaign 550. It shows how far we have come that we were aiming for a road toll of 550 in the mid 1980s when the road toll was over 700. We have certainly come a long way with improvements in roads, road rules and vehicles themselves. As the minister has said, there is more that we can do. We all believe that there is more that we can and should do to make sure that people can travel safely on our roads and not be affected by drink-driving and drug driving, which we know causes terrible road trauma that changes people's lives forever.

Death and serious injuries on Queensland roads cost \$5 billion every year. In addition to the devastation that I have already mentioned for individuals and families, these accidents place a high cost on the community through hospital and healthcare costs, lost productivity and the use of emergency services. In my electorate of Surfers Paradise these accidents are not just statistics. In February this year I was very upset to learn that a 16-year-old sustained serious injuries after being hit by a drink-driver in Cavill Avenue.

To address the issue of drink-driving the bill extends the interlock program to include mid-range drink-driving offenders and seeks to introduce education programs for first-time drink-drivers as well as for repeat offenders. Attitudes towards drink-driving have changed, as we heard from the honourable member for Cairns just a few moments ago. When we first brought in random testing in Queensland there was a lot of debate about whether that was appropriate. Now it goes without saying that people accept that. Police can pull a driver over for any reason at all to make sure that we are keeping people as safe as possible.

With regard to speeding, the bill will allow for the operation of point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits, whereas previously the legislation allowed for the operation of those cameras only in areas with single speed limits. I want to mention a particular area of my electorate that I know you, Mr Deputy Speaker, in your role as the member for Mermaid Beach, would be aware of, as would the member for Southport. I refer to the area along Bundall Road and Bermuda Street. We constantly observe and have sometimes documented reckless driver behaviour along Bundall Road and Bermuda Street. That has become more of an issue since the six-laning of Bundall Road between Nerang-Broadbeach Road and the Monaco Street Bridge. That was planned by the LNP when in government and delivered by the minister for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. The six-laning of that portion of the road has compromised it in terms of space, which has meant that the speed limit has to stay at 60 kilometres an hour. There used to be significant congestion from the Nerang-Broadbeach Road all the way through to the Monaco Street Bridge, in both directions. Whilst the introduction of six lanes has freed up traffic, many people believe that, because it is a six-lane road, the speed limit should be more than 60 kilometres an hour and they drive accordingly.

I am very concerned about the potential for accidents to happen there. I have written to the minister about this. I believe that we need to consider either point-to-point speed cameras or fixed speed cameras. It is very dangerous for drivers, because the six lanes are quite narrow, and also for people whose driveways go straight onto the road. There is no space beside the left-hand lane for someone to turn into their property, which is an issue when traffic is travelling at 70 kilometres an hour or beyond. That is going to lead to an accident at some stage. It is also dangerous for residents to back

out of their driveways. Another issue is the substandard footpaths along which people have to walk and about which I have also written to the minister. We will continue our communication about that. It is all happening in very close proximity to oncoming traffic.

Only last week the minister issued a press release about the introduction of new technology. There is a red light camera at the intersection of Rudd Street and Bundall Road. The new technology prevents accidents at an intersection. If someone runs a red light, it stops the light from changing in the other direction, hopefully to prevent a potential accident. That is all admirable. However, there is a 500-metre stretch from Fremar Street to the Monaco Street Bridge where there are no houses. It is right next to Albert Park. That area used to be in the electorate of the member for Mermaid Beach, who is in the chair at the moment. Unfortunately, because there are no houses there, people believe that they can drive at more than 70 kilometres an hour in that 500-metre stretch, even though it is a narrow six-lane road. I am going to be advocating not just for the new red light camera technology or a speed camera at the Rudd Street intersection to try to stop people from going through red lights; we need to do more in both directions between Fremar Street and the Monaco Street Bridge.

I want to deal with something that the member for Whitsunday mentioned, which is his concerns about people speeding through unattended roadworks. As members of parliament, we often come home late at night from meetings, as do other citizens. In my case, often I drive home from Brisbane on the M1. For some reason, people seem to think that road restrictions—and I am talking about coming down to 40 kilometres an hour—do not apply at night. Often when I am travelling, when the speed goes down sometimes from 110 to 80, 60 and then to 40 kilometres an hour, I seem to be the only person in the left-hand lane driving at 40 kilometres an hour. People seem to think that they can keep going at 110 kilometres an hour. If the road is occupied by road workers, obviously that is very dangerous. I am concerned about the policing of those roadworks.


A constituent of mine has received a number of speeding infringements in the Mudgeeraba extension of the M1, because for three or four days in a row he went through the roadworks and incurred three- or four-point speeding fines. Whilst I have some sympathy for him in the sense that he may now lose his licence—and I have written to the appropriate minister about that—the bottom line is that speed restrictions are there for a reason and I believe that people should stick to them, even if there are no road workers present. I would like to think that the minister and the Department of Transport and Main Roads are aware of whether it is safe to remove those speed restrictions. They are there because people still need to take care through those areas.

I turn to the Road Safety Strategy 2015-2021. It has an ambitious target to reduce death and serious injury by 30 per cent by 2020. For that target to be reached, it is clear that much greater effort by everyone involved is required. I have mentioned alcohol, drugs and speed being major factors in many road accidents and the devastating consequences for our communities.

In addition to the road safety related amendments, the bill before us extends the existing ability of the state to recover the costs and expenses incurred by prescribed entities when responding to a marine pollution incident. These incidents have the potential to cause a significant risk to the environment and the economy, so it is important that their costs are covered by offenders.

The LNP is keen to work in a bipartisan manner to improve road safety. We also acknowledge that we must work with our communities to improve driver behaviour. I know that there is a public perception that many of these measures are being used for revenue raising purposes. I note that in 2017-18 revenue from speed camera fines was \$160.6 million and it is forecast to grow to \$237.2 million in the 2021-22 financial year. The shadow minister has mentioned that.

There is no doubt that more can be done to improve the condition of our roads and infrastructure to improve safety. As we have mentioned, we need a second M1 on the Gold Coast. More locally, my electorate needs the state of the footpaths improved along Bermuda Street from Sophie Avenue and Fremar Street. Given the importance of well-maintained roads, I was concerned to read the Auditor-General's report, *Integrated transport planning*, which indicated that TMR has calculated that as at 30 June 2017 it has a \$4 billion renewal backlog for its road network and that that could blow out to more than \$9 billion over the next decade. We are not opposing the bill, but it is not a silver bullet to improve driver behaviour and road safety. More must be done to improve infrastructure. We cannot treat the community with contempt by trying to covertly catch them doing the wrong thing.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. As a former police officer, this issue is very dear to my heart. Today I do not intend to stand here and relate to the chamber all the gory details of every fatal accident that I have ever attended as a police officer. However, I do want to say that, at the accidents that I have

attended where alcohol was a contributing factor, there was always a sense of frustration. There was always the sense that that accident could have been prevented with better enforcement, better education and with a better acceptance, if you like, from right across the community of our laws regarding drink-driving.

Certainly everyone in our community deserves to travel safely on our roads. Everyone in our community deserves to know that their family and their loved ones will arrive safely at their destination. Whether they are driving for business or pleasure, taking the kids to school or whatever the case may be, road safety is one issue that unites each and every one of us.

I will not be opposing this bill, because the LNP has always placed road safety high on its list of priorities. The fact is that, despite the best efforts of government over the years, in 2017 on Queensland roads we saw a fatality every 35 hours. In that same year, every 95 minutes we saw a serious injury on our roads—serious injuries that far too often have life-changing consequences. In the past 12 months there have been five fatalities along a 10-kilometre section of the Bruce Highway south of Townsville, in my electorate of Burdekin. That highlights just how real and tragic road accidents can be.

I can tell the House that, as a police officer or emergency services worker, there is little worse than getting a call to attend the scene of a fatal traffic accident. There is absolutely nothing worse than having to knock on the door of a household and inform the members of that family that they have just lost a loved one. Without question that is the worst aspect of being an emergency service worker. Today as part of my contribution, I pay tribute to all our emergency services workers—the police, the fireys, the ambos—because theirs is a tough job. It is a tough gig when you go to the scene of a fatal traffic accident, particularly when children are involved. I pay tribute to the work that they do and will continue to do to help make our roads a safer place.

They are confronting figures. In some ways it may sound like a losing battle, but I encourage all members of this House to support this bill and I ask that they give an ironclad pledge to all the people of Queensland that these measures are merely a step to reducing the road toll and that we will continue to do what is needed to save lives on our roads, not just today but also into the future because one death on Queensland roads is one death too many.

Drink-driving is a scourge on our society. I have locked up my fair share of drink-drivers and I do not regret locking any of them up. As far as I am concerned, if you are out there drink-driving then you deserve to face the full brunt of the law. I have absolutely no sympathy for anyone who gets behind a wheel having consumed alcohol, or drugs for that matter.


I welcome the introduction of education programs for first-time drink-drivers and repeat offenders, particularly given the research that indicates that this will reduce drink-driving and therefore the road toll. We must be continually looking for ways and methods and policies and procedures that are going to reduce the road toll in this state. We can never take our eye off the ball when it comes to road safety. Anything that is going to reduce the number of fatalities and serious road accidents in this state should be something that we all embrace.

I know that there has been a lot of discussion here and a lot of contributions from members today about roads and the conditions of roads. That is something very dear to my heart and to the hearts of my constituents as my electorate still has several hundred kilometres of unsealed roads which are increasingly being utilised by resource sector workers and by the agricultural industry. I will continue to advocate for improvements, because it is important. Road conditions do play a part in traffic accidents. Whether you want to accept that or not, they certainly do play a major part in traffic accidents in this state.

Speeding continues to be a significant factor in road accidents. There is no better deterrent than a blue uniform or a highway patrol car or a police motorcycle, whatever the case may be, when it comes to speed enforcement. Cameras have their place. There is no question about that, but when someone is getting a ticket weeks after they have committed the offence I question whether they have actually learnt anything from that. It is completely different if you are driving down the highway and a police officer stands out in front of you and signals for you to pull over to the side of the road and gives you a ticket and at the same time gives you a serve which you probably deserve. That to me is the best deterrent of all. For me, it is about making sure that the Police Service has the resources—the staff and equipment—to undertake road traffic enforcement in this state and that we continue to give them the resources in terms of the growth areas of this state where they are most needed.

Whilst I and my colleagues support the intention of this bill to make our roads safer, we must not forget the roads themselves right throughout the state. We have heard today from some members about the importance of major highways to our south such as the M1, but let us put into perspective that some

of our country roads are just as important. Queensland is a vast state with a vast network of roads. The minister is sitting here with a big chequebook, I hope, to improve these roads and is listening to the contributions from the country members here today in terms of the priorities going forward, particularly along our major highways such as the Bruce Highway and the importance of overtaking lanes and upgrades to that highway, which is seeing increasing volumes of traffic year on year. I will continue to fight for those improvements as we go forward. As someone who has seen the devastating effect that road trauma has had in this state, I implore all members to support this legislation and to stand together to make Queensland roads safer.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.03 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. As we all appreciate in this House, road safety is a very important issue. We all use roads, whether driving cars as motorists or travelling on public transport or as cyclists. I would like to begin my contribution by reiterating a key passage from the bill's explanatory notes as it goes to the very basis of what we are debating today. With reference to Queensland's Road Safety Strategy 2015-2021, the explanatory notes outline—

The Queensland strategy sets the ambitious target to reduce death and serious injury by 30 per cent by 2020—meaning we need to reduce road fatalities to under 200 and serious injuries to under 4700 per annum. In 2017, 247 people were killed and an estimated 6462 were seriously injured on our roads. This Bill proposes road safety amendments intended to help achieve the 2020 target.

To achieve the stated policy objectives, this bill seeks to make a number of amendments to legislation including six related acts and four pieces of regulation. It has been said that death and serious injury on Queensland's roads costs \$5 billion each and every year. However, more than simply a dollar amount, the true human and emotional cost is ultimately borne by affected individuals and their families. From a professional perspective, I have certainly seen that in relation to our emergency departments where people are treated for a range of physical injuries, but there is also the additional psychosocial impacts—the depression and the post-traumatic stress disorders—that happen as a consequence of road trauma. Then there is also the ongoing rehabilitation costs which can be borne by not only health services but other service providers over many years to come.

At a time when motor vehicles and road transport have never been safer, fatalities and serious injuries are still happening all too frequently on our roads. I note in statistics published by the Department of Transport and Main Roads on Monday this week that in the year to date, as of 1 September 2019, Queensland has seen 123 fatal crashes—down by 36 on the previous year—with 140 fatalities—down by 33 fatalities, or nearly 20 per cent, on the previous period. Whilst we are here this week for the regional sitting of parliament, I note that sadly 33 fatalities have been suffered in the northern police region, which includes Townsville, in the year to date as of 1 September 2019—up five fatalities on the same period last year.

Whilst Queensland road fatalities are thankfully currently down when compared to this point in time over the last year and the previous five years, the fact remains that 140 fatalities is 140 too many. That is why it is so important that improving safety on our roads must be an absolute priority. Just last week it was reported that the Queensland University of Technology's Centre of Accident Research and Road Safety had found that 25 per cent of drivers and riders killed on Queensland roads in the five years to 2017 were over the .05 legal blood alcohol limit. The Department of Transport and Main Roads has also stated in the five years to December 2017 that almost 25 per cent of drink-drivers involved in fatal crashes had a mid-range blood alcohol reading—that is between .10 and .149. Such statistics paint a bleak picture—which is why this bill seeks to strengthen the approach to drink-driving through amendments which will extend the interlock program to include mid-range drink-driving offences.

Similarly, in seeking to address the significant contributing factor that is speeding on our roads, this bill has proposed amendments which will allow the operation of point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits. Whilst the Liberal National Party is a strong advocate for measures to improve road safety—and in fact has a proud history of supporting and implementing initiatives to make travel safer for motorists and road users—it must be noted that the Liberal National Party's policy on speed camera enforcement is that they should be used in locations of greatest risk and clearly signed to alert motorists of their operation. It is an unfortunate reality that under the current Labor government the requirement for mobile speed cameras to display a 'camera in use' sign to alert motorists has been altered. Further, with revenue from speed camera fines forecast to rise from \$160.6 million in 2017-18 to \$237.2 million in 2021-22, it is little wonder that the public often perceive such measures as efforts to only further raise revenue.

We certainly need cultural change here in Queensland, particularly with respect to road safety. That involves education. We know that the Fatal Five—speeding, intoxication, fatigue, inattention and failure to wear a seatbelt—can have devastating consequences with respect to road safety. Whilst we

are talking about road safety, I must also stress the urgent action that is required to improve road safety for my electorate of Moggill and the western suburbs of Brisbane. Infrastructure Australia has said, 'There were 192 crashes recorded on the Centenary Motorway between 2010 and 2016, and increasing congestion will contribute to further safety issues.'


Once again I take this opportunity to urge the Palaszczuk Labor government and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to work collaboratively and constructively with the federal Morrison coalition government in relation to the City Deal to ensure further infrastructure investment in the western suburbs of Brisbane to enhance and improve road safety and travel times. Residents of the western suburbs of Brisbane need real action and a commitment to an integrated road and public transport plan with funded solutions—not only for the electorate of Moggill but also surrounding areas—to tackle congestion on these roads and improve road safety overall. That is critically important, particularly for cyclists.

I have had correspondence with the minister. I know he is examining some of the issues relating to the fatalities that have occurred on Moggill Road. There are also issues in relation to pedestrian safety and a requirement for footpaths, particularly along certain parts of Moggill Road and out to the Moggill District Sports Ground. I know the minister has indicated there is a shared jurisdictional responsibility between state and local governments in relation to that. It is important for safety as well on some of our state owned roads.

Before I conclude I would like to make a few comments with respect to drug driving, because drug driving is certainly a significant and serious issue here in Queensland and across Australia. Not only illicit drugs but also synthetic and prescription drugs can affect people's capacity to safely operate a motor vehicle or other forms of transport. I remember a number of years ago I was travelling on the Cunningham Highway between Warwick and Inglewood when I came across an accident. I was then the medical superintendent at the Mungindi Hospital. This is going back last century to the late 1990s. A truck had unfortunately turned over, and I had to climb into the cabin to assist the driver. At the time I was staggered by the amount of drug paraphernalia in the cabin. We took the individual back to Warwick Hospital. I had the great assistance of some of our ambulance officers who also attended the scene.

There are risks associated with drugs, whether they be illicit or prescribed. They can affect people's cognition, their capacity to operate vehicles safely, and that is of significant concern to me and many other elected members in this place. We know that the Fatal Five are a significant risk to people when they operate vehicles of all descriptions, and more work needs to go into education across Queensland in relation to that.

Finally, I would like to thank all people who provided submissions to the Transport and Public Works Committee during the examination of the bill. I particularly thank my colleagues, the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Callide, for their work on this committee. They have been doing some terrific work around this. As I said earlier, I support the bill and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (3.13 pm): In my contribution to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill I intend to focus on two elements. The first is drink-driving and the positive initiatives which have been put forward in that regard. I thank both the minister and the shadow minister for the way in which they have debated this. They have put forward what I see as good, common-sense changes in this regard. The second relates to point-to-point cameras and variable speed limits. They are the two things I will focus on.

I will begin my contribution by reflecting that this is the beginning, not the end, of a journey to improve road safety. Many members have spoken about the loss of life. It is easy to quote a figure and say that 247 people lost their lives in 2017. As a young journalist, fatalities were something that became the norm in my life. I would hear it on the police scanner and I would race out and cover it. I hoped that covering it would help people avoid those errors—the drink-driving, the speeding, the lack of seatbelts—all of the things that contribute towards fatalities, but in a way we became numb to it because they happened so frequently. The number 247 indicates just how frequent it is, but every one of those 247 people has a story. Every one of those 247 people has a family. Every one of those 247 people has somebody who wishes that they had not made that fatal error on that fatal day or night. It is to those people that we owe every effort to improve road safety in this state, so I will begin with drink-driving.

The initiative that I am most pleased about is the change to mandatory education. I will not for one moment pretend there is not a large portion of people who drink-drive and do it knowing full well that they are drink-driving. There is a large percentage of people who just do the wrong thing and roll the dice with their lives and the lives of others, but there is an element of those people who do it through ignorance.

I remember running many sessions very close to here at a place called the Vale Hotel in Aitkenvale, where the police—to their great credit—would come along and test people after they had been drinking. You could test yourself progressively during the course of the night. It was an eye-opener for me to see the way that alcohol affects different people based on age, gender, size and all of those things. Some people can consume more alcohol and not be affected, while others consume less alcohol and are affected. Knowing your limit is important, as it is the morning after. Many people who drive over the limit are caught the following day because they did not know they had not had a sufficient rest period. Whilst you may think that a couple of hours makes you bulletproof, if it is in your system you are a risk. I would say to the minister that the idea of compulsory education is a magnificent step forward, and it is one that we should all embrace.


The issue of variable speed limits and point-to-point cameras is of concern to me. I note that speed cameras are proven to be an effective deterrent at slowing people down—I acknowledge that—but where there are variable speed limits, particularly when they relate to temporary variable speed limits such as at roadworks, I think we run the risk of this being more about raising revenue than it is about safety. That is something I would like the minister to address and acknowledge.

At the moment, on the M1 between Brisbane and the Gold Coast there is a section where the speed limit changes several times in very close proximity. In one section it goes from 80 to 100 and back to 80 within literally a couple of kilometres. I am sure there have been times where everybody in this House has come close to either overlooking that or almost overlooking it. I would hate to see a situation where people are being penalised for nothing more than goalpost moving. Where it is temporary and where the roadworks are not in operation at the time—for example, at night-time—there needs to be flexibility given so that it is genuinely about slowing people down and saving lives rather than raising money for the government.

The final thing I would like to acknowledge and reflect on is something that my good colleague, the shadow minister, talks about almost every time he stands up in this House: the need for better roads. Good laws and good deterrents will always help and we must always do better, but so too with the quality of our roads.

When an Auditor-General's report finds just how dire the maintenance backlog is in this state, we are risking people's lives. The government cannot continue to ignore maintenance. I say to the minister that it might not be sexy and it might not enable ribbon cutting, but it saves lives. If the government maintains the roads and gets good value for money whilst maintaining them, and if the government can drive costs down and manage the budget, then the government can fix more roads. By doing so, lives can be saved.

There are some excellent things in this amendment bill. There are some areas that we are concerned about and we have asked the minister to take them on board. It is indeed a great day when members in this place can come forward and in good faith put forward policies that can help make the lives of our magnificent Queenslanders safer for generations to come.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. I note at the outset that the LNP will not be opposing this bill because we support practical measures that reduce road trauma on Queensland roads. The numbers say that death and serious injury on Queensland roads cost \$5 billion per year, but the toll on families and loved ones cannot be measured. Tragically, like too many Queenslanders, this is an issue that I have had personal experience of in recent times. It is clear that more needs to be done. Any steps that we as legislators can take to reduce the road toll need to be considered.

One of this bill's objectives is to strengthen the approach to drink-driving. I wholeheartedly support any steps that discourage the actions of those who choose to disregard the safety of others by drink-driving. The correlation between drink-driving and road fatalities is well known. Around one in five fatalities on Queensland roads involve drink-drivers. When I was in the military, Army officers convicted of even a low-range drink-driving offence were routinely discharged from the Army. In my opinion this is how it should be. Leaders should be held to a higher standard, especially in relation to simple behavioural expectations like drink-driving, because the consequences of doing the wrong thing are just too great.

The proposed amendments to the alcohol ignition interlock program, which will include mid-range drink-driving offenders and will extend the applicable time frame to five years, make sense to me. We heard earlier from the member for Mirani who said that he thought it was unfair that mid-range drink-drivers should be punished with inclusion in the interlock program. I respectfully disagree and I would contend that having a blood alcohol content of .10 is not an inadvertent mistake. We know that


those drivers with a mid-range blood alcohol content of between .10 and .149 have a crash risk 20 times greater than a driver with no alcohol in their system. The evidence is pretty clear: mid-range drink-drivers are a risk to both themselves and other road users. The interlock program is a reasonable response to this insidious problem.

The bill also introduces changes in relation to the enforcement of speeding offences, particularly in relation to point-to-point speed cameras. Again, the link between speeding and motor vehicle incidents is well known, yet Queenslanders continue to speed. It is clear that the enforcement of speed limits through the use of the Camera Detected Offence Program works and the research says that point-to-point cameras are more effective at reducing speeds over long stretches of roads when compared with fixed or mobile cameras. I support the rollout of more point-to-point speed cameras, including those in areas with multiple speed limits.

It would be hypocritical of me to stand up here today and not acknowledge that I have exceeded the speed limit at times in the past—as I suspect most people in this place have—but, that said, every time I drive back from Brisbane to my home in Buderim I cannot help but check my speed as I hit the point-to-point speed camera that exists at Wild Horse Mountain. Point-to-point speed cameras work and for that reason I support the provisions contained within this bill.

It is clear that drink-driving and speeding are major factors which result in serious motor vehicle accidents but so too is road condition and design. In my own electorate of Buderim, the Mooloolah River Interchange at Mountain Creek is an example of a road that, due to poor design, results in serious motor vehicle accidents each and every month. Tackling road safety needs to be considered holistically. Just like the strengthened provisions in relation to drink-driving and speeding, attention needs to be paid to proactive investment in road safety upgrades. Apart from reducing congestion I do not believe that road safety upgrades have been a sufficient priority, and I look forward to long-standing problems like the Mooloolah River Interchange being afforded the priority they deserve.

Unlike some of the more senior members of the House, I have grown up in a society where drink-driving has never been acceptable. For me, the current provisions in relation to drink-driving offences do not go far enough. However, I am supportive of the changes contained within this bill because they are a step in the right direction.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.25 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. The government's explanatory notes to this bill state that speeding continues to be a significant factor in crashes. I will go a bit further to say that, sadly, the speed zone in the town of Yuleba has already caused two deaths. Yuleba is a little town west of Dalby on the Warrego Highway, and it is the only one with an 80-kilometres-an-hour speed zone. We have a lot of heavy vehicles and a lot of unpredictable wildlife.

Yuleba is a tight-knit community of about 50 households, yet over 300 people signed a petition to reduce the speed limit in this town. They want their speed limit reduced from 80 kilometres an hour to 60 kilometres an hour and they cannot get that reduction from the Palaszczuk Labor government. They have written to the Palaszczuk Labor government and they have petitioned the Palaszczuk Labor government for a speed reduction. They have the support of their local council and they have the support of their local member, but nothing has been done over the last five years to address this speed limit reduction and the request from the community of Yuleba.

I want to commend the shadow minister for transport and main roads, Steve Minnikin, who drove with me to meet with the Yuleba progress association members, Paul Masson and Karen Hibbs, about their Yuleba road safety concerns. The shadow minister took the time to visit and sadly saw the section of the Warrego Highway where we lost a member of the community. The LNP shadow minister listened to the raw emotion from the nurse who held a dying woman in her arms on the Warrego Highway. Karen Hibbs struggled to hold back the tears when she told us of the truck crash that took the life of Shirley Miller, an 84-year-old local lady, in May 2018. Karen Hibbs's words said it all: 'It all comes down to the speed limits.' The invitation is open to the minister to meet with the Yuleba progress association at any time. I would certainly encourage the minister to take up this invitation because we do not want to lose any more lives in Yuleba and we do not want to contribute to the road toll any further.


We can sit in this parliament and talk about how speed kills and we can talk about how the road toll needs to be reduced, but what is really needed is action. The lack of action by the Palaszczuk Labor government is very disappointing in Yuleba. Death and serious injuries on Queensland's roads continue to cause significant devastation for individuals, families and the broader community, and it costs Queensland an estimated \$5 billion every year. This is not the only \$5 billion problem that the

Palaszczuk Labor government has when it comes to roads. Page 6 of the Auditor-General's report in 2017-18 titled *Integrated transport planning* is alarming, particularly for someone like me who has a lot of roads in their regional area. The report states—

DTMR has calculated that it has a \$4 billion renewal backlog for its road network as at 30 June 2017. It estimates the renewal gap will increase to more than \$9 billion over the next 10 years. This will affect DTMR's ability to meet minimum performance targets; it will compromise service standards; and it will require DTMR to reprioritise works to address safety-related defects on its network at the expense of works to renew its assets.

During the estimates committee process, the LNP opposition were able to establish that that estimate of a \$4 billion renewal backlog has now risen to a \$5.2 billion backlog.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.29 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the debate of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. Many of the contributions were heartfelt accounts, and I particularly acknowledge the contributions of the members for Macalister, Mackay and Hervey Bay. This bill contains the Palaszczuk government's latest proposals to improve the safety of Queenslanders on our road network. If passed by this House, the bill will strengthen our crackdown on drink-driving. When the Palaszczuk government launched its Road Safety Strategy in 2015, we committed to an ultimate goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries and to reducing trauma by 30 per cent by 2020. It may sound ambitious, but logically no other vision is acceptable.

Over the past 10 years Queensland road fatalities have dropped by 35 per cent. In the last financial year, the number of people killed on Queensland roads is the lowest recorded for a financial year since accurate records began in 1952; however, I acknowledge that there were still 141 deaths to date this year, a reduction of 34 on the previous year. Still, 141 represents absolute tragedies for many people to deal with. A number of initiatives, including those introduced by the Palaszczuk government, have contributed to the significant decrease in fatalities, but much more needs to be done. That is why we continue to reform with new initiatives to improve road safety outcomes as set out in the bill.

Some of the key actions include our targeted road safety program, active transport program, flashing lights program, tackling drug driving, proposals that I put out there on distracted driving, campaigns on seatbelts—that is still a problem, particularly in regional areas—and the rebadged Street Smarts Engagement education program. The first national summit on driver distraction occurred in early July and some very good work is flowing through as a result.

In our QTRIP program, there is an additional \$212 million in funding for the targeted road safety program, bringing total state investment to \$830 million. That is a very strong commitment compared to the cuts of the previous government. As members know, drink-driving continues to be a significant road safety issue, with 43 people killed due to crashes involving drink-drivers or drink-riders last year. That represented 17.6 per cent of total fatalities. In 2018, 620 people were hospitalised due to a crash involving a drink-driver or drink-rider, making up 9.1 per cent of all hospitalised casualties. I am very proud of this government's introduction of education programs for drink-driving offenders as they will provide the opportunity to influence and encourage positive behaviour change. There is a much larger proportion of people who have addiction issues with alcohol who need that intervention and assistance.

The brief intervention education program is designed to support and educate participants about their alcohol consumption and specifically to teach them how to separate drinking from their driving. All first-time drink-driving offenders will be required to complete a brief intervention education program and to complete it prior to reapplying for a driver's licence. Based on the average number of drink-drivers over the past five years, it could be expected that approximately 15,800 people will complete this program in the first year of operation. That is a shocking forecast, but it does show the critical need for more action on drink-driving to make our roads safer.

If a person commits a subsequent drink-driving offence within five years of conviction for their first offence, they will need to complete the repeat offender education program. That is an intensive, face-to-face program delivered in group sessions that will provide broader strategies to separate their drinking from their driving. The program must be completed before a person's interlock condition is removed. Evidence suggests that alcohol ignition interlocks are more effective when combined with an education program. It takes several years for that program to reach its capacity as a person will be required to undertake the brief intervention prior to being eligible to participate in the repeat offender program.

The bill also includes amendments that will enhance our current alcohol interlock program. Under the current interlock program, the alcohol ignition interlock is removed at the end of 12 months. This is despite any failed breath test the person may have while using the interlock. This is certainly not the most effective means in terms of improving safety on our roads.

The interlock program will move from being time based to performance based so that people must demonstrate that they have separated their drinking and driving to complete the program successfully—that is, the interlock cannot be removed until there are no failed breath tests during the last four months of interlock use. To support the performance based interlock program, the current two-year sit-out period that applies to those people who chose not to fit an interlock will be increased to five years. Essentially, that is to stop people sitting it out and their behaviour not being addressed, which some people choose.

The interlock program will be expanded to require mid-range drink-drivers who have a blood alcohol content of .1 to less than .15 to participate in the program. Last year, more than 4,000 offenders were mid-range drink-drivers who now will be required to participate in the interlock program. I support those members who have an equal view that this is a required measure. I was very disappointed to hear the member for Mirani's irresponsible comments as I do not believe the member has sufficient concern for other road users in that regard. We already know that the risk of a crash involving a mid-range drink-driver is 20 times the normal risk. A drink-driving offender must complete the brief intervention education program prior to a work licence being issued. That is appropriate.

In relation to the contributions of the members for Traeger and Hill about speeding, there are no 130-kilometre-per-hour zones in Queensland. Let us be very clear: the top speed on any road is 110 kilometres per hour. I understand that we have different cultural issues in different parts of the state, but we must acknowledge that fatalities are three times the rate in regional and remote areas than in urban areas. There are a lot of different reasons for that, but some of those reasons need to be addressed and we need leadership from people on this. I understand that there are a long distances involved. I live in an electorate very different from those members, but we must provide leadership because fatalities in regional and rural areas are much higher than in urban areas. It is important that we all send out the right signals and the right leadership values and principles if we want to save lives on our roads. It is very important.

I am happy to advise the member for Toowoomba North that in January 2018 it was publicly announced that there would be a point-to-point camera on the Toowoomba bypass. In terms of variable speed limits, a speed limit is a speed limit. We have to be very clear about this. If there is a signposted speed limit, it should be enforced. That is what this bill looks to do in terms of where there is a variety of speed limits it is done fairly, but speed limits are put in place based on engineering, science and the manual for traffic control. We all must ensure that at all times we adhere to those speed limits.

Point-to-point locations are currently signed. In Queensland, motorists will pass at least one sign before passing a combined red-light/speed camera and a fixed speed camera or a point-to-point camera. Unattended speed camera trailers are also highly visible by being painted in bright yellow colours. A mixture of overt and covert camera deployment is used in the speed camera program. There is a clear science here. This is important for members to understand. Research undertaken by Monash University's Accident Research Centre in 2009 determined that the combined use of both covert and overt mobile speed cameras produces the best road safety outcomes due to the strong effect covert cameras have on suppressing vehicle speeds across the network. The centre recommended that 30 per cent of all mobile speed camera deployments be covert.

The research stated that covert cameras have the greatest impact on reducing fatal crashes. Unfortunately, some people will only slow down if they think they will be caught speeding. The uncertainty of covert cameras creates greater compliance across the road network as these motorists are unsure whether speeding enforcement will occur.

There are a couple of matters I highlight. Hospitalisations are an important part of the road safety equation, but let us look at fatalities. From 2004 to 2009, fatalities ranged from 360 to 311. There was not a single year in which they were below 300. Covert speed cameras were announced in late 2009 and brought in in March 2010. In that year, the fatality rate dropped to 249—82 fewer deaths on our roads. The rate increased to 269 in 2011, 280 in 2012 and 271 in 2013 but has since been dropping—to 223, 243, 251, 247 and 245. We are now regularly in the mid-200s in the covert speed camera era.

I note the contributions to the debate from a range of people. The member for Gregory said that people in his electorate support better road safety and the LNP always supports improvements to road safety. The member for Bonney said that any sensible road safety measure all MPs should support. He also said that we need the community behind us. We heard comments from a range of members. LNP

members had a bit of a song sheet. A lot of people have said positive things about road safety. I am also conscious of the words of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Mr Mander said that if the LNP wins the next election they will completely get rid of all covert speed cameras in Queensland. The LNP will sign all speed cameras and will get rid of covert cameras. Let us be very clear about this. I say sincerely to everybody in this chamber: that will mean more deaths on our roads.

There is no doubt that the threat of covert speed cameras reduces speeding on our roads and reduces the numbers of crashes, hospitalisations and deaths. I point people to the number of fatalities in Queensland since covert speed cameras were introduced. They are a very important road safety measure. Opposition members come into this chamber and say that they support anything that enhances road safety, but the only outcome of their policy position is a reduction in road safety. They should look at the Monash University research. I say sincerely: saving lives on our roads takes courage and leadership. That is how we have got reforms over time, whether it is random breath testing, seatbelts or covert speed cameras. There is a bit of a mythology that all of those measures were popular when they were brought in. Of course they were not. There was a lot of resistance to all of those reforms. It took real courage from political leaders to bring them in.

If we want to improve road safety in this state, we all have to play a role. I would like to see, as a baseline, that we do not go backwards on road safety. The policy of those opposite will cost Queenslanders' lives. I have no doubt whatsoever about that. It is highly irresponsible for the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to appeal to the base vote around revenue raising and to reduce road safety to go for votes. That is what that policy is about.

I say to the opposition: I will continue in this manner. I would love the opposition to reconsider their policy, because I do not want to see more people lose their lives on Queensland roads. We need the bipartisan position that we will not go backwards on road safety. Getting rid of covert cameras will see more people killed on Queensland roads. That is totally unacceptable. It is an abrogation of leadership, responsibility and courage. I urge the opposition to reconsider that irresponsible policy. It is not based on evidence or anything to do with road safety. All members of this parliament should have the courage to say, 'This is the baseline. We have to keep getting better.'

In terms of road safety outcomes, people look to Queensland. The members for Hill and Traeger referred to the Northern Territory. That jurisdiction's performance is the worst in Australia. They had 28 fatalities per 100,000 compared to 4.5 per 100,000 in Queensland. That is not the jurisdiction to look to in terms of outcomes. We perform better than every state in the United States of America with the exception of DC. We have to keep getting better on this. Covert speed cameras are an important part of the solution.

This has been a very good debate. There has been a lot of sincerity. I thank all members who contributed to the debate. We need to see stronger positions on alcohol, which this bill includes. We need to continue this. I have put a position out there in terms of distracted driving. The next big reforms that will save lives on our roads will address the very important issue of distracted driving. I think it is under-reported. No-one can tell me that some of those head-on collisions are not caused by distraction. In the aftermath of some crashes it is very hard to determine the causes. We all know that there is a high level of noncompliance.

My proposal for a very large first fine—a \$1,000 fine—and loss of licence for a second offence needs to be considered. I hope that by moving in that direction and getting a lot tougher on distracted driving we will see reform in that regard. I was heartened to see the public response to my suggestion. Stakeholders were very supportive of it. In fact, there was a lot less social media negativity than I expected. A lot of people want us to go even harder than that. When it comes to people dying on our roads, there is a problem there. A lot of people are addicted to their phones. We need to get tougher in that regard. That is a separate matter.

We have had a very broad and I think productive debate when it comes to road safety. I am very proud of this bill. We have to deal with people who have alcohol issues, because they are still causing problems on our roads. Even though the vast majority of people do the right thing, those who have problems need assistance. While we were national leaders at the time with the interlock program, we have fallen behind over time as other states have brought in reforms. In terms of the targeting of mid-range drink-driving, I accept the contributions of some members that there is no excuse. If your blood alcohol content is .1, you have absolutely no excuse. We need to be very clear about that.

This is a very strong bill. It contains quite an array of reforms that reduce the administrative burden for the courts and the departments and make the application of the law more effective. I endorse the comments regarding more effective provisions relating to marine pollution. There is a range of aspects there.

I say to the parliament: let's be very clear about the baseline on road safety. People look to this state for leadership. We have a very strong record over the past 40 years of bringing in a lot of measures that other jurisdictions saw saved lives and then implemented. Distracted driving is an area we have to address, but we cannot go backwards on road safety. I acknowledge the contributions of members who were first responders in their previous careers. Those people have been in very difficult circumstances. We have former paramedics, police officers and a range of other professionals.

I say to all members: do everything you can to ensure we do not go backwards on road safety. Search your consciences. You know the right thing to do. We cannot go backwards. People's lives depend on it. Many of us have had personal experiences with road trauma. We know how important this is and how deeply this affects our state. This bill is important. I acknowledge the positive contributions people have made. We cannot go backwards.

This is an important issue for the major parties in this chamber. I know where our members stand: we will never go backwards on road safety. I say to the members of all parties—I ask the member for Mirani to reconsider his position—that we all have to be part of the solution. People look to us for leadership and values. If we are ironclad and clear on this, we send out the right signals to help save lives. This is a very good bill. It has taken a lot of work. I thank all of the ministerial and departmental staff for their hard work. 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 115, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.50 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.50 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

MEDICINES AND POISONS BILL

THERAPEUTIC GOODS BILL

Cognate Debate



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 172, the Medicines and Poisons Bill and the Therapeutic Goods Bill be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages, as follows:

- (a) separate questions being put in regard to the second readings;
- (b) the consideration of the bills in detail together; and
- (c) separate questions being put for the third readings and long titles.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

MEDICINES AND POISONS BILL

THERAPEUTIC GOODS BILL

Medicines and Poisons Bill resumed from 14 May (see p. 1524) and Therapeutic Goods Bill resumed from 14 May (see p. 1525).

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (3.52 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

I want to thank the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for its thorough examination of the bills. I also want to thank the stakeholders—stakeholders who made written submissions to the committee, who attended the public hearing and participated in the extensive consultation process during the development of the bills and draft regulations. Their involvement and ongoing engagement in this process will ensure the success of the scheme.

The committee's report on the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019 made 10 recommendations. The first recommendation was that the Medicines and Poisons Bill be passed, and I appreciate the committee's support for the new legislative framework. I table the government's response to the report of the committee on the Medicines and Poisons Bill.

Tabled paper. State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 32, 56th Parliament, July 2019, Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019, government response [\[1433\]](#).

I will address the other nine recommendations of the committee in a moment. For the Therapeutic Goods Bill 2019, the committee made only one recommendation—that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support.

As I outlined in my explanatory speech for the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019, Queensland's current legislation that regulates medicines and poisons is outdated and difficult to apply in practice. It is full of prescriptive rules that are not responsive to industry practices and new technologies. The legislation is no longer fit for purpose. Queensland needs laws that are easier for industry to understand and apply. We need laws that are flexible and futureproof.

The Medicines and Poisons Bill reforms and modernises the regulatory framework for medicines and poisons in Queensland. The Therapeutic Goods Bill supports this framework by improving the regulation of the safety and quality of medicines for human use and enhancing national uniformity. The bills will be supported by four regulations for medicines, poisons, pest management and therapeutic goods. Collectively, they will give Queensland a comprehensive regulatory framework that is modern and streamlined. The framework removes regulatory cost and burden while enhancing public health and safety. Subject to the passage of the bills, the making of the regulations and a range of implementation activities to support stakeholders, the scheme is proposed to commence from 1 July 2020.

The Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 regulates the majority of manufacturers of medicines for human use. That act places standardised controls on the manufacture, import, export, supply and use of safe and effective therapeutic goods in Australia. It applies to Queensland based manufacturers except those that do not trade as corporations and are not engaged in trade outside Queensland. Constitutional limitations mean this group is not regulated under the Commonwealth act. The bill adopts the Commonwealth act as a law of Queensland. In doing so, it means that all commercially manufactured therapeutic goods in Queensland must be manufactured to the same high standard. It supports a COAG commitment to adopt a nationally consistent approach to the management of medicines, poisons and therapeutic goods, bringing Queensland into line with other jurisdictions.

The Medicines and Poisons Bill will establish a modern framework for regulating substances. It enhances public health and safety and simplifies requirements for clinicians, pharmacists, industry and the community. While some aspects of the scheme will come into effect on commencement, there will be a one-year transition period before industry needs to comply with certain new obligations such as the requirement to develop a substance management plan. This will provide time for industry to become familiar with the new scheme and make any necessary changes.

This bill establishes a head of power to implement a real-time prescription monitoring system to be known as the monitored medicines database. The database will monitor prescribing and dispensing of certain dependence-forming medicines such as pharmaceutical opioids and other prescription-only medicines that may cause harm. The bill replaces prescriptive rules with a new requirement for certain authority holders to develop a substance management plan that deals with known and foreseeable risks from their activities. The bill also further streamlines the process for prescribing medicinal cannabis in Queensland by enabling non-specialist medical practitioners to prescribe without the need for approval from Queensland Health.

I will now address the committee's report on the Medicines and Poisons Bill. Three recommendations related to the need for ongoing consultation with affected industries and professions. The government accepts these recommendations. Queensland Health has consulted extensively throughout the development of the bill and will continue to consult during finalisation of the regulations and implementation of the new scheme. The remaining six recommendations ask that I comment on implementation of certain aspects of the medicines and poisons scheme in my second reading speech. The government accepts these recommendations.

Recommendation 3 asks that I report on the development and rollout of Queensland Health's comprehensive communications strategy to support the implementation of the new scheme. Communication, education and targeted support are integral to the successful implementation of this new framework. A range of materials such as fact sheets, guidelines and sample documents will be adapted to particular stakeholder groups so every profession and industry sector has resources that reflect its needs. Queensland Health will provide information through a range of channels.

Queensland Health is already working in partnership with key stakeholders to develop communication and training materials and to educate stakeholders about the changes. However, communication activities will ramp up even further in the lead-up to commencement of the scheme in mid-2020. This will ensure information is being provided at the time industry will be focusing on adjusting to the new framework.

Queensland Health's communications strategy will include templates and sample substance management plans to support industry in complying with their new requirements. These resources are currently being developed in consultation with key industry groups. Queensland Health will also help stakeholders identify how they can use existing resources such as workplace health and safety management plans or resources for quality and safety accreditation schemes to develop a substance management plan. Recommendation 4 asked how Queensland Health will ensure oversight and compliance of all substance management plans. Substance management plans provide flexibility to industry to manage risks in a way that is suited to the unique circumstances of each particular business.

Penalties apply if substance management plans are not developed or if they do not meet minimum requirements, such as being written in a way that staff can understand their responsibilities. Queensland Health will assess substance management plans through random audits, or when considering whether to grant or renew a substance authority, or in response to an incident or complaint. Accreditation agencies will also be supported to report any noncompliance to Queensland Health if this is identified during an accreditation assessment.

Recommendation 7 asked that I outline measures to ensure that the rural sector has sufficient time to comply with new departmental standards about pest management and poisons. The government recognises that the rural sector needs adequate time to adjust to the new regime. Queensland Health is working closely with key stakeholders to ensure that the rural and agricultural sectors are supported in meeting their obligations under the scheme.

The bill provides a one-year transition period from commencement before a person must comply with departmental standards for substance management plans and minimum competency requirements. With commencement expected in mid-2020, this means that industry will have until mid-2021 before it is required to comply with these requirements. Queensland Health will also assist the rural and agricultural sectors to prepare by developing templates and sample substance management plans tailored to their specific needs. Queensland Health will maintain ongoing consultation with peak agricultural bodies to ensure that the sector is well prepared for the new framework.

In recommendation 8, the committee recommended implementing real-time prescription monitoring in Queensland's hospitals as a matter of priority. The government accepts this recommendation in principle. The purpose of real-time prescription monitoring is to protect individuals

and our community from the harm caused by the misuse of dependence-forming medicines. The government is committed to a comprehensive rollout of the monitored medicines database to minimise overprescription, reduce dependence and allow for early identification of high-risk patients or practices.

We know that the greatest risk comes from prescription opioid medicines and that the vast majority of prescriptions are issued in the community by general practitioners and dispensed by community pharmacies. This is our most pressing priority and that is why the monitored medicines database will be implemented in the community first. However, the database will also be searchable by doctors and pharmacists working in hospitals and emergency departments. They will be able to use this information to identify high-risk individuals and decide how to best support their patient.

Recommendation 9 asked that I provide an update on cross-jurisdictional data-sharing arrangements for the national real-time prescription monitoring database. The government is committed to supporting the rollout of a fully national system. It is vital that there is information sharing across state lines, particularly in major cities near a border, like the Gold Coast. Without a national system, we cannot fully inform health practitioners of a patient's prescription history of monitored medicines. Before a national system is possible, each jurisdiction must pass its own legislation and implement real-time monitoring within its own borders. Once this happens, each state and territory's information will be integrated into the Commonwealth's national data exchange.

Queensland is already doing its part to make a national system a reality by legislating for the monitored medicines database. Once it is operational, Queensland will be well placed to share information with other jurisdictions. A national system for real-time prescription monitoring requires all jurisdictions to work together. Queensland Health is working with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to help bring this about.

In recommendation 10, the committee asked about the need to publish information about schedule 7 poisons held on private rural properties on the substance authority register. The public register plays an important role in ensuring public safety. It lets the public check that a person is both qualified and authorised to do a regulated activity with a regulated substance. The government recognises the sensitivity of personal information and respects people's right to privacy and the bill includes certain safeguards. The public register must not include confidential information unless it is reasonably necessary to avoid a health risk and publishing the information will not place a person at risk of harm.

Queensland Health is currently consulting with affected stakeholders. This feedback will be used to inform the amount of information that will be published on the public register or if the information will be published at all. As the bill includes a discretion for the chief executive to publish information about substance authorities, the chief executive can exercise discretion not to publish information in appropriate cases.


I also briefly wish to address the statement of reservation on the bill by the non-government committee members. The statement of reservation states that the non-government committee members do not oppose the intent of the bill. I have already addressed some of the specific issues raised in my response to the recommendations. I particularly want to address the claim that insufficient detail has been provided for the committee to consider the scheme.

The new legislative framework for medicines and poisons is a significant reform. It replaces the existing suite of legislation with a comprehensive framework that consists of the bill and the supporting regulations, which will be supplemented by departmental standards. Indicative draft regulations were tabled on introduction of the bill to allow the committee and stakeholders to consider the scheme holistically. It is not a requirement for draft regulations to be tabled with a bill, but the government has done so to ensure transparency and to enable the committee to more fully understand the extent and scope of the new framework. The regulations and departmental standards are still being finalised. Consultation and policy refinement is ongoing and is being informed by the views of stakeholders, including feedback received on the draft regulations during the committee process for the bill.

The government has already responded to stakeholder feedback where appropriate. For example, it is planned to make separate regulations for poisons and pest management to recognise that they have different stakeholders with different needs and interests. This flexible and responsive approach will ensure the effectiveness of the scheme.

As industry practice evolves and technology changes the way businesses operate, it is critical that Queensland provides a flexible and contemporary framework to regulate medicines and poisons. The Medicines and Poisons Bill and the Therapeutic Goods Bill were developed following an extensive

review of the existing legislation and significant consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. These new bills will ensure that our legislative framework is contemporary and fit for purpose. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak in this cognate debate on the Medicines and Poisons Bill and the Therapeutic Goods Bill, introduced into the parliament by the health minister in May this year. At the outset, I want to say that the LNP will not be opposing the Medicines and Poisons Bill, but will be raising some of the issues outlined by stakeholders during the parliamentary committee review. The LNP will also not oppose the Therapeutic Goods Bill.

For ease of reference, I will be addressing each bill separately, starting with the Medicines and Poisons Bill. As I mentioned earlier, the LNP will not be opposing this bill, but LNP members will speak to some of the issues raised by stakeholders. In fact, the parliamentary committee that reviewed the bill made 10 recommendations to the government, including that the bill be passed. I should point out that those recommendations came from Palaszczuk Labor government members of the committee as well. Some of those recommendations and the issues raised by stakeholders show that there is concern about the lack of detail in the bill and the regulations and standards that are being replaced.

This is a significant piece of legislation that will repeal and replace the existing legislation with a new regulatory framework that has greater alignment with national regulations. For example, schedule 1 of the draft Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2019, which was tabled, refers to a number of departmental standards that are yet to be made, including standard 6 regarding substance management plans. The detail of these plans should be provided in legislation or, at the very least, in regulation and should already have been completed. The bill will repeal and replace the existing legislation with a new regulatory framework comprising the Medicines and Poisons Bill, the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation—the medicines regulation—and the Medicines and Poisons (Pest Management, Poisons and Other Regulated Substances) Regulation—the poisons regulation.

As outlined in the explanatory notes to the bill. The National Drug Strategy 2017-2026 released by the Commonwealth Department of Health in 2017 noted that the implementation of real-time monitoring of prescription medicines such as pharmaceutical opioids could assist in reducing the supply of illicit and illicitly used drugs. There was national agreement at the April 2018 Council of Australian Governments—COAG—Health Council meeting to support the implementation of a national real-time reporting solution. There is strong support for the introduction of real-time prescription monitoring, which is implemented through this bill, and the potential to prevent death or serious injury from a practice colloquially referred to as doctor shopping by people who are addicted to prescription medicines.

Only last week we saw the latest media reports about the impact that drugs are having on people across Queensland. The new research commissioned by the Penington Institute shows that the number of people dying from all kinds of drugs in unintentional overdoses in Queensland has gone up by more than 40 per cent since 2008. The report shows the increase in accidental overdoses from 2013 to 2017 compared to 2003 to 2007.

Sadly, the statistics speak for themselves. We have seen a 600 per cent increase on the Granite Belt, a 450 per cent increase in the Bowen Basin, a 410 increase in Hervey Bay, a 340 per cent increase on the Sunshine Coast, a 317 per cent increase in Wide Bay and a 300 per cent increase in the Far North. In 2017 there were 130 unintentional drug deaths in Brisbane and 130 in Queensland regions. It is said that patients typically progress from painkiller opioids to illegal drugs like ice and heroin.

The LNP supports the introduction of real-time prescription monitoring and we implore the government to work with doctors and pharmacists to get these changes right. We have seen only too often how Labor and Health IT projects just do not mix and we do not want this to be another bungled implementation. As the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners said in its submission to the bill—

General practitioners (GPs) across Queensland will, in general, applaud the ability to provide additional safety to their patients when prescribing. Nevertheless, the RACGP recognises that real-time prescription monitoring will impose on GPs yet another responsibility to perform in consultations that are already crowded in terms of activities and red tape against reducing real rebates. It is therefore essential that the implementation of the real-time prescribing initiative is done in a way that allows general practitioners to build it seamlessly into their workflows.

It is important to understand the concerns raised by doctors in relation to the implementation of the new system and the need to have an integrated model that avoids duplication of tasks or unnecessary additional bureaucracy for medical practitioners and pharmacists. AMA Queensland also raised implementation concerns as part of its submission to the committee. It said—

- i. Our members are concerned with the double log-in requirements of the new system for prescribers to obtain an approval before prescribing some S4 and S8 medicines and how feasible this will be in busy practices

- ii. Our members have also expressed concern about the possibility of an increase in assaults against General Practitioners due to this new requirement and we recently wrote to the Health Minister expressing this concern
- iii. Our members question whether the new ICT system (which doctors will have to log in to) will easily communicate with existing IT systems used in GP practices and the 'seamless' application of this new requirement
- iv. AMA Queensland notes the 12-month phase-in period before penalties will be applied for not seeking an approval and will be seeking information from Queensland Health about the monitoring of this phase-in period.

The concerns around assaults on staff, particularly nurses and paramedics, is something that we have raised before and in relation to this bill this is an issue that needs to be monitored by Queensland Health. In relation to other elements in the bill, there was considerable concern regarding the lack of oversight of substance management plans, the SMPs, which may be a role for the Medicines Regulation and Quality Unit as raised by the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union. Any consideration of that oversight role would also need to determine whether any additional resources were needed. In its submission to the committee the QNMU said—

In our view, the SMP is integral to operation of the bill and regulation. There are several factors that make the SMP itself a risky proposal. Regulated places and responsible persons (as defined under section 92(b)) need much greater support and guidance in their formulation. The bill seems to assume the responsible person will somehow know how to prepare an SMP without the benefit of a model plan. We believe there should be one recognised statewide standard SMP template written by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in consultation with the Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Health Care (ACQSHC) that can then form the basis of individual SMPs.

The QNMU is concerned that without such an approach the system will be highly reliant on the capacity of relevant entities to develop these plans with the attendant risks of manipulation, variable standards, as well as safety and quality risks. I note the minister's response to these concerns in his address-in-reply. In summary on the Medicines and Poisons Bill, I thank and acknowledge the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for its detailed consideration of the bill and the 10 recommendations for government.

We wanted to raise the concerns of pest management, about dual licensing and red tape, which have seemingly been ignored. It is another slap in the face for small business in Queensland. There are also issues about the public register of schedule 7 poisons that was raised by AgForce. While we appreciate the advice from Queensland Health about discretion from the chief executive, we would urge caution in any publication given the well-documented illegal protest activities from animal extremist that have terrorised law-abiding regional Queenslanders. In relation to these issues, during the public hearing AgForce advised the committee—

With regard to the public register for holders of restricted schedule 7 substances or poisons, AgForce recommends that landholders can opt out of that requirement. Producers effectively manage the storage of vertebrate poisons on their farms. They are very careful with them and store them appropriately, as legislated and required. There is a risk that a public register could be misconstrued and used against producers, especially when we see the increased level of activists invading farms and sometimes when pet owners are quick to blame someone for the death of their pet dog if they suspect toxicity. A public register of producers with some of those restricted schedule 7 substances, such as 1080, PAPP and strychnine, could be misconstrued and that puts people at risk.

The Therapeutic Goods Bill complements the changes made to the Medicines and Poisons Bill. As I mentioned earlier, we are not opposing the Therapeutic Goods Bill. The bill proposes to adopt the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act as Queensland law. The explanatory notes outline that the bill enhances national consistency, reduces regulatory burdens and ensures appropriate safeguards are implemented to protect the health and safety of the community. The bill gives effect to the recommendations of a national review of medicines and poisons regulation commissioned by the Council of Australian Governments, the *National competition review of drugs, poisons and controlled substances legislation*, also referred to as the Galbally review.

In 2001 the Galbally review recommended all states and territories adopt the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act. The Galbally review identified net benefits to the Australian community from adopting a comprehensive national legislation framework for the regulation of drugs, poisons and controlled substances. As part of these changes, the Queensland parliament will retain its authority over matters subject to Commonwealth law. Queensland and Western Australia are the only states that have not adopted the Therapeutic Goods Act into law to date.


As the explanatory notes to the bill state, the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act places standardised controls on the manufacture, import, export, supply and use of safe and effective therapeutic goods in Australia. Due to constitutional limitations, currently the Commonwealth act only applies to corporations and Queensland entities that trade interstate or overseas. The Commonwealth act does not apply to manufacturing entities trading as partnerships, trusts or sole traders who are not engaged in trade outside Queensland. The quality, safety, efficacy and timely availability of the therapeutic goods that these entities produce are not regulated. This has the potential to lead to safety

issues for those purchasing unregulated manufactured therapeutic goods such as herbal medicines and vitamin supplements. Adoption of the Commonwealth act in Queensland is intended to ensure equitable application of therapeutic goods regulation, improve national consistency and ensure the safety of products manufactured and sold within Queensland. There was only one stakeholder who made a submission on the bill.

I will finish my contribution by saying that the LNP believes more needs to be done to break the ice epidemic, particularly in regional Queensland. Ice has infiltrated our small towns and cities. It is destroying families and attacking the very soul and fabric of our communities. This is a drug that does not discriminate; it decimates. Cars get stolen, houses are robbed and businesses are being broken into just so people can feed their habit. There is nothing more heartbreaking than when someone reaches out about how ice has devastated their family, extended family, livelihood and their community.

The LNP has a comprehensive ice plan that provides more treatment, more education and awareness and four additional rehabilitation and detox centres across regional Queensland. This is a priority policy for Deb Frecklington and the LNP team and one that will help bridge the divide between our regions and the south-east. More does need to be done to take ice off our streets and help those suffering from its impact. We do not want our regional towns and regional people to suffer any more from the ice epidemic ravaging Queensland.

The LNP's comprehensive plan includes four new drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres across the state, including in Townsville; greater education and awareness; coordinated law enforcement; and shutting down organised crime networks that supply drugs to our kids. While Labor is struggling to find a site for its one additional rehab facility in Rockhampton, the LNP does have a comprehensive plan to help those struggling to break their addictions and to protect community safety. I look forward to monitoring the minister's response to the implementation issues as raised by stakeholders on the Medicines and Poisons Bill.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (4.19 pm): I rise in this cognate debate to speak in support of the two bills before us. Before doing so, I want to touch on an issue that the member for Mudgeeraba talked about—that is, dealing with issues of substance abuse. I have been an elected official for about 20 years now. For many years in my community, we have had waves of substance abuse that affect the whole community. We have heard much talk here about what is best for Townsville, as well as other parts of Queensland. I do know that nothing works better than getting people, at night as well as during the day, into the community to work with young people and older people, spending time with them, getting their trust, introducing them to certain solutions for dealing with deeper problems and also working with their families. That takes many years of trust building, whether it be in Townsville or elsewhere. You cannot build that trust by constantly threatening imprisonment. You have to work every day in depth with those people, who are often out on the streets because their home situations are absolutely intolerable. I look forward to hearing about the LNP plan and how they intend to work in depth and on the ground with people who do not deserve to be punished but do need to be helped. That is the only long-term solution to some of these issues.

The bills before the House are very important. It is very clear that the old legislation is outdated and not fit for purpose. The health system is still using an act that was passed in 1937. I have no doubt that we will have to go around this legislation as technology, science and medicine keep improving. Having conducted inquiries into these bills, it is very clear that we need an up-to-date system right across Australia. These bills mean that Queensland can play its part. The bills will give us a new framework and the ability to make the regulations that we need to control the medicines that keep Queenslanders healthy.

As the chair of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, I welcome the response of the minister to our recommendations. I say to the member for Mudgeeraba that we made recommendations because we thought they were very appropriate, given that across Australia it has taken nearly 20 years to rewrite these acts. It was a massive exercise. Our report reflects the seriousness and depth of work that has been done across Australia in this particular sphere.

On the Therapeutic Goods Bill, we made one recommendation, which was that it be passed. That will give us a nationally consistent approach to the management of medicines, poisons and therapeutic goods. It brings Queensland into line with the other jurisdictions.

On the Medicines and Poisons Bill, there are three features that I want to touch on, and the first relates to the prescription monitoring system. This bill will allow for the introduction of an up-to-date framework of regulations and controls, which is what we need. It will create a real-time monitoring

system for scripts and dispensing that will help prevent people from doctor shopping for opioids. It will help to minimise the abuse of prescription drugs. It will minimise overprescription, help to reduce dependence and help to identify high-risk users.

We have heard and will hear of the many Queenslanders who are addicted to prescription drugs, which do cause death and suffering. Those drugs are obtained from the chemist, having been prescribed by a doctor. While the current system of monitoring is good, it is clear that it is not as effective as it could be. Currently, doctors can only check on the patient sitting in front of them during a consultation by ringing up and checking the database. They then have seven days to update the database on what they have prescribed for that patient. There is no immediate update via an online tool. Through these changes, the online database will be able to be updated instantly. People were concerned that that would introduce another step or more red tape. During the inquiry, witnesses told us that the online tool for the database can be integrated into the script-writing software or a script-writing app, so there will be no extra red tape involved. It will be a very minor addition by the doctor on a screen that would already be open. I think that is a very important point.

It is clear that across Australia we need a consistent script monitoring system and this legislation will help Queensland to be a part of that. The system will come in across Australia. That is important for us, because we have an urbanised border with New South Wales. Doctor shopping across either side of the Tweed is something that we do not want to see.

The committee recommended that the prescription monitoring system be introduced into public hospitals as soon as possible. We are all very aware of the amount of pressure that is being placed on our emergency departments and our public health system in general. We absolutely accept that Queensland Health is committed to rolling out the monitoring system as soon as possible. However, we wanted to ensure that our hospitals do not fall behind other sectors. We cannot fall behind other health providers in real-time script monitoring and that is the message that we want to send to our health bureaucrats.


I turn to the issue of substance management plans, which the minister has touched on. Substance management plans need to be made by a place or a person where medicines are manufactured or supplied, such as a hospital or a prison, or a local government that has a pest-baiting system. The legislation streamlines the medical cannabis prescription system, so that non-specialist medical practitioners can prescribe it without Queensland Health approval. From 1 July we have had a system where specialist practitioners can prescribe those products without Queensland Health approval, which I think is a great advancement. However, we need to ensure that there are no more delays and costs for people who should no longer have to jump through the hoops.

I want to finish with a couple of anecdotes about the differences that I know that the systems that the bill will introduce can make to people's lives. The first is about the impact of the abuse of prescription drugs, which is very real and is felt by all members of my community. In my community I once knew a person whose life was dominated by addiction to such substances. I know that every day she fought that addiction. She got onto an early Subutex program, which is an opioid blocker medicine that is an alternative to methadone.

Every day was a struggle for her. I tried to stop her from doctor shopping when she lapsed. A couple of times, she called me to pick her up from a doctor very far away from where we lived. By the time I got there, she had already filled the script and taken the medication, and then the guilt would start. When she was not in a fit state, I looked after her child and I will be always thankful for that. She was a victim of childhood abuse and that was the real issue in this case, not the drugs. It was a battle that she never won, no matter what she achieved in her life. We lost her a couple of years ago and I spoke at her funeral. I have thought about this: maybe if we had this monitoring system, she would still be alive today. That is something that I will never know.

I have seen the difference that medicinal cannabis can make in people's lives. In my electorate office, I have been visited by a number of people with chronic illness and chronic pain whose lives are being turned around by medicinal cannabis. No longer do they have to exist on a diet of opioids as they try to avoid the trap of dependence. I remember when one bloke who, when I first saw him, could not raise his arm above his shoulder due to a vehicle accident. Basically, he was tethered to his house. We helped him to get onto a specialist program that was trialling medicinal cannabis. The last time I saw him, he was waving his arm about and he was driving again. I remember two other people with chronic conditions who needed help to try to navigate the system to get better and more consistent access to those products.

I point out that those are working-class people who are looking for another path so that they can have a new and better life. They are not wild-eyed cannabis enthusiasts. They are just normal working people who lived every day with chronic pain and chronic conditions. We were able to help them to navigate the system, to get them onto something that improved their quality of life incredibly. In this debate I think about all of those people. I think about Caroline and all of the other people whose lives will be or could have been improved enormously by the enactment of this bill. That is why I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (4.29 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate before the House. Before I do, however, I recall the member for Bancroft made a comment that the LNP's only policy was, in essence, to lock them up and throw away the key. That is not right. The LNP, via the shadow health minister, made it very clear that we have plans for four rehabilitation units across the state to assist those people who are in the throes of drug abuse to get out of the dangerous situation they are in and resume a normal life.

There has to be a balance struck between the rights of somebody to get the treatment they need to get back on track and the rights of the citizens of this state to be protected from people who are drug addicted performing break and enters and violent crimes. That is the balance that has to be struck. It is not as simple as saying that the LNP is bent on a regime of locking them up. We have a balanced regime. We have a regime to protect the citizens of this state from actions that are illegal and also to provide assistance to those people who are caught in the grip of a drug abuse situation that can destroy their lives and indeed their families' lives.

I turn to the Medicines and Poisons Bill. I want to focus on the issue of real-time prescription monitoring. The bill contains the capacity to establish a real-time prescription monitoring scheme. The scheme will include all S8 medicines and some high-risk S4 medicines including Valium, codeine and Stilnox. On reading the report of the committee, I note the quote from Dr Jeannette Young, Queensland's Chief Health Officer. Breaking that down, she makes the following points: that the misuse of pharmaceutical opioids is increasing; that access is by script; that evidence of misuse is widespread; and that overdoses of opioids are at record levels in Australia and, she may have added, across the globe.

The results, again breaking down her comments, are (1) an increase in cases of overdoses; (2) more deaths occurring in Australia and Queensland; (3) more people in treatment programs; (4) an increase in referrals through alcohol and drug treatment schemes; and (5) drugs are entering illicit markets. People are using these opioids issued by scripts to sell into the illicit market. Dr Kidd, the Chair of the AMA Queensland Council of General Practice, agreed with that assessment.

Currently pharmacists are required to report S8 scripts issued to Queensland Health within seven days. However, this process can drag out to 14 days, given the current regime of how that reporting is commenced and concluded. This means that the information provided is out of date. This then gives clear rise to the risk of 'doctor shopping' and pharmacists and pharmacies not knowing if earlier scripts have been issued and filled.

The committee also raised the point of cross-jurisdictional data sharing. Queensland data will be based upon the Commonwealth national data exchange. This collects all scripts throughout the country, but the state, in this case Queensland, can only access scripts issued in Queensland. They do not have the capacity to access scripts issued outside of the state. That needs to be dealt with as time goes by.

The next point is hospital issued scripts. The committee noted the necessity for scripts generated outside of primary care to be captured in the proposed real-time prescription monitoring system. I note that Dr Kidd referred to a coroner's case where a nurse, he thought, accessed 50 prescribers—most of whom were in our emergency departments. There is concrete evidence that there has been access of an enormous number of scripts by a person resulting in that person's death. That is quoted, in my opinion, by the committee as evidencing the need for real-time prescription monitoring in our hospitals, EDs et cetera to be brought forward as a real priority.

I note that Dr Young, in essence, agrees with the minister. They want to look at the GPs first and then at the hospitals. The committee notes that but also makes this comment—

However, the inclusion of monitored substances prescriptions initiated in an emergency department or hospital in the real-time prescription monitoring system should be a matter of priority.

The committee took on board the issues raised by Jeannette Young, which were mirrored here today by the health minister, but still came to the conclusion that this should not just be limited to general practitioners at this point in time but should be pushed out in relation to the emergency departments. We have heard the health minister on many occasions say that the people going through our


Queensland hospital system are increasing daily and yearly into the hundreds of thousands—so the risk is there. As I said earlier, Dr Young made it quite clear that there is widespread misuse of opioids; that the overuse of opioids is at record levels in this nation and indeed in this state; that deaths are increasing; that cases of overdosing are increasing; and that these drugs are entering the illicit market.

There is no reason to question where the drugs are going to or where they are coming from. They are coming from any source that a person can access to get their hands on prescription opioids. Those opioids can then be used to accidentally, or on purpose, overdose or enter the illicit market. I believe that the committee is right to make the recommendation it did in relation to the system extending to our hospitals and the emergency departments.

Turning quickly to the Therapeutic Goods Bill 2019, the bill proposes to adopt the Commonwealth legislation, the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989, as Queensland law. That provides national consistency. Queensland and New South Wales are at this point in time the only states not to have adopted that law. That consistency would have been of enormous benefit during the debate on the medicinal cannabis bill in the last parliament when people seeking access to medicinal cannabis from overseas had to go through two identical processes to gain access to the drug.

A parent had to comply with federal and state regimes that were identical in relation to what they had to do to gain access to the drug. There was a requirement that a parent had to comply with requests for two sets of medical reports and data—that may be identical but were requested by two separate bodies—and either body could say no and the application failed. At that point in time I said to the House that this was a real problem that had to be dealt with, and it should have been dealt with at that point in time because it left a massive gap for parents trying to provide relief for a child in certain circumstances.

That meant more time and money spent by parents and a delay in accessing a relevant substance that would have been of benefit to their child. By adopting the Commonwealth act some time ago, this ridiculous position would never have arisen. That should have been undertaken by this government well and truly before the debate on that bill took place. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.38 pm): While I rise to speak in support of the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019 and the Therapeutic Goods Bill 2019, today my speech will focus on the Medicines and Poisons Bill. This bill was tabled in the House on 14 May 2019, after which it was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee on which I serve as a committee member. The chair of the committee, the member for Bancroft, tabled the committee's report on 11 July 2019 and the committee recommended that the bill be passed unamended.

The Palaszczuk government has always been a leader in allowing patient access to medicinal cannabis—a medication derived from cannabis sativa, a plant more commonly known as marijuana. In October 2017 the Queensland parliament passed the Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis Affordability) Amendment Bill 2017. Prior to the introduction of this bill cannabis sativa was a prohibited plant in Queensland, but scientific studies around the world suggest cannabis sativa, particularly the cannabinoids contained in the plant material, may be an effective treatment for a wide range of medical conditions, including: multiple sclerosis; neuropathic pain; muscle plasticity for patients with multiple sclerosis; reducing seizures in children with treatment-resistant epilepsy; wasting due to HIV-AIDS; and controlling nausea associated with cancer treatment. Consequently, we know there are Queensland patients out there right now who may benefit from medicinal cannabis. The Palaszczuk government has led the way amongst Australian states to allow them access to this prescribed medication.

While there is a growing body of evidence regarding the therapeutic potential of medicinal cannabis, it is also important to ensure it is a product that is used safely. Consequently, in Australia the responsibility for regulating medicines and poisons is shared between the Commonwealth and the states. In 2016 the Australian parliament passed the Narcotic Drugs Amendment Act 2016—otherwise known as the narcotics act—that established a national licensing scheme allowing for the controlled cultivation of cannabis sativa for medicinal and scientific purposes. This licensing scheme commenced in October 2016.

The narcotics act established a national licensing scheme to allow for the cultivation of cannabis sativa. It also facilitated a sustainable supply of safe medicinal cannabis products to Australian patients who suffer from a range of medical conditions. This legislative reform at both the state and Commonwealth level has led to the establishment of Medifarm, a property on the Sunshine Coast that cultivates cannabis sativa, the raw material required to produce medicinal cannabis. The Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019 will further streamline the process for prescribing medicinal cannabis in Queensland by enabling non-specialist medical practitioners to prescribe the drug without the need for approval from Queensland Health.


I would now like to tell honourable members the case studies of three young people who suffer from epilepsy and who hope that medicinal cannabis might finally give them some relief from this debilitating condition. All three have agreed that I can tell their stories today and detail their battles with epilepsy.

Tahlia was 13 when she was first diagnosed with epilepsy, after which her doctor prescribed Dilantin. Whilst the drug gave her some relief, it also caused her liver damage. Her doctor then switched to a medication called Tegretol, but this gave her severe headaches and restricted her to a darkened room for days on end. The next drug they tried was Lamictal, which caused severe hormone fluctuations and seizures so severe that she stopped breathing and turned blue. They then tried Epilim, which caused a drug-induced psychosis and led to several long stays in hospital. When Tahlia stopped taking Epilim the psychosis disappeared. Then the doctors took a different tack and prescribed antidepressants and antipsychotics, but after commencing these medications Tahlia would sometimes be found sitting at a table dribbling and incoherent until somebody helped her to bed. She went off medications but after two years the seizures recommenced. Then the doctors prescribed Keppra and the psychosis started again. Medicinal cannabis is Tahlia's last chance at a normal life. The legislation we are debating here today will allow her access to this medication by way of a simple prescription from a non-specialist practitioner without the need for approval from Queensland Health.

Now, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to tell you Lachy's story. It is much the same as Tahlia's except that he suffers from epilepticus. His seizures can go on for hours at a time. Lachy's seizures are so severe that he has had to be hospitalised and put on life support eight times. His doctors tried everything without success. Medical cannabis is his last chance at a normal life. The third story I would like to tell you is David's story. These are his words—

Epilepsy means I am barred from obtaining and retaining a driver's licence. This not only has significantly reduced my personal social life, but has impinged on career opportunity and progression. As regardless of job requirement many employers simply want employees to have an open drivers licence. Even being able to afford getting home from hospital after a seizure can be quite a challenge when one's income is low as a result of limited employment opportunities. I am fortunate to have never lost continence but this is a risk for many. As a result of a seizure 3 weeks ago, I fell and my head was split open and I had six staples put in my head. Whilst unpleasant for me, it is shocking for those around. I have no recollection of my seizures, but those around me have been traumatised.

In debating this bill we need to have regard to people like Tahlia, Lachy and David. Consequently, I am pleased to support the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019. Medicinal cannabis will not cure their epilepsy, but it does give them some prospect of relief from this debilitating condition. I am pleased that they have allowed me to tell their stories today.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (4.46 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate on the Medicines and Poisons Bill and the Therapeutic Goods Bill.

Addiction is a terrible thing and it can happen to really good people. I remember training at the police academy with an officer whom I will not name. He was a fair bit older than me at the time, as I affectionately pointed out regularly, but we became good friends. After we were sworn in we eventually worked together in the same area. He was a great local cop—a really friendly, generous guy who had a great career ahead of him. Unfortunately, that changed when he was prescribed pethidine for back pain. I do not know if it was medical negligence or just one of those things, but he became dependent on it. He quickly became addicted to it.

In his desperation to get more of the drug he stole a prescription pad from a doctor and began going around to chemists using the stolen pad. It was a silly, irrational move, as it was only a matter of time before he was caught. That is indeed what happened. But when you have an addiction, rational thought is not something you care about because the need for the drug is so strong. He was charged with all sorts of offences. He lost his career and seriously damaged his future. Speaking to him later, he recounted to me how it had just 'crept up' on him. He blamed his doctor for overprescribing, but you can see how easy it is for an otherwise law-abiding, good citizen to suddenly get caught in the downward spiral of drug addiction.

I recall another example when I was a detective. An investigation led me to arrest and charge a woman under very similar circumstances to my friend. She was undertaking the practice we call 'doctor shopping' to collect prescriptions for her addictions. She was also stealing prescription pads, which is what eventually led us to her. Once again she left a trail of evidence and was certain to be caught eventually, but drug addicts are desperate to get their drugs. A week after I charged her with various offences I was informed that she was dead. She died of a drug overdose. Indeed, throughout my police career I lost count of the number of drug overdose deaths I attended. Some were from illicit drugs but many were from prescription drugs. Some were intentional, some were unintentional.

It is a sad reality we face every day that people are dying from drug use. We talk about pill testing and the like, but no drug taking is completely without risk. We have a duty in this parliament to regulate people's access to medicines and poisons to minimise the risk of addiction and the deaths and misery that result. In 2019 it is right that we update legislation, procedures and safeguards, and this bill goes towards that end. I note that the purpose of this bill is—

... to repeal and replace the existing legislation with a new regulatory framework comprising the Medicines and Poisons Bill, Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation (Medicines Regulation) and Medicines and Poisons (Pest Management, Poisons and Other Regulated Substances) Regulation (Poisons Regulation).

Modernisation of the legislation is important and it is supported by the LNP. I note the committee made 10 recommendations which have been outlined in their report.

Protecting the community from the scourge of drug misuse and addiction is the responsibility of us all. Last week we saw new reports about the devastating impact that drug overdoses have in our community. The new research showed that the number of people dying of all kinds of drugs in unintentional overdoses in Queensland has gone up by more than 40 per cent since 2008. It showed the increase in accidental overdoses from 2013 to 2017 compared to 2003 to 2007. The following alarming results were revealed: a 600 per cent increase in Granite Belt; a 450 per cent increase in the Bowen Basin; a 410 per cent increase in Hervey Bay; a 340 per cent increase on my own Sunshine Coast; a 317 per cent increase in Wide Bay; and a 300 per cent increase in the Far North. In 2017 there were 130 unintentional drug deaths in Brisbane and 130 in Queensland regions. It is said that patients typically progress from painkiller opioids to illegal drugs like ice and heroin.


Homelessness is a major issue in my electorate, particularly around Nambour. I speak regularly with service providers and the police, and I have been told that one of the major contributing factors is drug dependence—people so focused on their addictions that finding accommodation or helping themselves becomes secondary to that addiction. They often spiral from prescription medication to addiction and often then to illicit drug use and out on the streets. I note that one of the objectives of the bill is to ensure—

... Queensland Health is better able to monitor and respond to health risks associated with inappropriate access to and use of, medicines and poisons. For example, the framework minimises the risk that medicines and poisons could be diverted for unlawful purposes by limiting who may supply medicines and poisons, introduces real-time prescription monitoring for particular medicines and enables the chief executive to make an emerging risk declaration to prevent substances that may pose a risk of injury or illness entering the marketplace until their safety has been determined.

This bill to provide safeguards will go some way to preventing this spiral into addiction experienced by so many, but we also need to see rehabilitation services for people who are desperate for help. There are plenty of improvements to be made in that area.

We have also seen how non-prescription medications can be misused—for example, pseudoephedrine in the manufacture of methamphetamines. The restrictions around the sale of that have made it more difficult for criminal enterprises to obtain the quantities required, and this bill will also restrict other drugs from being obtained in quantities for unlawful similar purposes. Better legislation and tighter restrictions and monitoring of medicines, drugs and poisons will hopefully make sure there are fewer examples of my friend and his addiction ruining his career but, more importantly, far fewer examples of those who succumb to addiction and lose their life as a result.

Just briefly in relation to the Therapeutic Goods Bill, I note that these reforms will reduce duplication between state and Commonwealth regulatory frameworks while maintaining appropriate safeguards. The Galbally review examined Australian, state and territory legislation regulating medicines and poisons against national competition principles. A number of proposals for national uniformity of regulations through legislative reforms were made by the review. I note that the review identified net benefits to the Australian community from adopting a comprehensive national legislative framework for the regulation of drugs, poisons and controlled substances. As part of these changes, the Queensland parliament will retain its authority over matters subject to Commonwealth law. In summary, I commend the bills to the House.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.55 pm): I must say that I feel like a bit of a wowser. I was up here yesterday speaking about alcohol and its continued over-representation in fatal traffic accidents, and now I am up here again today speaking on the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019. I am specifically very interested in the introduction of the real-time monitoring of prescription medicines. This is in keeping with the minister's commitment in April 2018 to implement a real-time prescription monitoring system which is referred to in the legislation as the monitored medicines database.

This is so incredibly important because we know that the legality of opioids means they are inevitably easier and more socially acceptable to access than their illegal counterparts. This means that they are a significant contributor to presentations in our hospitals nationwide. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report into opioid harm in Australia reported that around 3.1 million people were dispensed opioid prescriptions in 2016-17. In that same period, there were 5,112 emergency department presentations and 9,636 hospitalisations due to opioid poisoning. This represents a 25 per cent rise in the rate of hospitalisations due to opioid poisoning between 2007-08 and 2016-17.

The report found that 11 per cent of Australians aged 14 and over said they had used opioids for illicit and non-medical purposes in 2016. The report also said that in 2016 pharmaceutical opioids were involved in more opioid deaths and opioid poisoning hospitalisations than heroin. The rate of opioid deaths increased by 62 per cent from 2007 to 2016. It is important to note that some of these hospitalisations would be due to intentional overdose and some accidental.


It is this increasing rate of hospitalisation that speaks to the need for us to ensure as a government that doctors are able to keep an eye in real time on the prescription of these potentially dangerous drugs and ensure that patients are not participating in a practice colloquially known as 'doctor shopping' to get access to more opioids than they would be able to get from a single doctor, with total oversight into the amount of drugs a patient has accessed previously.

This legislation will establish real-time prescription monitoring that will meet a recommendation of the Health Ombudsman's 2016 report titled *Undoing the knots constraining medicine regulation in Queensland*. It will establish the system, as I said, that will meet the commitment made by the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services to the COAG Health Council in April 2018. The database will monitor prescription information related to high-risk medication such as pharmaceutical opioids and other prescription-only medicines associated with abuse and drug seeking—for example, sedatives, sleeping tablets and products that combine codeine with other medicines. This will aid clinical decision-making by providing GPs and pharmacists with access to real-time prescription and dispensing information before they prescribe or dispense certain medicines and at the time of consultation. Clinicians will be better able to identify patients who may be at risk of harm due to dependence or high-risk use of certain prescription medication. This will help ensure that these medicines are prescribed and dispensed safely.

I note that some GPs raised concerns that they could be put at risk from agitated patients whose request for an unsuitable prescription is denied by a doctor. I also note the minister's response that they would not be subject to an adverse finding if they prescribed medication in those specific circumstances. I also note that, overall, the medical profession supports these changes because it understands, as I think does everybody in this House, just how important it is for real-time intervention to be available to patients at risk of opioid addiction or abuse.

Currently, there is a two-week lag for doctors to find out whether a patient may have engaged in the practice of doctor shopping, and two weeks is a long time when misusing a substance. Crucially, as the minister mentioned, being close to the border, as many population centres of Queensland are, like Brisbane and the Gold Coast, makes it even easier to doctor-shop. That is why it is crucial that these regulations are nationwide.

In 2016, opioid deaths accounted for 62 per cent of all drug induced deaths in this country. That is not only more than any other drug; it is also more than every other drug combined. From 2007 to 2016, after adjusting for differences in the age structure of the population, the rate of opioid deaths increased by 62 per cent, from 2.9 to 4.7 deaths per 100,000 population. This increase was driven by an increase in accidental opioid deaths and in pharmaceutical opioid deaths. Let me be clear: for those who need it, these medications are incredibly important; however, we need to acknowledge the reality that they are potentially addictive and need to be treated as such. They are responsible for more deaths than any other drug. I am sure that each of us in this House—as indeed many already mentioned—knows or loves somebody who has misused opioids, perhaps to a dangerous level. The statistics and the stories bear this out. This bill will ensure that we treat opioids with the seriousness they deserve. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (5.01 pm): I rise to speak on the Medicines and Poisons Bill and the Therapeutic Goods Bill, being dealt with cognately today. The State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee was tasked with reviewing both bills; however, I will mainly confine my comments to the Medicines and Poisons Bill. Before diving into the depths of the bill, I thank the secretariat staff, capably led by Jacqui Dewar, who guided the committee through the process. I also thank those who made submissions to this important inquiry and of course my fellow committee members including you, Mr Deputy Speaker Weir.

The Medicines and Poisons Bill is a significant piece of legislation. Not only does it deal with the health of Queenslanders; it also repeals and entirely replaces existing laws with a new regulatory framework that better aligns with national regulations. At the outset I make my position clear: the LNP will support the passing of this bill, but we do believe that a number of issues need to be addressed. As I mentioned, this bill will see a new regulatory framework established. That framework has a number of objectives. Not only will it provide greater community assurance that medicines, poisons and therapeutic goods are being regulated by a modern, outcomes focused framework; it will also enhance overall public safety. This framework will also give Queensland Health the ability to better monitor and respond to health risks associated with the inappropriate access to and use of medicines and poisons. For example, the framework will minimise the risk of medicines and poisons being diverted for unlawful purposes by limiting who can supply them.

The framework will introduce real-time prescription monitoring for particular medicines and will enable the chief executive to make a risk declaration in order to prevent substances that may pose a risk of injury or illness from entering the market until their safety level has been confirmed. This bill will simplify licensing requirements. Manufacturers with licences for multiple sites will be able to transition to a single licence for all sites. Employees will be able to be included in an employer's approval without needing to hold a separate licence.

This bill will streamline the requirements for prescribing medicinal cannabis in Queensland by enabling non-specialist medical practitioners to prescribe it without the need for approval from Queensland Health, eliminating duplication with the Commonwealth approval process. While on the topic of medicinal cannabis—it already seems fairly topical today—I make a quick shout-out to Canndeo, which officially opened its Bundaberg and Southport medicinal cannabis facilities last week. John Hall and his team in Bundaberg have worked incredibly hard on this for decades, so it was absolutely fantastic to be at the opening of the Bundaberg facility. Canndeo is set to become one of the largest manufacturers in the world. I say a massive congratulations to all involved.

The new framework will improve national uniformity by recognising Commonwealth manufacturing licences under a number of acts and by aligning key terminology with the poisons standard. It will also provide certainty for medicines and manufacturers by ensuring that all therapeutic goods are manufactured to the same high standard.

The new regulations will apply to a range of everyday settings including: filling prescriptions at a pharmacy; receiving life-saving drugs in hospital; and enabling vulnerable people such as children or those with a disability and the elderly to have the medicines they need to live comfortably. This bill does not intend to regulate everyday activities of laypersons or carers; instead, it is focused on regulating trained professionals in industries who require increased regulation and are sufficiently trained and experienced to know what is permitted.

On 20 May the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the Medicines and Poisons Bill, and 25 submissions were received. The committee received a public briefing on the bill from Queensland Health on 27 May and also received written advice from the department in response to matters raised in submissions and supplementary questions from the committee. The committee also held a public hearing on 20 June. Submitters commented on the bill and the draft regulations. Some submissions focused only on the draft regulations. While the draft regulations tabled with the bill are integral to understanding the Medicines and Poisons Bill, the committee's task was to examine and report on the bill only.

Regulations will be made after the bill is debated and passed by the parliament. The final form of the regulations will then be considered by a portfolio committee. It is possible the final regulations may vary from the draft regulations tabled to the committee to assist in understanding and implementing the intent of the bill. Our committee noted that a large number of the issues raised by stakeholders relate to the draft regulations and therefore are technically outside the committee's consideration of the bill; however, given that these issues are significant to stakeholders and may have a bearing on the bill, some of these matters were considered.


Although there are many benefits to the implementation of this bill, there are areas of concern. Doctors have raised concerns in relation to the implementation of the new system and the need to have an integrated model that avoids unnecessary duplication of tasks or additional bureaucracy from medical practitioners and pharmacists. There are also concerns about the need to check the history of patients who have lived in other states. Cross-border system integration is an important next step that will enhance real-time prescription monitoring and is something that has strong industry and community support.

Only last week we saw new reports—some of which were already mentioned here today—that showed that the number of people dying from unintentional drug overdoses in Queensland has increased more than 40 per cent since 2008, including a 317 per cent increase over the last 10 years in my region of Wide Bay. In 2017 alone there were 260 unintentional drug related deaths across Queensland. This is the tragic story of the impact of drugs. These significant issues, plus others, are the reason our committee made 10 recommendations that the health minister should address. We are supportive of this bill and what it stands for but believe there are some elements that are inadequate, with references to subordinate legislation and standards needed to fill in more detail.

Several of these recommendations were in relation to issues concerning the introduction of substance management plans. In recommendation 2 the committee recommended that Queensland Health consult further with local governments to clarify the requirements to develop a substance management plan. In recommendation 3 the committee recommended that in his second reading speech the Minister for Health report on the development and rollout of Queensland Health's comprehensive communications strategy, templates and sample substance management plans for different categories of entities and its ongoing information campaign. In recommendation 4 the committee recommended that in his second reading speech the Minister for Health outline how Queensland Health will ensure oversight and compliance of all made substance management plans. It was good to hear the minister mention all of those in his speech earlier today.

The LNP believes that more needs to be done to address the ice epidemic, particularly in regional Queensland. That is why the LNP has a comprehensive ice plan that provides more treatment, more education and awareness, and four additional rehabilitation and detox centres across regional Queensland. This is a priority policy for the LNP and one that will help bridge the divide between our regions and the south-east corner.

The LNP's comprehensive plan includes four new drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres around the state, including right here in Townsville and in my community of Wide Bay; greater education and awareness; coordinated law enforcement; and shutting down organised crime networks that supply drugs to our kids. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.10 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate of the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019 and the Therapeutic Goods Bill 2019. The previous speaker spoke about the LNP having an ice detox centre. I welcome the member and his opposition colleagues to visit the Salvation Army—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr HARPER: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba. They have 45 beds and a detox centre, which our government has proudly funded to the tune of a million dollars. I thank the member for going along and seeing that. They do an excellent job.

I thank the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, particularly the chair, the member for Murrumba. This is not work commonly given to the state development committee, but the health committee's current workload is exceptionally high. We thank the state development committee for its hard work in inquiring into these bills. They are important pieces of legislation.

In Queensland, medicines and poisons are currently regulated by the Health Act 1937 and the health regulation 1996. The Health Act is one of the oldest acts in Queensland's statute book. Given the amendments and changes that have occurred over the past 82 years, the current framework is almost entirely contained in subordinate legislation. This act has been on the books since before any of the current serving MPs were born. A few things happened in 1937. The Golden Gate Bridge was opened, *The Hobbit* was published, the UK started its 999 telephone service, Joseph Lyons was the Australian Prime Minister and William Forgan Smith was the Queensland Premier. This act has got to a point where it needs to be modernised and streamlined. As chair of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, I am keenly aware that this has been a long-term project for our government and for a dedicated team within Queensland Health. I particularly thank them for their work.

In addition to the Health Act 1937, the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996 regulates the possession, supply, administration and other activities related to the medicines and poisons in the Commonwealth poisons standard. The health regulation 1996 provides controls for manufacturing, advertising and labelling of substances and sets out requirements for pharmacy dispensing.

The bill will repeal the current legislation and replace it with a new regulatory framework which consists of the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019, the Therapeutic Goods Bill 2019, the draft medicines and poisons regulations and the draft Therapeutic Goods Regulation. The explanatory notes state—

A new regulatory framework is needed to modernise and streamline the regulation of medicines and poisons, ensuring requirements are easier for industry and the community to understand and apply in practice.

Additionally, it is stated that the new regulatory framework will be focused on outcomes instead of being overly prescriptive and will enhance public safety. Dr Jeannette Young, our Chief Health Officer, advised the committee during its deliberations that the purposes of the new framework are: to ensure that medicines and poisons are made, sold, used and disposed of in an appropriate, effective and safe way; to ensure health risks arising from the use of substances are appropriately managed; and to ensure persons who are authorised to carry out activities using the substances have the necessary competencies to do so safely.

The bill covers a diverse range of industries including health care, agriculture, pest management, pharmaceutical and chemical manufacturing, and research and analysis. This means that a broad spectrum of industries and communities will benefit from the bill, which modernises the regulation of medicines and poisons, ensuring it is easier for industry to understand and apply in practice. For example, a wholesaler with multiple sites will require only one wholesaling licence rather than a licence for each site.

Another important reform is the introduction of real-time prescription monitoring. That is something I am very interested in in the aged-care sector. The database established under the bill will monitor prescription information related to high-risk medications such as pharmaceutical opioids and other prescription-only medicines associated with abuse and drug seeking—for example, sedatives, sleeping tablets and products that combine codeine with other medicine. This will provide pharmacists with access to real-time information before they prescribe or dispense certain medicines at the time of consultation. The reform means that we are putting information in the hands of our pharmacists so that they can identify patients who may be at risk of harm due to drug dependence or high-risk use of certain prescription medicines.


Real-time monitoring in Queensland will ensure prescribed medicines are provided safely to all Queenslanders. Establishing a system of real-time monitoring in Queensland also delivers on a commitment made by the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services—a good minister of the Labor government—to the COAG Health Council in April 2018. I am so pleased to see his introduction today of the bill relating to aged care. I am also pleased to see that the introduction of real-time monitoring is supported by the AMA Queensland, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Pharmacy Guild and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

The bill will also build on this government's record of improving pathways for sick Queensland patients to access medicinal cannabis. This joins some of the most progressive laws in the country—yet another bill that the health committee helped pass through this place. This bill streamlines the regulatory framework for prescribing medicinal cannabis in Queensland by enabling non-specialist GPs to prescribe medicinal cannabis without the need for approval from Queensland Health. This is a good thing. It eliminates duplication with the Commonwealth approval process and removes the potential for Queensland Health and the TGA to reach different conclusions about applications for access for eligible Queenslanders. This means that medicinal cannabis will now be treated just like any other therapeutic treatment. It will also make the system for prescribing much easier for GPs, as they know the system and they now have just one system to use.

I am pleased to see that the Therapeutic Goods Bill also streamlines our health regulatory framework and brings our state into line with the Commonwealth and other states and territories. Due to constitutional limitations, the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act applies to corporations and persons trading interstate and internationally. This means that it does not apply to sole traders or partnerships that only engage and trade within Queensland. The Therapeutic Goods Act is an important law in protecting consumers from potentially unsafe therapeutic goods such as herbal medicines or vitamin supplements.

The bill will extend the application of the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act to those who trade only within Queensland. This means that for all goods sold by those who trade only in Queensland the quality, safety, efficacy and timely availability of therapeutic goods will now be regulated consistently with all other manufacturers. This will ensure we pick up potential safety issues for people purchasing therapeutic goods where these products would have previously not been assessed by the TGA. Applying the Commonwealth act in Queensland will provide certainty and competitive fairness for

medicines manufacturers and ensure that all therapeutic goods are manufactured to the same high standard. This is a good bill for Queensland. This is a good bill introduced by the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (5.19 pm): I rise to speak briefly on the Medicines and Poisons Bill and the Therapeutic Goods Bill. These cognate bills will change regulatory frameworks in a number of matters and bring them into greater alignment with a national approach. The Medicines and Poisons Bill is a significant piece of legislation as it will rescind and substitute existing legislation and introduce new frameworks. It is always important that, when we do this, we do not impose further unforeseen restrictions, including costs, on the daily operation of businesses and people's lives. This should not be another excuse for government to increase burdensome red tape on business and small operators.

The explanatory notes state that among the objectives are to provide greater assurance that the products are regulated to meet public safety expectations, to ensure that Queensland Health is better able to monitor and respond to risks associated with the overuse and access to medicines and poisons, to simplify licensing requirements, to streamline requirements for prescribing medicinal cannabis and to make regulations meet uniform national standards. In particular, I note the objective that the existing fee structure is converted into the new regulatory framework so that there are no new additional or increased fees. For example, fees for primary producers who hold a licence or approval will not change. A number of these changes will impact a wide range of industries such as the agricultural sector, pest management and veterinary services. We are talking about occupations such as pest management technicians, primary producers who carry out pest management activities and landholders who have an approval to use regulated poisons. While the LNP does not oppose the bill, there are concerns that some of the elements in it are incomplete and references to subordinate legislation and standards need to fill in more detail.

There are a number of department standards for using substances and meeting competency and training requirements. Industry stakeholders are concerned about the impact this could have on landowners, land managers and rural businesses. They have raised issues such as training costs, accessing training in rural and remote areas and the high percentage of those who are older who have to meet competency obligations, burdensome paperwork and the IT and literacy levels needed to meet these requirements. The rural sector needs time to adjust to this framework, to complete training and to conduct an awareness campaign. Marie Vitelli of AgForce told the committee—

Under the proposed regulations and standards, users will require those two levels of competency. Like everything, everyone is busy. Everyone needs to access the training. The registered training organisations—the ones that do good delivery—are out there, but they are going to be inundated.

...

We need time because it is a new requirement. It is a bit like when they brought in the chainsaw licensing requirements ... It took a long time for people to do that competency. Please give us time. There has to be awareness. A lot of rural people do not even know about the proposed changes.

Consequently, recommendations 5, 6 and 7 ask Queensland Health to liaise with our peak rural and agricultural industries to run awareness campaigns, to develop tailored guidance and education material, and that the minister outline measures to make sure that the rural sector has enough time to comply with the new standards. Pest management is a routine part of primary production. Primary producers regularly have to use poisons, baits and other measures. The committee sought clarity on the impact that these changes will have on primary producers and the use of poisons such as Roundup and 1080 baits. The explanatory notes state—

... primary producers will continue to be able to use pesticides or fumigants in compliance with label instructions approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority.

This was confirmed by the Chief Health Officer, Dr Young, who said that primary producers or their agents—

... can carry out a pest control activity or fumigation activity on land owned or occupied by the primary producer without requiring a licence, for example, when the primary producer sprays fruit using a pesticide to protect the fruit from insects.

A pest management licence will not be required if you, your agent or employees undertake pest management activities on your own properties. Neighbours who provide in-kind services in relation to pesticides will be considered an agent of the property owner and therefore also do not require a pest management licence. Agricultural groups are concerned about the public register of schedule 7 poisons. Marie Vitelli from AgForce said—

There is a risk that a public register could be misconstrued and used against producers, especially when we see the increased level of activists invading farms and sometimes when pet owners are quick to blame someone for the death of their pet dog if they suspect toxicity. A public register of producers with some of those restricted schedule 7 substances, such as 1080, PAPP and strychnine, could be misconstrued and that puts people at risk.


She continued—

We do not want that information to be made public. It is a bit like knowing what you might have in your medicine cabinet at home with some of the high-level schedule 7 substances. Would you like that to be on a public register so anyone can know what is in your home?

...

I am not saying that you should not have it on the register; just do not put it out on a public website.

This is a highly sensitive issue, especially considering the rise in illegal protests and militant activism and protests by animal extremists. While Queensland Health has advised about discretion available from the chief executive, I urge extreme caution about the publication of poisons on private rural properties. I do not oppose the bill.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.25 pm): I support the bill. This legislation is centrally important to nurses, to doctors and to pharmacists, but most important of all it is particularly important to the patients whom we care for. Medications are a key element in modern health care and one great example of that is what we have seen in relation to heart health over the last 40 or 50 years. We have seen significant increases in life expectancy, mainly due to improvements in heart health. While lifestyle factors around smoking, diet and exercise have all contributed to that, the great work done by the army of GPs in our community and the primary healthcare sector that manage heart health medications has contributed significantly to that.

This bill is updating an 82-year-old piece of legislation. It aims to identify the activities and substances that are to be regulated, it aims to regulate the people who can use the substance and it authorises persons to have competencies and be accountable for the effective uses of these substances, and that is really important and that is what I want to talk about today—that is, competencies and accountabilities. The administration of medication takes great skill. You use assessment skills, both before and after, you give medications. You listen to patients. You analyse data. You have a range of skills in terms of administration practices, measuring and calculations. It is not a simple process. I am forever hearing stories of people who think it is but who get into strife. Just today I heard a horror story about Stilnox which demonstrated to me again why we need competent people to administer medications.


I note the concerns of the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union in relation to this bill and the potential to extend medication management to unlicensed practitioners in aged care, and I share those concerns. We are at a time of great scrutiny and increased scrutiny in aged care, and that is right and just. Like all nurses, I was shocked and disgusted when I watched that *Four Corners* report and saw the way that older Australians were being treated in this country—and, sadly, being treated by some of my professional colleagues. Like all nurses, it made me want to commit personally as a professional to making sure that we continue to deliver excellent care to patients. One of the ways that we do that is to ensure that we have competent people and accountable people who are able to do the job of nursing, and administration of medications is a very important part in relation to that.

I have raised my concerns directly with the minister and I am extremely pleased with the responses that I have received. I know there are some bills before the House and I do not want to anticipate those, but I certainly believe that he shares my views around the need for greater accountability and transparency in aged care. Many other speakers have spoken about real-time prescription monitoring and medicinal cannabis, so I will leave those matters there. The main issue that I wanted to turn my mind to was the competencies and accountabilities required by professional staff, and I think I have raised those concerns. I commend the bills to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Kelly, adjourned.


SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, before moving to the next order of business I would like to acknowledge in the public gallery numerous members of the volunteering community in the Townsville region. I also want to make a particular acknowledgment of Mandy Johnstone, the former member for Townsville, and her daughter, Paige. Welcome to the Townsville regional sitting of parliament.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Townsville, Infrastructure; Flood Recovery


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (5.29 pm): My government is committed to Townsville. We are in the midst of the biggest infrastructure investment program in the past seven years. We have committed \$930.7 million to building the big projects this city needs that have sparked the creation of 3,200 jobs in this year alone. That infrastructure program includes \$190 million towards the \$290 million North Queensland Stadium, supporting 750 jobs during construction; \$225 million for water security, including the \$215 million pipeline, supporting 1,000 jobs over the life of the project; \$118 million of Queensland government funding towards the Townsville Channel Capacity Upgrade, supporting 125 jobs; and \$48 million for a new Townsville port rail freight terminal. We have locked in our \$36 million funding share for the Townsville Ring Road stage 5, supporting 200 jobs and \$80 million over four years to reduce rail access charges on the Mount Isa to Townsville rail line to promote more activity out of the North West Minerals Province.

More than 20,000 Townsville motorists are benefiting from a safer and more reliable journey on Riverway Drive, following a \$43.5 million road upgrade. We know that the member for Thuringowa loves Riverway Drive. There is \$35 million to redevelop the Pimlico TAFE campus, supporting 98 jobs; \$53.9 million for North Shore State School; \$24.6 million for works at Townsville Hospital, including a second MRI and upgrades to the acute mental health inpatient unit; \$9 million for the Townsville Courthouse redevelopment; and 53 extra officers being delivered by the end of 2020, to bring the total increase to approved police strength for the Townsville district to 103 officers.

Today, I am also pleased to announce that 2,900 workers will be supported through Back to Work—a program that I am excited to announce has passed the 20,000 jobs mark. This program has helped the unemployment rate, and especially the youth unemployment rate, fall lower than where they were when the LNP left them.


Today, just over six months after devastating floods engulfed this region, I want to take a moment to pay tribute to the resilience and the sheer determination of this community. This was a devastating event and we have come a long way, but there is still much to do. To all of those affected, I say that we will continue to stand with them. My focus and the focus of my government in the immediate aftermath of these floods and ever since has been listening and getting on to fix the infrastructure and rebuild the lives that were so badly damaged. I will continue to remain focused on that as we rebuild. My government is a listening government. It is an inclusive government. It is a government that is moving forward, building our regions and involving the community as we get on with the job

Renewable Energy

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (5.32 pm): My government is focused on jobs for Queenslanders in every region of our state and delivering the infrastructure that Queenslanders need. Today, I am proud to announce that work will start early next year on a multimillion dollar transmission package to fire up hundreds of potential jobs in North Queensland renewable energy projects. My government will support Genex's project at Kidston, with up to \$132 million leading to 500 construction jobs. Powerlink will build a single-circuit transmission line from Genex's Kidston site to Mount Fox near Ingham, linking the hinterland to the National Electricity Market.

North Queensland has high-quality wind and hydro-electric resources and providing transmission connection is the key to sparking investment in these resources. This investment unlocks access to more energy generation for North Queensland. This infrastructure will support the development of a clean energy hub in the north, providing jobs, investment and energy security.


Veterans

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (5.33 pm): Every region of Queensland is indebted to the contribution that veterans have made to their communities and the sacrifices they have made for this state and their country. That is why earlier this year I announced a commitment of \$9.7 million over five years to establish a dedicated Office for Veterans within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. In addition, from 2017-18, my government delivered \$4.3 million over four years for initiatives to support veterans in Queensland. An important part of that support was the launch just over a year ago of a program by the Public Service Commission to identify at least 100 public sector job opportunities for veterans. Veterans have some of the most well-regarded, diverse and sought-after skills and experiences in the labour market. What is often missing is the

opportunity. I am proud to announce that 298 veterans have now been successfully placed in roles in the Queensland public sector—well above and beyond our initial commitment to identify 100 jobs. Importantly, 46 of these jobs are based here in Townsville in areas such as nursing, teaching, human resources and administration, just to name a few.

This is not the end of our push to find veterans meaningful jobs to make the most of their skills. We are continuing our efforts and will be promoting roles in the Queensland public sector next week here in Townsville at the next Australian Defence Force transition seminar. My government has also committed over \$1.5 million over three years to provide veterans' support services and for the creation, upkeep and renovation of monuments, memorials and other public sites. Minister Coralee O'Rourke is overseeing the development of the Oasis Townsville, which will provide a one-stop shop to support the health and wellbeing of the ex-Australian Defence Force community in Townsville. I am pleased that, in July of this year, my government announced that three Townsville based building contractors had reached the final stage of the tender process to develop The Oasis Townsville. My government will continue to ensure that veterans are honoured with dignity and respect and that their contribution and service is acknowledged.

Economy; Townsville, Infrastructure

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (5.36 pm): Today's national accounts data shows that economic growth across Australia has slowed to a rate not seen since the global financial crisis. Australia's GDP growth over the past year was just 1.4 per cent, the slowest growth since September 2009, and around 1.3 per cent of Australia's 1.4 per cent GDP growth over the past year was the result of governments hiring, investing and building.


As the private sector across the country slows, the task falls to governments to support ongoing GDP growth. No Australian government is backing jobs and growth more fiercely than the Palaszczuk Labor government. Our government knows that Queensland, as Australia's most decentralised state, relies on the strength of our regional cities and towns. That is why the Palaszczuk government respects and supports the immense contribution made by our regions, and by Townsville especially, to Queensland's economy.

Since our government was elected, we have delivered \$4.6 billion in funding for the Townsville Hospital and Health Service, including this year's record budget for Townsville of \$1.04 billion. We have hired 120 extra doctors and 145 extra nurses for Townsville since our government was elected. Since we were elected, our government has also invested more than \$194 million in Townsville schools and hired more than 180 extra teachers and teacher aides.

Our government recognises Townsville's key role in unlocking the North West Minerals Province, an initiative that will create vital resource sector jobs and exports. That is why the Palaszczuk Labor government has invested more than \$233 million in upgrading the Port of Townsville since we were elected and we will contribute another \$134 million to complete berth 4, provide a new intermodal facility and upgrade the channel. This will not only create hundreds of jobs but also secure North Queensland's important place in our resource export supply chain.

Our budget is investing close to a billion dollars in Townsville infrastructure projects just this year alone, supporting directly 3,200 jobs. That is nearly \$4,000 in infrastructure projects for every man, woman and child in Townsville—nearly double the amount of capital investment compared to that in South-East Queensland. The Palaszczuk government backs Townsville like we back all of our regions. Our regions give so much to Queensland and through our budget the Palaszczuk government is proud to give back.

School Breakfast Program


 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors) (5.39 pm): We know that kids who have a healthy breakfast in the morning perform better at school and have the best possible chance to learn and grow. That is why every day across Townsville, hundreds of school students receive a healthy and nutritious breakfast at their school thanks to the Palaszczuk government. Our commitment last year of \$1 million funding over five years to Foodbank's School Breakfast Program has expanded the program into 70 schools across Queensland, including 10 schools right here in Townsville.

Earlier this year I had the pleasure of seeing firsthand how the School Breakfast Program is benefitting students at Vincent State School in my electorate of Mundingburra. By providing students with toast, fresh fruit and a glass of milk or juice, the program is making a real difference to their day at

school. Each week, this program provides 155 meals to students at Aitkenvale State School, 300 meals to students at Cranbrook State School, 255 meals to students at Railway East State School and 275 meals to students at Garbutt State School. At Rasmussen State School the School Breakfast Program operates five days a week, providing 395 meals to students each week. Students at The Willows State School, Heatley State School, Currajong State School and Mundingburra State School also benefit from the School Breakfast Program. Overall, the program provides more than 1,500 breakfasts each week to students in the Townsville area.

The School Breakfast Program has been such a success across the Queensland that in this year's budget the Palaszczuk government proudly announced a further \$1.5 million over five years to expand the School Breakfast Program into up to 70 additional schools. Whether it is investing in our teachers and schools or providing funding for healthy, nutritious breakfasts to start the school day, the Palaszczuk government is committed to giving all our kids a great start.

Renewable Energy, Infrastructure and Jobs

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (5.41 pm): The Palaszczuk government is investing in energy infrastructure and jobs in North Queensland. I can advise the House today that work will start early next year on a multimillion dollar electrical infrastructure package that will fire up jobs in North Queensland renewable energy projects.

The first project to benefit from access to the national electricity grid will be Genex's pumped hydro project at Kidston. Publicly owned Powerlink will build a single circuit transmission line from Genex's Kidston site to Mount Fox near Ingham, linking the hinterland to the National Electricity Market. This breakthrough 186-kilometre transmission line and associated infrastructure will create 400 jobs over two years. There will be boots on the ground early next year after the wet season. The Kidston project itself will have a peak construction workforce of about 500 people per annum for the first two years, 250 in the final year and 30 permanent operational jobs. Let me repeat: that is 900 jobs created by this government. Thirty families will be moving into Georgetown in the Etheridge shire. That is 30 families into that community. I am advised the first of these workers will be on site before Christmas.

Connecting 250 megawatts of pumped hydro capacity will help make the North Queensland electricity network more reliable. That is energy from the sun 24 hours a day.

An opposition member: The sun don't shine 24 hours a day!

Dr LYNHAM: Should I take some time to describe pumped hydro to those opposite?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, technically you have unlimited time on a ministerial statement. It is only your colleagues who may be concerned.

Dr LYNHAM: There is this concrete wall on top of a hill and another one down the bottom. In the day the sun pumps water up. The water trickles down at night-time driving a generator. For once I have to agree with what the Leader of the Opposition is thinking: there is not much to back her up.

Honourable members interjected.

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

A government member: You're on fire!


Dr LYNHAM: I'm not on fire, I'm amazed.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Do you have anything further to add in your ministerial statement?

Dr LYNHAM: I do. More broadly, this strategic transmission infrastructure will unlock this region's renewable energy potential. North Queensland has great wind and hydro-electric resources but the barrier to development has been the transmission connection. The Palaszczuk government is breaking down that barrier. In our Powering North Queensland Plan we told the people of the north that we would invest in strategic transmission infrastructure and the Palaszczuk government is well and truly delivering on these commitments.

North Queensland, Jobs


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (5.45 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government is working hard to bring more jobs to North Queensland. That is why I am pleased to inform the House tonight that Queensland's Coordinator-General is releasing final terms of reference for two new projects in North Queensland that together will support 900 construction jobs and 480 operational jobs: the CopperString Electricity

Transmission Line Project and the Winchester South coalmine. What it means for these projects is that they can now get to work on their environmental impact statements which will be submitted to the Coordinator-General for evaluation and approval. Importantly, the community will get to have its say on each EIS.

These steps mean we can bring more jobs to North Queensland in a streamlined fashion. The first project is the proposed \$1.5 billion CopperString project transmission line. That is 1,100 kilometres of overhead, high-voltage power that will connect the North West Minerals Province and Mount Isa to the National Electricity Market. CopperString will support the growth of businesses and industry in the north. CopperString will also offer an alternative electricity supply to our state's north-west putting more downward pressure on prices.


Whitehaven's \$1 billion Winchester South coalmine is another new coalmine for the Bowen Basin that is expected to create 500 jobs during construction and 450 jobs when operational. These are two big projects, meaning more coal, cheaper power and, more importantly, more jobs for North Queensland under the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Townsville Marine Tourism Precinct, Jobs

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (5.47 pm): If there is one thing this government knows, it is that by investing in bricks and mortar we create jobs. That is why I am proud to announce that the Palaszczuk government is investing \$3.5 million towards the Townsville Marine Tourism Precinct that will transform this key tourism hub for the city. The new marine precinct will include more ferry berths, better connectivity, facilities for buses, a retail and commercial precinct, as well as a brand-new 90-room hotel. Locals know that the current ferry facilities are dated and Townsville would benefit from having new world-class facilities.

During construction it is expected that more than 60 jobs will be created and on an ongoing basis there will be an additional 60 jobs for staff at the new facilities. We are supporting this project because it is expected to attract an additional 200,000 tourists through the city each and every year, injecting \$28 million into local businesses. This is a huge vote of confidence in the local tourism industry here in Townsville. Since 2013 the Townsville tourism industry has grown by more than \$120 million and we have created 400 jobs during that time. We have also seen 500,000 more people come and visit Townsville and the region. We will continue to invest in new tourism infrastructure because we know it creates jobs here in Townsville.

North Queensland, Health Services


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (5.48 pm): Heart disease is responsible for one in three deaths in Queensland. Last year we saw a 10 per cent increase in the number of patients arriving at hospital with a cardiac condition. Living with heart disease can be really difficult, especially if you are living in regional and remote Queensland far away from the major cardiac hospitals in Brisbane.

That is why we are investing \$12.4 million over four years to deliver cardiac care in some of the most rural, regional and remote communities. Townsville Hospital, along with Cairns Hospital, will become our cardiac hubs. This new hub-and-spoke model means that people in regional and rural areas will get the care that they need when they have to travel to a tertiary cardiac service such as Townsville Hospital. More importantly, regional and rural Queenslanders will have access to more care close to home through outreach services and telehealth services. That means that a patient in Mount Isa Hospital can have a specialist appointment with a cardiologist in Townsville via video. Clinicians will visit hospitals across the region, including in Ayr, Charters Towers, Ingham and Palm Island and west to Doomadgee, Mornington Island, Normanton, Burketown, Dajarra, Camooweal, Gregory Downs and Mount Isa.

We are hiring more staff to deliver this program, because that is what Labor governments do. We are hiring more doctors, nurses and allied health staff. A nursing coordinator, administrative staff and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker have already been employed. This is an example of how the Palaszczuk government is delivering more and better health services for all Queenslanders, no matter where you live.

In Australia, one in six men is at risk of developing prostate cancer by the age of 85. Today many members are wearing red socks. Project Red Socks raises awareness for prostate cancer. I thank the member for Townsville for his advocacy for such an important cause and all members of parliament for their support.

Police Service, Cold Case Investigation Team


 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (5.51 pm): Queensland's Cold Case Investigation Team leads the nation. Recently they solved a number of murder mysteries, some dating back decades. Today I joined police in announcing that the Cold Case Investigation Team is renewing investigations into an unsolved case here in Townsville.

In 1975, an 18-year-old woman, Catherine Graham, moved to Townsville and was selling educational books door to door. On the night of 29 July 1975, Catherine was seen canvassing homes in the Hermit Park area. On that night, Catherine was due to be picked up by friends at 11 o'clock. However, she never made it to the pick-up point.

Catherine's body was discovered on 1 August in a paddock in Oak Valley, 18 kilometres from Townsville along the Flinders Highway. Police say that, on the night of her murder, Catherine phoned her mother from a phone box in the Rising Sun area in Townsville. Police say that Catherine told her mother that she did not like the look of a man standing nearby. Catherine's homicide remains unsolved. Her case is now subject to review by the Cold Case Investigation Team.

Police are convinced that there are people with information about the murder. There is a \$250,000 reward available for information that may lead to a conviction. There is also an indemnity for anyone who did not commit the murder and who comes forward to speak with police. Justice never sleeps and Queensland's elite Cold Case Investigation Team will not rest until justice is done, for Catherine Graham and for her family.


Back to Work

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.52 pm): This week marks 20,000 Back to Work jobs in Queensland. This is a significant milestone and today I visited our 20,000th Back to Work job starter, Aaron, at Cutlers Diesel Performance in Bohle. Cutler's Diesel Performance is a small business that specialises in diesel performance upgrades and tuning for four-wheel drive vehicles. The owner, Brendan Cutler, has employed two apprentices through Back to Work. Shane was employed a little over a year ago and Aaron has recently started. Both of those young apprentices have helped us reach this fantastic milestone. Both are excited to be learning a trade that will set them up for life.

This is a great example of what the Back to Work program is all about. It is giving small businesses such as Brendan's the confidence to create more jobs and provide opportunities for many Queenslanders to get a start in an exciting career. More than 77 per cent of Back to Work businesses are small businesses just like Cutler's Diesel Performance. Almost one in four of our Back to Work jobs have gone to apprentices and trainees. With our recent announcement of free apprenticeships for Queenslanders under 21, I expect we will see many more.

Every day I get to hear stories from across Queensland of how people have grown in confidence and learnt new skills, and in some cases have progressed even further in the business. Ours is a government that is all about supporting our businesses to start, grow and create more jobs.

NAPLAN

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (5.54 pm): Last week the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, ACARA, released the preliminary results from this year's NAPLAN tests. I am proud to advise that Queensland continues to be NAPLAN's star performer and the most improved state in literacy and numeracy since NAPLAN testing began in 2008.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, I am sorry to interrupt you. Members to my left, the minister is giving a ministerial statement. I do not believe she is being combative with that statement. I ask you to hear the statement by the minister.

Ms GRACE: One year does not tell a story, but 10 years does. Since 2008 Queensland students have improved in 17 of 20 NAPLAN test areas against the national minimum standard, mean scale score and upper two bands, and nobody can take that away from our Queensland students. As recently agreed by all Australian education ministers, this year's results must be interpreted with care. I repeat that: as recently agreed by all Australian education ministers—every one of them, including the federal minister—this year's results must be interpreted with care due to online glitches and concerns with comparing written and online testing. Queensland's improvement over time has been acknowledged

nationally. The Grattan Institute has described Queensland as a 'star performer'. Last week, University of Western Australia academic Glenn Savage described Queensland as a 'standout with improvements significantly above average in several year levels and assessment areas'.


NAPLAN is not about comparing schools. Like the Gonski recommendations, it is about individual student growth and school growth. Queenslanders should be proud of the progress that our students and schools are making—schools such as Townsville Central State School, Thuringowa State High School in the electorate of Thuringowa, and Beenleigh State School and Beenleigh State High School in the electorate of Macalister, just to name a few.

Our NAPLAN results prove that the vision, record investment and continued focus on education by successive Labor governments are paying dividends. Labor's vision to introduce prep has been supported statewide. It was the Palaszczuk Labor government that, in 2016, made prep compulsory for all students. I note that the preppies now in year 3 have achieved some of our best results in writing since NAPLAN testing began.

However, we are not about to rest on our laurels, which is why this year's state budget includes a record \$13.8 billion for education, which is up six per cent on the previous year. We are employing 1,000 extra teachers as part of our commitment to employ 3,700 additional teachers over four years and we are employing an additional 200 teacher aides in the next 12 months. We will also invest a massive \$1.5 billion on new and enhanced education infrastructure at schools right across Queensland, ensuring that our kids are getting a world-class education in great facilities. We are partnering with New South Wales and Victoria to review NAPLAN to ensure that after 10 years it continues to meet its primary objectives. Only today we received the terms of reference from the New South Wales Liberal government.

The Palaszczuk government's commitment to education will ensure that our children get a great start and will continue to lead the nation in individual student and school progression. Nobody can take that away from Queensland students.

North Queensland, Flood Recovery; QBuild

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (5.59 pm): It is how we treat those in our community who fall on hard times that defines us as Queenslanders. In February of this year the unthinkable happened in this community: thousands of people were displaced from their homes during the North Queensland floods. The floods also exemplified what can happen when a community works together to support those in need: thousands of Townsville and North Queensland residents opened their homes to their neighbours. Queenslanders achieve great things when we work together.

Off the back of the floods, the Palaszczuk government pulled out all the stops to help North Queenslanders get back on to their feet. I can report that we established the local tradie register to ensure local firms won our recovery work, with 99 per cent of that work being performed by local businesses. We arranged for our department's apprentices to be among the first in the recovery efforts, and we worked hard to ensure that 1,818 households were supported into alternative accommodation. Truly, the North Queensland flood recovery effort was monumental—and it continues.


As Queenslanders, we are not strangers to natural disasters. Queenslanders know that this probably will not be the last one we brave together. That is why the Palaszczuk government is rebuilding QBuild. We will hire 300 tradies and apprentices to help deliver the \$12.95 billion capital program announced in this year's budget. This landmark decision really sets the Palaszczuk government aside from the LNP. When in government, the LNP cut QBuild, sacked its tradies and shut down the apprentice program. The Palaszczuk government is rebuilding QBuild—a skilled responsive workforce that is there where and whenever Queenslanders need them.

Mr SPEAKER: Before we move to question time, I want to acknowledge the federal member for Herbert, Phillip Thompson MP, who is in the gallery for today's sitting.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude this evening at 7.01 pm.

North Queensland, Insurance Inquiry

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (6.01 pm): My first question without notice is to the Premier. It has been more than 1,600 days since the Premier promised North Queenslanders an inquiry into the exorbitant costs of their insurance. Why hasn't this promised inquiry started?

Ms PALASZCZUK: In relation to that question, I am happy to get some further information from the Treasurer. Let me say very clearly in relation to our commitment to Townsville that we have demonstrated time and time again our commitment to providing jobs in this great city. We do not come to Townsville and criticise Townsville, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, who came to this city and said that she wanted to make Townsville livable—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to standing order 118 on relevance. The question was specific in relation to an insurance inquiry—nothing else.

Mr SPEAKER: In terms of your point of order, member for Kawana, I have noticed that 38 seconds have come off the clock where the Premier has given an undertaking to get further information. I believe that she still has two minutes and 22 seconds to come back to the point—which I ask the Premier to do right now.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know that following the floods there was a big concern about insurance for those people who were impacted. The Deputy Premier spoke to the Insurance Council of Australia advocating for the people of this region.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members to my left, the Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I would like to hear the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me go back to my former point, Mr Speaker. When you come to Townsville, you should talk up this great city. I love this city. All we have heard this week from members opposite is talking down the city and talking about being dragged up here to Townsville. I love Townsville.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, further to the point of order raised, I asked that you ensure you come back to standing order 118(b) on relevance. It is important that we come back to the core of the question asked. Do you have anything further to add, Premier?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, Mr Speaker. In relation to insurance, we have also raised this at a federal level. We know that it actually affects all of Australia. It does not just affect one part of Queensland; it has an impact right across the nation. I was more than happy to raise that at a federal level as well. I was advocating for it.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Members to my left, I have given clear guidance. The Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I have asked her to come back to the core of the question which I believe she is attempting to do. I would like to hear the response. It is the only way I can rule on relevance, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As the Premier of Queensland, I raised this important issue with the Australian government. They are the ones who have the control when it comes to these issues. I find it ironic that those opposite would come in here and say such things when people are still doing it tough in this city. We know that when the LNP was in government this was ground zero for cuts in this city—massive cuts. The Leader of the Opposition was part of that government. There are many members opposite who were also part of those cuts.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: So rude. So rude.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: So rude.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, resume your seat. Members, I am actually having difficulty hearing the Premier's response. I also ask the Premier: do you have anything further to add related to the question asked? Otherwise, I will ask you—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have raised it federally.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier.

Procurement Policy, CFMMEU Protest

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry to interrupt you, Leader of the Opposition. Members to my left, I ask for silence when questions are being asked. I do not think your leader appreciates interruptions.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. I refer to the CFMMEU protesting Labor's procurement policy here today. Why does the Premier's procurement policy allow for two North Queensland Stadium workers doing the same job on the same site to be paid two different amounts?

Mr Dick: The workers' friend over there!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, I take that interjection. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Of course we know that the LNP are the workers' friend in this state—not! They are no friend of the worker. You want to talk about jobs. I am happy to talk about jobs.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, please put your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to talk about jobs and my government's commitment to delivering in this state. Those opposite want to talk about the stadium. I am proud that my government is building the stadium for the people of North Queensland—750 jobs. Let's talk about the LNP's record. When they sacked people in this city they paid them zero.

Mr Mander: The CFMMEU are right about you guys.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Who would have thought the member for Everton would be on the side of the CFMMEU! Let it be stated that the member for Everton—and I think maybe the member for Kawana was nodding as well—is a great friend of the CFMMEU. I will tell you what the unions do, Mr Speaker. The unions back workers. The Labor Party has a proud record of backing workers in this state—absolutely.

I am more than happy today to talk about the LNP's record when it comes to jobs. Let's go—seven years ago today: 'Axe falls on 200 North Queensland hospital staff including doctors and nurses.' I table that article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 4 September 2012, titled 'Axe falls on 200 NQ hospital staff ... including doctors and nurses' [\[1435\]](#).

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in terms of standing order 118(b). We have taken your guidance. We have shortened our questions relevant to specific matters, relevant particularly to the issues of North Queensland. I would ask that you draw the Premier's attention to that specific question which was about procurement policy of only the stadium and two separate rates of pay.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. Premier, the question asked had some components to it. Some of them were related to the stadium, but there was more detail in the question. I do ask that you respond to the question that related to pay rates and procurement policy.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When the best practice principles came in, that is when the line was drawn in relation to the payment to those workers. We know that those opposite do not have a track record of supporting jobs in Queensland. It is very clear that the LNP does not support jobs and employment in this city.

Mr Harper: Fourteen thousand jobs were cut.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take the member for Thuringowa's interjection: 14,000 jobs were cut across Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition was part of the LNP government and many of them still sit here: the member for Glass House, the member for Kawana, the member for Everton, the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Surfers Paradise. They cut schools. The LNP cannot be trusted on jobs in this state.

(Time expired)

North Queensland, Women's Sport

Mr STEWART: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier outline what the Palaszczuk government is doing to promote women's participation in sport in North Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Townsville for that very important question. On this side of the House we realise that women and young girls should be given exactly the same opportunities as young boys to ensure they achieve their full potential, especially when it comes to sport in this state. That is why we have the Female Facilities Program, which is putting female facility change rooms across the state. This is something I am personally incredibly proud of.

There has been a lot of talk this week about the stadium and the Cowboys, but tonight I would like to talk about the Townsville Fire. The member for Townsville has spoken to me about this at length. The member for Mundingburra and the member for Thuringowa have also raised with me the importance of supporting the Townsville Fire. I had the great opportunity this afternoon to meet with representatives from the Fire, including Rachael, Micaela, Tess and general manager Sam Pascoe, to deliver some good news. We know that the team has a huge fan base and its members are community icons. They are role models for young women and girls to look up to. They do extensive community work not only in Townsville but in Tully, Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Charters Towers, Ingham and Ayr. They have a great footprint when it comes to promoting things. Tonight I am pleased to announce that my government will provide the Townsville Fire with \$1 million over three years to commence and expand important programs aimed at young Queensland girls aged between nine and 17. I think this is very important to them. I know how much good work they do in the community.

This funding will be used to attract thousands of girls into programs designed to address at-risk youth, boost school attendance, provide direct mentoring from players focused on young girls in foster care, expand the Fire's existing schools program to deliver 50 school visits each year—and I think it is very important to get out to the schools and keep young girls interested—and hold three-day camps each year to give girls the opportunity to be mentored by healthy role models. The Townsville Fire has a proud record of engaging with youth and making a big difference. I think that \$1 million over three years is a great announcement. I would like to thank the Townsville Fire for all the work they do in the local community. I can remember when we were first elected they won the national championship and we were here supporting them. I wish them all the best. They had their first training session today and some of them had to miss it because they came in to have a meeting with me. I was absolutely delighted that the member for Townsville was able to raise this issue—

(Time expired)

Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier. Yesterday the Deputy Premier stated that there is a void in her side of the story with regard to the investment property integrity crisis. To fill that void will the Deputy Premier immediately release all Integrity Commissioner advice, text messages with her husband, proof she declared the conflict to the Premier, proof she excused herself from decisions that would financially benefit her and the date that she will finally sell the property?

Ms TRAD: I refer the member to the CCC's statement put out today. He only needs to wait a matter of hours before the CCC comes down with its finalisation—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Hours?

Ms TRAD: Yes, Friday is only 48 hours away.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms TRAD: I know you do not know how hydro works and I know you do not know what 'head taters' are, but two days is 48 hours. As I said, the CCC today released a statement saying they will complete their assessment in the next two days—by Friday, some 48 hours away—and the member for Everton need only wait just a little bit longer. It is not as far away as Christmas is now, so may I suggest that the member for Everton and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition allow the CCC to do its job and—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. The Deputy Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I ask that you listen to her response.

Ms TRAD:—allow the CCC to finalise their assessment. I look forward to it. While we are here in Townsville I really do want to take up the question asked previously in relation to insurance, because I know those opposite cannot count. They cannot count the increase—the hike—they put on insurance

duty in this state. It is right here in this press release, which says that a 1.5 per cent stamp duty hike on household insurance will collect more than \$900 million from Queenslanders. They have the hide to come in here and talk about insurance—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Deputy Premier, the question regarding insurance was asked of the Premier. It has not been asked of you. I appreciate you bringing this advice to the House, but I ask you to come back to the question asked.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, I take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. She needs to update the government progress report. It is this one and it has far more detail. I table a copy for the benefit of the House. It is November last year. I think you are working off November 2017-18.

Tabled paper: Table, undated, titled 'Progress report on government election commitments' [[1436](#)].

North Queensland, Jobs

Ms LUI: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier explain what actions the Palaszczuk government is taking to create and support jobs in North Queensland and Far North Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cook for that question. My government is absolutely committed to making sure that we are creating jobs in Far North Queensland and North Queensland because there is dignity in having a job. When you do not have a job you cannot put a roof over your family's head and you cannot put food on the table. It is important that we help provide the necessities to give people the opportunity to get into work. That is why I am really pleased to announce that our Back to Work program now has its 20,000th person. We brought back the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program those opposite axed.

We will continue to ensure that families have good access to health and education. We are building the schools that we need for our growing communities. We are also making sure we expand our health services. Everyone knows, especially in North Queensland and Far North Queensland, how big the distances are from one place to another. It is my job to talk to people, listen to people and make sure we respond to their concerns. However, we know that when the LNP was in government they did not support jobs and employment in the regions. When you rip jobs out of small and regional communities it has a huge flow-on impact. Not just for families: it devastates communities and it makes it really hard for families to make ends meet.

We care about families. We care about the importance of employment and giving people a job—unlike those opposite with their savage cuts that happened here in Townsville. I take the opportunity to raise some of what happened with members here today. On 13 September 2012, Townsville rallied against job losses. There was a young paramedic who joined that rally and that person then became the member for Thuringowa. He saw the impacts on his local community. He stood up for the local community and he is a proud leader of the local community. Then we had 'Doctors threaten to leave Townsville'; that was the LNP's record and that was on 23 June 2012. Then on 3 September 2012 we had this article: 'Local jobs lost despite Newman government assurances. Public sector cuts hits 550.' They went to the election saying something and they did something else. We cannot trust the LNP.

(Time expired)

North Queensland Stadium

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. Does the welding of the roof structure on the Townsville stadium comply with Australian standards welding code 1554 and 5131? Will the minister release the report to prove it?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, this is the last time I am going to give a reminder this evening about silence during questions asked. Am I making myself clear?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question. We do love talking about the North Queensland Stadium, the future home of the North Queensland Cowboys. It is creating 750 jobs, including for welders, with 481 local companies in the supply chain. I had the opportunity just this morning to visit Cowboys House, and thank you, Mr Speaker, for organising that wonderful opportunity to meet with the students and residents there. I had the opportunity to talk to one of the young school based apprentices who has come from a remote community. I asked this young man what he thought about the constant criticism from those opposite of North Queensland Stadium.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call.

Mr de BRENNI: Christian is 17 years old and he is enjoying his apprenticeship, and he said that he is sick and tired of those opposite criticising the workmanship. That is what those opposite are doing. They are talking Townsville down, they are talking down the welding workforce, they are talking down the stadium and they are talking down the Cowboys. I can tell the House that the leadership of the Cowboys does not enjoy it. I do not think anybody in the gallery enjoys hearing the opposition come to Townsville—or, as they say, be dragged to Townsville—and talk down the most iconic project in this town's history.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I ask you to come back to the question asked. It was a specific question. If there is a complex answer required, you are welcome to take it on notice.

Mr de BRENNI: The answer is quite simple. I can talk about the workmanship of the people of Townsville—92 per cent of the labour hours on this construction site have been performed by people who call Townsville home. For those opposite to come into this place and say that they cannot do their jobs is extraordinarily offensive.

Mr Hunt interjected.

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

Mr de BRENNI: In relation to an anonymous opinion that was submitted about an issue with welding, that was investigated immediately. It was immediately investigated by the managing contractor, Watpac. They had their consulting engineering firm, Arup, conduct an investigation into those standards, but we went further. I want to assure the people of Townsville and the people in the gallery who are going to be enjoying Rugby League, football and a range of other sports out of this stadium that the steel fabricator's engineer, the report from Arup, the consulting engineer and two additional independent reports confirmed the structural integrity of this building. I am looking forward to seeing the North Queensland Cowboys take to the field.

(Time expired)

Floods, Insurance

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the flood recovery effort and the way insurance companies have been treating Townsville residents in the aftermath of the Townsville floods?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Thuringowa for the question. I want to particularly pay tribute to his strong advocacy and the advocacy of the members for Townsville and Mundingburra. They have made sure that the people of Townsville who were very, very badly affected by the flooding event earlier this year are treated fairly by insurance companies. I want to commend him.

The member for Thuringowa joined with me this morning to visit one of his constituents, Karen Hamilton, in her home in Heatley. That home has been part of the family for 50 years. It is where she has been living with her mother, who is over 80, her son and her granddaughter. Their house was devastated during the monsoonal event and it now needs quite significant repair works. Unfortunately, that has been a long time coming.

When the monsoonal event happened and so many people in this city were badly affected, I called all of the insurance companies up to Townsville and I had a meeting with them and the local members. I asked the insurance companies to treat those people affected in Townsville and the north-west with compassion, to respond to their requests promptly and to make sure they were not using loopholes to avoid their obligation to assist local residents recover from the devastating floods.

Unfortunately, in Karen's instance she has not had a very good run with her insurance company. After first being told that the roof was fine, she has now been told that it needs to be completely replaced at her own expense and that nothing would occur in her home in terms of insured works until that roof was fixed. She is a pensioner and she now needs to find \$14,000 to pay for her roof. I thank the member for Thuringowa, and I want to table a letter he wrote to me today after that visit asking for some action.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 4 September 2019, from the member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP, to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Jackie Trad, regarding insurance [[1437](#)].

I am pleased to report to the House that it is not an inquiry we are having; it is money in Queenslanders' pockets to help them fix their homes to become resilient in the face of natural disasters. More than \$20 million has been expended through our home resilience program. I note the new federal member for Herbert is here. I have not had the pleasure of meeting him, but if there is one thing he should take away from the regional parliament it is that he should go to Canberra and stand up to Canberra and join with us in making sure that North Queenslanders are well supported through proper resilience programs, and they should finish their insurance inquiries.

(Time expired)

Adani Carmichael Mine, Approval

Mr LAST: My question without notice is to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef. Following the approval of the Adani Carmichael mine by the Queensland Environmental Regulator in June, the minister said—

Let me tell you, me personally, there have been some tears shed on this—very much.

Will the minister tell the people of Townsville why she shed a tear about her department approving Adani?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. The Labor Party has always been the party to strive for the thriving balance. That is why we have some of the strongest environmental conditions in this country right here in Queensland. I am not a hardened politician like the member or the Leader of the Opposition; I still have human feelings. When you think about those people who continue to ensure a thriving balance, you think of First Nations peoples. When I see division among First Nations peoples, for me personally that is upsetting.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Sorry to interrupt you, minister. The minister is being responsive to the question asked. I ask members to my left to allow the minister to answer the question.

Ms ENOCH: When you see that kind of division, it is personally upsetting. Of course, as a First Nations person I react to that. That is a normal reaction. It was absolutely a normal reaction.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Kawana is warned under the standing orders. You will cease interjections and put your comments through the chair.

Ms ENOCH: We on this side of the House will continue to ensure that we have the strongest environmental conditions and laws in this country. We do that because we want to ensure a thriving balance in this state. We want to ensure that our environment is protected at the same time as we have thriving industries. At the state level we have strong laws that ensure there is no political interference.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Mander: I've had a gutful.

Ms ENOCH: Those opposite may laugh; however, at the federal level what we saw on the eve of the federal election was the federal Minister for Environment heavily lobbied by her own member, threatening her with her own job if she did not take action in a particular way. If you want to talk about political interference, that is what happens at the federal level. At the state level, we uphold the laws of this state to ensure we are able to seek out and strive for that thriving balance. That is how you do it.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members to my left, the minister is still being responsive to the question asked. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I ask that you withdraw the unparliamentary language from earlier.

Mr MANDER: I apologise for quoting the Premier and I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: No, that is not acceptable, member.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right! The member will withdraw unreservedly.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw unreservedly.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister, you have 27 seconds remaining, do you have anything further to add?

Ms ENOCH: Yes, I do. What we saw at the federal level was interference from the minister at that time, who now no longer holds that position. She was incredibly lobbied by her own members to make a decision in some ways against the very science that supported a way forward. Labor will always strive for a thriving balance.

(Time expired)

Mr Langbroek: Give her more time.

Mr SPEAKER: Well, we can talk about timing, member for Surfers Paradise, but you did not time that very well. You are warned under the standing orders. Members for Glass House and Mudgeeraba, your interjections were designed to interrupt the minister speaking. I did not want to interrupt her by warning you at that time. You both are warned under the standing orders.

Neighbourhood Centres

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Disability Services and Seniors. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting neighbourhood centres across Queensland?

Mrs O'ROURKE: I thank the member for her question and for her interest in how the Palaszczuk government is continuing to support the state's network of 124 neighbourhood and community centres, including George Street Neighbourhood Centre in her electorate of Mackay where we recently invested \$1.2 million in upgrading. From Cooktown to Charleville and Moranbah to Murgon, these centres are making a significant difference to the lives of Queenslanders and helping respond to the diverse needs of families, seniors, young people, the homeless and migrants.

Last week I was delighted to open the brand-new Moranbah Youth and Community Centre in the electorate of Burdekin alongside representatives from the Isaac Regional Council and BHP-Mitsubishi Alliance. This new centre is the result of a multimillion dollar partnership between the Palaszczuk government and BMA and is now delivering a range of services and supports for residents in the Moranbah community.

It is not just in Burdekin that our government is delivering for our regional neighbourhood centres. Next week I will be smack bang in the heart of Nanango to officially open a new neighbourhood centre in Murgon. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will be very thankful for the \$3.1 million investment from the Palaszczuk government that sees the brand-new Graham House Community Centre become a reality in her community. I look forward to seeing how this new and improved centre delivers for residents in Murgon and supports locals.

Here in Townsville we are fortunate to have three neighbourhood and community centres to support local communities. Every day hundreds of North Queenslanders visit these centres to access everything from play groups to free internet, phones, computers and financial and medical services. First, North Townsville Community Hub receives more than \$121,700 in Palaszczuk government funding each year. Community Grow manages the other two local centres: the Upper Ross Community Centre and the Garbutt Community Centre. The Palaszczuk government provides more than \$300,000 to Community Grow to deliver community support through these two centres. Community Grow also receives funding through our Community Connect initiative of \$125,000 per year over a five-year period to facilitate advocacy, support and referrals for individuals and families for specialist services.

I know firsthand that the Upper Ross Community Centre is a much loved part of our community. The centre has craft groups, an over-50s group, justice of the peace services, a child health nurse, free legal advice, and temporary counselling. I often hear from my constituents just how important these services are. That is why this government is proud to support neighbourhood and community centres, not just here in Townsville but across our state.

(Time expired)

Great Barrier Reef

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question without notice is also to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef. Given the impact upon North Queensland graziers and farmers, did the minister advocate for the reef bill not to be debated in Townsville?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that would be anticipating debate on a bill before the House.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Standing order 115(g) states—

Questions may be asked to elicit information regarding business pending on the Notice Paper but debate on the matter must not be anticipated.

I put that the member was not anticipating debate but simply eliciting information.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Thank you, members. I will allow the question.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question and welcome him back to Townsville.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Ms ENOCH: Yes, it has been a while. I take that interjection from the Premier. I know it has been a while. It must be quite an opportunity to catch up again with old friends who probably have forgotten about him.

For the past 2½ years almost there has been extensive consultation with regard to the bill that has been put before the House. There is some urgency around ensuring we are able to move to protect the Great Barrier Reef into the future.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I have already ruled on whether the minister is being responsive to the question asked. The House will hear the answer without interjection.

Ms ENOCH: Of course, there is consultation that must happen. I have been on many farms in all of the regions. I have spoken directly with representatives from associations. I spoke with Canegrowers this morning. I have spoken with graziers. I spoke with banana farmers this week.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

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

Ms ENOCH: Of course, this work is based on science. We saw last week—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms ENOCH: We know that those opposite do not like science. They may like to sit in dark corners with their tinfoil hats on and scribble policies on the wall with their crayons, but we on this side of the House believe in the science. We accept the science on climate change. We accept the science regarding water quality and reef protection. That is why we have been working with all of the industries—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, firstly, I ask you to come back to the question. Member for Broadwater, you will put your comments through the chair. You have been warned on numerous occasions. You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was taking interjections on their comments about science. That is why I was going down that path, just so you are aware.

Mr SPEAKER: I understand, Minister.

Ms ENOCH: Of course, we are basing this work on the best available science.

Mr Hart interjected.

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

Ms ENOCH: Last week two reports were released: one by the federal government, the outlook report for the Great Barrier Reef; the second by the federal government and the state government with regard to water quality. Both of those reports made it very clear that there are two major threats to the Great Barrier Reef. One is climate change; the other is water quality.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Thuringowa, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms ENOCH: We must get this right. This is our once-in-a-generation opportunity to make these changes to protect the Great Barrier Reef into the future. We will do that in a sensible, responsible way.

Regional Queensland, Major Projects

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister please advise how his portfolio is advancing major projects in regional Queensland and whether he is aware of any other approaches?

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the minister, members to my left, I could not pinpoint who the members were, but there was clearly conversation during the asking of that question. I have asked for silence. The next member who speaks during a question will be leaving the chamber for the remainder of the evening.

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Rockhampton for his question. As I said in my ministerial statement today, the Coordinator-General has released final terms of reference for two new projects: CopperString 2.0 and the Winchester South Project, a brand-new coalmine being delivered under the Palaszczuk Labor government. These are important steps towards the production of environmental impact statements which will allow the Coordinator-General to streamline approvals to get these projects underway.

I am asked by the member for Rockhampton whether I am aware of any other approaches to major projects. I became aware yesterday that the Leader of the Opposition has announced that the LNP will set new targets for Coordinator-General approval times for major projects. The Leader of the Opposition even praised Campbell Newman for a high rate of approval. It really does say something about the Leader of the Opposition that she thinks it is a good idea to praise Campbell Newman in Townsville. Townsville, of course, was the epicentre—ground zero—of the LNP's manic obsession to cut, sack and sell when they were in government. It also is a reminder that the Leader of the Opposition was the right-hand assistant of Campbell Newman when he was the premier. That includes running projects into the ground.

For example, when we came to office the Coordinator-General's EIS assessment times sat at 3.1 years under Campbell Newman and the LNP. The Palaszczuk Labor government has reduced that by 50 per cent, down to 1.5 years. The Coopers Gap Wind Farm and the Kidston Pumped Storage Hydro Project were completed in only seven months and six months respectively.

Mr Millar interjected.

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

Mr DICK: In fact, the Coordinator-General has made 485 statutory decisions since we were elected. That is 83 per cent higher than the sluggish old average of 59 a year under Campbell Newman. Talk about a do-nothing government frozen at the wheel: Campbell Newman and the LNP!

I do not need to tell the LNP or the people of Townsville about the obsession of the LNP on capital works when it was in government. It had one project: 1 William Street—a billion dollar project built for themselves in Brisbane. What did the LNP do in Townsville? Eighty Ergon staff were sacked, the 120-year-old Stuart State School was closed and almost 400 Queensland Health staff were thrown on the unemployment pile here in Townsville. The only thing the LNP fast-tracks is cutting, sacking and selling. Now we have a fresh commitment from the LNP and from the Leader of the Opposition. They were just no good for Townsville, but now we have a new commitment from them. If they form government, they will still do nothing; they will just do it faster.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next question, I remind members who are under a warning that there will be no interjections from them or they will be immediately removed from the chamber.

North Queensland Stadium, Catering

Ms SIMPSON: My question without notice is to the Premier. Earlier this year it was revealed that the Victorian corporation Spotless was awarded the North Queensland Stadium exclusive catering rights over the Cowboys Leagues Club. Why does the Premier choose to back Victorian jobs over Townsville jobs?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Maroochydore for the question. My understanding is that that company has the 1300SMILES contract and it will come over to the stadium. There has been—

Mr Batt interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am advised that 600 workers have been involved in that contract at 1300SMILES and those local jobs will transfer over to the brand-new stadium, built by local people for the people of Townsville.

I had the great opportunity earlier today to join the Minister for Education in visiting some schools and meeting some school students. One young school student said to me that she is so proud that her father is building the Townsville stadium. The Townsville stadium gives great pride to the members of this community. We are building the Townsville stadium. In fact, it was the very first infrastructure project I committed to. I took the commitment to the election and we were lucky enough to form government. We will keep building the infrastructure that is needed for this great city and this great region—unlike those opposite, who cut, sacked and sold. We believe in people.

Mr Lister interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The greatest asset Queensland has is its people. We saw that clearly when this community came together after the Townsville floods. Never before have I seen a community come together in such a way to help one another. We are making sure we are rebuilding the community. We will continue to do that. I find it absolutely ironic that those opposite would come to Townsville and talk down this great city. They talk down this great city. How disgraceful to talk down this great city!

Mr Last interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are building the schools. We put the MRI in the hospital.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are building the roads. We are building the stadium when the LNP at a federal level had to be dragged kicking and screaming. Do members remember the fight for that? It took JT to stand up at the NRL grand final and say, 'Townsville deserves a stadium.' Our money was on the table. We had to wait for the federal government to come to the table. The stadium will be opened next year and I am going to be very proud to be at that opening.

(Time expired)

Regional Queensland, Tourism Industry

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister update the House on the government's commitment to growing the tourism industry in regional Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. As the member is from Cairns, he knows just how important tourism is to regional economies. As I have already said tonight, tourism has grown significantly in Townsville and is now worth more than \$1 billion in this local community, and that is why I am so proud to be a part of the Palaszczuk government—the first government in Queensland history to have a specific fund for infrastructure projects in the tourism industry worth \$180 million. Tonight I have already spoken about the \$3.5 million investment we are making in the Townsville marine precinct—

Mr Stewart: Hear, hear!

Ms JONES: Thank you; I take that interjection. We were there today inspecting it. It is going to be a great transformational project for this city. In addition to that, we have also kicked in \$2 million towards the underwater art sculptures—the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere being built right here in Townsville. We are doing this because we listened to the local industry and we listened to locals, and we acted. I am very pleased to say that Jason deCaires Taylor, who is a world renowned artist, has been commissioned to do these underwater sculptures.

Unlike those opposite, we will not cut and run on Townsville like the member for Broadwater, who we know got dragged back here to Townsville tonight. In actual fact, the people in the gallery should not take our word for it. The member for Currumbin, who is from the Gold Coast, went on the radio and said that she wanted to be on the Gold Coast but she got dragged up to Townsville. I can assure everyone who is in the parliament here tonight that we are delighted to be in Townsville. The Premier loves Townsville. The member for Townsville loves Townsville. The member for Mundingburra loves Townsville. The member for Thuringowa—well, he would never want to leave Townsville! He gets dragged down to parliament in Brisbane!

Mrs Frecklington: Why do you hate Brisbane?

Ms JONES: I do not—born and bred. There is only one side of politics that will stand up for Townsville, and I take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition knows that she was a part of the Newman government that cut 670 jobs from Townsville. This included 398 health workers, with 156 nurses and midwives from Townsville. They tried to sell off the Townsville

port. They closed Stuart State School. They sold off TAFE land in Townsville. They tried to sell the port. They closed down the biosecurity lab in Townsville and axed plans for \$18 million. There is only one side that will stand up for Townsville, and that is the Palaszczuk government, and it will continue to invest.

North Queensland, Statehood

Mr COSTIGAN: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. With parliament finally returning to Townsville after a 17-year hiatus and given the current community sentiment, will the Premier commit to a referendum on statehood for North Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Whitsunday for the question. Let me say from the outset: I love Townsville and I love Queensland, and under my watch I am never going to see a divided Queensland. I love this state. I love our State of Origin team. We will always commit to making sure that we deliver for Queenslanders no matter where they live. I love this state. I love the people and I know that every single member of my team is absolutely passionate about the communities that they represent.

It gives me great pride to bring the government and the parliament to Townsville and those on this side of the House loved coming to Townsville—unlike those opposite. No wonder they did not want to come to Townsville. With their track record, I would not want to come here either if I was them! Members of the former Newman cabinet are still here and if there is one thing I can say it is this: you cannot trust the LNP. I know that the community members of Townsville—the families of Townsville—will never forget.

Mr Mander: We'll find out.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They will never forget what the former minister for housing did to QBuild. He axed QBuild. They will never forget the damage that was done to this community and right across Queensland. We believe that there is great opportunity in this region. There is great optimism in this city. During this week we have had the great opportunity to meet with members of the business community. We have met members of the school community. We have been out to look at the pipes that we are putting in place to ensure that we have water security for this region. We visited the Townsville stadium and we are talking to locals about things that matter to them at a local level.

Mr COSTIGAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I have given the Premier plenty of time to answer the question, but I rise on relevance. I asked about a referendum—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right, I need to hear the point of order. Sorry; please continue.

Mr COSTIGAN: I rise on relevance. The Premier has 36 seconds left and I asked about a referendum relating to statehood for North Queensland. I ask the Premier to answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Whitsunday. Premier, regarding the question asked, do you have anything further to add?

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Absolutely, Mr Speaker, and I will take the Leader of the Opposition's interjection. It was a dixer. It was an absolute dixer today in that I love this state. The people of Queensland love this state and we work best when we all work together. When we are united, we can do anything and I firmly believe that Queensland's best days are ahead of us. We have so much potential. There is so much optimism. It is the people of this state working together that continue to work in the best interests of their families, and we will continue to deliver for them.

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nicklin, I asked for no interjections by members under warnings. You can leave the chamber for the remainder of the evening under standing order 253A.

Whereupon the honourable member for Nicklin withdrew from the chamber at 6.57 pm.

Community Safety

Ms SCANLON: My question is to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. Will the minister advise the House of actions being taken to boost community safety across Queensland and here in Townsville? Is he aware of any threats to the delivery of these community safety initiatives?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for the question. There are two things for sure. The first is that, when it comes to police, our government—a Labor government—backs our police. We back them with more resources and we back them with more recruits. The second thing for sure is that those opposite talk the big game, but their words are hollow. It is a great opportunity that almost seven years to the day I am able to reflect on an article in the *Townsville Bulletin*. This is what the LNP does to our police. The headline is ‘Cops to hit the beat without vital kit’. The article states—

Townsville’s top cops have been told to tighten their belt, with no guarantee they will have equipment for new recruits before they hit the beat.

It goes on to say that this vital equipment such as cars for our police has not been funded. When the LNP was in power, the budget for our police and the equipment that they need to do their job fell by \$24 million in 2012. There is one thing for sure: when it comes to those opposite, they do not back our police and they certainly do not resource our police with the equipment that they need. They like to talk the big game, but they are of course hollow words. Let us look at our record right here in Townsville.

Since we have been elected, there are 50 extra police on the beat and 53 more to come. We are also providing resourcing for our emergency services and police, with new helicopters here in Townsville. For the benefit of the member for Toowoomba North—I know that counting is very difficult for him, but he does not even have to take off his shoes for this—I point out that it is not one helicopter here; it is two. These helicopters are not used just for aeromedical or emergency service work; they are used by our police. What are our police saying about these helicopters? The police tell us that whenever the helicopters are needed, they are available to police. What else do the police tell us? The assistant commissioner and the chief superintendent both say that they do not need a dedicated police helicopter, because there are already two here in Townsville.


We listen to the police. We take their advice. What does the Queensland Police Union northern region representative, Peter Thomas, say? He says categorically that he does not see the need for a dedicated police helicopter here in Townsville. That is what the police on the ground are saying. Why? Because there are already two here in Townsville. We have funded two helicopters that are available 24/7. They get used by our police whenever they need them.

There is one thing for sure about our government: we back our police, we resource them with the resources they need, we add more police and we are delivering here in Townsville.

(Time expired)

ADJOURNMENT

Southport Electorate, Police Resources

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (7.01 pm): We just heard the Minister for Police saying how the government backs our police. Just last week in the electorate of Southport a special forum was held, because the local business community was very concerned about antisocial behaviour and visible homelessness within Southport, Surfers Paradise and other parts of the Gold Coast from Broadbeach to Coolangatta and even in parts of Nerang, in the electorate of Gaven.

At that forum we heard from some of the local police who said that they are the only people working after 6 pm. Under this current Labor government, we have seen a blowout in the Public Service—an extra 30,000 public servants employed over the past couple of years—but fewer police in Southport; fewer police on the Gold Coast. What happens? One of the people who was at that forum said that, come four o’clock, all the public servants go home and the only people still dealing with issues of antisocial behaviour, homelessness and lawlessness on the streets of Southport and the Gold Coast are our frontline police who are under-resourced and under-appreciated. I find it absolutely appalling that just two minutes ago the minister could stand there and say, ‘We back our police.’ The government is not backing the police. On the Gold Coast we do not have the resources on the ground—on the streets—that we require. We have lots of promises, lots of words, lots of rhetoric, but we do not have more police.

What have we seen in the past six months? In Southport, police have been taken off the job to deal with prisoner transfers backwards and forwards between Brisbane and the Gold Coast because of the juvenile watch house crisis. We are not seeing more police; we are seeing police resources diverted. We heard the member for Gaven ask that wonderful question—‘Minister, tell us about community safety.’ We heard the minister give us this great promise and this great commitment about more police resources, but the fact is that members of the Police Service, members of those many


great community service organisations on the Gold Coast that are trying to deal with antisocial behaviour, trying to deal with homelessness, are telling the community that the Labor government is failing Gold Coast in the delivery of services.

There are so many plans. Earlier, we heard that there is going to be a review of insurance in North Queensland—another plan, another review. That is what Labor governments deliver. We are not seeing real services on the ground.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Before I call the member for Thuringowa, I remind members that there are several members who have received warnings already from Mr Speaker. They are the members for Kawana, Mudgeeraba, Glass House, Surfers Paradise, Toowoomba South, Broadwater, Burleigh, Thuringowa, Gregory, Bundaberg, Southern Downs and Burdekin. I remind members that these warnings will stay right through until we conclude this evening.

Townsville, Police Resources; LearnIt

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.05 pm): It is interesting to follow on from the previous speaker, who talked about police. We delivered 103 police for Townsville. In 2017, the LNP had zero police for Townsville. The LNP is misleading the people of Townsville with its rubbish alternative policies.

I rise to inform members of a fantastic local program that aims to provide young people with help to gain a driver's licence, which assists them in a number of ways, such as helping them to gain employment. The program is called LearnIt and it is directly related to the Drivelt program, which everyone knows that I am pretty passionate about.

Today at lunchtime Mark Bailey, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, along with the team from LearnIt, made an exciting announcement. We have a couple of people from LearnIt in the audience. I know that local media will be excited about this announcement, because LearnIt's funding was due to expire in December this year. Today, we announced \$300,000 in ongoing funding to keep the LearnIt program going. I thank very much the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for responding to my advocacy for this program.


I acknowledge in the public gallery Mr Murray Holm, who delivers the LearnIt program, and who has facilitated this program for the past 18 months. He is not alone. I also acknowledge Pat Driscoll from Drivelt, who is in the audience. I thank him very much for his advocacy in supporting young people to get employment through this program. Murray has been running this program for a very long time. It is great work and I commend them for it.

LearnIt is a youth mentoring program that is auspiced by Queensland Youth Services. I also acknowledge the work of the 73 volunteers who give up their time to mentor young learner drivers. Without their contribution, the 55 young people who were engaged in the program over the past 18 months would not have gained their licence.

I also thank Pickerings Auto Group, which donated two vehicles that are on display here today, and the many sponsors, such as the Graduate School of Motoring, Caltex and many others. The learner driver mentor program is designed to assist pre-learner and learner drivers who do not have access to a suitable vehicle or supervisor to obtain their learner's permit and the required hours to gain their provisional licence. Overall, amazingly, \$80,000 has been donated in kind with 10 local businesses involved.

So far, LearnIt has provided 2,500 mentor hours and 800-plus on-road lessons. Fifty-five clients have been engaged, 12 exemptions have been granted, 25 practical tests have been passed and there have been nine employment outcomes. I know that the team from LearnIt are working with many other people in Townsville, such as those in the multicultural community, to try to help them gain their licences as well. I want to give a great big thankyou to the work that the team has put together in Townsville. They should be commended for their work.

Rural Doctors, Recruitment

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.08 pm): We have a health crisis in the bush and I do not say that lightly. This health crisis revolves around attracting and retaining doctors. What would people say if I said that for four years the Mackay health service had been advertising unsuccessfully for a second doctor in Collinsville, or that Clermont was being serviced by locums because those places cannot attract a single permanent applicant? In short, the current system for recruiting medical practitioners and retaining them in rural communities is broken.

If a person lives in a community such as Collinsville, Dysart or Clermont, they do not have the luxury of shopping around for a doctor. There is one doctor, and that is it. If for any reason that doctor is tied up, if they are unable to fit that person in because of their workload, or they are called away, the only option that person has is to drive to the nearest town and source another doctor. In the case of Clermont, that is a 200-kilometre round trip.


Last month, an elderly resident of Clermont rang me to advise that she needed to drive to Emerald to see a doctor because she could not get in to see her local doctor in Clermont. This elderly lady has not driven out of Clermont for some 15 years and here she was undertaking a 200-kilometre round trip, running the gauntlet of road trains, kangaroos and highway traffic. It is not good enough. I certainly hope that it is not going to take a death before this government acts on this issue.

I have spoken to the Queensland Health minister. I have written to the federal health minister as well. There is no question in my mind that this is an issue that will require a commitment from all levels of government, medical schools and colleges. There is no easy fix to this problem. However, I would like to think that we live in a First World country, not a Third World country where access to basic medical services should be the norm, not the exception.

I am passionate about attracting people back to the bush, but that task is made so much harder if our rural communities are unable to provide basic services such as health and education. This is a serious problem that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency and I will continue to fight to have this system overhauled so that country people have access to the same basic health services as their city cousins.

When one sees the growth in these communities, in particular in our mining towns, there is a need to have medical practitioners based in those communities, not only to service the local community but also to be there in case of an emergency. We have had a number of fatalities in the resource sector in recent months which highlights the importance of having medical practitioners available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is a serious issue and I am not about to give up the fight to have this matter addressed.

Operation Energise; Port of Townsville

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.11 pm): This week we saw the kick-off of Energy Queensland's annual electricity safety campaign, this year themed Safety Heroes. Thousands of Queensland primary school children will get to know Look Up Lucy and Electro Ethan. These safety super heroes will teach practical lessons about the safe use of appliances and fallen powerlines to name just a few. What a great initiative.

I want to talk about some other electrical super heroes and that is the team from Operation Energise, an ETU initiative that mobilises every time Queensland experiences natural disasters, just like we saw earlier this year here in Townsville with the floods. Last week at Parliament House my good friends, the member for Kurwongbah, Shane King, and Minister for Housing and Public Works, Mick de Brenni, and I had the opportunity to come together with the Operation Energise team to offer them our most heartfelt thanks for their work in Townsville during the floods—as I know you would, Mr Speaker, along with the members for Thuringowa and Mundingburra.

This team of volunteer electricians and Electrogroupp apprentices worked tirelessly to reconnect power to some of the most vulnerable in our community, as well as to a number of community and sports facilities. In addition to the support of the ETU, Energy Super provided the trailer. Powerlink, Energex and Ergon were also fantastic supporters of the project. This year Mates in Construction also joined the team in Townsville to assist with the mental health wellness, not only of the Energise team but for Townsvillians alike. That was a fantastic effort. A big shout out to Keith 'Macca' McKenzie for all the work he does in bringing Operation Energise to life when Queenslanders need it most.


Out in the Redlands some call me Captain Kim because they know how much I love our waterways and particularly warring on wrecks. It was wonderful earlier this week to meet a whole range of boating and maritime industry stakeholders at the Port of Townsville to give an update on the War on Wrecks task force, particularly the good work with wreck removals here in Townsville. I joined Minister Bailey who I know also loves warring on wrecks.

While out at the port I also had the opportunity to visit Kevin and his team at Pacific Marine Group. They are just one of the local Townsville salvage contractors benefiting from the focus of our government on wrecks and our waterways. They employ over 150 staff and are working on such a variety of marine projects, from our War on Wrecks salvaging through to our government's investment

in the Museum of Underwater Art across the coast of North Queensland, as we heard earlier from the minister. This is an exciting project for tourism, with four locations—the Strand, Palm Island, the John Brewer Reef and just across the waters at Magnetic Island.

When it comes to investment in this region and right across Queensland—whether it be the Townsville port and our shipping and maritime industries or in tourism through projects like the museum and the Townsville stadium—we all know that it is only a Palaszczuk Labor government that will invest in North Queensland and Queensland more broadly to grow jobs and ensure a prosperous future for Townsvillians and all Queenslanders.

Radford, Mr F; Legacy Week


 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (7.14 pm): I rise tonight to recognise the contribution of a man who has dedicated his life to serving Australia and the community. That man is Frank Radford, who was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in this year's Queens Birthday Honours. Frank is a Townsville local and for the last three months he has been laid up in hospital after suffering a stroke. Although he understandably cannot be here tonight, I would like to take the opportunity of this regional sitting of parliament in Townsville to add my words of recognition to a man who embodies the best of all of us.

Frank is a proud Australian who during his life of service served in the Australian Army for more than 30 years, enlisting as a private soldier and retiring as a major. Among other postings, Frank served as a section commander in Charlie Company 2 RAR during the Vietnam War. After discharging from the Army Frank continued serving the military family by working as a volunteer pension and welfare advocate with the Townsville RSL. Veterans' advocates are volunteers who assist veterans and their families navigate the complex, time-consuming and often stressful process of putting in a Department of Veterans' Affairs claims process. For more than 11 years Frank has helped veterans young and old as they deal with the physical and mental effects of their military service. While based out of Townsville, Frank's work as a veterans' advocate has taken him west to Longreach, north to Cardwell and south to Airlie Beach.

I was privileged to get to know Frank and his loving wife Helen more than 25 years ago when my family lived across the road from them in Singleton, New South Wales. On behalf of the veterans' community I would like to recognise Frank for his lifelong commitment to others. It is through the efforts of people like Frank, with the lifelong support of his wife Helen, that the fabric of our community is made stronger.

Like Frank Radford's lifetime of service to the community, Legacy is an organisation dedicated to supporting the veterans' community. As I have spoken about previously, Legacy focuses on supporting the families of those who have served our nation. In my opinion, there is no more worthy cause than supporting the widows and children who are left behind. This week is Legacy Week, Legacy's annual national appeal to raise awareness and funds to support their work. I encourage members as they pass through the airport or their local shopping centre to stop and have a chat to the Legacy volunteers who are there selling badges and if you are in a position to, please lend your financial support so they can continue their important work.

Regional Queensland, Support

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (7.16 pm): Last week I had the pleasure of visiting South-West Queensland. Like west of Townsville they are in drought. It was an opportunity to see firsthand how, despite the terrible drought, local communities are striving to innovate and create jobs. Flying into Thargomindah, it was wonderful to see the town's new airport terminal building that was built with help from the Palaszczuk government's Building our Regions program. The Building our Regions program has also delivered fantastic infrastructure projects in Quilpie like the Bulloo Park redevelopment and stage 2 of the Eromanga Natural History Museum.

Another way this government is helping communities in our regions is through the Regional Economic Development grant scheme. To date 15 businesses have been awarded grants of up to \$250,000 to help fund their expansion and create jobs in their region. We are creating over 600 new jobs for regional Queensland. Thirteen of those jobs will be created in the Balonne shire. The Brodie family will be building a new feedlot and spelling yard on their sheep property near St George. All councils expressed an interest in the RED program and are considering applying for round 2 of the scheme which closes this Friday. Councils wished to pass on their thanks to Mr Hinchliffe, but also the Palaszczuk government, for the Works for Queensland grants funding program.


The Palaszczuk government has also committed \$19.74 million towards the construction of cluster fences across the state, including in the Quilpie shire.

Ms Grace: It revolutionised the wool industry.

Mr FURNER: Absolutely. I take that interjection. Mayor Stuart McKenzie complimented the fencing program giving local sheep producers security and confidence that they can go about producing some of the finest meat and wool in the country. I visited Anthony Glasson's sheep property near Thargomindah. With the help of a low-interest loan through QRIDA Anthony has been able to erect cluster fencing on his property and the results are amazing.

Another way we can help our friends in the outback is to pick up the kids, pack up the car and head out there. 2019 is the Year of Outback Tourism. There is so much to see and do in outback Queensland. The scenery is stunning, the people are friendly, and they have fantastic attractions like the Cosmos Centre and Observatory in Charleville. I encourage everyone to head out west and experience outback Queensland. I know they would love to see us out there.


Regenerative Agriculture

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (7.19 pm): I would like to touch on a presentation that I made recently in parliament. Nine crossbench members, as well as members from the LNP and Labor, attended my regenerative agriculture presentation. Today the member for Algeester talked about the reef. It is very important that we look at regenerative agriculture for Queensland, not just for the banana and cane farmers but for everything that we do in agriculture. I thank John and Mike Attard for giving the presentation. I acknowledge Michael Alexander, whose property has six kilometres of frontage along the Fitzroy River. They do an amazing job of looking after the environment. They do some things that are totally out the box, as far as making sure that they retain moisture in their soil. Our regenerative agriculture proposal will help Queensland to deal with drought over a longer period. It will not allow us to go into drought easier, but it will take us out of drought in a shorter space of time. That is a very important thing, because it means that we do not have to build dams right now as we can retain moisture in the paddocks that we have.

One of the biggest growers around the Mackay district is coming online to implement regenerative agriculture in Kalaka, in my electorate. The area has been set up to drain straight onto the Dugong Sanctuary. It is a great step forward to implement this process on what is basically one-year-old virgin ground with a lot of trace elements still in the soil. We will stop runoff to the sanctuary and ensure that we preserve the seagrass for the dugongs at the front of Clairview. That is what we should be doing.

We have been using regenerative agriculture in the islands for years. The Speaker and I have just gone back to have a look at that. It is amazing. I think it is Queensland's answer to saving the reef. I think it is the answer for a lot of Queensland farmers. I believe it is another key factor in preserving the health of Queensland going forward. It is a very exciting thing, which is why I wanted to speak about the issue today.

Algeester Electorate, Sports Clubs

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (7.22 pm): In reflecting on the speech of the member for Mirani, I look forward to his support for the upcoming reef regulations to be debated in the House. The Algeester electorate is home to some outstanding sports clubs that are led by truly incredible volunteers. Last month at Parliament House I hosted sports clubs from my electorate of Algeester at a barbecue with the sports minister, Minister Mick de Brenni, who spoke about the Palaszczuk government's 10-year vision for sport in this state, Activate Queensland. As part of Activate Queensland, we want to see community sporting facilities thrive to create a more active and healthier Queensland that is equitable for all, regardless of age, ability or location. The sports clubs in my electorate of Algeester are pleased to see a government taking the initiative on something that is so important in our community. This evening I want to share with the House a little about some of those sports clubs.


Thanks to the great work of Melissa McCusker and Robert Donald, by the end of their first season last year the Algeester Swimming Club had over 50 registered members and they continue to exceed expectations. The Calamvale Leopards AFL Club have had a successful season with the under-12s and under-17s playing in the grand final this weekend, both against Coorparoo. I wish them all the very best. I congratulate the club leadership of Karen Arnold, Chris Arnold, Robyn Malouf and Darren Tsimpkas and thank them for all their hard work.

I am also fortunate to have two Little Athletics clubs in my electorate, which provide children with an opportunity to be fit and active. Recently I visited the Algester Little Athletics for their sign-on day. It was great to see many local families getting active in our local area. They do an outstanding job, supporting local children and the local community with their activities.

At Parliament House I had the opportunity to catch up with the Browns Plains Little Athletics, led by their amazing team of Charlotte Halvorsen, Chris Williams, Alana Capner, Jacque Mills, Tish Hatchman, Natalie Boon and Kylie Slater. It was also great to hear about the work being done by Michelle Jones and Litara Tolu from Cannons Southside Basketball Club; Edward Dimmack and Catherine Tucker from Logan City Speed Skating; Kelby Miller from Logan City BMX; Keith Fullerton and Peter Marcovick from Ice Skating Queensland; Blair Ivens and Phillipa Perlin from Ice Hockey Queensland; and Jason Mahoney from Southern Stars Ice Hockey Club.

As members can see from that long list, there are some diverse sporting clubs in my electorate. That is just a snapshot of the many sports clubs in my electorate, led by volunteers. The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting them through Activate Queensland.

SandTunes Festival

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.25 pm): The Minister for Tourism, Kate Jones, and the member for Gaven, Meaghan Scanlon, made a big mistake in supporting the SandTunes Festival as a major event on Coolangatta beach for several years after the Gold Coast City Council approved it in September 2017, despite the local councillor opposing it. People power has forced them to move it. At some stage TEQ became involved, but they did not do their homework very well.

Firstly, the location was on a world surfing reserve that Labor declared worthy of protection only a few years ago, with much fanfare. I know; I was there. Secondly, there was no community consultation and countless risk factors were identified by those who know best. What people want to know now is whether council and state government contracts will lapse, or whether they will be resurrected again next year or the year after. We need to make sure that we will not have to go through this turmoil again. That is why I am exploring options to create a charter of community rights to give residents and small businesses a say in future major events.

Rarely does an issue ignite passion amongst residents as has this proposed festival for 35,000. It was a completely wrong fit for our precinct because of the high risk and opposition voiced by many groups and individuals. I thank sincerely the hundreds of residents who mailed or phoned me and my office. I have worked closely as a team with Councillor Gail O'Neil, our local chamber and President Hilary Jacobs, Andy McKinnon the president of the World Surfing Reserve, local surf-lifesaving clubs, police, Bilinga2Border, and Donna and Steve Archdeacon, along with many others. The media, radio, print and TV all played a role in sending a strong message to council, state government and the organisers that opposition to the location of the festival was widespread.


On behalf of the people in the Currumbin electorate, and particularly the Coolangatta precinct, I express our heartfelt thanks to them all. I acknowledge and thank my staff for their long hours and commitment to supporting public sentiment. They went the extra mile for locals, but that is what we do.

By falsely stating that people were trying to ruin this event for the Gold Coast, the member for Gaven insulted around 900 people who live locally and who voice their concerns as they are entitled to do. The push was always to have the festival moved to a more appropriate location. Her comments were untrue and a cheap political play from a member who could learn a thing or two about community consultation. It is more than posting on Facebook.

The member for Gaven said that the Metricon venue is perfect for a large-scale music event; it is a better option. I rest my case. If it is so perfect for the event, why was it not placed there at the start? Our close-knit southern Gold Coast community did not want our reputation ruined by a tragedy or unruly behaviour. I wish the Dainty Corporation every success with its festival at Metricon, which is a much better fit.

(Time expired)

Red Socks Project

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (7.29 pm): I kick off by saying thank you to every member who has travelled from their place on the earth here to Townsville. Joining me today and in the gallery is my lovely wife, Jackie, and my middle daughter, Jordan. Unfortunately, my son, Lachlan, could not make it. He is working tonight. It is lovely that they can come and see their dad and husband at work. We do not often get to see that, whereas a lot of other members have the good fortune of that.

I think I can speak on behalf of everyone in this chamber: families are the most important thing in our lives. That is why it was with great pleasure that I joined with the member for Burdekin, Dale Last, in co-hosting and co-sponsoring our Red Socks program this year. Thanks, mate. I really appreciate it. A lot of members wore their red socks today—thank you, thank you and thank you.

We know that one in seven males over the age of 60 will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Have a look around the room, members. Members in the gallery, I ask you to have a look around. While it may not necessarily be you, it may be your father, your husband, your son, your brother, your best mate. While we had a bit of a chuckle about it, this is serious. Men's health is serious. We need to do something about this.

Brian and Peter, who came in today to take a photo with us, started this project and they have done 6,000 pairs of socks. This is not a fundraiser. This is an awareness program. If you have not had your prostate checked and you are over the age of 50, you need to do something about it. You need to do something about it pretty quickly.

This program has gone out into the bush. The Flinders Shire Council decided that every household in their shire—750—would receive a pair of red socks. That has started the conversation with the doctors. Men are now turning up to their local GP and talking about men's health and mental health. They are getting their body checked. This is a great program. I thank each and every member in this House today who wore your red socks and came up and got your photo with us. Why did you do that? You did it because it is about promoting men's health. I thank you from the bottom of my heart and my father's heart for doing that.

The House adjourned at 7.32 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszcuk, 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