



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

### Tuesday, 19 May 2020

| Subject  | Page       |
|--|------------|
| <b>PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILL</b> .....  | <b>845</b> |
| <b>ASSENT TO BILLS</b> .....   | <b>845</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Letter, dated 23 April 2020, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker<br>advising of assent to bills on 23 April 2020. ....  | 845        |
| <b>SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS</b> .....  | <b>845</b> |
| <b>Sittings of Parliament, Procedures</b> .....  | <b>845</b> |
| <b>Absence of Member</b> .....   | <b>846</b> |
| <b>APPOINTMENTS</b> .....  | <b>846</b> |
| <b>Changes in Ministry and Government Whips</b> .....  | <b>846</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Queensland Government Gazette No. 12, dated 11 May 2020, regarding cabinet<br>restructure and administrative arrangements. ....   | 847        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette No. 14, dated 12 May 2020,<br>regarding change to ministerial portfolio for the Hon. Craig Crawford.....  | 847        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette No. 22, dated 18 May 2020,<br>regarding the appointment of the Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe as the Acting Attorney-General and<br>Minister for Justice..... | 847        |
| <b>Opposition</b> .....  | <b>847</b> |
| <b>PETITIONS</b> .....   | <b>847</b> |
| <b>TABLED PAPERS</b> .....   | <b>849</b> |
| <b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS</b> .....  | <b>852</b> |
| <b>Coronavirus, Economic Response</b> .....  | <b>852</b> |
| <b>Coronavirus, Health Update</b> .....  | <b>855</b> |
| <b>Coronavirus, Economic Response</b> .....  | <b>856</b> |
| <b>COMMITTEES</b> .....  | <b>858</b> |
| <b>Membership</b> .....  | <b>858</b> |

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 19 May 2020

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>MOTION</b> .....   | <b>858</b> |
| Suspension of Sessional Orders.....   | 858        |
| <b>NOTICES OF MOTION</b> .....  | <b>858</b> |
| Disallowance of Statutory Instrument.....   | 858        |
| Disallowance of Statutory Instrument.....   | 859        |
| <b>QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE</b> .....   | <b>859</b> |
| Palaszczuk Labor Government, Budget.....  | 859        |
| Coronavirus, Queensland Border Closure .....  | 860        |
| Coronavirus, Easing of Restrictions .....   | 860        |
| Unemployment, Queensland Border Closure.....  | 861        |
| Road Infrastructure, Accelerated Works Program .....  | 861        |
| State School Principals, Appointment Process.....   | 862        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract, dated 27 November 2019, from the <i>Record of Proceedings</i> , Queensland parliament, page 3829. ....  | 862        |
| Coronavirus, Rockhampton Aged-Care Facility .....   | 862        |
| Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ministerial Responsibility .....   | 863        |
| Economic Recovery Strategy, Aviation Industry.....  | 863        |
| Jobs Support Loans Scheme .....   | 864        |
| Coronavirus, Tourism Industry .....   | 865        |
| Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal Appointment Process.....  | 866        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Media statement, dated 28 November 2019, from the Director-General, Department of Education, titled 'Executive Principal appointment: Inner City South State Secondary College (ICSSC)'. ....                          | 866        |
| Road Infrastructure, Accelerated Works Program .....  | 866        |
| Mining Industry, Royalties .....  | 867        |
| Energy Industry, Projects .....   | 867        |
| Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ministerial Responsibility .....   | 868        |
| Manufacturing Industry, Jobs.....   | 868        |
| Manufacturing Industry, Regional Queensland.....  | 868        |
| Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.....  | 869        |
| Agriculture Industry, Exports; Beef Industry.....   | 870        |
| <b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENT</b> .....  | <b>870</b> |
| Further Answer to Question; Jobs Support Loans .....  | 870        |
| <b>MOTIONS</b> .....  | <b>870</b> |
| Business Program.....   | 870        |
| Resolved in the affirmative.....  | 875        |
| Revocation and Dedication of Forest and Protected Areas.....  | 875        |
| <b>MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL</b> .....  | <b>879</b> |
| Second Reading .....  | 879        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 46, 56th Parliament—Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, government response. .... | 879        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes to Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments. ....   | 883        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments. ....  | 883        |
| <b>JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE) AMENDMENT BILL</b> .....   | <b>883</b> |
| Message from Governor .....   | 883        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 19 May 2020, from His Excellency the Governor recommending the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020.....   | 884        |
| Introduction .....  | 884        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020. ....  | 884        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes.....  | 884        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights. ....  | 884        |
| First Reading .....   | 888        |
| Referral to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.....   | 888        |
| Declared Urgent; Suspension of Sessional Order; Allocation of Time Limit Order .....  | 888        |
| <b>MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL</b> .....  | <b>888</b> |
| Second Reading .....  | 888        |
| <b>MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST</b> .....   | <b>890</b> |
| Coronavirus, Economic Response; Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance .....  | 890        |
| Coronavirus, Economic Response.....   | 891        |
| Queensland Economy.....   | 892        |
| Coronavirus, Economic Response.....   | 893        |
| State Schools Principals, Appointment Process.....  | 894        |
| Coronavirus, Small Business .....   | 895        |
| Coronavirus, North Queensland.....  | 896        |
| Coronavirus, Economic Response.....   | 897        |
| Cross River Rail.....   | 898        |
| Coronavirus, Regional Queensland .....  | 899        |

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 19 May 2020

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BUNDAMBA .....</b>   | <b>900</b> |
| <b>First Speech .....</b>   | <b>900</b> |
| <b>ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF CURRUMBIN .....</b>  | <b>903</b> |
| <b>First Speech .....</b>   | <b>903</b> |
| <b>MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL.....</b>   | <b>907</b> |
| <b>Second Reading .....</b>   | <b>907</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Various articles from ABC News online relating to the mine explosion at Moranbah...  | 921        |
| <b>WORKING WITH CHILDREN LEGISLATION (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL .....</b>  | <b>926</b> |
| <b>Second Reading .....</b>   | <b>926</b> |
| Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a second time .....  | 941        |
| Resolved in the negative.....   | 941        |
| <b>ADJOURNMENT .....</b>  | <b>942</b> |
| <b>Mudgeeraba Electorate .....</b>  | <b>942</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Nonconforming petition regarding saving the Numinbah Forest Park in Numinbah Valley .....  | 942        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of photos depicting recreational areas and border crossing between Queensland and New South Wales .....   | 942        |
| <b>Algeria Electorate, Beaudesert Road Intersection Upgrade.....</b>  | <b>942</b> |
| <b>DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT .....</b>   | <b>943</b> |
| <b>Error in Division .....</b>  | <b>943</b> |
| <b>ADJOURNMENT .....</b>  | <b>943</b> |
| <b>State of Israel .....</b>  | <b>943</b> |
| <b>Townsville, Volunteers .....</b>   | <b>944</b> |
| <b>Oodgeroo Electorate.....</b>   | <b>944</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, undated, from the member for Oodgeroo, Dr Mark Robinson MP, to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, and the Chief Health Officer, Queensland Health, Dr Jeannette Young ..... | 944        |
| <b>Jordan Electorate, Coronavirus .....</b>   | <b>945</b> |
| <b>North Queensland .....</b>   | <b>946</b> |
| <b>Macalister Electorate, Schools.....</b>  | <b>946</b> |
| <b>Condamine Electorate, Secondary Schools.....</b>   | <b>947</b> |
| <b>Cook Electorate, Local Government.....</b>   | <b>947</b> |
| <b>ATTENDANCE.....</b>  | <b>948</b> |

## TUESDAY, 19 MAY 2020

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 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

### PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that on Thursday, 23 April I presented to His Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (COVID-19) Bill for royal assent and that His Excellency was pleased to subscribe his assent in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, I could not present the bill in person. This was the first occasion that a Speaker has presented bills to the Governor via videoconference.

### ASSENT TO BILLS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from His Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letter will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 23 April 2020

A Bill for an Act to protect the health, safety and welfare of persons affected by the COVID-19 emergency, to facilitate the continuance of public administration, judicial process, small business and other activities disrupted by the COVID-19 emergency, including by easing regulatory requirements and establishing an office of small business commissioner, to provide for matters related to residential, retail and prescribed leases affected by the COVID-19 emergency and to support the Queensland rental sector during the COVID-19 emergency period and to amend the Acts Interpretation Act 1954, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the Statutory Instruments Act 1992 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

23 April 2020

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 23 April 2020, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to bills on 23 April 2020 [[723](#)].

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Sittings of Parliament, Procedures

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I start today by thanking all members for their cooperation in ensuring that this House can continue to meet and conduct business. Also, thank you to the member for Greenslopes, who was Acting Speaker last sitting with the unavoidable absence of myself and the Deputy Speaker.

At the last meeting of the Assembly amendments to the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and special procedures for transacting business in exceptional circumstances, COVID-19 pandemic, were passed. Those measures were passed in anticipation that the Assembly may have to use technology to enable all members to participate in proceedings. To this end, arrangements were made for a hybrid sitting to occur in the Undumbi Room, with some members using Zoom to participate. That solution was implemented, tested and documented. Thanks to the efforts of all Queenslanders, a hybrid sitting became unnecessary. However, I wish to thank the Parliamentary Service for their hard work on that contingency.

I wish to remind all members that the special procedures effective from 23 April 2020 still apply, albeit they are not relying on or referencing a technical solution approved by the Speaker. By way of reminder, in practical terms this means that divisions will be conducted in accordance with special procedure 20. In short, we will conduct party votes with the whips, minor parties and other crossbench members casting their votes directly, not via the Clerk. There is no challenge vote. In accordance with special procedure 11, for members to be included in a party vote they must physically attend the chamber at some stage during the day's sitting.

In accordance with special procedures 12 and 13, members seeking to table documents, give notice of amendments, give notices of motions or lodge any questions are to provide the documents to the Clerks at the table via the email [tableoffice@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:tableoffice@parliament.qld.gov.au). In accordance with special procedure 14, the Clerk or their delegate will distribute electronic documents, including tabled papers and amendments to bills and notices of motion, to members by email. Hard copies of bills and amendments can be collected by members from the rear of the chamber if they desire, but hard copies will not be distributed. In accordance with special procedures 27, 29 and 30, members may incorporate speeches in accordance with the procedure set out and by the leave of the House.

A special colour coded seating plan has been approved in accordance with standing order 244(1). The colour shaded seats are the only seats which will be able to be occupied by members and are not allocated to any particular members. It is anticipated that party whips will regulate the rotation of members for speaking opportunities. There is a speaking seat set aside for the crossbench members. It is anticipated that the crossbench will regulate the rotation of members for speaking opportunities. There are also seats set aside for the crossbench when voting in a party vote only. Adherence to the seating plan and capping the number of members in the chamber to no more than 22 at any one time is essential to observe social distancing requirements. You may note that two parliamentary attendants are sitting at the rear of the chamber. These attendants will provide lecterns and will be sterilising seating areas between occupants.

I would ask all members to work with parliamentary staff to reduce the amount of paper circulating. I would ask for any ministerial statements or members' speech notes to be provided to Hansard via the email [hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au). I was informed and it was disappointing that fewer than half of members assisted Hansard by providing statements or speech notes at the last sitting.

Bottled water will be supplied to members in the House, not jugs and glasses, to reduce the risks to staff in handling glassware. I will also allow members to bring their own containers of water into the chamber if they so desire. Lastly, I urge all members to ensure that they abide by social distancing and limits on numbers in the remainder of the precinct, including offices, meeting rooms, the cafe, coffee shop, elevators et cetera. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

### Absence of Member



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received notification and supporting certification that the member for Pumicestone will be absent from the House until 10 July 2020. I note that standing order 263A has been suspended until further notice. However, I consider it prudent to advise the House that I am satisfied with the member's notification and that it complies with standing order 263A.

## APPOINTMENTS

### Changes in Ministry and Government Whips



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): I electronically lay upon the table of the House the *Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette* of 11 and 12 May 2020 which outline recent changes to the ministry. These changes include the appointment of the member for Murrumba as Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services; the member for Woodridge as Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning; the member for

Cooper as Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation; the member for Barron River as Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and the member for Gladstone as Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing. Furthermore, the member for Pine Rivers takes on a new appointment as Assistant Minister for Health. I congratulate all of these members on their appointments. I know that all these members will perform strongly for Queensland as my government works on our COVID-19 recovery and our commitment to provide strong outcomes for this state.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government Gazette No. 12, dated 11 May 2020, regarding cabinet restructure and administrative arrangements [724].

*Tabled paper:* Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette No. 14, dated 12 May 2020, regarding change to ministerial portfolio for the Hon. Craig Crawford [725].

I also electronically table the *Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette* of 18 May 2020 which includes the appointment of the Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, to act and perform those functions and exercise those powers of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice until the Hon. Yvette D'Ath returns to duty. I wish the Attorney-General a speedy recovery after her surgery. I also inform the House that the member for Sandgate will act as Leader of the House for this week's sitting.

*Tabled paper:* Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette No. 22, dated 18 May 2020, regarding the appointment of the Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe as the Acting Attorney-General and Minister for Justice [726].

I also inform the House that, following the appointment of the member for Pine Rivers as assistant minister, the member for Redlands has been appointed Deputy Government Whip.

## Opposition

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.37 am): I notify the House that I have appointed the member for Ninderry, Dan Purdie, as the shadow minister for police and counterterrorism and shadow minister for corrective services.

## PETITIONS

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

### **Ballandean, New England Highway**

**Mr Lister**, from 565 petitioners, requesting the House to cause the speed limit on the New England Highway through the village of Ballandean to be reduced from 80 km/h to 60 km/h [727, 728].

### **Black River, Bruce Highway**

**Mr Dametto**, from 1,443 petitioners, requesting the House to temporarily lower the speed limit for the section of the Bruce Highway at Black River to 80 km/h and fast track an improved design and construction to improve road safety [729, 730].

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

### **Cecil Plains Medical Clinic**

From 469 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate medical service to that of a Doctor or at least a Nurse Practitioner at the Cecil Plains Medical Clinic [731, 732].

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

### **North Queensland and Far Western Queensland, Quarantine**

**Mr Katter** from 6,108 petitioners, requesting the House to ask the Government to quarantine the areas generally known as North Queensland and Far Western Queensland, with the exception of essential services only [733].

### **Picnic Creek State School, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 306 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Picnic Creek State School [734].

### **Norfolk Village State School, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 177 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Norfolk Village State School [735].

### **Pimpama State Secondary College, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 428 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Pimpama State Secondary College [736].

#### **Pimpama State Primary College, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 185 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Pimpama State Primary College [\[737\]](#).

#### **Coomera Springs State School, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 183 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Coomera Springs State School [\[738\]](#).

#### **Ormeau State School, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 152 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Ormeau State School [\[739\]](#).

#### **Ormeau Woods State High School, Air Conditioning**

**Mr Crandon**, from 80 petitioners, requesting the House to complete the air conditioning in the remaining teaching areas of the Ormeau Woods State High School [\[740\]](#).

#### **Youth Justice**

**Mr Nicholls**, from 325 petitioners, requesting the House to increase resources for police in Hendra and to review the Youth Justice Act 1992 to provide stricter bail laws for youth offenders and appropriate deterrence for offenders [\[741\]](#).

#### **Criminal Offenders, Penalties**

**Mr Dametto**, from 7,732 petitioners, requesting the House to make significant legislative changes to introduce tougher penalties for offenders, including juveniles [\[742\]](#).

#### **Eastern Transitway**

**Dr Robinson**, from 167 petitioners, requesting the House to prioritise delivery of the overdue Eastern Transitway project [\[743\]](#).

#### **North Queensland Stadium, Matt Bowen Statue**

**Mr Katter**, from 926 petitioners, requesting the House to commission and install a statue of Matt Bowen at the new North Queensland Stadium [\[744\]](#).

#### **Redland City Local Government Area**

**Ms Richards**, from 303 petitioners, requesting the House to review and amend the eligibility for State Government regional funding to include all islands within the Redland City Local Government Area [\[745\]](#).

#### **Vehicle Registration, Licensed Motor Dealers**

**Mr Pegg**, from 224 petitioners, requesting the House to make available the option for licenced motor dealers in Queensland to pay/renew vehicle registration for three months [\[746\]](#).

#### **Firearms, Trading**

**Mr Andrew** from 3,692 petitioners, requesting the House to rescind the health directive and reinstate regular trading to firearms dealers and armourers and allow licensed firearms owners' full access to buy and sell [\[747\]](#).

#### **Firearms, Trading**

**Mr Andrew**, from 6,719 petitioners, requesting the House to rescind the Health Directive relating to licensed armourers and licensed dealers and amend dealer trading to enable sale to a person able to produce a Queensland firearms licence bearing the condition codes AC, RE, OC and a letter from a rural land owner requesting they conduct feral pest destruction on that land [\[748\]](#).

#### **State Forests, Management**

**Mr Dametto**, from 6,080 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that all planned changes of Queensland state forests into national parks be cancelled and that management of state forests be shifted to a new agency [\[749\]](#).

#### **Townsville, At-Risk Youth**

**Mr Dametto**, from 470 petitioners, requesting the House to work with Integrated Family and Youth Services to find a more appropriate location to house at-risk youth away from the northern beaches and closer to support services in Townsville [\[750\]](#).

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

#### **Pallara, Former State School Site**

From 237 petitioners, requesting the House to transfer the former Pallara State School site and all existing infrastructure at 282 Ritchie Road Pallara in trust to the Brisbane City Council at no cost for the purpose of a Multicultural Community Hub [\[751\]](#).

#### **South-East Queensland, Quarantine**

From 558 petitioners, requesting the House to quarantine South-East Queensland for the purposes of easing restrictions on businesses and social interactions in lower risk regions [\[752\]](#).

### Transport and Main Roads Infrastructure, Lighting

From 98 petitioners, requesting the House to cause the discontinuation of LED technology for all Transport and Main Roads' requirements and to use incandescent or halogen technology for traffic signals and flashing school signs; warm white sodium bulbs for all street lighting; and another form of technology for variable speed signs [\[753\]](#).

### Local Government Association of Queensland

From 495 petitioners, requesting the House to withdraw all public funding from the Local Government Association Queensland which is engaged in directly interfering in local governments [\[754\]](#).

### Russell Island, Department of Education Land

From 343 petitioners, requesting the House to reverse the decision identifying the parcel of land at 17 Kings Road, Russell Island as being surplus to the Department of Education's present and/or future needs and to prohibit the use of this land for any purpose other than the formal education of secondary school aged students [\[755\]](#).

### Macleay Island, Russell Island and Pimpama Island, Emergency Vehicle Barge Ramps

From 157 petitioners, requesting the House to support the development of emergency vehicular barge ramps at Macleay, Russell and Pimpama Islands [\[756\]](#).

### Dutton Park, Gladstone Road and TJ Doyle Memorial Drive Intersection

From 619 petitioners, requesting the House to redesign the intersection of Gladstone Road and TJ Doyle Memorial Drive, Dutton Park to make the site safe for people walking and cycling [\[757\]](#).

### Sittings of Parliament

From 846 petitioners, requesting the House to resume sittings of not less than Parliament's customary annual sittings patterns and that virtual sittings be broadcast or live-streamed [\[758\]](#).

### Birds, Feeding

From 416 petitioners, requesting the House to conduct a review into the impacts of irresponsible feeding of birds on humans, birds and the environment and to amend the Biosecurity Act 2014 to include responsible bird feeding [\[759\]](#).

### Firearms, Classification

From 1,030 petitioners, requesting the House to reconsider reclassifying firearm suppressors to Category A [\[760\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

24 April 2020—

[645](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 198, 56th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Registrar on 16 October 2019 relating to an alleged failure to register an interest in the Register of Members' Interests

[646](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 199, 56th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Registrar on 24 February 2020 relating to an alleged failure to maintain an accurate statement of interests in the Register of Members' Interests

29 April 2020—

[647](#) Coroners Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

5 May 2020—

[648](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 32, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 5 February 2020 and 17 March 2020

[649](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report 14: 2019-20—Evaluating major infrastructure projects

6 May 2020—

[650](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 37, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 February and 17 March 2020

[651](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 28, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 27 November 2019 and 4 February 2020

[652](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 29, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 5 February 2020 and 17 March 2020

[653](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 37, 56th Parliament—Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019, interim government response

7 May 2020—

[654](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 29, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 5 February 2020 and 17 March 2020: Erratum

8 May 2020—

[655](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (3311-20) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 3,397 petitioners, requesting the House to postpone the election by a minimum of four months, or until such a time that coronavirus no longer poses a threat to human lives in Queensland

[656](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (3232-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 590 petitioners, requesting the House to implement measures to reduce the risk of corrupt conduct in the Local Government Association of Queensland by separating the membership side from the commercial interests of the LGAQ

14 May 2020—

[657](#) Queensland Racing Integrity Commission—Annual Report 2018-19: Erratum

18 May 2020—

[658](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 50, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 27 November 2019 and 4 February 2020

[659](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 51, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 5 February 2020 and 17 March 2020

[660](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 38, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 5 February 2020 and 17 March 2020

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

#### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994:

[661](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 55

[662](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 55, explanatory notes

[663](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 55, human rights certificate

Water Act 2000:

[664](#) Water Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2020, No. 56

[665](#) Water Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2020, No. 56, explanatory notes

[666](#) Water Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2020, No. 56, human rights certificate

COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008:

[667](#) Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 57

[668](#) Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 57, explanatory notes

[669](#) Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 57, human rights certificate

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

[670](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 58

[671](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 58, explanatory notes

[672](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 58, human rights certificate

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

[673](#) Medicines and Poisons (Monitored Medicines Database Testing) Regulation 2020, No. 59

[674](#) Medicines and Poisons (Monitored Medicines Database Testing) Regulation 2020, No. 59, explanatory notes

[675](#) Medicines and Poisons (Monitored Medicines Database Testing) Regulation 2020, No. 59, human rights certificate

Biosecurity Act 2014:

[676](#) Biosecurity (Fire Ant Controls) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 60

[677](#) Biosecurity (Fire Ant Controls) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 60, explanatory notes

[678](#) Biosecurity (Fire Ant Controls) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 60, human rights certificate

Disaster Management Act 2003:

[679](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 2) 2020, No. 61

[680](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 2) 2020, No. 61, explanatory notes

[681](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 2) 2020, No. 61, human rights certificate

## Legal Profession Act 2007:

- [682](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice 2020, No. 62
- [683](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice 2020, No. 62, explanatory notes
- [684](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice 2020, No. 62, human rights certificate

## Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990:

- [685](#) Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment of Deed Regulation 2020, No. 63
- [686](#) Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment of Deed Regulation 2020, No. 63, explanatory notes
- [687](#) Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment of Deed Regulation 2020, No. 63, human rights certificate

## Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

- [688](#) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 64
- [689](#) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 64, explanatory notes
- [690](#) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 64, human rights certificate

## Land Act 1994:

- [691](#) Land (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Waiver and Deferral of Rents and Instalments) Regulation 2020, No. 65
- [692](#) Land (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Waiver and Deferral of Rents and Instalments) Regulation 2020, No. 65, explanatory notes
- [693](#) Land (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Waiver and Deferral of Rents and Instalments) Regulation 2020, No. 65, human rights certificate

## Fisheries Act 1994:

- [694](#) Fisheries Quota (Spanner Crab Fishery) Amendment Declaration 2020, No. 66
- [695](#) Fisheries Quota (Spanner Crab Fishery) Amendment Declaration 2020, No. 66, explanatory notes
- [696](#) Fisheries Quota (Spanner Crab Fishery) Amendment Declaration 2020, No. 66, human rights certificate

## Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

- [697](#) Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 67
- [698](#) Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 67, explanatory notes
- [699](#) Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 67, human rights certificate

## Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020:

- [700](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 68
- [701](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 68, explanatory notes
- [702](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 68, human rights certificate

## Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, Explosives Act 1999, Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004:

- [703](#) Natural Resources, Mines and Energy Legislation (Safety and Health) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 69
- [704](#) Natural Resources, Mines and Energy Legislation (Safety and Health) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 69, explanatory notes
- [705](#) Natural Resources, Mines and Energy Legislation (Safety and Health) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 69, human rights certificate

## COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, Explosives Act 1999, Mineral Resources Act 1989, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004:

- [706](#) Explosives Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 70
- [707](#) Explosives Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 70, explanatory notes
- [708](#) Explosives Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 70, human rights certificate

## Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992, Recreation Areas Management Act 2006:

- [709](#) Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (COVID-19: Fee Waiver) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 71
- [710](#) Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (COVID-19: Fee Waiver) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 71, explanatory notes
- [711](#) Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (COVID-19: Fee Waiver) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 71, human rights certificate

COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, Powers of Attorney Act 1998, Succession Act 1981:

- [712](#) Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Wills and Enduring Documents) Regulation 2020, No. 72  
[713](#) Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Wills and Enduring Documents) Regulation 2020, No. 72, explanatory notes  
[714](#) Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Wills and Enduring Documents) Regulation 2020, No. 72, human rights certificate

Disaster Management Act 2003:

- [715](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 73  
[716](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 73, explanatory notes  
[717](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 73, human rights certificate

#### SPEAKER'S PAPERS

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

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. Pitt)—

- [718](#) Oath of Allegiance and of Office: Member for Bundamba (Mr McCallum)  
[719](#) Oath of Allegiance and of Office: Member for Currumbin (Mrs Gerber)

#### MEMBERS' PAPERS

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Maiwar (Mr Berkman)—

- [720](#) COVID-19 Emergency Response Bill 2020, amendments to be moved during consideration in detail by Mr Michael Berkman MP  
[721](#) Letter, dated 14 May 2020, from the member for Maiwar, Mr Michael Berkman MP, enclosing a report by Redleaf Environmental titled 'Assessing development risks to the ecological values of the free flowing rivers of Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre Basin (Qld): An independent scientific expert panel report prepared for the Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Government'

Member for Southern Downs (Mr Lister)—

- [722](#) Nonconforming petition regarding the Cecil Plains Medical Clinic

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 am): When history records the story of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has thrust our world into a peculiar, unprecedented unknown, it will tell a story of heartbreak and fear and of a Queensland confronted with a startling new normal. It will tell a story of ordinary Queenslanders faced with extraordinary circumstances—a time when families were forced from workplaces through no fault of their own, a time when business across the board faced the toughest decisions of a generation, a time when huge sacrifices were forced to be made, a time when the ordinary things we take for granted and do each and every day were suddenly no longer acceptable or allowed.

The story of COVID-19 will also speak of resilience, of preparedness and of steadfast, decisive action which saved lives at the same time we were forced to sacrifice livelihoods, of staring down an invisible enemy and in doing so making tough, necessary but heartbreaking, difficult decisions to ensure Queensland had a chance of winning the battle against that enemy. As we move forward to overlay our economic recovery atop our considerable success in our health response, it will show that Queensland took measured, safe and responsible steps towards economic recovery.

Queensland, and all Queenslanders, have done a mighty job in beating what just 11 weeks ago appeared to be insurmountable odds. History will also tell that story. When last we sat on 22 April, 1,024 Queensland cases of COVID-19 had been confirmed in three months since the first case. Today, almost one month later, the Queensland case total is 1,057, with zero cases recorded overnight. Just a month ago, 280 cases of COVID-19 were still active. Today that number of active cases is fewer than 20; it is actually 12. Tragically six Queenslanders have lost their lives. The frightening truth behind those numbers is what was predicted—what might have happened—and that is far more confronting.

Had we not united together in our health response, we could have seen over 30,000 Queenslanders lose their lives. That is the cold, sobering fact. We only need to look at the tragic toll of this insidious virus overseas—in countries with advanced health systems—to understand that in many

ways we have dodged a tsunami. Even though we have avoided a mass impact on our health system, it comes with a much greater economic toll. We could not have saved livelihoods and we could not now get our economy moving if we had not protected ourselves from this virus. Now is the time to unite and recover for Queensland jobs. Now is the time to take sensible, safe, measured, responsible steps towards the mammoth task of our economic recovery.

This is a global disaster the likes of which we have never seen. In its midst, Queenslanders have united, we have worked together and we have flattened the curve to save lives. We have united, just as we do in the face of floods, fires and cyclones, but we must remain vigilant. I am only able to talk about our economic recovery today and our measured, sensible steps forward because we are containing the virus. That takes not only Queenslanders but all levels of government working together. I want to thank the Prime Minister for the bipartisan and collaborative approach he has taken with Queensland through the national cabinet. I want to thank all state leaders for putting politics to one side and getting on with the job of working together to see Australia through this crisis.

My government was the first in Australia to act with a support package to respond to COVID-19. Today I can speak in detail about how we will now move forward with a measured response to economic recovery. To date we have committed over \$6 billion including investment support from the Queensland Investment Corporation. Our response has included \$1.2 billion for the health response to ensure we have the ventilators, ICU capacity and testing in place; \$1 billion in loans for small business including \$500 million from QIC—no other state or territory in Australia has offered this assistance; \$200 off every Queenslanders' utility bill to provide cost-of-living relief; \$950 million in payroll tax refunds, waivers and deferrals for businesses; and \$100 million for a \$500 electricity rebate for SMEs.

We have only been able to provide this support and the further measures I will outline today because we positioned Queensland well ahead of the virus. Before COVID-19 Queensland had an economy growing faster than the nation at 2.5 per cent and we delivered five budget surpluses. Critically, we had worked to diversify Queensland's economy to increase our resilience. That is not just me saying this. Independent ratings agency Moody's said last month that their stable outlook for Queensland 'reflects our expectation that the state's large economy will remain resilient in the face of coronavirus related disruptions'.

Today I can announce and outline Queensland's measured, responsible strategy for the economic recovery—our plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs. This strategy will inform future actions we take to support jobs as we consult directly with businesses and unions through a new Queensland industry recovery forum that will report directly to me as Premier. That has been a large part of the point—to consult with business and industry at the coalface to plot a path forward. This is something my government has done determinedly and decisively.

The announcements I am making today are a direct result of engagement with industry representatives including from small business, manufacturing, tourism, mining, agriculture, hospitality, construction, housing and property. The clear message from our business, industry and union leaders is that the Queensland government's economic support needs to be directed at investment that will grow and diversify Queensland's economy into the future—because that will save jobs now and over time create more jobs in more industries.

That is why we will be guided by principles to: build a more resilient economy in Queensland; invest in productive infrastructure; build our regions based on Queensland's strengths; strengthen the environment for business confidence and investment; and support Queensland communities to be healthier and more united. This economic framework will create jobs by focusing on what we are good at and by making more products right here in Queensland. We have an opportunity now to promote Queensland as one of the safest places in the world for investment with the most secure supply of goods for global markets. With both government and business investing, by working together we can build a bridge to the other side of the most significant global crisis in generations.

A plan to build vital infrastructure right across Queensland is at the heart of this strategy. Last week the Infrastructure Association of Queensland, the Civil Contractors Federation and the Property Council told me they need both a solid infrastructure pipeline and for construction projects to happen as quickly as possible to prevent job losses and provide job opportunities for Queenslanders who have found themselves, through no fault of their own, out of work. That is why today I can confirm that my government will not put the brakes on; we will continue our infrastructure investment with more than \$50 billion over the next four years. The federal government is investing \$100 billion on infrastructure over a decade. In Queensland we are committing to \$50 billion over four years.

To get jobs moving as quickly as possible, today I am announcing a \$400 million accelerated works program to deliver new roads, bridges and pavement sealings right across Queensland. Projects included in the accelerated works program will include: the Mulgrave Road upgrade, Far North Queensland; Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road Valley Drive; and the Gracemere Road upgrade near Rockhampton.

Master Builders has recommended extending our highly successful Household Resilience Program, which provides grants to support people in cyclone-affected areas to improve the resilience of their homes. This is exactly the type of investment that provides long-term benefits while supporting construction jobs over the short term. That is why today I can confirm we are extending this program with another \$11.25 million, and I welcome the federal government's commitment to provide \$10 million in matching funding.

On Friday last week, following several meetings I had with both the LGAQ and local government mayors right across Queensland, the LGAQ submitted their list of projects for funding consideration. I want to thank the LGAQ and councils for the impressive work they have done and for working with my government constructively. To get the work we discussed during those consultations moving, today I am committing initially \$200 million in 2020-21 for a COVID Works for Queensland program that will immediately support jobs over the next year. We will also be rolling out the latest \$70 million round of the Building our Regions program to projects, including: upgrades to Coen Airport facilities; the Queen's Park revitalisation project in Toowoomba; the Western Queensland Livestock Exchange redevelopment with the Longreach Regional Council; the Beaudesert town centre revitalisation; and the Mackay Animal Management Centre expansion. The new funding announced today builds on the \$600 million committed under our Works for Queensland program and the \$500 million commitment under Building our Regions, taking total funding to local governments to more than \$1.3 billion under my government.

The feedback I received from AgForce and the Queensland Farmers' Federation is that they want to see investment in local projects that supports jobs over the short term and unlocks benefits over the long term, such as urban water supply and agritourism infrastructure. That is why we will focus our COVID Works for Queensland fund on productive infrastructure. We are continuing to work on new initiatives to expand wild dog fencing and to lift our agricultural productivity. We have also rapidly progressed approvals for Kalfresh to develop their 16-lot integrated agricultural industrial processing plant. This includes a waste-to-energy facility that will lift their competitiveness internationally.

While we have provided payroll tax relief for businesses, I know there are many smaller and micro businesses that fall below the \$1.3 million payroll tax threshold that are hurting. Many of these businesses are small travel agents and tourism operators who have lost almost all of their income. At a meeting with CCIQ last week I committed that we would act. Today I can confirm that we will deliver another \$100 million to support small businesses, including small business adaptation grants of up to \$10,000 to support these smaller businesses get to the other side of this pandemic.

Ai Group has been doing fantastic work in Queensland to support our manufacturers to create the PPE, hand sanitiser and medical supplies needed to respond to COVID-19. To further support this work we will reprioritise \$50 million of industry attraction funding under Making it for Queensland to directly support Queensland manufacturers to expand this capacity and create local jobs. Already we are seeing international pharmaceutical and medical supply companies realise that too many of their factories are in one location, increasing the risk of supply disruption. Queensland is perfectly positioned to attract new investment in this important area.

Queensland's tourism industry, our state's backbone, has been dealt a crippling blow by this pandemic. Personally, it has been absolutely heartbreaking to witness. It has been heartbreaking to make tough, but unavoidable, decisions; for example, the decision to close our borders and place hard restrictions on the industry knowing they would hurt, while at the same time understanding they were absolutely critical to save lives. I have heard directly from impacted businesses and the Queensland Tourism Industry Council. Tourism contributes over \$12 billion to the Queensland economy and over 200,000 jobs. There is an impact here that I never imagined I would witness in my lifetime. History will tell the story of a vital industry—one of our state's most important industries—being brought to its knees by this unprecedented time. That is why today we are committing \$50 million to support our tourism businesses, our iconic theme parks and animal parks. We want them to get through this and survive and come out at the other end stronger, more resilient and able to continue to make their critical contributions to Queensland. We will also deliver a domestic marketing campaign to align with the easing of restrictions to encourage Queenslanders to holiday in Queensland.

In just a single month we have lost over half of the gains we made in employment since 2015. Unemployment is now the highest it has been since October 2014. We are now committing another \$20 million to assist Queenslanders with access to free online training to help them reskill and ensure safety and hygiene standards are maintained to keep coronavirus contained. This training will also focus on helping young people and women. Unfortunately, and frighteningly, we have not yet seen the worst of the impacts of the global economic turmoil that lies ahead of us, but if we unite and work together to support our fellow Queenslanders and their businesses we can get through this.

Today I am also confirming additional support of \$14.8 million to support the CopperString 2.0 project to financial close. This project will deliver a 1,100-kilometre high-voltage transmission line that will connect the North West Minerals Province with the National Electricity Market. That means 400 jobs in construction and 30 ongoing operational jobs but, more importantly, it means lowering energy costs for the North West Minerals Province, where we have half a trillion dollars in the new economy minerals needed for batteries and renewables. It also has the potential for wider economic benefits. I not only want to see minerals, cobalt, copper, scandium and vanadium mined in Queensland; I also want to see batteries manufactured in Queensland because that means more jobs in more regions.

A new renewable hydrogen industry in Queensland will support job opportunities for future generations. Today we are committing \$20 million towards construction of a Queensland apprenticeship centre in renewable hydrogen in Beenleigh. This will be the first of its kind in Australia and one of the first in the world, providing the practical skills needed for Queensland's emerging renewable hydrogen industry and the ability to export Queensland's wonderful sunshine to the world.

Today's announcements have been all about my government and my ministers listening to Queenslanders and working with them toward a common aim: to unite and act together because united we are stronger. This strategy today sets out the framework for many more initiatives to come that we will develop in direct consultation with all of our key industries and stakeholders across our regions—not just across the traditional economic sectors but also across our growing social services sectors. We know that governments do not have all the answers but we will decisively and determinedly continue to expand on our economic strategy to lift the economy, to save jobs and to create new jobs.

This pandemic has demonstrated just how intimately our health and economy are bound together, but in its midst Queenslanders can take great pride in the effort they have taken to stare down this invisible foe. They can take great pride in the fact that our frontline army—our doctors and nurses, police and emergency services—have worked tirelessly and professionally to help us get through it. It is true that this global pandemic has been at times overwhelming, but here in Queensland we have avoided the worst of what we have seen elsewhere because we looked resolutely and firmly around the corner so we could act to avoid the worst.

However, it is not over—not by a long shot. The health threat continues and we must remain vigilant. The job losses and business closures have been heartbreaking and the pain continues. The recovery will be long and there will be many setbacks, but Queenslanders know tough times. Queenslanders know how to unite and recover and get through these times. As I said, we have all experienced devastating natural disasters. While this unprecedented pandemic has knocked us all around worse than ever before, we will rise to this challenge. We will emerge stronger because that is what we do. We will emerge at the other end united, stronger and more caring. Queenslanders know we are better together, just as they know—and I implore each and every one of us to remember this—there is no better place to be in the world right now than Queensland.

### Coronavirus, Health Update



**Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.01 am): It has been 111 days since the virus then known as the novel coronavirus reached Queensland, 111 days since a state health emergency was declared here, 111 days since our Chief Health Officer was given special powers to help fight the virus. In the last two weeks, we have recorded only one case of COVID-19 in Queensland that was not imported from across the borders or seas. Today we have recorded zero new cases of COVID-19 here in Queensland; in fact, we have had several zero days if you exclude old cases of Queensland residents reported late by other states.

However, many Queenslanders have been directly impacted by the virus: 1,057 Queenslanders have fallen ill with COVID-19; 1,039 cases have recovered and 12 remain active; four Queenslanders remain in hospital because of COVID-19; and just one Queenslanders is in the ICU and ventilated. Sadly, six Queenslanders have lost their lives to this disease. Initial modelling showed Queensland's death

toll due to COVID-19 could have been more than 30 times greater than the number of total cases we have seen. The global death toll is now at 317,566 and the global case number is more than 4.7 million. Queensland's position and hold on the virus comes down to the hard work of each and every Queenslanders. They listened to the health advice, they listened to the calls to stay home and they looked out for each other. It has been 111 restless nights thinking about the impact this pandemic could have on Queensland families, their friends and their communities.

The Palaszczuk government has put the health and lives of Queenslanders as our top priority since day one. It was Queensland's early action that prepared us to respond effectively to the virus. We injected \$1.2 billion into public hospitals to double intensive care and triple emergency department capacity. We ordered more personal protective equipment and brought forward a \$25 million order of medicines, gloves and masks. Since November, we have invested \$70 million in our PPE supplies. We boosted testing capacity, including Panther machines and 35 GeneXpert machines and serology testing, bringing to five the number of testing platforms available.

We employed 1,375 extra staff, including doctors, nurses and paramedics, and ordered 110 new ventilators. We boosted protection of workers by introducing big fines for people who deliberately cough, sneeze or spit on public officials and workers including shop assistants. We announced an additional \$28 million to support non-government organisations delivering critical mental health care and drug and alcohol services across the state. There are 18 mental health support organisations and seven other community services already helping Queenslanders. We even announced we would purchase an additional hospital, the Gladstone Mater Hospital in Central Queensland.

I do believe we would not be where we are today if it were not for our health heroes on the front line who every day go to work to save Queensland lives. When the pandemic hit 111 days ago, our amazing staff put on their gowns and masks, pulled on their gloves and did what they do best: keep Queenslanders healthy and safe. Pathology staff performed 158,641 tests in Queensland, with 2,986 conducted in the last 24-hour reporting period. Fever clinic staff screened 77,611 patients who presented to one of the 17 state-run fever clinics. Allied health and nursing staff have answered 25,772 COVID-19 related calls to 13HEALTH since 21 January. Public health officials issued 60,934 self-quarantine notices.

Those health heroes are responding right now to a potentially catastrophic situation in Rockhampton. In just a matter of days, they have tested hundreds of people—all thankfully negative so far. They are doing an incredible job of contact tracing and protecting the Rockhampton community—just like we saw in Cairns, where their public health unit tested hundreds of staff in response to a pathology worker who confirmed positive. In that hospital, they have now screened over 3,100 staff, and fortunately there are no further cases.

I have spent eight days as the Deputy Premier of Queensland, 889 days as the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and 1,935 days in this government since it was elected. In the days ahead, my focus will be on tackling this virus but also championing the system that has so successfully protected us. It has shown us how vital our world-class, free universal healthcare system is. Our health system and our response to the pandemic is the envy of many countries around the world. Without a strong, public healthcare system, we would be in the same situation as countries like the United States—trying to manage the spread of this disease with a disjointed system where the wealthy are prioritised instead of those who need care the most. Public health care has never, ever been more important, and I will fight any attempts to undermine it. As important as it is to the outbreak, it is also crucial to our recovery. The Palaszczuk government is currently building 173 new or upgraded health facilities across this great state, providing jobs for Queenslanders right now and into the future.

This shutdown has also highlighted our health in other ways, some of them positive. Iso life has seen so many Queenslanders choosing to exercise more and cook at home more. I hope that with the help of Health and Wellbeing Queensland we can help more people around the state start and keep a good habit—help them take better care of their mental and physical wellbeing. If Queenslanders keep up their incredible efforts, we will beat this virus. I want to thank Queenslanders for their efforts and support of our health workers as we have faced one of the biggest challenges of our lifetimes.

### **Coronavirus, Economic Response**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.08 am): COVID-19 has posed an extraordinary challenge to the health of Queenslanders, but as we confront this battle COVID-19 presents a second challenge for our state. The necessary restrictions that have seen us flatten the curve have been felt by workers and businesses and our entire economy.

Before coronavirus hit, Queensland's economy was on an upward trajectory, with economic growth exceeding two per cent and our state budget recording five successive surpluses. Most importantly, the Queensland economy generated 250,000 new jobs in the five years to March 2020, but in a single month of COVID we lost 130,000 of those jobs. That is a grim demonstration of just how fast this terrible virus can hurt our economy and our people.

We have seen downturns in coal prices. Thermal coal is down 34 per cent over the year; hard coking coal is down 46 per cent. We have seen downturns in the oil price with Brent oil down 65 per cent over the year after its futures price recently dipped into negative territory. Japan, one of our biggest trading partners, has tipped into recession.

The need to continually address both the health and economic challenges of COVID-19 has been borne out around the world. Singapore was an early success story at containing the virus, but as it lifted restrictions a second wave of transmission took hold, forcing harsher lockdowns. In Lebanon the government started easing restrictions in a desperate attempt to stave off economic pain. Case numbers rose quickly, prompting a second harsher and more damaging lockdown. While continuing to curb transition we must withstand COVID-19 economic headwinds, both domestic and international. To do so we will have to fight harder and smarter than we have ever fought before.

COVID-19 is delivering bad economic tidings across the planet. As it does, Queensland confronts them as well prepared as any jurisdiction. In addition to our five successive surpluses and strong economic growth, Queensland is in the envious position of having fully funded public superannuation liabilities and lower net debt than New South Wales or Victoria. The strength and resilience we have built into our budget can now be put to work helping to protect jobs and businesses.

The Premier has announced a COVID-19 economic recovery strategy and today I announce that in September this year I will release the government's COVID-19 fiscal and economic review. This publication will adopt the same standards used for the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review, which is trusted by financial markets, ratings agencies and Queenslanders. To ensure full scrutiny and accountability I will also make myself available to appear before the Economics and Governance Committee.

The COVID-19 fiscal and economic review will incorporate all of the measures the Palaszczuk government has announced to date: \$909 million for payroll tax relief by way of refunds, holidays and deferrals; \$1 billion in loans to small and medium enterprises to support jobs; \$1 billion in industry support for larger businesses; \$400 million in land tax deferrals; \$300 million in utility bill relief for households; \$100 million in power relief for businesses; and \$19.7 million for a rental relief scheme to help vulnerable Queenslanders who have lost their jobs to stay in their homes.

Today the Premier has announced more critical support measures, outlining additional programs and projects including \$100 million in grants to assist small businesses as they move to reopen their doors. It also includes the allocation of \$14.9 million to progress the CopperString 2.0 project, which has the potential to revolutionise the energy corridor between Mount Isa and Townsville. It is another example, like our commitment to keep Virgin based in Queensland, of our government working to support economic opportunities in our regions.

The impact of necessary COVID-19 restrictions on both demand and revenue is having a profound effect on the Queensland economy. As recently as December, Queensland Treasury was predicting a budget surplus of \$151 million. As the treasurers of Victoria and Tasmania have already publicly observed and as treasurers and finance ministers around the world know only too well, 2020 will be a deficit year. Like so many other jurisdictions, COVID-19 is placing our state's economy and budget under severe pressure. While we will continue to carefully identify responsible and prudent savings, the last thing Queenslanders can sustain now is essential services being cut or jobs sacrificed. There are some who would advocate cutting, sacking and selling our way down a path of austerity, but our government will always choose jobs.

Our public accounts will be a reckoning of the impact COVID-19 is having on our lives and livelihoods. Consistent with the views of Reserve Bank Governor Philip Lowe and leading economists like Chris Richardson and Saul Eslake, they will reflect our view that when the economy falls to its knees it should be government that holds out its hands to catch the vulnerable.

We have flattened the infection curve of the coronavirus. We must now crush the curve of unemployment which the virus has forced upon us. We saw the impacts of the lockdown recorded in last week's shocking unemployment data. Behind each unemployment statistic lies a Queensland—

someone with obligations and most likely dependent family members who must surely wake up every day and wonder what happened to the world they knew. They are looking to governments for solutions, and our government will not let them down.

There are choices we must make in the future. These will include choices about debt and deficit, and investment and savings. Our government makes one choice now—something that will guide us in the months ahead, something that will guide all of our choices, something that has always guided the labour movement, the Labor Party and Labor governments. Today we choose jobs. We will always back Queensland and we will always back Queensland jobs. Ours was the first state in the nation to recognise the threat of COVID-19, moving to support business, industry and Queensland jobs in January before the virus had even been named. We bring the same urgency to this recovery task. As we move from the unprecedented to the uncharted, we will continue to implement our strategy to drive the recovery and restoration of the Queensland economy.

Mr Speaker, as you know, serving as Queensland Treasurer is a tremendous privilege and responsibility, and I thank the Premier and my government colleagues for the faith they have shown in me as I assume this important role at this critical time. I acknowledge my predecessors—you, Mr Speaker, and the member for South Brisbane—for the work done to strengthen our economy and promote the interests of the Queensland people.

Now is the time for vigilance, for discipline and for determination. Nations around the world that acted too late or lifted too soon have discovered the consequences, the severe consequences, of such actions. Hazards and hardships lie ahead as Queenslanders face the stark reality that things will get worse for our jobs and economy before they get better. We are in a fight for our future, but in that fight there is no-one we would rather have standing beside us than a fellow Queenslanders. Together we will bring our mighty Queensland economy back to its feet, creating jobs and prosperity as we work towards the brighter days that lie ahead.

## COMMITTEES

### Membership

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (10.16 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That the member for Pine Rivers and the member for Ninderry be discharged from, and the member for Bundamba and the member for Toowoomba North be appointed to, the Economics and Governance Committee;
2. That the member for Pine Rivers be discharged from, and the member for Bancroft be appointed to, the Ethics Committee; and
3. That the member for Bundamba be discharged from, and the member for Capalaba be appointed to, the Transport and Public Works Committee.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Sessional Orders

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (10.17 am), by leave without notice: I move—

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended to enable the members for Bundamba and Currumbin from 3 pm today to make statements not exceeding 20 minutes noting their elections.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## NOTICES OF MOTION

### Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (10.17 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That the proclamation made under the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019, Subordinate Legislation No. 233 of 2019, tabled in the House on 26 November 2019, be disallowed.

### Disallowance of Statutory Instrument



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (10.17 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, Subordinate Legislation No. 234 of 2019, tabled in the House on 26 November 2019, be disallowed.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.18 am.

#### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Budget



**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.18 am): My first question is to the Premier. The Palaszczuk government has abandoned handing down a budget. It has lost its Treasurer to a corruption investigation while several senior ministers and departmental heads are playing musical chairs at 1 William Street. With coronavirus putting almost 129,000 Queenslanders out of work in April alone, when will the Palaszczuk government be handing down a full budget?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. If she had listened to the Treasurer's comments she would know that he said very clearly that he will hand down a statement equivalent to a midyear economic review, which is appropriate under these circumstances. Further to that, both the Treasurer and I will make ourselves available for scrutiny over the delivery of that financial statement. I look forward—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Thank you, members, on both sides.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. The opposition might have to do some work. They will have to formulate some questions and be ready for that. Of course, that is—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Kawana and member for Maroochydore.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As members know, in October we will be in caretaker mode. It is planned at that stage for the federal government to deliver a budget or a statement—we are not quite sure of the exact format of that—to the people of Australia.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is when we will get a full handle on the economic situation. At the moment, it would be negligent for any government—and the national cabinet has taken this decision—to hand down a budget when the sands are moving so constantly.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. In fact, there are other states in the country—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Premier, please resume your seat. Treasurer and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you will cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There are other states in Australia that are not even resuming their parliaments. I made a full commitment to the people of this state that we would be available for scrutiny. We will meet every single month leading up to the election so the opposition can ask questions. That is my firm commitment to the people of this state. If the Leader of the Opposition had shown the courtesy of listening to the Treasurer, she would have very clearly heard him announce that at the end of his ministerial statement. I know it is a bit hard to adapt, but the very serious question for the opposition today is: are they going to support our Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs plan? Is the opposition going to actually take on board everything that we have said in relation to helping Queenslanders recover? Let me also make it very clear that I have listened very clearly to what stakeholders have said. We have listened and we have acted and we will continue to act in the best interests of Queensland jobs throughout this state.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the Leader of the Opposition, member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Glass House, you are warning under the standing orders. To make it clear, members, it is far easier to see who is interjecting under these arrangements.

### Coronavirus, Queensland Border Closure

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My second question is also to the Premier. Queenslanders need clear and consistent messaging from their government as we deal with the economic fallout of the coronavirus. The government's published road map and the Chief Health Officer, Jeannette Young, both say the border could be opened in July, but the Premier says the border will be shut until September. Why is the Premier giving confusing, mixed messages about when Queensland's border will be reopened?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition can listen to new mayor Lawrence Springborg; he seems to back in my decision on the closing of the border! Let us make it very clear. If the Leader of the Opposition had listened to what Dr Young said yesterday she would know that she said very clearly, as I have said, that we will review the borders at the end of each month. When you look at the road map, in July—if everything goes to plan and we have the virus under control—people will be able to travel within Queensland. Dr Young also said that we would need two incubation periods of zero in New South Wales and Victoria. If the Leader of the Opposition had also listened to Professor Peter Doherty last night on the ABC, she would have heard him say very clearly that there are issues of community transmission in New South Wales and Victoria. I will not put Queenslanders' health at risk—full stop.

We only have to look at the New South Wales health advice—I did a bit of research—in that 'all non-essential domestic travel should be cancelled'. New South Wales is just emerging with the easing of restrictions. There is no advice in New South Wales to travel domestically to any other state. I would not listen to the Leader of the Opposition, who went into a supermarket and touched all the fruit and vegetables. I am also happy to provide the Leader of the Opposition the New South Wales heat maps that show community transmission and the number of COVID cases in New South Wales and Victoria. I apologise to the people of New South Wales and Victoria: we would love to have you to Queensland, but not at this stage.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am happy to take the interjection of the member for Kawana, because obviously he has not read about the easing of restrictions, because federally and at a state level the advice at the moment is for workers, where possible, to stay at home. We are gently easing restrictions; we are overlaying the health advice with the economic restrictions that we can ease. Front and centre of all of this is to avoid a second wave. Go and ask any Queenslanders. They understand what a second wave is about, and we will try to avoid that at all costs.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier will resume her seat. The Premier's time has expired.

### Coronavirus, Easing of Restrictions

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is to the Premier and the Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on our road map to easing restrictions?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Mackay for the question, because this is really important for Queenslanders. My government has put out a very comprehensive three-month road map for the easing of restrictions in Queensland. I want to thank Queenslanders for the job they are doing. As we found out on the weekend, it was two weeks from the easing of restrictions when people were able to go outdoors a bit more and visit their mother on Mother's Day.

As we know, Queenslanders have responded very well and we continue to see very minimal numbers of cases. Having said that, we also recognise that there are still thousands of people in quarantine across our regional communities across Queensland. The fact that we do not have people under quarantine and no cases—that twin element—in the outback meant that we were able to ease restrictions there. I thank the mayors of those outback regions who raised the issues with me on numerous teleconferences. It is great to see that people are trying to get back to some sense of normality. We are a long way from getting back to where we were. Of course, I once again urge all members and members of the public to download that COVIDSafe app as we move into ensuring that we are able to respond to people as much as possible.

As I was saying earlier, the advice is still to work from home where possible and, of course, to make sure you follow social distancing. I thank the parliament for abiding by those rules and regulations as well. Of course, we know how important the economy is. That is where we are firmly focusing our

Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs. Today, I laid out a very clear framework. I also thank the representatives of the peak industry and union bodies who will meet with me on a regular basis and continue to work with government as we put out our clear path forward to recovery. At the centre of all this is jobs. I know that people are not statistics and that they have families and friends. There are a number of Queenslanders at the moment going through the worst of times. We know that banks are helping with lending when it comes to deferrals of loans, but it must be a really tough time at the moment for families who have lost their jobs in trying to make ends meet. We will stand with Queensland families. We have a very clear path to recovery both on the easing of restrictions and on our economic road map. The real question will be whether the opposition supports that today.

*(Time expired)*

### **Unemployment, Queensland Border Closure**

**Mr MANDER:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. With Queensland's unemployment rate now at 6.8 per cent, the second highest in the nation, will the Treasurer tell the House: what is the number of Queensland jobs that are being lost because of Queensland's border closure?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Everton for his question, and I start with an observation: I noticed that the member for Everton read his question from a piece of paper. If he is reading numbers or words from a piece of paper, I am perfectly okay with that because the member for Everton and I are on exactly the same page. I am very happy to talk about unemployment because, as all honourable members know, including the member for Everton, I made attacking unemployment my priority when I assumed the office of Treasurer in this state. I have said publicly that unemployment scars individuals, it damages families and it hurts communities and the single greatest focus of my job as Treasurer and that of this government is to smash the curve of unemployment. As honourable members would have heard last week, we heard some devastating figures when it came to unemployment—devastating figures: 130,000 people lost their jobs in Queensland. While politics fills this parliament, we must all remember that behind every one of those 130,000 people is an individual, a family and a community affected by unemployment. That is our priority as a government.

COVID has wrought a devastating impact on employment in this state and we have done the right thing. We have secured the border to secure Queensland. That was our priority. Our priority was to ensure that we could flatten the curve of infection first before we could address the economic problems. Unless our society and community and business and industry remain safe and healthy, it will not be possible to open our economy; it will not be possible to restore strength to the Queensland economy.

We did absolutely the right thing to close the borders and any call to open them early is simply wrong, and I make one observation: there was a single cruise ship that came into this country and it came across the border of New South Wales. It did not go into a regional part of New South Wales; it went into the heart of New South Wales. It docked in Sydney Harbour and from the *Ruby Princess* a devastating price has been paid by our state and by our nation. It is not for the New South Wales Premier to start criticising our Premier or our state for securing Queensland. We will not be criticised by New South Wales. We will not be criticised by Premier Berejiklian for doing the right thing by Queensland. Just as I am doing the right thing for jobs, the Deputy Premier has done the right thing for health care and protecting Queenslanders and the Premier has done the right thing by leading Queensland. We are going to keep Queensland safe.

### **Road Infrastructure, Accelerated Works Program**

**Mr HARPER:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the \$400 million announcement in accelerated road funding and what it means to Queensland communities?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Thuringowa for that question. The member for Thuringowa knows how important accelerated works are, because when we had the closure of Queensland Nickel we moved very quickly to bring forward works projects in Townsville to ensure that people had employment after losing their jobs from Queensland Nickel. Bringing forward those accelerated works is really important as part of our Unite and Recover for Queensland jobs, and I want to thank Minister Bailey for the incredible work that he has done in working with my department and officers of Treasury to pinpoint what projects we can bring forward to get underway as quickly as possible. This is not anything that is unique—we have seen it work before—but there is also a call to arms across Australia for governments to look at what accelerated works can be done.

The member and I went to the Hervey Range crossing when the bridge was swept away after the devastating floods and we are seeing that rebuilt, and I remember that it was a very hot day. There is \$8.9 million to widen Hervey Range development road near Townsville which will create an extra 14 jobs in that region. I can also update the House where more of that \$400 million will be spent. There is \$37.5 million for the jointly funded Mount Lindesay Highway upgrade from Stoney Camp Road to Chambers Flat Road creating 80 jobs; \$30 million in the Beaudesert Road-Illaweenah Street intersection upgrade creating 32 jobs; \$18 million for the Six Mile Creek Bridge upgrade along Pomona-Kin Kin Road creating 28 jobs; \$15 million in additional funding to continue the Cleveland Redland Bay Road duplication creating 23 jobs; \$30 million in the Proserpine to Shute Harbour Road duplication and intersection upgrades between Valley Drive and Tropic Road creating 20 jobs; and \$3.75 million at the Caloundra Road and Ridgewood Road intersection upgrade creating 12 jobs, just to name a few. Minister Bailey will be outlining more of those details over the coming hours and days.

This is fundamentally about jobs and getting our state moving in a safe and responsible manner. Let me say it very clearly again: we will always put the health interests of Queenslanders first and we will move forward in a safe and responsible manner. It is absolutely negligent for those opposite to come into this House and to criticise the health advice that I receive from Dr Jeannette Young. I will take my advice from Dr Young and not the Premier of New South Wales.

*(Time expired)*

### State School Principals, Appointment Process

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Education. On 27 November the member for South Brisbane said it was the education minister who advised her about the reopened principal appointment process, saying—

The advice I received from the Minister for Education was that the director-general had changed his mind in relation to the appointment

I table an extract from *Hansard*.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, dated 27 November 2019, from the *Record of Proceedings*, Queensland parliament, page 3829 [761].

Why was the minister advising the member for South Brisbane about an independent appointment process and what was the content of that advice?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. These are operational matters and I reiterate in this House once again that the minister has no role in relation to the appointment of a principal. The director-general has made a full statement which has been tabled in the House in relation to the reclassification of the position with regard to the new high school in South Brisbane. These are matters and issues that are now before the CCC. I do not intend to make a running commentary in relation to that investigation. The CCC has full powers to investigate the matters and I think that it should be allowed to get on with the job. When the decision was made with regard to the reclassification, I think in passing I let the Deputy Premier know that the position had been regraded to an executive principal after I had been informed, but these matters are all before the CCC.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left, the minister is being responsive to the question asked and I ask that you cease your interjections.

**Ms GRACE:** I think it should be allowed to get on with the job.

### Coronavirus, Rockhampton Aged-Care Facility

**Ms LAUGA:** My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister outline how the Palaszczuk government is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the response to the recent case in a nursing home in North Rockhampton?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Keppel for her question. I know that she has been very concerned for the wellbeing of constituents of hers who live at that nursing centre. She is well known to the nursing centre; I understand she spends four days a year volunteering there and is incredibly proud of the refurbishment that she secured for that centre. The wing that has been refurbished is looking very good. It was great to be on the ground with the member for Keppel, the Chief Health Officer and the member for Rockhampton to see firsthand how the hospital and health service and the staff of

the nursing centre were responding to keep those residents safe. I was also able to visit the Central Queensland Health Emergency Operations Centre where that operation was being led and managed from. While unfortunately I was unable to enter the main areas of the nursing facility because it was in lockdown, I was able to hear and see what a fantastic effort had been put in by all of the staff on the ground from 8 pm on Thursday.

They have performed hundreds of tests of staff, of residents and of contacts in the community, as well as others in Rockhampton who were concerned for their health and sought out a fever clinic. Thankfully all of those tests were negative. There is only one person outstanding whom we would like to see tested. The centre itself has been locked down since late Thursday night. A local disaster management plan was put into place. A rapid response team was deployed, including a senior public health physician and 20 additional nursing staff from Brisbane. They have increased their hygiene and cleaning routines at the facility and increased their nursing ratio to mirror those of a clinical environment. The HHS has opened a second fever clinic so that we can do large-scale testing of the Rockhampton community which, of course, we want to do.

The QAS assisted in evacuating residents to the Mater and to the Hillcrest private hospital and I thank both of them for their assistance. That means that all of the residents now have private rooms and private bathrooms. They will be tested every four days. Many of them were retested yesterday. I have asked the director-general to commission an independent health service investigation into the incident in addition to the internal investigation. This is a chance for us to remind all Queensland Health and indeed all health staff that if they are sick they should stay home and get tested. It is this rapid response capability that will allow us to respond to—

*(Time expired)*

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ministerial Responsibility**

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question without notice is to the Premier. On the last sitting day of 2019 the Premier refused to investigate the member for South Brisbane's interference in an independent principal appointment process, a matter which has now caused her to resign in disgrace. Did the Premier refuse to uphold standards of behaviour in her own government or was the Premier afraid to investigate the member for South Brisbane?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I reject some of those assumptions that the member states. These matters are clearly before the CCC and I think those opposite should allow the CCC to do their job.

### **Economic Recovery Strategy, Aviation Industry**

**Mr STEWART:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning. Could the Treasurer please update the House on how the government's strategy for economic recovery will be assisted by a competitive aviation market for regional Queensland and whether he is aware of any other approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Townsville for his question and also for his strong support for our government's commitment to save and protect jobs in Townsville, in North Queensland and, in fact, right across our state. As the parliament has heard today, our recovery plan aims to restore tourism, to restore business connectivity through our state and to safely and carefully reintroduce travel to Queensland. We will not be able to get back to where we were without a competitive aviation market.

As the member for Townsville and colleague members across regional Queensland know, we cannot support business and industry in Townsville, Cairns, Mackay, Central Queensland, Wide Bay, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast without a competitive aviation market. We depend on competition. It is so important to Queensland. Thousands and thousands of jobs depend on it and that is why we are fighting so hard to keep Virgin in Queensland. It is why last week I launched Project Maroon, our commitment to activate the Queensland Investment Corporation to support Queensland's interests and to protect Queensland's interests in the bidding process for Virgin. There are many private equity companies and businesses interested in Virgin and they do not all have Queensland interests at heart, I can assure members of that. We are putting skin in the game to ensure we keep competition for regional flights no matter what the big private equity firms say or do. We have even heard that the Federal Future Fund has an interest. Peter Costello sees value in it and so does Queensland.

But what would Peter Costello know when we have got the member for Everton? The member for Everton turned over the envelope, got out his crayons and did his calculations. 'Good money after bad,' he said. 'Don't worry if Virgin collapses,' the member for Everton said. 'Another airline will come

along.' Never mind the lost decade for regional Queensland when Ansett collapsed. Of course, once he started getting the calls from the tourism industry, it was 'Clean up in aisle Everton!', 'Clean up in aisle Everton!'. He had to conjure up \$200 million to put into a marketing campaign for tourism, which was exactly the same amount that he and his colleagues ripped out from tourism when he was a minister in the Newman government.

You cannot keep an obsessive, overly ambitious, failed leadership aspirant down, can you? The member for Everton was again at it last week espousing his friendless plan in the *Courier-Mail*. What did he say right at the end of his op-ed? He said selling our state is the responsibility of the Queensland government. Never have more truthful words fallen from the lips of the member for Everton. The Strong Choices zombie is rising again. There is one way to sell Queensland and we know what that is—selling Queensland assets—and there it was in black and white in the *Courier-Mail*. The member for Everton is still clinging to the belief that there is one way out of everything: cutting, sacking and selling.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member of Kawana has had plenty of warnings today. You are warned under the standing orders.

### Jobs Support Loans Scheme

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Treasurer. Given the Queensland government's Jobs Support Loans scheme was closed to new applicants after 18 April, will the Treasurer confirm that the second announcement of \$500 million of loans will not cover the backlog of applicants and that there is no money for any new applicants, many of whom have spent time and money on external advisers under a false hope because the application scheme is already closed to them?

**Mr DICK:** The QRIDA program has been extraordinarily successful. It is the most successful and the largest small business loan scheme in the Commonwealth. That is just the truth. We made a commitment of \$500 million and we backed it in with another \$500 million.

**Mr Mander:** And misled people!

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the member for Everton. We have misled absolutely no-one, member for Everton. Enough of your untruthfulness. What we have done is doubled the amount of money that we have put into that loan scheme and that is quite appropriate. We will provide support, financial assistance, to other businesses in Queensland.

What the member for Maroochydore has not acknowledged is the comprehensive economic recovery strategy announced by the Premier today: \$100 million in small business loans we announced today.

**Mr Mander:** Another talkfest!

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection. The member for Everton calls it a porkfest.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, please resume your seat. The Premier will cease her interjections and quarrelling across the chamber with the member for Everton.

**Mr DICK:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker. He calls it a talkfest. This is cash from the Treasury going out to support Queenslanders in a time of crisis.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Mr DICK:** This is the first pandemic in a century and the worst global economic crisis in 90 years. Queenslanders expect government to act and that is exactly what we are doing. Not only do we have the largest small business loans program in the country; we are backing it in with a whole range of other measures, including providing small business with relief through payroll tax relief, land tax relief and a whole range of other measures that will support small business. This is the most comprehensive package that a Queensland government has ever put forward to support Queenslanders in crisis during an economic crisis. It is the most comprehensive.

The one question that needs to be asked now, the single question that needs to be asked, is whether the state opposition, whether the Liberal National Party, which is in fact the lowest performing opposition in this entire crisis nationally, will back in our Unite and Recover plan for Queensland. Will

they support this plan? We have seen the Premier standing and supporting the Prime Minister and all the other first ministers trying to find a path through this for our nation. It is about time the LNP put the politics aside, including the member for Maroochydoore who said nothing about supporting Virgin flights into the Sunshine Coast. All of the Sunshine Coast MPs from the LNP attacked our proposal to support Virgin when they have one of the biggest tourism markets in the country. They are not backing Queensland. This is their chance. Will they support this plan to support Queenslanders in a time of great distress and need? That is the challenge and we wait to hear the answer.

### **Coronavirus, Tourism Industry**

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is of the Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation. Will the minister please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting Queensland's tourism industry to recover from COVID-19?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for the question. Having visited her local community a number of times as the tourism minister, I know how important tourism is to her community. It was great to hear from Sealink that, with restrictions easing from the weekend we have just had, we are already seeing people going back to our beautiful Moreton Bay islands. We expect that that will continue to grow, particularly as we go into the June/July school holidays. Thank you for your advocacy on behalf of your local community and the tourism businesses in your area.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Through the chair, please, Minister.

**Ms JONES:** From day one the Premier has made it very plain that we are going to walk hand in hand with the tourism industry. As we have heard here again today, we were the first government anywhere in the country to announce economic relief and support for the tourism industry, which happened all the way back at the beginning of February. That happened because of the close working relationship that our government has, under the Premier's leadership, with the tourism industry. From the moment we were elected we understood that one of the very first things that we had to do was to restore confidence in and support to the tourism industry. We have heard a lot from the member for Everton today—

**Mrs Frecklington:** What do they say? September or July?

**Ms JONES:**—and I take the interjection from the assistant treasurer at the time, whose proud legacy to the tourism industry was a cut of \$188 million from the industry, even though they went to the election saying, 'We're going to make tourism a pillar and then we're going to turn around, jackhammer the foundations and cut \$188 million from it.' I have a message for those opposite: no-one in the tourism industry believes the false promises from the Leader of the Opposition, which she has been sending out in a scramble this week to try to make herself relevant. Today again our government has put in additional money—\$50 million—on top of the money we have already committed to support the tourism industry, because we know that tourism means jobs.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Must have got to you, Minister.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will put her comments through the chair.

**Ms JONES:** I take the interjection: it did get to me. Do you know why? Because right now the tourism industry is at a crisis point! Thousands of people have lost their jobs. You do not give people who have lost their jobs false hope. That is irresponsible, it is heartless, it is mean and it does not move Queensland forward. What does move Queensland forward is real money moving out the door to support businesses when they need it most. That is why I am so proud of today's announcement of \$100 million in grants to be made directly to small businesses across Queensland. Ninety per cent of tourism businesses in our state are small businesses. On top of the \$1 billion worth of loans, we are now injecting a further \$100 million in grants. On top of that, there is \$50 million in tourism funding and support. We will not give false hope. We will not make false promises. We will back our tourism industry with real jobs and real commitment.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** You bet your false promises got to me. They hurt people when they were down.

**Mr SPEAKER:** A reminder to all members that comments will come through the chair or members will be warned under the standing orders. Speaking of which, member for Maroochydoore, you are under a warning. You will leave the chamber under standing order 253A for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Maroochydoore withdrew from the chamber at 10.53 am.*

### Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal Appointment Process

**Ms BATES:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Education. In his 28 November statement, which I table, Director-General Tony Cook said that the principal appointment process for the Inner City South State Secondary College was terminated and recommenced because the department had received new modelling about enrolments. However, according to the education department's RTI officers, the only modelling in existence was dated January 2019, the same month that the process commenced. Can the minister explain why the process was stopped when the director-general already had the new data months before?

*Tabled paper:* Media statement, dated 28 November 2019, from the Director-General, Department of Education, titled 'Executive Principal appointment: Inner City South State Secondary College (ICSSSC)' [762].

**Ms GRACE:** Those are matters under investigation by the CCC. The statement made by the director-general has been tabled in this House for everybody to read. Those matters are being investigated. The CCC should be allowed to get on with their job. The CCC is fiercely independent and I do not intend to comment to jeopardise that process.

### Road Infrastructure, Accelerated Works Program

**Mr O'ROURKE:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Following the Premier's announcement of a \$400 million stimulus package for Queensland roads and jobs, can the minister update the House on what that means for families and businesses in my electorate and across the state?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for Rockhampton for his question. He has the biggest smile that I have seen in quite some time and I wonder why! We have to be united in our response to this pandemic and that includes making sure that we come into a sustainable and steady recovery. I note that the handling of this crisis by the Premier and the health minister has been exemplary. We are the best performing state in the country, which is one of the better performing nations in the world, and that has allowed us to be in the position that we are in. However, we also have to deal with the jobs and the roads. Today we have announced a \$400 million road stimulus package that I know Queenslanders will be very happy to see. We will see 430 jobs created by the roads package and 360 of those jobs will be in regional Queensland as part of our commitment of 13,500 regional jobs over the QTRIP program. That means jobs for truck drivers, traffic controllers, machinery operators, local equipment suppliers, local firms and earth moving companies. That is what it will mean at a time when those workers need it most.

The \$200 million in funding will see the widening and sealing of some of our key freight routes, the upgrading of older bridges and a direct injection for regional jobs. The member for Rockhampton has advocated very strongly for and had me onsite to look at the bottleneck at Lawrie Street, Gracemere, which was ignored by the previous government. We are getting it done. That means 56 jobs in Central Queensland, which will set up this fast growing area for the future. I congratulate the member for Rockhampton for delivering that. He has been a very strong advocate. Likewise, I acknowledge and congratulate the member for Redlands for the \$15 million in extra funding for the Cleveland Redland Bay Road duplication, meaning another 23 jobs. That was another road ignored by the LNP when in government. This government has allocated \$60 million for that duplication and the Redlands community will be very happy about that.

The member for Logan has advocated very strongly for the Mount Lindesay Highway upgrade at Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat Road, meaning 80 jobs and more money going into the Mount Lindesay Highway. The member for Algester has also advocated very strongly for the upgrade of the Beaudesert Road to Illaweenaa Street section, meaning another 32 jobs. The list goes on. We invest in roads. We do not cut, we do not sack and we do not sell. We get things done. That is what this government does.

I acknowledge the praise this morning on radio from the federal LNP member for Leichhardt who said, 'I have to say that she, the Premier, has done a pretty good in managing this situation. I'm not going to get out there and attack her because of the politics. We have so few cases because we have been very, very disciplined overall. Suddenly we open it up and we'll end up like'—expletive—'Brazil or the US for that matter.' That is praise from people—

*(Time expired)*

### Mining Industry, Royalties

**Mr BERKMAN:** My question is to the Treasurer. Mining company bosses love the government's royalties freeze and 'voluntary' tax scheme, which equates to a tiny 0.05 per cent royalties increase and saves them billions of dollars a year on even a modest increase. Why is the new Treasurer still going easy on mining company bosses instead of making them pay their fair share to pull us out of this crisis?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the honourable member for his question, but I reject the premise in the question that I am going soft on anyone and I do not intend to do so as the Treasurer. I intend to treat all people fairly. Twelve months ago the government made a commitment to the regional communities infrastructure program. I have resolved that matter, ensuring that \$100 million will now flow to regional communities in our state. I think that is a fair thing to do not only to give certainty and consistency to resource and mining companies but also to fulfil the promise we made as a government to those regional communities. Mining communities have generated enormous wealth and prosperity for our state over many generations. I am a supporter of the mining and resources community, as I am a supporter of all industries in Queensland.

One of the strengths we have in Queensland is the diversity of our economy. We have our traditional industries—mining, resources and agriculture—but we also have the new and emerging industries, the industries based on health, knowledge based industries, advanced manufacturing, aerospace, defence and so on. I was very proud to be part of supporting those industries when I was the State Development Minister. We made a commitment. We have now delivered on that commitment. We give certainty to those mining companies going forward. For the benefit of the member for Maiwar, we are in the worst global economic crisis for 90 years. The recession in the United Kingdom is faster and deeper than any other recession for 300 years. That is the reality. We need to give certainty and consistency to all parts of the Queensland economy and to Queenslanders, and we need to demonstrate leadership. That is what we have seen from the Premier and the Deputy Premier and that is what I seek to deliver as the Treasurer now.

### Energy Industry, Projects

**Mr KELLY:** My question is of the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Can the minister advise the House of the latest projects commenced by Queensland's publicly owned energy businesses?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for Greenslopes for the question. Like all members on this side of the chamber, he is a big fan of our publicly owned energy businesses. They are integral to Queensland's energy trifecta: the lowest average prices on the eastern seaboard, reliable supply and an important planned transition to a renewable future. Work gets under way this month on a \$32 million redevelopment of Energex Greenslopes depot. Queensland based builder, Alder Constructions, will build a new workplace for more than 200 Energex staff in a project that will create dozens of jobs.

Our publicly owned Ergon is particularly busy in Cairns. Work started this week replacing two critical high-voltage underground cables that power the Cairns CBD. This is the second major Ergon project to get under way recently in that great city. A local company, Bryant Building Contractors, is on the job in a \$42 million redevelopment of Ergon's inner-city facilities. This project will generate work for more than 360 people. To prove it is even-handed, Powerlink is upgrading a transmission line right through the middle of the electorate of Nanango. This \$5 million project is replacing more than 2,200 insulated strings on 245 transmission towers between Wivenhoe Dam and Tarong near Cooroy.

Queensland's publicly owned electricity companies are investing more than \$2.2 billion on capital works in 2019-20, supporting up to 4,900 jobs. I ask: what would become of them under those opposite working in tandem with their LNP mates in Canberra? We have Angus Taylor waving around his big stick, demolishing investor confidence in the energy sector and, more importantly, he is dying to use that legislation to carve up Queensland's energy businesses. His cheer squad over there will be rubbing their hands with glee because they have \$8 billion of unfunded election promises and there is nothing like a public asset fire sale to help fund those promises. Why limit yourself to electricity businesses when you can also flog off a bit of glorious Queensland public beach as well? I am still waiting for the member for Surfers Paradise to categorically say he will not stand by while the Spit gets turned into Kuta Beach. It will not be happening under my watch. A public beach and publicly owned energy assets are not for sale under a Palaszczuk Labor government.

*(Time expired)*

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ministerial Responsibility**

**Mr MINNIKIN:** My question is to the Premier. After Minister Bailey's mangocube affair and the ministerial rules were rewritten, the Premier directed that all official government business must be conducted on government servers so records can be kept. Can the Premier explain why the member for South Brisbane was secretly texting a senior education bureaucrat about cabinet matters in open defiance of the Premier's direction that all official government business would be handled properly?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am not going to comment on matters that are before the CCC.

### **Manufacturing Industry, Jobs**

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing. Will the minister advise his plan to reverse the 18,000 manufacturing jobs lost in a single quarter, under his predecessor and now Treasurer Dick?

**Mr BUTCHER:** I thank the honourable member for the question. It certainly is an honour to be here today as the new Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing. It is certainly one of those sectors that I am very passionate about, being a manufacturing worker here in Queensland for 21 years of my life before becoming a member in the alumina industry in Gladstone. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to supporting the manufacturing sector in Queensland. One of the greatest lessons of this COVID-19 virus has been how critical it is to retain our capacity to manufacture things locally. Whilst we will always be a state that supports open trade, it cannot be at the expense of our ability to look after ourselves.

Post COVID, we will need a dynamic and sustainable manufacturing sector to keep producing the things that we need in the next crisis that we possibly could have in Queensland. More than 165,000 Queenslanders work in the manufacturing industry with 24 per cent of those jobs being in regional Queensland for which I am now responsible.

Based on figures from March of this year, there are 500 more Queenslanders employed in the manufacturing sector than when we first took office. This compares to the 12,500 manufacturing jobs lost during the term of the Newman government. It is an impressive achievement during a period when the traditional manufacturing sector in Western economies has come under increasing pressure. It is impressive but certainly not accidental. Since being elected to office, the Palaszczuk government has implemented a range of initiatives to support our local manufacturers. That is why the Palaszczuk government has invested \$30 million in regional manufacturing hubs in Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton, to support the growth of regional businesses to meet local and global demand while creating more jobs for Queenslanders.

We are also supporting regional manufacturers through our government's \$46 million Made in Queensland grants. It was an absolute pleasure to go out to a local company, Luina Bio, in the Premier's electorate yesterday to meet local manufacturers who are delivering not only here for Queensland but also for the world. They are now in line for another grant under that same program to extend their premises and make sure that in the future they can employ more people, they can employ more specialists in that field and deliver for Queenslanders.

### **Manufacturing Industry, Regional Queensland**

**Mr SAUNDERS:** My question is to the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing. Will the minister outline to the House how the government is supporting manufacturing jobs in regional communities like the great city of Maryborough?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I will wait for silence members. As a courtesy I have asked members to cease interjecting while questions are being asked. I expect questions to be heard in silence.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I thank the honourable member for his question. The member for Maryborough has shown time and time again that he is a champion for the manufacturing industry in the regions, even though he may be a little late to questions sometimes. It was because of his strong advocacy that the cut-price trains of the LNP bought from overseas are now being fixed at Downer's manufacturing facility in Maryborough. As a trained fitter and turner who worked in industry for 21 years, I also understand how important manufacturing is to economic prosperity in regional Queensland and particularly for jobs in places like Maryborough.

Regional Queensland has a long history in manufacturing going back over 100 years in industries like rail, marine and food production. Today, the manufacturing industry contributes around \$20 billion every year to the state's economy, with nearly a third of that generated by regional manufacturing. More

than 165,000 Queenslanders work in the manufacturing industry, with nearly 24 per cent of those jobs in regional Queensland. As the regional development minister I will make sure that those jobs are in regional Queensland in places like Maryborough, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns and out to the west in great regions like Mount Isa.

We know that we can always do more. The Palaszczuk government has invested \$30 million into our manufacturing hubs to ensure we grow regional areas and support, through Advance Queensland, the jobs that we know can be undertaken in Queensland. This morning it was great to hear the Premier announce a continuation of the Works for Queensland package for regional Queensland. An extra \$200 million will support local councils maintain jobs in regional Queensland and ensure people are employed during this recovery process.

Through our support for the Made in Queensland fund we will ensure we continue to have products that we know are critical to Queensland to get us through issues like COVID-19. It is great to see that in the biomedical field local businesses in Brisbane are producing hand sanitiser to ensure that the frontline staff of Queensland Health have those products available. They are being made in Queensland. As the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing I want to make sure that every business in Queensland has the opportunity to not only deliver products but also make them in Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### **Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning**

**Mr HART:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. During an interview with Karl Stefanovic last week the Treasurer did not know important facts like the amount of Queensland's total debt. Despite claiming he had a bazooka to bid with, the Treasurer was embarrassed into admitting he had not done his homework on the company, with one expert pointing out that \$200 million would only cover a few months of Virgin's running costs. Will the Treasurer stop his gormless political stunts and get on with some hard work to support Queensland jobs by handing down a full budget?

**Mr DICK:** There is one thing I know, and that is the difference between a hectare and a 'hectacre'. I am happy to talk about debt because it allows us to outline the member for Burleigh's legacy. I am very happy to put on the record our responsibility in respect of Queensland when it comes to supporting the infrastructure and jobs our state needs. That includes the investments we have made by effective borrowing.

When you look it at in any way, borrowings are lower under the Palaszczuk government than they were under the LNP. That was a government in which the member for Burleigh served. The LNP racked up a \$4.6 billion deficit in their first year of government—piling on the debt—and we have been doing everything we can and working day and night to pay it down. When the LNP talks about debt, they do not want to talk about general government sector debt which is now well below the level we inherited from the LNP. We brought their debt down. The LNP want to talk consistently about the borrowings of the publicly owned corporations, and of course they should borrow to sweat their assets to deliver services and to get the best possible return for Queenslanders.

**Dr Miles:** We own them.

**Ms Grace:** Because we own them.

**Mr DICK:** Because we own them. I take the interjections from the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Education. The reason they want to talk about debt on government owned corporations is because they want to privatise those assets.

I say to the member for Burleigh that this has been conclusively determined by the people of Queensland at three successive elections—2012, 2015 and 2017. I say to the LNP: stop disrespecting the people of Queensland who have formed a very clear view that they want government assets owned by government. They want government owned corporations and income earning assets—those strategic assets—owned by government. That is the reality.

At MYEFO general government borrowings were at \$38 billion, \$5 billion below the peak of \$43 billion under the LNP in 2014-15, \$15 billion below Victoria general government borrowings, \$18 billion below New South Wales general government borrowings and \$645 billion lower than Commonwealth general government borrowings. If the member for Burleigh has a problem with debt, can I respectfully suggest to him that he calls the real leader of the opposition, Peter Dutton, and tells

him what his view of debt is. You ring the real leader of the opposition—sorry, I respectfully withdraw—the de facto leader of the opposition. The real leader of the opposition is in the chamber—the member for Broadwater. There he is on Sky and on Alan Jones putting his calling card out for the world. You should ring the federal coalition and tell them that you do not support debt and then you might be believed.

**Mr SPEAKER:** A reminder, Treasurer, that all comments must come through the chair.

### **Agriculture Industry, Exports; Beef Industry**

**Ms PUGH:** My question is of the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries. Can the minister provide an update on the importance of Queensland's agricultural exports to major export partners and how current issues are impacting our beef industry?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mr FURNER:** I thank the member for her question. She knows quite well the support the Palaszczuk government has provided to our farmers since day one of the election of the Palaszczuk government. We continue to support not only those farmers but also those supply chains that rely upon the agriculture industry. It is a key economic driver for our state and supports thousands of jobs. We are justifiably proud of the food we produce in Queensland and also proud of the Queensland farmers who produce it.

In May last year I led a trade delegation to Hong Kong. We travelled to Chongqing in south-west China to support our Queensland farmers and our Queensland beef. I witnessed firsthand in a supermarket in Chongqing where we were handing out Queensland beef to consumers their insatiable appetite for Queensland beef. That is why I am proud as the Queensland agriculture minister to back it in. I know that the Premier, as the trade minister, is very proud of our agriculture sector and the trade, investment and opportunities that we generate from that sector.

Let me be clear: Queensland has no beef with China. Notwithstanding that, the nation is an important trading partner for Australia and an important market for Queensland beef. Last year we exported \$893 million worth of Queensland beef to China—a growing \$5 billion export powerhouse. Any LNP member who criticises our trade relationship with China should hang their heads in shame. I want members opposite to condemn the words and motions of those in Canberra and throughout the state so that we can mend the relationship that we have worked so hard to improve in order to sustain the beef and agriculture sector in Australia.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The time for question time has expired.

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Further Answer to Question; Jobs Support Loans**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.18 am): Out of respect for the House and its members, I clarify that the small business support scheme announced by the Premier today is a grant scheme not a loan scheme and that the QRIDA loan scheme is the largest of any state or territory in the Commonwealth.

## **MOTIONS**

### **Business Program**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (11.18 am): I move—

1. That the following government business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum periods of time as specified:
  - (a) the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of 3.5 hours to complete all stages;
  - (b) the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of 2.5 hours to complete all stages; and
  - (c) the motion standing in the name of the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts proposing the revocation and dedication of forest and protected areas under the Nature Conservation Act 1992, a maximum of 20 minutes for debate.

2. The following time limits for the bills listed in 1 apply:
  - (a) consideration in detail to be completed by three minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours;
  - (b) question on third reading to be put by two minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours; and
  - (c) question on long title to be put by one minute before the expiry of the maximum hours.
3. If the nominated stage of each bill has not been completed by the allocated time specified in 2, or by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 21 May 2020, Mr Speaker:
  - (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration;
  - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill or motion without further debate;
  - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
  - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

I wish the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Leader of the House all the very best with her recovery. I know she underwent surgery on her hand yesterday and is on the road to recovery. That is a phrase that will be used again and again during this sitting and others.

As the Premier outlined this morning, I am acting in the Attorney's stead this week which includes in this role as Acting Leader of the House. I would like to thank all members of the Business Committee for their attendance last night. It was my first Business Committee meeting. It was certainly a very interesting meeting to attend, with some members' contributions being more constructive than others. I must say that I thanked the Manager of Opposition Business for being gentle with me on my first occasion.

On behalf of the Leader of the House, I would like to thank the Deputy Premier for his attendance and contribution to the Business Committee as the deputy chair in recent times. Due to the changes in the ministry, the member for Miller has been appointed as the Premier's proxy to the committee and was also elected deputy chair last night. We welcome him to the committee.

Turning to the matters at hand, the motion circulated to members speaks for itself, with a total of three hours and 30 minutes allocated to the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill; and two hours and 30 minutes to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, to which I note the government is moving amendments which deal with the statement of reservation raised by non-government members.

Also provided for in the business motion is 20 minutes to be allocated to the revocation motion standing in the name of Minister Enoch. In addition to this, the House will deal with urgent legislation in relation to our government's response to COVID-19. This bill will be introduced by the Deputy Premier later today, with debate most likely commencing tomorrow afternoon.

Briefings by ministers to their relevant shadows and crossbench members will take place if those non-government members wish. I have been informed that previously the opposition have taken issue with being briefed prior to seeing the legislation, so I trust that this arrangement of the bill being introduced for them to see it prior to any briefings occurring will be amenable to them.

In addition to the legislation described, the House will conduct its usual scheduled business. This means going back, as much as we can in these extraordinary times, to a usual sitting week. That includes the introduction of private members' bills and debate; matters of public interest; private members' statements; and, of course, the non-government motion on Wednesday evening. All of those normal parameters are back in place.

As was noted earlier, members will also be aware that there will be the first speeches for the newly elected members for Bundamba and Currumbin later today. I am sure that we will all seek to congratulate them in an appropriate social distanced manner.

I reiterate that in these challenging times we do need to make sure that we have a business program that provides for and manages the business of this House including urgent legislation that is required to respond to COVID-19. I note—because I anticipate that the Manager of Opposition Business will make some comments about his disagreement with the whole concept of the business program motion—

**Mr Mander:** Don't make assumptions.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Indeed, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will do the same, I suspect. I reiterate—and I have a chance to say this on this occasion—that we look to the Westminster tradition. This House looks to the Westminster tradition. We hear that harked upon. What arrangements do they have in the Palace of Westminster, in the House of Commons, to organise the business when they have almost 600 members of parliament? They do not all get a chance to speak to every bill. They work out an arrangement—the House makes those provisions—a similar arrangement to this business program motion. It is done in the Palace of Westminster, so get over yourselves—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Address your remarks through the chair.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:**—and get on board with something that makes this House operate efficiently and effectively. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the Manager of Opposition Business, I remind members that the following members have already received a warning: the members for Burleigh, Glass House, Kawana and Everton.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.23 am): Mr Deputy Speaker, there you have it—the arrogance and hubris of the Palaszczuk government. ‘Get over yourselves’, he said. ‘Get over it. Get over the fact that parliament doesn’t sit. Get over the fact that members don’t have an opportunity to speak. Get over the fact that the government will have its way. Get over the fact that we don’t know when the next sitting week will be. Get over the fact—

**Mrs Frecklington:** No budget.

**Mr BLEIJIE:**—that we have no budget and no direction. Just get over the fact,’ the Acting Leader of the House says. I was going to be nice to the Acting Leader of the House until he made that last comment. He made many assumptions. The advice I give to all honourable members is never assume anything that happens in this place.

He says that we should trust the Westminster provisions. The Labor government, the Palaszczuk government, is trashing Westminster tradition. We have a situation where we sat for one day a few weeks ago, we do not know when we are sitting again, and they continually guillotine debate—and all under the guise of COVID-19.

The Acting Leader of the House just said that we are getting back, as much as we can, to normality this week. Yes, we should. We are telling Queenslanders that we are easing restrictions—that they can go out in the public domain. Parliament should never have stopped in the first place. The Premier keeps saying, ‘We’re just following federal parliament.’ No, we are not, because if we were we would have sat last week. Federal parliament sat last week, not this week. Why does the Premier of Queensland continually say, ‘This is what this jurisdiction is doing and this is what the federal jurisdiction is doing’? How about the Premier make a decision about what is in the best interests of Queenslanders, the Queensland public?

I have to say that I did not think the Business Committee could get any worse. Then I telephoned in for the teleconference last night to be greeted by the tones of Minister Mark Bailey replacing Minister Miles on the Business Committee. My first thought was that I did not think it could get any worse, but then hearing Minister Bailey on the call made it worse.

This morning the Treasurer talked about discipline. There has been no discipline in the Labor government. There has been no discipline going forward with our sitting days. For goodness sake, they have lost their deputy premier. They are trying to make out that there is nothing to see here—nothing to see. The Labor Party, five months from an election, lost its treasurer, lost its deputy premier. That is big news. They may want to skirt over that little piece of history of the last couple of weeks, but we are going to ensure that they do not and we are going to ensure that Queenslanders remember it.

We have seen members continually cut off. My question to the government is: when is the next parliamentary sitting or are we going all year with this ‘adjourn to a date to be fixed’ and we do not know when we are sitting? Do you know what that shows? That shows the government have no plan. They have no idea what they are doing for the rest of the year. Why would they when now we have the Treasurer, ‘Prince Poppycock’ here, who every morning practises in front of the mirror—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I think I will pre-empt. You need to refer to members by their correct title, member for Kawana. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. We have the government completely trashing the Westminster convention. We have the Business Committee continuing to meet. When the Acting Leader of the House was on the teleconference last night and he asked me a question, there was this moment of

silence. Then he asked me another question. I said, 'I'm sorry, Mr Acting Leader. I'm not sure if you have been told how this Business Committee works. This is a system whereby the government trashes all democracy in Queensland, and I will not participate with procedures that wreck the democracy of Queensland.'

I have been consistent with our opposition to the Business Committee, whether it is Yvette D'Ath, the Leader of the House, or the Acting Leader of the House on the committee. On that note, I wish the Leader of the House all the very best with her recovery. She had surgery yesterday. We spoke just before she went in for her operation. I wish her all the very best.

There are important matters that should be debated in the Queensland parliament. I was told yesterday in the Business Committee that we are going to have a COVID-19 bill introduced today and we have no idea what is in it—again, another COVID-19. The government has not announced what is in this COVID-19 bill. They always call for bipartisanship. Wouldn't you think they would brief the opposition on this COVID-19 bill? Was it because the Premier was asked at a press conference on Sunday, 'What are we debating this week?' and she said, 'It's all going to be COVID related,' not realising that there is no bill before the House about COVID. What a disgrace! The government is chaotic. It is in a shambles. The only way to fix it is on 31 October.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.28 am): If the member for Kawana was disappointed, you can imagine how I felt, Mr Deputy Speaker. We all have to make sacrifices in this job. I am prepared to take one for the team. I am very pleased to play a role here and support the government program. What we see here is the usual amateur thespian routine from the member for Kawana. He is like the actor who has played the same role for five years who knows the lines but does not really have any passion behind them anymore. He goes through the motions but there is nothing really there—the kind of thing that sends everybody off to sleep.

We are very clear in this parliament in relation to having contemporary values, family-friendly hours and managing the business of this parliament. I have been here for five years now, and that has been long enough to hear an endless number of opposition speeches with the same old dusty talking points they still use from the Bligh government. Time and time again you hear the same points being made about the same piece of legislation. Family-friendly hours challenge all of us to prioritise the points and contributions we need to make. That is what parliaments do all around the world and we are no different.

The member for Kawana loves to tweet and Facebook about anything to do with the royal family. He loves the monarchy and he loves the UK. He loves everything about the UK except the way they run their parliament, because that is exactly how we run this parliament using Westminster principles, prioritising legislation and ensuring we have enough space for all the things we need to do: there are prebriefings for the opposition; the non-government motion on Wednesday evening; we have made provision for first speeches; and ordering programs so there is ample time for shadow ministers, committee members and others to make their contributions.

It is incumbent on all of us not to waste this time with long, turgid speeches until two o'clock in the morning. That is not what people out there think the parliament should be about. The parliament should be ordered, just as any other parliament is throughout the world, particularly within the Westminster system which ours is based on. This program is sensible. I cannot see any issue here in terms of the amount of time people have to debate it. The member for Kawana made the point, 'Oh my God, we don't know what's coming up.' Well, doesn't the member for Kawana realise there is a pandemic on? That means it is a dynamic situation. We have to be consistent with all of the health advice in this parliament. Is it any surprise to anybody here or anywhere else that we will be debating coronavirus related legislation? Why is this a surprise to anybody? Clearly, this is a situation that the government continues to respond actively to in all sorts of ways, and the legislature is no different.

We have been incredibly successful in this state. We are the best-performing state in terms of our response to the coronavirus of any jurisdiction in Australia. We declared a health emergency on 29 January, six weeks before the United States, and now we only have 13 active cases in Queensland though it is still spreading, so we have work to do. Compare that to New South Wales where, depending on whether you read the *Financial Review* or the *Sydney Morning Herald*, there are between 412 and 560 active cases and community transmission remains very strong.

We have to manage this parliament in a way that is consistent with the situation and the circumstances we have, and that means ensuring that everyone prioritises their role here. The opposition could learn a little bit about discipline and focus, because that is what it requires. We do not

need long, turgid speeches until two o'clock in the morning. That is not what a modern parliament is about. I back the Acting Leader of the House. The opposition should wake up to themselves and stop wasting time. They say time is precious, yet they waste half an hour in every week of parliament with the same old speech from the member for Kawana. I sense a contradiction.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.33 am): How laughable it is when this government talks about discipline! We have seen what has happened here over the last week, which has been an absolute shambles. I do think they have lost a deputy premier since Jim Elder. 'Oops, we lost a deputy premier! She's gone; let's bring in another one.' This government expects us to get on our knees and grovel and thank them for allowing us to come back to parliament this week. That is their reaction. That is what their attitude is with regard to parliament.

At the sitting week at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic they went a day short. Every week we had to wait with bated breath to see whether we would come back or when we would come back. They came back for a day. We quickly went through probably the most significant legislation that has gone through this House in the parliament's history, and again the debate was truncated. Now we have this sitting, and we should be eternally grateful for the privilege of being here. Of course, we do not know when we are sitting again.

One of the principles we debate every time we come to parliament is that, when you truncate parliament, when you have these so-called family-friendly hours, when you say you can only debate for a certain period of time, when you take away some of the speaking rights the previous parliament had, it is more about the issues you do not cover and that you cannot cover as an opposition. This morning has been a classic example. The Premier has come out and basically said that the road map to easing restrictions that was released last week is not worth the paper it is written on. Queenslanders and businesses are looking for some consistency and some certainty. Now we hear about border confusion and the different positions the government has—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I do not see anything in the business motion before the House that relates to the matters that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is speaking to.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Member for Everton, I would ask you to come back to the motion, please.

**Mr MANDER:** As I was saying, it is about the opportunities the opposition does not have to examine the government's agenda and their policy initiatives—some of which, as they rightly claim themselves, are some of the most significant that have been brought into this House. The opposition is all about keeping this government accountable. That includes making sure the new Treasurer knows what the debt level is and whether the Premier understands the testing regime with regard to coronavirus and realising that, when you are asymptomatic and you are tested, it picks up whether you have the virus or not and not saying things like, 'I'll look into that', which is the regular response we get from the Premier when she basically stuffs up her lines.

**Mr Janetzki:** 'I've got to go to lunch.'

**Mr MANDER:** 'I've got to go to lunch.' I will take that interjection. The consistency issue is incredibly important, whether it is in relation to the borders or the schools. We want to ask questions and we want to debate the fact that we have been misled. The Queensland public has been misled with regard to the safety of schools. All along this government has told us it has been unsafe to go back to school. The Chief Health Officer admitted last week that that was not the reason why schools were closed: the reason was to send a signal to 'dumb Queenslanders'—that is what they think they are, dumb Queenslanders—who cannot work out we are in a dangerous situation at the moment and cannot adapt how they live their lives so that we get the great results we have. Queenslanders have proven they understand things and they are happy to comply to make sure we keep this state safe.

We will get up in every sitting of parliament to debate a motion which takes away the basic principles of democracy. The Minister for Main Roads seems to be saying, 'What, you expect people to get up and represent their electorate? You expect everybody to get up and give their opinion on legislation? How dare you expect that!' That is why we will get up and speak every time about the principles of democracy. They have defied that and undermined those principles.

*(Time expired)*

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

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members are reminded of the changed voting structure. The total number of votes cast for each party includes those present under sessional orders and any proxy votes but must not include paired members or members asked to withdraw from the chamber and excluded from voting under the standing orders.

**AYES, 44:**

**ALP, 44—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

**NOES, 37:**

**LNP, 34—**Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Watts, Weir.

**Grn, 1—**Berkman.

**NQF, 1—**Costigan.

**Ind, 1—**Bolton.

Pairs: D'Ath, Wilson; Healy, Stevens; Pegg, Sorensen.

Resolved in the affirmative.

### Revocation and Dedication of Forest and Protected Areas



**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (11.44 am): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
  - (a) revoke by regulation under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the setting apart and declaration of part of a timber reserve;
  - (b) dedicate by regulation under section 29 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the revoked area of the aforementioned timber reserve as part of an existing national park;
  - (c) revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of one national park and part of one conservation park,
 as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

#### Description of areas to be revoked

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Monkhouse Timber Reserve | An area of about 9.9 hectares described as part of lot 165 on plan FTY1722 (to be described as lot 1 on AP23568 and dedicated as part of Ngalba Bulal National Park), as illustrated on the attached sketch. |
| Kondalilla National Park | An area of 0.1529 hectares described as part of lot 783 on plan NPW788 (to be described as lots 1 to 5 on SP305105), as illustrated on the attached sketch.  |
| Duggan Conservation Park | An area of 0.6849 hectares described as part of lot 2 on plan MCH5054 (to be described as lot 1 on SP314659), as illustrated on the attached sketch.   |

#### Description of areas to be dedicated

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Ngalba Bulal National Park | An area of about 9.9 hectares described as part of lot 165 on plan FTY1722 (to be described as lot 1 on AP23568), as illustrated on the attached sketch. |
|----------------------------|--|

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 growth and conservation of protected areas is a significant responsibility for any government. The Nature Conservation Act 1992 provides for a national park to be managed to the greatest possible extent for the permanent preservation of the area's natural condition and the protection of the area's cultural resources and values. The Palaszczuk government is committed to that management and protection, while understanding the need to provide for opportunities that will be of benefit to traditional owners and the community.

Protected areas in Queensland include both publicly owned and managed, or jointly managed, protected areas such as national parks and conservation parks. I will only support the revocation of land from protected areas and forestry estates where it can be clearly demonstrated that: it is in the interests of the specific tenure; it provides for greater protected area management effectiveness; there is a net conservation benefit as a result; it is in the interests of First Nation peoples and the public; and there is no reasonable practical alternative.

With such a large and dispersed protected area and forest reserve estate, there is the occasional need to revoke the dedication of areas for particular reasons. The revocation proposals being debated here today have been given careful consideration, and in each instance consultation has occurred with state and local government agencies, landholders and interested groups and persons, and of course First Nation peoples.

I can confirm to the House that the proposal to revoke part of Monkhouse Timber Reserve will not extinguish or affect native title or native title rights and interests in relation to the land. The timber reserve contains an area of about 9.9 hectares, and its revocation will allow the area to be dedicated as part of the existing Ngalba Bulal National Park, about 50 kilometres south of Cooktown. This action is a small yet important part of progressing the Eastern Kuku Yalanji land dealing to transfer the existing Daintree, Ngalba Bulal, Black Mountain and Hope Islands national parks and other lands to jointly managed national park inside the Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land project, encompassing an area of approximately 160,000 hectares. The revocation of this section of the timber reserve will form part of the government's commitment to hand back this land to its rightful traditional owners as part of the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program. Handback of this timber reserve land to Aboriginal traditional owners is scheduled for later this year. However, this handback time frame may be affected by the ability to conclude tenure negotiations with Eastern Kuku Yalanji representatives, given the current travel restrictions due to COVID-19.

The timber reserve was originally planned to be included into Ngalba Bulal National Park in 2007; however, a mining interest over the land precluded this action. The small area of timber reserve we are talking about today is very unusual in its dimensions, being 50 metres wide and two kilometres long. It generally follows one of the unnamed waterways which were mined for tin, gold and tungsten. In terms of the natural landscape, the area is very remote, with steep, mountainous, rainforest terrain. It has no dedicated access and is surrounded by the Ngalba Bulal National Park on all sides. The whole timber reserve was included as part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, thereby recognising the land as having an additional level of natural and cultural significance. The mining lease over the timber reserve was surrendered in 2017. This opened the way for the revocation to proceed and the land transfer to progress.

Expanding partnerships and joint management opportunities with First Nation peoples is a priority of the Palaszczuk government. When it comes to fire management, QPWS works collaboratively with more than 30 First Nation groups when implementing fire within protected areas. This involvement can be at a management planning stage or on the ground with the planning and direct application of fire. The LNP opposition recently proposed a trial of this kind of fire management partnership, but let me be clear to the House that our government is far beyond a trial. We are already in partnership with First Nation people, and we will continue to build on those partnerships because we know that their experience and knowledge of Queensland's environmental and cultural landscape is invaluable to its conservation.

The proposal to revoke part of Kondalilla National Park, containing an area of about 0.15 hectares, will allow for a public road upgrade about 10 kilometres north of Maleny. The Sunshine Coast Regional Council is undertaking to seal a section of Flaxton Mill Road. During preliminary investigations, council determined that parts of the constructed gravel road encroach slightly on the national park. The encroachment of these five small areas requires resolution prior to council conducting the roadworks. The upgrade works will retain the existing road alignment and width with minor adjustment, add additional gravel pavement and provide a bitumen sealed surface to the existing road. The proposed scope of works will minimise construction impact on the values of Kondalilla National Park and is expected to reduce the impact of dust and siltation from the operation of the road on the national park once the work is completed. Suitable compensation for the loss of any inherent natural, environmental, social and cultural values associated with the area being revoked has been agreed upon with the Department of Environment and Science.

The proposal for the revocation of part of Duggan Conservation Park, containing an area of about 0.69 hectares, is for public road purposes about 1.5 kilometres south-east of Hervey Bay. The current infrastructure of Boundary Road and Denmans Camp Road does not currently have the capacity to

meet future requirements. This route has been designated by the Fraser Coast Regional Council as the secondary east-west traffic distributor for the city of Hervey Bay, connecting the suburbs of Urrangan and Urraween.

The council plans to extend Boundary Road to the west through to Urraween Road over the next four to five years. The project is estimated at \$20 million and is a cornerstone of the local government infrastructure plan. Consideration was given to finding alternative routes or designs that would not impact on the conservation park, and it was determined that no other practical routes could be used to meet this function.

The scope of the upgrade works includes doubling the current road capacity to four lanes, a district footpath, an open drainage channel and a major services corridor. The proposal is supported by an environmental management plan that has determined practical measures to minimise impacts on the conservation park through identifying and reducing impacts on the natural and cultural values of the site. These measures include minimal vegetation removal and rerouting a portion of the open drainage stormwater flow to avoid significant impacts to the site. Suitable compensation has been agreed with the Department of Environment and Science.

Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has grown the protected area estate in Queensland by more than one million hectares, and we take the responsibility of this conservation very seriously. These revocations are in the best interests of Queensland communities. I urge all members to support the motion before the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (11.53 am): The opposition will be supporting the revocation motion moved by the minister. We do so both for the realignment and widening purposes in the areas of Maleny and Hervey Bay respectively as we do for the revocation of the Monkhouse Timber Reserve, approximately 9.9 hectares, from timber reserve to national park. I thank the minister for the opportunity for the briefing prior to the legislation coming before the House. I thank her also for outlining the principles by which she guides her assessment of revocations.

I take this opportunity to highlight what I see is a clear deficiency in this state at the moment, and that is our vision for growing our protected areas. I will say that the opposition supports the revocation of the timber reserve into the national park; that is fair and reasonable and the right thing to do. However, we need more than just a strategy where we accept things when they come forward based on ILUAs and the like. We need a clear strategy to increase protected areas in this state.

I highlight to the House the diabolical fall in funding for the acquisition of new parks in this state. The member for Glass House is in the chamber—and I do sincerely hope he gets an opportunity to contribute today. If we look at the funding set aside for the acquisition of national parks in this state, it has fallen by about two-thirds on average when comparing what he delivered as environment minister to what has been delivered in the past half a decade. We must get serious about this.

It was only a handful of years ago that the then environment minister, now Deputy Premier, stood up and signed on to a procedure that would bind us to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and said that we would reach 17 per cent of protected areas in this state. We are currently at 8.2 per cent, not 17 per cent and we did not start from scratch; we started at 7½ per cent. On that trajectory we are looking at half a century before we get close to what we said we would have delivered by now. We need action.

A Queensland Audit Office report titled *Conserving threatened species* showed how diabolical this situation is if we do not kickstart a serious acquisition of protected areas in this state. The minister mentioned the need for maintenance. Yes, he is spot-on, but it is not happening the way it should be at the moment. Landholders will tell him that many times the worst neighbour they have is the state government, which does not embark on sufficient maintenance of its assets. The time starts now.

Finally, before I conclude my contribution, I ask the government to come forward as part of what we are experiencing now to develop a vision for an environmentally led recovery. It should look seriously at acquiring areas, improving the ones we have and looking for economic opportunities that come with allowing people to enjoy our national parks and allow the maintenance to occur. That will deliver benefits for us now and into the future. We support the revocation.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (11.56 am): I rise to speak in support of the revocation motion. I support this motion because it fulfils part of the government's commitment to hand back cultural lands to the rightful traditional owners. It also provides for improved community, road safety and capacity in the Sunshine Coast and Fraser Coast regions. The Monkhouse Timber Reserve revocation proposal contains an area of about 9.9 hectares, and its revocation will allow for the area to be dedicated as part of the existing Ngalba Bulal National Park and jointly managed as Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land.

The revocation of 0.1529 hectares from Kondalilla National Park will enable the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to implement road upgrades that will see the unpaved section of Flaxton Mill Road sealed to support the increasing use of the road. I understand the Sunshine Coast Regional Council has considered the proposal carefully and put in place measures to minimise the potential impacts upon the natural and cultural values of the adjoining national park. The proposal will actually help reduce the current impact of dust on the national park caused by existing road use. This proposal will provide positive environmental outcomes for the national park and also into the future to cater for higher volumes of traffic.

The proposed excisions from the Kondalilla National Park are very minor and the outcomes of this proposal are positive for the natural values of the area. Consultation has occurred with affected stakeholders as well as state and local government agencies with all parties agreeing to this revocation. Suitable compensation will be provided for the loss of the state's assets.

The revocation of 0.6849 hectares from Duggan Conservation Park allows for upgrades to Boundary Road and the junction of Boundary and Denmans Camp roads. This upgrade will contribute to improved community safety as well and deliver road infrastructure with increased capacity for the city of Hervey Bay. The proposed works form part of the transformation of Boundary Road into a major urban arterial for public use. The proposal is critical to the community and the city of Hervey Bay, as it will become the secondary east-west arterial road for the city and will service increasing demand on public road infrastructure into the future in Hervey Bay.

The Fraser Coast Regional Council has negotiated the proposal with the Queensland government to minimise the impacts of works upon the natural values of the conservation park. The Fraser Coast Regional Council has determined a number of practical measures to reduce impacts on natural values as a result of this project. An environmental management plan has been prepared with careful consideration to reduce impacts on the conservation park, including the identification of natural and cultural values for the site, minimal vegetation removal, a replacement boundary fence and the rerouting of stormwater flow that would avoid impacts for the site. I understand consultation was conducted with stakeholders and state and local government agencies, and all parties have indicated support for this revocation. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.00 pm): I, too, rise to address the revocation of a number of national parks around the state but I will particularly focus my comments on the Kondalilla National Park. I pick up and thank the member for Broadwater for his comments. National park protected areas and state expansion under the former LNP government are something of which I am extremely proud as the former environment minister. Indeed, what we have seen since the additions to the protected areas of state are likely only the actual formation of national parks that were purchased by the LNP during our time in government. We see very little effort by this current government to continue to expand our protected areas of state. As the member for Broadwater also highlighted, they have done zero in terms of ensuring that our national parks are good neighbours for our farmers and landholders around the state.

The revocation in the Kondalilla National Park is occurring around the area of Flaxton in the north of the electorate of Glass House. It comes as a result of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council looking to improve Flaxton Mill Road. I know all of the residents in that part of the world would certainly welcome that, and therefore there is no opposition from me or anyone in the electorate of Glass House to this proposed revocation. It is also important to point out that, since Kondalilla National Park reopened under relaxation of the COVID restrictions, it has been incredibly popular. It is one of the real tourism highlights of the Sunshine Coast and indeed the Sunshine Coast hinterland. In fact, in using some of the extra time that I have with them, my family and I have been spending a fair bit of time over the last couple of weekends in Kondalilla National Park.

The access road, Flaxton Mill Road, through to Flaxton Walkers Camp has been well traversed, as has the northern route to Baxter Falls. I am ashamed to admit that I have been in the area for 17 years and that is one site I had not previously visited, but since being there the wife, children and I have been back twice already and intend to be back a lot more. It is a little-known gem within the great walk in the Kondalilla National Park. Everyone walks to Kondalilla Falls and down to Baroon Pocket Dam. They do not know about Baxter Falls—and I probably should not have mentioned it in the chamber because we will see people there—as it is a fantastic little trip. I certainly encourage everyone in the House to take in all parts of the great walk through the Blackall Range, not just those well traversed.

With those short comments, I again add my support to this revocation. Revocations are not taken easily. The hard work that is taken to add protected areas of state within Queensland is not something undone easily, but in this case it is a sensible suggestion and it has my support.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 4 February (see p. 38).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (12.03 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for its consideration of the bill and for its report tabled on 27 March 2020. I now table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 46, 56th Parliament—Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, government response [\[763\]](#).

The loss of one life in the workplace is one life too many. The loss of any life in the mining and quarrying industry is simply not acceptable. Families expect that, when their loved ones depart for work, they will return safely. As a Labor minister in the Labor government, that is my expectation too.

On 10 July 2019 I brought all Queensland mining and quarrying leaders together to recommit to put safety front of mind. This resulted in more than 51,000 workers taking part in more than 1,100 safety resets at more than 200 mines and quarries. While attending the safety resets last year, I heard firsthand from workers about their experiences on the job around safety. On this side of the House we talk to Queensland workers; listening to workers is part of who we are. This Labor government will always act to protect workers. Queensland has the toughest mine safety and health laws in the world.

This bill will make industrial manslaughter an offence in mines just as it is already in other Queensland workplaces. No matter where they work, Queenslanders deserve to return home safely and be equally protected by our state's laws. The most important product to come off a mine site or a quarry at the end of the shift is not minerals or coal; it is a worker heading home to their family and friends. I want the House to note that the health of a safety culture can be measured by this well used saying, 'The standard you walk past is the standard you accept.' That means no fatalities, no serious accidents and no disease. Safety and health is a shared responsibility. It sits with employers, unions and workers in the inspectorate and it sits with us all. As a doctor I am bound by an oath, 'First do no harm.' I apply that to every aspect of my life, including my responsibilities as a minister.

I reflect on the Brady report. The Brady report stated that people think of mining and quarrying as hazardous industries. There are risks because it is mining and quarrying, but it also stated that we should not think of it like that. We should think of it just as a normal, everyday job where every worker has the right to return home safely. It should not be as it is in mining, but it is hazardous. It should not be. We can achieve that in the state with the cooperation of unions, workers, industry and the government, and that is my aim. Our government will continue to pass legislation and embed a culture so that every time a mine or quarry worker heads to a shift their family and friends know that they will return home safely.

I welcome the committee's first recommendation: that the bill be passed. I thank those who took time to make a submission on this bill. This bill progresses important reforms to resources safety and health legislation. It implements legislative changes that support ongoing improvements to the financial insurance and mine rehabilitation regulatory frameworks and continues reforms that improve the efficiency of the resources sector regulatory framework.

The first important area of reform relates to resources safety and health. The bill seeks to strengthen the safety culture of Queensland's resources sector with two significant changes. The bill introduces a specific offence of industrial manslaughter into resources safety legislation that will apply when the criminal negligence of an employer or a senior officer causes the death of a worker in the resources sector. The new offence also ensures there is consistency in how deaths of workers in Queensland worksites are treated and aligns with the Queensland government's commitment to ensuring the safety and health of all workers across all industries.

Serious penalties will apply under these provisions, including up to 20 years imprisonment for an individual and a fine up to \$13.3 million for a corporation. This offence sends the clear message to employers and senior officers that the safety and health of their workers is paramount. If they act with criminal negligence, they will be prosecuted.

The bill also amends the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 to require that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations must be an employee of the coalmine operator. This amendment will provide those critical officers with confidence that they can raise and report safety issues without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment. How many times did I hear that at the safety reset? Time and time again the fear of reprisal or impact on their employment was raised.

It is concerning that the opposition, particularly the member for Burdekin, has not publicly supported this legislation already. Nearly three years ago the LNP voted with One Nation to oppose industrial manslaughter laws for non-resources workplaces. The member for Burdekin has spoken in the media regarding getting calls on a daily basis from miners concerned about safety practices at mine sites, yet despite workers coming to him frightened about safety standards he does worse than nothing; he actually votes against essential laws.

It is clear that resource workers deserve the equivalent protection that all other workers in all other Queensland workplaces already have under this Palaszczuk government. Other amendments to resources safety and health legislation in the bill include validating certain costs orders made by the Industrial Magistrates Court and providing for the lawful making of future costs orders and amending the regulation-making powers under the Explosives Act 1999 to allow certain regulations to be made.

The second key area of reform in the bill relates to the Palaszczuk government's ongoing reforms to strengthen Queensland's financial assurance regime. The amendments included in the bill follow extensive consultation with stakeholders over the past three years. The bill provides the state with greater oversight when a resource authority changes control in two specific circumstances.

The first is where a company sells a resource authority to another company, resulting in a direct change of control. This transaction is currently regulated under the resource acts and requires the minister's approval. The bill includes an amendment that requires the proposed transferee to demonstrate that they have the financial resources to fund the estimated rehabilitation costs for the project in addition to the existing requirements under the legislation. This will allow for the consideration of the proposed transferee's ability to meet the rehabilitation expenses for the tenure.

The second circumstance is where there is an indirect change for control. An indirect change for control occurs where there is a change to the entity who controls the holder of the resource authority. These transactions are regulated by the Commonwealth under the Corporations Act 2001 and often occur behind the corporate wall.

The bill includes amendments to the resource acts to enable the minister to vary resource authority conditions if an indirect change of control occurs and the holder of the resource authority does not possess the resources to comply with the conditions of the resource authority. The bill also requires mineral mines that produce above a certain threshold amount of prescribed minerals to complete and comply with a development plan. This requirement will increase the state's oversight of activities on significant mineral mines and provide additional information about sites that may enter care and maintenance.

The intent of the bill's amendments to the remediation of abandoned mines and abandoned operating plants is to ensure the remediation powers provide sufficient scope to ensure sites are safe, secure, durable and, where possible, productive. The amendments install a framework permitting authorised persons to carry out remediation activities on land beyond the boundary of a site, enabling the state to more effectively remediate land that has been affected by an abandoned site. Unless there is an emergency, entry to this land will require the consent of the land's owner and occupier.

The list of remediation activities that may be undertaken on abandoned sites has been expanded, including the ability to assess whether a site can be released for alternate land uses or recommercialised and released for future mining under the new mining lease tendering provisions. These new provisions introduce a competitive tender process that will allow the successful tenderer to apply directly for a mining lease. Land that is the subject of this competitive tender process will be excluded from applications for other resource authorities or tender processes. This provides tenderers with certainty that they will be able to mine the land if their bid is successful. The existing requirements

for mining lease applications will not be affected by the process. The provisions for this new tendering process for mining leases is similar to the existing tendering process for other tenure types, particularly in the way it allows relevant matters to be considered in deciding the tenure.

Since the Palaszczuk government was first elected in 2015 we have demonstrated a strong record of releasing land for tender, with more than 72,000 square kilometres for petroleum and gas exploration, more than 1,900 square kilometres for coal and more than 1,200 square kilometres for minerals exploration. These new provisions will allow the state to release areas of land for a mining lease if the site is suitable for production.

The Palaszczuk government has always put workers and their safety at the centre of our policy-making. I am pleased to inform the House that I have directed my department to ensure that all tender processes have an increased focus on the applicant's safety record. The updated health and safety criteria now include information requirements about reported incidents or high-potential incidents, remedial actions, improvement directions and more detailed information and evidence relating to the applicant's safety management system. These criteria will apply to all tender processes, including any tender that is released under the new mining lease tendering provisions being established by this bill and is a key requirement in our most recently released coal tender. In addition, the criteria weightings to be used in the evaluation of tender bids will be published to improve the transparency of the process.

The bill also strengthens the state's ability to assess the suitability of resource authority applicants and proposed transferees in Queensland with the introduction of disqualification criteria for applications made under the resources acts. The intent of these amendments is to reduce the risk that tenure is held by a person or entity that may not be able to meet their obligations under the resource authority. The decision-maker will be able to consider a range of matters, including examining whether an applicant has a history of serious noncompliance with prescribed legislation or offences against prescribed legislation.

The decision-maker will also be able to consider whether the applicant has a history of financial mismanagement such as insolvency. Convictions involving fraud and dishonesty will also be considered by the decision-maker to determine an applicant's suitability to hold tenure in Queensland. A decision to disqualify an applicant or proposed transferee is made at the discretion of the decision-maker, ensuring the decision-maker has the flexibility to consider the seriousness of each matter on a case-by-case basis. Procedural fairness is built into the decision-making process. Importantly, the ability to assess and disqualify an applicant or transferee will also apply to their associates. An associate includes any entity that can control or substantially influence the affairs of the applicant, company directors and parent companies.

The third key element of reform in the bill is a range of amendments to improve the regulatory efficiency of the resources acts. These amendments include: a framework to resolve commercial disputes between existing resource authority holders and applicants who want to coexist on the land with the existing holder; consolidation of the conference provisions that are currently found throughout the resource acts into one framework under the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014; a clarification that the minister may exclude certain land from exploration permits and mineral development licences when deciding to grant a new application or renew an existing authority; a new process that allows holders of Petroleum Act 1923 tenures to amalgamate them at the same time they transition those tenures into the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004; new provisions that allow certain documents to be served electronically rather than by hard copy; allowing companies to count areas that have successfully been converted to a petroleum lease towards the relinquishment requirements for their exploration tenures; and streamlining the way the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy registers a number of non-assessable transfers.

The bill also corrects provisions that allow potential commercial areas to be amalgamated. It amends the prosecution periods under several resource acts to make them consistent and makes a number of minor streamlining and modernising amendments. These amendments will ensure that the resources acts remain contemporary while also providing efficiencies and improvements for resource tenure holders and applicants.

The bill also includes some minor amendments to the legislation within the Natural Resources, Mines and Energy portfolio. Firstly, the bill includes minor amendments to water legislation to improve transparency and the public availability of information. Amendments to the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009 will require South-East Queensland distributor-retailers Urban Utilities and Unitywater to make information regarding the levying, collection and investment of water and sewerage infrastructure charges public. These amendments provide

greater transparency of financial information for both local governments and South-East Queensland distributor-retailers. Local governments have been required to publicly report this information since January 2020.

The bill also includes amendments to clarify the wording in the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 relating to the definition of the full supply level of a dam. This clarification will ensure that provisions apply as they are intended. An amendment to the New South Wales-Queensland Border Rivers Act 1946 is also included in the bill. This amendment explicitly allows for the appointment of a Queensland controlling authority and will support the appropriate operation of assets under the oversight of the Border Rivers Commission.

The bill also includes minor and technical amendments to maintain and strengthen the existing energy customer protection framework in Queensland. The insertion of a regulation-making power into the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act will ensure the ombudsman scheme is more responsive and better able to readily meet the changing needs of the energy market. In particular, the amendment will enable a new category of scheme participant to be made via a regulation rather than requiring an amendment to the act. This will ensure the ombudsman scheme is flexible enough to continue to support and protect small energy customers.

This government is also ensuring the continuation of a crucial protection that benefits some of our most vulnerable consumers. Through this bill we will ensure that the current ban on certain fees and charges, including late payment and paper billing fees, for customers on standard retail energy contracts remains in place as a permanent Queensland customer protection.

Having outlined the contents of the bill and the intention of the amendments, I will return to addressing the remaining recommendations made by the committee. The committee's second recommendation was that I clarify the standard of negligence that will apply in relation to the offence of industrial manslaughter. To clarify, where negligence is an element of a criminal offence, such as the industrial manslaughter offence, the standard of proof is the criminal standard of beyond a reasonable doubt and not the civil standard of on the balance of probabilities. Criminal negligence requires recklessness or gross negligence. This is a much higher standard than civil negligence.

The committee's third recommendation was that I clarify that the bill, read in relation to the current safety and health obligations, does not place a reverse onus of proof on a site senior executive in relation to the offence of industrial manslaughter. To clarify, the industrial manslaughter offence requires that the prosecution prove each element of the offence beyond a reasonable doubt. This includes that the employer or senior officer's negligent conduct caused the death of a worker. There is no reversal of the onus of proof on a site senior executive in relation to the offence of industrial manslaughter.

The committee's fourth recommendation was that the bill be amended to allow a transition period of 18 months for the amendments relating to statutory office holders. The Palaszczuk government supports this recommendation and acknowledges stakeholder concerns about meeting the requirements for statutory office holders. I can advise the House that I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail to allow a transition period of 18 months for these amendments. This extension will provide resource companies additional time to make any adjustments to their structures and other arrangements in order to facilitate this important safety change.

Over the coming months, my department will work closely with industry to provide guidance and assistance to ensure that they can meet their obligations as required by the law. Collaboration and common work towards this vital reform between industry and government will deliver good outcomes for our mineworkers on the ground.

The committee's fifth recommendation was that I give consideration to amendments to align the penalties for reprisal action under the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 and the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999 with the reprisal provisions in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The government supports this recommendation. The Palaszczuk government acknowledges stakeholders' concerns and wants to ensure that workers feel safe in raising complaints without reprisal. Make no mistake, any allegations about reprisal will be investigated. I take this matter extremely seriously. Every worker should feel free to speak up, speak out and feel safe. I am continuing to work with my department in examining what we can do in this space to strengthen protections for mineworkers in Queensland.

This amendment, initially suggested by the union movement on behalf of their mining members in their submissions to the committee and recommended by the committee, allows us to take action now whilst I continue to work with my department. I thank them all for their work and wish to advise

them that the Palaszczuk government did not hesitate for a moment in deciding whether or not to adopt this vital recommendation. The government will move amendments during consideration in detail to section 275AA of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 and section 254A of the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999 to align the penalty for reprisal with the reprisal provisions in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. This will mean that the penalty will rise from 40 penalty units to 1,000 penalty units.

The committee's sixth, seventh and eighth recommendations were that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy develop and publish operational guidelines about the process to assess an entity's financial and technical ability to comply with conditions of a resource authority when there is a change of control; the process to apply the disqualification criteria in assessing tenure applications for a resource authority; and the process to allow petroleum leases areas to count towards relinquishment requirements. The government accepts these recommendations, and I can advise the House that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy will prepare guidance material in line with these recommendations.

The committee's ninth recommendation was that the bill be amended so that proposed new section 99BU(6) of the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009 requires that information about infrastructure charges forecast to be 'collected' be included in the distributor-retailer's infrastructure charges register. The Palaszczuk government supports the recommendation, and I can advise the House that I intend to move an amendment during consideration in detail.

I will also move three additional minor amendments to the bill. The first amends the commencement provisions so that several of the water provisions commence on assent rather than by proclamation. The second amends the current term used for the definition of 'prescribed mineral' under Schedule 6 of the Mineral Resources Regulation 2013 to ensure that the same term is not defined differently under the Mineral Resources Act 1989. The third amendment corrects a minor drafting error in the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020; namely, to clarify that the CEO of Resources Safety Health Queensland has, under the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, an ability to delegate their powers.

I table the explanatory notes to the amendments that will be moved during the consideration in detail stage and a statement of compatibility with human rights in relation to those amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes to Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments [\[764\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments [\[765\]](#).

Again I would like to thank the committee for its time in considering the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Dr Lynham, adjourned.

## JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE) AMENDMENT BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.27 pm): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): The message from His Excellency recommends the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE) AMENDMENT BILL 2020

*Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68*

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

A Bill for an Act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, the Casino Control Act 1982, the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2005, the Corrective Services Act 2006,

the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Forensic Disability Act 2011, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Keno Act 1996, the Liquor Act 1992, the Local Government Act 2009, the Lotteries Act 1997, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999, the Public Health Act 2005 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 19 May 2020

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 19 May 2020, from His Excellency the Governor recommending the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020 [\[766\]](#).

## Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.28 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, the Casino Control Act 1982, the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2005, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Forensic Disability Act 2011, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Keno Act 1996, the Liquor Act 1992, the Local Government Act 2009, the Lotteries Act 1997, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999, the Public Health Act 2005 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020 [\[767\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes [\[768\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[769\]](#).

I rise to introduce the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill. The bill builds on the Palaszczuk government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Queenslanders, our businesses and our government agencies have all risen to the challenge of tackling this virus and protecting our community. The health, employment, disability, residential, leisure, environmental protection, law enforcement, corrective services and youth detention sectors have implemented extraordinary measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and prepare for an emergency response if there is a significant increase in community transmission of this disease. The Palaszczuk government will support these sectors with their efforts. Even though we have started to wind back our restrictions, we will continue to feel the immediate effects of this global pandemic for months to come, which means we will need the flexibility that this bill permits in certain circumstances.

The public health emergency we continue to experience is one of a kind. It requires a tailored and ever evolving response as new challenges arise. The Palaszczuk government has already introduced a number of unique legislative measures in response to the pandemic. We were the first state to declare the pandemic a public health emergency and we were the first state to strengthen those emergency powers with new legislation: the Public Health and Other Legislation (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Act 2020, passed on 18 March 2020. We also passed the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, passed on 22 April 2020. The emergency response act established a framework that applied across the statute book, providing the powers necessary to ensure our business, health and law enforcement sectors can continue to operate smoothly during a public health emergency.

This bill includes a technical amendment to clarify the operation of the statutory time limit modification provisions in the emergency response act and addresses those issues that cannot be addressed under the modification framework in the emergency response act—issues that have come to light since its passage—and also includes amendments that will ensure Queensland is prepared should a second wave of virus transmission require stricter social distancing measures. The common thread that links these amendments is that they represent a shared commitment to support Queenslanders and, in particular, our business, health and law enforcement sectors to ensure that we all continue to work together to overcome this health emergency and emerge stronger than ever.

In particular, this bill will safeguard the revenue stream for local governments and assist in minimising the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the state. It will provide economic support for Queensland businesses and individuals suffering financial distress caused by the public health

emergency. It will support Queensland's health, disability, corrections and youth detention sectors to operate safely and effectively and it will support law enforcement efforts in keeping Queenslanders safe. It is important to note that the extraordinary legislative responses to the pandemic proposed within this bill are, for the most part, time limited. Most amendments will expire on 31 December 2020, with only a few extending beyond this time. I propose now to give a brief overview of the amendments proposed by this bill, in the order in which they appear.

Firstly, I turn to the amendments to body corporate and related legislation in part 2 of the bill. The purpose of this part is to provide measures to alleviate the financial burdens being experienced by bodies corporate for community title schemes, as well as individual unit owners, as a result of COVID-19. The community titles sector is a vital part of Queensland's economy and communities, providing a wide range of housing, lifestyle and investment options for many Queenslanders and visitors to our state. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a range of specific issues and challenges for the community titles sector. The bill alleviates the financial burden on the community titles sector by making temporary modifications to financial management arrangements under the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 and the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980. More specifically, the bill amends the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 to provide bodies corporate and their committees with increased flexibility regarding long-term budgeting, due dates of unit owners' levies, timing of debt recovery proceedings and borrowing. The bill also amends the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 to prevent bodies corporate from applying penalty interest on outstanding levies from the date of commencement until the expiry of the amendments on 31 December 2020.

Part 3 of the bill includes four amendments to the Corrective Services Act 2006 that will assist Queensland's adult correctional environment to continue operating safely and effectively during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Firstly, the bill will provide greater flexibility when releasing prisoners to parole to better facilitate their return to remote or regional communities. Where required, new section 110A will allow the chief executive to order the release of a prisoner from a Corrective Services facility within seven days immediately before the day on which the prisoner was due to be released on parole. COVID-19 travel restrictions are impacting release arrangements, which puts prisoners at risk of homelessness. The amendment replicates existing provisions in place for those being discharged from custody under section 110 of the Corrective Services Act 2006. On release from the corrective services facility and until the parole order starts, the prisoner is subject to the conditions of the parole order as if the parole order had started on the day the prisoner was released from the facility.

The bill will also allow longer-term acting appointments for the Parole Board Queensland under section 228 of the Corrective Services Act 2006, ensuring the board has flexibility to respond to the foreseeable increase in parole applications associated with COVID-19. Further, the bill will expand the application of a declaration of emergency made under section 268 of the Corrective Services Act 2006 to any corrective services facility. This power currently applies only to prisons, which excludes other facilities that may be impacted by COVID-19, such as the Helana Jones Centre and work camps. Finally, the bill clarifies the Corrective Services commissioner's power regarding corrective services facilities administered by engaged service providers under section 272 of the Corrective Services Act 2006. These amendments will ensure that Queensland Corrective Services and the Parole Board Queensland have powers necessary to ensure the health and safety of prisoners, and lawfully maintain security and good order in corrective services facilities for the duration of the pandemic.

Part 4 of the bill includes amendments to the Disability Services Act 2006 and the Forensic Disability Act 2011. These amendments focus on the safety and wellbeing of people with an intellectual disability or cognitive disability and clients of the Forensic Disability Service during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The amendments balance individual rights and safeguards with the need to protect individuals, workers and the wider community from infection. Amendments to the Disability Services Act 2006 will ensure that disability service providers can lock gates, doors and windows to prevent an adult with an intellectual or cognitive disability from breaching a public health direction. Amendments to the Forensic Disability Act 2011 will ensure that public health directions can be followed in the Forensic Disability Service.

Part 5 of the bill amends the Disaster Management Act 2003 to provide for a longer period—up to 90 days—by which the declaration of the COVID-19 disaster situation can be extended. This will provide certainty for disaster officers and the community regarding the application of disaster powers and will support longer term disaster management planning. Amendments to the Disaster Management Act will also set aside the entitlement to compensation for loss or damage suffered as a result of the exercise of powers in response to the COVID-19 emergency. While the impacts on the community are

being addressed through more broadly based protective and stimulus measures, this provision protects Queensland taxpayers against compensation claims as the economic effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency continue to be felt.

Part 6 of the bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to ensure that businesses affected by immediate additional challenges resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency can continue to operate lawfully while the government continues to protect the environment. To achieve this, the bill will provide two new powers. First, the bill will allow the administering authority to issue temporary environmental authorities without the normal application process where additional capacity is required due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Secondly, the bill responds to business concerns by providing for the environment minister to declare a temporary pause of certain conditions placed on an approval. This power will allow a timely response to immediate challenges and avoid the need to undergo the more detailed and time-consuming process of amending individual approvals. This amendment is time limited to 31 December 2020, with necessary transitional provisions to apply, which commence on 1 January 2021.

To assist hospitality venues impacted by non-essential business closure directions, part 7 of the bill amends the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Casino Control Act 1982, the Keno Act 1996 and the Lotteries Act 1997 to provide for the deferral or waiver of certain gambling taxes. The amendments contained in the bill will commence retrospectively to validate the existing deferral of gaming machine taxes announced on 6 April 2020. The amendments provide that the minister responsible for the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Casino Control Act 1982, the Keno Act 1996 and the Lotteries Act 1997, with approval from the Treasurer, may defer or waive a tax collected under those acts through the issue of a notice. A notice may provide for deferred taxes to be repaid in instalments, including on terms decided by the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming. Terms must require deferred taxes to be paid in full by no later than 30 June 2021. The amendments and any notice issued under the amendments will expire on 31 December 2020. A transitional provision ensures that the obligation to pay deferred taxes remains in place despite the expiry.

Part 8 of this bill amends the Liquor Act 1992 to allow the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming to provide liquor licensees with an authority to sell take away alcohol, even if such sales are not allowed under the current licence or permit. The authority may be granted retrospectively to validate administrative decisions already instigated by the commissioner since 23 March 2020. The authority may also be granted for premises supplying an alcohol restricted area if necessary to prevent people leaving the community to access alcohol from more populous areas then returning. The bill allows for a take away liquor authority to be modified by reducing the allowable amount of liquor that can be sold as pandemic restrictions are eased and on-premises liquor consumption is gradually reintroduced. The commissioner may also remove or amend an authority if satisfied that the licensee has contravened the authority but only after the issuing of a show cause notice. However, the bill provides that this can be suspended immediately and subsequently revoked if necessary.

Part 9 of the bill amends the City of Brisbane Act 2020 and the Local Government Act 2009 to provide a temporary regulation-making power to enable Queensland local councils to decide by resolution outside of an annual budget meeting what rates and charges are to be levied for part of the 2020-21 financial year. These amendments respond to serious concerns in the local government sector about the financial sustainability of councils and provide the flexibility for them to revisit their rates decisions in the financial year if needed. This amendment will expire on 30 June 2021 to ensure that any alteration to rates applies to the entire 2020-21 financial year.

Part 10 of the bill amends the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003 to insert a temporary regulation-making power that will allow for the modification or suspension of processes for increasing or reducing site rent in residential parks and to modify the processes for disputing proposed site rent increases during the COVID-19 public health emergency. This will enable the government to address issues raised by industry groups and manufactured home owners about rigid processes mandated in the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003 and difficulties in applying these processes during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Part 11 of the bill makes amendments to the Mental Health Act 2016 that will provide continuity of mental health treatment for patients who need to be relocated because of COVID-19. The amendments will allow the Chief Psychiatrist to authorise leave from an authorised mental health service and provide an expedited process for declaring additional authorised mental health services and appointing administrators to run those services. These provisions are subject to safeguards and are intended to be used as a last resort. The provisions may be needed, for example, to respond to an outbreak of COVID-19 at an authorised mental health service or to comply with a public health direction.

Part 12 of the bill amends the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act to provide a legislative framework for police to apply to a magistrate for a disease test order to have a person tested for COVID-19 in circumstances where a person wilfully coughs, spits or sneezes on another person and has been arrested for an assault offence under the Criminal Code. A victim of such a malicious act may be placed under significant stress as they have no way of knowing with any degree of certainty whether the offender may be infectious with the potentially deadly COVID-19 virus. The ability to seek a court ordered COVID-19 test will also protect the health, safety and welfare of the victim's families and the broader community as it will allow the victim to self-isolate if the alleged offender tests positive for COVID-19. These amendments complement the strong measures established under the Public Health Direction, Protecting Public Officials and Workers (Spitting, Coughing and Sneezing) Direction (No. 2), issued by the Chief Health Officer on 1 May 2020. This part will expire at the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency or on 31 December 2020, whichever is later. Transitional provisions are also included to ensure that an order made immediately prior to the expiry of the provision can still be complied with.

To provide relief from financial hardship, part 13 of the bill introduces temporary amendments to the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991, and the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2005. The amendments will allow registered workers under these schemes with at least five years service to temporarily apply for payment of all or part of their long service leave entitlement if they are experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 emergency. Ordinarily, registered workers under these schemes would not be able to apply for their pro rata long service leave entitlements until they have reached 10 years or equivalent service under their respective industry scheme. These changes have been advocated for and supported by the building and construction industry portable long service leave board and by industry stakeholders including employers and worker representatives. It is intended that the scheme will be able to deal with applications flexibly in light of the range of circumstances which might affect individuals and their households.

Existing review and appeal rights under the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991 and the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2005 will apply to any decision regarding early access to long service leave.

Part 14 of the bill amends the Private Health Facilities Act 1991 to allow the Chief Health Officer to waive or defer fees that would otherwise be payable by private health facilities on application for the renewal of a licence or changes to a licence. These amendments are necessary to reduce the financial impact of COVID-19 on operators of private health facilities in the event that they are directed to cease elective surgery or to change the scope of services they provide in order to assist the Queensland government's response to the COVID-19 emergency.

Part 15 of the bill amends the Public Health Act 2005. The amendments will enhance Queensland Health's ability to quickly respond to new cases of community transmission by allowing additional qualified delegates to authorise the disclosure of confidential information for the purpose of contact tracing. The confidentiality of this information will continue to be protected as there are no changes to the restrictions on what information can be disclosed and for what purposes it can be used. The amendments to the Public Health Act 2005 also clarify the operation of public health directions issued by the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers during the COVID-19 public health emergency. For example, where a direction is given to a child to self-quarantine or self-isolate, the amendments provide that a direction may also be given to the child's parent to ensure that the child complies with the quarantine or isolation requirements. Some of the amendments to the Public Health Act 2005 will expire on 19 March 2021 rather than on 31 December 2020 because they amend the temporary emergency powers established under the Public Health and Other Legislation (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Act 2020. Since the amendments clarify the operation of the temporary emergency powers, they will expire at the same time as those powers.

Finally, turning to part 16 of the bill, this part inserts new section 264A into the Youth Justice Act 1992 to provide the option to appoint non-public service employees as temporary detention centre employees during the COVID-19 public health emergency if reasonably required to do so. The provision will ensure that appropriately qualified people are appointed as a temporary detention centre employee. I want to be clear that the appointment of temporary detention centre employees may only occur if the chief executive is satisfied that the appointment is reasonably necessary for the security and management of detention centres and the safe custody and wellbeing of children detained in detention centres.

The provision will only be utilised in the worst-case scenario where a large number of detention centre staff are suddenly unavailable for work due to an outbreak in a youth detention centre and will operate so that the government is not limited to public service employees when searching for suitable people to staff the centre. The first option will always be to employ any new staff under the Public Service Act 2008 where possible. Any appointment made under the provision will be revoked if no longer reasonably necessary for the security and management of detention centres and the safe custody and wellbeing of children detained in detention centres. All safeguards applying to existing detention centre employees such as the requirement to complete certain training prior to exercising a power will also apply to temporary detention centre employees appointed under the provision.

The government needs to be prepared for future unforeseen circumstances arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Acknowledging the extraordinary nature of the amendments in this bill and the need for an urgent legislative response, general safeguards apply across the provisions, including ensuring the amendments will expire on 31 December 2020 unless specifically provided for in limited circumstances which I have previously canvassed, and ensuring the operation of the Human Rights Act 2019 is explicitly preserved to ensure the human rights framework will continue to apply.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to consult with key stakeholders throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, listening and responding to their needs as this health and economic crisis evolves. The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing a strong response to the public health emergency which ensures the safety and economic future of all Queenslanders and to be prepared for future events.

In conclusion, I am sure all members will acknowledge the continued significance of the challenge presented by COVID-19 and the enormity of the response required. This bill demonstrates the continued commitment of the Palaszczuk government to support Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.50 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

### Declared Urgent; Suspension of Sessional Order; Allocation of Time Limit Order

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (12.51 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill and not stand referred to a committee;
2. That all stages of the bill be completed by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 21 May 2020;
3. That, for consideration in detail of this bill, sessional order 8 be suspended to allow all relevant ministers to be able to speak in relation to the clauses which amend legislation that they are responsible for without time limits; and
4. If all stages have not been completed by the time specified, Mr Speaker shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the bill, including clauses and schedules en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill, without further amendment or debate.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 883, on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.52 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. As the member for Burdekin and shadow minister for natural resources and mines, at the outset I say that we will not be opposing the bill, particularly off the back of the amendments just tabled by the minister regarding the extension of the period for compliance with the new statutory office holder requirements in the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 to 18 months. That issue around permanent employees and contractors remains a contentious one in the mining sector. Simply extending that period to 18 months will not necessarily resolve the issue regarding the appointment of permanent employees.

Our mines and quarrying industry is very close to my heart. Unlike some in this House, I speak to workers from that industry every single day. Unlike some in this House, I have visited mine sites and I have been underground. I have spoken to the parents, partners and friends of miners and quarry workers who have paid the ultimate price for the benefit of all of us. It is because of these interactions that we will not be opposing this bill. However, I make it crystal clear today that this legislation on its own will not fix the problems. There are still major concerns and issues associated with mine safety in this state.

Do my constituents and every other person who works in mines and quarries deserve safer workplaces? Of course they do. I know that and the LNP knows that. Should people who contribute to the death of a worker in any way be held to account? Of course they should be. This government and this minister have much more to do. They too need to be held to account.

Before moving on to the steps that I would like to see the minister take, I want to clarify a few points for the benefit of members and, more importantly, for Queensland's miners and quarry workers because they deserve the truth. Let us begin with the minister's claim that 'the LNP fail to support it' when referring to the committee's report. As any member will know from reading the committee report, the LNP members of the committee in fact highlighted the shortcomings of this legislation and, as is the role of a committee member, highlighted the implications this legislation would have for workers throughout the industry.

I attended the committee's public hearing at Moranbah. It was a packed house. During the course of that hearing we heard of the issues and concerns that senior managers right through to workers at the coalface continue to have around mine safety in this state. The minister's allegation is further proof that the LNP members' statement of reservation is correct in stating that 'this legislation may receive the headlines and media coverage that the minister is seeking'. If this minister had an ounce of credibility, he would correct his misleading statement during the course of this debate today.

It is not just the minister who is not providing the full picture when it comes to his media stunts. The member for Keppel recently wrote in the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* that this government 'has increased mines inspectors'. What the member for Keppel conveniently chose to omit was that the increase in 2018-19 was just two inspectors and that even then the number of mines inspectors was lower than the number in 2014-15. The member for Keppel also conveniently omitted that despite the appointment of two extra mines inspectors the total number of inspections of Queensland's mines and quarries in 2018-19 was lower than the number in 2017-18. In fact, it was seven per cent lower. Again, Queensland's miners and quarry workers deserve the truth.

The attempts of this minister and this government to mislead an industry that contributes over \$74 billion to the Queensland economy are not recent. This has been happening for years. It is this minister and this government that almost three years after its release have failed to act on the recommendations contained in the *Black lung white lies* report. The number of unannounced inspections is fewer than half the target set in that report—a target that was set based on the advice of industry professionals and industry participants. It is that report that recommended that Mine Safety and Health Queensland be based in Mackay to ensure access to sites and knowledge at the heart of Queensland's mining industry. However, as we now know, this minister and the government have decided that Brisbane is a better location. Queenslanders have every right to ask when this minister will take advice from industry workers and participants.

I will move on to the Brady report. The minister advised that the serious accident frequency rate and the high potential incident frequency rate would both be adopted as measures of safety and culture in the industry. What comfort does it provide to our miners and quarry workers that it took yet another report for the minister to adopt these indicators when that information is already held by the department? If we look at the serious accident frequency rate we find that it has been steadily climbing on an overall basis since this government came to power. In fact, if we look at quarries we find the rate has skyrocketed, but still the minister took no action.

Instead of taking action, instead of increasing the number of unannounced inspections in line with the recommendations contained within the *Black lung white lies* report and instead of simply increasing inspections, this minister stood by while the watchdog fobbed off responsibility to industry. As the minister with responsibility for an industry that contributes billions of dollars in royalties to this government and to this state, he does have a responsibility. The minister has a responsibility to explain to Queensland's miners and quarry workers, their families and their communities why compliance actions in the natural resources industry, in the mining sector, in Queensland were almost 80 per cent lower in 2018-19 than in 2017-18. If we focus on coalmines, the reduction over the same period was over 96 per cent.

Debate, on motion of Mr Last, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.00 pm.

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Coronavirus, Economic Response; Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): I would like to congratulate Queenslanders for the efforts they have made towards defeating coronavirus. Every Queenslanders has played a role in suppressing the virus. I thank our essential workers and those who have been forced to stay at home. I thank students for the way in which they have coped with this crisis and I thank our seniors for the sacrifices they have made. Together we are beating this disease.

Unfortunately, suppressing the virus is only half the battle. The cost of coronavirus to our economy is becoming clearer by the day. Queensland's already high unemployment rate is climbing even higher. In April, almost 130,000 Queenslanders left the workforce. Many of those still in work have had their hours and incomes cut. Few Queenslanders can remember an economic crisis like this, and people are rightfully asking: how will we get through this? Now more than ever Queensland needs a government with a purpose and a plan for the future and a government that gives clear and concise messaging.

The people of Queensland have risen to the challenge of coronavirus but, unfortunately, the Palaszczuk government has not. As Queenslanders fear for the future, Labor has shown that it has no plan, no budget and no integrity either. Unlike the LNP, Labor has no plan to build a strong Queensland economy by creating more jobs. This government, in contrast to every other government in Australia, is refusing to present a full budget this year. Today all Labor has delivered is an eight-page glossy brochure. That is not a comprehensive economic plan. In the middle of this crisis Labor has been consumed by an integrity scandal that goes right to the heart of this government. Businesses are failing each and every day, but the CCC has never been busier. Queensland deserves better than this. Queensland needs a government with principles and a plan to get this state working again. Mr Deputy Speaker, 31 October this year cannot come soon enough.

The member for South Brisbane may have been the worst treasurer Labor has given Queensland—and that is surely saying something—but her time as treasurer saw Queensland suffer the worst average unemployment rate in the nation, as well as the highest number of bankruptcies and rock-bottom economic confidence—and this was before coronavirus. I will leave it to the CCC to investigate her latest integrity scandal, but her resignation does not change the fact that this was a bad government before, and it is still a bad government. Just look at the chaos that has been caused by her exit. Labor gave us three treasurers in just two days in the middle of an economic crisis. What an embarrassment to Queensland. The treasurer's resignation did nothing to resolve Labor's integrity crisis because, when it comes to Labor's integrity scandals, the member for South Brisbane is not Robinson Crusoe.

Last week we learned that the deputy director-general of the education department has also been stood aside. Text messages between the deputy director-general and the member for South Brisbane were heavily redacted before they were released to the opposition. The education minister was happy to be in a social media video with the member for South Brisbane and the new school principal, but she was not keen on answering questions about this scandal last week—questions like: why was her department's deputy director-general texting the then deputy premier? What were they talking about that was subject to cabinet confidentiality? Why can the public not see those text messages? The minister refused to answer those questions—and the weak Premier let her do it. You cannot have integrity without accountability. Under this weak Premier, no minister is ever held to account for their actions. There is only one way to clean up the state government, and that is by electing an LNP government on 31 October this year.

Tourism is the lifeblood of places across Queensland such as Cairns, the Whitsundays, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and the Outback, but you cannot have a tourism industry without tourists, and tourists cannot come to Queensland while our borders are still closed. The Palaszczuk Labor government caused chaos when the Premier announced the border closures via Twitter back in March. The Palaszczuk government is still causing border chaos. They cannot even agree amongst themselves when the border will reopen. The Chief Health Officer says July. Then the Premier sent shockwaves through the industry when she said September. The Palaszczuk government's own roadmap says July. Businesses want and deserve clarity and certainty, but that was destroyed yesterday with the Premier's thought bubble statement—a little thought bubble once again—that borders will not open until September.

The tourism minister was reportedly shocked to learn of the Premier's timetable, and the tourism minister was not the only one in Queensland. Our entire tourism industry was shocked too. There is a slim booking window open right now and the Premier is simply trying to slam it shut. Queensland could lose millions of tourists and tens of thousands of jobs because of the chaos caused by the Premier's mixed messages. When people's jobs are on the line, the government's message must be clear and consistent. Our tourism industry cannot recover until our borders are open again. Labor's confusion and incompetence will cost jobs.

The Palaszczuk government must get its act together and give Queenslanders its final plan for reopening the borders. Is it a staged approach? Will the Premier listen to the health advice? Will the Premier take her own advice? Will the Premier listen to the tourism minister? Will the Premier listen to the tourism operators who live across the border? The Premier needs to give the industry clear and concise messaging so they can have some certainty and we can save the tourism industry in Queensland.

I want to thank our health workers for their tremendous work over the last few months. Sadly, it is clear that the correct procedures have not been followed at the Rockhampton state-run care home. The LNP immediately called for an independent inquiry into the breach of the coronavirus restrictions. Unfortunately, the Premier stood up in a press conference and had the hide to blame the nurse. Labor needs to stop blaming the nursing staff and instead focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the elderly residents, the staff, the patients and the nurses at the other 15 state-run care homes. Their health matters more than anything else.

Many jobs have a huge element of risk, but mining is one of the most dangerous jobs of all, as we all saw at the Grosvenor Coal Mine earlier this month. In the past 21 months, eight miners have lost their lives at Queensland mines. In the past 21 months, we have also learned that the number of mine inspections has been shamefully cut by the Palaszczuk government.

Despite eight deaths in Queensland the Labor Party has refused to hold an independent parliamentary inquiry into mine safety. The mine minister in Queensland has failed mineworkers and the mine minister in Queensland should resign. The Premier should show some leadership and act for the safety of mineworkers across Queensland. Workers in the resources sector deserve and expect the state government to ensure safety within their industry. Our resources industry and miners create wealth for Queensland; therefore, they deserve the protection of their government. Every miner should be able to go home safely when their work is done. On behalf of the LNP our thoughts and prayers go out to those five miners who were so tragically injured in that mine incident in the last couple of weeks.

### Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation) (2.10 pm): What a great day this has been! I have just come from the Speaker's Green, where I stood with the Premier, Deputy Premier, Treasurer and a number of stakeholders who have backed in our government's plan to reopen our economy. We know that the economy is doing it tough, but we also know the only reason we are standing in this parliament today having a discussion about reopening our economy and working with the private sector to reclaim claim jobs is because of the great work that the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Chief Health Officer have done to protect Queensland. We are only able to talk—

**Mr Hart:** You have done nothing. Absolutely nothing.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members! Your interjections are not being taken.

**Ms JONES:** I will take the interjection. I do not know what it means. We did absolutely nothing? Does the honourable member for Burleigh not watch the news?

**Mrs Frecklington:** It's a bit touchy. She wasn't allowed to answer a question at a presser.

**Ms JONES:** I am touchy about lowbrow politics when it comes to people's jobs and livelihoods. You betcha, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am touchy about that. We were the first government in Australia to put money into the COVID response because we listened directly to the tourism industry. That is why I am proud that today during the lunch break on the Speaker's Green we stood with Rebecca Andrews, head of Queensland Ai Group; the IAQ CEO; LGAQ's Greg Hallam; the Master Builders CEO; Amanda Rohan from the CCIQ; CopperString chair Joseph O'Brien; QTIC CEO Daniel Gschwind; and Andrew Freeman from AgForce. Those stakeholders stood with us because they understand our government has a strong plan for reopening our economy. It is so disingenuous for the Leader of the Opposition to come in here and pretend that her time on the treasury benches never happened—to come in here and, all of a sudden five years later, start caring about the thousands of frontline nurses and health practitioners she sacked. All of a sudden 'now we care about them'? Imagine!

In relation to what the member for Burleigh said, that we did nothing, let's talk about it. Imagine how worse our response would have been if we had not been in government, if we had not restored the frontline health workers, nurses, doctors and teachers that they so heartlessly and ruthlessly cut when they were in office. You lie in bed at night and worry about these things as a government. I thought about how tough it would have been for us to restore and work with health practitioners if we had not restored those frontline services. As I said, that is why we are able to get on with the job of working with the private sector to rebuild the economy. The very first thing we did when we came into government was deliver on our election commitment to restore the frontline workers who were cut so heartlessly by those opposite. Thank God we did!

When the Leader of the Opposition was assistant Treasurer she was happy. She said nothing. Maybe this is the coup of the week: apparently, behind closed doors she was actually begging Premier Campbell Newman, 'Please don't cut money from the tourism industry!' I would love to see some evidence of that, because all we have ever seen her go along with is, 'I was proud to be part of the Newman government.' I think that was what she said. So much for distancing herself from that legacy! Everyone in the tourism industry knows that the moment the member for Burleigh became a minister of the Crown he decided to cut \$188 million from the tourism industry. That is what they did. All of those Gold Coast cabinet ministers cut \$188 million from Tourism and Events Queensland. What did we do? Once again we delivered on our election commitment. We said we would have a four-year funding guarantee for tourism. That now means that under our watch \$400 million was restored to the front line, which once again means that we are in a much better position to fight to get the Queensland economy moving again. These are the legacy decisions we have made ever since we came into government to make sure that we have the people, the resources and the plan to get our economy moving again.

Today we have announced even more funding: \$400 million to get roads built—which I am sure the honourable minister wants to talk about—\$200 million for Works for Queensland to work hand in glove with local governments; and \$50 million for tourism infrastructure to fast-track jobs and new experiences to get people to come back. Our government has a plan, we are working as a team and we are delivering for Queensland.

### Queensland Economy

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): I rise this afternoon to speak about some things that are very relevant to our economy. This week we received results that tell us business confidence, as low as it was before the coronavirus, has fallen off a cliff. Is it any wonder that business confidence is at rock bottom when you look at the performance of the government, particularly in the last week? Is it any wonder businesses have no confidence when they have a new Treasurer who has been a senior minister for five years in two terms of government and who, in a train wreck of an interview with Karl Stefanovic, could not tell us what the state debt was. This morning he tried to make a joke of it saying, 'I needed to look at my notes.' You could ask every member of this parliament what is the state debt at this moment and they would be able to answer in an instant. This Treasurer—similar to his boss, the Premier, who did not know the GST rate—did not know the level of debt. As a senior minister it is absolutely embarrassing to admit that he needed notes for that type of figure.

Is it any wonder that business has no confidence in this state government when we look at what the new Treasurer has done with Virgin over the last week and a little bit before that as well? It is a company that is 90 per cent foreign owned—a company that last year lost \$371 million, the year before lost \$300 million, the year before that lost \$545 million and the three years before that combined lost

\$190 million. That is not a great track record financially. What responsible treasurer would commit \$200 million to try to rescue this company when, two days later, it went into administration? If they or somebody else had taken up that offer, \$200 million of taxpayers' money would have gone down the drain. In another interview on the same morning he thought he was on a roll. He was asked at Channel 7, 'Will you make any money with this venture?' His response was, 'It's not about making a commercial return.' What planet does this Treasurer live on?

**Mr Bleijie:** 'Labornomics'.

**Mr MANDER:** 'Labornomics', I will take that interjection. What have we seen now? The Brookfield Infrastructure Group—the group that the government align themselves with—got out of it. They realise it is not something they want to play with, yet this minister will continue misleading Queensland workers who think he can save their jobs. If another airline comes back, it will come back because there is a demand for it. We need to have a second airline in this state. It will come back because of private investment and it will be a lot smaller than it is now. That is why Virgin got into trouble in the first place: it outgrew itself. Is it any wonder business does not have confidence when they see those types of decisions being made?

Is it any wonder there is no business confidence in this state when they come out with their Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs plan. It is eight pages—one of the pages is blank and the other page is the cover—of fluff and reannouncements. There is a picture of beef cattle on the front page and one mention of agriculture. It is not an initiative; it is just saying it is a traditional industry of Queensland, which of course it is.

This is what this government is all about. It is all about show. It has announced a recovery industry forum. I wonder if that is similar to the Premier's business advisory council that did not meet for two years and then when they did meet I think the Premier did not turn up. This is what this government does. It makes announcements with no backup whatsoever. Is there anybody better suited to the Treasury role in a government that is all about show and no-go than the member for Woodridge, who was described by David Hinchliffe, the former deputy mayor of Brisbane, as a 'gormless show pony'? That is what he is. He came in this morning with this great rallying cry. I think *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* was on in the background so he could really pump it up. He is all show and no-go. Queensland deserves better and it is only an LNP government that will deliver it.

*(Time expired)*

### Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.20 pm): One can only hope that we are all awake here in the chamber after that diatribe by the member for Everton. I remind those who lecture us economically that under the previous government we saw unemployment spike to 7.1 per cent, which is in fact more than the current unemployment rate in this pandemic, that growth plunged to 0.7 per cent, and that they sacked 14,000 people, including 1,800 nurses and doctors. Thank God they have been re-employed, because we needed them.

The best health response to this pandemic has been the best economic response too. What we see in other countries is an elongated crisis with thousands of deaths and devastated economies for a long time. The best health response has been the best economic response and that is because of the leadership of this Premier and the health minister, now Deputy Premier. They have been exemplary. We declared this first, before any other jurisdiction, on 29 January. That was six weeks before the United States. We acted fast, we acted hard and we saved thousands of lives. If this opposition had any integrity, they would at least acknowledge that because Queenslanders understand that. They can see that that has happened. Now we are moving on to the specific economic recovery issue here.

I note, for instance, that Queensland has 13 active cases while there are over 400 active cases in New South Wales, and those opposite want to open the border. They want to open the border to a state that has a lot of community transmission of this virus as some sort of economic strategy. Are they kidding? This is the health of our Queensland population that is at stake. We are the best performing state in the nation and considerably better than New South Wales with their debacles with the *Ruby Princess* ship. I might add that three of the six Queensland deaths were from the *Ruby Princess* ship.

This government will not be lectured by those in New South Wales, and we will not be lectured by the lackey opposition who are just running the New South Wales line. We will not be lectured. We will keep managing this crisis well because the health of Queenslanders depends upon it. Our record has been very strong and it will keep being strong. There are challenges ahead but we will keep at it.

The Premier announced today a \$400 million accelerated roads package which I have been very happy to be involved with. There will be 430 jobs, with 360 jobs in regional Queensland. We are targeting regional areas. We are targeting growth areas. The Mount Lindesay Highway between Chambers Flat Road and Stoney Camp Road will get \$37½ million to further the duplication work. Well done to the member for Logan who has been a relentless advocate for us there on that project. In Gracemere, the bottleneck at Lawrie Street over the railway line will be dealt with—we will duplicate the road. That is a great achievement by the member for Rockhampton in his first term. There is \$15 million for the Centenary Motorway and Logan Motorway interchange upgrade. There is a lot of growth out there in that Springfield and Bundamba area. Well done to the member for Jordan for delivering that in her first term. We are continuing the duplication of the Cleveland-Redland Bay Road with \$15 million. The member for Redlands has done a fantastic job with that.

This list is substantial. The Beaudesert Road and Illaweena Street intersection upgrade gets \$30 million. There is a great package for the Sunshine Coast, with \$18 million for a new bridge at Six Mile Creek along the Pomona-Kin Kin Road, \$9.5 million for the Beckmans Road and Cooroy-Noosa Road intersection and \$3.75 million for the Caloundra Road and Ridgewood Road intersection upgrade, thanks to Jason Hunt who is a great advocate for local roads.

We are seeing other projects like the Herveys Range Developmental Road near Townsville in North Queensland which gets nearly \$9 million. The Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road upgrade, which is in another growth area, gets \$10 million. The Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road duplication is very important infrastructure for our tourism economy and the communities up there around Cannonvale. Ipswich gets \$10 million as well.

We build roads. We create jobs. We get things done. We do not cut, we do not sack and we do not sell like those opposite. An important part of this package is that we have listened to the mayors of this state. There is \$100 million to seal dirt roads all over Queensland. We will work with local government. We will not cut like those opposite did. There is \$100 million to seal dirt roads all over Queensland—roads like May Downs Road, the Burke Developmental Road and the Cloncurry-Dajarra Road. We get things done.

We have steered this state well to this point. We will keep doing that by investing in jobs and building the infrastructure that we need. We know that those opposite cut and that they will cut again if ever they get the opportunity.

### **State Schools Principals, Appointment Process**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.25 pm): My advice to Queenslanders is: do not believe a word coming out of the mouths of the Premier, the ministers or the Palaszczuk Labor government between now and the election. Everything they say will be under the prism of an election, and they will say and do anything they need to get re-elected, including the diatribe we have just heard from the Minister for Main Roads, who said that they have steered Queensland well. They have steered Queensland to nearly the highest unemployment rate in the country. They have steered Queensland to the highest debt in the country. They have steered Queensland to being the bankruptcy capital of Australia. That is no record to be proud of, Minister Bailey. If that is the type of steering that the government is going to continue with for the year, then God help Queenslanders. It is a bad government, it is going to keep being a bad government and that is why Queenslanders should dismiss the bad government on 31 October.

We have seen integrity scandal after integrity scandal under the Palaszczuk government. The Premier would have us believe that she has fixed it all now—that Jackie Trad, the member for South Brisbane, has gone and it is all rosy. Wrong. The new Deputy Premier has already said that the member for South Brisbane is going to come back. She announced yesterday that she is going to contest the seat of South Brisbane.

We have seen the full-scale corruption investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission. The education minister put her foot squarely in it this morning. She has been saying for days now that she has had nothing to do with the appointment process, that she knows nothing, that it is all operational matters, yet today we find out that the member for South Brisbane had advised this House in November last year that she received advice directly from the education minister. The education minister stood up today and said, 'I think in passing I may have mentioned something to the former deputy premier.' Either the minister has had a discussion with the member for South Brisbane or she has not. Up until now, it was 'know nothing, say nothing, hear nothing', that she had nothing to do with the appointment process, but now we understand there was a little discussion. There are so many more questions in this.

These are the questions that the education minister should answer with respect to this corruption investigation. What advice did the minister give the member for South Brisbane as noted by the member for South Brisbane to parliament on 27 November? When did the minister have any conversations or communications with the member for South Brisbane or her office regarding the appointment of Ms Tracey Cook or Ms Kirsten Ferdinands? Did the minister have any knowledge that her deputy director-general was communicating via text message directly with the member for South Brisbane? Why will the minister not release those text messages in full? Why has the information in these text messages been redacted? What was being discussed between the member for South Brisbane and the deputy director-general by text message that was subject to cabinet confidentiality?

Why is the education department still withholding the opposition right-to-information request relating to all the deputy director-general's text messages? How many other Department of Education officials were in regular contact with the member for South Brisbane? Following the first recruitment process, when did the minister become aware that the principal's position for the Inner City South State Secondary College was being readvertised? Did the minister approve or have any role to play in the director-general decision to reopen the recruitment process? In the circumstances where Education Queensland had in its possession full and correct modelling of the size of the college in the same month as the original principal's position was advertised, why did the director-general reopen the recruitment process? Why does there not appear to be any new modelling between when the original principal's position was advertised and when the principal's position was reopened and advertised for a second time?

Why will the minister not release this new so-called modelling? On what date was the minister advised by the director-general that the member for South Brisbane would be consulted about principal appointments? On what date did the minister become aware that the member for South Brisbane was meeting with a candidate, Ms Tracey Cook? On what date did the minister become aware that the member for South Brisbane was meeting with the other candidate, Ms Kirsten Ferdinands?

After I first raised this matter in parliament in November 2019 what, if any, steps, including the ordering of an internal investigation, did the minister take to ascertain the veracity or otherwise of the allegations? Has the minister required her departmental officials to get clearance from the Queensland Teachers' Union before implementing any of the government's decisions, as was contained in text messages? Why does the Queensland Teachers' Union give clearance before ministerial decisions?

Finally, the 20th question that the Minister for Education should answer is: can the minister publicly assure Queenslanders that the appointment of principals in every other state electorate is made at arm's length and without interference from any member of the Labor government? These are the questions that remain unanswered. The time line is very suspicious. One person gets a job and then they get hauled into the deputy premier's office. That person does not then get the job and the position is readvertised. I am glad the Crime and Corruption Commission are investigating this with a full-scale investigation into this government.

*(Time expired)*

### **Coronavirus, Small Business**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (2.30 pm): In the face of the biggest health crisis in a generation, Queenslanders have stepped up and, overwhelmingly, have followed government health directives. Of course, now the government has to act to address the other crisis, the economic crisis, and do everything within our power to protect and restore jobs right across Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government has now announced over \$6 billion in stimulus to support industry, households and our health sector, and key to getting Queenslanders working again is supporting our small businesses. We know that they are the engine room of our state's economy and are responsible for employing close to one million Queenslanders. As a government committed to delivering jobs, we are also committed to supporting our small businesses.

To date we have delivered a comprehensive package to support our small businesses. This includes payroll tax relief, which has put around \$360 million back into the accounts of thousands of Queensland businesses. Our \$1 billion in interest-free loans has assisted over 3,600 businesses, and that number is continuing to grow. We have also provided support to over 6,000 small businesses through our Small Business Hotline, which includes free mentoring and free financial counselling.

However, we know that what a lot of small businesses need right now is that much needed cash flow. Building upon that work, I was so pleased to see the Premier announce today a \$100 million support package for our small businesses. They can now apply for grants of up to \$10,000 that will

provide much needed assistance to help them counter the impact of COVID-19. The new grants program has been developed to support those small businesses forced into hibernation or those that have experienced a significant impact as a result of the pandemic. These grants can be used for professional advice or services such as marketing or social media as well as specialised digital equipment or software. This will be very helpful for businesses right now, especially as we are seeing many of them having to transition, do business differently and get their operations online. No matter what these businesses need in order to keep going and to keep people in jobs, we will back them.

Jessy Cameron, the owner of Molten Store in Fortitude Valley, actually opened her brand-new store on the day the pandemic was declared. Jessy has said that a COVID grant would go a long way to helping her business increase their online operations and look at new ways of running her business. She said that she was growing before the pandemic and she wants to get back to a situation where there is growth again in her business, and this will help her do that.

Taj Pabari from Fiftysix Creations was another small business quick to welcome the government's new grants. Of course the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland's general manager, Amanda Rohan, also welcomed our announcement saying that the grants will provide 'much needed immediate cash support to Queensland's small businesses'. National Retail Association CEO Dominique Lamb said that retailers are appreciative of any help during the current turmoil. She said, 'The fate of thousands of Queensland small businesses continues to hang in the balance and all support is welcomed.'

The package announced today will also include \$4 million for much needed training, which will help small business owners and also their staff to upskill and reskill now as we begin our road to recovery. This is something that the sector has called for and I am very pleased we are able to deliver. This is all part of the Palaszczuk government's planned approach to our economic recovery and will play a vital role in kickstarting Queensland's economy post COVID.

With May being Small Business Month, I also want to remind everyone to continue to 'support small' and support their local small businesses. It was wonderful on the weekend in my community and in Logan to see so many residents supporting their local cafes and businesses, and I encourage them to continue to support them during this time. Our Queensland small businesses support so many Queenslanders in terms of jobs, so it is now time that we get behind them and help them recover. By supporting our local small businesses, by supporting small, we are supporting Queensland jobs. It has been wonderful to join with CCIQ to launch our #supportsmall campaign. I would urge all members of the House to continue to 'support small' during the month of May and to continue to do so during our economic recovery in the months ahead.

### Coronavirus, North Queensland

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (2.35 pm): I would like to stand and give my support and celebrate our COVID-19 achievements over the last couple of months, especially in health. In North Queensland we have done particularly well, from the Townsville University Hospital through to the small hospitals that fall within our footprint including the Ingham Hospital, Charters Towers Hospital and Mount Isa Hospital. Those hospitals were ready to act when the COVID-19 virus hit our shores. We have been doing our best in North Queensland. Not only have we done well to reduce the amount of community spread of the virus but also it has now been nearly two months since we have had any COVID-19 positive cases within the Townsville Hospital footprint. That leads me to my next point.

The regions need to be treated differently to the south-east corner. Businesses across the north are crying out to be reopened. They are asking for restrictions to be lifted in regional areas so that we can get back to business as usual so they can bounce back quicker. Now we see that these businesses are hamstrung by what is happening in the Brisbane area and on the Gold Coast where COVID-19 cases still exist. While there are still active cases in the south-east corner, the north is being held back. Honourable members can go and ask the local publican along The Strand if he opened this weekend with the restrictions allowing him to open with 10 people. Most business owners will say no because they were not willing to take on the added responsibility and the added cost of staffing created by these measures; nor were they wanting to deal with the debates and arguments in front of these licensed venues.

We need an approach that does not take the lazy option of a one-size-fits-all approach to the whole of Queensland. Queenslanders in the north and in other areas that do not currently have any COVID-19 cases should be treated differently to the south-east to allow us to bounce back quicker. This is what will help small businesses to open their doors again and to once again turn a profit.

At the moment we are seeing that small businesses are struggling. We have seen some relief from the state government but it is not enough. Telling them there is payroll tax relief does not help small businesses with a payroll of under \$1.5 million. They are the mum-and-dad operators—businesses that are so small they only have one or two people working on their premises but not big enough to be paying \$1.5 million in payroll. Those businesses have been left out in the cold and they are the businesses that are falling into the cracks.

A rebate of \$500 on their power bill that covers three months of supply is not enough to keep their doors open. That is not even enough to keep the gas burner going for a week in the fish and chip shop to keep the oil hot enough to cook. It does not matter if they have a coldroom running with half the amount of stock in it or with enough to feed 100 people a day; the same amount of electricity is used to run the coldroom. We have seen the state government make an announcement, which we welcomed. They heard the cries of small business and increased the QRIDA loans by \$500 million, bringing that up to a total of \$1 billion. Sadly, we are already seeing constituents come through our office saying that is not going far enough. They have already received their letters saying they will miss out because that money has already been spent. That is sad because a lot of these small businesses are crying out for a bit of help.

I hate to compare North Queensland and New South Wales, especially where New South Wales seems to be doing better than Queensland, but in this situation we have seen \$100 million announced this morning in terms of \$10,000 grants for small business, financial/legal professional advice, marketing, communication activity, digital or tech strategies. That falls short of what Queensland businesses are calling for. They are looking for money to keep the doors open and to keep the lights on. If you were a business that was about to go belly up and were seeking financial advice, the financial adviser would tell you what you already know: you are going broke. You need money to buy stock and food to put through your restaurants, to buy beer to put through your pub or to put diesel in your machinery. If we do not get on top of this quickly—and if the Labor Party does not support the KAP's call for a \$20,000 cash injection in a small grant scenario—we will see businesses closing. Queenslanders will get used to watching tumbleweeds travel down the street instead of small businesses opening their front doors.

### Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (2.40 pm): I rise today to speak about the vital importance of the interventions of the Palaszczuk government to help the state's businesses and economy recover from the economic impacts of COVID-19. Never before has an Australian state made such important strategic investments in our economy. Today's announcement of \$100 million in small business grants and training will lift these businesses up. These are businesses that are the lifeblood and the livelihood of those communities that are an engine room of employment across Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is pulling out all stops to help the entire state unite and recover for Queensland jobs. These grants of up to \$10,000 will help these businesses not only survive but also set up for success on the other side of COVID-19. As the economy gets going again and the restrictions progressively ease, our great small businesses will be able to hit the ground running, knowing they have the Queensland government's backing. This well-timed, strategically important further investment in Queensland business and Queensland jobs matches perfectly with the investments we have already made with payroll tax relief, with electricity bill relief and with \$1 billion in jobs support loans.

Queensland remains the only state that has provided low-interest or interest-free loans to businesses in need of capital during the coronavirus pandemic. Queensland's Jobs Support Loans scheme was announced in March, before the federal government had announced the JobKeeper scheme. Initially, \$500 million in loans was made available under the scheme and applications were closed, with the program to run until September or until funding exhausted. The program was so attractive and so needed by Queensland businesses that it was massively oversubscribed. Applications were closed on 18 April. Seeing the level of take-up by Queensland businesses, the government moved quickly to make a further \$500 million available so that thousands more Queensland businesses would be successful with their applications. Already loans have been approved to the value of more than \$529 million, supporting more than 45,000 jobs right throughout Queensland. That is 45,000 Queensland jobs that have been directly supported by the Palaszczuk government's Jobs Support Loans scheme. This is a brilliant result and a result to be proud of.

With the loan funding available increased to \$1 billion, the number of jobs supported is expected to exceed 80,000 in total throughout the program. In all, about two-thirds or more of those 10,000 applications to the scheme will be successful in obtaining loans. So far, more than 85 per cent of those

businesses approved for a loan were small businesses employing fewer than 20 staff and with payrolls under \$1.3 million. This scheme has meant survival for some businesses, while others will emerge even stronger than before thanks to these loans giving them a capacity to invest.

I will provide some examples. For Andy and Judy Veal of Touchwood Farming in South Burnett, it means supporting five jobs plus putting on additional workers during avocado picking season. Judy said the approval of their loans was a massive weight off their shoulders. In Goondiwindi, Proterra Group, a civil engineering firm, is continuing its support for 40 regional jobs through the COVID-19 pandemic as well as continuing to support regional communities and councils. It is the Queensland government's Jobs Support Loans scheme that has given them the certainty they need to get through this difficult period. I had a conversation only today with Mayor Springborg from Goondiwindi about the success of this business. Mount Isa Coaches plays an important role in the community, providing transport for mineworkers, schoolchildren and sporting teams as well as helping many locals get to work. A jobs support loan means it can maintain all 10 of its staff.

RedDoor Community Services in Cloncurry plays a vital role in supporting that community as a social enterprise and a jobs support loan has meant that RedDoor can continue to support 15 staff members to do what they do best. It would be remiss of me not to refer to QRIDA, an organisation that has used the loan scheme with success, working tirelessly seven days a week and on weekends to ensure these loans get out the door. They assess the appropriateness of a business, do a sterling job and will continue to do so.

### Cross River Rail

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.45 pm): I rise today to outline concerns in relation to the Labor government's so-called significant infrastructure project, Cross River Rail. This will be South-East Queensland's biggest infrastructure project for over a decade. However, with Labor's poor track record of project delivery, Cross River Rail is certainly deserving of very careful oversight before it becomes yet again another failed Labor project. Right from the beginning, this project got off to a disappointing start and the hits have just kept coming, more recently courtesy of the state's former 'let me be perfectly clear' treasurer.

The business case for this project was released in August 2017. In its assessment of this project, Infrastructure Australia concluded that the benefits of the proposal were significantly overstated and the costs of the project as presented were likely to exceed its benefits. More specifically, Infrastructure Australia considered that the estimates of the growth in rail patronage were too high and that the network's capacity constraints could take longer to materialise. For most agencies, that kind of assessment from the nation's independent adviser on infrastructure investments would have set off the alarm bells, however not for this inept Labor government. Although they were encouraged to go back and work with Infrastructure Australia in order to review the business case, the Labor government chose to simply ignore these findings and go ahead despite the misgivings.

In February 2018, it was indicated that tunnelling work was set to begin in the second quarter of 2019; however, this was subsequently pushed back to mid-2020. Then, in 2019, the investment property saga emerged leading to the former deputy premier and treasurer, who had carriage of Cross River Rail, being removed from all dealings with the project. Accordingly, the responsibility for delivering the Cross River Rail project was shifted to a new minister, with construction works eventually beginning in September last year. However, early in the construction phase workplace health and safety officers identified various contraventions involving contamination from asbestos-containing material occurring at the Albert Street site of Cross River Rail. The contraventions included not wetting down a site while removing 200 lineal metres of wall; workers' shoes not being decontaminated; appropriate protection equipment not being worn—type 5 disposable overalls, P2 half-face respirators; and appropriate training not being provided to workers. While progress has been slow, tunnelling has finally started with a road header excavating the first part of the project's Roma Street site.

The Rail Supporters Association of Queensland recently reviewed the current Cross River Rail project and provided a report on its conclusions. Many issues were raised including significant capacity and operational limitations with the project which will impact the people of Queensland for generations and which cannot be fixed except at massive cost; the project provides little or no additional usable capacity overall to that currently available; and massive investment for capacity expansion is required. Furthermore, it identifies serious deficiencies in the economic assessment of Cross River Rail as the estimated cost of delivery has been significantly and systematically understated. For any government, let alone one with a dubious reputation for project delivery, this surely must have been cause for review—but, again, evidently not!

Due for completion in 2024, there are growing alarms about cost blowouts and the uncertainty surrounding this project. To add to the pressure, the Auditor-General's report No. 11 for 2019-20 relating to Queensland government state finances highlights right on page 1 that the financial performance of the Queensland government has reduced over the last two financial years. The report goes on to state that debt is expected to rise over the next four years as the government commences a program of capital works and highlights that the delivery of major infrastructure projects like CRR needs to be closely monitored. Evidently, despite introducing nine new or increased taxes, Labor was still spending more than it earned, and this was all well before the COVID-19 crisis arrived and not because of it.

Under Labor, public transport users have already endured the costly 'rail fail'. Queensland cannot afford yet another project disaster with 'Cross River fail'. In terms of transparency, Labor has again failed miserably. It has failed to release the business case for the project and failed to provide any revised train service plan. It has underestimated that Cross River Rail is contingent on further network improvements, including layout issues north and south of the new tunnels as well as upgrading lines such as Cleveland and replacing level crossings. Just like the state budget, the full cost of all of the components associated with this project continues to be hidden. In response to a recent question on notice about the full costs, it was stated to be \$5.4 billion. It has not been made clear what further costs will be incurred with the delivery of this project. What will it cost?

### Coronavirus, Regional Queensland

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing) (2.50 pm): The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted Queensland's social and economic fabric. Regional Queensland in particular has felt the full force of the virus's economic effect. While the impacts of the virus have been devastating, under the leadership of the Premier we have flattened the curve and strongly positioned our state to emerge from this crisis. Since being appointed as the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, I have been working with stakeholders and the Premier to develop a recovery strategy. Today the Premier and the Treasurer outlined the first stage of that recovery road map for Queensland workers, businesses and industry. We are a government that governs for all of Queensland.

The support for regional Queensland in the Queensland economic recovery strategy announced today further delivers on that commitment. The strategy includes maintaining infrastructure investment at more than \$50 billion over the next four years despite the financial challenges of COVID-19; a \$400 million accelerated works program to deliver new road, bridge and pavement sealing works right across the state—and I am sure that those mayors in regional Queensland appreciated the news today from the minister in relation to the sealing of those roads; a further \$200 million in 2020-21 for a Works for Queensland program to fund job-creating projects—and we know that every mayor right throughout Queensland, including regional Queensland, loves this program and loves the fact that they can get local jobs with local funding from the Queensland government; and an \$11.25 million expansion of the Household Resilience Program in cyclone affected areas, and we know that that makes a big difference in those regions that are prone to cyclones.

Industries across Queensland have been hit hard by this pandemic. I have seen it in my own electorate. That is why initiatives to support regional tourism, manufacturing and industry are fundamental to our economic strategy. This support includes \$50 million for tourism infrastructure and further funding for a domestic tourism campaign. The Gladstone port in my electorate has engaged with that tourism funding for a new cruise ship terminal at the East Shores development, which is looking absolutely amazing and ready to open in the next month or so. We have redirected \$50 million of industry funding attraction to further expand manufacturing capacity for PPE, hand sanitisers and medical supplies to respond to COVID-19.

In a further boost for the resource sector, in regional Queensland the Palaszczuk government will also fast-track support for the massive CopperString 2.0 high-voltage transmission line to the North West Minerals Province, and those in that area will have certainly welcomed that announcement today. Today's announcement of \$14.8 million towards the CopperString project to continue its important development and prepare for construction in 2021 is a huge win for regional Queensland. Extending the national electricity grid from Townsville across the north to Mount Isa, CopperString is expected to help create thousands of jobs in mineral mining and also in industrial manufacturing. It will also stimulate large-scale renewable energy investment. It also means lowering energy costs for the North West Minerals Province, something that people in that area have been screaming out for for years. I am advised that the wider economic benefits from unlocked private investment are modelled at over 3,500 jobs in North Queensland and a \$79 billion economic uplift over 30 years.

Today's announcement also included a \$50 million boost to the Making it for Queensland initiative to support expansion of Queensland's vital manufacturing sector and production capacity. As I have said, this pandemic has shown that Queensland needs to be self-reliant when it comes to manufacturing key products in a time of need. We have already seen innovative Queensland companies retool to help supply the critical products our healthcare and frontline workers need while they put themselves on the line to keep Queenslanders safe. This includes Saleyards Distillery, a Rockhampton rum and gin distillery, manufacturing hand sanitiser to help local emergency services, schools and nursing homes. Other manufacturers have also modified their production to 3D printed face shields to support our frontline workers, both now and into the future. The Palaszczuk government will continue to step up and invest. Our recovery strategy makes this clear. Our regions and our manufacturers deserve nothing less.

## ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BUNDAMBA

### First Speech

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the honourable member for Bundamba, I remind members that this is the member's first speech and it should be listened to with the courtesies reserved for such occasions. I call the member for Bundamba.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.56 pm): What an honour it is to rise to speak for the first time in this House. I am both humbled and excited to commence life in this parliament as a member of the Australian Labor Party. My first acknowledgement and deepest respects are to the traditional owners and custodians of the lands, Meanjin, on which we gather—the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, their elders past, present and emerging who offer us so much wisdom and inspiration. I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the Bundamba area, the Yuggera and Ugarapul people. As a proud member of the Gubbi Gubbi nation, I acknowledge my people whose lands border the Yuggera nation north of here and stretch over land and sea from the Sunshine Coast to the Burnett.

In our culture decisions are made by consensus—something that is foremost in my mind as I stand here to speak for the first time in the seat of Queensland's democracy. I am immensely proud to join the members for Algeester and Cook as the third First Nation member of the Palaszczuk Labor government—a government that history will show has walked the first steps on a path to treaty and truth telling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here in Queensland. I acknowledge the Premier. I know there are many places in Bundamba that hold a special place in her memory from childhood. I thank her and all ministers and fellow MPs who were able to lend their support during our campaign. I acknowledge all members of the government and indeed this parliament. I look forward to working with all of you to discuss and debate the legislation and issues that matter to our communities.

What a different world we live in today to that of only a few short months ago. Being a community representative is both an honour and a privilege that is heavy with responsibility at the best of times, and never has it been more so than during the time of coronavirus. Our local communities, our state and indeed our world are grappling with the impact of this virus, which has changed almost every facet of our lives in ways that were unthinkable only a short while ago.

At the start of March we were unaware that we would soon be seeing an end to catching up with family and friends, travelling to work, watching a movie at the cinema, heading out to a restaurant for a meal or a drink, handshakes, hugs and so much more. Thankfully, we are beginning to see a return of some of these activities, albeit within the context of the new norms of COVID-19. While this is most welcome, we are now only beginning to grapple with the ongoing health, social and economic impacts of coronavirus. There is a long way we must walk together on this road yet. The Palaszczuk government was quick to act at the beginning of this pandemic with our unprecedented \$4 billion package to support health, jobs, households and businesses which has helped limit the virus's spread and impact. The goal of flattening the curve was set, but collectively what we did was smash the curve, exceeding almost all hopes and projections in being able to reduce transmission rates.

That said, it has not been without terrible cost. I want to send my heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and loved ones of those who have lost their lives to coronavirus. Hard times can bring out the best of us, individually and collectively, and so it has proved during this pandemic, with all of us doing our part and supporting each other to limit the spread and deadly impact of this virus. Locally in West Moreton we have had only a single new confirmed case over the last month, which is testament not only to our local community but also to our frontline health workers.

Labor, the party of Medicare, has always been the party that the community can rely on to provide world-class health care. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has hired 536 more nurses and midwives and 164 doctors in West Moreton. Thanks to our \$146 million investment in expanded services, Ipswich Hospital will boast a new MRI machine, a 50-bed mental health ward and 26 additional beds which will mean even more permanent frontline health staff and support hundreds of jobs, including apprentices during construction. While these are record levels of investment in health, any government should not rest on its laurels. We can and should do more. I will work to see the existing hospital and site expanded even further in the future to increase capacity and services.

Labor is also synonymous with world-class education. I am proud to be part of a government that has opened eight new state schools this year, with two in the Ripley Valley alone: the new \$70 million Ripley Valley State Secondary College and the \$50 million Ripley Valley State School. We have also delivered new buildings at Fernbrooke State School and Goodna Special School. Our children deserve a world-class education, and as our community grows I will continue fighting for the upgrades and investment needed for our local schools.

Everyone in our community deserves access to a job. A large part of that comes down to skills and training. That is why we are delivering a \$7.3 million upgrade to Ipswich TAFE. During the by-election we announced a \$2 million upgrade to the Bundamba TAFE's metal trades training facility. With 260 students already accessing Labor's \$42 million TAFE and apprenticeships program in Ipswich, we will have a local pipeline of skilled young workers ready to take on emerging opportunities in our growing industries.

In my family we know firsthand the value of education, skills and training. My brother Francis, who is here today, graduated from the University of Queensland last year with a Bachelor of Biotechnology and we learnt just last week that he has been accepted into a PhD program at UQ and will start in July. Obviously as an older brother I am extremely proud of his accomplishments, but what makes me proudest is when I think that Fran, who left school in year 10 and enrolled in TAFE to finish his high school equivalency later and in turn was admitted to university and then graduated with first-class honours and a Dean's Commendation, is now about to start his PhD. It just fills me with pride. I am really proud of you, mate.

It has never been more important to keep Queenslanders in work, which is why we are investing more than \$23 billion in roads and transport, supporting local businesses and 21½ thousand jobs in the process. We have already invested in the \$400 million stage 1 upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway, which is on time and on budget and, critically, supporting over 470 jobs. Locally we have a crew of 15 working through this month and next on the River Road overpass at Dinmore to improve its longevity and safety. Our community knows it is an important link for the local meatworks, industrial centre and surrounding businesses. It is vital that we continue to roll out programs and projects such as these to support jobs as we face the economic challenges presented by coronavirus.

The reality of any growing city is that more infrastructure and services will be needed as more families move into the community. As the member for a rapidly growing electorate I want to ensure that our community grows in a sustainable and balanced way where we all share in the benefits of growth. It is the responsibility of all levels of government to ensure that developments, big or small, have as minimal impact on the environment as possible. We live in such a spectacular part of the world and a balance must be struck to preserve its nature and heritage for future generations to enjoy.

I am confident that by continuing the Palaszczuk government's commitment to consultation and engagement we will be able to successfully balance the demands of a growing local community. This preparedness to listen, a hallmark of our government, was evident when, during the by-election, rail commuters expressed to me concerns around improving access and egress at Redbank station. I took these concerns to the Minister for Transport immediately and secured a commitment to raise the platform at Redbank which I am delighted to inform the House was completed only last week. In addition to the \$3 million expansion of Ebbw Vale park-and-ride, we are also forging ahead with installing digital timetable screens at Redbank, Goodna and Dinmore stations. After spending time early in the campaign talking to locals at every train station in Bundamba on their morning commute, I know that these are small yet important improvements that will make a big difference.

Bundamba has a strong sense of community, which is in no small part derived from our proud and broad cultural diversity. People from the world over—Polynesian, African, Asian, Indian, New Zealand, European and many more—all make strong contributions to the fabric of our community. I am proud to say that I have established a close relationship with those who are working hard to celebrate and strengthen local cross-cultural relationships. One such organisation is the Polynesian African

cross-cultural advisory group who work out of Goodna Neighbourhood House. I had the privilege of joining with them during the campaign to discuss their vision for our local community and I look forward to cementing this relationship by doing what I can to assist their important work to celebrate and capitalise on the great cultural power in our local community.

Being inclusive, tolerant and supporting one another is something that I believe in deeply. I have been subject to my share of racism and I have seen others be persecuted for their origin, religion, body shape, gender or sexuality simply because the perception of them by others was one of an often illusionary difference. Unfortunately it still happens today and in many cases is deliberately weaponised to suit particular agendas. I will always strive to call out this insidious behaviour and will always choose acceptance, collectiveness and unity over fear, distrust and division and staunchly support those who work in our communities to celebrate diversity and inclusiveness.

The people of Bundamba, like the majority of people across Queensland, want jobs—jobs that are purposeful, secure and can provide a decent standard of living for them and their loved ones. There is dignity in work. However, that dignity can be eroded when workers cannot find stable jobs that pay a decent living wage. Unfortunately we continue to see an ever-increasing prevalence of insecure work for ordinary workers in all of its forms: casualisation, labour hire, contracting and outsourcing to name but a few.

I have been fortunate to have, for the most part, good jobs that I have been passionate about, but it was not until quite late in my working life, in my 30s, that I was able to secure permanent employment. Having until then mostly been on contracts, I and the banks considered it too much of a risk for me to buy a home. The uncertainty that can stem from insecure work is what keeps people in the working class suburbs of Bundamba up at night. I know this because they have told me—like the labour hire worker at Dinmore who works at a nearby factory and is worried every time the roster comes out that they may not be given enough hours to pay the bills, or the healthcare worker in Redbank Plains who is wondering how they could pay the mortgage or the kids' school fees if their three-, six- or 12-month contract is not rolled over or extended, or the educator in Collingwood Park who is worried that their job is going to be outsourced and they will be faced with the choice to either quit or lose over 30 per cent of their pay and conditions.

Looking back now to my childhood, with seven people in my family in a three-bedroom house with a single working wage to support us, there was no way we would have been able to survive if my father's job had not been secure. It was modest but it was secure and that meant stability—stability of accommodation, education and the basics of what a family needs to survive. As we begin to rebuild our coronavirus impacted economy, with so many unemployed, underemployed and seeking more work or having given up on looking for work altogether, all through circumstances beyond their control, it has never been more important to provide as many secure local jobs as possible.

I stand here in this place as a representative and voice of the ordinary workers and battlers in Bundamba who want someone to fight for a fair go on their behalf—a fair go that means the opportunity to live and work in a community where you and your family have access to quality services and can get help and support when you need it. Supporting each other is something that Queenslanders do naturally. We ban together in the face of hardship, be it fires, floods, cyclones or coronavirus. This simple act of people sticking together for a common purpose is ingrained in us. You see it everywhere, from teams to clubs, associations, societies, alliances, chambers, political parties and the list goes on. Collective action for working people through their unions to make considered and mature representation on their behalf is something that has always been and will always be critical to a fair, progressive and equitable society.

I have been privileged to have had the opportunity to work for the labour movement, fighting to improve the lives of working people, particularly with the mighty Electrical Trades Union. I take much pride in my role with the Not4Sale campaign that protected our publicly owned energy assets from being sold off and privatised. This included Swanbank Power Station in my electorate which, after being mothballed and prepped for sale, was brought back into service by the Palaszczuk government and now forms part of CleanCo, the groundbreaking publicly owned clean energy company. I firmly believe that public assets should remain in public hands, particularly when those assets are a physical and market monopoly that provide essential services to the community and any profits can be reinvested into public services and infrastructure. We need to ensure that these assets are protected now and into the future, not sold off to overseas multinationals for short-term profit. I will fight to ensure that our publicly owned assets remain the property of Queensland taxpayers and that the governments that oversee them remain accountable to the people who own them.

I want to thank and acknowledge comrades from the ETU who have offered me so much support and advice. To Ongy, Stuey, Andrew, Macca, Lynchy, Hicksy, Michael, Lara, Trevor and Dave and all of the officials and members of the ETU family: thank you. I want to make special mention of a comrade who has been a little crook over the past couple of years. Simmo, thanks for your vision, values and heart. You are a true inspiration. Keep fighting, mate. We are with you.

If you rewound the clock to September 1992, you would find me letterboxing for a man named Wayne Goss. He went on a win a second term as premier, with Labor returning to government with a 54-seat majority. Growing up, particularly as a young Indigenous bloke, I found political expression through collective action and the labour movement. I have been raised to believe that together we can make a difference. I grew up in awe of Labor giants such as Whitlam and Hawke, who viewed education as the fundamental ingredient for equity and opportunity, who introduced a universal healthcare system and who have stood with First Nation people in our struggle.

The movement that stood for these things was irresistible to me and I relish the opportunity to contribute to our party's legacy as a member in this place. Since the re-creation of the electorate in 1991, the Bundamba community has always trusted Labor to fight for a fair go on their behalf and I want to acknowledge the work of former members Jo-Ann Miller and Bob Gibbs. Jo-Ann was a fierce advocate for 20 years and I wish her good health and happiness. I said during the campaign that I would be Bundamba's representative in Brisbane, not the other way around—and I meant it. I will continue the legacy of Labor delivering for Bundamba by fighting tooth and nail for a fair go.

I am the eldest of five children. My father worked in the Public Service while Mum looked after us kids. We grew up happy, in a very modest house in the Redlands, with bunk beds to fit us all in. As is the case for many working-class families, while we did not have material wealth we were rich in the things that really matter. We are and always will be a close-knit family and words will never be enough to convey the depth and breadth of my gratitude.

To my mum, Elizabeth: your sacrifice, compassion and strength for those you love knows no boundary. To my dad, Patrick: thank you for setting such a fine example and providing the advice we always needed and the patience that we probably did not always deserve. To my siblings, Robert, Jodie, Daniel and Francis: you are all inspirations to me. Thank you for your endless support and love. I acknowledge all of my aunts, uncles and cousins, as well as my ancestors. Although they may no longer be with us in body, they are in spirit, having forged the path we walk on today, as we remember that we will do the same for those who come after us.

Humble thanks go to my close friends who, as close friends do, have shared life's many trials, triumphs and tribulations over the years. To Marty, Troy, Jon, Sascha, Susanne, Jagdeep, AJ, Neil, Scotty, Shaun, Robbo: thank you for always being there. To my campaign director and friend, Peter Allen: we have had some fun and done a few things over the last 30-odd years, mate. You are as staunch in your values as you are generous with your intellect. To the Bundamba campaign crew of Bisma, Jess, Ben Brew, Elliot and every volunteer who supported the campaign and, for their wise counsel, the members for Miller and Kurwongbah and Julie-Ann Campbell: thank you, all. Let us do it all again in October. I also want to acknowledge Milton Dick, Shayne Neumann and the members for Ipswich, Ipswich West and Jordan for their support and advice. I look forward to working together to deliver for our community.

I am committed to working tirelessly to make Bundamba and Queensland a better place for all of us, regardless of who you happen to be or where you come from. I am here to ensure that we get the services and infrastructure that our growing community deserves, whilst preserving the beauty of our natural environment. I am here to fight for a Bundamba where our community can access secure local jobs and the very best in services, like education, training, health care and public transport. The people of Bundamba have put their trust in me and I do not intend to let them down.

## ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF CURRUMBIN

### First Speech

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the honourable member for Currumbin, I remind members that this is the member's first speech and it should be listened to with the courtesies reserved for such occasions.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.16 pm): I rise today in this chamber humbled, grateful and privileged: humbled by the confidence the people of Currumbin have placed in me, profoundly grateful for all of the support of those who have worked so hard to get me here and deeply privileged at the opportunity given to me by the people of Currumbin—an opportunity that has been bestowed on only

four members before me, one of whom was the former member for Currumbin, who served our community for 16 years. I am here to be a strong and persistent voice for the people of Currumbin. I am cognisant of the trust they have placed in me and of their rightful expectation that I will work tirelessly on their behalf and I am aware of the enormous responsibility that now rests with me as the member for Currumbin.

The Currumbin electorate is a fusion of natural beauty and exciting growth, which creates a lifestyle like no other. Currumbin is home to so many important landmarks, including the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, John Flynn Hospital, the Gold Coast Airport, the Southern Cross University and family operated businesses such as Freeman's Organic Farm and the Neumann Group, which is one of the largest employers in the electorate. Set amongst the beautiful beaches and the bush, Currumbin hosts a world surfing reserve and breathtaking hinterland, all of which must be preserved for the next generation and generations to come.

It is easy for me to be passionate about Currumbin. I grew up on the Gold Coast and Currumbin is the jewel in the crown. My mother moved from Sydney to the border town of Terranora at the age of seven. Her parents took up farming. We were known about town as the 'city farmers'. Mum and Dad bought their first house in Carrara and I was born in the Allamanda hospital in Southport, the eldest of four children. Although we were a working-class family, we were rich in so many ways, surrounded by love and strong family values. My parents sacrificed a lot for us to have that childhood. Dad worked seven days a week as a mechanic to put food on the table and provide all four of his children with a Christian education. We spent many summer afternoons at Rainbow Bay, Greenmount or Coolangatta Beach. My father taught me to surf at Rainbow Bay Beach. It is because of this experience that I went on to achieve my bronze medallion at the Currumbin Beach Vikings Surf Life Saving Club as a teenager and volunteered my time as a surf lifesaver. From my upbringing I learnt the meaning of hard work, sacrifice, family values and determination. I know that nothing comes easily and that if I am to represent the people of Currumbin I will need to work hard, listen to their concerns and support them to the best of my ability.

I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude to my parents for everything they have done to support my siblings and me. They selflessly committed to providing all of their children with opportunities in life. Mum tells the story of how, from the age of six, I told her I wanted to be a lawyer. I do not know what it was that planted that seed, but I was determined to achieve this dream. I worked my way through university as a waitress in several of the local restaurants in Tweed and Coolangatta. I enjoyed learning and gained an appreciation about the importance of education. I firmly believe all children should have opportunities to achieve their dreams. As the member for Currumbin, this will certainly be a focus of my work. We need to plan for the future and ensure our children have opportunities to experience clean beaches, world-class education and local jobs.

In 2008 I attained my Bachelor of Laws with honours from Southern Cross University. A local Coolangatta firm, Attwood Marshall Lawyers, employed me in my first legal role. I owe a lot to my beginnings at Attwood Marshall Lawyers and the friendships I forged there.

After three years as a litigation lawyer, I accepted a position as a federal prosecutor with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in Brisbane. As a federal prosecutor, I was part of a team of prosecutors who prosecuted bikies, people smugglers, drug importers and paedophiles. I heard the witness accounts of victims of organised crime, of refugees put in danger by people smugglers and of children exploited by paedophiles. All too often the argument made to mitigate online offences against children was that online child pornography is a victimless crime. Every day across the world, children are exploited to produce this material to meet the demand of paedophiles seeking to download it. It is not victimless, yet the legislation allows the judiciary to go soft on these types of offences. To me this is wrong. The law should prioritise victims over criminals. I welcome the opportunity in my role as the member for Currumbin to work with my colleagues to be tougher on crime and to be a voice to keep children and our most vulnerable safe.

During my work as a disciplinary prosecutor for the Office of the Health Ombudsman, I completed the Bar Practice Course through the Bar Association of Queensland. I used to tell people that sitting the bar was the most difficult career achievement I had undertaken. I can no longer say this. This by-election was also one of the most challenging yet rewarding achievements I have undertaken in my career. I worked as a prosecutor for nine years because I want to make a difference, because I want to uphold community standards and because I want to protect our most vulnerable. This accumulated experience has shown me the dark underbelly of our society and the failures within our system. I used to prosecute the law-breakers to protect the public. Now I join the lawmakers to continue to preserve and protect my community.

I owe my community spirit in part to my mother. My mother's contribution to Currumbin is admirable. My mother, after being a stay-at-home mum and raising four well-adjusted children, went on to attain a Bachelor of Social Science and become a counsellor. For over a decade, she worked in mental health and homelessness services and currently works in Tugun, housing the homeless, youth homeless and victims of domestic violence. My mother provides a great service to the people of Currumbin and I want to uphold these values within the Currumbin community.

My upbringing and my values inspired me to join the LNP and run for Currumbin because my beliefs accord with this party. The political traditions of liberalism and conservatism are well preserved and defended by the LNP. It is the party that has the security and prosperity of society as its highest priority. It is the party of lower taxes and strong economic management. It is the party for greater freedoms for the individual and is the party that understands the importance of family.

Family is so important to me. I met my husband, Dan, in Coolangatta and we married five years later on Currumbin Beach. Dan is a mechanical engineer by trade, operating his own small business for a time. He has witnessed firsthand both the challenges and opportunities small businesses across the state are presented with. There are just under 5,000 small businesses in the Currumbin electorate, the large majority of which are family owned and operated. These are the backbone of our economy—hardworking people, making sacrifices and giving back to the community. We need to do more to support them. The small businesses of Currumbin need our help now more than ever. I plan to be their voice as we negotiate our way out of COVID-19.

Together, Dan and I have two beautiful children—Lily, who is six, and Thomas, who is two. They are a strong motivating force for me and part of the reason I put my hand up to serve in this role. I aspire to be the best version of myself, to act with kindness and to show my children by example that no door is closed to them. I have always had the courage to seize the moment and open doors. This is also part of the reason I am fortunate enough to be standing in this parliament today. That is not to say I have not experienced failure, but I believe he or she who does not fail does not learn. We speak about success all the time. In my view, the ability to use failure is of more value. I will proudly fight for the people of Currumbin, risking failure, but aiming for great success.

I will not sit by while the southern Gold Coast is neglected. I understand my community's frustration with the M1, for I, too, have lost productivity and valuable time with my loved ones as a result of the impossible congestion on the M1 and surrounding roads. I will fight to build the second M1 to reduce congestion for those commuting. I will lobby for the government to deliver on the LNP's policy to air-condition every classroom in every state school. I will lobby for improving local road infrastructure, including Currumbin Creek Road.

We also need to improve our public transport capacity by connecting our community to the heavy rail network. Over the last four years, capacity building on the Gold Coast heavy rail network has been neglected. I will fight for a heavy rail station at Elanora and the preservation of the heavy rail corridor to the airport. The government desperately needs to connect Gold Coast Airport to local public transport. The airport is the sixth busiest in the country, welcoming over 6.5 million passengers annually. It seems archaic that it is not connected to a form of rail transport.

There is also a strong sense in the community that we need to start more detailed planning for stage 3B of the Gold Coast Light Rail and beyond. My constituents want to know what specific routes are being considered, what the government's preferred option is, and they want to be genuinely consulted as this major infrastructure undertaking moves forward.

We need to tackle the increasing prevalence of crime in our local community, especially youth crime. As a mum with two young kids, I have a strong instinct to protect my family. I know families right across the Currumbin electorate feel the same way. From my experience as a prosecutor, I know our approach to crime must be multi-faceted involving both the government and the family unit. Governments that are weak on crime increase the rate of crime as criminals become emboldened, so the first step is that governments need to get tough on crime. Additionally, and particularly relevant for reducing youth crime, the government needs to support families in addressing the causes of crime at home before it gets out of control. People in our community are increasingly feeling more and more unsafe and it should be the government's highest priority to secure the safety of its citizens.

The Currumbin electorate is very special to me. I firmly believe we need to preserve our pristine beaches, gorgeous hinterland and their environments. The Gold Coast will continue to grow—that is to be expected—because it is an amazing place to live, work and raise a family. We need to ensure that, as we grow, the developments being approved are in keeping with our community standards. We need

to end the inappropriate development spree so that we can preserve the southern Gold Coast lifestyle that our residents enjoy. We need to balance this with our obligation to protect the environment and our native fauna. We have an unparalleled resource in Currumbin Wildlife Hospital. The state government needs to work with the hospital to protect our wildlife, including expanding the hospital's capacity for koala rehabilitation.

I believe that values matter—values like preserving our natural assets for future generations, upholding and enforcing the rule of law, respecting the innate worth of every individual and the need to encourage personal responsibility and the importance of family and the fundamental role family plays in raising and nurturing children. For my community to prosper and stay vibrant, we must turn these values into actions. We need to build the infrastructure our community needs and crack down on crime to keep our citizens safe. We need to support innovators and small business and take real steps to protect the lifestyle that makes Currumbin unique.

The opportunity I have to use this platform to improve our community would not be possible without a long list of people who deserve my thanks placed on the record. To my family—Riss and Alec, Brent and Aimee, Peter and Sue Hudson; Caryn, Justin, Christine and Paul Gerber—you keep me grounded and I could not have done this without your constant support. Special mention to my cousin Jenna Fearnley, who planted the seed of the possibility of this path for me and to my mum, Maree Hudson, and my little sister, Jesinta Hudson, it takes a village to raise a child and they are always there for me, Dan and the kids.

To my good friends, Debbie and Benny Morison, Ange Harry, Jaime Millar, Deb Workman, Kelli Edwards, Lisa and Benny Hathaway, Terri and Pablo Millane and Trent Thompson, you have always been there for me and supported me without fear or favour. Your friendship is so important to me, thank you. To my career mentors, Jeff Garrett and Liza Marshall, thank you.

Most importantly, to my husband, Dan, who has supported me unwaveringly in everything I do. Walking away from a stable career as a prosecutor—a career that I loved—was not an easy decision and one I did not make lightly. I have absolutely no doubt that I am standing here today, with the great privilege of representing the people of Currumbin, because of Dan's belief in me and encouragement. I love him and our children more than words could ever convey.

I thank my LNP colleagues. So many of them have contributed, in one way or another, through their time, enthusiasm, confidence and sometimes just a word of encouragement. Thank you Deb Frecklington, Leader of the Opposition and member for Nanango. Your strong leadership and counsel has helped me so much. You are an inspiration to me. To all of my LNP colleagues in this chamber who supported me during the campaign, thank you. Thank you senators James McGrath, Paul Scarr and Amanda Stoker for giving me so much of your time and counsel. Also thanks to federal members Karen Andrews and Angie Bell for their words of encouragement and effort.

The last two members I make special mention of because without them I know I would not be standing in this chamber today. I sincerely thank the member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek, for showing me the door which I had the courage to open and walk through. Without you I could not have dreamed of achieving the great honour of representing the people of Currumbin. I sincerely thank the member for Mudgeeraba, Ros Bates. You mentored and supported me, and I will be forever grateful. I am proud to stand alongside you.

Thank you to all the volunteers in the LNP who supported me and thank you to those volunteers who committed to supporting me in the campaign but were unable to due to COVID-19. I am grateful to everyone. However, I am going to be bold and name a few special volunteers. Thank you Peter and Mary Flynn, you both did more for me personally and throughout the campaign than I could detail here. Thank you Paul and Sheila for tirelessly road siding. Thank you Josie Kay for standing up for what you believe in and helping the LNP retain the seat of Currumbin. Thank you Jenny Sinclair for being a friendly face in the campaign office every day. Thank you Andrew Rowe for letterboxing and manning pre-poll with me. You were a great support to me. Thank you Brett and Alyson Hannam, Nerida Smith, Brad Carswell, Greg Young, Cynthia Hardy, Lincoln Folo, Malcom Cole, David Hutchinson and Michael Leighton for being so involved in the campaign. You are all appreciated.

Thank you to the Young LNP, including Anna Harris, Jackson Franks, Taylor Birtchnell, Ben Naday and Chris Manwaring, who were always ready and willing to doorknock, letterbox, roadside and pre-poll with me. I am fortunate to have the support of such a passionate and hardworking group of young people.

I would also like to thank the many community organisations that are the heart and soul of the Currumbin electorate. The volunteers that run these organisations put in countless hours of community service, and what better time to acknowledge them than during National Volunteers Week. The many groups include, but are not limited to, the following: Tugun Leagues Club, Friends of Currumbin, the Tugun Progress Association, the Currumbin RSL, Currumbin Beach Vikings Surf Life Saving Club, Coolangatta Senior Citizens, Southern Beaches Community Garden, the Alleygators Rugby Union Club, the Carpenter's Workshop at Elanora Uniting Church, BeachCare, the Rotary Club of Currumbin Coolangatta Tweed, Volunteer Marine Rescue Currumbin and the Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce.

Finally, I give my commitment to the people of Currumbin. Your issues are my issues. I will use this platform to improve our community. I will not waste a single opportunity to represent you. I am here for those who voted for me and for those who did not. I will work hard for the whole of the Currumbin electorate to ensure our community remains the best place to live, work and raise a family for many generations to come, so help me God.

## MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 890, on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (3.36 pm), continuing: If safety in mines is the minister's greatest concern, why are inspections down? Why are compliance actions down? Why are the number of safety alerts being issued also down, especially when the information that his department holds shows dramatic increases in the indicators the government has adopted?

This minister openly refers to Queensland having the toughest mine safety legislation in the world. That legislation has not prevented eight deaths in 21 months. That legislation has failed to keep pace. In fact, it has taken almost eight years and the Brady report for this minister to adopt the indicators referred to by the Pike River royal commission in New Zealand in 2012. The report into that disaster has an entire chapter dedicated to and entitled 'The decline of the mining inspectorate', yet this minister took no notice.

Our friends across the ditch were aware in 2012 of the correlation between decreasing inspections and the increase in what they call serious harm frequency rates. In fact, to quote the royal commission's report, 'Reduced inspections frequency was a contributing factor to the increase in serious harm incidents.' As one industry safety correspondent wrote, 'I am exhausted from hearing the statement that we have the toughest mine legislation in the world as miners continue to die or be maimed.'

I move onto the detail of the bill. Despite the somewhat belated intention to make our mines and quarries safer, this legislation has some serious deficiencies. It is lacking in its understanding of the very industry it seeks to make safer. Statutory office holders are safety critical roles and are important in managing risks to the safety and health of coalmine workers to whom they owe a responsibility. Currently, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 does not prescribe particular persons who may be appointed. For example, this may include a contractor or service provider or employee of a contractor or service provider.

This bill amends the act to clarify that only persons who are employees of a coalmine operator may be appointed as certain statutory office holders. I reiterate my earlier comments following the tabling of the amendments by the minister to extend the time period for these mines to sort out this issue between permanent employees and contractors. I want to express my concern that those amendments do not go far enough in resolving that particular issue, which is the single biggest concern raised throughout the course of public hearings and deliberations on this particular bill.

The bill amends the act to clarify that only persons who are employees of a coalmine operator may be appointed as certain statutory office holders. I ask the minister: what guarantees will there be that we will have sufficient SSEs at all of our mine sites across this state following the implementation of this legislation we are debating today?

This issue around site senior executives having to be employees of the mine operator has been a point of contention for mine operators and some workers, as this will remove the ability for contractors to be able to work in these roles at the present time. The rationalisation for this change in the explanatory notes stated—

This will ensure that statutory office holders can make safety complaints, raise safety issues or give help to an official in relation to a safety issue without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment.

However, as outlined in the LNP statement of reservation, there was no evidence presented to the committee to justify this. In fact, the Brady mine safety review indicated that contract statutory office holders were not reporting safety breaches for fear of losing their job as opposed to direct employees.

At last year's safety resets, only 22 people raised employment status as a reason for not raising safety issues—22. With only 22 out of 52,000 workers at 1,197 resets, that does not appear to be justification for this significant and extreme amendment to force contractors to become employees of the mines. The committee even heard evidence that contract statutory office holders were more likely to report safety concerns—opposite to the justification used for the law change requiring direct employment.

Mr Andrew McDonald from the SSE Forum confirmed the benefit of having contractors on site to raise safety concerns. He said—

Our mine is set up with around 70 per cent full-time employment and 30 per cent contractors. We did a review back through our hazard reporting process for the last 12 months. When I pulled the numbers out, it surprised me. Some 68 per cent of all hazards reported came from the contractor base and only 32 per cent from the full-time employee base. To me, that is telling us that our full-time employees have become very acclimatised to it. It is what they do every day. They are starting to move past hazards that the contractors are seeing and recognising from other sites.

Mr Dan Proffitt claimed that statutory officers and coalmine workers often seek different employment arrangements and that this difference is neglected in the bill. He said—

I believe the reason behind the perception this change is needed has been incorrectly interpreted from the safety reset feedback. The majority of contractors that do the statutory roles within our industry actually prefer to remain contract. This is in stark contrast to contract coal mine workers on the shop floor level who are constantly chasing a permanent role.

The Queensland Resources Council also believed that it would be an unreasonable and unjustified regulatory burden requirement for all statutory position holders—senior site executives—at a coalmine to be employed by the coalmine operator. Corporate structures in mining are complex and involve joint ventures, partnerships and structures within individual companies. This is why contract statutory office holders are in demand in the industry as they can easily fit into new roles and relieve in situations where the office holder has taken leave or is ill. The LNP strongly believe that it is not the government's role to tell workers who they must work for.

I also want to raise a serious issue around this bill's compliance with fundamental legislative principles, or FLPs as we all know them. This flows into the issues around the fact that this provision and its mismanagement through the drafting and committee process breaches the fundamental legislative principles of Queensland law. The QRC wrote to the Speaker notifying him that there had been a serious breach of FLPs with the bill. In the letter from QRC, CEO Ian Macfarlane stated—

The QRC has for some time been concerned about the lack of genuine consultation on regulatory changes that will significantly affect the resources industry. Too frequently there has been no proper regulatory assessment of policy proposals that impose a regulatory burden on industry.

The letter went on to outline that clause 7.2.12 of the *Queensland Legislation Handbook* states that Queensland's legislators—that is, us in this chamber here today—must consider the abrogation of individual rights and liberties and justify restrictions on a person's ordinary activities. The clause also states that legislative intervention should be proportionate and relevant to any issue being dealt with under the legislation. The fact that there was a failure in the regulatory assessment process for the bill, as well as the committee's assessment, has meant that the issue has been referred to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly for review, as it should. Ian Macfarlane went on the finish his letter saying—

I am bringing this to your attention so that you consider under the Standing Rules and Orders whether the effectiveness of the debate of the Bill has been compromised by both the short comings of the regulatory assessment process for the Bill as well as the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee's assessment of how it affects the fundamental legislative principles.

This is a serious issue that this chamber and the members in this place need to consider as part of this debate. I ask the minister to clarify why this mess was allowed to happen in the first place and whether he will now abandon this provision that has breached the fundamental legislative principles?

This legislation is lacking when it comes to the limitations in this legislation on who can be charged with the industrial manslaughter offence. During the committee process, the issue of the appropriateness of the targeting of the statutory supervisors under the industrial manslaughter offence was raised time and time again. For example, while the CFMMEU strongly support amendments to implement industrial manslaughter, they too firmly believe that the definition of a senior officer needs to be considered further and expanded. They want to see the definition applied to other offsite decision-makers and obligation holders.

The CFMMEU want to extend the industrial manslaughter definition beyond just targeting statutory office holders and, in doing so, allow investigators or police officers the discretion to determine who should be charged with the offence—that is, the person who is actually negligent. They believe by restricting the proposed industrial manslaughter provisions to statutory position holders will allow other employees—for example, supervisors, superintendents et cetera—to fall outside the ambit of this legislation. At the Moranbah public hearing, Stephen Smyth from the CFMMEU stated—

... the industrial manslaughter definition should be broader by leaving it up to the investigator—

that is, the workplace health and safety officer or police officer—

to determine who is going to be charged—not just the SSEs.

We certainly support that this should be across the board because we want the decision-makers to be the ones who are responsible. We think by exempting people, you are not going to get that.

I personally support the notion that industrial manslaughter should always be applied to those responsible. That is why I am seeking clarification from the minister on whether he supports the CFMMEU's calls to extend the criteria of who can be charged and to clarify exactly who can be held responsible.

This legislation is also deficient when it comes to respecting the rights of Queenslanders under the law, especially relating to the defences available to people who may be charged with industrial manslaughter. The submission and contribution from the Queensland Law Society, which raised concerns around the lack of defences and rationale for the introduction of the industrial manslaughter offences, highlighted a number of issues. The society stated—

The Queensland Law Society does not support the introduction of the industrial manslaughter offences into the resources safety acts. There are existing criminal offences in these acts which capture conduct, both acts and omissions that causes a fatality, as well as offences in the Criminal Code which do the same.

In relation to the proposed offence of industrial manslaughter the Queensland Law Society said—

- a) the standard of proof should be higher, to align with the standard of proof for criminal manslaughter under the Criminal Code;
- b) defences should be available (again, consistent with the Criminal Code) to account for circumstances of accident, involuntariness, reasonable excuse or acts independent of the will; additional consideration should be given to defences for specific duty holders who have exercised due diligence, given the framing of duties under the Resources Safety Acts;
- c) the penalties for individuals should not be limited to custodial sentences, and there should be judicial discretion (as there is with most offences) for financial penalties to be imposed in the alternative if appropriate.
- d) significant consideration ... should also be given to ensuring that there is appropriate and adequate separation between the regulatory, investigatory and prosecutorial arms of the investigating body to protect individual rights and preserve the principles of natural justice.

When we prescribe in legislation the removal of a defence as outlined in section 23 of the Criminal Code, we are then becoming extremely prescriptive. We are taking away a fundamental right of people charged with this offence to rely on that defence in any subsequent court hearing. That is something that causes me a great deal of concern. The LNP opposition believes it is essential that the minister addresses the concerns raised by the Queensland Law Society and reassures Queenslanders that appropriate and necessary legal processes and defences exist for all parties involved.

This legislation is also lacking when it comes to transparency. Again, we are seeing the government force through an omnibus bill with hidden consequences. When it comes to the section of the legislation that seeks to clarify full-supply level provisions with regard to dams, Queenslanders affected by floods have every right to be suspicious. We know what happened with the Wivenhoe Dam and the flooding of Brisbane. We know what happened in Townsville with the flood event that occurred last year and the difficulties and issues that arise when we release water from storage facilities during

wet weather events and the subsequent impact that might have on communities. We are seeing that being played out in the courts at the moment. As stated in the explanatory notes—

The proposed amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 will clarify the intent and interaction of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 flood mitigation for dam safety purposes, with resource operations licence, temporary full supply level and reduced full supply level provisions under the Water Act 2000. Specifically, they propose to clarify and confirm that necessary actions taken by storage infrastructure operators, e.g. Seqwater and Sunwater, to make water releases to reduce storage capacity as per an approved Flood Mitigation Manual or to meet a dam safety requirement under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008, are separate to obligations stated in the resource operations licence under the Water Act 2000.

All Queenslanders have the right to question whether these changes are in response to legal action already taken against this government and legal action that may be taken into the future. My colleagues on this side of the House will address other areas of concern that the LNP has with this particular legislation. There are a number of parts to the bill before the House that involve areas right across this state of ours. Rightly, Queenslanders still want answers. They want to know why this minister has failed to act. They want to know why we have seen eight deaths in 21 months and why we are still seeing horrific incidents in the mining and quarrying industries.

On behalf of the opposition I want to place on record our thoughts and prayers for the five men who were critically injured in the gas explosion at the Anglo American Grosvenor mine outside of Moranbah earlier this month. As the member for Burdekin, incidents like this demonstrate why we need to get mine safety issues right. I also want to place on record my thanks to those who responded to that incident.

The LNP understands the importance of the state's resource industry and firmly believes that, given its contribution, as a society we can afford to pay for a mine safety system that protects our workers. The LNP stands shoulder to shoulder with our miners on this important issue. I have taken dozens of phone calls from miners regarding this particular legislation. They are concerned about their safety. They are concerned that safety standards are being compromised in some of our mines and that production is being put in front of protection. That mentality needs to change. The LNP supports laws that protect miners' legal rights to a safe workplace. The safety of our miners must be paramount. The opposition and I will continue to hold this government to account when it comes to our miners' health and wellbeing, because our miners need to know that when they go to work each day they will come home again at the end of their shift.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill before the House. Before I begin I want to address a couple of issues the member for Burdekin raised. The member for Burdekin said the department failed to meet the CWP select committee's recommended target for unannounced inspections which, he said, was based on advice from industry experts. I am a fan of his work, but can I remind the House that the member for Burdekin does have a history of overstepping the mark in some of his statements. For example, a 'grave breach' of legislative standards is based on one letter received. I think we are going to need a bit more evidence than that. The member also accused us of lacking understanding of the industry. I would point out to the member for Burdekin that he is going to need more than a billboard of himself in high-vis outside of Moranbah to appear like an expert on mining.

I remind the member that in its report the select committee did not provide a basis for its recommendation. In response to the select committee the government recognised the importance of unannounced inspections, and that that must be based on the analysis of risk. The government engaged an expert to provide advice on the level of unannounced inspections, and the advice was that catastrophic events such as fires and explosions cannot be detected by direct observation. They require in-depth examination of plans and systems and discussions with mine personnel. We cannot rely on unannounced inspections to deal with this issue. This expert said that we are looking at a range of 10 to 20 per cent of total inspections as a reasonable proportion of unannounced inspections. In the 2018-19 financial year, 19.5 per cent of coalmine inspections were unannounced and 18 per cent of mineral mining and quarrying inspections were unannounced. As of March 2020 the proportion of unannounced inspections is 18 per cent and 22 per cent in those other mines and quarries. It is not just a case of standing up and stating this; you have to have proof.

I would like to emphasise that it is an honour to support a bill that is going to make a material difference to the lives of working Queenslanders. It is going to make a difference because it will make the lives of Queenslanders who work in mines a lot safer. It certainly was an honour to chair the committee that published the report. The report set out nine recommendations. It is very heartening to see that the minister accepts or supports all of these recommendations. I am especially pleased that

the penalties for reprisal offences will now align with those in the Work Health and Safety Act. Recommendation 5 touches on a key issue that I want to address, which is countering reprisals for calling out a safety issue in the workplace.

We received a lot of written submissions opposing what we are doing with this bill, many repeating the same points, and we received a few that support what we are doing. It was the hearing at Moranbah and the verbal testimony of people sitting in front of us that to me really set out the framework that made sense of all these submissions. This testimony really provided a context that ordered my understanding of what needed to be done.

What we heard in Moranbah was the unfiltered opinions, views and stories from the men and women who work in those mines. What had a great impact on me was the men and women who talked quietly to us afterwards and even sought me out in the airports on the way home—and I do mean quietly because they did not want to be overheard. These workers said that the raising of a safety issue and the employment status at the mines was a real safety concern. They talked about how people were afraid to speak out and that sections 275 and 254 of the relevant acts, which protect those whistleblowers, were being ignored in some cases.

They talked about how people were afraid to come up to the microphone on that night because their bosses were in the audience listening to them. Even one of the bosses—a senior manager—sought me out and said that we were on the right track and that one of their concerns was that they had a 30 per cent contract workforce and that was a real safety concern for them. This informal testimony did have a great impact and I will read into the record my foreword. It states—

Of crucial importance in drafting this report were the informal representations to committee members outside of the formal hearing at Moranbah, which have been as informative as—and contradictory to—the written representations received by the committee. Informal testimony focused on the ability to raise matters of safety in mines without suffering workplace retribution, and the capacity or reluctance of workers to raise these matters depending on the permanence or security of their employment.

I stand by everything we wrote in this report, and there is enough written and formal testimony to justify the recommendations in this report. I will go through some of that testimony we heard and that is on the record. Brodie Bruncker said—

I have witnessed firsthand the vulnerability of contract deputies being overruled by management even though the deputy is ultimately responsible for the area of the mine, but they know if they do not follow the instructions given, even though they do not agree with the decision, they will either be pulled into the office and reprimanded or, worse, shown the door. Having all critical safety roles employed on a permanent employment type will give the person the confidence to stop the job regardless of the circumstances and not fear for their job.

Phil Taylor, who has 40 years experience, said that people with reporting and accountability responsibilities were scared to speak out or put their hand up.

In the last few minutes I have, I want to say that every time we hear about a death or injury at a coalmine it affects every member of parliament, no matter which electorate we represent in this House. The members for Ipswich and Mount Ommaney and I sat at the miners memorial at Moranbah, and the impact that is felt there is as profound as any war memorial. It is sobering, it is contemplative. It emphasised to me the importance of what we were doing—that is, protecting the health, wellbeing and working capacity of the community members that were around us.

This is a Labor government. The wellbeing and health of working Queenslanders is of utmost importance to us. We will always come down on the side of working and middle-class Queenslanders who rely on their government to provide the protection they need in the workplace. This year, 2020, will be an historic year and there will come a time later in history where we will be judged on how we used the power of governing to protect the health of working people. This government has shown that it will put the health, wellbeing and welfare of working Queenslanders first. This bill continues to do that.

I want to pay regard to all the witnesses who spoke up, no matter what their opinion. I want to give particular thanks to those who put their careers at risk by speaking to us. I do pay regard to the five miners injured at the Grosvenor mine and their families. I am immensely proud of Queenslanders and the mining community that has passed around the hat and raised about \$200,000 for these miners who are still at RBWH. Someone described to me recently the kinds of injuries that would have been suffered by these five miners, and they are horrific. I will not describe the injuries to the House, but the description that was given to me haunts me still.

I cannot bear to think that men and women would be subject to such injuries in the future in workplaces in Queensland, which is why it is crucial that we pass this bill. We heard from the member for Burdekin that they will be supporting the bill, but he told the House what he thought were reasons the bill was imperfect and perhaps should not be supported. I hold grave fears for the future of the reforms in this bill if the LNP, God forbid, ever gets back on these benches here. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (4.04 pm): As a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, I rise to make my contribution on this bill as well. I would like to start by thanking the secretariat staff for their ongoing and valuable assistance with committee matters during the review of the bill. One death is one too many, but to have eight mining related deaths in just 21 months means immediate and drastic action must be taken.

In July 2019, the minister called a meeting between resource companies, unions and other stakeholders to discuss the critical situation that had developed with the deterioration of the state's mine safety, with six deaths in the previous 12 months and, as we are all aware, an additional two deaths since then. The meeting resulted in a joint commitment from the Queensland government, industry and unions to conduct a safety reset on all mine sites and quarries, as well as a pledge to work together on introducing reforms to strengthen the safety culture in the resources sector, including sanctions for reckless behaviour and legislative reform such as the government's proposal to actively consider the offence of industrial manslaughter, which exists in other industry sectors.

On 17 February our committee received a public briefing on the bill and on 27 February submissions closed, with 80 received in total. This was quite a substantial number for the short time frame offered for submissions to be made on this very important topic. On 3 March our committee held a public hearing in Brisbane and later the same day we travelled to Moranbah to hold a second public hearing which was incredibly well attended, and understandably so with the bill focusing on many incredibly important industry issues.

The LNP places the safety of our resource workers at the highest priority, and that is why we are not opposing this bill, but that is also why we are raising several concerns in relation to this bill and mine safety. The sole focus of this legislation must be to improve safety for Queensland workers. Queensland miners and their families and communities deserve answers as to what is happening in our mines and what has gone wrong to cause these horrific accidents.

In the time I have today, I will focus on two issues which are of major concern—the introduction of an industrial manslaughter offence and the appointment of statutory office holders as employees. In December 2019, Dr Brady finalised his report on the safety resets which took place in Queensland's mines and quarries mid last year. Neither the industry resets nor Dr Brady recommended that industrial manslaughter charges be introduced or that statutory office holders be only direct employees of coalmine operators not contractors. However, the minister is still going ahead and making these changes. With regards to industrial manslaughter measures, the Queensland Law Society stated—

The Queensland Law Society does not support the introduction of the industrial manslaughter offences into the resources safety acts. There are existing criminal offences in these acts which capture conduct, both acts and omissions that causes a fatality, as well as offences in the Criminal Code which do the same.

Many of the submitters are concerned that these provisions will capture mineworkers in operational roles beyond the senior officers of the corporation. This was also raised by the Queensland Resources Council, which stated—

Resource workers like SSEs, SSMS, safety certificate holders and the people identified in the management structure of a mine are not executive officers of the corporation. They do not have the capacity to affect significantly the corporation's financial standing but are simply employed to work at the operation using the resources they are given.

Submitters such as BHP also expressed their concerns. They said—

Our SSEs are concerned that they could be captured by the industrial manslaughter offence and become a target once the new laws commence and be punished despite their best efforts and overwhelming commitment to mine safety. Moreover, SSEs already carry liabilities under the CSMH Act in the event of a failure to meet these responsibilities, including maximum penalties of up to \$400,350.00, or three years imprisonment.

The vast number of submissions received for this inquiry recommended that site senior executives, site safety managers, underground mine managers, open-cut examiners and ventilation officers should not be captured in the industrial manslaughter provisions of this bill.

Many submitters were concerned that the legislation will result in adverse consequences such as a reluctance to take on statutory roles or share information for fear of self-incrimination. The QLS submitted—

... the introduction of industrial manslaughter provisions may also have the unintended consequence of compromising individuals' willingness to participate in safety investigations following fatal accidents, including investigations which SSEs are obliged to undertake.

Despite all of this industry feedback, the minister is pressing on with introducing the industrial manslaughter offence. In doing so, the LNP is seeking a commitment from the government to place limitations on who can be charged with the offence and to ensure that defences are available to persons charged with that offence.

With regard to making changes to the law that will see statutory office holders be only direct employees of the coalmine operator and not contractors, this has really caught the industry by surprise as there has been no consultation with resource operators on this amendment and there is no evidence that supports the change. Under this legislation, a contractor to the mine would no longer be able to hold the position of a statutory officer. The QRC noted that—

... the requirement for all statutory position holders at a coal mine to be employed by the coal mine operator represents an unreasonable and unjustified regulatory burden which was not subjected to consultation with industry—

or a regulatory impact assessment. Anglo America site executives noted in their submission—

This is a complex area where there has been no consultation with the industry to understand the likely implications, including a shortage of statutory positions in Queensland that cannot be filled under the current system. The requirement would also necessitate changes to hundreds of contractual arrangements for mining services, which apart from the compliance burden, may also have other unintended consequences for our operations that we have not yet had the opportunity to consider.

The explanatory notes state—

This will ensure that statutory office holders can make safety complaints, raise safety issues or give help to an official in relation to a safety issue without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment.

This was not an issue reflected in the safety resets or in Brady's report, nor was there any evidence to the committee that contract statutory office holders were not reporting safety breaches for fear of losing their job as opposed to direct employees.

During the Brisbane committee hearing I asked a question of the departmental officers to seek quantification of the feedback from the safety resets about fear of raising genuine safety incidents, which was taken on notice. In its latest written response, the department advised that only 22 people raised employment status as a reason for not raising safety issues. That is 22 out of 52,000 employees and workers at 1,197 resets. How is the minister justifying this extreme amendment? How could the minister walk in here earlier today and say he heard this over and over again at the resets he attended when only 22 in total brought it up?

Indeed, our committee heard evidence of the opposite: that contract statutory officer holders were more likely to report safety concerns. In an answer to a question I raised, Mr Andrew McDonald from the SSE forum confirmed the benefit of having contractors onsite to raise safety concerns. His response was—

Our mine is set up with around 70 per cent full-time employment and 30 per cent contractors. We did a review back through our hazard reporting process for the last 12 months. When I pulled the numbers out, it surprised me. Some 68 per cent of all hazards reported came from the contractor base and only 32 per cent from the full-time employee base. To me, that is telling us that our full-time employees have become very acclimatised to it. It is what they do every day. They are starting to move past hazards that the contractors are seeing and recognising from other sites.

Mr Dan Proffitt claimed that statutory officers and coalmine workers often seek different employment arrangements and that this difference is neglected in the bill. He said—

I believe the reason behind the perception this change is needed has been incorrectly interpreted from the safety reset feedback. The majority of contractors that do the statutory roles within our industry actually prefer to remain contract. This is in stark contrast to contract coal mine workers on the shop floor level who are constantly chasing a permanent role.

Our committee heard that the corporate structures in mining are complex and involve joint ventures, partnerships and structures within individual companies. Therefore, contract statutory office holders are in demand in the industry and they can easily fit into the new roles and relieve in situations where the office holder has taken leave or is ill. It is not the government's role to tell workers who they must work for. Worker safety is paramount and the LNP treats this issue very seriously. We support any constructive and workable measures to improve workplace safety. Unfortunately, this bill is more about being seen to do something than working and consulting with the entire industry to address the underlying problems and failures. Unless these underlying issues are addressed, we are likely to see more fatalities.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.14 pm): I am pleased to rise in support of the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 because the need for this legislation is clear. Having been born and raised in Ipswich, I am very familiar with the dangers faced by men and women working in the Queensland mining industry. The number of mining memorials in Ipswich is only exceeded by the memorials honouring those men and women who have served in the Australian Defence Force. We know how dangerous mining can be and we know how to honour those mineworkers who are fatally injured at work.

Ipswich has not just one but three mineworker memorials. Each year in July I join others at the Box Flat memorial at Swanbank to honour those killed in the Box Flat mine disaster. The Box Flat mine operated from 1969 to 1987. Its coal was mined for the operation of Swanbank Power Station just

across the road. During the early hours of the morning of 31 July 1972, 17 miners lost their lives after an underground gas and coal dust explosion. An 18th man, Clarence Edwin Wolski, died two years later in 1974 from injuries directly related to the Box Flat explosion. Eight of the men who died were part of a mine rescue team.

As well, each year in October I join others at the Ipswich and Rosewood coalminers memorial, located at Limestone Park in Ipswich, to honour the 186 mineworkers killed while working at Ipswich and Rosewood mines. The third Ipswich miners memorial is located at Redbank. Unveiled on 19 September 2017, the miners memorial monument is dedicated to the more than 1,500 Queenslanders who have lost their lives in fatal mine and quarry accidents.

Like many Ipswich families, my family has a strong and continuing connection to the mining industry. My grandfather Pat McGuire, my mother's father, was a miner in the Marburg area. At a relatively young age he suffered an injury in a mining accident that left him permanently disabled. I have uncles and cousins who have worked in mines across Australia. Our mining lineage continues to my nephew Nathan Thompson, who worked at the New Hope Jeebropilly Mine at Amberley until it was recently decommissioned; and his sister Cara Thompson, who works at the South Walker Creek mine in Strathfield and is currently on maternity leave.

As at June 2019 a total of 53,084 people were employed by the Queensland resources industry split across each of the three subsectors: 37,290 workers are employed in coalmining, 14,034 in mineral mines and 1,760 in quarries. The Queensland mining industry is a major contributor to the state's resources exports and a significant source of employment. As at January 2020 the overall value of the Queensland resources exports was \$71.5 billion. That is almost double the export value in 2009, when it was \$36 billion. The industry continues to grow.

Mine safety has come under review before in this parliament. It first did so in the 1980s and early 1990s in Queensland after a series of mining disasters that included the Moura mine disaster in 1994 when 11 men were killed. Subsequently, two mine safety acts were introduced by the Beattie government in 1999, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 and the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999.

It is an obligation of all governments, particularly Labor governments, to make laws that ensure a safe work environment for our workers and that they safely return home to their families at the end of their working day. However, there have been 49 fatalities in Queensland mines between January 2000 and January 2020, and this has highlighted a review of the mining safety legislation made in 1999.

In an effort to improve mine safety, the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 delivers on three government priorities outlined by the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Dr Anthony Lynham, in his introductory speech for the bill on 4 February 2020. First, the bill strengthens safety culture in the resources sector through introducing industrial manslaughter provisions and requiring that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations must be an employee of the coalmine operator. Second, the bill implements the legislative changes that support the Palaszczuk government's ongoing reforms to the mine rehabilitation and financial assurance laws. Third, the bill progresses amendments that align our election commitment to improve the regulatory efficiency of the resources sector.

Minister Lynham demonstrated his absolute commitment to mine safety in Queensland by commissioning three independent expert reviews into how the Queensland resources industry can work towards being free of fatality and serious harm. As he said in his introductory speech, this bill introduces industrial manslaughter offence provisions into the resources safety legislation as well as other amendments to resources safety legislation. The industrial manslaughter offence will apply to employers, senior officers and corporations in cases where their criminal negligence causes the death of a worker in the resources sector. It will bring the conduct of senior officers and corporations clearly into focus in relation to safety in resources sector workplaces.

The amendments are similar to the amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 made in this parliament in 2017 and will provide consistent treatment of the worst cases of criminal negligence that cause the death of a worker across all workplaces in Queensland. These serious cases of workplace fatality caused by criminal negligence of senior management will have significant penalties applicable—namely, 20 years imprisonment for an individual and 100,000 penalty units for a corporation. This equates to fine of up to \$13.3 million. I thank Minister Lynham for his commitment to mine safety in Queensland. Just as the Beattie government introduced legislation to address mine safety in 1999, it is great to see the Palaszczuk government introducing legislation to improve the safety of mineworkers with this bill.

In closing, I thank my fellow members of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, the members for Bancroft, Mount Ommaney, Condamine, Bundaberg and Buderim. I also thank the committee secretariat, led by the committee secretary, Dr Jacqui Dewar, the relevant departmental officers who assisted the committee as well as all of those people, groups and companies who made submissions to the committee. I quote from a submission made to the committee by Stephen Smyth, District President of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union—

We have seen the loss of 8 miners' lives who simply went to work and never returned in the last 14 months. We have seen other serious accidents and workers continue to be diagnosed with occupational lung diseases and other illness. We must do something different and we must take the opportunity to do this now.

I commend the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.23 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. This bill is a response to the deterioration in mine safety, particularly over the 12 months to July 2019. I note that the LNP will not oppose this bill, because the safety of our resources workers is the highest priority. However, there are a number of aspects of this bill where justifiable concerns were raised during the committee process. Principally, these concerns relate to the requirement for statutory position holders to be direct employees of mines as opposed to contractors; limitations on who can be charged with industrial manslaughter; and the changes to the defences available to individuals charged with industrial manslaughter.

The current state of affairs which has resulted in the deaths of eight Queensland workers over the last 21 months is clearly and completely unacceptable. While more Queensland mineworkers are killed or maimed, all we have seen from the weak natural resources, mines and energy minister is political gamesmanship. Just like his insipid performance on the vegetation management issue in 2018, Minister Lynham has gone missing in action. When concerned graziers and farmers were lining up with questions and concerns in 2018, he was nowhere to be heard. Now, like then, all we have seen is more pathetic manoeuvring via media releases. What we should have seen from the man who supposedly cares about mineworkers is genuine engagement with all stakeholders, not just his CFMMEU masters. Perhaps if Minister Lynham did his job properly, he would not have had to come in here today to bring in hastily drafted amendments which apply a sunset clause to the requirement for statutory position holders, specifically SSEs, to be direct employees of mine operators.

The minister would have people believe that this bill has widespread support, citing the joint communique issued in 2019, but, as was very evident during the committee process, the reality is not quite so united. When questioned during the committee process in relation to the issue of statutory position holders and SSEs being direct employees of mine operators, chair of the Queensland Resources Council, Ian Macfarlane, said, 'We cannot support the bill in its entirety with the current provisions on SSEs.' The QRC also said that those specific proposals 'run the risk of diminishing safety by undermining the culture necessary to prioritise safety'. All we have seen today are amendments that apply an 18-month time frame in relation to this issue. Apparently this superficial change will remove the risk articulated by the QRC as we have heard nothing from the QRC or the CFMMEU today. I contend that the minister's amendment does nothing to remediate the concerns expressed by many during the committee process. All it does is push the issue out 18 months down the road.

On the issue of the consultation, the committee heard the same refrain that we hear so often in relation to an inadequate consultation process. As coalmine worker Karl Barnsdale stated—

I am disappointed in the consultation process, it appears to be non-existent. The first I heard about the proposed amendments were through social media.

In particular, industry representatives expressed concern in relation to the provisions included in division 2. A representative from Peabody Mines stated—

The industry has been surprised by the addition of Division 2 amendments which were not previously included in the consultation draft released in 2019.

QRC chair Ian Macfarlane stated—

For some of the issues in this bill, industry has had extensive engagement, and we thank the government for that. However, the bill includes a late addition for which there has been no consultation or evidence provided, other than the apparent preference from the unions. This issue is the proposal that all statutory officials in the coalmining industry must be employed by the coalmining operator. There is no evidence to suggest that this requirement would have any impact on improving safety outcomes.

Given the round table, the joint communique and the engagement on some aspects of this bill, why did Minister Lynham try to slide through the provisions for which there is no evidence to support that it will improve mine safety—provisions which fly in the face of industrial relations law and will unnecessarily restrict the rights and freedoms of small business operators and contractors who are just trying to earn a living and provide for their families? The only supportable conclusion is that it is because that is what the CFMMEU wanted. We all know how this government is owned by the unions. It is what the CFMMEU wanted to boost its own membership so that it can exert even more job-destroying influence on the workforce.

If only the government had a minister for natural resources, mines and energy who had some courage, a minister who had the wherewithal to stand up for what is right rather than what his mates want, who could work for the greater good of mineworkers and the mining industry rather than just one who resorts to bartering away the rights of workers to resolve a political problem. I suppose we should be thankful that the minister has humiliatingly been forced to move the feeble amendments we see here today, all of which could have been avoided had the minister consulted openly and in good faith on all of these issues. In his contribution the minister invoked his oath to do no harm as a doctor but, unfortunately, it is clear that the minister's oath does not extend to doing no harm to contract SSEs and other statutory position holders who will be out of a job in 18 months.

To be clear, I do not have a problem with mining companies, boards and CEOs being held to account when their actions or inactions result in the avoidable death of a mineworker. Were the provisions contained in this bill restricted to such individuals, many of my concerns would have been ameliorated. Unfortunately, as I and my LNP colleagues noted in our statement of reservation, this bill is more about being seen to do something rather than working and consulting with an entire industry to address underlying problems and failures. I question the need for an industrial manslaughter provision in relation to mineworkers given that all workers are already subject to manslaughter provisions contained within the Criminal Code. Despite this fact, no worker has ever been convicted under such provisions which begs the question why these new provisions are needed. Had we seen many failed prosecutions then the case may have been made, but that is not the situation. My view is supported by the Queensland Law Society which submitted that it—

... does not support the introduction of the industrial manslaughter offences into the resources safety acts. There are existing criminal offences in these acts which capture conduct, both acts and omissions that causes a fatality, as well as offences in the Criminal Code which do the same.

The CFMMEU has stated that these provisions will only come into effect in the event of a mining fatality. However, I believe that ignores the point that these types of punitive laws create a culture of non reporting and will actually increase the risk of serious injury or death. The mining industry already has considerable obligations, particularly those contained within the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act where statutory office holders have a positive obligation to report incidents and near misses. By introducing provisions which will attract a custodial sentence, the natural consequence will be that workers act to protect themselves. That will mean that near misses that currently get reported will go unreported and unfortunately in years to come more Queensland mineworkers will be injured and more will die. This bill is an inadequate response to an issue that is of concern to all Queenslanders. It appears that the minister is more interested in getting media headlines than actually addressing the issues that are getting mineworkers killed. Mineworkers deserve better.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.31 pm): I rise to contribute to the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The member for Buderim should have followed the media of the member for Burdekin. He flew into Moranbah and did some media there and spent the whole time saying that it was the minister's fault, calling for his resignation. He should have had a look at the response in the media because that is not what miners and their families were saying. They were appalled by the media, so those opposite do not have the backing of the mining communities and they do not support what those opposite are saying.

This bill is very necessary and will further strengthen the safety of the men and women who work in the mining industry. I want to convey to the five men who were recently injured near Moranbah that I hope each day brings them closer to a full recovery and our thoughts are with them and their families and friends. Because of the nature of mining—the intense use of heavy machinery, working in confined spaces kilometres under the ground—there needs to be the strongest legislation possible to protect every person involved in the chain of operation. This bill will strengthen the safety culture in the resource sector.

The mining industry and its workers do not want to be in the headlines because of industrial accidents. The communities that support mining go into shock every time there is an incident. When I spoke to Mayor Baker, the mayor of the Isaac Regional Council, just a couple of weeks ago, her whole

community was on tenterhooks. It was shocked. It was anxiously waiting for news of the workers injured in that recent underground explosion. It does not matter to them whether it is a worker who chooses to live permanently in a mining town or to drive-in drive-out or fly-in fly-out; these mining industry townships embrace each and every worker as one of their own because they choose to come into their community to work. I do not want to hear the pain and despair in Anne's voice ever again as she speaks about another accident in her community. Workers deserve to be able to arrive home in the same physical state as they left. A safe working environment is what all workers and their families and the mining companies want for everyone.

After the safety reset held in 2019, it was reported by stakeholders that there was still a reluctance for workers to raise safety complaints due to fear of reprisals. The large number of contract and labour hire workers in the industry does not give workers the perceived power to be able to speak up, and unfortunately those contract workers still exist. This bill includes amendments to provide a specific offence of industrial manslaughter to the resource safety legislation. The Labor state government is committed to the safety of all workers across all industries. This bill will ensure the consistent treatment of serious breaches of safety and health obligations by employers, corporations and senior officers that result in the death of a worker on Queensland's work sites.

This bill also includes the requirement that statutory office holders for coalmining operations must be employees of the coalmine operator. This amendment has caused pushback by some of those contractors because they have set up business based contract companies to work on mine sites and to be paid underneath a company name. This change will interfere with the way that they do business. It will interfere with the way that they claim different items on tax, but instead of considering the way that some people claim their taxation we must put safety first. There needs to be an assurance that statutory office holders can raise safety issues and make reports about dangerous conditions without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment. Contractors in the mining industry know that at the end of any shift they may be given notice of the end of their employment. Some people might think that that does not happen, but just last week at a mine at Coppabella 160 workers at the end of their shift and others just about to start their shift were told that they were no longer needed. This is 160 families without employment. For those who are contract workers there is no certainty. We need safety officers in secure work who are tied to their employer.

The coal industry is an economic lifeline for my community and that is why I have focused on it, but this is not the only area that is covered in this bill. It is just as important for all other mining sites and quarries to be covered. This bill will amend the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, the Explosives Act 1999 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 to include the offence of industrial manslaughter for an employer or senior officer where a worker dies in the course of undertaking work, or if that worker is injured and later dies, and the employer or senior officers' conduct causes the death and the employer or senior officer is negligent about causing the death. There are maximum penalties provided for individuals of 20 years imprisonment and for a body corporate 100,000 penalty points. This bill is for mining communities as much as it is for mining and quarry workers. Queensland knows how to mine. We are good at it and we need to be as safe as possible at it as well. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.39 pm): I rise to speak to this bill with mixed feelings of relief and frustration. I am relieved that this bill has finally come before the House, but I am frustrated that it has taken so long. I am frustrated that while we waited we saw the deaths of eight mineworkers in Queensland mines in 18 months. This was still insufficient to get the Labor government to ensure this legislation was put before the House for debate. This month we saw the tragic gas explosion at the Grosvenor mine in Moranbah. Thank Heavens no-one was killed, but five men have been terribly injured. Four remain in a critical condition and all five must be living in horrendous pain. I speak for all my constituents in Gregory when I say to those workers and their families that our thoughts and prayers are with you and yours.

I am relieved to see this bill finally come before the House, but I am angry that the Labor government has fiddled and dragged its feet while lives have been lost. Mining safety should not have to beg for the proper attention of the government of the day. The industry is one of the economic pillars of the Queensland economy, as the LNP government recognised publicly. With the short notice and the restrictions on flights due to COVID-19 I was struggling to find a way to get to the parliamentary sitting today. I ended up having to drive to Moranbah and fly out of Moranbah. Moranbah is receiving more flights out of Brisbane than any other airport in the state—more flights than there are going from Brisbane to Melbourne at the moment. That is a practical demonstration of the huge part mining plays in keeping Queensland going. Resource reliant jobs count for one in every eight jobs in Queensland.

Given that statistic, it is unforgivable that this Labor government has still not fully implemented the 68 recommendations of the *Black lung white lies* report. The report was handed down in 2017 and was fully supported by the LNP. Here we are, heading to the next election, with the job still not done despite bipartisan support. This is, frankly, unacceptable.

It is not an isolated example of Labor's neglect of the industry. In this chamber in April last year, the then deputy premier and treasurer, Jackie Trad, said mockingly that miners should start reskilling. What sort of deputy premier openly attacks and mocks the jobs that support families right across the state? Did the then deputy premier not reflect how this would make those families feel? This is neither an intelligent nor a caring government when the industry the former deputy premier was attacking, the resources industry, accounts for \$1 in every \$5 in the Queensland economy.

As Queenslanders watched eight deaths occur over the last 21 months, they were also hearing that a key advisory committee on mining safety was not sitting because the board members were not of the right gender. Forget knowledge, expertise and experience, everything is seen through the lens of politically-correct, totally irrelevant gender wars with this government. This was the government's priority, not mining safety. It is not surprising to discover that there was a 30 per cent decrease in mine safety inspections between 2015-16 and 2018-19. No wonder something is going fatally wrong. We owe it to the workers, their families, their communities and all Queenslanders to try to find out everything that is contributing to this state of affairs.

My sense is that more than one factor is involved. The mining industry is not a static industry on a cookie-cutter model. We have differences in workforce structure and rosters, for instance. For that reason, all this time the LNP has been calling for a public inquiry by a bipartisan parliamentary select committee. Such a committee would allow all stakeholders to have a say. It could hold regional hearings and accept written submissions to ensure all stakeholders get a say. Most importantly, it could review the suite of existing mining legislation to see if it is fit for purpose against contemporary mining practices.

As a Bowen Basin MP representing Blackwater, Emerald, Springsure, Rolleston, Tieri and Capella—all mining towns—constituents often ask me whether the *Black lung white lies* reforms have been introduced or when a particular mining bill before the House is going to be debated. As Bill Shorten discovered at the federal election, Central Queensland is a very politically savvy and engaged community. My constituents are uniformly annoyed to find out that mining workforce regulation is sprinkled in dribs and drabs over a number of different bills. They are right to see it as unnecessarily complicated. It is not the comprehensive and coherent approach that stakeholders expect. A bipartisan parliamentary committee inquiry could clean that situation up, but the Labor government and the minister have been actively resisting any such public examination. The Labor government has announced two internal reviews and reports into mine safety yet nothing much has changed. We will have a board of inquiry into the Grosvenor mine gas explosion. So we should, but it still does not do the comprehensive, coherent and public job that a parliamentary committee inquiry would do for the people of Queensland.

This bill is another in the muddled chain of mining legislation coming before us. It actually addresses three separate issues: the introduction of industrial manslaughter penalties with a view to strengthening mining safety; financial assurances for the state with regard to mining rehabilitation; and, lastly, regulatory efficiency laws touching the energy and water ombudsman, water infrastructure charges, energy retailing and amendments relating to water supply safety and flooding. Despite the cost in lives and injuries, mining safety is still being tucked into a shopping list of other regulatory concerns. If this is a demonstration of a political strategy to bury a tale of incompetence, then it is also yet another demonstration of the contempt the Labor government feels for the regions.

The LNP will not be opposing this bill. It is fitting that this important industry be subject to the same laws on industrial manslaughter as any other industry. The introduction of industrial manslaughter offences will ensure that there are sufficient penalties where there is criminal negligence by an employer that causes a workplace fatality. The new offences will ensure there is consistency in how the deaths of workers on Queensland worksites are treated. The introduction of these penalties will affect four pieces of existing legislation: the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999; the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999; the Explosives Act 1999; and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004.

It is the changes to the first act that are causing great concern to my constituents because it impacts the role of what we call SSEs—site senior executives. I have had multiple meetings with constituents about the requirement under these industrial manslaughter laws for SSEs to be direct employees of the mine operator. This act will remove the ability for contractors to be able to work in

these roles. Such a requirement completely ignores or misunderstands the workforce model used on the Queensland coalfields. Mining is not a generalist field of knowledge anymore. It is highly technical and highly expert. Mine operators use experts in many narrow disciplines. For those experts to make a living, and for the mine operators to have access to the very best expertise, there is a system of independent contractors and self-employed consultants who may work for many different mine operators. They may be the very best in ventilation, for instance, or any number of other areas of expertise. This workforce model allows the best and widest use of our skilled and expert mining workforce for the benefit of the entire industry. It also allows Queensland's mines to be efficient producers and therefore successful exporters.

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 reflects the workforce model by not prescribing the particular persons who may be appointed. The SSE may be a contractor or service provider or the employee of a contractor or service provider. This bill amends the act so that only persons who are a permanent employee of the mine operator may be appointed as certain statutory office holders. This will remove the ability for contractors and their employees to be able to work in these SSE roles. In doing so, it fundamentally imposes a more rigid workforce model across this vital industry. It does so for no apparent benefit in terms of workplace safety and yet risks making the SSE positions in our mines unfillable.

The Queensland Resources Council has argued persuasively that this can be resolved with an amendment to ensure it is the CEO of the mine operator who is held liable. I am running out of time, but this is a vital point that I sincerely hoped to see government amendments addressing today. While I am very alert to the defects in this bill, the LNP will not be opposing it in the interests of mining safety.

Mine safety must always come first when it comes to our mining industry. Every person who works in a mine must be assured that they will return home safely. It is important that we have the regulations and the legislation around such an important industry to make sure that we have mine safety as a priority. I know many people who work in the mines. I went to school with people who work in the mines today. A lot of my mates work in the mines and also work in agriculture. We must make sure mining is safe.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (4.49 pm): The Queensland mining industry is a major contributor to the state's resource exports and a significant source of employment, as we know. As of January 2020, the overall value of the Queensland resource exports was \$71.5 billion, which is almost double the export value of \$36 billion in 2009. As at June 2019, a total of 53,084 people were employed in the resource industry, split across the following subsectors: over 37,000 in coalmining, over 14,000 in minerals mines and over 1,700 in quarries.

It is great to see the Palaszczuk government backing mining. We saw that today with the announcement of the Queensland Economic Recovery Strategy, which highlighted the importance of the CopperString 2.0 project. The \$14.8 million investment into CopperString will help the mining industry. We will see more mines opening. When mines open, jobs are created. We will see more miners moving into the work sites. More miners will come from cities such as Townsville, Mackay and Cairns. Every one of the miners who goes into those workplaces will know that they will be protected under the legislation that we are debating today.

For a number of years, Townsville was the second largest fly-in fly-out mining hub in Australia and supported the mining industry with workers to Cannington mine, Dugald River mine, Phosphate Hill and Ernest Henry mine, just to name a few. Last year I had the opportunity to visit each of those mines and experienced firsthand their operations. I acknowledge the mine managers who took time out of their very busy schedules to spend half a day with me, showing me their mine operations. I also had time to speak with the workers at the mine sites. They said it was tough doing fly-in fly-out work and being so far away from home. They were happy about the camp sites and the support they were given on the sites. In fact, at the Cannington mine they had a wellbeing trainer who looked after their physical and mental fitness while onsite. At each of those sites, a strong safety culture exists as does a focus on ensuring each and every worker returns safe after their day's work. However, we know that the mining industry can be a dangerous industry and, unfortunately, fatalities occur.

The Brady review analysed the 47 deaths by year from 2000 to July 2019. Brady stated—

If the industry continues to take a similar approach to safety, using the same philosophies and methodologies adopted over the past 19½ years, then similar safety outcomes are to be expected.

...

There will be periods where a significant number of fatalities occur, followed by periods where there are few to none. Past behaviour suggests that in the order of 12 fatalities are likely to occur over any 5 year period.

Those numbers—those figures—represent people. They represent dads or mums, uncles or aunties, next-door neighbours or friends with whom we share lazy Sunday afternoon barbecues. They represent workers whose families expect them to come home after their roster is finished. Those families expect them to come home and read to their kids in bed, instead of via Zoom or videoconference; to come home and share dinner around the table and talk about the day's events over a beer or a glass of wine.

I listened to the speech of the member for Gregory, who talked about his electorate where there are a number of mines. He talked about Springsure. When I spent time in Springsure, mining was not part of their work. The people were farmers and graziers. That has changed. Some of the students I taught in my early days of teaching have now become miners in the local mines. We need to protect those kids who are now workers in the mining industry. We need to protect the future miners who will work in the industry. This legislation will do that. I am not prepared to accept one death, let alone an average of 12 deaths over the next five years, in the mining industry. This House will do everything it can to ensure that we do not lose any more miners. That is what this is about. It is about making sure that the miners can get home to their families.

It seems to me that complacency can creep into a mine site. We all know that behaviours are hard to break. The Brady review found that the majority of fatalities were the result of interactions between factors across various levels in the mine site—for example, individual, supervisory and organisational. Many were preventable. I repeat: many were preventable. There was rarely a single cause. The Brady review stated that the fatalities are typically the result of a combination of banal, everyday, straightforward factors, such as a failure or absence of controls, a lack of training, and/or absent or inadequate supervision. What is the price of a worker's life? It comes down to a combination of three very simple problems that generally lead to a tragedy at a mine site: a failure or absence of controls, a lack of training and an absence of or inadequate supervision. Those things are preventable.

Importantly, in his recommendations Brady discusses high-reliability organisational theory, which considers a safety culture to be a reporting culture. The Palaszczuk government has moved quickly to introduce amendments to ensure that statutory office holders can raise safety issues and make reports about dangerous conditions without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment. That is where the cultural shift needs to happen—a shift where reporting issues and concerns are as important as the single bottom line of profits to a company; a shift of culture where resolving safety concerns swiftly and effectively is celebrated as much as celebrating an increase in ore production. Unfortunately, that is not the culture. Resource workers deserve the equivalent protections that all other workers in Queensland workplaces already have under the Palaszczuk government. Government has already extensively reformed mine safety and health over the past five years. In fact, we have 48 mine inspectors, which is the highest number we have had in 10 years. We are working on these improvements.

This legislation strengthens the safety culture in the resources sector through the introduction of industrial manslaughter provisions and requiring that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations must be an employee of the mine operator. Statutory officeholder positions are positions that are required to be appointed under legislation to a mine's management structure or in its operation. They are positions of oversight. Those officeholders should be able to raise safety concerns and make reports about dangerous conditions without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment. The industrial manslaughter provisions will bring the conduct of senior officers clearly into focus, holding industry and those in senior positions on site to account. Under the proposed laws, senior officers of a mine or quarry company can be tried for industrial manslaughter if criminal negligence is proved for a worker's death. Executives could face up to 20 years in jail if a Queensland mine or quarry worker dies because of their criminal negligence. Fines can also apply, with maximum penalties ranging up to \$13 million.

It is unfortunate that the big-stick approach has had to be taken to bring about cultural change. However, when it comes to protecting the lives of workers, the Palaszczuk government will do whatever it takes to ensure that the most important thing that comes out of a mine is every miner, safe and well at the end of their shift, so that they can go home to their families and read to their kids in bed or have a glass of wine and unwind at the end of the day. Those are the important things. That is why this bill is so important and it is why I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.57 pm): I rise to speak to the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The policy objectives of the bill relate to three priorities: safety and health, to strengthen the safety culture in the resource sector through the introduction of industrial manslaughter offence provisions and requiring that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles

for coalmining operations must be an employee of a coalmining operator; financial assurance, to implement legislative changes that support mine rehabilitation and financial assurance reforms that mitigate the financial risk to the state and improve rehabilitation outcomes for Queensland; and regulatory efficiencies, to improve the administration and effectiveness of the regulatory framework applying to resource projects.

I was a member of the committee that inquired into the black lung disease. I heard a lot about the impact that the lack of safety provisions had on the miners affected by that disease and especially the impact that it had on their families. I heard the heartbreaking stories of families affected because past governments did not provide adequate legislation to safeguard them from the risks involved in mining. I was also a member of the committee that examined labour hire company practices in conjunction with mining companies. I heard harrowing stories about employees who were told that if they spoke out about safety issues they would no longer have a job.

I have been a member of parliament in four coalmining areas: Clermont, Tieri, Moranbah and Capella. Year in and year out, I heard about the concerns people had around issues of safety, particularly in those coalmining areas. I would say that safety is probably the most important issue that will ever come anybody's way when it comes to work environments. Safety also has an impact on families. There is no doubt that any legislation that can improve safety needs supporting.

The impact mining accidents, injuries and deaths have on families and communities lasts for decades. We all know the story in this article—we have heard it constantly in the news and it was featured on the ABC—about how mining tragedies such as that at Moranbah can impact entire communities and haunt families. I will table the articles.

*Tabled paper.* Various articles from ABC News online relating to the mine explosion at Moranbah [\[770\]](#).

One article says—

As word spread of a major incident in the coalmining industry in Queensland, dozens of families waited anxiously to hear if their loved ones were safe.

Last Wednesday, five men received significant burns when gas ignited at the Grosvenor Mine, near Moranbah in the Bowen Basin.

They remain in a Brisbane hospital, with four in a critical condition.

The ABC interviewed two women, both wives of miners and mothers of two children who requested anonymity for fear their husbands' jobs might be jeopardised by speaking out.

One woman found the news of the blast upsetting—her husband worked at the same mine, but was not on shift that day.

“Sending him to work underground is pretty nerve-racking on a normal day,” she said.

The mother of two said the incident had made her family, and many others, reconsider working in the industry.

I am surprised that it is the year 2020 and the culture that frightens people to speak out about safety still exists this day. We have a great understanding of the miners and their families. They express concern in regards to going to work each day because there is a concern as to whether they will come home alive. It is annoying that we still have employees and families that are too afraid to speak out because of fear of retribution.

I was on the labour hire committee. I attended a number of public meetings regarding the labour hire legislation. One young woman said that her dad had died. She had asked her employer if she could have time off to go to the funeral. It was to be an 11-hour drive. She was told, ‘You have 48 hours to attend your father’s funeral then return. If you do not get back in time, you will not have a job.’ I reported that in that last committee hearing.

We need to take into account the combined factors—of labour hire, the need for a job, that they are like cannon fodder, that if you speak out about safety you will not have a job, and if you are not returned at exactly the right time after having a reason to go, you do not have a job either.

A lot of things have changed. I am not disputing whether or not safety has improved. I do not want to point the finger at all mining companies—there are good mine managers and there are good CEOs. In Moranbah, the mining company supported the local netball team, supported the hockey team, supported the rugby league team and donated to the community. The mine managers lived and worked in the community, sent their kids to school in the community and their wives participated in the community. All of a sudden they get someone from overseas who kicks him out, sacks him and then some thug is in there introducing ruthless changes so that they can make more profits and safety is thrown out the door.

I support legislation when it comes to safety. I acknowledge the CFMMEU. I had a lot to do with the CFMMEU in my coalmining years. They have constantly persevered with issues with safety. The hard work that they have put in has to be acknowledged.

I want to say that this is the most important issue that will come anybody's way. When you go into those mining towns where there has been an accident, you see the fear within the communities because they know that it could be their loved one next. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing) (5.04 pm): I rise tonight to support the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. Queensland Labor governments have a long and proud history when it comes to delivering on workers' safety in this state. Thanks to Labor, Queensland already has one of the toughest mine safety and health laws in the world. We have spent the last five years extensively reforming safety in this very, very important sector. It is every workers' right to be able to walk out their front door each day in the morning, go to work, then come home safely to their families at the end of their shift. Our laws might be strong, but we can always do more. We know workers in the resource sector deserve the best protection that they can get. That is why the Palaszczuk Labor government made a commitment to further strengthen mine safety in Queensland. Today that commitment is being met.

This legislation strengthens safety culture in the resource sector in two very crucial ways. Firstly, it introduces the offence of industrial manslaughter, meaning that senior officers of a mine or a quarry company can be tried for industrial manslaughter if criminal negligence is proven for a worker's death. Maximum penalties are fines up to \$13 million or 20 years in jail. Queensland resource workers and their families can take comfort in the fact that this bill will further strengthen safety culture in the resource sector. By introducing the offence of industrial manslaughter, we are sending a clear message to employers and to senior officers that if they act with criminal negligence they will face the full force of the law and will be prosecuted. The message is clear: the safety and health of workers in Queensland is paramount.

Secondly, the bill requires that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations in Queensland be an employee of the coalmine operator. These are positions of critical oversight. The people who fulfil these roles should feel comfortable when raising safety issues and reporting on dangerous conditions without fear of losing their jobs for speaking up about safety.

During the statewide safety resets that were held last year, Queensland miners indicated that their fellow workmates were deterred from raising safety issues out of fear of losing their jobs. This is real and this happens. That is why the changes we have introduced through this bill are so very critical. They will bring the conduct of senior officers clearly into focus, holding industry and those in charge on site to account. These laws will make senior mining officers and executives think twice before sending a worker off to do something unsafe. No job is worth dying for. I do not want Queensland mineworkers having to choose between protecting the lives of their workmates and protecting their jobs.

On this side of the House, we are proud of our record in protecting Queensland workers. The LNP's record on this issue—nothing. During their disastrous three years in government, they joined up with One Nation to oppose industrial manslaughter for non-resource workplaces. If their statement of reservation is anything to go by, it looks like they are at it again. Some say it is unfortunate those opposite are trying to make political mileage out of mining tragedies. It is more than unfortunate; it is outright appalling.

Instead of playing politics with the lives of resource sector workers, the Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job. During our time in government, we have continued to reform mine safety laws. Our work in relation to black lung prevention and detection is the envy of other jurisdictions, including the United States. Experts there say other jurisdictions should strongly consider adopting the changes that Queensland has made.

The safety of resource sector workers is particularly personal to me. After finishing school, I started my apprenticeship at the power station as a fitter and turner. When I finished, I worked at Queensland Alumina for 21 years, eventually becoming a maintenance superintendent which meant I oversaw 12 mechanical supervisors, 95 tradesmen and a budget of over \$85 million.

I know what it feels like to be responsible for workers' safety and big budgets. Managing a workplace is not easy, but there was never any doubt in my mind that the safety of those whom I supervised was paramount. I have never been afraid to speak on issues of workers' health and safety.

That is why I joined the Labor Party. It is an honour and privilege to further my passion to serve regional Queensland in my capacity as Minister for Regional Development. Jobs in the resources sector are spread throughout Queensland, particularly in the regions that I support and live in. The workers who do these jobs are the lifeblood of regional communities—communities that, despite their small size, support and power so much of this great state of Queensland.

Any death in a mine or quarry is tragic and unacceptable. These incidents have a profoundly devastating impact on families, workplaces and communities and they send shock waves across the entire resource industry. We can and must do everything in our power to protect our resource sector workers. Our state's record when it comes to the strength of our resource sector is outstanding. However, as the minister has said, the most important product to come off a mine site or a quarry at the end of a shift is not minerals, not coal, not aluminium, not alumina; it is a worker heading home to their family and friends. I commend the Palaszczuk government for taking strong action to further protect all Queensland workers.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.11 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. The Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 was introduced into the parliament and referred to the committee on 4 February 2020. The committee was required to report to the Legislative Assembly by 27 March 2020. Eighty submissions were received—a significant number for a very important bill. The committee received a public briefing from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy on 17 February and public hearings were held in Brisbane and Moranbah on 3 March 2020.

The explanatory notes state that the main objective of the bill is to strengthen the safety culture in the resource sector through the introduction of industrial manslaughter offence provisions and require that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations must be an employee of the coalmine operator. This legislation is in response to eight fatalities in mines and quarries in this state since 29 July 2018—almost one fatality every three months. These were eight truly tragic events, and I am sure that all our hearts go out to the families and work colleagues who were impacted by these accidents. My son has worked in coalmines in New South Wales and Queensland. My brother-in-law is an open-cut examiner in a coalmine. I have other relatives and friends who work in coalmines in Central Queensland. Their safety is vitally important to me.

This parliament has a role to play in the safety of all those working in the mining industry by implementing legislation that will address where the failings lie. We need to do this by working with all sectors of the mining industry. Unfortunately, during the committee hearings into this bill we were told that that has not been the case. In 2019 Minister Lynham commissioned three separate reviews into mine safety. Two were from the University of Queensland's Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre—one published in November 2019 and the other in December 2019. The third report prepared by Dr Sean Brady on all fatal accidents in Queensland mines and quarries that occurred from 2000 to 2019 made 11 recommendations and was published in December 2019. The industry was also directed to participate in an industry safety reset in July and August 2019.

Not one of these reviews recommended the introduction of industrial manslaughter or that all statutory holders be under the direct employment of the mine operator. There were many submitters to the committee who expressed concern as to who would be targeted under the industrial manslaughter legislation and be deemed senior management. The bill states that industrial manslaughter will be an indictable offence where criminal negligence by senior management leads to a worker's death on a resource site.

Given the unique nature of the resource safety act which creates strategic roles such as senior site executives, site safety managers, underground mine managers, open-cut examiners and ventilation officers, it was argued that the amendments will capture people in operational roles on site beyond senior officers of the corporation. This raised concerns regarding the possible reluctance of people to undertake these roles. The Queensland Law Society questioned the need for the change stating—

The Queensland Law Society does not support the introduction of the industrial manslaughter offences into the resources safety acts. There are existing criminal offences in these acts which capture conduct, both acts and omissions that causes a fatality, as well as offences in the Criminal Code which do the same.

The Australian Institute of Health and Safety commented that there were other issues at fault. It stated—

The absence of prosecutions in Queensland under the existing legislation ... prior to the introduction of Industrial Manslaughter, do not suggest that the penalties were too low—they just were not being applied.

At the public hearing in Moranbah CFMMEU District President, Mr Stephen Smyth, stated a somewhat different view—

In relation to senior officers, we think that industrial manslaughter should apply—and excuse me—from the ... house cleaner to the boardroom. It should be consistently applied.

...

It may surprise a few people that we have taken that view, but we have taken that view because you have to be consistent—we are fair dinkum about this: it must apply to everybody ...

During the consultation process for this bill, proposed amendments requiring statutory office holders to be employees of the coalmine operators were not disclosed. This is by far the most provocative part of this bill. The amendment is supported by the unions. However, there has been no consultation concerning the amendment with the industry whatsoever. For industry this came out of the clear blue sky.

The amendment is opposed by industry and the department did not provide any evidence that would support the change. QRC noted that the requirement for all statutory position holders at a coalmine to be employed by the coalmine operators represents an unreasonable and unjustified regulatory burden which was not subject to consultation with industry or a regulatory impact assessment. The department stated that this amendment was warranted due to concerns raised during the safety resets by 22 workers regarding fear of reprisal if they reported safety concerns. Given the fact that 52,000 workers took part in 1,197 safety resets and only 22 raised this as an issue, it is simply staggering to use that as a justification for this amendment.

The Chief Executive of the QRC, Ian Macfarlane, raised concerns as to whether this change would offend FLPs that the legislation should adhere to. In the report at page 39 it states that this issue is discussed in detail in the FLP section of the report. It is not. It is not even mentioned in that section of the report. This is a serious omission given the implication of this amendment. It is not addressed in the human rights section of the report either.

I have a number of issues with this report and indeed the committee process as a whole. Recommendation No. 1 is the same as it is for every committee report this term. It states that the committee recommends that the bill be passed. This is a given from the time the relevant bill is introduced into the House as the committee chair has the casting vote. Essentially three Labor members have four votes and the opposition three. Not only is it recommended that the bill be passed, but any amendments are very seldom included. If members have a copy of the report and look at the chair's foreword they will see an interesting comment that states—

Of crucial importance in drafting this report were the informal representations to committee members outside of the formal hearing at Moranbah, which have been as informative as—and contradictory to—the written representations received by the committee.

This informal evidence was at the bar of the Moranbah Community Workers Club, where a number of members of the public attended the hearing and stayed to have a drink. A number of issues were raised outside the scope of this bill in those discussions—about reporting, enforcement, the inspectorate, resourcing, amongst other things—with individual members of the committee. As incredible as it may sound, rather than testing the validity of these concerns in an open manner in a formal committee forum, recommendation 5 has found its way into this report based on these yarns around the bar rail.

I am not disputing this recommendation, but this is not the way a committee report is conducted. The Brady review made 11 recommendations, many of which have still not been implemented by this government. We are still waiting to see many recommendations implemented by this government regarding mine dust disease. This minister has constantly failed this industry and is looking for an easy headline with this legislation to show that he is doing something.

In the aftermath of the latest mine incident at Grosvenor mine near Moranbah, the minister has called for a board of inquiry. The minister did not see the need for this after the three deaths in 2018, nor after the four deaths in 2019, nor after the death in January 2020. Since the member for Stafford has been the minister, we have seen eight deaths in the mining industry and now an underground mine explosion with severe injuries to five more workers—the worst single incident in the last 25 years in this state.

There is nowhere for this minister to hide. His incompetence is on the public record. We have seen more deaths under this minister's watch than we have had in this state from coronavirus. This minister should be sacked. The cloud of uncertainty for the safety of these men and women who work in the resources sector will hang over this industry while ever this minister is in charge. The only way safety will improve in mining in this state is without this minister.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.21 pm): That is a deeply disappointing piece of histrionics and theatre that does not address the issues. What we have heard today through all of their theatre is that they are against every single aspect of the bill. They wish to pick holes in every single aspect of the bill. That makes us think that when they return to government they will pull it all apart again. Let us not forget that, for all the histrionics, the legislation under which those events happened is the LNP's legislation. They brought in that legislation.

My Cornish ancestors, the Casleys, came from the extreme tip of Cornwall where the tin mines extend far under the Irish Sea. They dug those mines over generations with picks and shovels, shoring them up and using their knowledge of the terrain to keep them and their mates safe. They were the first community to come out to Australia and set up underground mining, which has been such a big part of our economy and such a big part of Australia's history. They faced enormous economic pressure to go down into dangerous mines, as well as indifference from often remote owners for whom the loss of life in underground mines was part of the process.

As the need for skilled miners increased in Australia as surface gold was wiped up, they brought their skills and bravery here and they formed the bedrock of mining in Australia. They also fought to see safety and security of work improved—often through our trade unions. They would have insisted that mineworkers deserved equivalent protections that all other workers in Queensland already have under the Palaszczuk government. That is why I am proud to be part of the government that has been continuing to reform mine safety and health over the past five years.

I am also proud to be a part of a government that backs our mining sector. The Palaszczuk government has a strong record of supporting and advancing the resources sector. Since taking office, we have supported more than \$20 billion worth of investment in resource projects, resulting in 7,000 jobs in the mining and gas sectors. We have worked effectively to ensure the continuity of the resources sector under the threat of coronavirus. I particularly recognise the minister who is passionate about keeping workers safe from the coronavirus and to keep them working because they are the big part of our economy. We know that the LNP federally had members who were willing to rip this apart and shut down the industry.

Looking forward, we are well placed to continue that growth. There have been over 230 exploration permits in minerals, petroleum and coal granted in the current financial year to date. That is a great vote of confidence in the administration of mines in this state.

We recognise that mining can be very dangerous, but it need not be. I note the Australian Workers' Union submission, which states—

In the past twenty months, eight workers have tragically lost their lives while at work on mines and quarries in Queensland.

We know it can be dangerous, but we reject these accidents and deaths as inevitable. We do not accept them. We will make mining safer in Queensland. That is why it is important that this bill includes industrial manslaughter as a provision, sending a clear signal that ignoring safety in our mines and causing death is a criminal offence. The aim of this is to profoundly change the organisational culture of mining to ensure safety in our mining workplaces.

I note that, although those opposite will not vote against it, they constantly pick at this issue and have given a clear indication that if they were in government they would tear it up. What are they suggesting? Are they suggesting that it would be okay to give the green light to criminal negligence leading to the death of a worker? Isn't that implied in what they are suggesting—that we are not to send a clear signal that workplace negligence should be treated as a criminal offence?

Every worker who enters a mine site deserves to go home to their family. Every worker deserves to work in a workplace that is focused on workers' safety, not as an afterthought, not as a price of doing business but as the primary goal—one that they must meet before the first tonne of ore or coal is removed from the mine. I have long held concerns about the nature and employment in our mines. It should be that the owner of the mine, wherever possible, directly employs all of the workers at that mine. It is possible that labour hire could be used in temporary circumstances or for particular temporary skills. I think safety is enhanced when the operator is directly employing mineworkers.

This bill is an important step that requires that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for mining operations must be employees of the operator. This ensures that those who take on these roles have greater security of employment and can more confidently speak up and fulfil their role at the mine with less fear of losing their employment than if they had a more tenuous employment arrangement. These statutory office holder positions are required to be appointed under legislation to a mines management structure already within its operation.

I hope that the industrial manslaughter provisions will be discussed very seriously amongst senior mine officers and will make the safety of our workers the primary goal of their operation. Without this, the operation of a mine should not go forward. It is serious that senior officers up to executives could face up to 20 years in jail if Queensland mineworkers die because of criminal negligence. Fines can also apply, with maximum penalties up to \$13 million.

We know that the LNP did nothing about mineworker safety and health during their disastrous three years in government. They let a culture of safety begin to slide. This legislation stops that and sends a clear signal. We remember how they joined up with One Nation to oppose industrial manslaughter laws for non-resource workplaces nearly three years ago. Now it looks like they are going to do it again. Let us remember that they are saying to Queenslanders: that where there is criminal negligence in industrial circumstances there should not be a law that holds that person criminally responsible.

We have heard that Queensland miners and their fellow workers were deterred from raising safety issues out of fear that they may lose their jobs. We know that miners' job security and safety on the job are linked. However, we also know that the LNP—and they have proved it here tonight—are hell-bent on reducing the job security of mineworkers and, as a result, reducing the safety of workers. I warn them that the consequence of this is a reduction in safety and inevitably more injuries and deaths in mines.

Everyone in this House should reject any measure that makes a miner so uncertain of their continuing employment that they do not stand up and say no when they know what they or their work mates are doing is unsafe. Reporting and job security are linked, and if we increase reporting we must increase job security.

Each day my Cornish ancestors, the Casleys, went down into the tin and gold mines in fear, knowing that serious injury and death could be the result. I want no worker today to face those same fears. They would be proud that their great-great-grandson stood up today for miners' safety and job security.

Debate, on motion of Mr Power, adjourned.

## **WORKING WITH CHILDREN LEGISLATION (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Second Reading**

Resumed from 18 February (see p. 395), on motion of Mr Katter—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (5.30 pm), continuing: I rise to continue my contribution. I got halfway through in February. A lot has happened since then. I was pointing out that a lot of stakeholders raised many reservations about this bill. I remind the House that, whilst I acknowledge the bill has noble intentions, we cannot support the bill. I note that the most common theme amongst the stakeholders' reservations was to increase support services and increase access to these services rather than have a separate blue card policy for Indigenous communities, as I outlined earlier in my contribution. The LNP cannot support the bill because it creates too great a risk to children. The LNP will always put the safety and welfare of children first and, as I said, this bill fails to do this in that it shifts the benefit of the doubt to the applicant for the card rather than the safety of the child. Under this bill children's rights will be overshadowed by certain applicants with criminal histories who would not otherwise be eligible.

This division is not justifiable just because of the community they reside in. Children in those communities deserve the same protection as all Queensland children. It is not an acceptable concession in law that violent people who commit indictable offences—the most serious of crimes—may bypass a stringent application process just because of where they reside in Queensland. The LNP takes criminal histories seriously, which is why the LNP advocated for more stringent measures to be in place to crack down on people who should not have a blue card, such as people convicted of child cruelty. As I said earlier, and as stakeholders have suggested, rather than creating a separate blue card system that provides lower standards for eligibility it would make more sense to increase support services and awareness and increase access to blue card services. I believe that improvements in this area would help alleviate at least some of the problems this bill seeks to address without the risk of putting children in further danger.

The risk of community justice groups turning a blind eye to an applicant's criminal history to allow that applicant to work will be heightened under this proposed bill. It is a dangerous responsibility to allow someone to decide whether or not someone may or may not reoffend, thus putting a child in danger. One can imagine the possible consequences to a person who has made such a determination and a child is harmed and the distress this would cause them. It is a responsibility and a burden these community members should not have to carry. This policy will conflict with the government's no-card no-start policy and will effectively create different standards for persons who reside in remote communities. Standards in child safety do need to be uniform across Queensland. All of our children deserve the same level of protection.

I note that the bill has sought to omit some offences from the act whilst retaining others, limiting community justice groups to decide applications relating to drug or property offences. This downplays the seriousness of these crimes and suggests that they may be overlooked by community justice groups in order to promote employment. If these offences are downplayed in these communities it sends the wrong message to both that community and communities at large across Queensland. There is a reason for every offence in the act that excludes people from working with children regardless of where they live in Queensland.

The bill will also infringe on an applicant's privacy and confidentiality when their criminal history is shared with community justice groups in their local community rather than just being supplied with a negative notice. These concerns were raised by the Australian Association of Social Workers through the committee process. This bill will simply provide a different standard of applicant assessment and a different standard of protection for children in specific communities.

As I said at the beginning, I understand that the reasons behind this bill are noble in that they are seeking to assist employment and participation in the community; however, child safety must come first. If people have offended in the past and are excluded from working with children they need to find other ways of contributing to society. The balance must always favour the safety of children, no matter where they live in Queensland. They all deserve the equal protection of this parliament.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (5.36 pm): I rise in the House to oppose the passing of the bill. The private member's bill, if passed, would limit the range of criminal charges and convictions that would be considered as part of a working with children check for a person who applies for a blue card for use in a discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. The bill would enable the community justice group for the community to make a binding recommendation about a community member's application for a blue card.

While one has to be sympathetic to the issues the bill seeks to address, one has to place weight on the recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which found that nationally there should be no conditional or different types of working with children clearances. The bill is both contrary to the royal commission's findings and the Queensland Family and Child Commission's findings during its review into blue cards. The bill does not have sufficient regard to a child's rights by allowing certain applicants to receive a positive notice when they otherwise would not be eligible. This would provide a different standard of an applicant's assessment and protection for children in specified communities.

The committee considered whether there may be alternative ways to achieve the intent of the bill and to address some of the difficulties experienced by people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with the blue card system. Given the importance of the systematic implementation of the broad-ranging and significant recommendations of the blue card review, one of the recommendations the committee made was that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice provide the committee with a progress report on the implementation of the Queensland Family and Child Commission blue card review recommendation to reform how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants are supported.

The Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018 was introduced into the Legislative Assembly by Mr Katter MP on 17 October 2018 and initially referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. The bill is similar to a 2017 bill introduced by Mr Katter MP which lapsed on dissolution of the parliament in October 2017 prior to a general election. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee provided the committee with access to documents received by it during the conduct of its 2017 and 2018 inquiries into the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill.

The Committee of the Legislative Assembly determined that the bill would be considered by the education committee, and the private member's bill was transferred to that committee on 15 November. Concurrent with its inquiry into the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities)

Amendment Bill 2018, the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee inquired into a government bill, the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. The explanatory notes state that the current blue card system—

... has significant limitations in the way it applies to the unique circumstances of Indigenous communities and this is resulting in missed opportunities for social and economic development.

The explanatory notes went on to say that the current blue card system—

... whilst well-meaning in its intention, is not practical in its application to remote indigenous communities. Numerous examples exist where individuals who have made significant progress reforming their behaviour are faced with no hope of accessing employment due to the Blue Card system. Feedback from community leaders, law enforcement and judicial representatives indicates that handing more decision-making power to the communities themselves will assist in opening employment opportunities whilst maintaining child safety standards.

The working with children act provides the framework for working with children checks, commonly referred to as blue cards. Section 6 of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act states that it is to be administered under two principles: that the welfare and best interests of a child are paramount and that every child is entitled to be cared for in a way that protects the child from harm and promotes the child's wellbeing.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission review considered feedback from stakeholders about the impact of the blue card system on remote communities. Concerns raised included that the system was a barrier to employment. The Queensland Family and Child Commission summarised the feedback about their concerns, including that current Blue Card Services processes and systems are not culturally appropriate and that there is a lack of community education and culturally appropriate information.

The blue card review report noted there were no culturally appropriate community education strategies and a lack of culturally appropriate information and resources. In its submission, the Australian Association of Social Workers recommended that the private member's bill not be passed and said, in line with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the blue card review, that it does not support the use of conditional cards or different types of clearances. I oppose the passing of this private member's bill.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.42 pm): I fully support the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018 introduced by the member for Traeger. The bill primarily amends the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. The objectives of this bill are to provide a new blue card framework that empowers Indigenous communities to make decisions which best serve their interests in relation to child protection and employment of community members. The current blue card system contains significant limitations in the way it applies to the unique circumstances of Indigenous communities, and this is resulting in missed opportunities for social and economic development.

The member for Traeger heavily consulted with traditional owners on Mornington Island and at Doomadgee and Normanton, and many Indigenous representatives have come down here to parliament on this bill. I know that some will say that not having a blue card will not stop you from getting a job in communities, but the exact opposite is happening, where employers are insisting that you must have a blue card even if your job does not involve working with children. Even rural fireys have to get a blue card. Worse still, local people from communities have not been employed while their blue card is being processed, having been terminated from their jobs if they had a minor criminal charge in the past, sometimes going back 10 or 20 years.

Jobs are scarce in Indigenous communities. For Indigenous people in these communities, a job gives them a sense of pride. However, the opposite happens if that is taken away. It leaves them ashamed and they can easily slide into drugs and alcohol abuse, which is the real issue in these communities. I want to stress that we are not asking for a relaxation in rules surrounding sexual predators or serious crime. I have heard members put forward this argument which is simply not true and ridiculous. All we are asking for is a sensible, logical framework around blue cards in Indigenous communities because, despite what many people and bureaucrats down here may think, these communities are unique and do not have the same opportunities as those in the cities.

The bill creates a framework which strengthens the process by enabling the community justice group to consult with the police and relevant authorities on whether an individual should be issued with a blue card. I want to say that again: this bill creates a framework which strengthens the process by enabling the community justice group to consult with the police and relevant authorities on whether an individual should be issued with a blue card. We are simply asking for changes to the way blue cards

are assessed by bringing the decision process back within the local communities. This will in fact be a better system, as a person who secures a job working with children in a community may not have a record but may be known to the community as a person not to be trusted. It would be far more beneficial for the community to help make this decision, rather than a person sitting in an office tower thousands of kilometres away.

There are a lot of people living in communities who may have a minor criminal record from past deeds years or decades ago when they were young and stupid but they have reformed and are good citizens whose community leaders know they deserve to get a blue card to work. Instead of having a one-size-fits-all approach, this bill is the result of listening to the community leaders on the ground and has been developed based on direct feedback. It is not about relaxing rules; it is simply changing the way blue cards are assessed in Indigenous communities and ensuring those living in communities receive the same opportunities we do—to get a job, to be proud of what we do and to look after our families. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (5.47 pm): I rise to speak against the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill currently before the House. I would like to thank the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee, which completed and tabled report No. 13 into this bill after it was initially considered by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

The bill proposes to amend the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 by creating a new category of blue card—a restricted positive notice based on input from community justice groups. The proposals in this bill seek to address the difficulty experienced in Indigenous communities in gaining employment in cases where blue cards are required. The explanatory notes outline that the blue card system is having a negative impact on Indigenous communities within Queensland and that this bill proposes to short-circuit the approval process when people with serious criminal history are denied a working with children blue card.

I do note that some of the concerns raised in the explanatory notes had been addressed in the most recent Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, but at the heart of this bill is finding a delicate balance in Queensland's Indigenous communities—between the employment prospects of residents in these communities and the safety of children in these communities. Let us be clear about where this bill sees that balance fall, and it is not in favour of protecting our children. The member for Traeger said as much during his public briefing, and I quote—

They might have had some ice-trafficking offences and you might say that puts the child more at risk, but in the grander scheme of things I sit back and say, 'I would prefer to try to re-engage these people.' There may be higher risks associated with those communities ...

When more directly asked whether it was acceptable for a person who has been convicted of trafficking ice in local Indigenous communities to be working with vulnerable children in that same community, the member for Traeger said yes. So there we have it. The bill that the member has drafted places possible employment opportunities over the safety of children in that community.

I understand the member's concern and that the issue he seeks to highlight is instances where there has been a significant passage of time since the relevant offences and there has been significant behavioural reform of the individual in the intervening period. This bill seeks to circumvent the standard vetting process by allowing a community justice group to approve a new category of blue card and limit the scope of the applicant's criminal history that would be considered by the community justice group.

There are a couple of reasons why the committee—as do I—has concerns about this proposed measure. Firstly, I was interested in understanding the work of community justice groups as there are none operating in my community. I thought it was important in the context of this bill that I understand the composition and the remit of these groups. I would have thought that in drafting the bill the member for Traeger would have a good working knowledge of these groups to which he proposes to provide additional responsibility. However, the public briefing proved this wrong. The member for Traeger stated he was ill equipped to give the committee a good idea of how local groups are formed or how these groups even work. Considering the explanatory notes indicate that consultation occurred in the drafting of this bill, it is unfortunate that the role of these groups is not known and their administrative bodies were not consulted.

Secondly, there is either a careless or wilful misunderstanding of the process of approving blue cards for people with criminal histories. It is not as clear cut as the member for Traeger would have us believe. Firstly, the mere existence of a serious offence in a person's criminal history does not mean the applicant will be denied a blue card outright. The existence of a drug offence, such as that nominated

by the member for Traeger, on an applicant's history means that they will be given the opportunity to provide evidence—or put forward a case—of an exceptional case in which it would not harm the best interests of children to issue a blue card. An example of an exceptional case is the time that has elapsed since the offence was committed, such as the example provided by the member for Traeger.

The problem with these cases is the public perception that they are precluded from even applying for a blue card when they have a criminal history. The reality is very different. Applicants who have questionable eligibility are given the opportunity to state their case, but at the end of the day the decision will be made in the best interests of children who may come under the care of the applicant. I back a framework that will always back the safety and wellbeing of children, particularly in areas of high vulnerability.

Finally, the outcomes proposed by this bill are in direct opposition to the recommendations of both the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Queensland Family and Child Commission blue card review. Specifically, the royal commission recommended that the outcomes of these checks be either that the blue cards are issued or that they are not; there should be no conditional or different types of clearances. The Queensland Family and Child Commission blue card review did not support conditional working with children clearances but did support further community education about the application process. Woe betide any government that would counter these recommendations when the safety of our children is at risk. It will not be this government. I support the committee's recommendation that the bill not be passed.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.52 pm): We all have a role to play in the protection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders—these young people from the longest living culture in the world. We would all agree that the health, wellbeing and safety of all children is one of the most important challenges for our state. We know that we must empower Indigenous communities to make decisions including what best serves their children's protection and the employment of community members. We know employment offers a significant opportunity for a healthy lifestyle and positive opportunities for our families wherever they live.

I understand the origins of the bill attempt to overcome existing barriers in creating opportunity and I am a supporter of less interference from governments. The challenge of these proposed changes is the implementation and the uniqueness of Indigenous communities across Queensland. I see real issues in the balance between community expectations of the need to support employment aspirations in the community while continuing the tremendous task of protecting the interests of children. I fear that the proposed changes would introduce, amongst other issues, increased governance, and poor accountability processes would hinder outcomes, not improve them.

We know that the Queensland government's blue card system has been in place since 2001 to create safe environments for children. It aims to minimise the risk of harm to children receiving services that are essential for their development and wellbeing by the prevention and monitoring of people who work and care for children. We know that the blue card system operates a three-step risk management approach. It assesses a person's eligibility for a blue card based on known activities; monitors that blue card holders have taken appropriate actions if necessary and undertakes audit services; and a future step will also require organisations and self-employed persons to implement and annually review child and youth risk management strategies, which will be monitored by Blue Card Services. The present step we are debating requires Blue Card Services to monitor all police and disciplinary information.

We should be concerned about the plight of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There have been many and varied reviews into the blue card process, and we would agree the system contains significant limitations in the way it applies to the unique circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. Submitters to the committee, for example, listed some of these limitations: there is a difficulty in providing proof of identity in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; applications and the assessment process generate logistical and geographical barriers to assessing applicants; correspondence through Australia Post; disengagement with the applicant and assessment process due to a lack of literacy skills of certain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders; costs and challenges to engage, review and appeal the process; and a reduced number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders applying for a blue card as the assessment process does not take into account any relevant cultural aspects of the application.

There is a need for greater marketing material which contains culturally appropriate material to ensure a better understanding of what a disqualifying offence is, as this lack of knowledge can result in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people thinking they are excluded from being eligible for a blue card. The result is them not applying, which is causing us concern. Our concerns are reflected on many levels, especially when we reflect on the Closing the Gap report.

The government's report is an area where we need to take action, with just two of the seven targets on track to be met. The Prime Minister's 11th annual Closing the Gap report, which is the national standard by which all states and territories are measured, showed Queensland was the only state or territory that was not on track to meet a single target. These reports really expose the fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government is failing to deliver any practical improvements for Queensland's Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander communities. The issues in Indigenous communities are highlighted when we see government failures and shocking scandals involving children. We have seen the issues of children being locked up in watch houses under this government. It has been revealed that two-thirds of children held in Queensland watch houses were Indigenous.

A huge issue for Indigenous child safety is the government's attitude towards the Family Responsibilities Commission. The changes to the commission all but ceased a decade of work in addressing welfare dependency and school attendance in some of these Indigenous communities. It is important to reflect that what is now being proposed is a vague program called Thriving Communities. This program has been plagued by the government's continual problems: it cannot negotiate with the federal government on the three-year funding for the commission. The seriousness of the government's politicisation of this care has been shown well in these Indigenous communities and it has not gone unnoticed.

In November 2018 Prime Minister Scott Morrison had this to say in response to a question on notice—

The profound damage arising from the Queensland Labor government's decision not to reappoint commissioners or continue to fund and support the Family Responsibilities Commission will end more than 10 years of critical work that has been improving the lives of Indigenous Australians in these communities. Minister Scullion—

at that time—

has written to the Treasurer of Queensland, urging her to reconsider what I would describe as a foolhardy decision to abandon the Family Responsibilities Commission. He has repeatedly indicated the Commonwealth government's support for the FRC. It is the most critical component underpinning the Cape York Welfare Reform agenda.

It is important to reflect that the reality of working with children in Indigenous communities is one that challenges us all. In just one year there was an increase of 405 ATSI children living away from home. That is an increase of 10 per cent. The number of children subject to protective orders jumped to 10,769 by the end of last year, and this is more than in the preceding 12 months. This is more than 1,500 since June 2015. The number of children subject to child protection orders has increased by 6.4 per cent from nearly 10,000 at the end of 2018 to 10½ thousand by the end of last year. Since 2015 we have seen the number of children subject to child protection orders increase by 14.2 per cent. Over this period, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children subject to child protection orders increased by 17.8 per cent.

Creating a two-tier system is not the answer. The creation of a families justice group is not the answer. Putting this amount of risk into decision-making is not sustainable and comes with much risk. We all have a role to play in improving the lives and opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders. However, what we have before us tonight, although well-intentioned, is not the answer.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.59 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018. I do so because in the 55th Parliament I was a member of the legal affairs committee. Along with the chair, the member for Stretton and the members for Capalaba, Coomera, Scenic Rim and the former member for Currumbin, we undertook travel in relation to the private member's bill before that parliament. In doing so, we travelled to Yarrabah, Hope Vale and Doomadgee. Although that travel occurred in September 2017, I have a number of vivid memories in relation to that travel about which it is worthwhile making a short contribution to the House.

It has been said tonight and also in previous debates around this bill that the blue card system has limitations, but my point is that those limitations are the inherent protections that exist for vulnerable people within our community. Absolutely we should strive for improvement, but we should do so cautiously and carefully. We should be very prudent around that. From my professional background as an early childhood educator and as a mum, I want to ensure that all children in our community have those protections that a system like the blue card system is innately designed to provide.

The member for Hill said that there was much community feedback in the formation of this bill. While travelling on the road, we found such a divergence of views around the types of offences that should be covered by and have exception for within this bill. There was also a divergence of views from members of the community justice group insofar as whether they would want to play a part in

determining whether their peers, relatives and neighbours would have the opportunity for exemption and be able to work in community. The takeaway for me was that from the community members we spoke to there was some real reluctance in terms of being the decision-makers of the community justice groups, but also not having a clear position in terms of what offences were acceptable or not acceptable in the provision of the bill.

My takeaway from this experience in travelling to the remote communities was that there is much more work to be done. This is why I am very pleased to see in the 56th Parliament that this bill has come before it and had the full, thorough and robust committee process that it deserves, because it is absolutely demonstrated that there is a desire from everyone in this House to ensure that people right across our community have the dignity of work and the dignity of a job. In doing so, we need to ensure that the most vulnerable people in our community are protected.

I am very heartened to see the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice's recommendation 2 in relation to the progression of the development and implementation of the strategy and action plan. That will be coming to members of the House so that we can continue the good work in terms of shining a light on this issue and working perhaps to address a system that could potentially have a light shined in some areas and some tweaks made but in a way that offers protection for the vulnerable in the community into the future.

I thank the member for Traeger for introducing the bill yet again and the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for its work in fully investigating the bill. I look forward to further updates from the Attorney as this progresses. In summing up, it is not a bill that I support but I am keen to see further development in this space as time progresses.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.04 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018 introduced by the member for Traeger. If we speak to anyone in any of these Aboriginal communities, all they want is a job. We have a situation where communities have fallen apart when people have lost work. Railways workers in Mount Isa had an opportunity to earn an honest day's living, but they lost that. The member for Traeger tells stories of how people in his electorate lost their heart and soul. A lot of the Indigenous community lost a reason to get up in the morning. This led to some of the social problems, including drugs and alcohol, which turned into the issue of the family fabric falling apart. The member has seen this scenario throughout his electorate, from Mornington Island to Doomadgee. All that these communities lack is some direction for some of these families. They need the opportunity for the mothers or fathers to go out and earn a living. Unfortunately, a lot of these families become second and third generation welfare recipients without an opportunity to take on work because of blue card restrictions.

We ask that community justice groups are able to get involved in this situation. We already have legislation in place that allows them to get involved in some of the judicial systems within their communities. No-one knows their communities better than the community justice groups and the people who live there. I heard contributions from both sides of the House tonight that said we cannot have a situation where we weaken the system to allow people to do things in different areas of Queensland. Living in one of those Aboriginal or First Nation communities is a situation like no other. It is a situation where families rely solely on welfare payments to get by or where the only work is in and around the schools or with companies that have government contracts. Without the ability to access the blue card system, inadvertently these people are discriminated against and are unable to get into these lines of work. It leaves a huge gap. People want to get off the welfare system and off drugs and alcohol, but then they go through the process of applying for a blue card.

Earlier, I heard a member say that one can go through the system and ask for review of a negative response to a blue card application. The situation is that these people are dried out. They get off the drugs and finally get themselves to a position where they can apply for a job. They have someone who is willing to give them a job. Then they get back this white man blue card system that is not allowing them to go through the next gate. A lot of these people do not understand what that means. They all say that they were able to get a job yesterday but now must wait another six weeks for the same job. All of a sudden the cycle continues. They get themselves back into a situation where they are not working for the next week. Drugs and alcohol that are on their doorstep allow them to return to their old ways and, before we know it, we have lost that person that we almost had over the line in terms of cracking and breaking the cycle.

We seek a bit of autonomy in these communities where people can rely on the community justice group to give them some direction in this respect. No-one knows these communities better than the people who live there. There are not 100,000 people living in a city. There might be 5,000 people living

in a community. They all know each other. They know who are the bad people and who are the good people. They should have that input when they say who does and does not get a chance to work near, around or with their children.

In this scenario many of these kids are living with or are being picked up after school by the same people who are trying to apply for these blue cards who then cannot work at their school or work on a construction site near their school or around these children because of the failing system that we have today. Queensland is too big for one set of rules. The KAP keeps saying that, and this why we have come forward after consultation with the communities. The member for Traeger went to Doomadgee and Mornington Island to put this together. This is not a bill that came out of thin air. This has been six years in the making with consultation with the communities trying to understand exactly what they need to ensure that they can break the cycle and get out of the revolving door of welfare.

Everyone in this country deserves a job and in some situations we need to try to figure out what we need to do to get those people in a job. I am not saying that we should not be protecting children, but we should at least give the people in those communities the autonomy so that they can decide who gets to work with their children, not someone who lives thousands and thousands of kilometres away sitting in a desk assessing an application that looks pretty bad on paper. As I said, let these people have the freedom to try to make some of these decisions for themselves. These are the people who want to help themselves get out of this hole.

Both sides of the House should heavily consider where they sit on this. Instead of coming up with tokenistic ways to support our First Australians, we should be trying to find ways to make real, on-the-ground changes like these blue cards. Maybe this is not perfect, but there is the opportunity for someone on the government or the opposition side to introduce some amendments to try to help these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities do better for themselves. I will be supporting this bill. I commend it to the House.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.11 pm): Today I rise to make my contribution to the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill put forward by the member for Traeger. This bill will amend the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 to provide a new blue card framework. This suggested reformation of the current blue card framework and the current system undermines the protections of our First Nation children—in fact, all children right across Queensland.

This bill proposes impractical legal solutions which could never translate to real-life application. It is not sustainable. These impractical solutions offered by the bill exist in the form of, firstly, the inclusion of a community justice group in the blue card decision-making process and, secondly, the ability to offer work to an applicant while their blue card is being processed. This bill proposes a new framework which would enable a statutory community justice group to make a binding recommendation to the chief executive of Blue Card Services to issue a restricted positive notice to an applicant who would otherwise have been issued a negative notice under the existing blue card framework. A restricted positive notice would enable that person to be employed in child related employment or to carry on a child related business in a defined community area. We should never allow for the standards that have been established to be eroded in any part of Queensland, especially not in the areas of Queensland where our children are our most vulnerable.

The bill states that a community justice group consists of key stakeholders who typically include elders, traditional owners, respected persons and community members of good standing. This new framework places these good people in an untenable position where they are making decisions that may compromise the safety of children in a whole community. This is a serious responsibility that should never be imposed on a group of community members. I have spent my whole career protecting the safety of children. As a former principal and teacher, I understand the importance of protecting our children and I applaud the Palaszczuk government's approach to maintaining our high standards and to serving the needs of Indigenous communities without compromising the safety particularly of our First Nation children. I oppose this bill.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.14 pm): I rise to address the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018 introduced by the member for Traeger on behalf of constituents in his area facing difficulties with the blue card system. The bill aims to set up a new framework for decision-making on blue card applications by First Nation people which is led by First Nation communities, in particular via community justice groups. At the outset I will say that we support the intention behind this bill and that the Greens recognise that the blue card system has a

disproportionate and unfair impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland. In fact, we believe that community-led decision-making about safety issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities should be distributed even more broadly than this bill proposes.

There are very well recognised barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander folks accessing the blue card system which can and do lead to some incredibly discriminatory outcomes, especially in communities where almost every government job requires a blue card. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are incredibly overrepresented in the criminal justice system as a result of two centuries of dispossession, discrimination and racism that persists even today. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody delivered its final report nearly 30 years ago, and this is a pertinent time for us to ask what we have achieved since then. Recent reports indicate that incarceration rates have doubled in that time. Indigenous Australians are, nearly 30 years after the royal commission, the most incarcerated people in the world.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission, the QFCC, and the report of its review on the blue card system was the basis of much of the government's related bill that passed this chamber last year—namely, the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Beyond the issues dealt with in the government's bill, the QFCC made an important recommendation that goes to the heart of what this bill moved by KAP seeks to achieve. Recommendation 73 of the QFCC report proposed—

... that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General develops and implements a specific strategy and action plan to provide more support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and build cultural capability in the blue card system, including:

...

- considering ways to empower communities to be involved in decisions about their community

The government's bill, enacted last year, implemented some other recommendations of the QFCC including the no-card no-start rule, which very directly raises barriers to getting a blue card, but the government simultaneously failed to create any legislative basis for action on recommendation 73. In its evidence to the committee, Sisters Inside stated in describing QFCC's recommendation 73 that it proposed—

... developing guidelines to embed an appropriate consideration of culture in working with children check decisions, and considering ways to empower communities to be involved in decisions about their community. In our submission, these mechanisms should have a legislative basis and must be implemented at the same time as amendments that significantly tighten the WWCC system.

It went further, noting—

We have been disappointed by Blue Card Services's decisions, especially in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In our view the decisions of which we are aware did not give sufficient consideration to contextual factors of criminalisation, especially the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adults in the criminal legal system and the child protection system. In our view, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland must be eligible for support within the WWCC system to respond to the history of colonisation and criminalisation.

I want to give one final excerpt from Sisters Inside. It was even more explicit, saying—

We believe it would be appropriate for the Government Bill to be amended to include mechanisms that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-community led decisions about children's safety and the suitability of criminalised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work with children.

In other words, quite simply it recommended that the government listen to the QFCC and move in a direction similar to what is proposed in this bill.

The government has so far failed to implement recommendation 73 and this lopsided adoption of the QFCC recommendations has, in reality, not just failed to address any of the already significant barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but it has, in fact, raised these barriers.

I will touch briefly on the views of some other stakeholders involved. The North-West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services argued for broader application of special considerations for First Nation people under the blue card scheme. For example, in Mount Isa they said, in paragraph 4 of their submission—

While this has been talked about in relation to discreet communities, I think it needs to also apply to 'communities of common interest'. For example: A person in Doomadgee comes to live in Mount Isa. They have a local card to work in their community. I see no reason why they cannot work here if local approval processes could not be put in place to allow for a decision making process to be implemented which involved their own home community as well as their community of interest, e.g., Mount Isa.

I note there are some what I consider to be quite fair concerns about the bill which were raised by the Australian Association of Social Workers Queensland Branch. The first is that there needs to be more widespread and detailed engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

concerned. This could go some way to addressing the issues I mentioned a moment ago, and raised by the North-West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services, that a scheme like this should apply more broadly than just to discrete Indigenous communities.

The Australian Association of Social Workers raised that it is not clear how the privacy and confidentiality of applicants for this limited class of blue cards would be adequately protected, which is particularly significant given that community justice groups would be dealing with these applications in what are fairly small communities where, I would imagine, pretty much everyone knows everyone.

Finally, I am not entirely confident that the bill fully deals with the concern that any change like this risks lowering the standards or safeguards for kids in remote communities. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service made the point in these terms—

As the safety of the child is always paramount, we recognise that any amendments that have the potential to impact on the safety of a child or children must be implemented in a way that ensures any potential risks are identified and managed and would seek the appropriate supports to be put in place.

I note that last year when the Assembly was dealing with the government's related bill—the no-card no-start amendments as they were referred to—Labor unexpectedly pulled the bill then brought it back for debate after making it even more restrictive. This was no doubt the result of a fear campaign bordering on moral panic run by the LNP. The LNP are shockingly inconsistent when it comes to community safety. In one breath they claim to be concerned about the wellbeing of kids locked up in adult watch houses and caught up in the justice system, then, when a political opportunity arises, they pivot seamlessly and with no apparent embarrassment whatsoever to the most divisive culture war, stoking fears and talking of youth crime waves. The same phenomenon is apparent on the issue of blue cards. When it suits their political purposes the LNP stokes up the culture war, Labor acquiesces and very few people think about the long-term impacts on First Nation people.

It is clear that those additional restrictions will disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, just as every expansion of police powers and every incursion of law enforcement disproportionately affects First Nation people here. I, like a number of submitters, support the intent of what is proposed by this bill from the member for Traeger. The intended outcome of the bill is just one of an enormous number of steps that the government must take to better empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be involved in decisions that affect them.

The bill demonstrates once again the value that the crossbench can bring to debate in this place. While for the reasons I stated above I will not support the bill, I do commend the member for Traeger for pursuing this issue and for representing the interests of parts of his community. I implore the government to now just get on with it and do what it takes to implement QFCC recommendation 73.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—NQF) (6.24 pm): I am pleased to rise to make a short contribution to the debate in relation to the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill. I also join in acknowledging the stewardship of the member for Traeger and his patience. This has been a long time coming for the member for Traeger. Whilst North Queensland First and KAP differ on some areas of public policy, I foreshadow that I intend to support the bill before the House here tonight and I will explain why. From my reading on this issue, I understand that the work of both committees has been quite exhaustive. I note that there were submissions from far and wide.

Before coming into the chamber to make my contribution I saw the submission from the Coen Justice Group. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the passing of the late Barry Port, the last police tracker, who passed away in March this year. He was an icon of the cape who did so much work in making our community a better place. About 18 months ago in Coen I had the opportunity to meet Mr Port and Aunty Yvonne in Coen. In fact, we were there alongside the member for Moggill. I am sure the people of Coen were pleased to see that submission go before the committee because they wanted to make a difference in their community.

No-one in their right mind wants to see the blue card system watered down. I am not going to so much focus on the employment aspect or the implications for meaningful employment, which has been canvassed by a number of members including the member for Hinchinbrook, but I will say that having a pen pusher in Brisbane making decisions about people in communities thousands of kilometres away is just not right. There are people who are valuable, community minded, decent and law-abiding who live in these communities from Woorabinda to Wujal Wujal—where it is so nice you say it twice—from Palm Island to Murray Island. I have been to some of these places.

Like a number of members, I have crossed the political divide. About 18 months ago I went to Doomadgee, again with the member for Moggill, my good friend, and I recall meeting in the front yard with Councillor Dean Jupiter, a good footballer in his day—and I will come to that in a moment. I am

sure that people in Doomadgee, like those in other places I have mentioned, feel strongly about having local people providing input. They are not dills. They are not fools. Treating them as such is the offshoot of not respecting them.

I am sick and tired of politicians of all persuasions talking about closing the gap and not doing something that delivers in this space. Dean Jupiter was at Parramatta Park at Cairns Showgrounds 32 years ago. I never saw him play, but I was there that night. Ellery Hanley gave him the player of the match medal after the game in a curtain-raiser to Great Britain versus North Queensland.

Rugby League is such a big part of the social fabric of our Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. I know for a fact that there was someone who was contributing to making Palm Island a better place through Rugby League. He was reformed, as I understand it. I do not think we should be penalising people for things that happened so long ago when they have corrected themselves, picked themselves up and made their community a better place and when they have done the right thing by their family, the right thing by their community and the right thing by their elders. That person on Palm Island lost their job in Rugby League because they could not get a blue card.

So many people cannot get a blue card for work because the system is not perfect. What the member for Traeger has tried to do is to fix it up and to make the system better. As I said in the early part of my contribution, and say as I sum up, we all want the best for our children—black, white or brindle, First Australian or new Australian; it does not matter. Local people in these communities are being ignored and are not being given a sense of empowerment or autonomy. We are treating them with contempt. There is no respect.

Former Wujal Wujal mayor Desmond Tayley is not in this parliament, but I hope that after the next election he will be. He will be the flag-bearer for North Queensland First in the electorate of Cook at the forthcoming state election. I know that 'Deadly Des' would like to see some work done in this space so that local communities have a sense of empowerment, autonomy and respect.

In conclusion, I pay tribute to the member for Traeger for doing the hard yards with this bill, which has passed through two committees. There have been two wet seasons since it was introduced—which in North Queensland are pretty important, as are the fundamental rights of our brothers and sisters in Indigenous communities and treating them with respect. They are not all dills. They are not all fools. Those community justice groups—whether in Coen, Kowanyama or wherever—had a role to play here. Unfortunately, it would appear that they are not going to get their wish to make the system better.

Brisbane does not know best all of the time, and I am afraid that we are going to see another example of that in relation to blue cards, which is a hot topic in my electorate. We have all heard about what has happened to our rural fire brigades. There are a lot of angry people out there, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. With current developments in the cape around lockdown laws, there are a lot of issues at play, although I will not canvass them here tonight.

This legislation would have been a good thing. The member for Traeger knows his community on Mornington Island, in Doomadgee, up in the Gulf country and through the backblocks of the electorate of Traeger. I feel sorry for him tonight, because he has done the hard yards. We do not agree on everything, but I think he has had a red-hot go on this. He and his people, particularly Indigenous people far and wide, not just in Traeger but right across Central, North and Far North Queensland, deserve better.

As the leader of NQ First in this chamber, I am disappointed in the content of some of the contributions made here. This is a democracy and everyone is entitled to their views, but unfortunately a lot of people are letting down our First Australians. We could have made a difference tonight, but I fear it will not happen. However, I compliment the member for Traeger on his work. I am very proud to support the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill, because I think it would have been a step in the right direction towards making the system better in relation to blue cards and being respectful of our Indigenous brothers and sisters in Central, North and Far North Queensland.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (6.32 pm), in reply: I am grateful for the opportunity to close the debate on the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill. It is with a fair degree of emotion that I rise to speak tonight, although not to the point where I will break down in tears. This bill means so much to me because I know it means so much to people who are relying on the success of it, or something similar to it, to unlock meaningful work for people in my areas.

A lot of people who come to my office say, 'What are you doing about youth crime in Mount Isa?' Ninety-five to 100 per cent of youth crime involves Indigenous youth, which is tragic. Everyone is throwing their hands up in the air and asking, 'How do we repair this?' I say, 'I can tell you one way I

am trying to repair it. It is to make some changes to the blue card system.' They might ask, 'How so? What do you mean by that?' To that I would reply, 'I think a lot of those kids are on the street because mum and dad do not have meaningful work.' If people do not have meaningful work, often they will turn to substance abuse or other types of abuse. Kids go out on the street because it is not safe to be at home. They do not like being at home. That sums up a lot of the problems that we have. You then drive further into the problem, which is that it is not so much about fixing the kids; it is about fixing the problem at home by getting the parents into meaningful pastimes, which usually means meaningful work. People will ask, 'Why aren't they accessing work? Is it because they don't want to work?'

I can honestly say that, after eight years of going up to Doomadgee and Mornington, there may have been but I cannot recall one person saying to me, 'Rob, you have to make sure we get more dole money up here. We want more Centrelink money.' I cannot recall one person saying that. The majority of people who approach me say, 'What are you doing about jobs up here? How come a white fella is working on the construction camp—no local fellas?' They will say, 'How come I didn't get the ATODS job? The fella who got the ATODS job in town doesn't even know us.' Those are the conversations that I am more likely to have. There are plenty of people who are willing to work. We could get into a discussion about procurement, which is a big issue and difficult to resolve. Unfortunately, a lot of the solutions are not perfect solutions for the problems. They are not perfect.

I take extreme exception to some of what I have heard. I did not hear all of the contributions, but I did hear the contribution of the member for Macalister. Unfortunately, she is not here at the moment. I wish we had a full House to address some people's contributions directly. I took great offence to some of the assertions that she made. She quoted, quite fairly, things that I said when I was in the committee. I would add that when you sit on a committee for the Labor Party, which is in government, and you are given notes, you have 220 staff to back you up. When you are sitting there for the KAP, you have zero. I am sitting there on my Pat Malone, trying to resource myself and answer all of the questions. One of those questions was, 'Would you agree to a drug dealer being granted a blue card?' I responded by saying something like, 'Yes, if the conditions were right.' I stand by that. It is an ugly comment to make, but unfortunately I have to make it because it is the truth.

I am not saying that there are good answers for up there, but someone better start doing something because nothing is getting better. I have been sitting here for eight years and nothing has been done on the alcohol management plans on Mornington Island. We have hospitals, police, the community and the councils asking, 'What is happening? We want to reintroduce pathways going forward with alcohol management plans.' That has not happened. I sit in this place when we do welcome to country, we acknowledge everything and we say that we want to help Aboriginal people. Those are good words, but let us put them into action because I am also sitting up there at the coalface and things are getting worse.

I do not see much happening to create meaningful and significant change around the problems where parents are sitting at home with nothing to do, although they are trying to access jobs. I have something here. I have introduced this bill twice. I welcome amendments and a discussion on how we can improve it—but let's not talk about tinkering around the edges of the same system, because that will not cut it. I accept that in some places more support with the process will help people, but certainly it does not go close to fixing the problem. If you are going to accept that, I do not think you care enough about this issue. If you spend enough time with the people up there, you will see with your own eyes and understand that there is a cry for help and that those people want to access meaningful work.

This bill is based on one very important principle. I believe that one principle extinguishes or exhausts any argument delivered, either here tonight or in any former debates on this issue. It is that we empower our First Australian communities to make the decisions for themselves on what is best for their community. Isn't that bold? Isn't it bold that we let them make the decisions, not us down here? We politicians in Brisbane are so smart that we cannot possibly allow this, because it will endanger the children! Will it? The people in the community will be making the decisions about their kids.

When you say this will weaken the standard and endanger our kids, that is a complete affront to the parents and the people in the communities. It is saying that they do not have the capacity to decide what is best for their community. I think they do. Who am I? I am not part of that community, although I visit regularly and I observe what is happening. I have talked to any number of mayors and councillors in the cape and the gulf. This issue is pervasive. I could go through all sorts of categories of people in the communities who say, 'Yeah, the blue card—my goodness, I had so much trouble with it. My wife couldn't get it and I couldn't get it.'

I heard someone say earlier in the debate, 'The member for Traeger is saying that if there is a criminal issue you can't get it but you still can get it.' That is not the point. Say you are an employer in Mount Isa trying to encourage the employment of local people, or looking for someone to work in the Doomadgee school. I can give a real example. There was a mum they wanted as a teacher aide. She turned up at the school but could not get the blue card. She was fostering four or five kids at home. Despite fostering four or five kids at home, she could not get the job at the school as a teacher aide. That is when someone called out to me—it would have been seven or eight years ago—and said, 'Rob, can you please do something about these blue cards? We are trying to get the right people in these jobs. It is a barrier.'

To take a hypothetical situation, let's say a gentleman at Doomadgee presents to work. He has had a lifelong struggle with substance abuse and has a four-inch rap sheet of assaults and terrible actions but he is reformed. The whole community knows that he has reformed and they are happy to have him working with their kids because they know his previous actions were as a result of substance abuse. If he is reformed, he should be allowed the opportunity for his community to say, 'We know that guy. We know he is a completely different person now, despite his previous actions.' They should have the right to make that decision, not someone in Brisbane.

I have had a discussion with one of the officers involved in this process. I asked them a direct question: 'What would you do if you have a fifty-fifty decision to make, a judgement call to make on an application for a blue card in Doomadgee? You do not know the person but you have seen their rap sheet. What do you do? I hope that you would err on the side of caution and put a cross next to their name, not a tick.' They replied, 'Yes, of course. The safety of the children is paramount.' There you go. They do not know the person. You should take that same application, which is what this bill is all about, send it back up to the local justice group and give them the power.

Here is the issue about empowerment. The member for Macalister was sitting beside a colleague when I was addressing the committee and said, 'Don't you think you are putting too much pressure on these local justice groups in their community?' That is the whole point. We have to empower them. I see it as condescending and patronising to say, 'We do not think they can look after it. That is too much pressure on them.' There should be pressure on them. That is how you grow, mature and make decisions for your community. Most of the people I talk to want that responsibility and that right. The pressure release valve is there. As I said, they do it in consultation with the local police and magistrate. That is the pressure relief valve for them in terms of dealing with families and other issues.

I want to go through some of the responses given by stakeholders. Opposition and government members raised a few of these in their contributions. They were quoting the ones that were against the bill, so I will go through some of the people who support the bill. I think some of these are very legitimate.

Before I do that, I go back to what I thought was a low blow when the member for Macalister thought it was great to point out that I do not know what local justice groups do. Here is the news flash: Junkuri Laka, the local justice group at Mornington Island, were the people who helped me put the bill together. There goes the member's claim that I did not consult with any local justice groups. They were the ones who put the pressure on me in the first place and, in fact, invited me once to act as a witness for someone who was trying to get a blue card. He tried for about two years. I think he may have eventually secured it. It is unfair to say that I do not know what local justice groups do or that I had no consultation with them. In further contradiction to the claim by the member for Macalister, I have the submissions here by the Coen Local Justice Group and Junkuri Laka, the Gununa Mornington Island group. Need I say more?

I will go through some of these. The first person we heard from who spoke in favour of this was Ms Anderson from LawRight. She brought up some examples similar to what I was talking about before. She said—

Kay was dealing with the collapse of her marriage, which had been both physically and emotionally abusive. She briefly fell into a short pattern of drug abuse, something she had never engaged in prior to this. Kay voluntarily sought rehabilitation treatment with the support of her family.

She cleans herself up, gets into work then loses the blue card. She lost it for two years. They said, 'No, we have gone through the process and got it back for you,' but she had lost her job by that stage. That goes to the example I was giving before where in Doomadgee someone presents for work and the first thing they say is, 'We put all these measures in place to help fasten up the process and we have tinkered at the edges to try to streamline the process and make it more culturally sensitive, but you will still have to go home for two months. Stay dry and don't do anything silly and we will still take you back with a job for you in two months time.' I ask anyone listening tonight: do you really think that person will be engaged after that two months? There is the perfect opportunity, when someone is

presenting to work, to grab them with both hands, put them in that job and sort out the rest later. That is why I put in the bill that it is mandatory that there be a three-week period to push this through because the timing is almost as important as the approval itself. That was the contribution from QCAT's LawRight. The next one in favour was from Debbie Kilroy, who said—

The blue card system as it currently operates does not assist people, organisations or communities to achieve the goal of keeping children safe. It is a risk management compliance system.

It keeps everyone happy ticking boxes in Brisbane. Does it keep kids in Doomadgee any safer? Maybe a little bit, but I would argue that the number of parents it has displaced from work or kept from work and kept in substance abuse, which creates more problems at home and makes home more unsafe, would offset some of the other risk. It is a very one-dimensional attitude to say, 'Look, you are lowering the bar, therefore it is just bad for kids.' It is a lot more complicated than that. I will always keep reverting to the argument which I think trumps all of that—that is, it is important to remember that it is these communities that still have the final say on whether or not that person gets a blue card. It should be like that. They know their community and they should have the power to make those decisions for themselves. It should not be up to us.

The next submission was from Kate Greenwood, the Policy, Early Intervention and Community Legal Education Officer with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, someone who deals with this issue at the coalface every day. She is very strongly in support of the bill. She went into a fair bit of detail and went further in her submission to say, 'Please, we need some help with this. There is a huge problem.' What has the response been? I have been at this for seven years. There is nothing; tinkering at the edges has been the only response.

There was a clanger of a contribution from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, which has all the worldly experience of having one school that exists in an Indigenous community in Queensland. They felt it necessary to come right out of the trenches to say how bad this bill was. I took exception to this. In Mount Isa, Father Mick Lowcock would be one of the best sources of moral judgement on this. He has been out there for 25 years working in this space—buried in this space, trying to fix it—and has a strong hand in the running of the Catholic schools out there. They did not ask him. They completely contradict his submission. Someone in Brisbane from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission comes out and says, 'We do not think there should be two standards for two different types of people in Queensland. There should be just one. It gets confusing.' That is a good response! That is a good response to all of this heartache and trouble we are talking about in the community! If they are saying it is no good, what is their solution?

I was extremely annoyed at that and, quite frankly, I do not think they are qualified to comment on that because they do not have a big presence out there. Remember, we are talking about Indigenous communities here, not all over Queensland. They have very little presence there and they completely contradicted the submission from the Catholic Church group NWQICSS in Mount Isa that is buried in this space.

Frank Tracey from Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service offers strong support and says that this is needed. He acknowledges that this is a huge problem and that this is a great way forward. Clearly, members who have made contributions prior to me know more than all these people. Father Mick Lowcock is a giant in Far North Queensland. I think he has earned the respect of both sides of the House for his work and what he has offered in this space in Mount Isa. He is trying to improve things.

The member for Maiwar made a really good point in his contribution. I would love to take this bill further than just the Indigenous communities. In the course of talking about this issue, I have had people from Townsville, Brisbane and Rockhampton contact me saying, 'I have had some indiscretions years ago and suddenly I cannot get a blue card.' It is a real problem. The KAP is trying to keep it simple at the moment and start where the problem is worst.

If anyone is interested in the issues in this space then they should read the submission from NWQICSS because I cannot endorse their efforts in this space enough. They certainly endorse in principle what we are trying to achieve here. Another heavy hitter is Shane Duffy from ATSILS. The conclusion of their submission states—

ATSILS supports in general terms the proposed amendments in that they empower—  
there is that word again—

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be involved in decisions relating to them and their communities. As the safety of the child is always paramount, we recognise that any amendments that have the potential to impact on the safety of a child or children must be implemented in a way that ensures any potential risks are identified and managed and would seek the appropriate supports to be put in place.

That is covered off by the local justice groups. The people involved in those groups are not going to deliberately allow someone to get a blue card who they think is a risk to people, as I would not and as anyone else in this room would not. Do not judge them differently and say that they are incapable of making those judgements. They are capable of doing that and they should be empowered to do that.

An interesting point was made during consideration of this bill. I remember the Catholic education office made it. I heard this point when I was acting as a witness for an applicant for a blue card who was from Doomadgee. That was actually going through Junkuri Laka, the Mornington Island community justice group. I was interested in the interaction. I suspect it was a lawyer I was talking to on teleconference. In the discussion he said, 'Do you think this person is right and proper to work with kids?', to which I replied, 'Yes.' The comment he made then was, 'Do you recognise what this guy has done?' I cannot recall the exact words, but it was eventually said, 'Do you think there should be two sets of rules for people in Queensland—one for Indigenous people and one for non-Indigenous people?' I said, 'You are already doing that. There are alcohol management plans in place. You cannot drink on Mornington Island. That is a separate rule. I can drink in Burketown, but I cannot drink on Mornington Island. You are already applying two sets of rules.' It is hypocritical to say that there should not be two sets of rules. It is about the safety of people. The government has made those rules for the safety of people. There can be two sets of rules if there are different sets of circumstances. It was good to have the support of those stakeholders.

I will move on to the Coen Justice Group, which stated—

We the Coen Justice Group are strongly supportive of this bill. We are very confident in our ability to manage this process in a good and efficient manner.

Junkuri Laka—the group that I apparently did not consult with—wrote a very extensive submission, as they should. That was done at the time under Berry Zondag. They had a wonderful group there. A great way to move forward with our First Australian brothers and sisters in those areas is to say to them, 'We should not be making these decisions. They are your decisions to make. You should be empowered to say who does and who does not work with your children.' I am not even going that far because I have still said that if there are disqualifying offences they will not get through the first door. They are still not eligible anyway. We could have a debate about the people who fall into that category. Members can keep throwing rocks at the KAP for suggesting things, but it is there in black and white.

A person could be a drug dealer or peddling ice and 10 years later working with kids. That is the ugly truth, but do I stand by this? Yes, if that person is reformed. It is not my call to make. If the community of Doomadgee said that they understand what that person did, they may choose to say that they are still not comfortable with that person working with their kids or they may choose to say that they are happy with that person working with their kids. They may say, 'In fact, we think it is better because he has more chance of staying away from substance abuse and staying on the straight and narrow if he is engaged in work.'

The current system is going the other way. We can all feel comfortable in terms of compliance and say that we can sleep safely at night because it has been checked off. Yes, there are risks to kids. There will always be risks to kids. Are there fewer kids being abused in those communities? I do not know. I am sure there are still a lot being abused, which is a very sad fact to reflect on. I am sure there are a lot up there still being abused that the blue card system is not protecting.

There were a heap of examples referred to around the practicalities of the blue card system. There were examples such as a solicitor cannot act for a person and the mail has to go directly to the person and not their solicitor. An issue that I tried to tidy up early on in the piece when I started down this road was that a person would apply for a position at the school in Doomadgee and they would not turn up because either the school or the person did not get the mail. People say that there are processes there and they ran a culturally appropriate program to get people to engage more with the blue card progress and get their applications in. That is all well and good. It sounds good. It might make people down here feel comfortable, but it is not working in practice. The proof is in the pudding.

I was talking to a mayor from the Cape a few months ago and he said that he was even having trouble with the blue card system. Half of the last Doomadgee council said that they were having trouble with the blue card system. This problem is extensive. Unfortunately, people have to recalibrate how they deal with problems everywhere. The issues are different in these communities but one thing is for sure: they are not different insofar as they can make decisions for themselves.

This strikes at the heart of other issues such as title deeds. In the eight years I have been in this job I have never seen one title deed application in the Gulf either pushed or assisted. In Doomadgee or on Mornington people can never aspire to own a house if they get a job. We do not give them that right.

We do not give them the right to drink on Mornington. If a person has alcohol offences for making home-brew those accumulated charges mean they cannot get a blue card so they cannot get a job either. That is another kicker on Mornington Island. Most of the offences on Mornington Island are breaches of the alcohol ban. People are just trying to have a drink.

We have created these problems. We are starting to see these problems in places like Townsville and Mount Isa because progressively kids are not being looked after. The stable unit starts with meaningful work for mum and dad. How do we get mum and dad into work? Here is a big barrier. Should we not be putting a lot of effort into this in this place if members are serious about addressing any of these problems? I would love for someone to come in here and say, 'Rob, you got it wrong, but here is an alternative solution to blue cards.' Do not just give me that we are just going to tinker at the edges of the existing system.

It does not have to be the KAP solution, but give us something. For eight years I have been knocking on doors—both parties—and there has been no progress. The people in those communities are still drowning in bureaucracy. They deserve better from our politicians. I ask members here tonight to search their conscience. We do not get a lot of chances to provide some meaningful improvement for these people's lives.

Do not hide behind the royal commission. Yes, it is a very real and serious document. Is it just a lay-down misere that it disqualifies every other argument of any substance just because it was a royal commission? It is not too much of a stretch to say that some of the people involved in the royal commission did not take into consideration the nuances of the application of a blue card as it applies in Aboriginal communities in Queensland or in Torres Strait Island communities. It is not too much of a stretch. Whether it is a royal commission document or anything, we should be able to challenge it on the merits of the issue.

Quite obviously to me there are big problems up there that are not being solved. This is the second time that the KAP have tried to introduce legislation on this. We are looking for support from the House. It is the right thing to do. Yes, there are risks. There are always risks when it comes to children.

The question is: what do we want to do? Do we want to move forward or do we want to be stuck back here with the brakes on? That is where we are at, but we have to move forward. Other members can throw off at the KAP bill all they like, but they had better come up with a good alternative. These are very serious problems. They are not going away and they are getting worse, and it is up to us to come up with some solutions.

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

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members are reminded that the total number of votes cast for each party includes those present under sessional orders and any proxy votes but must not include paired members or members asked to withdraw from the chamber and excluded from voting under the standing orders.

**AYES, 6:**

**KAP, 3—**Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**NQF, 1—**Costigan.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

**Ind, 1—**Bolton.

**NOES, 80:**

**ALP, 44—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

**LNP, 35—**Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Watts, Weir.

**Grn, 1—**Berkman.

Pairs: D'Ath, Wilson; Healy, Stevens; Pegg, Sorensen.

Resolved in the negative.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Mudgeeraba Electorate

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.05 pm): Tonight I speak on behalf of my locals who, at the hands of the Labor government, have been dealt cruel blow after blow. I am well acquainted with the local farmers at Natural Bridge in the Numinbah Valley which is why one of them phoned me two weeks ago at 6 am to tell me that bulldozers were descending on their premier picnic spot at Forest Park. Twenty or so locals formed a blockade to stop Labor's bulldozers but were unsuccessful and had to watch on as heritage stone structures, toilet facilities and picnic benches were flattened before their eyes. I table what is left of our park for the benefit of the House.

Weeks before the demolition I wrote to the Minister for Environment and urged her to listen to locals. The minister was well aware that locals had commenced a petition. Unfortunately, their pleas fell on deaf ears. Only after the demolition and only after I had written to the minister was a ridiculous reason given to create a 'vivid greenspace'. Hinterlanders deserve to be treated better from Brisbane bureaucrats who have no idea about my electorate—3,329 residents signed a petition, which I have tabled as a nonconforming petition, an electronic copy of which I have provided to the Table Office.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding saving the Numinbah Forest Park in Numinbah Valley [\[772\]](#).

Again, locals contacted me—this time about the ridiculous border closures preventing kids getting to school in New South Wales through the Natural Bridge border. The Palaszczuk government was paying for a public servant to sit beside a barrier 24/7 to tell locals they needed to park their car in Queensland and walk to work or school in New South Wales or take a detour that added hours to their commute each day. I table a photo of what the border crossing looked like. I wrote to the Premier after locals staged yet another protest, requesting the border be opened at Natural Bridge. Finally, we have a new police border checkpoint installed. Finally, I table a photograph of the parking issues in Springbrook to highlight a serious problem there for tourists and locals alike.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of photos depicting recreational areas and border crossing between Queensland and New South Wales [\[771\]](#).

I again wrote to the environment minister about the parking issue, but I am yet to hear a response. At least Tom Tate, the Mayor of the Gold Coast, recognises the gravity of the situation and volunteers his support for installing more parking at Springbrook National Park. Yet again we hear deafening silence from the Labor Minister for Environment.

The parking problem makes social distancing next to impossible. It is just plain dangerous when the only place to walk from your car to the walking trails is on the road. I am calling on the minister to open up both the Settlement and Springbrook Mountain Manor for tourists and the people of Springbrook before a fatality occurs. Stop treating hinterland residents like they are second-class citizens. They deserve better and we want to be heard.

### Algerger Electorate, Beaudesert Road Intersection Upgrade

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerger—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (7.08 pm): Today the Premier announced great news for the people of my electorate of Algerger, with fast-tracked funding for a well-known congestion hotspot. In a huge win for the local community, we will invest \$30 million to upgrade the intersection of Beaudesert and Algerger roads and Illaweena Street. Locals have been raising concerns about this common bottleneck with me regularly, and after a lot of hard work I am glad we can fast-track a solution.

Each day more than 56,000 vehicles travel across this intersection, whether it be families travelling to get their children to and from school each day—something that will once again become a regular practice starting next week; or tradies and small business operators getting onto the Logan Motorway and onto their next job; or daily commuters travelling into the city. With a growing population, commuters are often caught up in the congestion that can occur at this site.

The intersection upgrade means that there will be six through-lanes on Beaudesert Road, plus extended right turns, additional slip lanes and an overhaul of pedestrian crossings. This upgrade announcement has been fast-tracked for our community and TMR are working hard to finalise concept designs, which will be shared through the consultation process. I have been working with the community across the Algerger electorate on traffic issues since being elected in 2015 and I know that this is one of the most important. I am very proud to have worked closely with the transport minister, Mark Bailey, to deliver a practical solution to this local problem.

This upgrade also builds on the work of the recently completed \$512 million Logan Enhancement Project. As the first-of-its-kind market-led project in partnership with Transurban, our government delivered a safe and efficient road network for the electorate of Algester. I fought hard to keep traffic off our local roads by keeping the right-hand westbound turning lane from Beaudesert Road onto the Logan Motorway which resulted in an efficient and safe solution for our community.

Since I was elected as the member for Algester, I have made it my priority to deliver strong solutions to these common traffic congestion issues. First with the Logan Enhancement Project and now with the \$30 million upgrade, families in our community will be able to get home safer and sooner.

This project will also benefit the local economy, supporting over 30 jobs during construction. Our government is proud to support Queensland jobs and, during our recovery from COVID-19, that is more important than ever. This project is just one of many that our government is investing in as part of a \$400 million COVID-19 recovery package which forms a multibillion dollar pipeline of transport and road upgrades to supercharge the state's economy.

As the Premier said this morning, we will unite and recover. I am proud to deliver job-creating road upgrades for my community of the Algester electorate as we do just that.

Interruption.

## DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Error in Division

 **Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Pugh): I wish to correct the record of the results of an earlier division. The result of the division was ayes six and noes 80. The *Record of Proceedings* will be updated accordingly.

## ADJOURNMENT

Resumed.

### State of Israel

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (7.12 pm): Many members would be aware that when I was first elected many years ago I set up the Parliamentary Friends of Israel, and I appreciate the bipartisan support from both sides of the chamber. Many times in the last few years I have been asked whether I would like to visit Israel as part of a study tour. Regrettably, every time I have been invited it coincided with a parliamentary sitting week, so obviously the answer was no. Towards the back end of last year there was a spare position on the New South Wales parliamentary delegation to Israel, which was to be held in the middle of January this year. I was able to accept that.

I will say for the benefit of the House that the airfare and accommodation was fully paid for by myself, and it was worth every cent. To say that it was probably one of the most fascinating tours I have ever undertaken is an understatement. Over the course of the week in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv we undertook a range of meetings. In fact, it was a very intense schedule. We literally started around about 6.30 am with breakfast on the coach and then away we would go.

It was not exactly a Contiki tour, because the sorts of places we went to included Ramallah in the West Bank and a little town called Sderot, which I will come back to towards the end of this quick speech. In terms of seeking balance, we also met representatives from the Palestinian National Authority as well as the Israeli government. It was truly fascinating. We went to the Gaza border; we went to the Lebanese border; we went to tunnels which Hezbollah had only just recently dug a few weeks earlier. We saw tanks, we saw planes, we saw you name it. Most importantly, the purpose of the trip was to get a better understanding. That better understanding included a combination of MPs from all sides of the chamber—predominantly New South Wales, obviously—but I was privileged to be asked to attend.

Many of us visit our schools and we are sometimes there when they have fire drills. I was in the little town of Sderot when they had a drill of their own kind—a 30-second warning to say that in a matter of eight seconds rockets would be coming over from the Gaza border into Sderot. All of the kids sprung into action; they knew exactly what to do. It was very sobering and it reminded me with a passion just how fortunate we are to live in this state and in this country. I know that when I did this trip—which was

about 17 to 23 January—the world well and truly changed not long after I returned. I will say that, despite our differences and despite the divide ideologically between this side of the chamber and that, there are some things in life that unite all humanity, and it really puts it on display when you go to Israel.

### Townsville, Volunteers

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors) (7.15 pm): This week during National Volunteer Week I would like to take this opportunity to thank volunteers and people who give their time in my local electorate of Mundingburra and across Townsville more broadly. More than 12 months after the monsoonal event last year when people came out in droves to support one another, we have again seen that happen with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to acknowledge those people and thank them for their work. With the establishment of the response from the Premier, we saw the setting up of the community recovery hotline to support people who need support in areas such as food delivery and someone to talk to whom they could call on and ask for help.

Across North Queensland 800 requests for assistance were received through that hotline and staff played a vital role in keeping vulnerable members of the community safe and supported. At a time like this we need to look out for each other, and we particularly need to look out for the more vulnerable members of our community. That is why I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government—and the Premier herself—led the way with the Care Army. In Townsville alone we had more than 600 people register to join the Care Army in a wonderful show of support across the Townsville region. In Townsville we have Youth With A Mission, which is working with Volunteering Queensland and liaising with local community organisations to pinpoint where those volunteers can help the most. I was pleased to visit them to see firsthand the work they are doing to link vulnerable community members with volunteers and community organisations that can help them.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Townsvillians and North Queenslanders who put their hands up to join the Care Army. As we celebrate National Volunteer Week I want to say thank you to all of the volunteers in Townsville in my electorate and across the state in general. I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge all of the workers who have continued to play a vital role in helping our local community in workplaces right across Townsville during the pandemic. I want to thank the supermarket workers, the retail workers, the drive-through operators, people working in our petrol stations and takeaways, the truck drivers, the factory workers keeping essentials on our shelves in our shops and the schoolteachers who have kept our kids learning. Thanks to the nurses, allied health professionals and doctors who continue to do us proud each day. All of these workers deserve our thanks and especially our respect. They deserve to be treated kindly and with patience in their workplaces.

The people of Townsville are a strong, resilient bunch of people. We take on any challenges that are thrown our way. Even though we are still recovering from the monsoonal event, we still stand by each other. We show our support and we will continue to support vulnerable members of our community.

### Oodgeroo Electorate

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.18 pm): Redlands coast residents have warmly embraced the LNP's local team for this October state election: Henry Pike for Redlands, Bev Walters for Capalaba, Kirrily Boulton for Springwood and I are working to ensure that Redlands coast gets its fair share. Henry Pike's Facebook video recently featured his valiant effort to park his car at Redland Hospital. Many frustrated Redlands people shared how they just want to park within walking distance of the main entrance. Some \$16 million of LNP federal government funding for a multilevel car park has sat on the table for over a year, but the government still does nothing. For six years I have called for an intensive care unit for Redland Hospital, but Labor said no. Redland Hospital was not ready for this coronavirus pandemic, and I again call on the Premier and new Treasurer to increase the critical care capacity of Redland Hospital to not leave Redlands people vulnerable to such pandemics again.

With respect to transport and road projects we see delays and excuses, including the Gateway on-ramp at Old Cleveland Road and the five transit lanes on the Eastern Transitway. There is no construction, just more broken promises. Speaking of the government's unresponsiveness, my letter to the Premier about working together for a recovery plan for North Stradbroke Island went unanswered. Weeks ago I asked for the government's COVID-19 recovery plan but heard nothing. I table the letter to the Premier.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, undated, from the member for Oodgeroo, Dr Mark Robinson MP, to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, and the Chief Health Officer, Queensland Health, Dr Jeannette Young [773].

It calls for a planned, staged opening—first to property owners and off-road beach four-wheel drive tourists, dropping the Straddie tax, then opening up progressively and with new tourism funding to promote a midyear school holiday return of tourists. However, the Labor government fumbled it. Without notice, they announced a partial opening of the island to day visitors last weekend, but only on the day before. Local businesses and ferry companies were left scrambling, and day visitors came over to an island in virtual lockdown. Labor's ad hoc approach to Straddie shows that the residents are still an afterthought. Their recovery strategy is paying higher taxes, like the job-destroying beach four-wheel drive tourism tax.

Redlanders have patiently waited five years for a fully-fledged local Mt Cotton named and licensed rural fire brigade, one in which local volunteers could fight bushfire emergencies. Instead, Springwood MP, Mick de Brenni, announced a fire service that is not locally based, has no local licence to operate, has no local budget, has no local assets like trucks and a shed and will not allow local volunteers to put out bushfires—yes, an army of firefighting volunteers who cannot put out bushfires. It is time for Minister de Brenni and local Redlands MPs Kim Richards and Don Brown to stand up to the union and stand up for the Redlands community so that they are protected during the next fire season.

### Jordan Electorate, Coronavirus

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.21 pm): I wish to begin by thanking the people of the Jordan electorate who have shown such incredible resilience and strength in the face of COVID-19. This pandemic has had an incredible impact on so many in our community. Like many members in this House, over the last few months my office and I have dealt with the full gamut of issues as we have and continue to provide individual support to our community members and particularly our local businesses. I am very proud of how our locals have particularly responded to the health advice. This was the most important contribution that our Jordan community could make—to keep themselves, their families and our communities safe and well. I believe this has been reflected in the relatively low numbers of COVID-19 cases we have seen in the Ipswich and Logan regions. It is also a reflection of the amazing preparation and work being undertaken by our health and hospital services and I wish to acknowledge the work of West Moreton Health and Metro South Health and all of the incredibly dedicated frontline health staff who have been absolutely outstanding in all of this.

As we now begin a gradual easing of restrictions, it is important that we reward the efforts of our community by ensuring that we continue to support those individuals, families and businesses who need ongoing financial assistance. I do wish to thank our local community services that have been absolutely phenomenal. It is our community centres and service providers that are truly the backbone to our immediate recovery. Whether it is with food hampers, emergency funds or financial counselling, I cannot thank them enough for all they are doing to support our most vulnerable people and those who have now found themselves facing difficult times. I will continue to be a champion and a support for those organisations. They are a true measure of what our community can and should be, and I could not be prouder and more appreciative of their work.

For many of our local businesses, times continue to be tough and I have worked closely with a number of businesses to offer advice and support. Commercial lease arrangements continue to be a big issue for many businesses in the Jordan electorate, and I am pleased that our government is establishing the Small Business Commissioner who will deal with such leasing disputes. The Small Business Adaption Grants announced today are also a wonderful way to support local businesses to get back on their feet.

Importantly for the Jordan electorate, we need to push forward in our economic recovery with key infrastructure projects that will not only create jobs but provide certainty for when life resumes to something closely resembling normal. Last week I announced that our \$44.5 million Springfield Central park-and-ride is on track and we are looking for contractors to build this important project which not only will deliver around 1,100 car parks in the station precinct but also will create 44 jobs for our economy.

Today there is even better news that the Centenary Highway-Logan Motorway interchange will be upgraded with \$15 million in funding that will create 15 jobs. This has already been very warmly welcomed in the Jordan electorate—as was the announcement of \$37.5 million for a jointly funded upgrade to extend the four-lane section of the Mount Lindesay Highway from Stoney Camp Road to Chambers Flat Road, supporting 80 jobs, as Queensland and our local communities continue their economic recovery from coronavirus.

## North Queensland

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—NQF) (7.24 pm): It is time to put North Queensland first—not just North Queensland but Far North Queensland, Central Queensland and indeed my beloved Mackay and the Whitsundays. We need to do that more so than ever before on the road to recovery post coronavirus. This virus has obviously turned the world upside down, but we have to remember that we also have another virus and it is coming from the two major parties—and that is foot-and-mouth disease. People are sick and tired of hearing the rot that comes out of Labor and the LNP.

My concern is that, as we try to rebuild our economies post coronavirus, the economic recovery will start in South-East Queensland. This is something I pointed out alongside my colleague and good friend the North Queensland First candidate for Cook, Desmond Tayley, the former long-serving mayor of Wujal Wujal, when we announced his candidacy last week in Cooktown. We do not need the economic recovery coming out of Brisbane, Surfers Paradise, the Sunshine Coast, Noosa or Coolangatta. That is the last thing we need. There is no doubt that Central, North and Far North Queensland have so much to offer in getting our people back on track.

As we go forward towards the 31 October state election, I have a plan for the people of Central, North and Far North Queensland as the leader of North Queensland First. As you go further north, I find that so many people are tired of the two major parties, and that is why on 24 February we announced our \$6 billion real royalties for regions fund—funded by royalties out of the resources sector. It is what comes out of the ground in the Bowen Basin, the North West Minerals Province, the soon-to-be-developed Galilee Basin and on it goes. People are sick and tired of the two major parties spending our money, our wealth, in South-East Queensland—building these grand tunnels and bridges.

I see one of the government members across the chamber laughing, but it is true and even Labor people in Mackay and the Whitsundays agree. That is why we have committed \$160 million to rebuild our agricultural colleges, \$6.5 million to develop the North Australian maritime college in Airlie Beach, \$1 million to develop the Coral Sea Catalina Heritage Museum in Bowen, \$750,000 to rebuild our swimming enclosures in the northern beaches of Mackay and Bucasia and \$250,000 for a similar facility at Wilson Beach in the Whitsundays. I want to thank people like Doug Petersen in Bucasia who has stood the test of time trying to get this project back up and running after the old one was knocked over by a cyclone and the council were not interested. There was a similar chain of events up in the Whitsundays.

Before I finish, I call on the federal and state governments to lift the lockdowns in Cape York. There are people now battling mental health issues, alcoholism, domestic violence and financial hardship. I note what the Cooktown chamber of commerce has done in wanting that economic corridor between Cooktown and Mareeba. We need to lift the lockdowns in the cape. These people deserve more. We have oppression and it is not good enough.

## Macalister Electorate, Schools

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (7.27 pm): My Macalister schools have been doing an amazing job over the past few months—from the uncertain days of March when the impacts of the pandemic started to enter the public consciousness, to the massive work undertaken by teachers over the school holiday period to prepare for learning at home, to facilitating online and in-class learning experiences, and now to transition back to the classroom. Our state schools are great schools and they have demonstrated this in spades.

I have spoken to all of my school principals a number of times over the past few weeks to gauge how they were travelling and what they were each doing to adjust their school systems and, more importantly, to support students and their families. I understand that schools in my electorate are not flush with electronic learning devices and tablets, and the feedback I got was that hard copy packs were by far the most popular resource amongst Macalister families. Many of my schools, including Edens Landing State School that I visited last week, were running drive-through learning pack pick-up zones. There I got to have a chat with the teachers who were missing their students and the parents who were more likely than not missing their schools. They showed uniformly that they were prepared to be flexible and adaptable to ensure a good learning experience for their kids.

I would like to acknowledge the many parents out there who potentially now have a greater understanding of what it takes to engage a student in learning. I trained as a high school teacher but that did not make facilitating my children's learning from home any easier. In fact, my high school approach did not find too many fans amongst my primary schoolers. This was not an easy time for anyone, and no-one said or thought it would be. We are in the midst of a global pandemic and this was

not meant to be rainbows and butterflies but, by and large, we have gotten through this. We are almost there on the other side in terms of schooling for our kids, and I am certainly very thankful that the grade 1ers went back to school last week. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the herculean efforts of our school staff—our teachers, teacher aides and school cleaners, all under the able leadership and stewardship of our school principals.

Thank you for being so flexible. Thank you for placing the needs of our kids first. Thank you for going above and beyond, for teaching in a way that was not covered during your training and was not in your initial job description. Like frontline Queenslanders the length and breadth of this state, teachers have improvised, adapted and overcome.

Unfortunately, the LNP has locally taken this as an opportunity to attack our school principals, demanding that parents call police on our principals if they were unhappy with decisions made by these principals in the interests of their students. If we could hand out medals to our frontline workers for their efforts over this time, our principals should be rightly considered. However, it appears that the LNP would rather have them arrested and taken away from their schools. Shame!

### **Condamine Electorate, Secondary Schools**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.30 pm): Students in the fast-growing Westbrook area in the Condamine electorate are not able to access their secondary education requirements in close proximity to where they live. Families in and around Westbrook are being compelled to send their children into Toowoomba for secondary schooling. Harristown State High School and Centenary Heights State High School are very close to—or are already—over capacity and there are fears these additional students are being forgotten in an already overcrowded education system.

Census data shows that the Westbrook-Drayton area had a collective population of 3,861 in 2011. In 2016 the listed population had grown to 4,505, a population increase of 14 per cent in five years. The Queensland Education website states that Centenary Heights State High School has an enrolment capacity of 1,560 while Harristown has a capacity of 1,703. In 2011, 1,192 students were enrolled at Centenary Heights and 1,477 at Harristown. In 2016 the enrolments at Centenary Heights increased to 1,569 and 1,652 at Harristown, demonstrating both schools have experienced significant growth.

Queensland Treasury's Office of Economic and Statistical Research stated that in 2018 the Toowoomba local government catchment, which includes the Westbrook area, had a population of 164,595, with a projected figure of 204,300 by 2041. This is an increase of over 19 per cent to the population in the region, and much of this growth can be attributed to the western corridor.

The local community is advocating for a secondary school to be part of this growth. These families would like to see their children easily able to access secondary education without the need to travel back and forth to Toowoomba on an already busy highway. A proposed development in the area, the Fernleigh Westbrook development, is now in the hands of the Toowoomba Regional Council. The development would include 1,500 residential lots, a large shopping centre, a major supermarket and specialty retail shops, a tavern, childcare centre, aquatic centre, community facilities, parklands and cycleways. This will only add to the population growth in the area. Right now with the turmoil and pressure that COVID-19 has placed on our economy, we need infrastructure projects like the Fernleigh development to be approved and construction started.

Likewise, the Palaszczuk government needs to procure land for a secondary school in the western Toowoomba corridor without further delay, firstly, to safeguard the educational future of students and, secondly, to ensure Queensland has infrastructure projects going forward to secure and strengthen our economy.

### **Cook Electorate, Local Government**

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (7.33 pm): On 29 March, Queenslanders took to the polls and we saw a massive shift to leadership in communities throughout the Cook electorate. I work across 14 local governments and one town authority. I am humbled to have met and worked with so many great leaders over the past couple of years who have worked tirelessly and passionately for the benefit of their community, from Mareeba to the Douglas shire and from Cape York to the Torres Strait. The Palaszczuk government worked closely with all 14 local councils and one town authority and maintained strong partnerships to deliver better services and infrastructure to improve social outcomes and create job opportunities for locals.

I want to acknowledge the former mayors—Julia Leu, Fred Gela, Edward Newman, Dereck Walpo, Rex Burke, Ralph Kendall, June Pearson, Desmond Tayley and Michael Yam—for their outstanding efforts. It has been my absolute pleasure to work closely with them for the betterment of our communities and I wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Tom Gilmore was a long-serving mayor for Mareeba Shire Council and former state member of parliament. When I first met Tom, I immediately addressed him as ‘Mr Gilmore’ as a sign of respect. His response was, ‘Tom is fine, my dear,’ and that was the beginning of a positive relationship with Tom. Tom and I had many conversations about his vision for Mareeba. Tom recently retired after so many years giving back to his community. Tom, thank you for showing me the good side of politics and how to work effectively together for the benefit of the whole community. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with you, old mate, and I wish you well in your retirement.

I now turn my attention to the re-elected and newly elected mayors. Wayne Butcher from Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire; Vonda Malone, Torres shire; Peter Scott, Cook shire; Aileen Addo, Mapoon Aboriginal shire; and Michael Rowland, Weipa Town Authority, all successfully retained their seats. I want to acknowledge our incoming mayors in Keri Tamwoy, Aurukun Aboriginal shire; Philemon Mosby, Torres Strait Island Regional Council; Angela Toppin, Mareeba shire; Patricia Yusia, Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council; Michael Kerr, Douglas shire; Robert Sands, Kowanyama Aboriginal shire; Richard Tarpencha, Pormpuraaw Aboriginal shire; Janita Motton, Napranum Aboriginal shire; Bradley Creek, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal shire; and Jason Woibo, Hope Vale Aboriginal shire. I want to congratulate all of the mayors and councillors across the seat of Cook and pass on my best wishes for the term ahead.

I give special mention to my dad, Getano Lui Jnr, for retaining his seat of division 9 at Yam Island and being appointed Deputy Mayor for Torres Strait Island Regional Council for his final term in local politics. I am proud of you, Dad. In the words of Nelson Mandela—

Sometimes, it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom.

The House adjourned at 7.36 pm.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Stewart, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting