



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament  
First Session**

**Tuesday, 13 March 2018**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Tuesday, 13 March 2018**

**The SPEAKER (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock)** took the chair at 12:00.

**The SPEAKER** read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

*[Notices of motions given.]*

### *Private Members' Statements*

#### **TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN ANNE HAYMAN**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (12:11):** I pay tribute to a lady who has left us, but not before living a full, loving and memorable life. Kathleen Anne Hayman achieved in life the three most precious titles a woman can have: mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was loved and cherished in each of those roles. Her husband was Robert, but the family always referred to Kathleen as the captain of the Hayman family ship. In paying tribute to his beloved mother, son David said that she was always supportive, loving and devoted to her family. David added that his mother had oodles of common sense and wisdom, and her understanding of human nature was indeed exceptional. Her family and friends united in describing Kathleen as humble, disciplined, unassuming and a good listener. One could say that she never liked to talk about herself but she had a master's degree in being interested in others. Her son Greg speaks of his mother having lived a truly memorable life—a life of dreams fulfilled and adversity faced.

Kathleen Hayman simply got on with life, always looking for the best in every situation. Born on 7 November 1930, she was the second of three girls to Francis Sullivan and Ethel Stollery. Before her marriage, her mother stayed with the Carmelite Order. Kathleen's grandfather was a lighthouse keeper and that saw her dad raised at various lighthouses across the State, including Nobbys Head in Newcastle and Barrenjoey at Palm Beach. Kathleen Hayman was educated at Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College in North Sydney. She maintained some schooldays friendships for the rest of her life. At 14, she gained her first part-time job weighing and wrapping flour and sugar at the local grocery store. In the school holidays, she was a mail sorter at the General Post Office. Kathleen first met Robert at the local Catholic Youth Organisation. In a good move, she asked him to be her debutante ball partner. She was to tell her children she knew from the start that Robert was her "forever man".

Diagnosed at 18 with a serious illness, she was hospitalised for nine months and was told it was unlikely she would ever have children. The medical professionals who were treating her got that one wrong—she went on to have six babies. Robert had proposed to Kathleen while she was in hospital. Married the day before her twenty-second birthday, she and her forever man honeymooned in Forster. They got to Forster by air—the first time either of them had flown. She admitted that she was scared of the aeroplane "because flying wasn't something ordinary people did back then". Married life began in a bedsit in Willoughby. They later saved the money to move into their own home in North Ryde. Years later, they shifted to Eastwood. Having carried her first child to full term, Kathleen was devastated when she lost Gary Robert to cot death, at just 11 weeks. This busy mum and her beloved husband gave up a lot of time and energy by becoming involved with the St Therese parish church and its primary school.

It was well known that she used her inquiring mind to stay abreast of politics, current affairs and the financial state of the nation. Those who knew and loved Kathleen were familiar with her often quoted sayings. She loved to impart, "It is always darkest before the dawn," "Up the ladder, Jack," "Put your best foot forward," and—now, prophetically—"Stop the world, I want to get off." Her family say they will continue the annual ritual of Grandma's Christmas tree trimming. It is with heartfelt sorry that I say that the captain and her ship have now sailed. May God bless Kathleen Anne Hayman. May she rest in eternal peace.

#### **NEWCASTLE PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY BRANCH CLOSURES**

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (12:15):** I have been contacted by a worried constituent who received a concerning letter from the Newcastle Permanent Building Society. In the letter, "the Perm"—as the building society is known in Newcastle—announced the closure of the Lambton branch and told my constituent that he could continue to bank with it without access to face-to-face, over-the-counter services. Located in the busy Elder Street of Lambton, this bank is the third Newcastle Permanent Building Society branch to be closed in the western suburbs in recent months, following the shuttering of branches at John Hunter Hospital and the University of Newcastle Callaghan campus. Elderly, disabled and lower-income people who do their banking with

the Newcastle Permanent Building Society—people who may not have the mobility to get to other branches, or the capacity to make use of internet banking services—are being negatively impacted by these closures. Lambton residents and business owners told the *Lambton Local* magazine that they were aghast at the decision. Bede Jarrett, of local business Jarrett's Quality Meats, told the magazine:

I think it's short sighted of the Perm to leave Lambton. Elder Street is one of the busier local shopping strips around Newcastle and it's a real shame to think our locally grown building society will be walking away.

Mark Brooker, the publisher of the *Lambton Local*, pointed out that this was the fourth time in two years that the high streets of Lambton and New Lambton "have lost in-branch over-the-counter banking services". Mr Brooker wrote:

I must say I'm tired of writing and publishing the same story over and again just with the name changed!

In response, the Perm put out a statement blaming the closure on the "evolution of digital and online banking" and on fewer of their members making use of the Lambton branch. Bede Jarrett said, "It looks busy enough when I'm in there." It looks busy when I go there as well. Anyone trying to get their banking done during the afternoon or on a Saturday morning would agree. While I acknowledge that internet banking is becoming more prevalent, and that it offers a useful service to many in the community, it is not accessible to all. The elderly, in particular, are disadvantaged by this new model. As I have said, this is not the first time the Newcastle Permanent Building Society has closed branches in the western suburbs. It was the only branch at the huge John Hunter campus and many employees, patients and visitors at John Hunter Hospital relied on it. Now, without easy access to banking services and with a lack of internet connectivity at the hospital—which is an issue that I have raised before—some people are starting to feel the pinch.

The closure of the Newcastle Permanent Building Society branch at the University of Newcastle Callaghan campus affects students, staff and student organisations including clubs and societies, unable to do their banking without travelling to Jesmond or Wallsend. While the Newcastle Permanent Building Society pointed out that there are seven branches within a short distance of Lambton branch, the recent traffic and transport chaos caused by the reorganisation of the Newcastle bus networks has not helped at all—in fact, it has disadvantaged people and inconvenienced them.

The Lambton branch will cease trading this week, on 16 March. I reiterate the message last week from the member for Northern Tablelands, and Minister for Tourism and Major Events, who is facing similar problems of bank and building society branch closures in his electorate. It is not in the best interests of our community. I have written to Newcastle Permanent Building Society asking it to take into account the concerns of local residents and to reconsider this decision.

### **TRIBUTE TO WILGA THURGOOD OXLEY ELECTORATE EVENTS**

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (12:20):** It is with sadness I report that the Macleay Valley's Queen of Microwaves, Wilga Thurgood, passed away on 25 January. Wilga will be remembered as a culinary pioneer whose success sprung from a passionate dislike of people telling her what she could and could not do. Born, bred and now resting in the Macleay Valley, Wilga Thurgood is widely known as the first person to successfully cook a sponge cake in a microwave. Her innovative methods of home cooking, which progressed to include books full of microwave recipes, saw her feature in the pages of the *Australian Women's Weekly* and on *The Mike Walsh Show* and *The Ray Martin Show*.

At a time when fast food and packaged meals were rare and creative cooking was an essential skill for family matriarchs, Wilga's unconventional methods taught people in kitchens across Australia how to create scrumptious meals quickly and without the food losing moisture—an unsolved challenge of microwave cooking. One of eight Arthur children, Wilga came from a well-known family in the Macleay Valley. Wilga's father and uncle planted the Norfolk Island pines at South West Rocks. In 1949, a month after the great floods of Gladstone, Wilga became the wife of dairy farmer Keith Thurgood. For 42 years Keith and Wilga lived and worked on the Thurgood dairy farm at Belmore River and spent the remainder of their lives in Gladstone, opposite the church in which they were married.

Wilga was known for her work in the community where she baked for and hosted a number of fundraising events. Her work on fundraising for the installation of the Kempsey Hospital hydrotherapy pool is most notable. Even though 2018 marked the end of Wilga's life, the Queen of Microwaves survives through the scrumptious recipes featured in many flour-covered cookbooks piled on kitchen tables around the country. The stories of her vivacious and infectious character will no doubt continue to be shared at the dinner table by her children and her wonderful grandchildren over a slice of four-minutes-and-seven-seconds sponge cake.

Recently I attended the Comboyne Show in the southern reaches of the electorate of Oxley. I, along with the local community, celebrated the annual agricultural event, enjoying a number of activities including the farmers challenge, where I and the Federal member for Lyne, David Gillespie, participated in the horse and slide event, much to the amusement of onlookers. There was also a championship dog show and exhibitions for cattle, poultry and horses, as well as a range of pavilions abundant in everything from craft and baking to food displays and art. The agricultural show is the heart of every rural community, and I thank the volunteers and organisers for their efforts in creating and continuing this wonderful event.

On the same afternoon, after attending the Comboyne Show, I attended the Sgt Matthew Locke MG Charity Match in Bellingen. Now in its tenth year, the event is held to honour Sergeant Locke, who was killed in Afghanistan in October 2007 by the Taliban militia. The match is between the Bellingen Magpies and the Australian Army rugby league team and attracts hundreds of spectators, including His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales, the Honourable David Hurley, AC, DSC (Ret'd), and his wife, Linda. Again attending this year was Federal Liberal Senator Jim Molan.

I understand that the Governor has attended nine of the 10 Matthew Locke charity events in Bellingen over the past decade. Thus far Matthew's wonderful family has raised more than \$120,000 that has been distributed among Soldier On, which looks after returned soldiers and their families, The Grub Club and local organisations. This is a significant community event. The Locke family, particularly Matthew's sister Debbie and his elder sister Belinda, along with organisers, can be very proud of their tireless efforts to make it happen.

I proudly inform the House that much of the \$120,000 is being sent to improve educational facilities and opportunities for children in East Timor and other parts of Asia. That is an incredible effort. Belinda and Debbie know that education is the key. They lost their brother but they also keep fighting for a world that has better knowledge, better care and better understanding. For that, I thank them most deeply. I know the community really respects what they do and how they have dealt with the loss of their beautiful brother.

#### **WAKEHURST WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEE VESNA PERISIC**

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (12:25):** I bring to the attention of the House an amazing woman in my electorate of Wakehurst, Vesna Perisic, who recently was named Wakehurst's nominee for the Woman of the Year Award. Vesna took part in the Woman of the Year Awards ceremony that was held at the International Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, on 8 March. Vesna is an amazing human being. My electorate officer, who has been with me for 26 years, Noelene Barrell, said to me when describing her perception of Vesna, "Vesna is a lovely, kind-hearted person who goes out of her way to help people—and all the time." That certainly is the Vesna I know and have known for quite a few years as a result of her involvement in Community Connect Northern Beaches. She has been out working for our northern beaches community at the same time as she has brought up, by herself, two lovely daughters.

Community Connect is an organisation that provides the glue that holds the northern beaches community together. Vesna is one of the key people who ensures that that glue holds so well. The northern beaches holds expos regularly. Not long ago Vesna was one of the major coordinators of an exposition I attended. It was an opportunity for people who perhaps had not considered volunteering to attend an expo and see and hear from those who are involved in more than 20 volunteering groups across the northern beaches. The underpinning philosophy of Community Connect has always been that volunteerism can work not only for the community but also for the individual—in fact, it changes lives. Having been the northern beaches local member for 26 years, I support that philosophy. I have seen what it can do to support people who really need it. I also have seen what it does for people who come into volunteerism to provide to others on the northern beaches their support, their love and their connection.

Vesna Perisic arrived approximately 20 years ago from Serbia and, as a citizen who has settled in this wonderful country, she is a role model. She is one of our very large multicultural population but she is very much an Aussie. She is so connected with our northern beaches community that I could not imagine the northern beaches without her. She is instrumental in organising numerous community events that have helped to build very strong community connections throughout the northern beaches.

We often joke that the northern beaches is a very small community because everybody knows everybody and if we do not know an individual we certainly know someone who does. Vesna has fitted into the community. At public functions, such as the Northern Beaches Volunteer Expo held at Dee Why RSL, I have seen the warmth Vesna exudes towards the volunteers and community groups and their response to her. If there were more people like Vesna Perisic, our community would be an even better place. On behalf of the northern beaches, and particularly on behalf of those who reside in the electorate of Wakehurst, I say thank you, Vesna, for everything you have done. Vesna Perisic is a deserving recipient of the Woman of the Year at Wakehurst.

## HARVEY NORMAN YOUNG WOMAN OF THE YEAR SHAZA RIFI

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (12:30):** Exception comes in many forms. It can be an exceptional doctor paving the way for a research breakthrough or activists using their voice to inspire change and improvement. Exception comes about when a person undertakes endeavours on a road of adversity, maybe one that is not often tread, and emerges triumphant in his or her dedication and commitment. Last week the NSW Women of the Year Awards were held in Sydney. I acknowledge Minister Davies and her team on a wonderful event. Minister Hazzard just spoke about the Wakehurst Woman of the Year.

In addition to the 93 respective electorate Women of the Year, including the Lakemba Woman of the Year, Ms Nadia Saleh, overarching awards recognising exceptional women were awarded to recipients for their work in building a better society. The NSW Women of the Year Awards are designed to do just that: to highlight exceptional women who have contributed to the betterment of our society and who are worthy of commendation. Ms Shaza Rifi is no exception and her efforts were recognised with the 2018 Harvey Norman Young Woman of the Year Award. As a successful civil engineer in a male-dominated field who is also of the Muslim faith, Shaza is no stranger to going against the tide and standing out from the crowd. As the President of the Muslim Women's Association, she plays an active role in facilitating community needs and dedicating her time and efforts in the service of others.

Shaza illustrates that cultural, gender and religious barriers can be overcome to achieve professional and personal success. With humility and sincerity and empowered by her faith as a young Muslim woman, she strives for excellence in both the corporate and community sectors. Shaza grew up as one of five children, who all attended university and are positive, contributing members of society. She was raised in a household where community involvement and advocacy were the norm. Most people would know her father, the prominent community member and leader Dr Jamal Rifi. He is a very dear friend of mine. Her brother works in a female-dominated profession as a registered nurse and her older sister is a criminologist who has worked as an Australian Federal Police liaison officer. This is a family that makes an enormous contribution.

As a Muslim woman, Shaza has reformed the perception of women in the engineering industry. She often gets asked by tradies "Are you lost?" or "Are you looking for your husband?" However, she continues to defy the norms and to be a true trailblazer in her field. She often is the only woman wearing a hijab on a building work site, but that does not stop her. Her gender, faith and culture are not a hindrance; rather, she embraces them as an important part of her identity which highlight her individuality as she pursues her career. This perspective has meant that she now has over five years' experience in the property area in New South Wales, with the successful completion of more than 400 apartments. She is now working on mixed-use developments, consisting of residential, retail and commercial premises, with the inclusion of community facilities. I see similar projects in my electorate at Riverwood, with a major development under way that includes considerable community housing.

Shaza is a prime example of a concept I often speak about: that religion, nationality and success are not mutually exclusive. She is an inspiration to all young women that regardless of one's faith, culture or circumstances, success is never unachievable. We need to change the narrative that such factors are a barrier; rather, people should be celebrated for their diversity—upon which we pride ourselves. Shaza exemplifies the fact that regardless of the obstacles that may be presented or the challenges that may be faced, hard work and dedication are rewarded. I find that truly inspirational. I commend Shaza for her achievements, which do not stop with her work as a civil engineer.

Shaza extends her services and efforts by assisting the community in her role as President of the Muslim Women's Association [MWA]. Mentored by the highly respected Maha Krayem Abdo, OAM, Shaza leads the management committee to ensure continuous improvement in the quality and range of services that MWA provides to women facing domestic and family violence. She guides the direction of the health, wellbeing and capacity-building portfolios that empower young people and provide Australian Muslim women with opportunities to actively participate in and contribute to Australia's culturally and religiously diverse communities.

Shaza is an exceptional young woman, whom I have the pleasure of knowing personally. Her admirable qualities permeate also into her personal life. When Shaza got married, at her bridal shower, rather than having a gift registry, guests were asked to bring non-perishable goods which were donated to a local food drive. She always gives back, and she radiates a humble goodness in all that she does. The inspirational stories of our local heroes make us a better society. Many thousands of exceptional people do amazing things every day. For many, there is no recognition. But we take a moment to celebrate some in the hope that their stories will motivate others to be their best selves. I am proud of all Shaza's achievements and commend the great work she does not only in her paid employment but also in her voluntary community mentoring work. Shaza is a valued member of our community and a great role model who inspires young women and men to pursue their dreams no matter the challenges.

## GWYDIR INDUSTRIES FUNDRAISING EVENT

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (12:35):** On 23 October 1963, an organisation was formed in Moree that was initially called Gwydir Handicapped Children's Association and is known today as Gwydir Industries. Gwydir Industries is not just any kind of business. It was formed as an Australian disability enterprise that provides training and support to people with a disability in the local Moree area. I take great pleasure in spruiking Gwydir Industries and its incredible event, which was enjoyed by 340 guests, including me, at the Moree Memorial Hall on Saturday night. The tickets to the event sold out in 20 minutes. After being there on Saturday night, I could see why, as could anyone else who was there.

Every two years, a group of Moree locals, the Gwydir Industries board and others band together to raise funds for ongoing upgrades to enhance the viability and safety of Gwydir Industries and its staff and the amazing activities they undertake on behalf of the community. The organisation is located in an old building which continually needs improvements. This year's fundraiser will enable the purchase of a new engraving machine, as the trophy business is critical to the viability of Gwydir Industries. The Dancing with the Stars event on Saturday night was not like the one we see on television. It was the real deal—bush dancing with the stars. The event brought together real people, great judges and a magnificent local cause. There is no better combination.

The evening kicked off with the arrival of a surprise guest and mystery judge, the well-known Australian pop singer John Paul Young, who performed a crowd-stopping rendition of *Love is in the Air*. He was then joined on stage by Gwydir Industries clients Jillian Campbell and Adam Love, who stole the show with their dance to John Paul Young's hit *Yesterday's Hero*. On the night, the two songs became known as the "Barnaby set". We raised a toast to the now departed Anthony "Dipper" Diprose, a shining light of Dancing with the Stars and magnificent community servant, who sadly passed away last year. Six local couples took to the stage to show off their newly learned skills and entertaining routines. I was lucky enough to be one of the three judges, alongside John Paul Young and a past Dancing with the Stars participant Vanessa Parkes.

Jordan Barratt and Paige Miller got the competition under way with an elegant dance, setting a high standard of expectation for the evening ahead. Donny and Amanda Mealing, who were up next, performed a sultry tango in a red light scene, which one could imagine seeing in Amsterdam. Mark Cotter and Della Barnes wowed the crowd with tequila shots, fishnets, bling and drop-crotch pants, bringing back the 1990s in style. Greg and Rachel Bell cut loose on the dance floor with a risqué performance to *Footloose* that featured pelvic thrusts, plenty of kicks, sparkles and great expressions. Byron Birch and Kendall Tait gave a fiery, fun and flirtatious performance to *Candyman* and received the first and only perfect 10 out of 10 score on the night. The closing performance was by Oscar and Susannah Pearse, who fooled the audience into thinking they were doing a country dance, which started with the crack of Oscar's whip, but turned into a passionate paso doble. As I said on the night, it was the best paso doble I had ever seen—and also the first.

The judges' award was taken out by Byron Birch and Kendall Tait, while the people's choice award was presented to Mark Cotter and Della Barnes for their tequila-laden dancing performance. The fun continued into the evening with a magnificent charity auction. Seventeen lots were auctioned, including an incredible donation of 500 hectares of contract farming and spraying from Oodnadatta Farming, selling for more than \$25,000. Ian Reardon's painting of Alice Springs was a favourite. I donated a parliamentary dinner which sold for nearly \$3,500. The lucky raffle winners of the Holden Barina Spark were the Carroll family. There were many other raffle items distributed amongst guests.

While figures are still being calculated, I am happy to report to the House that the evening was the most successful Dancing with the Stars to date, raising in excess of \$80,000. I commend the President of Gwydir Industries, and emcee of the evening, Peter Weal, and his board for this remarkable effort. I acknowledge Eric Carrigan, a stalwart of that organisation from the beginning. He is retiring as a board member after many years of dedicated service. Organisations such as Gwydir Industries are the backbone, heart and soul of country communities. The passion, tears and hard work that go into events such as Dancing with the Stars is something from which we can all learn and be inspired by—people power, friendship and teamwork are the essence and the answer to success.

## WESTCONNEX

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:40):** I speak yet again about the impact of WestConnex on our communities, the electorate of Newtown and throughout New South Wales and note that the Minister for WestConnex is in the Chamber. This morning the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that NSW Labor Waste Watch spokesperson Mr Hugh McDermott, who is present in the Chamber, uncovered that Transport for NSW bypassed the usual independent reviews to fast-track \$2 million of urgent spending on advertisements spruiking the features and vision of WestConnex. Yesterday, in a radio interview between James Valentine and investigative journalist

Michael West, Mr West outlined what could only be described as a utopian concept of an equalisation factor. I encourage every member to listen to the content of this interview; it is something that only the best political satirists and comedy writers in this country could write.

The interviewer refers to a toll equalisation factor that somehow allows companies to charge tolls based on distance. One has to multiply the distance by the equalisation factor to get the per distance toll price. Depending on the distance, one would then pay a higher amount on certain sections of road even though those sections have not changed in length. That is just one of the latest financial disasters and rip-offs in inaccessible and secret contracts—thousands of pages of modelling and deals concerning WestConnex that cannot be assessed or reviewed by the community. It is not the first time I have spoken in the Chamber about the disastrous impact that this is having on our communities. Too many giant red flags are now flying in regard to this project and its octopus-like offshoots, including the murky financial machinations that are driving it.

There are daily revelations in the media about shonky dealings and the severe impact that this is having on a number of communities. Because of these huge costs and risks and the public fury about this project, it is not surprising that the New South Wales Auditor-General has chosen to re-examine WestConnex. We have the findings of the Australian National Audit Office and its scathing report, which are matters of concern. This Liberal-Nationals Government continues to bulldoze our communities and to spend exorbitant amounts of public money while bankers and lawyers have a field day.

Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs has been paid around \$16.5 million by this Government in less than a year just to set up the sale of WestConnex. Let me be clear: it has not built anything; it has not delivered any infrastructure; yet \$16.5 million has been paid to set up the sale of the Sydney Motorway Corporation. To put that in perspective, 50 disability advocacy organisations in New South Wales are set to close because this Government will not commit \$13 million to fund their ongoing work in the community.

With the initial bid for the controlling share of this dirty, unsustainable toll road being put in place by Transurban Group and its backers, Australian Super and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, it is looking like Transurban is the frontrunner, even though it is talking down its chances with the hope that it might secure another bargain, like the Cross City Tunnel. The tunnel was repurchased in 2014 for a mere \$470 million, when in actual fact it cost the community \$1.1 billion to build. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is now investigating Transurban for a third time because of the potential conflicts of interest in this company's growing toll road monopoly. With full or partial control of 13 of Australia's toll roads, Transurban is laughing all the way to the bank. We just have to look at the staggering profits of Transurban, which were up 280 per cent in six months, to know who is winning from this New South Wales Liberal Government's toll road building agenda.

It is interesting to note that another bidder for the 51 per cent share of the Sydney Motorway Corporation and the 40-year toll concessions is IFM Investors, a giant pension fund management investment corporation, through which a lot of this State's residents' individual superannuation fund money is being funnelled into the privatisation of the control of our transport infrastructure. Another bidder is CIMIC Group. I note that in November last year the Premier met with IFM Investors and CIMIC, and now there are reports that the two may combine their bids to strengthen their hand for the push on the privatisation agenda of the Sydney Motorway Corporation. The financial disaster that is WestConnex must end. [*Time expired.*]

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (12:46):** I inform the House that there is plenty of construction activity on WestConnex. Stage one of WestConnex is open to traffic, which is improving the flows of traffic on the M4. The tunnel excavation below Parramatta Road is proceeding at a fantastic rate to bypass sets of lights and provide an uninterrupted connection between the Blue Mountains at Lapstone to the city. West Link is being built, and if the construction results in disruption in surrounding communities, that disruption confirms that we are building the infrastructure that communities desperately need. I also point out to the House that WestConnex sits alongside other forms of transport, because this Government has always understood that an integrated transport solution is required. That is why we are building metro train lines, light rail in the city, light rail in Western Sydney and the Western Metro. More train lines are coming, and we will continue to invest in the infrastructure that this State needs.

#### PARRAMATTA ELECTORATE CHURCHES

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (12:47):** I recognise and congratulate Parramatta Christian Church that has been providing a place of worship and community support for the past 40 years. From humble beginnings in 1978, Parramatta Christian Church has grown steadily. I congratulate and pay tribute to all the pastors who have served at Parramatta Christian Church over the years: Peter Cox, who served from 1978 to 1981; followed by Lance Mergard, who was pastor from 1981 to 1986; Bert Bain, who served from 1986 for more than two decades to 2008; Michael Green, who was pastor from 2008 to 2014; Louis Baron, who served from 2014 to 2015; and

the current pastor, Hilary Williams, who started in 2015. It was an honour and privilege to join with Senior Pastor Hilary Williams and Assistant Paster Louis Baron to celebrate this special occasion on 24 February 2018.

It is also important to recognise all the volunteers who have continued to work tirelessly and who have sacrificed in their commitment to the church and their community activities, such as the FoodCare store that helps people in our community who need a hand-up. I also recognise all the parishioners who have continued to come from far and wide to celebrate their relationship with God and enjoy worshipping together in this community. On behalf of the people the church has served in Parramatta and Western Sydney, I say thank you. My own reflections on Parramatta Christian Church parishioners is that they are a strong community united by their love for each other and people who share common values and who are friendly. They are a diverse group of people from a league of nations who are united by their common love of God. They are people with a vision and plans to develop their facilities to continue to serve the City of Parramatta in the future. On behalf of the New South Wales Government I congratulate the Parramatta Christian Church.

I was delighted to join more than 100 people for the opening of the C3 Church in Parramatta. The service was welcoming, upbeat and contemporary, with a clear theme of worshipping Jesus. Pastor Hartley Taylor, visiting from the C3 Church Silverwater, paid tribute to the late Evangelist Billy Graham and his passion for the local church and sharing the good news of Christ with others. C3 is utilising the modern facilities of Skye Hotel Suites in Parramatta's central business district.

At this first service the Crown Group Chairman and Group Chief Executive Officer, Iwan Sunito, delivered an inspiring message, borrowed from Apostle Paul's words in the book of Romans Chapter 8, detailing how the land was predestined, and shared the story of the historically significant site. Like the Crown Group, I encourage other churches and organisations in the region to work with the C3 Church to serve the people of Parramatta together. The church has a heart to bring hope to some of the less fortunate residents of Parramatta and serve the diverse needs of the local multicultural community. I congratulate location Pastors Leon and Kristin Shohmelian and their team of volunteers on the launch of this new church in our city, which is part of the global C3 Church movement that has grown from humble beginnings.

I also thank Sharon Jones, who I know personally, for her kind invitation to join with the church on this special occasion. The co-founders, Senior Pastor Phil and Chris Pringle, had just 12 people attend their first Easter service in 1980 on Sydney's northern beaches. Under their continued strong leadership over the past 38 years, C3 Global has grown into a network of more than 530 churches and more than 100,000 members in 64 countries. That is an outstanding achievement. Finally, next month C3 Global will host thousands of members from all over the world for its annual Presence Conference at the Sydney ICC. The conference will be live-streamed to the presence parties around the world from the website [presenceconference.com](http://presenceconference.com). I commend the C3 Church as a great exemplar of the Christian heritage on which our fine State was founded and the global influence that will define our future.

### FAIRFIELD HOSPITAL STAFF SHORTAGES

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (12:51):** One of the hardest things a member has to do in this House is to talk about the death of a child, especially when the death was preventable. Close to three years ago in Fairfield Hospital maternity ward we learnt about two deaths. We did not know whether they involved children or mothers. Sadly, for approximately 2½ years we have tried to get information from the Government about those matters, but it was not released. However, this week there was a coronial inquest into the death of one child at Fairfield Hospital.

It has been revealed that the parents are Sharon and Sam Amone, who are still waiting to know why their daughter died in the hospital, a hospital so understaffed on that night that they were forced to deliver the baby on their own, without a doctor, midwife or nursing staff. Both Sharon and Sam said that they believe chronic staff shortages at Fairfield Hospital contributed to their daughter's death. The name of their daughter was Manusiu; she was born on 25 November 2014. Unfortunately, she lived for only a short time. No medical staff were in the birth room when the baby was born. She was born with the umbilical cord wrapped tightly around her neck. An article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* stated:

"Just before and immediately after the baby was born" Mr Amone said he pressed the buzzer for help.

"I pressed the buzzer and no one came. I tried to tell [Sharon] to hold on ... to keep breathing" he said. But the baby "just came out".

When the baby came out I just ran straight for the door and screamed for anyone to come ... The autopsy report reveals the father ran outside and called for help. The baby was not breathing and had turned blue. A midwife came and removed the umbilical cord from around the child's neck and slapped it on the back before it started breathing again.

But shortly after the baby was handed back to her father she started to have problems breathing. The report says that at 10.30 p.m. the father called the midwife again because the baby was pale and gasping.

The report also says that it was only then that staff gave the baby an injection to reverse the effects of the pethidine which her mother was given. The baby was then taken to the special care nursery, but attempts to resuscitate her failed.

Mr Amone said that to him there were not enough staff for the amount of hospital beds and that if two or three ladies were expecting a baby and there were not two or three midwives on hand it would create a dilemma. If they were not overstressed or overworked it would be a different story. This was also confirmed by a Fairfield Hospital doctor who was on duty that night. On 12 March 2018 the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported:

Fairfield Hospital Obstetrics Registrar Chee Tan told a Coronial Inquiry on Monday that nurses were usually understaffed at the hospital, but that night on November 25, 2014 was especially busy.

The article continued:

A lawyer representing the South Western Sydney Local Health District acknowledged that aspects of the care provided at the hospital were "deficient".

There has been chronic under-resourcing and chronic understaffing at the hospital. In the past three years Fairfield Hospital has received no money in any budget. More than three years ago it was identified that the hospital needed more than \$6 million to upgrade it, especially the emergency ward but also the paediatrics ward. Not one cent has come from this Government. Time and again I have called for this Government to fund Fairfield Hospital. I do so again today. Finally, my thoughts and prayers are with the Amone family. I call upon the Government to ensure that the family has the support it needs at this difficult time. For three years the Fairfield community was kept in the dark about this awful incident at Fairfield Hospital. If the Government were taking issues at Fairfield Hospital seriously it would adopt the Coroner's recommendations and give Fairfield Hospital the resources it needs to ensure that such a terrible tragedy never happens again.

#### TRIBUTE TO STEVEN DOSZPOT

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (12:57):** Today I speak about the passing of a dear friend on 25 November 2017. Steven John Doszpot was born in Budapest, Hungary, on 23 September 1948. When the Russians invaded in November 1956, his parents, Istvan and Anna, fled the regime that had interned Istvan for two years because he was a Catholic youth leader. On 17 January 1957, after two attempts, the family finally crossed into Yugoslavia—a journey that involved walking through several wintry nights to avoid detection, including one night trudging through knee-deep snow. They were accepted as refugees and arrived in Australia on 17 September 1957 aboard the SS *New Australia*. This was the start of Steve and his family's new life in the promised land of Australia.

Steve came to Canberra from Sydney with his wife, Maureen, in the early 1970s to take up a position with Sharp. His business career led to senior positions with Wang, the CSIRO, Canberra Strategic Marketing as managing director and owner, and Canon as its general manager. He became a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. But his passion was football. He learned to play in Sydney through the famous St George-Budapest Club, where he met people such as Johnny Warren, Les Murray and Charlie Perkins—men with whom he remained friends his entire life. He kept playing until he was in his early sixties, first with Canberra City old boys and in later years with Brindabella Blues.

It was this passion for football that led him to a distinguished career as president of what is now called Capital Football. This is where I crossed paths with Steve early in my local advocacy role in the community. I was then president and founder of the Monaro Panthers Football Club. I remember a cold, wintry afternoon on the hill of Riverside Oval in Queanbeyan. Steve and I exchanged some colourful words about my take on what was wrong with the football scene in Canberra and its surrounds.

I think it was that meeting, that conversation, that started my public career—almost my political career. Steve dared me to join the board of Capital Football, which I did later that year when I was elected at the annual general meeting. I started a friendship with Steve Doszpot through our shared passion for football, and that passion led to my running for council, then for State government. That is what brings me to this place today. Steve was passionate about public and community involvement. In 2008 he was elected to the Australian Capital Territory [ACT] Legislative Assembly in the electorate of Brindabella, and then re-elected in 2012 and 2016 in the electorates of Molonglo and Kurrajong. He is the only member to ever stand successfully in three separate electorates.

Steve was a shadow Minister for Education and Training, and held a number of other shadow portfolios, including Disability, Ageing, Sport, Multicultural Affairs and ICT—something that we all know he was very passionate about. He secured many commitments, even when in opposition from the Government, in areas that he believed in, which was a testament to his strong work ethic as a member of the ACT Legislative Assembly. Steve earned respect from all Assembly members, as was demonstrated during his valedictory speech and the

condolence motion following his death. He was lauded from all sides. He was known for standing up for the underdog and fighting for what some called lost causes. However, as an ACT Government Minister said recently:

If Steve took on a cause, it wasn't lost.

Steve always contributed to the community. The famous Doszpot trivia nights raised approximately \$230,000 for 10 charities, which was something that he was so passionate about. In December 2016 Steve was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer. His public statements were notable for being concerned more about the effect of his illness on others, particularly his wife, Maureen, and the family. He wanted to use the opportunity to raise awareness of liver cancer, and the importance of early and thorough screening. He died on Saturday 25 November surrounded by his family. Former and current Prime Ministers John Howard and Malcolm Turnbull thanked Steve for his remarkable contribution to public life. The national flags at Parliament House and the Lodge flew at half-mast to commemorate his death.

It was a fitting commendation for a man who recalled his father telling him to remember to thank Australia for everything this new country had done for them. Ultimately, Steve Doszpot was thanked by two Prime Ministers for everything he had done for Australia. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Maureen; his children, Adam and Amy; their partners, Nettie and Ed; and his grandchildren, Isi, Cassia, Noah, Andrew and Harry. It is with a very sad heart that I bid farewell and pay deep respect to a good friend—my old friend—Steve Doszpot. While the referee has blown his whistle on Steve's time with us, he will live on in our hearts and memories. He will be greatly missed, but he will never be forgotten.

### SCHOOLS FUNDING

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (13:02):** Five days ago, the *Sydney Morning Herald* [SMH] claimed there was a government "funding bonanza for rich schools" and compared a private school and a public school in the Ku-ring-gai electorate in support of that contention. However, the assertion of a government-funding bonanza for private schools is not consistent with all of the relevant facts. Despite attempts to provide a different point of view to a series of SMH articles on public funding in schools, that newspaper, disappointingly, will apparently not publish anything I have written contrary to its editorial line.

A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of attending a reunion of my year from Newcastle High School. Whenever I go to these periodic get-togethers, I enjoy being reminded of the outstanding people with all types of backgrounds and personalities that I went to school with and the friendships I made. My 13 years of schooling in public education enabled me to matriculate to the University of Sydney. It gave me the tools to obtain two law degrees and an economics degree, and conduct a successful legal career for 27 years. Our Premier was, like me, also exclusively educated in public schools. I will always fight for our local public schools.

However, my public school education also gave me critical skills in assessing and evaluating evidence to arrive at the truth. The recent SMH article compared two outstanding schools in Ku-ring-gai—Turrumurra High School and Knox Grammar School. Knox is more than twice the size of Turrumurra High, and is a combined primary and secondary school now including Wahroonga Preparatory School. It is important to understand that comparing the total government expenditure on Knox—2,890 students—with the total expenditure on secondary school only Turrumurra High—1,243 students—as the SMH did, requires caution.

As the article made clear, public high schools are funded by all levels of government to the tune of approximately \$20,281 per student on average. Knox, according to the latest My School figures, was funded last year by all levels of government in the sum of \$3,418 per student. Abbotsleigh, Pymble Ladies College, Ravenswood and Barker in my electorate receive similar per student funding to Knox. Turrumurra High School students therefore received \$16,863 per student per year more in recurrent public funding than Knox Grammar School students received. As there was less than \$7,500 of government capital expenditure at Knox Grammar School, Turrumurra High School also had much more substantial government capital expenditure last year of about \$142,000. Turrumurra High School has seen about \$2.5 million in government capital works expenditure since 2011.

The continual focus on the money spent on private school facilities indirectly talks down our public schools. It wrongly creates a perception that facilities are the most important part of a good educational environment. This in turn can have the effect of encouraging a flight of students from public to private schools, further weakening our public system. As a consequence, it takes the focus off what is happening in our public schools and the outstanding education that schools such as Turrumurra High School provide. I have frequently been able to observe the great work of that school's teachers under the first-class leadership of its principal, Stephanie McConnell. Would public schools really be better off if all children were in the public system and private schools were banned, as was recently argued in a *Sydney Morning Herald* opinion piece by Elizabeth Farrelly, or should governments stop spending taxpayers' money on private schools?

Philosophically, there is an important question of individual choice involved with independent schools. Why is it okay for parents to spend their money in whatever way they want, including on undesirable things, but, according to the critics of private education, under no circumstances are they to spend money on their children's education? Many parents of private students struggle to pay school fees. Increases in the cost of private education as public funding is reduced or taken away are likely to force at least some parents to move their children from the private to the public system, which will have adverse consequences for taxpayers and public schools.

As an extreme example, if all of the parents of the 2,890 students at Knox Grammar School and Wahroonga Preparatory School decided tomorrow to enrol their children in a public school, as is their legal right, it would cost the State and Federal governments a breathtaking \$48.7 million extra in taxpayers' money annually to educate them. That is in addition to the approximately \$9.8 million that the school received, in the main, from the Federal Government last year. It also does not include the millions of dollars in the capital cost of building the public school space in which to house those additional students if they were to migrate to the public system.

Bemoaning the \$3,418 per student government funding provided to Knox Grammar School, without acknowledging the much higher \$20,281 per student government funding to public high schools, misses the point. Private school taxpaying parents are saving the government, and therefore all taxpayers, large amounts of money each year. It is overwhelmingly private school parents, not the government, who are purchasing through their school fees the facilities that those schools provide. The *Sydney Morning Herald* should stop wrongly disparaging them because the exercise of the parents' independent choice is also indirectly financially supporting public education.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (13:07):** Recently in the Blue Mountains I launched the domestic violence program It Stops Here Safer Pathway. With more than 40 people in attendance, I was overwhelmed by the positive response from the local police, specialist domestic violence, health and community services. The NSW Police Force is a critical agency in responses to domestic violence and often its members are the first on the scene. When I was a young child 30 years ago, the police would often turn up to my home and say, "Come on, let's head to the pub and have a drink until she calms down." Those sorts of responses have changed; there has been an important cultural shift.

When police attend a domestic violence incident they will now make an automatic referral to the local coordination point closest to where the victim lives. As the lead agency, it was wonderful to have such strong representation from the Blue Mountains Local Area Command and the Hawkesbury Local Area Command. I acknowledge the presence and leadership that day of Detective Superintendent Darryl Jobson, the Blue Mountains Local Area Commander; Detective Superintendent James Stewart, the Hawkesbury Local Area Commander; North West Region Domestic Violence Sponsor, Detective Superintendent Gary Merryweather; Detective Chief Inspector Almer; and Domestic Violence Liaison Officer Senior Constable Lisa Murphy. I make special mention of David McPherson, the Acting Region Domestic Violence Coordinator, whose knowledge, respect and commitment was of enormous assistance in the launch of this program. Kay Hyman, the Chief Executive Officer, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, attended and spoke of the progress made since the introduction of the program in the Penrith area. She spoke of the importance of collaborative practice and a timely response.

A wide range of non-government organisations were represented including Blue Mountains Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program, Blue Mountains Women's Health and Resource Centre, West Connect Domestic Violence Services, Thrive Services, Elizabeth Evatt Community Legal Centre, Wentworth Community Housing, Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre, Family Referral Service, Nureen Women's Domestic Violence Support Service, Mountains Community Resource Network, Integrated Violence Prevention and Response Service, Glenbrook and Springwood preschools, and Blackheath and Winmalee neighbourhood centres. That high level of collaboration and commitment is definitely a good news story.

Domestic violence is responsible for approximately one to two deaths each week. A focus on women and children at high risk of injury or death is clearly needed to prevent victims from falling through the cracks. The It Stops Here Safer Pathway program will focus on high-risk victims and their children. Victims will be provided with coordinated support, reducing their need to retell their story and relive traumatic experiences. To ensure that services have the capacity to respond in a timely manner and provide specific individual focus, it is essential that local services are appropriately funded to provide the necessary level of support. I am pleased that the Blue Mountains Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service [WDVCAS] has received funding to operate the local coordination point. With a strong track record of delivering services to women victims and their children, and effective working relationships with the police and other agencies, Blue Mountains WDVCAS is best placed to fulfil that role.

Blue Mountains WDVCS will contact every victim and provide case coordination services, connecting the victim with local services. In other words, it will ensure that there are wraparound services that meet the needs of the victim and their children. Unfortunately, we have not seen the same level of commitment to women requiring specialist domestic violence refuge accommodation and case work support services. Following the reform agenda ironically named Going Home Staying Home so many of our State's specialist domestic violence refuges were demolished, with only a few of our 81 refuges being dedicated specialist domestic violence women-only refuges. Even fewer are able to operate effective after-hours programs to ensure that women and children who are in a domestic violence crisis can access safe accommodation and appropriate referrals.

Recently I met with workers from my local women's refuge who explained the difficulties of providing an after-hours service. While the capacity to provide crisis services at a time of need is essential, much of the referrals and connecting of victims to services cannot happen after hours given that most agencies are closed at such times. A large amount of frustration was expressed, given it took nearly two years for the Department of Family and Community Services to agree to the service allocating positions where needed and to allow its after-hours funding to be used for a daytime position. In this brave new world we have a Minister who does not support specialist domestic violence crisis refuges. Instead she supports the temporary accommodation model. Those in the field know that temporary accommodation cannot meet the needs of victims fleeing domestic violence. How can women be kept safe when resources are clearly inadequate? I call on the Minister and the Government to put their money where their mouth is.

### **HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN'S SHELTER**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:12):** The Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter is one of the most important community organisations in Hornsby. February marked three years of operation for the amazing organisation that has helped give a home to 231 women who came to the shelter when they had nowhere else to turn. Having grown up on the North Shore, Chief Executive Officer of Women's Community Shelters Annabelle Daniel saw a desperate need for a shelter in the Hornsby area. With only one other shelter located in Manly, those living in northern Sydney had limited choice if they needed to leave their home. Fifty per cent of the start-up costs came from the Women's Community Shelter, while the other 50 per cent was raised by the wonderful Hornsby community. Head of the steering committee was the great John Lockyer, who has since been made a life member. He was instrumental in raising the funds and getting the shelter up and running. He went on to head the board of directors until October 2016.

The community answered the call to raise money in a big way. A group from Ku-ring-gai led by Vanessa Smithyman raised \$80,000 at a black tie ball. Hornsby locals Marianne Ioffrida, Kylie Macri and Michelle Chahine, along with Pete Smith, who runs the Facebook page "You grew up around Hornsby if you remember ...", raised more than \$20,000. The Harry Potter Alliance, run by young Hornsby siblings Sean, Zoe and Sasha Landis, also raised money for the start-up costs. The steering committee also included Julie Griffin, who was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her work with women; Dick and Dob Babb; and Carroll Howell. Mayor of Ku-ring-gai Jennifer Anderson, former member for Hornsby Judy Hopwood and Karen Wiley were heavily involved in the creation of the shelter and are still lending their time serving as patrons.

Their continued support for the shelter over the last three years has been absolutely phenomenal. I mention some local businesses and community organisations that have provided vital financial support for the shelter over the past three years: SOS Removals and Storage at Thornleigh; Rotary Club of Wahroonga; Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Ecumenical Choir, which holds an annual performance of Handel's *Messiah*; Carols at Asquith Oval donates its proceeds each year; Hornsby RSL Club; Asquith Magpies; Bendigo Bank; Bank of Queensland; Hornsby Lions Club; and Soroptimist International.

The Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter had an amazing success rate. Within 72 hours of arriving at the shelter, 97 per cent of clients receive a tailored case plan, and 82 per cent were successfully housed in accommodation after their stay. The board of directors is headed up by the amazing Sallianne McClelland. Recently I named her the 2018 Hornsby Woman of the Year recently because of her incredible work and determination to see the success of our community shelter. As well as being involved in the running of the shelter, her Apron Project has raised a massive \$40,000. The Apron Project sees artists design and paint aprons which are auctioned off. It is an extremely popular fundraiser that the Hornsby community looks forward to every year. This is just one of the many fundraisers spearheaded by this amazing woman. Vice President Stafford Hamilton, Treasurer Lianne Bolton and Secretary Deborah Harrigan assist Sallianne on the board. Those wonderful people spend many hours ensuring that the women's shelter is run efficiently and successfully. Louise McCann, Kiki Paul, Heidi Tamlyn, Anne Sheehan, Carmel Aitken and hardworking Hornsby Councillor Nathan Tilbury serve as current board members.

Recently the shelter opened a transitional home which allows clients to have somewhere to go once their three months with the shelter comes to an end. This home was completely set up using donations from the

community and local business groups. The shelter has also set up an outreach program to continue to monitor clients once they have left the centre. They also provide support at Hornsby Court every Tuesday to assist women in domestic violence situations. Many of these initiatives have been overseen by Hylette Evans, who has recently taken over as shelter manager. She worked as a caseworker on the first shift when the centre opened in February 2015. Her dedication to the shelter and these women is without question. To celebrate their amazing work over the past three years they celebrated their birthday with an Aussie Rock night, run by Ian Westmoreland. The sell-out crowd was entertained by local band Ministry of Rock. The band is fronted by Hornsby general practitioner Geoff Darvas and supported by Andy Day, Nic Brown, James Noble, Paul Colley, Col Blair, Stu Abbott and Stu Pringle.

I was pleased to hear of plans for a massive fundraising event this year organised by local Kim Warwick, which will include top Australian tennis players. I thank all the board members, patrons, volunteers, shelter staff and the Hornsby community for supporting this amazing and important organisation. I congratulate them on reaching three successful years in operation and I thank them on behalf of the hundreds of women who have taken advantage of their wonderful service.

#### *Community Recognition Statements*

#### **AFRICULTURES FESTIVAL**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (13:17):** I congratulate Fatma Isir and her team on organising another wonderful Africultures Festival at Lidcombe's Wyatt Park last Saturday. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Africultures Festival, which has grown from a small gathering to commemorate Fatma's Somali background into becoming Australia's pre-eminent African festival. On Saturday more than 10,000 people were in Lidcombe to celebrate the diverse cultures of the African continent. In Auburn alone more than 2,000 people were born in Africa and this day connects them to their place of birth. For me and many others, the Africultures Festival has become a not-to-be missed event to share and celebrate Africa's cultures and traditions through food, markets, sport, dance and fashion. I commend the Africultures Festival to the House.

#### **BATTLE AT OLD BAR BOXING MATCH**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:18):** The Battle at Old Bar is a boxing match that raises funds for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service and was recently held at the Old Bar Tavern. The main event saw Taree's Adam Fitzsimmons take on Sydneysider Josh Jenkins for the Australasian light heavyweight crown. While he competed in approximately 100 fights as an amateur, Adam has fought only four as a professional. After a loss to Tim Tszyu, Fitzsimmons knew he faced a tough challenge against Jenkins, who was unbeaten in three fights, but Fitzsimmons took out the belt in four rounds in front of a home crowd. The afternoon bout also saw Taree's Ryan Spencer draw against Lincoln Dixon from Tamworth and Tuncurry's Brendan Nash step into the ring for the first time. I congratulate promoter Beau Callaghan and Mark O'Neil from the Old Bar Tavern on a wonderful event.

#### **CENTRAL COAST HAPPY TAPPERS**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:19):** Tap, tap, clap, clap, clap to the fabulous Central Coast Happy Tappers. Last Saturday morning it was not only a visit for me but also a fun work-out as I joined the Happy Tappers for a lesson on the dance floor at the East Gosford Progress Hall. Every Saturday morning for the past 25 years people with intellectual disabilities from across the Central Coast have been participating, and last Saturday was business as usual—they were sweating it out on the dance floor with the full support of their families. Every week the session starts with an eardrum-challenging, vigorous tapping lesson, followed by a funky jazz session.

Everyone arrives with a smile on their face, many friendships have been formed and many performances have been delivered to various communities across the Central Coast by this fit, active and enthusiastic group of dancers. I congratulate Secretary-Treasurer Doone De Henau and teachers Kate De Henau and Madeline Stephenson, who have been dancing with the Happy Tappers since the idea emerged from choreography of the Gosford Musical Society in 1993. I am really looking forward to being in the audience when the Happy Tappers perform for their great supporters at the North Gosford Rotary Club later this year.

#### **PENRITH CITY COUNCIL**

**Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:20):** I take this opportunity to inform the House and the constituents of my electorate of a decision made by the Labor-dominated Penrith City Council that will have dire implications for my community. Last night the Labor candidate for Mulgoa, Councillor Todd Carney, voted against the interests of the people of Penrith in order to support his Transport Workers Union [TWU] masters. This is a timely and sobering insight as

to where his priorities lie. If Councillor Carney were to be elected as a member of this Parliament he would work for his union masters, not the hardworking families in my electorate. I commend Liberal councillors Ross Fowler, Tricia Hitchen, Bernard Bratusa and Mark Davies, as well as Independent Councillor Marcus Cornish, for putting the people of Penrith first in their decision to ensure that the rubbish recycling contract presently going through Penrith City Council is in the best interests of the people of Penrith and those who elect the councillors to represent their interests.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** Order! Members will keep their community recognition statements positive.

#### **BELMONT NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (13:21):** I congratulate the Belmont Neighbourhood Centre on last week officially cutting the ribbon on its new play area. I was pleased to support the building of the new play area. The centre received \$10,000 in funding from the Community Building Partnership fund. For nearly three decades the Belmont Neighbourhood Centre has provided an important service to our local community, including advocacy services, community programs and building partnerships with other organisations to help vulnerable people in our community. This play equipment will not only benefit the children of the Belmont area but also create a space to bring parents together and create support networks for each other.

In building this play area, the centre has continued its commitment to providing inclusive spaces by ensuring that the space is appropriate for children on the autism spectrum and for those children who require additional behavioural support. This is a great initiative by the Belmont Neighbourhood Centre and its team of dedicated staff and volunteers who work together to make sure that our community is vibrant, inclusive and connected. I give a big shout-out to Kilie and Chris.

#### **HORNSBY KURING-GAI DISTRICT TENNIS ASSOCIATION**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:22):** Today I acknowledge local sporting group Hornsby Kuring-gai District Tennis Association. The Hornsby Kuring-gai District Tennis Association is well known in Hornsby for its competitions, coaching, court hire and other fantastic social events. The association not only passes on a love of tennis to our community but also gives back by holding an annual 24-hour Festival of Tennis fundraiser. This year more than \$2,000 was raised for Hornsby hospital and the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter. I thank the association for its continuing support of local charities in our community. The wonderful Mai Donnelly first started the idea of a Festival of Tennis many years ago. I thank Mai for all she has done for our community. I also thank the committee of the Hornsby Kuring-gai District Tennis Association, especially President Marc Donnelly, Eddy Watson, Robyn Flood and Tristan Conybeare. I thank them for everything they do. They are all "aces" in my book.

#### **HUNTER WATER HERO OF THE YEAR TOBY KABLE**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:23):** I congratulate Toby Kable on being named the Hunter Water Hero of the Year from a number of exceptional finalists. With a focus on cricket and touch rugby, Toby founded the sporting organisation All Ability Sports Coaching, which allows sportspeople with an intellectual disability to be involved in teamwork and to improve their sporting skills. Whilst sport is the main focus of All Ability Sports Coaching, Toby envisioned, and has succeeded in, achieving the greater goal of building the self-esteem and confidence of players. Toby's initiative has grown from fielding the first local cricket and league tag teams for people living with an intellectual disability to being the small sole trader business that it is today. That is an incredible achievement for such a young member of our community. He has successfully proved the importance of sport as a powerful way for people to connect. I commend Toby for his proactive approach to skills development for those with intellectual disability in our community.

#### **THE HILLS STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE UNIT**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:24):** The NSW State Emergency Service [SES] does a fantastic job ensuring the safety, rescue and recovery of members of our community across the State, and in the electorate of Seven Hills. In particular, I thank the Hills SES unit, which boasts 182 volunteers. Its service to our community is extraordinary. It is led by local controller Evelyn Lester and deputy local controller Malcolm Liston. Just last week the Hills unit celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in conjunction with its annual presentation night. The ceremony included 20 unit citations, many commissioner's certificates of appreciation, and 25 long service awards, including a 50-year long service award to Keith Grant. Also, four national medals were awarded to Karen Jones, Evelyn Lester, Matthew Palmer-Burton and Gregory Wilkinson. I acknowledge their great efforts and congratulate them on their awards. I also personally thank the 182 volunteers to whom we are indebted and who continue to help our community.

### RAIL PASSENGER SAFETY

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (13:25):** On Wednesday 7 March just after 10.00 p.m., train W587 was approaching Lawson station with the eighth carriage roof engulfed in flames. Lithgow train guard Greg Norris acted in a professional and efficient manner. Greg made an announcement to customers to evacuate the train at the platform. He then walked through the train on two occasions to make sure that there were no passengers left on board. Greg was the only person injured and transported to hospital with smoke inhalation. I thank the Rail, Tram and Bus Union in its care for Greg. I thank Greg Norris and all our train guards. This incident has once again highlighted the critical role of the train guard. We need our train guards. They perform critical security and safety roles in emergencies, and on the train between stations and on platforms—to name just a few tasks. Today I recognise Greg and all train guards. Customer safety should never be compromised.

### NEWCASTLE TO SYDNEY TRAIN SERVICE

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:26):** Each day 34,000 people on the Central Coast use the State rail network to commute to and from work in Sydney. Community members often raise with me the need for faster and more efficient train trips as well as more commuter parking. That is why I was pleased to join my Federal colleague the member for Robertson, Lucy Wicks; State colleagues Mr Scot MacDonald and the Hon. Taylor Martin; and the Gosford-Erina and Coastal Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Rod Dever last week to announce that the Commonwealth Government will be supplying grant funding to the New South Wales Government to develop a business case to reduce train travel time by up to an hour on the Newcastle to Sydney train line. This business case is an exciting step in the right direction and will investigate potential line improvements, including realigning parts of the track, removing level crossings, rearranging junctions, and segregating passenger and freight services. I commend my Federal counterpart Lucy Wicks for lobbying hard for this funding. I look forward to the business case developing over the next 12 to 18 months.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** Order! Opposition members will come to order. Members who wish to have private conversations will do so outside the Chamber.

### WYONG DISTRICT MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOMESTEAD

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (13:27):** Alison Homestead is the home of Wyong District Museum and Historical Society. Set on two hectares in a rural setting on Wyong's first land grant, it dates back to 1825. It is the site of much of our collected local history and offers a unique insight into the early European settlement of the Wyong area. In the homestead and other buildings on site there are displays of memorabilia, photos, furniture, toys and other household items, equipment, machinery and tools all relating to the early settling of Wyong and surrounds. The site hosts school groups and has a range of facilities that can accommodate weddings, fairs, markets or just about any function you can think of. It even hosts a men's shed. It is one of my favourite places on the coast to visit. I am proud to be patron of the museum and to recognise this local gem in the Parliament.

### ILLAWONG RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (13:28):** Today I acknowledge the brave members of the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade who attended the Curra Moors fire in the Royal National Park on 20 January 2018. These amazing men and women leapt into action, took time away from their loved ones without hesitation, and responded to the bushfires that were out of control near Wattamolla. The fire burnt a total of 2,194 hectares, affecting around 15 per cent of the national park. The Illawong Rural Fire Brigade supported this huge effort over eight days and contributed a staggering 675 volunteer hours.

I acknowledge the following members of the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade whose contribution was been vital in ensuring the safety of our community: Captain Mark Pryor, Senior Deputy Captain Simon Delander, Paul Reynolds, John Koole, Cameron White, Scott Lepre, Tim Christison, Pat Tuffy, Peter Ross, Steve Burt, Peter O'Connor, Peter Moore, George Kouroulis, Bruce Angus, Rhys Shardlow and Jennifer Dolden. Whilst no amount of acknowledgement will ever truly do justice to their heroism, dedication and selflessness, I take this opportunity to thank them for their service to our community and wish them all the best for the future.

### MIROMAA ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:29):** I acknowledge the outstanding work done by the Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre, based in my electorate of Newcastle. I recently had the opportunity to visit Miromaa and was very impressed by the work that it does. The centre was established in 2002 to reclaim the Awabakal language. It developed community-empowering processes and software that has supported language conservation around the world, providing support to the documentation of more than 150 languages in Australia and the Torres Strait and nearly 100 languages throughout the rest of the world. Miromaa recently received the Community Organisation of the Year Award at the inaugural National Dreamtime

Awards in recognition of that work. In 2016 at a reception hosted by Michelle Obama at the White House, the organisation was praised by Native American Indians for its help in preserving Native American languages. The centre is a great success story for Newcastle and one that our whole community should be proud of. I pay tribute to Daryn McKenny and his wonderful team at Miromaa.

#### **ROYAL FAR WEST CHILDREN'S HEALTH SCHEME**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:30):** I speak about an important occasion in Manly concerning the Royal Far West Children's Health Scheme. Based a few hundred metres from my electorate office in Manly, Royal Far West has been connecting kids living in remote and rural Australia with quality health care since 1924. This year's City to Country Week in Manly begins with an open day at Royal Far West, with behind-the-scenes tours, exhibitions and workshops presenting its incredible history and bright future. Locals and visitors alike can follow the City to Country Trail around Manly, where purchasing meals or drinks from participating businesses will donate the proceeds back to Royal Far West. I recognise Chief Executive Officer of Royal Far West, Lindsay Cane, and her team for the important work that they do. I was fortunate to join my National Party colleagues at a Christmas lunch to celebrate Royal Far West last year and I hope to see many of them in Manly again during the City to Country Week 2018.

#### **SHELLHARBOUR TAFE STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:30):** I bring to the attention of the House the work and achievements of Mr Rohan Herring and Miss Annaliese Phipps. Over the weekend, Mr Rohan Herring was named Shellharbour TAFE's Student of the Year for 2017. Mr Herring displayed the utmost care and dedication to his studies in a Diploma of Nursing. Likewise, Miss Annaliese Phipps was named the Shellharbour campus's TAFE Vocational Education and Training [TVET] Student of the Year for 2017 for her tireless efforts in her health services assistance studies. I wish Rohan and Annaliese all the best for their future. These students signify everything that our State should be proud of when it comes to the great public institution of TAFE. I offer my sincere congratulations to each of those local students. I look forward to hearing about their achievements and contributions to our community in the future.

#### **CHINESE COMMUNITY NEW YEAR CELEBRATION DINNER**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (13:31):** I acknowledge the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation [ACCF], which recently hosted the New South Wales Chinese Community New Year Celebration Dinner that I had the privilege of attending. I thank ACCF Chairman Dr Michael Tse, Event Chairwoman Mrs Monica Chu and Vice-Chairman Dr Victor Tsang for organising this successful fundraising event. It was an honour to usher in the lunar new year—the Chinese New Year—with such great company for a worthwhile cause, with Lifeline Australia being the sole beneficiary.

The ACCF was formed in 1990 as a broad-based charity organisation to help the community at large. Its objectives include promoting multiculturalism, helping those in need, supporting community projects and responding to urgent need in a state of emergency, such as New South Wales bushfire appeals. ACCF and the New South Wales Chinese Community New Year Celebration Dinner raised \$85,000 for Lifeline Australia. Over the years, ACCF has contributed to bushfire appeals, earthquake disaster relief and flood relief across Australia and in poorer nations such as Nepal. On behalf of the many individuals, family and groups benefiting from ACCF's work, I offer my appreciation of that organisation in the House today.

#### **WOLLONGONG WOMAN OF THE YEAR REBECCA LACHLAN**

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (13:32):** I congratulate the 2018 Wollongong electorate Woman of the Year, Rebecca Lachlan. Bec is a fighter for fairness and absolutely deserving of this recognition. When I put out the call for nominations, Bec's name came up again and again. After suffering a double stroke nearly a decade ago and spending months recovering, Bec began to understand the difficulties faced by people with mobility problems in accessing services and venues that we all take for granted. She recognised that the platform at Unanderra station cannot be readily accessed by people with mobility problems, the elderly, and parents with prams and she set out on a campaign to fix it. Despite years of effort, with Bec assisting in gaining strong community support as well as helping to assemble a broad coalition of community organisations to back the push, we have not been successful—but we are determined. Bec also works hard to raise awareness of strokes and their impact and helps to raise funds for research and support. Bec is a most worthy recipient of this award, and I congratulate her. May she keep up the fight.

#### **TRIBUTE TO MARY NEWLINDS, OAM**

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (13:33):** I recognise the life and contribution of Dr Mary Newlinds, OAM, who passed away peacefully last week at the grand age of 88. Together with her late

husband, Dr John Newlinds, OAM, Mary served the local Pittwater community as a general practitioner focused on the needs of mothers and children in particular. As well as serving her community in medicine, Mary was a formidable and indefatigable environmental campaigner, defending her precious Duffys Forest community from inappropriate development that threatened this wonderful and vulnerable community, which is nestled within Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park. Mary was also a stalwart member of the Liberal Party in Pittwater. Her contribution to our community was immense. She leaves a powerful legacy and wonderful example. I was very proud to call Mary a friend. She was a mentor and example to me and to many in our community. She will be missed.

#### **MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA RECIPIENT THEO DECHAUFEPIC**

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (13:34):** "Humility", "sacrifice" and "service to others" are commonly used in describing Theo DeChaufepic, who was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] for his service to veterans and their families. Theo's involvement with the local Returned Services League of Australia and his ongoing volunteer work to look after veterans and their families, both mentally and physically, is much admired. Being able to access vital support services is part of the recovery process for all returning service men and women.

Theo particularly wants to encourage younger people to access services, especially mental health services. True to his humble nature, when Theo found out that he had been awarded the OAM, his first thought was that many other people were more worthy than him. Theo served our country with honour as a medic in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps in Vietnam; now he serves our community with the same level of dedication in looking after veterans and their families—and he has done so for more than 20 years. I take this opportunity to thank Theo and recognise a true local hero who has put other people's needs above his own throughout his life.

#### **CULBURRA BEACH BOARDRIDERS CLUB**

**Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (13:35):** I congratulate the Culburra Beach Boardriders Club, which recently won the highly rated 2018 Australian Boardriders Battle final at Newcastle Beach. Having formed recently, in 2014, this was the Culburra Beach Boardriders Club's first victory at the World Surf League sanctioned event. Mikey Wright and Tyler Wright were joined by Jordin Watson, Ty Watson and Jordan Dank in their triumph. I make a special mention of current Women's World Champion Tyler Wright, and her brother Mikey, who collected enough points late in the event to qualify the team for the final. Mikey Wright was also awarded the prestigious Wayne "Rabbit" Bartholomew medal for being the best performer of the competition. Winning such a competitive national event is recognition of the incredible skill and determination of the team and of the Culburra Beach Boardriders Club as a whole. I congratulate all the participating South Coast teams, including Ulladulla, on proudly representing our local community in this national surfing meet.

#### **CAMPBELLTOWN COLLEGIANS ATHLETICS CLUB**

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (13:36):** I recognise Campbelltown Collegians Athletics Club girls throw team, which won five gold and two silver medals at the recent New South Wales junior championships. I also congratulate coach David Prior for his skilled leadership, which, along with the hard work and perseverance of the five young athletes—Amelia Morgan, Breanna Griffiths, Nicole Pili, Venita Mailei and Unitty Ta'uo—has seen the team qualify for the 2018 Australian Junior Athletics Championships. Their dedication to their sport and their passion for excellence puts the girls in a good position to deliver some astounding results at the national championships. On behalf of the Campbelltown electorate, I wish the girls, their coach and their ever-supportive families the very best at the Athletics Australia Junior National Championships.

#### **GOULBURN ELECTORATE COMMUNITY CABINET**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (13:37):** I recently had the pleasure of visiting the electorate of Goulburn together with my State ministerial colleagues, hosted by the hardworking local member, Pru Goward, on behalf of Community Cabinet. It was a great opportunity to speak to many in the local community and to attend an afternoon tea session with Simon Bennett and the team at Anglicare. Anglicare plays an important role for people with disabilities in providing out-of-home care and youth and family support in the southern New South Wales region, including Goulburn, Bega Valley, Palerang and Snowy River.

They presented me with a lovely handmade painting, and I look forward to hanging it in my office. Afterwards I visited the Goulburn Multicultural Centre, which provides services to migrants and refugees settling in the Goulburn region. I thank, in particular, the Goulburn Multicultural Centre Director John Gunn, Heni Hardi and all the hardworking volunteers for running such a successful and lively centre. I commend all of these hardworking people, who work tirelessly on behalf of the community of Goulburn.

### TRIBUTE TO ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FRANK MINNELLI

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:38):** I acknowledge the tremendous contribution of Assistant Commissioner Frank Minnelli, who stepped down as the South West Metropolitan Region Police Commander last Friday. In the past 11 years Assistant Commissioner Minnelli has dedicated himself to our region, with a strong focus on stamping out crime and making our community a safer place in which to live. Since taking up the post in December 2006, Assistant Commissioner Minnelli and his dedicated police officers have initiated widespread change throughout the region, and I place on the record our community's sincerest appreciation for their tremendous efforts over the years. Although we still have many challenges ahead of us, our region is certainly a much better place thanks to the efforts of Assistant Commissioner Minnelli. His team has given its all to work for our community's safety. I wish Assistant Commissioner Minnelli all the very best in his future endeavours and, once again, thank him for everything he has done for our community.

### KANGAROO VALLEY SHOW

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (13:39):** Over the past few weeks, the Kiama region has been a hub of activity as many agricultural societies put on their annual show. On Saturday 17 February, I had the incredible opportunity of attending the 113th Kangaroo Valley Show, which provided a reminder of the smorgasbord of talent that this region has in a wide variety of agricultural disciplines. Besides witnessing the showcase, I was delighted to present a cheque for \$17,000 on behalf of the Community Building Partnership program to the Kangaroo Valley Show Society for permanent seating around the showground. The grant is well deserved. I acknowledge the show committee members and volunteers, including Secretary Mairi Langton, President Harold Sharman and Treasurer Keith Wearne. They and many others do a commendable job in organising an event that needs significant planning and effort to make it a reality. I look forward to the 134th Kangaroo Valley show, the biggest little show on the coast.

### CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY VOLUNTEER LES BROWN

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (13:40):** Since its inception in 1989, Clean Up Australia Day has inspired countless Australians every year to take to their local parks, beaches, bushlands and streets and clean their local environment. In the Hills community, Les Brown of the Eric Mobbs Park Committee has devoted his precious time and efforts to clean up Eric Mobbs Reserve on every Clean Up Australia Day for more than 25 years. On Sunday 4 March 2018, I joined Les, along with the Mayor of The Hills Shire Council, Dr Michelle Byrne, for another year to clean up our community's much-adored reserve. Les's participation in this magnificent Australian cause, as well as his incessant maintenance of this impeccable and spotless reserve, will be forever admired and appreciated. I say thank you to Les.

### NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (13:41):** On the morning of Saturday 3 March, along with various local community groups, I had the opportunity to witness the excellent progress on the construction of the new Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest. Decked out in hard hats and high-visibility vests, we saw how the essentially completed external building works are being complemented by a modern fit-out that, together, will provide an outstanding health facility for both public and private patients from the end of October this year. I recognise the hospital project staff, who met us at the Frenchs Forest Road entrance and ably led the tours, including Communications and Engagement Manager Nicola Pellegrini, and Project Director and recently appointed hospital Chief Executive Officer Deborah Latta. I also thank the current Coalition Government and Healthscope for overseeing the new hospital development after decades of false promises, particularly under the former Labor Government.

### TOM UREN PARK INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:41):** On Monday 12 March, I had the great pleasure of joining the Mayor of Cumberland City Council, Councillor Greg Cummins, Cumberland City Council staff and Monarch Construction at the official opening of the new outdoor fitness equipment recently installed at Tom Uren Park. This great project was made possible through joint funding from Cumberland City Council and the Community Building Partnership grants program, which provided money for the installation of new outdoor fitness equipment to meet the growing needs of residents in the local community. Local residents played a key role in identifying the need for the facilities in the area and were instrumental towards making this project a reality. I congratulate all local residents who were involved throughout the engagement and consultation phases of this project, and I congratulate everyone at the council who helped make the dreams of local residents a reality.

**WINGHAM DISTRICT RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB UPGRADE**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:42):** Last month I welcomed Deputy Premier John Barilaro and Minister for Sports Stuart Ayres to Wingham to announce \$511,000 from the Stronger Country Communities Fund for the Wingham Tigers rugby league club. The club plans to upgrade and renovate the dressing rooms, ground lighting, canteen and playing surface. The Wingham Tigers has 85 senior players and the biggest registration of juniors in its history with 167 players. This season the Tigers will field junior girls under 10s and under 14s teams for the first time. The great work of this club could not be possible without a committed group of volunteers. I thank for their service President and Treasurer Craig Martin, Vice-President Steve Blanch, Secretary Mark Spencer, Rocka Humphries, Kevin Bakewell, Ross Pickett, Scott Blanch, Darren Lewis, Ron Spriggs, Ben Welch, Luke Steel, Troy Atkins, Paul Lewis, Peter Wood, Brent Sheehan, Brock Howard, Belinda Blanch, Reanne Blanch, Helen Cross, Andrew Gilbert and Simon Crow.

**PENRITH VALLEY SPORTS FOUNDATION JUNIOR SPORTS STAR OF THE MONTH  
MADDISON KRAHE**

**Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:43):** I congratulate a Glenmore Park sporting champion, Maddison Krahe, upon being named Junior Sports Star of the Month by the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation. Maddison received the award for her continuous dedication, development and skill in a variety of sports including netball, touch football, swimming and softball. Maddison currently represents Penrith in three representative sports teams across three different sports. She plays in the under 13s Penrith representative softball team, the Penrith under 13s State age netball team and the Penrith touch football under 14s State representative side. Maddison has also achieved great success in the pool, swimming in squad teams at the Dive In Swimming Academy and last year was second age champion at the Caroline Chisholm College swimming carnival. Maddison is a great asset to all of her sporting codes and is a truly remarkable sportswoman. I once again congratulate Maddison on her incredible achievements and wish her all the best in her future sporting endeavours.

**VISSLA CENTRAL COAST PRO**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:44):** I congratulate all competitors in last week's Vissla Central Coast Pro, which was held at Avoca Beach in my electorate of Terrigal. My wife, Jill, and I were at Avoca Beach last Sunday afternoon to watch the final rounds of the competition and present awards to the winners. I congratulate Sarah Baum from South Africa and Shane Holmes from Australia, who took out the competition in their respective women's and men's divisions. I also say well done to women's runner-up Kirra-Belle Olsson, who is from Avoca Beach and who performed exceptionally well, having made it all the way to the finals. The Central Coast Pro has been held in our region for more than three years, thanks to a successful partnership between Destination NSW and the Central Coast Council. Given the fantastic exposure this event has created for beautiful Avoca Beach, I certainly hope that a new three-year deal can be arranged so that the Central Coast Pro can return for a fourth year in 2019. I congratulate Surfing NSW on its organisational work and again say well done to all local and international competitors.

**KIAMA ELECTORATE COMMUNITY BUILDING PARTNERSHIP GRANTS**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (13:45):** On 4 March I was absolutely delighted to present a cheque to the St Stephen's Anglican Church at Bomaderry. The funding will assist with the installation of a commercial kitchen to facilitate the church's community outreach programs and enable continuing support for the most vulnerable people in our community. This is another example of the Community Building Partnership grants providing deserving organisations with the necessary means by which to assist and support people across our community. The upgrade would not have been possible without the tireless and persistent efforts of the Bomaderry Anglican church's members. All members, especially the senior minister, Reverend Sean Heslehurst, youth minister Wycliffe Ochieng, and church manager, Liz Hylton-Cummins, provide a solid foundation for this congregation to continue to go above and beyond to assist our community. They are an asset to our community. I wish them and all members of the congregation all the very best for their continuing work, particularly the work that supports the most vulnerable people across the Shoalhaven.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

*Visitors*

**VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to Karina Mathias, who is participating in Youth Parliament, guest of the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services, and member for Castle

Hill. I welcome also Michelle Phillips from Camel Milk NSW, and Jane Rose and Richard Williams from CameLife Australia, guests of the member for Upper Hunter. I welcome to the gallery the Lakes Grammar School debating team, guests of the member for Wyong. I welcome a group of students from Muslim Care, who are participating in the Leading Together program, and students and teachers from Al Sadiq College, Greenacre, guests of the member for Lakemba. Finally I welcome to the gallery the Apprentice Organisers from Sydney Alliance, who are accompanied by their lead organiser, David Barrow. We welcome you all to the Chamber.

*Commemorations*

**CENTENARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR**

**The SPEAKER (14:17):** On 14 March 1918 the newspaper the *Australian Worker* published a letter from the Secretary of the Women's Peace Army, a high-profile anti-conscription organisation founded three years earlier by suffragist Vita Goldstein. The letter concluded with a 15-point declaration of the Women's Terms of Peace, which included equal political rights for women in countries with representative government, a prohibition on press censorship and on secret international treaties, freedom of the seas, and referral of international disputes to an International Court of Justice.

The letter was written by Isabel Swann, one of the daughters of a prominent pacifist family then living at Elizabeth Farm in Parramatta. One of the first women in Australia to become a qualified dentist, Swann was active in both the campaign against conscription and the opposition to censorship of anti-war opinion in the press. She regularly made impassioned speeches at rallies in The Domain on Sunday afternoons where her remarks were recorded by plainclothes police officers. When Premier Holman later proposed controversial anti-sedition legislation aimed at silencing anti-war critics, Swann joined the Free Speech Committee, a hastily formed group opposed to the bill. Promoted as "one of Australia's foremost lady orators", she spoke on behalf of the committee at numerous public meetings from the Hunter to the South Coast. In the decades after the war Swann remained one of the most high-profile peace and free speech activists in Australia. Lest we forget.

*Question Time*

**SYDNEY STADIUMS**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:21):** My question is directed to the Premier. In light of the Deputy Premier's comments on radio last week where he said, "We've changed our position on a number of policies ... we weren't gonna back down on councils, we weren't gonna back down on greyhounds, we weren't gonna back down on a couple of things," when is she going to back down on her extravagant Sydney stadiums splurge?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Keira will cease interjecting.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:22):** On 7 March 2018 Ray Hadley said, "You want Parramatta Stadium, which is well underway, to be finished?" Luke Foley said, "Yep."

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I do not need a chorus of yeps, yips or yaps. I call the member for Keira to order for the first time. I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. The member for Londonderry will come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Why do Opposition members not want me to quote their leader's comments? The transcript reads:

**RAY HADLEY:** I would think you would be happy for ANZ Stadium to be made a rectangular stadium, forget the AFL so rugby league, rugby union and soccer can be played there and we need to modernise the stadium even though it was only built 20 years ago ... Am I right there?

**LUKE FOLEY:** Yep.

That is two out of three. The Leader of the Opposition asked the question.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: Madam Speaker, you have made a ruling about the words "yip", "yap" or whatever it is. I draw your attention to the fact that Government members are flouting your ruling.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member raises a valid point. I ask for that noise to cease. Members who flout my ruling will be removed from the Chamber.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** That is two out of three. On the issue of Allianz, Ray Hadley asked, "Where do you stand on Allianz Stadium at the moment? What do you want to do?" There was a little bit of toing and froing, and the Leader of the Opposition then said, "Look, I am happy to look at all the options." I say to the Leader of the Opposition—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Interjections will cease. I warn members not to continue interjecting.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I am sure that everybody in the gallery and members of the public would agree that members of Parliament should not deceive or mislead them.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Keira should not take things personally.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. We agree, so where is the \$2 billion?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. There is no point of order. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time. If he continues to argue he will be removed from the Chamber. His behaviour is unruly.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition said publicly on 2GB that he backs two stadiums and that he is keeping his options open on the third. The National Rugby League [NRL] issued a press release thanking the Leader of the Opposition for his bipartisan support that said:

The NRL Chief Executive Todd Greenberg today welcomed bipartisan State Government support of plans to rebuild both Parramatta Stadium and ANZ Stadium.

In addition, the Football Federation of Australia [FFA]—

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Has the Premier completed her answer?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** No.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Could the Premier answer the question about what her deputy has said?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier has been relevant to the question she was asked. The member for Maitland will resume her seat.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It is not just the NRL that has backed Labor's position on the ANZ Stadium. Today I received a press release—I am sure everybody did—from the Football Federation of Australia—which reiterated its support. David Gallop talked about the benefits of that and thanked Opposition members for their bipartisan support. Why does the Leader of the Opposition tell the community one thing—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maitland will cease shouting. I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Opposition members do not like the truth. They cannot handle the truth.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition stuffed up and he cannot be honest about it.

**Mr Luke Foley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will resume her seat.

**Mr Luke Foley:** Why is it that the Premier is so weak she is unable to hold the line on a single big policy?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That is a disgraceful comment. There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition tells the public one thing and expects them to believe him. The next day he changes his position. He is a disgrace. Members should not take my word for it; they should take the word of the NRL and the FFA.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier has completed her answer.

#### HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (14:33):** My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government ensuring first-class health care for future generations?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:33):** I thank the member for Parramatta for his question. Yesterday the member for Parramatta, the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical

Research, and I visited the Sydney Children's Hospital at Westmead to officially open a new medical research centre that specialises in caring for children and preventing various childhood diseases including chronic and life-threatening illnesses. Days like that make one proud to be a member of Parliament. The research centre, which will support 1,000 extra clinical trials a year, is part of a \$900 million or more investment in the Westmead precinct. Yesterday was special because putting the facility together was not just the vision of the State Government; it was also the vision of clinicians and private benefactors for children's medical research in this State. Research will assist local children and ensure that New South Wales is leading the world in cutting edge technology for this type of research.

Something that was extremely exciting for me—I have to confess it was something I had not anticipated—was when I represented New South Wales in Japan and China people proactively referred to the Westmead precinct and what it means for the future of health services and health research and development in Western Sydney and in New South Wales. Yesterday the Minister for Health, the member for Parramatta and I were pleased to meet with Laura and her son, Valentino. Laura told us that her son had been identified as having a high-risk propensity for allergies—in particular, eggs. Laura engaged in a controlled experiment to see how her newborn son would react to eggs. As a result of that controlled experiment Valentino was found to be allergic not only to eggs but also to dairy products. Imagine what it will be like for this new mother once her child starts preschool and is subjected to different foods that could result in anaphylactic shock or worse.

Yesterday was a stark reminder to us to ensure that we provide dollars and opportunities and collaborate to support cutting edge research centres that provide for future generations. The types of experiments and clinical trials conducted in that precinct will help children not just in New South Wales and Australia but also around the world. The digital age is taking over traditional ways of doing things. New South Wales is outstanding in the field of medical research, and research and development. If the Westmead precinct is a world-class precinct it will attract the best brains and minds locally, throughout Australia and internationally. We will ensure that New South Wales is at the cutting edge in saving lives and creating jobs for the future, which is exciting.

This Government, as part of its commitment to health infrastructure, is investing more than \$900 million in the Westmead precinct—part of its \$7.7 billion contribution to health. Our contribution to health infrastructure and our investment in hospitals is more than double what we inherited. Yesterday was all about Westmead. It is not just about the precinct, the wards, the lovely environment or the state-of-the-art technology that is being used for patients, children and their parents; it is also about those undertaking research in these state-of-the-art facilities. It is something to behold. I encourage every member to visit that exceptional facility.

When considering the technology and the methods used at the research centre it dawned on me that it is not just bricks and mortar. People working in those facilities will have the best environment in which they can do what they do best. We are not just putting infrastructure dollars into Westmead and other similar precincts; we are also investing in staff who need that technology and who rely on State governments to support them to do what they do best. Yesterday I had the pleasure of meeting with researchers, clinicians, doctors and nurses who specialise in research and who support children and parents. [*Extension of time*]

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Prospect will cease interjecting or he will be removed from the Chamber. I call the member for Prospect to order for the first time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In addition to investing in health infrastructure in the Westmead precinct, this Government is spending \$1 billion on medical research in New South Wales. It is important not just to unlock answers to questions but also to ensure that New South Wales has cutting edge technology. This is on top of the recently announced \$12 million facility that the Minister for Health opened last November—the NSW Health Statewide Biobank—the largest storage bank for human biospecimens in the Southern Hemisphere.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** Missenden Road.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It is at Missenden Road. This Government is committed to funding medical research and the buildings that support that research. It not only saves lives but also puts New South Wales on the map in leading Australia and the world. The Government will continue to invest in these important initiatives to save lives, create jobs and create opportunities in New South Wales now and for successive generations.

#### SYDNEY STADIUMS

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:34):** I direct my question to the Minister for Sport. I refer to the Deputy Premier's comments, "As politicians you have got to learn to listen, and if there is red hot anger out there, we've got to actually take that on board." With 200,000 people having signed a petition opposing this Minister's Sydney stadium splurge, will he take this on board and publicly release the business case, the studies and all the facts and figures, admit he got it wrong and walk away?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:35):** This Government will not walk away from its clear vision to ensure that New South Wales has the best infrastructure available for hospitals, schools, stadiums and roads. Only this Government can provide all that infrastructure. I have said time and again in this Chamber that New South Wales has an incredibly important major events sector that sustains more than 129,000 people and generates more than \$33 billion a year in economic output for this State. The question we should be asking is: Why are Opposition members so opposed to jobs in New South Wales? Why are they so opposed to making sure that New South Wales provides the best economic opportunities for people across the State?

Earlier the Premier clearly articulated that the Opposition has its own stadium plan for the Parramatta, ANZ and Allianz stadiums. It has a \$2 billion stadium plan but it does not want to tell anyone about it until after the election. Let us compare what is happening on this side of the Chamber with what is happening on the other side of the Chamber in order to deconstruct the schools, hospitals and stadiums argument. I will highlight this by using as an example my home patch in Penrith. Let us look at what is going on there.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting and listen to the Minister.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Let us compare what is happening at Nepean Hospital now with what those opposite achieved when they were in government. This Government invested \$576 million on the largest ever redevelopment of Nepean Hospital in Penrith. This Government is able to redevelop the hospital and the stadium.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Blue Mountains to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The Government is funding the upgrade of Northern Road in Penrith because it knows that communities across Western Sydney need road and rail infrastructure in order to grow.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for the Blue Mountains to order for the second time. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This Government is funding the upgrade of Northern Road in Penrith but it can still afford to build stadiums. Governments that manage the economy properly can invest in all sections of the New South Wales economy.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Blue Mountains to order for the third time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This Government does not have to look after its friends in the union movement as do those opposite. Time and again this Government has based its decisions on sound economic policy which has meant that the ranking of New South Wales in just about every economic indicator has gone from number eight to number one. People in New South Wales now have the opportunity—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Charlestown will cease interjecting. If the member has a question she should ask it next, not now, as it is not her turn. The member should read the standing orders. She has had three years to do so.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We have an opportunity to ensure that New South Wales remains number one in sporting and major events. We do not have to look too far. Last weekend the National Rugby League doubleheader was held in Perth at a stadium that far exceeds the capability of the ANZ Stadium over the past 20 years. It is time for us to make investments that will lead to a stronger economy in New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Charlestown to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This Government is investing in sport, roads, rail, health and education.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Kogarah to order for the second time. The member will cease shouting. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This Government has ensured that it has its priorities in order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Kogarah to order for the third time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** As the Minister for Sport in this State, I am incredibly proud of this Government's decision to invest in the future.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members who are trying to incite the Minister will be removed from the Chamber if they continue. Some of the comments from Opposition members are unacceptable.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I am just as proud to inform everyone in New South Wales that in the process of making sure New South Wales is number one again in sport, this Government has invested \$200 billion in

health and education. Let me use Penrith again as an example. When the Liberal-Nationals Coalition was in opposition I wanted to ensure that it won government. The Labor Government announced that the Nepean High School in Penrith would become a creative and performing arts school. The Labor Government's total investment in health and education was a sign at the front of the school that stated "Creative and performing arts". This Government invested in a new arts centre to give students at that school every opportunity. This Government is investing also in hospitals and in Penrith Public School.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: I seek additional information. I want the Minister to keep talking about stadiums.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

**Mr Michael Daley:** I invite the Minister to address that part of the question that asks for the public release of all documents.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister is being relevant to the question he was asked. There is no point of order.

*[Extension of time]*

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I am happy to reiterate for the benefit of people in Western Sydney that they can have a new stadium at Parramatta, a world-class rectangular stadium at Sydney Olympic Park, a new hospital at Campbelltown, a redeveloped hospital in Penrith and an upgraded hospital at Westmead. However, they can only have those things if the Government makes the right decisions and manages the economy properly. There is only one choice for the people of New South Wales if they want to achieve those things—that is, to vote for Liberal or The Nationals members.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Charlestown to order for the second time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** That is the only avenue available to residents of New South Wales if they want to ensure that we are the number one State for major events and they want to protect 129,000 jobs.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The behaviour of Opposition members today is nothing short of juvenile. They have had instructions from their party, but it does not mean they have to follow them.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** If we are to protect those 129,000 jobs and we want to ensure that we have the best events that used to come to Sydney but that are now going to Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne or Brisbane—events that need to return to their rightful home in New South Wales—

**Mr Ryan Park:** I want the Melbourne Cup.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Keira is not getting the Melbourne Cup at Allianz Stadium.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Who cares about the Melbourne Cup? Have Opposition members heard about the Everest and the Golden Slipper in Western Sydney? The Victorians will now have to come to New South Wales. In order to ensure that our stadiums are the best in Australia we will take even more events away from the Victorians.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the second time. I call the member for Maitland to order for the third time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We will take all those events back from Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland. That can only happen under a Liberal-Nationals Government.

#### INFLUENZA VACCINATIONS

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (14:42):** I address my question to the Minister for Health. How is the New South Wales Government helping to reduce the spread of flu this season?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If members are not interested in listening to the answer they should leave the Chamber, return to using their iPads or to whatever they are doing.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (14:42):** The member for Wagga Wagga, who is a good member, is advocating hard for his community. As a result we have an amazing new hospital in Wagga Wagga. So far this Government has spent \$282 million and it intends to spend even more. At the request of the community that hospital is now called Wagga Wagga Base Hospital. This Government is doing more than any other State or Territory government to try to ensure that our community is safeguarded against a range of diseases. Next year New South Wales will be spending close to \$23 million on vaccination and immunisation programs.

Today is an important day as we are heading into the flu season. Chief Medical Officer Kerry Chant and the Director of Communicable Diseases in NSW Health Dr Vicky Sheppard and I were at Martin Place railway station this morning. They are outstanding public servants who are committed to the people of New South Wales. This morning we launched a new campaign to warn people across the State how dangerous flu can be. Members would recall that we had the worst flu season since the 2009 pandemic. Last year was a shocker. Some people may know that last year 650 people in this State lost their lives as a result of flu. Some people underestimate flu and think it is not dangerous, but flu is extremely dangerous. Last year two little babies lost their lives. The Government has determined it will do all it can to try to support our community, to remind people of the dangers of flu and to make sure that this season, no matter what comes our way, the community will be much more aware and prepared.

In January this year I joined with Premier Berejiklian to announce that New South Wales will lead the way across the country and provide free flu jabs for children from six months to five years of age, which is a \$3.5 million investment for some of our most vulnerable children. Nothing is more important than looking after our children, which is why people go into public service and into Parliament. We want to look after children. That \$3.5 million is already making a huge difference to children under the age of five. Vaccines are available through a local general practitioner, the Aboriginal Medical Service, a community health centre or some local councils. Last year more than 12,000 cases of influenza were confirmed in children under five years old. As I said, it is a very serious disease. We are determined to try to ensure that children are safeguarded against flu and the severe complications that flow from it, including pneumonia and encephalitis.

The awareness campaign that we launched today is about not spreading the flu and about the power we have in our own hands to make a difference. Our hands are one of the most dangerous parts of our body for attracting and spreading viruses. This morning quite a number of people, including journalists, stopped and tested their hands under the ultraviolet light. I know they were all surprised to learn that after having washed their hands quite well they could still spread germs. In pop-up centres across transport hubs in Sydney and at our local health districts across the State—

[*Interruption*]

This is not a laughing matter. The member for Bankstown might need some of this.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! This is a serious matter. I suggest that the member for Bankstown listen to what the Minister is saying.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Three hundred and fifty people died.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Bankstown that this is neither a funny nor a laughing matter.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** The member for Bankstown should take this matter more seriously. This morning we said that people should make sure they wash their hands, and get a flu jab. If people are going to cough or sneeze when they have the flu they should not cough into their hands but into their elbows. And if they are sick they should stay at home. That is the best advice we can give.

[*Interruption*]

Sometimes the member for Bankstown is a little bit too juvenile. In this place she should accept that on occasion matters should be dealt with on a bipartisan basis. [*Extension of time*]

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I suggest Opposition members settle down. This is not a controversial matter.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** This morning's pop-up centre was about making sure there was a greater awareness across New South Wales. On 5 April the centre will be at Central station, on 10 April it will be at Chatswood, on 11 April it will be at Liverpool and on 21 April it will be at Coffs Harbour. The Government is asking the 15 local health districts across this State to organise their local campaigns with local people to make sure that people understand the message—they must understand the message. New South Wales has been very successful in increasing vaccination rates. For example, in 2010, 87.80 per cent of Aboriginal children aged five had full vaccination. Now, after seven years of a Coalition Government and a lot of effort from this Government, that has been increased to 96.5 per cent of all Aboriginal children having full vaccination at age five. This Government really takes vaccination seriously.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** We do too.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** The member for Cessnock said, "We do too", and I know that some Opposition members do as well, although from the earlier interjections there are a few juveniles who do not. This flu season could be quite serious. Do not spread the flu. It is in your hands. Definitely use the cleansers that are available to

clean your hands whenever you are heading out into the public. If you do not have one of these cleansers, you should wash your hands frequently and there will be far less likelihood of you getting the flu.

#### SYDNEY STADIUMS

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:49):** My question is directed to the Minister for Sport. The report of Infrastructure NSW on the Western Sydney Stadium says there will be three National Rugby League [NRL] teams playing at the new stadium. If the Parramatta Eels is one, which other two NRL clubs will each play 10 of their games at Parramatta next year?

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:50):** I am very tempted to say the Cronulla Hawks but Peter Beattie, the great Labor Minister from Queensland, has already decided to back our stadium plan. Even the former Queensland Labor leader knows just how important it is to the rugby league community to get a new stadium at Parramatta and at ANZ. As I said last week, and I will keep repeating it, where the National Rugby League plays its games is entirely up to the NRL and all of its clubs. We want to keep building facilities to make sure that they choose to play the games in New South Wales rather than taking the games to Perth, where a whole lot of New South Wales-based teams took games on the weekend.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Londonderry will not yell or argue. It is not seemly to behave in that way.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** If we take the Canterbury Bulldogs and the South Sydney Rabbitohs to Perth we are exporting economic opportunities for New South Wales, which is exactly the reason we need to have stadiums—to keep the games in New South Wales. That is the whole point of the policy. What we see time and time again is—

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I do not know what the point of order could be because the member for Cessnock has not been listening for the past three minutes; he has been interjecting or chatting.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** No, I disagree. I have been listening closely.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! What is the member's point of order?

**Mr Clayton Barr:** It is under Standing Order 129. The Minister has had one minute to make some introductory remarks.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has been relevant to the question he was asked.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** The business case tells us that three teams are to play there. We know one of them. We are asking about the other two. If he could tell us, that would be great.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister is being relevant to the question he was asked. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The NRL has done a very good job lately—I refer to the Penrith Panthers again, which were raised in this Chamber last week—at taking games to regional New South Wales. The absolutely last thing the rugby league community in New South Wales wants is the Australian Labor Party telling people where they should play their games of football. I can absolutely guarantee that is the last thing we want.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Londonderry will stop being juvenile and childish.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The problem with the position of those opposite is that their stadiums, schools and hospitals sting is predicated on a couple of things: one is that they will not build any stadiums. They have not quite figured out what they want to do, but they have pretty much told us that they will build Parramatta, ANZ and Allianz—that whole "no stadiums" idea is not real. The second is that they say they will spend money on schools and hospitals, but the problem is that they will not spend more money on schools and hospitals than what we are spending. They are not outspending or outinvesting the Government in hospitals and education, they are not outspending or outinvesting in stadiums, they are not growing the major events economy and they are not creating new opportunities for people in New South Wales. All they want to do is stick to their track record, which is cancelling one project after another project. This side of politics wants to build a strong future for New South Wales, build railways and build roads, and support the airport, which Opposition members do not want. The member for Blacktown is the most fierce advocate—

**Ms Prue Car:** Come on.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Do not say, "Come on." I will take that interjection from the member for Londonderry because it is just too good to pass up. She cannot be a member for Western Sydney, and support jobs and infrastructure growth in Western Sydney and have sitting right next to her the member for Blacktown who is the person in New South Wales most opposed to the airport and who is getting \$100,000 a year from the people of New South Wales to run an anti-jobs and anti-airport campaign.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time. She is continually interjecting.

**Ms Prue Car:** Point of order: It is clearly Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** It is clearly not.

**Ms Prue Car:** You think might think this is funny, but it is not funny in Penrith. One—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Londonderry will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** What we have from the Leader of the Opposition is a complete failure to call out the member for Blacktown, who is getting paid \$100,000 by New South Wales taxpayers to run an anti-airport campaign.

**Mr Luke Foley:** Point of order: But I can call you out Stuart. You're going to cost your own government with your policy, mate.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Yep, yep, yep, yep, yep.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Bankstown will stop screeching.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** What the Government is saying to people across New South Wales is that it does not matter whether it is health, education, rail, roads, jobs or hospitals—this side of politics is the only side of politics that has a plan to build a strong future for New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Maitland that she is on three calls to order. The next time the member for Maitland interjects she will be removed from the Chamber.

#### REGIONAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (14:55):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional New South Wales. What steps has the Government taken to increase the number of health professionals delivering care to communities in regional New South Wales?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:55):** I thank the member for Port Macquarie for her question. Just over a decade ago the member did her postgraduate year as a nurse at Port Macquarie Base Hospital and then went on to work in the palliative care ward. The member for Port Macquarie is passionate about nursing, and passionate about regional and rural health. She is doing a wonderful job as Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural New South Wales. It is people such as the member for Port Macquarie—a number of members on this side of the House have worked in the health system—who have enabled us to develop a policy that is in line and in tune with supporting communities in regional New South Wales.

I have spoken often about the vast investment in regional and rural New South Wales from this side of the House. Last year's budget, and going over the forward estimates, shows a \$7.7 billion capital spend on hospitals, including in regional New South Wales. I have named the \$534 million hospital in Tweed—a half billion dollar hospital in a regional setting. When we talk about health we often look to the bricks and mortar, being the hospital itself, which is very important. We are making sure we build facilities and accommodation for our patients and our fantastic staff. We also should focus on the importance of ensuring that regional and rural New South Wales have all the allied health professionals delivering services at a very local level. They are often seen as the champions of our community. That is probably why The Nationals have a number of former health professionals among them. We are always looking for local champions promoting causes that are so important in regional and rural New South Wales.

It was fantastic to see that this year in regional New South Wales 287 new junior medical officers began their internship across 24 hospitals, including 18 officers in Tamworth, 18 in Orange, 19 in Coffs Harbour, 16 in Port Macquarie, 18 in Tweed Heads, 22 in Wagga Wagga, 14 in Lismore and 12 officers in Dubbo. Those junior medical officers are beginning their journey and what is so exciting about that is that we are giving them a taste of what it is like to live in a regional setting. Some are local, but others are visiting regional New South Wales for

the first time. Often in this House we talk about enticing people to regional New South Wales, which we do through government policy—decentralisation—sending more people into the regions and establishing public sector jobs in the regions and attracting industry and business to the regions. However, if you want to grow a strong and vibrant regional community you must offer basic services such as education and health. We cannot offer health services if we do not have wonderful people delivering those health services.

Those opposite often talk about their legacy and what they did in health. But they did very little for regional New South Wales. Under the Coalition Government, more than 2,900 additional nurses are working in regional New South Wales. This is not just about future doctors in the regions, we also want nurses coming back to the region. Only last week I had the opportunity along with upper House member and Parliamentary Secretary for Southern New South Wales the Hon. Bronnie Taylor to meet some interns at Cooma. It was wonderful to see that two interns from a number of years ago have returned to Cooma to call Comma home.

Part of what we are trying to do is entice people from the region to come back to live in and be a part of the region. We must deliver world-class health services in regional New South Wales, but we can only do that by having fantastic people supported by a huge investment in infrastructure. We are building the new hospitals, the multipurpose services and all the services that enable people in regional New South Wales to receive the best health care without leaving the comfort of their home and the support of their family. To do that we need health professionals. That is why it is so important to make sure that we continue to have more health professionals in the regions.

I have a great case study. I love it when I get a chance to talk about individuals. Often we talk about policy, we talk about our intent, we talk about investment, but let us break it down to the individual. As I have been answering this question those opposite want to throw barbs across the Chamber; they want to attack Government policy. They come into this House and they want to play politics. I know that is a shock, but that is what they do. They have no vision and no plan for regional New South Wales. For those opposite regional New South Wales includes Wollongong, Newcastle and Campbelltown. When I talk about regional New South Wales it is the real regional New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

In a recent debate we talked about the \$4.2 billion from the Snowy Hydro funds going into what we call "generational productive regional infrastructure". We will not rush that decision; we will take our time. In that debate the Leader of the Opposition said, "We will use the money to win seats, to pork-barrel our seats to win the election." The Leader of the Opposition wants to waste and squander the money. There is another word that I would use, but I cannot use it in the Chamber. Joanna Noakes studied a Bachelor of Medicine at the University of Newcastle. Joanna came through the Aboriginal Medical Workforce Recruitment Pathway scheme, a program linking Aboriginal medical graduates with support during the transition from medical school to traineeship. She knew that she wanted to go rural when it came time to choosing a location for her internship. Growing up in regional New South Wales, Joanna has always been passionate about working in the country and loves the idea of being part of a close-knit team. Joanna is now an intern at Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital and in her own words says:

During my time at Tamworth Hospital I have been well supported, mentored and included as part of the team and have truly appreciated the hospital's sense of community.

That is the key. When you live in regional New South Wales you become part of the family, you become part of the community, you are ingrained within the community. It is our health professionals, our doctors and our tradies who become the local coach, who run the local footy club and who cook a barbeque to raise money for community groups because they become part of our community. We want to ensure that we deliver world-class health services in regional New South Wales. We have a plan. We are investing in the infrastructure that gets us the right hospitals in the right places. We are investing in programs to deliver funding directly to where we want it to go. But, more importantly, we are backing in our allied health professionals. We want to see the best people in regional New South Wales.

### SYDNEY STADIUMS

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:01):** My question is directed to the Premier. Will she confirm that to make the business case for the rebuild of the Sydney Football Stadium and to get the cost-benefit ratio up to one, she is moving events from Olympic Park to Moore Park? Why would she not do what Premier Baird had the strength to do and bring an end to the sport Minister's rorts and manipulations?

[*Interruption*]

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Would the member for Maitland object if the same thing were said about her? I suspect she would. She would be on her feet taking a point of order. The Premier has the call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:03):** Given the shadow Treasurer has piped up, it is relevant for me to advise the House that last week the Victorian Labor Government announced that it was going through asset recycling for Land and Property Information. I raise that because it is relevant. When our Government went through the transaction, members opposite opposed it. Guess why it is relevant today? Because we raised \$1.3 billion from the transaction to fund part of our stadium strategy.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Cessnock will come to order. He does not know it all, although he thinks he does.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Labor governments around Australia are adopting our asset recycling policy specifically on Land and Property Information [LPI]. Why is that relevant?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was about stadiums. The Premier has not mentioned that and we are 1½ minutes into her answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I will listen further to the answer. The question was verging on being ruled out of order. The Premier has call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Member opposite love spending money they do not have. We do the hard yards, we announce our policies and we explain what we are doing.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the third time. The next time he interjects he will be removed from the Chamber.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** We raise the money and members opposite have the hide to tell us how to spend it. We do the hard yards. I see the shadow Treasurer is on his feet. Last week there was an embarrassing issue between him and the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** It is barely 20 seconds since the member took her last point of order.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It is 40 seconds, and the Premier still has not mentioned stadiums, which was the premise of the question she was asked.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. I will listen further to the Premier's answer.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I raise this issue because it goes to the heart of the credibility of the shadow Treasurer and his relationship with the Leader of the Opposition. I think it is on the front page of the *Illawarra Mercury* today.

**Mr Luke Foley:** When are you going to talk about stadiums?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I'll get to that, do not worry. We saw the member for Wollongong and the member for Keira advocating for spending the \$4.2 billion proceeds from the Snowy Hydro not in rural and regional communities but in Wollongong. Within 24 hours—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I know what the question was. Does the member for Strathfield have a different point of order?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It is the same point of order but we are now three minutes into the answer. We know the Premier is completely humiliated by her stadium policy. We would like her to answer the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier is being relevant to the question she was asked. I did say the question could have been ruled out of order because it contained imputations against the Minister. Let us leave it at that. The Premier has the call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I think it took only a few hours for the Leader of the Opposition to say, "No, my shadow Treasurer got it wrong. We're actually not going to do that." The Leader of the Opposition does not even have confidence—

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: The Premier is launching an attack upon a number of Opposition members. Under Standing Order 73 she should do that by way of substantive motion.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Questions can fall into that category as well. There were serious imputations against the Minister for Sport in the question. There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I am simply wondering how we can trust the member for Keira every time he pipes up when the Leader of the Opposition does not even trust him. He says something and it is kiboshed within hours.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Keira that he is on three calls to order and that he has had numerous warnings. That should be enough.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I commend Labor Premier Daniel Andrews for his LPI asset recycling policy—a policy we led the way on and in fact got first-mover benefit from. We got a great price for ours.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maitland is on her last warning.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In addition, this is what Dan Andrews said about stadia:

We can't take these (sporting) precincts for granted. They are special, they're a big part of our brand. They facilitate and make possible all those major events and jobs, but because they were once great"—

[*Time expired.*]

### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon) (15:08):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Mental Health. What is the Government doing to deliver world-class mental health services across New South Wales?

**Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (15:09):** I thank the member for his question. He has been a passionate advocate for people living with mental illness in his community and across this State. Over the past few years it has been a focus of this Government to strengthen community-based mental health services because people live better lives when they are in their communities. We are focused on ensuring that the most vulnerable in our community have the support they need. It was this Government, under my colleague the member for Barwon, that had the foresight and vision to establish an empowered and independent Mental Health Commission.

This Government has embarked on a decade-long reform of mental health services in response to the Mental Health Commission Living Well report. Members on my side of the House have committed to reforming the way in which mental health services are provided to increase the care available. It is a challenging reform that takes not only significant new funding but also a change in the way we approach service delivery. We know there are a range of benefits for both individuals and the health system in doing this. It is a reform that Labor knew was required but lacked the courage and capability to deliver. In 2017-18 alone we have committed \$95 million to strengthening community-based mental health care through the implementation of the Living Well reforms. The Liberal-Nationals Government has now allocated \$210 million in new funding over four years since it introduced the reforms. That significant investment is just one part of our record \$1.9 billion budget for mental health services this financial year.

The results are beginning to show. Since 2012 we have overseen a near doubling of specialist mental health community contacts. We know that we have more to do, but members on this side of the House have had the courage to step up, identify what needs to change and put the wheels in motion to deliver the sort of enduring change that mental health services need. We are a government with a plan for the future. In mental health we are making sure that our reforms are in alignment with the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan.

We know that suicide is tragically the leading cause of death for Australians aged between 15 and 44. On the weekend I announced that the Government, in partnership with the Mental Health Commission, has begun work on a statewide framework to reduce the rate of suicide across New South Wales. No parent, friend, family member or community should have to go through the grief of losing a loved one to suicide. We are committed to optimising and coordinating care and interventions so that support reaches those who need it. We are consulting with communities, the mental health sector and those with lived experience to get this right. Face-to-face consultation will take place in Wollongong, Warwick Farm, Lismore and Dubbo starting tomorrow.

We are not just a party of plans for the future; we are also making investments in the technology of the future. For the first time in Australia pulse monitoring devices will be trialled in the Hunter as a suicide prevention tool following our \$300,000 investment. As part of the suicide prevention project patients will wear a back-to-base pulse oximetry wireless device. In addition, staff will use a number of other observation tools. The device provides 24-hour monitoring of patients at risk of suicide by observing their blood oxygen levels. If vital signs change, or if the patient removes the device, staff will be alerted. The trial is an important step forward in the search for better ways to support people living with mental illness.

Reducing the rate of suicide is everyone's responsibility. In addition to the great work we are doing on that, we are also looking to put in place services for the population as it ages. For too long many of our most

vulnerable seniors have experienced long-term care in mental health units when we know that they would be better cared for in the comfort of their own communities. This year we have committed an additional \$9.6 million to develop and maintain specialised mental health supports in aged care facilities. Seniors living with severe mental illness will be cared for in specialised mental health facilities within their communities instead of in hospitals. We also recently announced \$2.4 million to enhance older persons mental health services so that hundreds of older people across New South Wales will benefit from an additional 17,000 hours of care. [*Extension of time*]

Since we began reforming the system, almost 50 specialised clinicians have been funded by the New South Wales Government specifically to meet the demands of the ageing population. Refugees suffering the effects of torture and trauma are another vulnerable group that we are targeting with new services. I recently visited the remarkable Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors [STARTTS] in Carramar, where I met some incredibly inspiring refugees. The Government has committed \$8 million over four years from 2016-17 to support the work of STARTTS. This is part of a \$32 million investment in health services to support the increased intake of humanitarian refugees. Whilst at the service I announced \$4.8 million in funding for organisations like STARTTS to announce their—

**Mr Jamie Parker:** Hear, hear! Good announcement.

**Ms TANYA DAVIES:** I thank the member for Balmain. It is nice to know that someone on the other side of the Chamber is listening. The Government announced this funding to enhance community-based mental health support in refugee settlement areas. Major reform is not easy, especially in areas like health care. On an important issue such as the reform of our mental health system one would expect bipartisan support of initiatives to improve services for our most vulnerable. However, all we have seen from those opposite is inaccurate, floundering responses to these reforms and investments. The Opposition spokeswoman for mental health has criticised us for announcing initial funding to reduce restrictive practices in our mental health units. This sort of opposition to progress means that the New South Wales Government will always be champions to the most vulnerable people in our communities. [*Time expired.*]

#### ASEAN-AUSTRALIA SPECIAL SUMMIT SECURITY

**Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:16):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police. Minister, given that the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has threatened violence against peaceful protesters at this weekend's ASEAN-Australia Special Summit, what steps are being put in place to protect Australian citizens who exercise their right to lawful protest?

**Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services) (15:17):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. On the weekend of 17 and 18 March the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN] secretary generals and the leaders of its ten-member nations will come together for the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit 2018. ASEAN's collective members make up this important trading group, which is Australia's third largest trading partner. I am informed that about 3,000 attendees are expected to attend this event. Invited guests will include the foreign Ministers of the member nations, senior police and government officials with expertise in counterterrorism, and the chief executive officers of 50 ASEAN-based companies. The summit will be an opportunity to show New South Wales as a key business partner, and for Sydney to showcase its ability to host world events in the safest possible way.

To manage this event, the NSW Police Force has obtained temporary additional powers under the Major Events Act on the basis that preventative measures are better than being placed in a reactive situation. Those additional powers will apply only for the period 15 to 19 March 2018 in the designated major event area. The Premier has declared that time as a major event period and it is inclusive of a lead-in and a lead-out period. The NSW Police Force has been granted temporary additional powers to manage road transport, implement airspace controls and to assist with the maintenance of public safety, dignitary protection, crowd management and public order. However, the additional powers are not as far-reaching as those enacted during the 2007 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] Summit. For the general public this will mean that motorcades may move in the designated major event lanes and some perimeter barriers may be erected at certain venues. The airspace of the central business district has also been declared a no-fly zone during the major event period.

The general public may see a greater police presence in the major event area—from Sydney Harbour to Goulburn Street in the south, and from East Sydney to Harris Street, Ultimo, in the west. As an additional security precaution, specific venue locations are not being publicised. The increased policing will be most visible from Friday to Sunday to cover the business summit, the counterterrorism conference and the leaders' special summit. People coming into Sydney should carry out their business as normal, but should be aware that this international event is taking place. The NSW Police Force has been granted temporary powers to provide the safest possible event for these world leaders. There is also a rule of law in New South Wales that clearly articulates the manner

in which protests can be held, such as where they can be staged and with the necessary approval process and the communication liaison that needs to take place with the NSW Police Force. Those well-established protocols will be adhered to. In answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question, I have not received a briefing as to any specific threat or any additional measures other than what I have just outlined to the House.

### HOMELESSNESS

**Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (15:21):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Minister, how is the New South Wales Government delivering record support for our State's homeless and is the Minister aware of any alternatives?

**Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:21):** I thank the member for Albury for his question and I acknowledge his commitment to tackling homelessness. Members know that homelessness exists in all of our communities across this State. I am proud to inform the House that in the past 12 months the Department of Family and Community Services [FACS] has permanently housed more than 200 rough sleepers from inner city Sydney alone. That did not happen by accident. We are more proactive, more assertive and working more intensively than ever before. In the past 12 months FACS staff have conducted intensive outreach operations on more than 66 occasions in the inner city alone. They do not just go once. They turn up to the same location day after day to build relationships and the trust of those who are sleeping rough. This intensive work, which is occurring in Belmore Park, Wentworth Park and around Central Station, is all in addition to the regular patrols that FACS staff and non-government organisations do across the city on a weekly basis.

Recently I was in Woolloomooloo—FACS staff were there before 6.00 a.m.—to speak with people sleeping rough to help them into permanent housing. One man told me that, despite sleeping rough for years and talking to services in that time, he had never known where to go to get help to leave homelessness. That morning, thanks to the proactive work of our teams, he received the help he needed. Members know that rough sleeping is at the pointy end—the very visible end of a complex and growing social problem. We on this side of the House know there is more work to do and we are determined to do it. The member for Albury asked me also about alternative approaches. It is interesting that the shadow Minister, the member for Bankstown, has been eerily silent on this. Those opposite have no plans, no ideas and no interest. The best the shadow Minister could do was call for a parliamentary inquiry into homelessness. That is the Labor way—call for an inquiry and push it off to the never-never.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I place the member for Bankstown is on three calls to order. She has had numerous warnings.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** It is little wonder that the Leader of the Opposition wants to send his frontbench to training school. This shadow Minister is not up to the task. She needs to get the basics right.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The member for Newtown will cease interjecting. The member for Gosford will come to order.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Recently I received a representation from the member for Bankstown, which I have here.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** I will read it to the House.

Dear Minister—

The word "Minister" is crossed out with "Pru" inserted instead, so she has read the letter—

Please be advised that I have received the attached correspondence from a constituent with respect to "Click here and type issue".

It is signed by the member for Bankstown. We now know that the shadow Minister does not know what she is making representations about. I knew her work was sloppy but this takes the cake. How can she expect to be the Minister responsible for the care and protection of the most vulnerable when she cannot even fill in the space: "Click here and type issue"? I wonder who the Leader of the Opposition was talking about when he said that being a shadow Minister was no guarantee of a ministry. Let me give the shadow Minister some lines to insert into her letters in future. I hope the member for Bankstown is listening. Insert here: "The Berejiklian Government is championing social policy, putting Labor to shame." Insert here: "The Berejiklian Government has the biggest social housing building program of any State or Territory across the country."

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Bankstown for the last time that she is on three calls to order and has had numerous warnings.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Insert here: "The Berejiklian Government's \$22 billion Communities Plus program will create 23,000 new dwellings in social housing." Insert here: "The Berejiklian Government's Millers Point sales program is generating a return of almost five new homes for every one sold." Insert here: "The Berejiklian Government is driving real change to improve the lives of social housing tenants through proactive maintenance pop-ups, amenities improvement programs, and real help with antisocial behaviour. [*Extension of time*]

We will keep delivering for the most vulnerable people in New South Wales—something Labor never did, and the member for Bankstown can insert that too.

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### *Committees*

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS**

##### **Discussion Paper**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR:** As Chair: I table the discussion paper of the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics entitled, "Review of the Code of Conduct for Members", discussion paper 1/56, dated March 2018. I move:

That the discussion paper be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

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#### **COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

##### **Report: Review of the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Annual Reports of the ICAC**

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** As Chair: I table the report of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled, "Review of the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Annual Reports of the Independent Commission Against Corruption", report 5/56, dated March 2018. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### **LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

##### **Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 51/56**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled, "Legislation Review Digest No. 51/56", dated 13 March 2018.

I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding Legislation Review Digest No. 50/56, dated 6 March.

#### **COMMITTEE ON LAW AND SAFETY**

##### **Membership**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I move:

That Stephanie Anne Cooke be appointed to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety in place of Jai Travers Rowell, discharged.

**Motion agreed to.**

### *Petitions*

#### **PETITIONS RECEIVED**

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following petitions signed by fewer than 500 persons have been lodged for presentation:

##### **Affordable Housing**

Petition requesting legislation mandating a percentage of all new residential developments be set aside for affordable housing received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

#### **Companion Animals on Public Transport**

Petition requesting that companion animals be allowed to travel on all public transport, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

#### **Ashbury Bus Services**

Petition requesting additional bus services to Ashbury, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

#### **Summer Hill Ambulance Station**

Petition opposing the closure of the Summer Hill ambulance station and calling on the Government not to sell the land to private developers, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

#### **Anti-discrimination Guidelines**

Petition calling on the Government to adopt Commonwealth Government guidelines that protect citizens from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following petition signed by more than 500 persons has been lodged for presentation:

#### **Tullamore Multi Purpose Health Service**

Petition requesting that adequate senior nursing resources be maintained at the Tullamore Multi Purpose Health Service, received from **Mr Philip Donato**.

#### **RESPONSES TO PETITIONS**

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Anthony Roberts—Western Sydney Incinerator Proposal—lodged 6 February 2018 (Ms Prue Car)

The Hon. Anthony Roberts—Elizabeth Street Development Proposal—lodged 13 February 2018 (Mr Alex Greenwich)

The Hon. Andrew Constance—B-Line Bus Project—lodged 6 February 2018 (Ms Jodi McKay)

#### *Business of the House*

#### **BUSINESS LAPSED**

**The SPEAKER:** I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 (3), General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 2345, 2346, 2348 and 2350 to 2359 have lapsed.

#### *Motions Accorded Priority*

#### **NORTH COAST HEALTH SERVICES**

##### **Consideration**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:30):** I ask that the House give priority to my motion that this House supports the New South Wales Government's record investment in hospitals and health services on the North Coast and notes that only the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals have a track record of delivering health upgrades in rural and regional communities across the State. The Government needs this opportunity to tell the people of New South Wales about its proud record of delivering the best healthcare services for the people of the North Coast. Previously the Minister mentioned the \$7.7 billion investment in Health over the next four years. Of the 70 hospital projects that have been completed across New South Wales, more than 50 are in the regions.

The Premier said it is not only about bricks and mortar. This Government is delivering record investment in Health elsewhere. We have achieved record workforce numbers and record performances, particularly in North Coast hospitals. I remind the House of Labor's track record on the North Coast, which was more focused on budget cuts and money rather than the health of people in our communities. My motion must be given priority so I can tell the people of New South Wales about this Government's record Health infrastructure spend on the North Coast not only in hospitals but also in dental health, Aboriginal health, mental health. Most importantly, the people on the North Coast must hear about the increase in the workforce in our hospitals.

It was in 2009 when I was a nurse at the Port Macquarie Base Hospital that we learnt of the 400 fulltime-equivalent jobs that were going to be cut from the North Coast health service. That demonstrates the level of priority that Labor gives to regional health and to North Coast hospitals. I want to inform the House about the many infrastructure projects in Health that have been completed but also those that are in progress. Some of those projects are underway in your electorate, Mr Deputy Speaker, including the \$52.5 million redevelopment of the Lismore Hospital. I also wish to inform the House about the record staffing levels in our hospitals and allied health sector across the North Coast. The comparison between 2012 and 2017 tells a very interesting story. [*Time expired.*]

## SYDNEY STADIUMS

### Consideration

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (15:33):** My motion, which should be accorded priority, is in the following terms:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that regional communities are deeply concerned at the Government's plan to spend \$2.7 billion on Sydney sports stadiums.
- (2) Calls on the Government to abandon its Sydney stadium policy and to instead put schools and hospitals before stadiums. I read that fast because I have so much to say. The Government is spending \$2.7 billion on stadiums. The Nationals opposite—or, as I like to refer to them, "Libs in tan pants"—are now cowering in their corner. They talk up a big, tough game in the bush, but when they are in the city they are pussycats. This is what we know about the decision-making process for the sports stadiums thus far: the Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox, in the other place, belled the cat on this issue. He said in the media that the decision had not been taken to the party room, that "it was taken by Cabinet" and that "it was rammed through". Today is the day that The Nationals get to vote—brought to them by the New South Wales Labor Party. It is voting day. The Nationals have a choice. They can sit on the other side of the House with the North Shore elite executive of the Liberal Party or they can cross the floor and vote with the Labor Party, which sticks up for and supports regional communities.

I want "Shane Jacobson" over here. Crossing the floor is not unprecedented. Members might remember a debate a little while ago on greyhound racing. We saw some courageous members of The Nationals who, to their credit, made a decision to cross the floor. The Nationals on the other side say, "We do not have binding caucuses. We do not have binding votes". But what happened when two Ministers of The Nationals and one of their parliamentary secretaries crossed the floor? At the next reshuffle they were gone. The Nationals say they do not have binding votes, but if its members do not do the right thing they lose their career. Today is their opportunity for The Nationals to come over to this side of the House and support their communities. With 12 months to go until the next State election, career climbing does not matter as much as saving their career.

The good member for Cootamundra might want to look across the Chamber at the member for Orange and think about the roles played by the two former members for those electorates in the debate on greyhound racing. One of them did not cross the floor and they lost their electorate; the other one crossed the floor at the time and held their electorate by the skin of their teeth. I recognise and call out Hodgkinson, Humphries and Gulaptis. I say to The Nationals: Today is the day they get to vote. Cross the floor, support your communities and desert the gold-plated Stadia Strategy of the North Shore elite.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the motion of the member for Port Macquarie be accorded priority.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....46  
Noes .....36  
Majority..... 10

### AYES

Anderson, Mr K  
Barilaro, Mr J  
Brookes, Mr G  
Cooke, Ms S  
Davies, Mrs T  
Evans, Mr A  
Grant, Mr T  
Hazzard, Mr B  
Kean, Mr M  
Marshall, Mr A

Aplin, Mr G  
Berejiklian, Ms G  
Conolly, Mr K  
Coure, Mr M  
Dominello, Mr V  
Evans, Mr L  
Griffin, Mr J  
Henskens, Mr A  
Lee, Dr G  
Notley-Smith, Mr B

Ayes, Mr S  
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)  
Constance, Mr A  
Crouch, Mr A  
Elliott, Mr D  
Goward, Ms P  
Gulaptis, Mr C  
Humphries, Mr K  
Maguire, Mr D  
O'Dea, Mr J

## AYES

Patterson, Mr C (teller)  
 Petinos, Ms E  
 Sidoti, Mr J  
 Taylor, Mr M  
 Upton, Ms G  
 Williams, Mrs L

Pavey, Mrs M  
 Provost, Mr G  
 Speakman, Mr M  
 Toole, Mr P  
 Ward, Mr G

Perrottet, Mr D  
 Roberts, Mr A  
 Stokes, Mr R  
 Tudehope, Mr D  
 Williams, Mr R

## NOES

Aitchison, Ms J  
 Barr, Mr C  
 Chanthivong, Mr A  
 Dib, Mr J  
 Finn, Ms J  
 Harris, Mr D  
 Hornery, Ms S  
 McDermott, Dr H  
 Mihailuk, Ms T  
 Parker, Mr J  
 Smith, Ms T F  
 Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E  
 Car, Ms P  
 Crakanthorp, Mr T  
 Donato, Mr P  
 Foley, Mr L  
 Harrison, Ms J  
 Leong, Ms J  
 McKay, Ms J  
 Minns, Mr C  
 Piper, Mr G  
 Tesch, Ms L  
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Bali, Mr S  
 Catley, Ms Y  
 Daley, Mr M  
 Doyle, Ms T (teller)  
 Greenwich, Mr A  
 Hoenig, Mr R  
 Lynch, Mr P  
 Mehan, Mr D  
 Park, Mr R  
 Scully, Mr P  
 Warren, Mr G  
 Zangari, Mr G

## PAIRS

Fraser, Mr A  
 Gibbons, Ms M  
 Rowell, Mr J  
 Wilson, Ms F

Cotsis, Ms S  
 Haylen, Ms J  
 Kamper, Mr S  
 Lalich, Mr N

**Motion agreed to.***Visitors***VISITORS**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I recognise in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon Peter Petty, Mayor of Tenterfield Shire, and Terry Dodds, General Manager of Tenterfield Shire Council.

*Motions Accorded Priority***NORTH COAST HEALTH SERVICES****Priority**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:43):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Supports the Government's record investment in hospitals and health services on the North Coast.
- (2) Notes that only the Liberals and Nationals have a track record of delivering health upgrades in rural and regional communities across the State.

It is interesting that Opposition members spent all of question time asking about stadiums and then they tried to move a motion accorded priority about stadiums. That tells me—and this was highlighted by the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services—that they do not care about health on the North Coast. Indeed, that was reflected by Labor's record on health services on the North Coast. When seeking to have this motion accorded priority, I spoke briefly about the 400 jobs in Health that Labor cut from the North Coast in 2009 when I was a nurse at the Port Macquarie Base Hospital.

I will talk shortly about the workforce and cuts that Labor made to the North Coast health service, but first I highlight some of the interesting health infrastructure projects. The Minister for Health referred to the record \$7.7 billion investment and the 70 projects currently underway across the State in health infrastructure, with 50 of

those being in regional communities. I refer now to some projects that have already been completed where the people of regional New South Wales, and specifically the North Coast, are reaping the benefits. The \$88 million new Byron Central Hospital and mental health unit were opened in 2016. Stage two of Grafton Base Hospital redevelopment was completed in 2012 at a cost of \$6 million. The Coraki Campbell HealthOne was completed in February 2017 at a cost of \$3.9 million while the Maclean District Hospital 10-bed subacute unit was completed in February 2014 at a cost of \$4 million. The Coffs Harbour Hospital received \$2.27 million for an interventional suite expansion that was completed in December 2017.

I highlight what is happening in the electorate of the Deputy Speaker. There has been unprecedented investment in health infrastructure. The New South Wales Government allocated \$20 million and the Commonwealth Government allocated \$80.25 million to the Lismore Base Hospital redevelopment stage 3A that enabled the hospital to have expanded emergency services and the completion of a new renal dialysis unit in August 2016. Lismore hospital car park was upgraded to a 270-space car park at a cost of \$9.27 million. The Kempsey District Hospital redevelopment was completed in October 2015 at a cost of \$81.9 million. The Port Macquarie Base Hospital expansion was completed in December 2014 at a cost of \$104 million, comprising expanded emergency services, six new operating suites, an expanded theatre recovery unit from eight beds to 34, a new cardiac catheterisation lab and new wards relocated to the paediatric ward.

The Government allocated \$20 million to the North Coast Cancer Institute, with \$4.75 million for a second linear accelerator at Port Macquarie Regional Cancer Centre, \$5.8 million for a magnetic resonance imaging [MRI] scanner at Coffs Harbour Regional Cancer Centre and \$9.52 million for a second linear accelerator and a positron emission tomography [PET]-computer tomography [CT] scanner at Lismore Regional Cancer Centre, completed in November 2012. As the Premier alluded to during question time, health, particularly in regional New South Wales, is not just about the bricks and mortar. Dental care has also received record investment. Total NSW Health expenditure for dental activity is \$229 million for 2017-18. This includes the New South Wales Government funding an extra \$10 million of new dental activity in 2017-18 on top of the additional \$10 million for new activity in 2016-17.

A number of rural and regional local health districts are receiving additional funding in 2017-18, including Northern New South Wales, \$1.2 million; Mid North Coast, \$1 million; Southern New South Wales, \$0.2 million; and Hunter New England, \$1.2 million. I will touch briefly on Aboriginal health. The New South Wales Ministry of Health is investing \$24.8 million in 2017-18 for 41 Aboriginal community-controlled health and related organisations to deliver health services across 44 different sites. The Government's commitment to the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector was enhanced in 2016-17 with almost \$1.52 million being invested into seven additional sites across New South Wales to deliver culturally safe and tailored health services to the communities of Condobolin, Dubbo, Griffith, Tamworth and Werin.

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (15:48):** It is great to have motions like this brought before the House because it provides an opportunity for the truth to be put on the record and for us to spell out the reality of living in rural and regional New South Wales. I refer to a report called "The Invisible Children" produced by Royal Far West, one of the State's oldest and most reputable charitable organisations that looks after children in rural and regional New South Wales. I am surprised that the member for Port Macquarie is a little outraged that I want to put the reality on the record because she, too, attended the launch of this report. The report states that one in three children in rural and remote New South Wales are unable to access the health services they need. This is the truth.

One in six children and adolescents in rural areas have mental health problems. The Deputy Premier spoke about what the Government is doing for health workers. The report states also that allied health workers in rural and remote areas serve a population at least five times greater than their metropolitan counterparts. This is what living in rural and regional New South Wales is like, not the glossy pictures that Government members bring in here every day, trying to tell us how good it is living in rural and remote areas. Lismore, Ballina and Tweed hospitals are at breaking point. It is not just Labor saying this; this is independent information from the Bureau of Health Information, which says record numbers of people are presenting to emergency departments at Lismore, Ballina and Tweed hospitals. The wait list for elective surgery is at an all-time high in the State.

This means that people wanting surgery for cataracts and knee and hip replacements are waiting a year or more for elective surgery. That is what it is like to live in rural and regional New South Wales in this State, not these big glossy, pretend, fake advertisements that Government members bring into the House each day. I was surprised that the member for Tweed and the member for Lismore support the stadium splurge. How is it possible, when it is clear that children in their communities are not able to access the health services they need, according to this report that was released at the end of last year?

Emergency departments are congested and the lists of people waiting for so-called elective surgery—surgery that is not urgent but makes an enormous difference in their lives by enabling them to leave their homes

and drive their cars so that they have some social inclusion—are now the longest they have ever been during the seven years the Coalition has been in government. I turn now to Tomaree Hospital in my electorate. We have had to fight for years to get even diagnostic capabilities onsite. We have only just got X-ray services onsite in the hospital but we still do not have ultrasound facilities, so people cannot get the diagnoses they need in the local area. The only upgrade under the Coalition's watch in my hospital has come from a bequest. When the emergency department upgrade was opened as a result of that bequest, who should open it but the former health Minister. She cut the ribbon to open an emergency department upgrade that the State Government did not even fund.

I turn now to privatisations. The Government was prepared to privatise five hospitals in rural and regional New South Wales. There was enormous community outrage. There was no disclosure leading up to the 2015 election that the Government was going to privatise health services. Labor knows that is the Government's agenda and that it cannot be trusted when it comes to the delivery of public health. That is why Labor will always put schools and hospitals before stadiums in Sydney.

**Mr Troy Grant:** Point of order: The member is misleading the House.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member's time has expired.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:54):** It is a pleasure to support my colleague the member for Port Macquarie on the magnificent record this Government has in investing in hospitals and health services on the North Coast. I have been here for a number of years—as has the Deputy Speaker, the member for Lismore—including for the 16 years of Labor government. The new Labor members come into the Chamber and shoot off their mouths about how great Labor is going to be. During the 16 years of Labor government, the North Coast was starved. Everything was promised up and down the coast, but nothing was delivered.

Under this Government Lismore has received more than \$300 million and Byron Bay, \$88 million. In the Clarence there are new health centres at Coraki and Evans Head, and money is being invested in Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour and Maxville. There are now great initiatives up and down the North Coast because there are finally funds available. The North Coast was starved under Labor. The member for Port Stephens has only been here a short time and does not know the reality. I suggest that those opposite check on Walt Secord, who is supposedly the shadow health Minister. He is loose with the truth. He is waste of space. He drags the Labor Party down time and time again.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** I have two points of order. My first point of order is that the member should address his comments through the chair. My second point of order relates to Standing Order 73: If the member is going to attack another member he should do so through a substantive motion.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** That is no point of order: Sit down. What a waste.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** He just called me a waste of space. I think he should withdraw it.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** I did not; I will not withdraw it. This Government has invested significantly in health up and down the coast. In the Tweed area there are currently 1,200 staff. When the new hospital is built it will have 2,500 staff. It is amazing. Prior to the 2015 election Labor came north and promised \$200 million to the Tweed Hospital. Guess what? Labor down here did not even list it as capital expenditure. It was a lie to the people of the Tweed. Labor continually lies to the people of New South Wales. It promises everything and delivers absolutely nothing.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Tweed will resume his seat. I direct the member for Maitland to remove herself from the Chamber for a period of 30 minutes.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Maitland left the Chamber at 15:55.]*

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 94. The member should sit down when I raise a point of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The time of the member for Tweed has expired.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (15:57):** There are 2.7 billion reasons that this motion is before the House: Every member of the National Party understands that \$2.7 billion spent on three stadiums in Sydney does nothing for health services on the North Coast.

**Mr Troy Grant:** Point of order: I ask the Chair to return the member to the leave of the motion. The motion he is speaking to was defeated by a vote. The motion we are debating is the priority motion on health.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have not heard enough of the member's speech to decide, but I will listen to what he has to say. The member has the motion in front of him.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** This motion is a representation of the fact that members of the National Party on the North Coast know that this Government's priorities are wrong when it comes to health. They know the money being spent on stadiums in Sydney could go towards health—the Minister for Police said it himself.

**Mr Troy Grant:** Point of order—

**Mr Chris Minns:** Excuse me? We will pull this stunt on you guys.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I will wait until the interjections cease before I hear the point of order.

**Mr Troy Grant:** I raise the same point of order. I ask the Chair to ask the member to return to the leave of the motion, which is a debate about the investment in health on the North Coast. It is not a debate about the stadium spend.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume his seat.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** Obviously the National Party is sensitive about health funding for the North Coast. The Minister for Police said earlier, during the division, that this debate is about "health before stadiums". If imitation is the greatest form of flattery, I thank him for adopting the Opposition's position. The motion notes the Government's record on health and hospital services on the North Coast. Let us have a look at it: Health and hospital services on the North Coast are at breaking point. The Lismore, Ballina and Tweed hospitals are under enormous pressure. The Bureau of Health Information's independent statistics reveal that in December last year that 40.5 per cent of patients at Lismore Base Hospital—that is, two out of every five patients—and 22 per cent of patients at Tweed Hospital, or one out of five patients, face delays of more than five hours in the emergency department. It gets better: This is the record of the National Party on the North Coast when it comes to health services— *[Time expired.]*

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:01):** In reply: I thank the members who contributed to the debate on the priority motion. I thank my "100 per cent for the Tweed" colleague, the member for Tweed, for his passionate speech about North Coast health. I have to point out Labor's record for health on the North Coast. When the Coalition came to Government it had to clean up the huge mess left by Labor. When Labor was in office, 50 per cent of the State's hospitals were more than 50 years old, and capital expenditure was cut in seven of the 16 years of Labor government.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Stop the clock. All members will cease interjecting. When there is silence in the Chamber we will continue.

**Mr Chris Minns:** You didn't stop the clock for us. That's not fair. I think it's a breach of your pre-existing bipartisanship.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Kogarah to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of one hour.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 16:02.]*

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS:** It was no wonder that this Government had so much catching up to do when it came to health on the North Coast. It has been highlighted that Labor promised, promised, promised but never delivered on regional hospitals such as Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Bega, Wagga Wagga and Dubbo. Who has built all those new hospitals? The Government has built all of those hospitals. Hospital performance was the focus of those opposite. As I said, it is not all about bricks and mortar but also how we perform. I take members to the statistics for the Mid North Coast Local Health District: elective surgery performed on time from July to September 2010 was 82.4 per cent. The member for Port Stephens is shaking her head, but this is the truth. Elective surgery performed on time from July to September 2017 was 98.4 per cent. For those leaving the emergency department within four hours: from July to September 2010, the figure is 60.5 per cent.

If we fast-forward to July to September 2017, the figure is 75.6 per cent. The figures speak for themselves. Labor had no idea when it came to delivering health infrastructure and health services on the North Coast. As I said earlier, it was an absolutely disgusting effort of the former Government to slash health spending during its final years of government. Labor slashed 400 North Coast health jobs—the vast majority of which were nurses who worked in life-saving areas such as intensive care, theatres, oncology and renal care. If members of the Opposition think they should be proud of that record, they need to come to the North Coast and tell them about it.

**Ms Kate Washington:** We had to buy back—

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS:** You did not have to buy it back. Do you want to debate the Port Macquarie Hospital? Bring it on. [*Time expired.*]

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the motion as moved by the member for Port Macquarie be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....46  
Noes .....32  
Majority..... 14

**AYES**

Anderson, Mr K	Aplin, Mr G	Ayres, Mr S
Berejiklian, Ms G	Bromhead, Mr S (teller)	Brookes, Mr G
Conolly, Mr K	Constance, Mr A	Cooke, Ms S
Coure, Mr M	Crouch, Mr A	Davies, Mrs T
Dominello, Mr V	Donato, Mr P	Elliott, Mr D
Evans, Mr A	Evans, Mr L	Goward, Ms P
Grant, Mr T	Griffin, Mr J	Gulaptis, Mr C
Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A	Humphries, Mr K
Kean, Mr M	Lee, Dr G	Maguire, Mr D
Marshall, Mr A	Notley-Smith, Mr B	O'Dea, Mr J
Patterson, Mr C (teller)	Pavey, Mrs M	Perrottet, Mr D
Petinos, Ms E	Provest, Mr G	Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J	Speakman, Mr M	Stokes, Mr R
Taylor, Mr M	Toole, Mr P	Tudehope, Mr D
Upton, Ms G	Ward, Mr G	Williams, Mr R
Williams, Mrs L		

**NOES**

Atalla, Mr E	Bali, Mr S	Barr, Mr C
Car, Ms P	Catley, Ms Y	Chanthivong, Mr A
Crakanthorp, Mr T	Daley, Mr M	Dib, Mr J
Doyle, Ms T (teller)	Finn, Ms J	Greenwich, Mr A
Harris, Mr D	Harrison, Ms J	Hoenig, Mr R
Hornery, Ms S	Leong, Ms J	Lynch, Mr P
McDermott, Dr H	McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D
Mihailuk, Ms T	Park, Mr R	Parker, Mr J
Piper, Mr G	Scully, Mr P	Smith, Ms T F
Tesch, Ms L	Warren, Mr G	Washington, Ms K
Watson, Ms A (teller)	Zangari, Mr G	

**PAIRS**

Barilaro, Mr J	Foley, Mr L
Fraser, Mr A	Lalich, Mr N
Gibbons, Ms M	Haylen, Ms J
Johnsen, Mr M	Kamper, Mr S
Rowell, Mr J	Cotsis, Ms S

**Motion agreed to.**

*Bills***SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2018****First Reading****Bill introduced on motion by Mr Brad Hazzard, read a first time and printed.****Second Reading Speech****Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research)****(16:11):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to bring the Smoke-free Environment Amendment Bill 2018 before the House. This bill proposes to amend the Smoke-free Environment Act and the Passenger Transport (General) Regulation to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in areas which are smoke-free areas for tobacco products. These changes would prohibit e-cigarettes from being used in certain public areas, as tobacco products currently are. In addition, the bill will amend the Public Health (Tobacco) Act to ensure that e-cigarette retailers are required to notify the Health Secretary, in the same way that tobacco retailers are. The bill is necessary as evidence is now emerging that there are potential health risks from the substances in e-cigarette vapours, even where there is no nicotine in the e-liquid.

This bill will introduce measures to minimise the known and possible risks of e-cigarettes through restricting second-hand exposure to e-cigarette vapour. The bill will help to establish norms about where it is acceptable to use these products before their use is more widespread. The popularity and use of e-cigarettes is growing across the world. Regulators everywhere are faced with the challenge of responding in a way that is balanced and proportionate to the potential risks and benefits of these products.

In 2017 the Chief Executive Officer of the National Health and Medical Research Council released an updated statement on e-cigarettes to assist the public in understanding the current evidence about the safety and efficacy of electronic cigarettes. It stated that e-cigarettes expose both users and bystanders to particle pollution that may worsen existing illnesses or increase the risk of developing cardiovascular or respiratory disease. Vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, people with cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and older people are more sensitive to the adverse health effects of particulate matter. E-cigarette vapours have been found to contain toxins, metals and chemicals. Some of these substances, like formaldehyde, are already known to cause cancer.

The New South Wales Government is acting now to protect vulnerable bystanders from passive exposure to vapour in places where they can least avoid it and in places and areas frequented by children and families—for instance, within 10 metres of children's play equipment, within four metres of an entrance to a public building, at public transport stops and stations and on a bus or on a train. I am also aware of concerns and evidence that e-cigarette use by young people may increase their risk of ever using cigarettes and act as a gateway to nicotine addiction.

A report in the United States by an expert committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine concluded that there is substantial evidence that e-cigarette use by youth and young adults increases their risk of ever using tobacco cigarettes. In New South Wales in 2015-16 the highest rates of past and current electronic cigarette use among adults was in young adults in the 16 to 24 age group. The use of e-cigarettes is visually similar to smoking cigarettes. The bill will help to reduce children and young people's exposure to the use of these products.

In New South Wales the rate of current e-cigarette users is low. Just 0.9 per cent of people 16 years and older were current e-cigarette users over the combined years of 2015 and 2016. However, e-cigarettes may become more popular in New South Wales in the future, as shown by the higher rate of use overseas. For example, there is a significantly higher rate of current e-cigarette users in Great Britain and the United States. It is important that we regulate now before the use of e-cigarettes becomes further entrenched in society.

Turning to the specifics of the bill, the bill amends the definitions of "smoke" in the Smoke-free Environment Act and the Passenger Transport (General) Regulation to include use of e-cigarettes. As a result, the prohibition of smoking in smoke-free areas will apply to the use of e-cigarettes. That means that it will be an offence to use e-cigarettes in enclosed public places and certain outdoor public places such as commercial outdoor dining areas, at passenger transport stops and on passenger transport vehicles, in children's playgrounds and within four metres of a public building. It will be an offence to vape in smoke-free areas, with a maximum penalty of \$550 or an on-the-spot fine of \$300. Importantly, the bill will bring New South Wales in line with Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. Those jurisdictions already regulate e-cigarettes to prohibit their use in smoke-free areas.

The Government recognises that prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes in all smoke-free areas may cause disruption to some e-cigarette retailers. This is particularly the case for e-cigarette only retailers that allow customers to sample their products in the store. These are stores that sell only e-cigarette products and currently do not allow minors to enter. They are stores where people go with the sole purpose of buying e-cigarette products. As such, the bill will allow for the Health secretary to exempt a person, or class of persons, from the prohibitions of using e-cigarettes on the premises of an e-cigarette retailer.

This is a limited exemption power which applies only to the use of e-cigarettes on e-cigarette only retailer premises. There will be no ability to exempt the smoking of tobacco products in smoke-free areas. I understand that there are currently about 12 retailers who sell e-cigarette products and it is part of their retail model to allow people to vape on the premises. While I would have been more than happy to have taken action in this regard, advice from the Ministry of Health was that it was more appropriate to allow current retailers to continue that practice. We are not keen for any new retailers to begin to operate along the same lines.

The bill will also amend the Public Health (Tobacco) Act to require retailers that sell e-cigarette and e-cigarette accessories to notify the Health secretary of their premises. This will ensure that e-cigarette retailers are subject to the same notification requirements as tobacco retailers. The notification requirements will enable NSW Health to check retailer compliance with existing requirements for selling e-cigarettes such as restrictions on e-cigarette advertising and display, the ban on selling e-cigarettes and accessories to people under 18 years old, and the ban on selling liquid nicotine. Notification is simple and easy and requires retailers to complete a short online form. Registering with NSW Health does not involve a fee and should take only 15 to 30 minutes via the online form.

Retailers will be able to get help with making the notification by calling the NSW Health Tobacco Information line. Any retailers selling tobacco or non-tobacco smoking products are already required to register, and if they sell e-cigarettes they need only to update their existing registration to show that they are selling e-cigarettes. I am aware that some people see e-cigarettes as a quit smoking aid, although the Therapeutic Goods Administration has not approved any e-cigarette products as a quit smoking aid. This bill is not about banning e-cigarettes or impacting on the availability of such products. Rather, it is about limiting the effects of e-cigarettes on those who are not using them. In areas where members of the public congregate, people who do not use e-cigarettes should not have to breathe in the vapour when there is evidence that it contains particulate matter that may harm their health.

This is a significant step forward. As Minister for Health, I have visited many research institutes where researchers have made it clear to me that they are broadly concerned about a range of things to do with e-cigarettes. One researcher looking into vaping reported that in his view people who vaped were effectively smoking the equivalent of antifreeze and colour. He advised that manufacturers use about 500 colours to make the devices attractive to young people in particular but that the actual substance is like antifreeze. I understand there are a range of scientific views across the world; that is the nature of science. In my view, it is incumbent upon this Government—like it was on governments in four other States—to operate on the precautionary principle and exercise its duty of care to the community. We must make sure that individuals who do not wish to vape are not exposed to e-cigarette fumes.

I stress again that this bill will not stop anybody from vaping in New South Wales. It only says to people who vape that they cannot do it in spaces where people are currently not allowed to smoke cigarettes. This bill is about keeping the vulnerable safe. In my view as Minister for Health, it is unfair that pregnant women and their unborn babies should be exposed to vaping fumes. Those with cardiovascular disease, respiratory diseases or those with asthma like me should not be exposed to these products. As I said, the Government acknowledges the right of individuals to smoke and vape as long as it does not harm others. This legislation will simply make sure that they cannot harm others. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

### **First Reading**

**Bill received from the Legislative Council, introduced and read a first time.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** I order that the second reading of the bill stand an order of the day for a future day.

**LIQUOR AND GAMING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018**  
**CASINO CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2018**  
**GAMING MACHINES AMENDMENT (LEASING AND ASSESSMENT) BILL 2018**  
**REGISTERED CLUBS AMENDMENT (ACCOUNTABILITY AND AMALGAMATIONS) BILL 2018**

**Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 6 March 2018.**

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (16:24):** I lead for the Opposition in debate on the cognate bills before the House—namely, the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. I state at the outset that the Opposition will not oppose these bills or move any amendments in the Legislative Assembly—although one never can tell what will happen in the other place. Much has been said recently about the effect of the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and some of media coverage relating to it has been inaccurate. The most significant amendments to the bill relate to the trading of poker machines or, more accurately, the classification of areas and zones for the trading of poker machines in local government areas [LGAs].

The Opposition is proud that the local impact assessment scheme for the trading of poker machine entitlements—gaming machine entitlements—was introduced by a Labor government in 2009. That scheme allows for hotels to sell gaming machines to hotels, and clubs to sell gaming machines to clubs. There is no cross-pollination; trading between hotels and clubs is not allowed. Significantly, for every three machines traded, one machine is forfeited. Various figures have been nominated but we estimate that between 5,600 and 5,800 machines have been removed from operation in New South Wales. This legislation deals with the local impact assessment scheme—the mechanism for clubs and hotels to seek an increase in the gaming machine entitlement that they are allowed to operate. Given the forfeiture regime, the number of gaming machines can never increase; it can only decrease. I note that the Minister addressed in his second reading speech the number of gaming machines that have been forfeited in New South Wales.

One of the reforms inherent in this legislation, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018, implements recommendations from a review by the department into the scheme. The scheme significantly reduces the size of community boundaries by an amendment to the Act, replacing local government areas with local statistical areas for the purpose of classifying areas for the local impact assessment process. The Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority [ILGA] ranks these areas and will now rank statistical area level 2 [SA2] according to three factors: the number of gaming machines per capita in the SA2; expenditure per capita from gaming machine revenue in the SA2; and the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas [SEIFA] in the SA2. This will provide greater weight of socio-economic factors. We support that reclassification of the areas.

This bill creates gaming machine "red zones"—where there will be no further net increases into the so-called high-risk areas. Importantly, new section 32A grants the ILGA the power, conditional upon a recommendation of the Government. The ILGA, of course, is independent. The bill grants it the power to prescribe a cap on the number of gaming machines to be operated in an area. I note and welcome the announcement that attended the introduction of this legislation that the Fairfield local government area has been prescribed. This is something for which Mr Frank Carbone, Mayor of Fairfield, and the councillors of Fairfield City Council campaigned. The aim of this newly amended legislation is to give the ILGA the power to prevent the movement of gaming machines into areas where there is a high risk of gambling-related harm. Because the authority is independent it will exercise discretion. However, the Fairfield local government area will be subject to the cap.

The bill makes welcome reforms to the role that communities play in the decision-making of the ILGA in respect of gaming machines in any given area. The bill amends community consultation requirements under the Gaming Machines Regulation 2010. We agree with the Government that it provides greater transparency and increased consultation and, amongst other things, minimum consultation requirements are now strengthened in the bill. There are also welcome provisions that prescribe financial contributions made by revenues as part of the local impact assessment process and that will require payments to be made into the Responsible Gambling Fund, and that is to be supported.

There have been recent contentions that the new classification of areas under SA2s will make it easier for gaming machines to move into high-risk areas. However, I do not believe that to be the case. In my electorate—the local government boundary of Randwick City Council—there is great wealth but there are also pockets of disadvantage. I will not name them but I think I have the third or fourth highest population of public housing tenants in the State. Under the current regime, our area of Randwick City Council, our LGA, is classed as a

low-risk area. Pockets in my electorate that are high-risk areas will now be classified as red zones. They will be SA2s and there will be no net increase of gaming machines in that area. I am open to all views but I do not believe that the contentions in the media over the past few days are true, which is one of the reasons why the Opposition is supporting this legislation. Another feature in the bill relates to the leasing of gaming machines. In his second reading speech the Minister said:

While the trading scheme has secured an overall reduction in the number of gaming machines, it has also produced some unintended outcomes. For small pubs and clubs, gaming machine entitlements are often one of their key assets, but can often also be an asset with low returns. These small pubs and clubs are often required to hold on to their entitlements, despite the ability to sell them, as the entitlements are used to underwrite loans to the venue to help keep the doors open, and to continue to provide social benefits to the community. I have been a director of a club. Unfortunately, in the past seven or eight years probably 10 clubs in the eastern suburbs, including the Randwick Rugby Club, Bronte RSL Club, Coogee Airmen's Club, Mascot RSL Club and many others have closed. The Minister said that since 2011 there have been more than 80 club closures in New South Wales and it is concerning that 10 per cent were in my area. I make no apology for saying that I think the closure of a club is an unmitigated disaster. When a club goes broke it does not help those who hate poker machines because the machines are traded back into the scheme. There may be some small forfeitures. Jobs are lost when clubs close and the economic spinoff from those closures includes the jobs of food and beverage suppliers, cleaners, dry cleaners, et cetera.

Clubs are great employers. Many young people get their first job in a club—even I got my first job at the Randwick Labor Club at 18 years of age. My dad worked part-time for about 27 years in a club. He intended to work two or three nights a week for a couple of years when my sister was young but it ended up being many more years than that. As I said, I have been a director of a club and in the well-to-do pockets of the eastern suburbs like Coogee, which I know well, people do not play poker machines. We had about 25 poker machines at the Randwick Rugby Club that no-one played. We did not want to get rid of them because they were assets on our balance sheet that supported loans for smoking modifications and things like that. That club is now gone but I would have loved the opportunity to lease those machines out for some cashflow to keep it alive.

This regime will allow small pubs with 10 machines or less and clubs with 30 machines or less to lease out those entitlements. Pubs and clubs often have loans and the banks will not let them get rid of these machines because they are listed as assets on the balance sheets of those clubs. Poker machines often provide a very small amount of revenue. Time and again pubs and clubs in debt make the mistake of drip-feeding machines one after the other to chase their debt. That keeps them alive for only a number of years. Finally, when they have nothing left and all is wasted, the clubs close their doors.

This regime will allow those pubs and clubs to keep those machines as assets on their balance sheets to give them much-needed cashflow and keep them alive. Labor unreservedly supports this provision. This will not provide a backdoor way of getting around the trading regime because leased machines will form part of the local impact assessment process and the red, green and amber bands that sit over the top of trading will still apply to leased machines. Also the lock-out laws in inner city areas have seen a mix in the demographics and some venues no longer want poker machines. Some of those small pubs and clubs will lease their machines out and offer other food and beverage experiences to continue to get the cashflow—for example, in my area young mums and dads are now bringing their children along to a safe and secure area in which to play, to colour in or to watch *Dora the Explorer* on the big screen in a room that formerly housed poker machines.

The reforms in the Registered Clubs Amendment Accountability and Amalgamations Bill 2018 address the commitments made by the New South Wales Government to review club accountability in relation to amalgamations, particularly the merger and demerger framework. From 2015 to 2017 Liquor & Gaming NSW undertook reviews of the club accountability and the amalgamation framework requirements. Many industry stakeholders were engaged. The bill will strengthen the disciplinary power of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

Currently, if a transgression is identified by the ILGA the Act provides for disciplinary action to be taken against the club. It is well known that there can be rogue elements within an organisation who engage in inappropriate conduct, yet the people on the governing side of the organisation are aware of such conduct. New section 57F will allow the ILGA to take disciplinary action directly against the secretary or a member of the governing body of a club. The proposed monetary penalty of \$11,000 is significant. A person may also be ruled ineligible from holding an employed position with a club for a period exercised by the ILGA with discretion. Those penalty provisions align with other regulatory provisions in relation to clubs.

I turn now to mergers. According to ClubsNSW, up to 30 per cent of clubs in New South Wales are experiencing financial distress, particularly in the current environment where housing affordability is an issue and there is less disposable income. The regime introduced by the Labor Government allowed for clubs to merge in order for them to survive, particularly smaller clubs. Last year Liquor & Gaming NSW undertook a review of the effectiveness of those merger and demerger provisions and, as I have said, this bill deals with changes to those provisions. Section 17AH of the Registered Clubs Regulation will be amended by the cognate bills to remove the

50 kilometres radius for mergers. This will allow for clubs to search for viable mergers across the State—a particularly attractive proposition for regional clubs.

In my area I have seen larger clubs, particularly RSL clubs, rescue smaller clubs. For example, the Randwick Club and the Juniors Kingsford have rescued smaller clubs that were on the verge of collapsing. I am proud to have been a member of a former Government that introduced that provision. If it were not for that provision, if larger clubs that are in the club business for the right reasons, had not rescued—and that is an appropriate word—smaller clubs, the lights would be off in those clubs and blocks of units would be standing in their place. Those clubs are thriving under the expertise, increased resources and critical mass as a result of the amalgamations. Currently, provisions exist that restrict the parent club from taking over a smaller club, cherrypicking assets and disposing of them. Sensible amendments contained in this legislation clarify and improve those provisions.

The changes inherent in the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 aim to secure a strong focus on risk, which I spoke about earlier, relating to provisions covering the misdeeds of governing bodies and senior club employees. The bill provides more consistent penalties for offences across liquor and gaming legislation. The bill will amend the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007 to ensure that restrictions placed on post-employment activities of liquor and gaming officials are risk based. That is a sensible amendment. Currently, the Act contains provisions to allow certain employees of the Liquor and Gaming Regulator to be identified as key officials and for a post-separation provision to be placed on what happens after they have left that employment. Those restrictions, which are analogous to provisions in a whole range of industries—Ministers have similar restrictions in this Parliament—are intended to ensure the integrity of regulation and reduce the scope for conflicts of interest, perceived or real. The restrictions address the risk associated with post-separation, activities and we believe that is a sensible amendment.

Another welcome amendment contained in the bill is for consistency of penalties across liquor and gaming legislation to ensure that penalties by certain operators are not seen as mere trifling or business expenses and tax deductions. It has been found in certain cases, where offences have been identified and prosecutions brought, that the penalties in the Act have not acted as sufficient deterrents. The Minister cited examples of online wagering operators facing a maximum penalty of \$5,500 per offence for offering inducements to gamble. He outlined that the gain the operators stand to make from that behaviour is worth the risk and that they continue to engage in such activity, despite the best efforts of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority. The penalties for those sorts of offences will be increased to \$55,000 for corporations and \$5,000 for individuals. Given the proliferation of betting institutions, that is not an inappropriate response.

This legislation addresses loopholes by placing beyond doubt that it is an offence to publish or communicate, or cause to be published or communicated, any gambling advertisement that may be accessible to a person in New South Wales, which, among other things, includes an inducement to participate in any gambling activity. A reference to "inducement" in this respect includes an inducement that involves an offer that is not available to persons resident in New South Wales, but does not include an inducement published or communicated directly to a person who already has a betting account with a particular betting service provider. For example, gambling advertisements that offer a sign-up bonus, but include a disclaimer that it is not available to residents in New South Wales, will now be prohibited.

There are also provisions that relate to the conduct of both casinos. These changes include: amending the existing statutory review requirements of casino licensees and operators to provide for a review of Crown Sydney's licence to occur three years after it commences operation and for it to be conducted concurrently with the next review of The Star; removing unnecessary requirements and restrictions with respect to control contracts; increasing the use of internal controls, that is, for casino special employee identification and the changing of the layout of gaming areas, aligning risk and the level of oversight required; providing a performance-based rather than a specification-based approach to monitoring of surveillance equipment and operations; expanding exclusion order powers of the Commissioner of Police—which is welcome; and allowing the automatic licensing of security guards who are licensed under the Security Industry Act 1997.

In addition, the bill contains provisions that relate to competitive neutrality between The Star and Crown Sydney. If there are to be two casinos, it would be a nonsense not to have competitive neutrality. Provisions in relation to indoor smoking exemptions for The Star's private gaming area will apply to Crown Sydney, as will the process for changing the layout of gaming areas. If some members are prohibitionist and think there should no poker machines in New South Wales, I am sorry, but I do not agree with them. These bills provide some sensible mechanisms. They are not groundbreaking or huge reforming legislation; they are a tidy up. Some of the measures in the bills are very good, others are inconsequential. We believe there is nothing exceptional in the amendments contained in this legislation, and the Opposition supports the bills.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:52):** I speak on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. I highlight in particular the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Amendment) Bill 2018 and the reinforcing of the investigative powers of Liquor & Gaming NSW contained in the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill. On many occasions in this place I have put on record that before entering politics I spent 27 years as a licensee. I worked in some of the major clubs in Sydney, including the Georges River Sailing Club in Botany Bay and the famous Revesby Workers, or The Workers, in Revesby—it is still a good club and I have friends there. When I was assistant manager at the club, Pat Rogan was the local member for East Hills for many years and was well respected, particularly in Labor circles. Following that, I ended up at Tweed Heads Bowls Club for a number of years. In all venues, particularly Revesby and the Tweed Heads Bowls Club, there were a large number of gaming machines. I lived through an era of regulation coming in slowly.

**Mr Ryan Park:** The old pull machines—

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** The old pull machines, the old springs. I note that the member for Maroubra was a "glassie". When I was working at Revesby Workers' Club and the sailing club I cleaned ashtrays, I cleaned toilets and I picked up glasses. But we used to refer to them as "swabbies". I was a "swabby", and I was very proud of it. Eventually, I was promoted and the rest is history. What has been concerning me a great deal is that anything to do with gaming and liquor will attract various lobby groups. Back in the mid-90s I experienced this with the "axe the tax" campaign. A lot of claims are misleading and ill-informed and are made to create fear; fear among patrons and fear among the general community.

I can speak about clubs significantly. Clubs fill an important role in our social fabric, particularly in New South Wales. There would not be a little town in Australia without an RSL. I ended up a life member of Bowls Australia, the national body. There are not too many of us. I am probably one of the few remaining. I am very proud of what clubs do to support the community. I think members from both sides would acknowledge the input of their local clubs—RSL clubs, bowls club, golf clubs and so on. They support their communities in times of need. Most clubs are disaster refuges. If there is a cancer sufferer or some tragedy in the town, people usually end up at the local club.

I am the first to acknowledge that problem gambling exists, but to my professional knowledge and from what I have seen in the industry it affects 10 to 20 per cent of the population. Of the people that I have seen 80 per cent gamble in a responsible manner and I see that continuing. I see many pressures on the flutter money, the gambling money. The real evil one I see in the gaming industry—I am glad that new enforcement powers are coming—is online gaming. All the clubs I have known and worked in strive to ensure that all their staff have responsible service of gaming certificates and responsible service of alcohol certificates, and work under supervision.

I have issued self-exclusion notices for some of my customers. I have referred people to problem gambling associations and dealt with it. But, the real evil is online gaming. I can gamble with my credit card under no supervision. I can gamble in a casino somewhere overseas. I can be subject to inducements. There are no age provisions—there is no nothing. Online gaming is a terrible minefield. However, what the Minister is doing with this legislation is very responsible.

Leasing will not increase the number of poker machines. My electorate probably has one of the highest concentration of gaming machines. It kicked off with all of our Queensland visitors who crossed the border. The majority of my electorate is a red area, as is 20 per cent of the State. That is an enormous amount. Therefore, no more machines can go into those areas. An area in my electorate called Tumbulgum has a little hotel that has four or five poker machines. This time last year it was flooded out. The residents of Tumbulgum believe this legislation is a godsend. It will keep them alive. The Condong Bowling Club, which was flooded with a metre and a half of water, will continue trading as a result of this legislation.

I will now restrict my contribution to the enhancement of the investigation and enforcement powers of Liquor & Gaming NSW, which are included in the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. It is proposed that Liquor & Gaming NSW existing powers for conducting investigations of hotels, clubs and the casino will be extended to wagering operators and public lotteries. These proposed amendments are directed at promoting consistency and certainty for industry participants, as well as ensuring that Liquor & Gaming NSW has an appropriate tool to investigate serious breaches of gaming legislation.

The amendments will allow compliance officers who are investigating possible offences under the Betting and Racing Act 1998, the Totalizator Act 1997, or Public Lotteries Act 1996 to question people and require that information or records be provided. Compliance officers will have their powers extended to enter and search premises. As a result of the passage of time and the rapidly changing environment of the gaming sector, the regulator's enforcement powers have not kept pace with industry trends and advances in technology. This is

particularly the case in the online wagering space where there is clearly a need to update the enforcement powers provided by the Betting and Racing Act 1998.

Without proper investigative powers Liquor & Gaming NSW is unable to effectively enforce the requirements of the Act, including the prohibition on the advertising of gambling inducements, which risks industry misconduct not being addressed effectively. These changes will complement other proposed amendments in the bill, which will include an increase in maximum penalties for certain offences and the clarification of director liability for offences committed by a corporation. Where it is appropriate, the regulator's investigative and enforcement powers are updated and made sufficient for the purpose. It is important that an individual's rights are not trampled in the rush to efficiency. I am pleased to note that the amendments include a clear protection against self-incrimination for individuals. The bill provides that a person may refuse to answer a question if giving information may incriminate them.

This goes beyond merely protecting the person from an answer being used against them in proceedings and works to protect the privilege of self-incrimination. This will ensure an appropriate balance between investigating and prosecuting serious offences with the need to protect individuals from self-incrimination where they are compelled to answer questions. Liquor & Gaming NSW already has the capacity to compel witnesses under most of its Acts—powers that always have been used appropriately and responsibly. The proposal is to extend these powers to the remaining legislation. I think these are very important amendments. I compliment the Minister.

A number of key stakeholders—ClubsNSW and the Australian Hotels Association NSW—support the legislation. ClubsNSW will save the little clubs. I note the member for Maroubra spoke about a number of lost clubs. I lost the Tweed Aquatic Club and the Tweed Rowing Club. I have lost the Terranora Country Club. I have lost a number of major clubs, which has had a massive effect on the towns. Without clubs, the little old ladies who go to the club to play bingo would have a very big hole in their social lives. We should remember that they worked very hard to get where they are and it gives them a little enjoyment. I am 100 per cent committed to the club industry and to the Tweed.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:59):** I contribute to debate on the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and cognate bills. This is a suite of four bills. First, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 implements recommendations from the Liquor & Gaming NSW review into Labor's 2009 Local Impact Assessment scheme under the Gaming Machines Act 2001, including changes to the classification of communities, consultation requirements, and transfer of gaming entitlements. It also introduces a gaming machine leasing scheme for small clubs and hotels.

Secondly, the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 standardises the regulatory powers for liquor and gaming, changes penalties for certain liquor- and gaming-related offences, updates post-employment restrictions for officials, and makes minor amendments to liquor and gaming legislation. Thirdly, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018 implements the aspects of the Government's response to the Casino Modernisation Review report that requires amendments to the Casino Control Act 1992.

Predominantly, the bill updates regulatory controls by removing prescriptive requirements, standardises controls across The Star and Crown casinos, and implements minor gambling harm minimisation measures. Lastly, the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018 implements recommendations from reviews into the registered clubs accountability amalgamation framework under the Registered Clubs Act 1976, including implementing a co-regulatory approach for the accountability of clubs with the industry body, ClubsNSW, and streamlining the clubs merger and demerger process.

I focus in particular on the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 as there are areas in my electorate that will be classified as high risk under the Local Impact Assessment Scheme and will be impacted by the bill. The bill changes the area to which local impact assessment [LIA] bands relate. Current legislation, introduced by Labor in 2009, provides for a scheme of local impact assessments being required for the transfer of gaming machine entitlements. The purpose of the LIA is to support community consultation and enable the Independent Gaming and Liquor Authority [ILGA] to determine the impact of transferring entitlements to a community, in particular, high-risk and medium-risk areas.

Whether an LIA is required is determined according to the ranking band of the area and the scale of the request. Currently, all local government areas are ranked in bands by the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority according to socio-economic status, machine expenditure and machine density into low density/band 1/green, mid-risk/ band 2/amber and high-risk/band 3/red. This bill provides for a local impact assessment rather than being done on a local government areas basis—with the exception of Fairfield—to being done on a much smaller statistical area level 2 [SA2], representing areas of between 3,000 and 25,000 people.

The bill also gives the ILGA the power to cap movement of machines into all band 3 SA2s as well as Fairfield LGA, preventing the movement of machines from outside bands into these high-risk areas. In assessing the risk of each SA2, greater weight will be given to socio-economic factors when determining the risk banding. Currently the weighting is spread equally across socio-economic factors based on Socio-Economic Indexes for Area [SEIFA], gaming machine density and machine expenditure. The bill provides a 70 per cent SEIFA, 15 per cent machine density and 15 per cent machine expenditure weighting. This means that under the new scheme, the ILGA will give extra weighting to disadvantage when determining SA2 banding.

Produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage is an index that reflects broad levels of disadvantage in a given area. It measures and weighs a wide range of variables, many of which go beyond economic circumstances, including the proportion of people with stated household income less than \$20,799 per year, percentage of people aged 15 years and over whose highest level of education is year 11 or lower, percentage of people in the labour force who are unemployed, percentage of employed people classified as machinery operators and drivers, percentage of people who do not own a car, percentage of people under the age of 70 who have a long-term health condition and need assistance with core activities, percentage of occupied private dwellings paying rent less than \$166 per week, percentage of people aged 15 years and over who are separated or divorced, percentage of employed people classified as low skill community and personal service workers, percentage of people aged 15 years and over who have no educational attainment and percentage of people who do not speak English well.

All these are reflected in areas of socio-economic disadvantage. Under the bill quite disadvantaged areas in my electorate will be classified as band 3 communities that would be subject to a gaming machine cap. The bill proposes that due to these suburbs being classified as high risk, no additional gaming machines will be allowed in pubs and clubs in these suburbs in an attempt to crack down on problem gambling. The subject of gaming machines often is one that is hotly discussed. Gambling addiction is an issue faced by many, and I would be surprised if anyone in this place did not know someone with a gambling addiction of some sort.

I do not understand the attraction of gaming machines. I have not been a big supporter of putting money into gaming machines in my local pubs or clubs; I can count on one hand the number of times I have played machines over my life. However, poker machines are easily accessible in every community and internet gambling is increasingly a cause for concern. The University of Sydney's Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic is currently undertaking research into several aspects of gambling addiction, some of which I am pleased to see is being funded by ClubsNSW. Those areas of concern include "The influence of features of the online environment on risk taking: Unravelling the impact of social cues", "Multi-Venue Self-Exclusion", "Electronic Gaming Machine study", "Daily Fantasy Sports in Australia", "Problem gambling prevention in young adults and adolescents", "What does it mean to recover from a gambling disorder?" and "Empirical evaluation of the ClubsNSW Chaplaincy Program.

I acknowledge that many schemes are in place for problem gamblers, but often techniques are used by venues to keep punters engaged. For example, often pokies areas are fully smoking and table service is available. Therefore, I do not believe that this amendment will rapidly reduce the total number of machines in New South Wales, nor will it rapidly reduce harm to people and communities caused by problem gambling. However, it is a step in the right direction. I, along with my NSW Labor colleagues, believe reduction of social inequality should be an overarching goal of policymaking and recognised as a key measure of our progress as a society. It is a widely accepted fact that poker machines are readily available. Presently there is one poker machine for every 114 people in Australia. Current annual poker machine losses in Australia are the highest in New South Wales at nearly \$1,000 per adult. These figures are very high by world standards.

The losses by Australians on poker machines outside of casinos dwarfed those of any other comparable country. They are 2.4 times greater than those of our nearest rival, Italy. These losses are even more anomalous when compared with non-casino gambling machines in other English-speaking countries. Australians lose three times more than New Zealanders, 4.1 times more than Canadians, 6.4 times more than the Irish, 7.5 times more than the British and 9.8 times more than Americans. While thankfully fewer people are playing the pokies, the amount of money lost per gambler has remained relatively constant and this amount appears very high. The amount lost per pokie gambler just in pubs and clubs in New South Wales is approximately \$3,500 per year or approximately \$65 per week. To put that into context, that is more than the cost of top hospital cover for a family for a year.

It is obvious that regulatory reforms are required to reduce the amount of losses for pokie gamblers in New South Wales. This legislation goes some way to reducing the risk being experienced by those who can least afford it. Other proposed measures in the cognate bills that I have not dealt with in detail, but I welcome, include increases in fines for gambling operators who offer illegal inducements, a lease scheme to help small hotels and clubs work towards becoming free of gaming machines yet remain financially viable and tougher penalties for

club directors found to have done the wrong thing. This legislation is not earth-shattering and it certainly will not fix all the ills associated with problem gambling. However, it is a number of small steps in the right direction and I support Labor's position in not opposing the bills.

*Visitors*

**VISITORS**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin):** I welcome to the public gallery visitors to the Parliament who are attending A Little Night Sitting, which is a program conducted Parliamentary Education.

*Bills*

**LIQUOR AND GAMING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

**CASINO CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

**GAMING MACHINES AMENDMENT (LEASING AND ASSESSMENT) BILL 2018**

**REGISTERED CLUBS AMENDMENT (ACCOUNTABILITY AND AMALGAMATIONS) BILL 2018**

**Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:13:0):** Problem gambling can have serious community impacts, with disastrous costs for those affected including lost homes and jobs, financial ruin and broken families. The 2010 Productivity Commission Report on gambling found that between 80,000 and 160,000 Australian adults suffer from a significant gambling problem and a further 230,000 to 350,000 are vulnerable. It estimated that problem gamblers account for 22 per cent to 60 per cent of gaming machine spending, which increases to 42 per cent to 75 per cent when combined with use by moderate-risk gamblers. New South Wales residents spend the most on gaming machines in the country, with \$5.4 billion each year going into machines. That is more than double what Victorians spend, which is \$2.5 billion each year, the next largest in the country. Australia has more gaming machines than any other country in the world and the largest number of problem gamblers.

Indeed, New South Wales alone has more gaming machines than anywhere else in the world except Nevada in the United States. In fact, the 94,000 machines plus in New South Wales account for 10 per cent of the world's poker machines. There is a growing body of evidence proving how electronic gaming machines are addictive. The sounds and flashing lights from wins stimulate pleasure in the brain, and machines use those sounds and lights to invoke that pleasure even when there are losses known as "near misses" and "losses disguised as wins", which encourages punters to keep playing and develop a habit.

The odds are always stacked against the player, and the more one plays, the more one loses. A regular gambler will ultimately lose significantly more than they will win. With this State being the gaming machine and problem gambling capital, one would think that a detailed update of our gaming legislation would introduce reforms to start winding back the damage that gaming causes and to reduce the State's reliance on gaming machines for revenue. Unfortunately the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills before the House will continue the status quo and thousands of vulnerable people will continue to be at risk of considerable gaming losses.

The bills are long and were introduced only last week. Detailed bills should sit on the table for more than a week to give members the opportunity to consult with experts and their communities. I have not had the chance to thoroughly assess the bills. Therefore, my contribution will be brief. I acknowledge that the bills include some good improvements to local impact assessments such as extended consultation periods, smaller assessment regions, red zones, new notification requirements and the requirement that clubs contribute to the Responsible Gambling Fund. Those provisions merely tweak the laws of this destructive industry. Improvements may even be offset by other measures in the bills that reduce regulations for clubs and pubs with poker machines. The community is particularly concerned about new provisions that allow small pubs and clubs to lease out their gaming machine entitlements, allowing them to transfer machines without forfeiting them.

In his second reading speech the Minister said that since 2002 the forfeiture system has reduced the number of gaming machines in this State by more than 8,000. This is not a large reduction given the period and the large number of machines in the State. Legislation should not create loopholes to make the system even less effective. Anti-gambling campaigner Tim Costello has likened the gambling industry to the National Rifle Association in the United States. The harm to the community is blatantly obvious, but industry lobbies both sides of politics aggressively so that nothing changes. We hear more about the work that clubs do in the community with a small fraction of their massive poker machine profits than the devastating impacts gambling has on

vulnerable people. We know that people who rent, live alone, receive social security payments or are migrants are most likely to develop a gaming machine problem. There must be a fairer way to collect funds for social infrastructure, but it is hard to see how anything will change. One day I hope this Parliament will give gambling harm the attention it deserves and support reforms that scale back this destructive industry so that our most vulnerable are protected.

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (17:17:0):** I speak in debate to the cognate bills: the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. For those in the gallery, those bills are in the Chamber. They are available online and make fascinating reading.

The gaming industry reforms in the cognate bills are a step in the right direction but they are only a small step towards addressing the chronic issue of problem gambling in this State. I acknowledge the Minister with carriage of the bills is present in the Chamber. I also acknowledge that it is not an easy sector to legislate. It is difficult for this Government to set policy because for many years the gaming industry has inextricably linked its fortunes to the gambling sector. I agree with the member for Sydney and I hope that in time we will have a government that will bring about changes to wind back the excesses of the gaming industry. Hopefully it will be done with the help of the industry but more than likely the industry will be kicking and screaming. It is hard to see how these reforms will effectively address issues such as suicide, family breakdown and associated domestic violence, personal financial disasters and the levels of social harm that are seated in the community as a result of our addiction to gambling.

I turn now to the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I acknowledge the Minister and the Government are proposing genuine reforms in the bill such as identifying problem areas and capping the number of poker machine licences in those areas. That is not the level of reform that is needed. I acknowledge the Minister's assurance that the number of poker machine licences in the State will only decrease as a result of the forfeiture requirements in the new legislation. I trust that is true. However, those reforms do not stem the scourge of problem gambling and are not significant enough to make a difference.

Capping poker machine numbers in a band 3 statistical area [SA] 2 such as Fairfield, but increasing the number in a band 1 SA2 area is a bit like shifting the problem from one area to another. No doubt a problem gambler will find a way to gamble somewhere, whether it is in Fairfield, the bigger poker palace 10 kilometres away, the casino at Pyrmont, or one of the countless pubs and clubs in our electorates around the State. I acknowledge that the bill provides an incentive for pubs to go pokies free. I imagine many premises would take up that opportunity if it is available.

Currently every pub and club in my electorate houses poker machines. Some licensees admit there is a problem, which creates unwanted operational problems in small pubs and clubs. I understand that clubs and pubs in the community employ hundreds, if not thousands of people. They provide entertainment, support sporting and cultural groups, and are hubs for get-togethers with family, friends and neighbours. I know some pubs and clubs would operate without poker machines if they could. Poker machines are still a significant player in the gaming industry, which has a significant downside that must be addressed.

Other speakers in this debate have mentioned the figures on the gaming industry—they are undisputed facts that must be reiterated. Incredibly, Australia has 0.3 per cent of the world's population but 20 per cent of the world's poker and gaming machines. More than 200,000 poker machines are located in Australia, and more than half of those are located in New South Wales. That is not the fault of this Minister or any particular government. It is now a struggle to unwind the gaming model that has developed. Three in every four problem gamblers have that problem because of poker machines in our clubs and pubs. In fact, 94,000 poker machines are located in what we call neighbourhood pubs and clubs. Problem gambling plays a role in as many as 20 per cent of all suicides. The gradual destruction of a problem gambler's life affects seven other people, mostly through financial hardship and disintegration of the family unit. More than 2,000 poker machines are located in Lake Macquarie, which equates to approximately one per 100 people.

In the 12 months prior to August last year, more than \$1.15 billion was gambled through those machines, delivering to their owners a profit of \$102 million—in other words, delivering a \$102 million loss to the people who played them. Unfortunately, I know some of those people. The Australian Tax Office made almost \$19 million out of those unlucky punters, and that is just in my area. Gambling counsellors in my electorate have recounted many horror stories associated with problem gambling. Last week, one counsellor saw 13 new clients in my local area alone, all of whom had sought help for their addiction to poker machines. As she informed us, these addicts only seek help when they reach rock bottom, are facing financial crisis, or their family has left.

*[Extension of time]*

The counsellor also told me about a 19-year-old man in my community who took his own life not long after seeking counselling. This teen had been a victim of a severe assault years earlier and had received a victim compensation payout. He lost the lot in less than a year playing poker machines. He felt that he had let down everyone around him and he was ashamed of what he had done—so ashamed that he took his own life. The counsellor told me that the number of people seeking help had skyrocketed after pubs were granted poker machine licences. It is obvious that would occur.

Pubs are not held to the same account as clubs, the counsellor said. They do not contribute to the community benefit funds and schemes to which clubs are required to contribute. Poker machines in clubs are easily accessed. That goes to my earlier point about the ineffectiveness of capping poker machine numbers in some areas and not in others because a problem gambler will move to the next pub or the one after that in the next SR2 area. It is a pointless exercise that will achieve very little. I do not wish to generalise about pubs in that way, because there are a number of pubs that do great things in their community and help a lot of people in many ways. But I give examples of poker machine use.

Peak groups have long recommended a drastic review of the State's poker machine industry. These are the groups left to clean up the fallout from the gambling industry's failures. Recommendations have included a cap on the amount that can be bet at any one time on poker machines, a vast reduction in poker machine numbers, particularly in pubs, and most importantly, according to gambling counsellors in my electorate, the removal of note acceptors on machines and the removal of features in poker machine games. None of those recommendations is contained in these bills. A social gambler might walk into a club or pub and put \$20 or maybe \$50 through the pokies for a bit of fun and entertainment. That is not the problem. The problem is the impact that these machines have on people who are more vulnerable to their addictive nature. That is where we are failing, and that is where this legislation is falling short of the mark.

As other members have noted, including Government members, these bills do little or nothing to stop the proliferation of advertisements for online betting or to stop international gambling houses operating online gambling in this State. One cannot turn on the television or watch a sporting match without being bombarded with advertisements for betting agencies. These ads need to go the same way as cigarette and alcohol advertising. Once again, these bills do not address this issue. On a similar note, any effort made in this place to reduce problem gambling will be pointless unless we can stop the rapid growth of online gambling sites based abroad. I do not know how to do that, but as one local gambling counsellor told me, "The politicians can take every poker machine in town and toss them into the lake, but it would do nothing for problem gambling if they still allow online casinos to operate from their bases in Macau, Monaco, London or other places overseas."

Clearly, the problem is not just the poker machines, it is the culture that we have developed. Problem gamblers will look for other ways to continue gambling. I understand the problem faced by Government ministers in this regard. Hotels and registered clubs are an important part of our community, and many of these establishments go above and beyond in supporting their local community. It is a shame that the industry has been allowed to expand with a model so heavily dependent on gambling, particularly with poker machines. I will be supporting these bills, but if we are going to make a real and significant difference to the levels of problem gambling in this State we need to revisit this legislation again and again until we get to a point where people can have a reasonable flutter and where the industry itself is both answerable and sustainable. I believe this bill is trying to address this issue.

The member for Tweed remarked that the gaming industry seems happy with this bill. I think that is a problem. We will know that we are getting close to the mark when the industry is loudly screaming and running campaigns against the Government on this issue. I have barely heard a whimper about this bill from members of the gaming industry, so I suspect that it will not affect them very much. I recognise the difficulty in balancing the need to do more on this issue with the need to protect the viability and sustainability of clubs and communities. But until we get to a point where significant change can happen, please gamble responsibly.

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:30):** I support the package of legislation before the House, consisting of the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Amendment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018, and I wish to speak to the proposed legislative changes regarding gambling advertising. New South Wales legislation prohibits gambling advertising that offers any inducements to participate in any gambling activity, including an inducement to open a betting account. These laws were put in place to protect problem gamblers and those vulnerable to gambling-related harms. It is disappointing to note that despite the best endeavours of this Government to ensure that licensed wagering operators meet their obligations under New South Wales law, many betting service providers have failed to modify their behaviour in relation to the advertising of inducements. It would seem that some of these operators factor

the risk of facing penalties into their business model and view the current range of sanctions and penalties as an acceptable cost of doing business.

Members of this House might ask themselves, "If the advertising of gambling inducements is illegal in New South Wales, why am I forever seeing the advertising of inducements offered by online wagering operators on free-to-air television?" Their constituents may have asked them the same question. The short answer is that these advertisements are broadcast nationally. In an effort to cover themselves, the advertisements carry a rider in small font stating that the offer is "not available to New South Wales residents". Regardless, their products and services have gained the exposure that they seek. Other attempts by online wagering operators to bypass the law include the offering of gambling inducements through third party marketing, particularly via the internet and social media platforms. The community expects the New South Wales Government to take all necessary action to prevent wagering operators from engaging in conduct that is contrary to this State's laws and from ignoring public harm minimisation obligations. The legislative amendments proposed in the Liquor and Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 directly address these ongoing concerns.

The proposed legislation will significantly increase penalties for offering inducements to gamble to \$5,500 for individuals and \$55,000 for corporations, and ensure that offers of inducements, regardless of any disclaimer, cannot be published in New South Wales or be made accessible to New South Wales residents, including through third parties. The increase in penalties is necessarily substantial and the bill makes it very clear that any person who publishes or communicates an advertisement that offers a gambling inducement is guilty of an offence. This includes any person who publishes an offending advertisement on their website or Facebook pages or shares it on Twitter, whether or not they are signed up to a wagering operator's "affiliate program". The proposed amendments will also make directors and senior managers personally liable for offences committed by a corporation, which may result in penalties being imposed on the individual director and a criminal conviction being recorded.

When a company director has not taken reasonable steps to directly prevent prohibited conduct or has allowed an environment of unlimited accountability to evolve within the business, they may be held accountable for the corporation's conduct. It will not be good enough for a director to plead ignorance of the company's non-compliance with regulatory requirements and social responsibilities. The refinement of a director's liability provisions is aimed at encouraging change to the corporate culture of the online wagering industry to one that does not tolerate or lead to non-compliance. The Minister has informed me that Liquor & Gaming NSW has written to licensed wagering operators to put them on notice that their behaviour must change. I congratulate Minister Toole and his department for taking steps to address problem gambling within our communities. The proposed legislative changes will go a long way to address the problems that gambling can cause in our towns and villages across New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:35):** I make a contribution in debate on the cognate bills: the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. In the Prospect electorate every club and all hotels, bar one, have poker machines so any changes in the legislation will impact on them all. Every week those clubs have thousands of patrons who live in Prospect and the surrounding suburbs. They are a major contributor to the social environment of the Prospect electorate, which is a bit unusual because it is made up of a number of local government areas and police area commands. It does not have a centred community—people in the north focus towards Blacktown, people in the middle towards Parramatta and people in the south towards Fairfield. Importantly, the centres of community are the clubs and pubs.

It is important that any changes to the regulation of gaming machines or liquor in casinos or registered clubs is sensible and does not adversely affect businesses. At the same time, we must keep in mind that problem gambling is a social issue. However, if we get rid of the means for people to gamble legally organised crime will take over, as happened for more than 100 years in this State, or people will gamble online using offshore gambling sites. This creates a myriad of issues in our society. The people who say gambling should be stopped dead give the same arguments I have heard towards the prohibition of alcohol and a lot of vices that people have. People gamble on horses, greyhounds or on poker machines.

We saw the absolute uproar faced by this Government when it tried to ban greyhound racing. Banning poker machines will cause the same uproar. I acknowledge that a small number of people have an addiction to gambling, just like alcohol and drugs. The attack on pubs and clubs with the wholesale banning of poker machines will serve no-one. The reality is that people will gamble. The shadow Minister, the member for Maroubra, has talked about the position of the Opposition on these bills and that it will not oppose them. In fact, the Opposition is supportive of the clubs and pubs in New South Wales because they are important to our communities.

I will refer to key points of these bills. The Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 implements recommendations from the Liquor & Gaming NSW review into Labor's 2009 Local Impact Assessment Scheme under the Gaming Machines Act 2001 including changes to the classification of communities, consultation requirements, and transfer of gaming entitlements. It also introduces a gaming machine leasing scheme for small clubs and hotels. It is sensible legislation.

The Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 standardises the regulatory powers for liquor and gaming, changes penalties for certain liquor-related and gaming-related offences, updates post-employment restrictions for officials, and makes minor amendments to liquor and gaming legislation. The Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018 implements aspects of the Government's response to the Casino Modernisation Review report that require amendments to the Casino Control Act 1992. Predominately the bill updates regulatory controls by removing prescriptive requirements, standardises controls across The Star and Crown casinos, and implements minor gambling harm minimisation measures.

The Star casino is not in my electorate but a lot of people come from Western Sydney to The Star. Obviously the revenue is not being spent in the Prospect electorate, which is in Western Sydney. I asked Star representatives, which makes a lot of money, what it could do for the people of Western Sydney. I was told it is focusing on what benefits it can give back to the people of Western Sydney with grants and other things to facilitate the Western Sydney community. I thank them for those discussions. Every member representing an electorate in Western Sydney, no matter what political persuasion, should talk to groups such as The Star casino to see how it can contribute to their community in the future.

The Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamation) Bill 2018 implements recommendations from reviews into the accountability of registered clubs and the amalgamation framework under the Registered Clubs Act 1976, including implementing a co-regulatory approach for the accountability of clubs with the industry body, ClubsNSW, and streamlining the merger and de-merger processes for clubs. ClubsNSW and the Australian Hotels Association have made comment on the bills but I am interested in the views of clubs and pubs in Western Sydney on this legislation.

I will comment on some of the great work of clubs and pubs in my electorate. They employ thousands of people and every year they give back millions of dollars in community grants. Often they will go out of their way to assist local sporting teams. Recently I have spoken to a number of clubs about the Special Olympics that is being held in April in Adelaide. They are helping to sponsor a number of our special Olympians from Western Sydney. They can always do more because they make a lot of money. The boards of those clubs have committed to give as much as possible back to the community. I specifically refer to Club Marconi in Bossley Park which was set up by Italian immigrants. It now has a mix of people from different backgrounds. The club chairman told me that the biggest growing groups are South American and Chinese. It is a key part of Western Sydney.

The Smithfield RSL was originally set up by a number of veterans from the First World War and the Second World War. It is growing in size and gives back to the local community. Without doubt the beautiful little Cumberland Golf Club is one of the key centres of the Greystanes community. Every day the Prospect Hotel on the Great Western Highway is full to the brim with tradies and others. It gets involved in the Prospect community. Many people have heard of the Royal Cricketers Arms which was set up in the late 1800s to build Prospect Reservoir. The hotel was set up for the workmen whilst the dam was being built but more than 100 years later it still exists. It is a fantastic place which is frequented by a lot of locals.

Every year Wentworth Leagues gives tens of thousands of dollars to local sporting groups. It is a key sporting club that feeds players into the best rugby league team in the country—the Parramatta Eels. It also takes players from local teams such as the Greystanes Devils and others. Blacktown Workers Club is another great club and it has members from many ethnic communities. Its bowls club is doing great work with the local Sudanese community and has really embraced them, recently inviting several families to attend a barbecue. Some of them had never been in a club before. It is wonderful that the club has embraced the Sudanese community. It is the kind of spirit that exists in many clubs.

Greystanes Hotel, Alpha Hotel Eastern Creek and New Victoria Tavern at Wetherill Park are also great places that offer fantastic facilities. In Prospect and surrounding suburbs, pubs and clubs play a key role in providing entertainment at night and on weekends. They sponsor kids sports teams and really give back to the community. I congratulate them. I thank the Government for being sensible with these bills. We must continue to monitor problem gambling and have programs in place to ensure that things do not get out of hand. I commend the bills to the House.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:45):** On behalf of The Greens, I speak in debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. In this debate I have heard some very misguided and misinformed contributions about addictive poker machines and the fact that this State has a gambling problem.

We have heard the statistics. We know that gambling losses in this State are absolutely staggering and will be close to \$8 billion this year. We know that there are 95,000 machines in New South Wales, which is 10 per cent of all machines worldwide. The role of online gambling is exercising the minds of some people. We know that online gambling needs regulation, but let us ask ourselves why almost 70 per cent of gambling losses come from poker machines. Why are most of the losses not at the TAB, at casinos or through sports betting? It is because poker machines are designed to addict. The problem is the product.

Since the mid-1950s when the old one-armed bandits were introduced in New South Wales, intensive investment in poker machines has led to the machines that we see today. I encourage members to look at the work of gambling support groups that highlights the problems with today's machines. They include the fact that people can feed up to \$7,000 worth of notes into machines to bank as cash and that the configuration of the machines promotes near misses. In the old days the machines had actual reels; they now have virtual reels that have been lengthened to increase the number of near misses to make the person using the machine think that they almost had a win. We know that kind of machine encourages addictive behaviour.

In its 2010 report the Productivity Commission estimated that almost 40 per cent of spending is done by problem gamblers. Every weekend my dad goes to the club with a friend and puts \$20 or \$30 in the pokies. They play a bit of snooker and have a good afternoon. He always says that he sees people sitting there all day just feeding the machines. The Productivity Commission report shows that a large percentage of the people who lose money on poker machines are problem gamblers. It is because of the machines. Almost 70 per cent of gambling losses are on poker machines because the machines are designed to promote near misses and are configured to addict. There are also problems with the way the machines flash, make noise and indicate success. If a punter puts in a dollar and gets back 20¢ the machine will flash that they have won something. They have lost 80¢. There is clear evidence that the way the machines are designed encourages addictive behaviour. Academic literature and work by gambling advocacy groups indicate that the problem is the machines.

Not only do poker machines generate addiction in players; clubs and hotels are also addicted to gambling losses. In some towns you will see an enormous building and ask, "What's that?" It is a Taj Mahal built on gambling losses. The Productivity Commission report and others show that a significant proportion of funds used to build large clubs come straight from the pockets of problem gamblers. They feed their money into machines that are designed to attract people and keep them engaged so that they lose. We need to work with clubs and hotels to wean them off the gambling losses that they think they need in order to survive.

Victoria introduced a freeze on new gaming machines. Other States have perfectly well functioning football clubs that do not rely on gambling losses. We hear members say that they welcome the donations, but let us look at the meagre contributions that clubs are compelled to provide. They amount to a couple of per cent of the hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue that poker machines generate. My electorate in the inner west is a relatively high socio-economic area although it has some lower income areas as well. More than a billion dollars goes through machines in the inner west and around \$100 million worth of gambling losses goes to the venues. Do we want to live in a society where clubs rely on gambling losses to build their buildings and then provide a very small percentage of that revenue to sporting clubs? We want to work with clubs and hotels to wean them off their addiction. There is a range of suggestions as to how we do that, including buying back machines, encouraging reduced use of machines, introducing \$1 maximum bets and not allowing machines to accept notes.

I acknowledge that the Minister is at the table. While I recognise that these bills do some good things, poker machines are a major problem for our community. When I was mayor of my council a gentleman who had lost a fortune on poker machines came to see me. I will not name him, but he was a journalist whom many members might know. He said, "I just couldn't stop." He even took out an equity mortgage on the family home and had to tell his wife they had no money. He was a highly intelligent and educated person.

We know that many clubs seek out low-income areas to put machines into. For example, one club sought to put machines into the Auburn local government area instead of mine because people in lower income communities invest more in poker machines. That is appalling behaviour. Clubs realise that poker machine revenue is important for their growth and development. The Government needs to be working with them on alternative revenue streams. No-one is suggesting that we ban poker machines; I do not know where the member for Prospect got that from. The question is: How do we help clubs kick the habit? We need to be looking at constructive ways to do that.

Some members have said that their local football team got a new pair of football boots. The memorandum of understanding that the O'Farrell Government signed robbed this State of an estimated \$400 million of revenue because of the reduction in poker machine tax. The community might get some footy boots out of a club but the arrangements made with registered clubs have led to a significant reduction in State income. Whether members think the memorandum of understanding was a good or bad idea, we all know board and club members who say that they would rather not rely on pokies. I certainly have not heard anyone say that they want more. Of course, a

few of them want to build pokies palaces but most of them say, "We would prefer not to have poker machines, but what else can we do?" Some of the mega clubs that have hundreds of pokies only exist to generate profits from gambling losses, but most clubs are not like that. Most clubs want to reduce their reliance on poker machines if they can and promote food and beverage and so on. But poker machine revenue is very addictive. Clubs have to do nothing other than stick in a machine and the money comes in. We need to look at constructive ways to deal with that.

I have many specific points to make but I will not have sufficient time. In summary, some aspects of these bills are positive. They include increasing penalties for not allowing donations to community groups in support of applications to increase machine numbers. It will now all go into the Responsible Gambling Fund. Our ultimate concern is that the bills weaken restrictions for pubs, clubs and casinos and increase self-regulatory functions, allow conflicted officials to move more quickly from regulatory roles into future employment in the industry—that is very concerning—and do not do anything to address harm.

I acknowledge the effort of those in the Minister's department who have helped in the preparation of these extensive bills. However, The Greens are particularly concerned that this legislation will introduce a leasing scheme that avoids the local impact assessment process and forfeiture rule; it will allow machines to be moved around to more profitable areas; it will allow exceptions to the forfeiture policy for country hotels that are wanting to get rid of all their poker machines; and it will introduce local impact statements when a statement is not required—that is pointless if it is made after the approval. In our view all increases in machines should require a local impact statement.

The Greens are also concerned that local government areas will be replaced as a statistical area level 2 [SA2]—members involved in election campaigning know what a SA2 is—and that is to be graded. Within local government areas there are many small areas and the risk level of many of those areas will be downgraded under this modelling. We would like some more detail on how that modelling will affect risk areas. My colleagues in the upper House will provide a lot more detail but my message is that no-one is in the game of wanting to ban poker machines; we are in the game of minimising risks. So much money is wagered on poker machines because of the very nature of those machines.

**Mr Geoff Provost:** What about online gaming?

**Mr JAMIE PARKER:** Online gaming is a tiny percentage because it is not designed to addict. When one buys a scratchie one goes back to buy another one and people at the TAB spend time looking at the next races. Poker machines are continuous; every hour of the day you can gamble on them. It is a problem with the machines and it needs to change.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (18:04):** I speak in support of the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. The member for Balmain spoke about people who have gambling addictions. In my electorate we have many pubs and clubs and a number of them offer programs, advice and support to those who have gambling addictions—for example, the Wests Entertainment Group. In its responsible gaming mission statement the Wests Entertainment Group states that it is committed to providing responsible gaming. It also offers counselling services and a problem gambling self-assessment. The mission statement also refers to the Gambling Hangover website, which is an initiative of the New South Wales Government, and the group also offers a self-exclusion program to its patrons.

The reforms proposed in these bills are many and varied, but not insignificant. They are evidence of the Government's commitment to ensuring that the laws which regulate this State's liquor and gaming industries remain relevant and fit for purpose. A number of members have made a contribution to this debate. I do not intend to speak to each of the initiatives in these bills. I will focus on the proposed changes to restrictions on the post-employment activities of former key officials. The Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 proposes changes to the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007. Among other things, the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act makes provision for certain employees of the liquor and gaming regulator to be deemed key officials and for restrictions to be imposed on the type of employment they can engage in after they have left their role with the regulator.

Restrictions of this nature are highly appropriate. They are aimed at addressing potential and perceived conflicts of interest associated with the movement of employees of the regulator to the private sector. They are also intended to ensure that public officials are not able to move into industry to benefit their new employer, or potentially be rewarded for favourable treatment. Restrictions on the post-employment activities of key officials are also an important tool in fostering public confidence and trust in the regulator. However, it has been found that the current arrangements for key officials under the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007 have become outdated and are not operating effectively to manage risk. This has resulted in a decline in their use.

Under the present terms of the Act, for a period of four years after leaving the employment of the regulator, a former key official is prohibited from holding any type of gaming or liquor licence and is also barred from seeking any employment whatsoever from a gaming or liquor licensee. On first reading these restrictions might appear reasonable, but they are inflexible and do not allow for consideration of the risk of the potential conflict of interest in the proposed post-separation employment of the former key official or any other relevant contextual information for that matter—for example, a key official responsible for gaming compliance is currently prevented from opening a restaurant that serves alcohol or even drinks, despite there being a very low potential for conflict of interest.

The proposed amendments will allow for exemptions from the post-employment restrictions to be considered on the request of a former key official based on the risk associated with the activity. The individual circumstances of each case will be assessed against criteria prescribed by the regulations and approved by the secretary. I also note that transparency in the decision-making process will be promoted. These changes are an extension of the existing arrangements whereby approval must be given for a former key official to hold office as a member of the governing body of a registered club or to have a direct or indirect business or financial association with a gaming or liquor licence holder.

The bill also proposes that the four year post-employment restriction period will be reduced to two years in the case of all Liquor & Gaming NSW senior executive officers, and to six months for other non-senior executive officers whose role involves a degree of influence or control over the industries. It is considered that the current arbitrary four-year restriction period is unnecessarily onerous and places unwarranted restraints on a person's ability to seek employment in a field in which they have knowledge and experience. By comparison, in the private sector it is generally the practice that these kinds of restrictions would not be placed on a key employee without suitable compensation. The proposed new time limits are therefore considered reasonable and strike an appropriate balance for those officers designated as a key official. They are also comparable to post-employment restriction periods that apply to former liquor and gaming key officials in other Australian jurisdictions.

The opportunity has also been taken to address an anomaly in the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007. That Act imposes restrictions on former key officials taking a job with a gaming or liquor licensee but is silent on employment relationships with industry peak bodies and lobby groups. I note that the Minister for Racing, Paul Toole, is present in the Chamber. He has played a key role in the drafting of this legislation and his team has looked closely at the finer detail of the amendment to this Act. Many would argue that the risks associated with a former key official being engaged in activities with an industry peak body or lobby group may be greater than some of the activities that are currently restricted. The bill will extend the restrictions on the post-employment activities of former officials to include industry peak bodies and lobby groups with those peak bodies and lobby groups being determined by the Minister from time to time.

It is expected that the proposed changes will result in more of the hardworking people at Liquor & Gaming NSW being subject to the key official provisions. The proposed amendments will provide for a more flexible and risk-based approach to managing this important aspect of the relationship between the regulator, its key officials and industry. Mr Temporary Speaker, as the member for Tweed and a former club manager, you would know the importance of ensuring that there is transparency in post-employment opportunities under the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007 in relation to Liquor & Gaming NSW and other associated organisations. The new arrangements also will give the community greater confidence that the regulator is operating in its best interests. I commend the bills to the House.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:05):** I make a contribution to the debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills: the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. I acknowledge the contributions to the debate of the member for Balmain and others. The Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 is of interest to my community, as the Central Coast—the third largest council area by population—is an area with the highest number of electronic gaming machines in the State. The Peninsula, where I live, has 768 poker machines.

This legislation enacts recommendations from Labor's liquor and gaming review, including the changing of community classification to protect areas of disadvantage against a further increase in the number of gaming machines. Before 2009 pubs and clubs traded poker machines at will across the State until Labor introduced legislation to limit the growth of poker machines to curb the impact of gambling across communities. The best thing about the new legislation back then was that, for every three machines traded, one was removed from circulation. This has led to a decrease in gaming machines that is difficult to define in actual numbers—possibly between 5,500 to 8,000 fewer gaming machines—and it has restricted clubs to only trade machines with clubs, and pubs to only trade machines with pubs.

Under the new legislation, which seeks to further limit the number of machines in New South Wales, each local government area [LGA] is classified into band 1, band 2 or band 3, depending on gaming machine density, gaming machine expenditure and the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas [SEIFA] disadvantage score published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. A band 1 LGA usually has low gaming machine density, low gaming machine expenditure and a high SEIFA score. A band 2 LGA usually has moderate gaming machine density, moderate gaming machine expenditure and a moderate SEIFA score. A band 3 LGA, like ours on The Peninsula, has high gaming machine density, high gaming machine expenditure and a low SEIFA score.

The SEIFA index reflects the broad levels of disadvantage in any given area based on more than just economic factors. The index uses measures such as income less than \$20,800 a year, the percentage of people without Higher School Certificate qualifications, the percentage of people under the age of 70 with ongoing health needs that require assistance with everyday activities, and rents lower than \$166 a week. Like the electorate of Maroubra, the Gosford electorate has pockets of wealth and pockets of disadvantage. This legislation aims to protect those already disadvantaged pockets from the influx of any more gaming machines, using the statistical areas level 2 [SA2] statistic regions and statistical data to protect particularly socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Under the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018, the most socially disadvantaged areas and those with the highest levels of problem gambling will have their numbers of poker machines in the area frozen in a reform the Government hopes will arrest growing problem-gambling hotspots across the State. This legislation aims to protect the Central Coast from an increased growth in the number of poker machines, using the LGA rankings combined with the new legislation requiring that gaming machine numbers will not be able to increase in band 3 or high-risk areas identified on the coast. I am very happy that The Peninsula is a particular area of concern that will be protected from any extra poker machines coming into our community by this legislation.

I thank ClubsNSW and all our local pubs for all they do for communities around the State. I thank ClubsNSW for its input and help for elite athletes through its support of the NSW Institute of Sport and for its amazing grassroots support of local athletes in regional communities across New South Wales. I thank ClubsNSW for the uniforms, the scoreboards, the sponsoring of the referees at gala days, the mowing of the lawns and the provision of community transport. I also thank ClubsNSW for the discount meals for our seniors, the provision of entertainment and the support of local entertainers in our community. Clubs are community venues that our communities rely on and, when clubs close, jobs are lost—along with the flow-on economic costs that go with them. In our community it is essential to retain every single job possible. I commend the work of our clubs in developing other community resources such as affordable housing and medical centres and in identifying areas of disadvantage in communities that they can support.

The Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 aims to enable small pubs and clubs to lease out their machine entitlements and continue to gain a revenue to keep them alive. It is exciting that we might see clubs without poker machines—clubs that have spaces only for families and for meals—so that we can enjoy our community life after those poker machines go to different locations. I support the streamlining of merge and demerge regulations in the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. There is an example in our community of where large clubs can go in and rescue smaller clubs, for the right reasons: Woy Woy Leagues Club is now a part of the Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club. The expertise and resources of the larger clubs and the support they continue to give in our community help our sporting groups and our youngsters to get out on the sporting field and our oldies to have somewhere to meet and participate.

Recently the spotlight was shone on The Sporties club at Woy Woy, a local bowling club with three outside greens, which is being kept open very generously by the owner despite significant losses over the years. A generous conversation is taking place in our community regarding a takeover or a merger with the Ettalong Bowling Club. The owner stands to benefit from the sale of the land and the possibility of continued income from poker machines. And, our bowlers will keep bowling. The higher penalties for directors who do the wrong thing is an important additional part of this legislation to protect our communities. In my electorate many of the clubs and pubs provide lots of support for people with gambling problems. I thank the member for Terrigal for sharing on the radio the other day his personal story of problem gambling and for pointing out how far and how deep it hits families across New South Wales.

Whilst this legislation will limit the proliferation of pokies in communities at risk, it does not address the growing risks associated with online gambling. The new gambling activities that we see our kids participate in on devices are creating addictive behaviour that we, as parliamentarians, will have to have conversations about in the not too distant future. The international reach of gambling through the internet is going to be part of our responsibilities and considerations. In conclusion, I point out that we have substantial support for people seeking gambling solutions on the Central Coast. Central Coast Problem Gambling Help provides a network of support,

including counselling, resources, networks and support groups, and workshops for individuals and families affected by gambling. I commend the efforts of all at Central Coast Problem Gambling Help and Coast Community Connections for the work they continue to do to support people who have gambling problems in our community. I support the new legislation.

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:13):** I was sitting in my office listening to this debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills and thought that I would make a contribution, given some of the things that have been said. There are many sensible elements of this legislation. Representing an electorate that is not marked by socio-economic advantage, which has a few poker machines and where the clubs get involved in a lot of activities, it is good to see that, at least in some ways, in the red zones there will not be an increase in the number of poker machines.

We have heard much about the idea that some clubs will be able to bail out other clubs and may be able to become family spaces again. All members have plenty to do with their local clubs, whether it is a small bowling club or in my case Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, a huge club. I have said before and I will say it again: This club's community engagement is amazing. It does incredible things and supports many programs. Other clubs might give money but the Bulldogs also provide the resources. For example, the club provided money not only to Walk for Assist but also to staff members to enable them to be part of the event. I quite like that. The club goes above and beyond its obligation to donate money and I acknowledge that because sometimes clubs cop a bit of flak. They do not need me to bat for them; they can do that themselves, but we should acknowledge all they do to support local communities.

When I am approached about grants that do not fit within the Community Building Partnership grants, I suggest those people should approach the clubs and try their luck there. I mention another club. Anyone who drives along King Georges Road when the traffic is not heavy may notice just past the 40-kilometre an hour zone, on the left-hand side heading south, a bowling club called The Acres Club. It has been around for a long time but it has been struggling. That club has been taken over by the Bulldogs and is now a family-style club that does not rely on poker machines. It has outdoor entertainment spaces and families now enjoy spending Sunday afternoons there.

As stated, clubs can become focal points in their communities and we need more focal points where families can spend time together and have inexpensive meals. I know that Mr Temporary Speaker, the member for Tweed, plays lawn bowls and I imagine was a pace bowler from way back. The Mount Lewis Bowling Club has a terrific community program to introduce lawn bowls to communities that would not normally play, such as those from non-English speaking backgrounds, and is also working with an aged care centre. It is important to acknowledge that work. Clubs have a commitment to provide a certain amount of money based on the revenue they receive. Everybody has probably put a few dollars into a poker machine and everyone seems to bet on Melbourne Cup day; it is part of our culture.

However, we as members of Parliament must look further down the track: How do we address this difficult issue of problem gambling? Yesterday a lady popped into my electorate office and we had a bit of a chat. She just wanted to talk to me about gambling because she had seen an advertisement on morning television and she asked me to do something about it. I said that if it ever came up in Parliament I would raise the matter, so here I am talking about it now. Talk about a great member—all I have to do now is make sure I let her know that the issue was raised. She made an important point; advertising on television and particularly online gambling really bother me.

One cannot watch a game of football on television without seeing a number of advertisements about gambling. I find it a bit rich that at the end of the advertisement they say really quickly, "Gamble responsibly". I consider people being fed stuff about gambling and then being told to gamble responsibly as contradictory. We saw years ago in sport that the exotic way in which people could gamble resulted in games being rigged and people being corrupt. The vast majority of people can control themselves but there is that minority who cannot. We need to ensure additional education programs for gambling and that we have a collective responsibility. If we encourage people to gamble we must provide support networks to stop them getting to the point of the lowest ebb. I am also concerned about the high caps on gambling.

My brother is a boxer and a few years ago he had a fight in Connecticut. We stayed at the casino where the fight was being held. I am an early morning person; I like to get out and about early. I have never forgotten the sight of going out early in the morning to get something to eat and already people were gambling at 6 o'clock and 7 o'clock in the morning; obviously it was a 24-hour thing. The thing that really got me was the depressed look on their faces. They were just pressing buttons. It was not entertainment anymore; it was just an automated action. Anyone who is gambling at that time of the day—and they looked like they had been there for a long time—is a worry. I would hate to see that happen in Australia; I know it does in certain places. I know there are

many protections but I know every member of this place would agree that problem gambling is something we must address.

We must put money into education programs and support mechanisms to ensure that we do not have to deal with constituents who have lost their houses, their families or their cars. How does one get to that point? These are the effects of gambling. This first step to ensure that we limit the number of machines is really good. We acknowledge the great role that clubs play in building communities but we cannot step away from the fact that we must stop anything that allows people to get to the situation where gambling is such a problem that they end up losing everything they have. That is a responsibility that we all bear.

What really bothers me, especially when I am watching the football with my 10-year-old son, is the number of gambling advertisements that come on the television. It almost becomes part of the commentary; it is not seen as an advertisement. Whilst we cannot necessarily legislate for that right now, we need to have the discussion about telling people to gamble responsibly while constantly throwing gambling in their face where they cannot distinguish between commentary and advertising. Gambling safely does not mean putting lots of money into something and, if it does not go right, a person can then pull out. Gambling safely means knowing one's limits. We must marry the rhetoric with the laws, regulations and mindset. I commend the Minister for introducing the legislation and for trying his best, but we cannot escape the fact that gambling ultimately is a problem. It is as much our responsibility to ensure that people do not fall into a hole as it is to make sure that we give them good legislation.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (18:23):** I speak in debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, and cognate bills. Problem gambling is a scourge on our society. In my life as a lawyer I specialised in areas that included civil fraud. As a senior barrister I only saw the worst cases but I had many cases involving people with gambling habits where they stole millions of dollars from their employers. They ruined not only their lives by ultimately going to jail but also the lives of their family through the dissipation of their family assets. A related issue that has concerned me for a long time is that I could not sit down and watch sporting fixtures on television with my son when he was very young without being bombarded with gambling advertising. As he is now 17 years of age it does not worry me as much as it did 10 years ago when he was in primary school but it is still a concern for all of us. What is particularly alarming is the way in which people associated with gambling have become part of the program themselves, normalising that activity.

I thank the Minister for imposing controls on gambling advertising as I am uncomfortable about young children in their homes being brainwashed into thinking there is something cool or even manly about pouring their money down the gambling black hole when the stakes are always stacked against gamblers. This is not an easy area. To some extent sporting competitions have become addicted to the revenue from gambling advertising. However, I would like to think from an ethical point of view we can do more in this area in the future. I am relieved that we are passing advertising provisions in this bill—an issue about which I will say more later.

When my son was younger what worried me was the normalising of the gambling behaviour that was presented to our youth. I had many conversations with him about the dangers of gambling, just as I did about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. But we must realise that not all children have the benefit of appropriate guidance, especially if their parents are not responsible with regard to gambling, and drinking or taking illegal drugs. I turn to the detail of the bill and to the gambling advertising provisions in part 4A. In new section 33G the definition of "gambling advertisements" include, relevantly and appropriately in subsection (2), the publication of gambling advertisements on a website. In new section 33H there is a general prohibition on gambling related advertisements. Subsection (1) states:

A non-proprietary association or licensed betting service provider or any other person must not publish or communicate, or cause to be published or communicated, whether from in or outside New South Wales, any gambling advertisement that may be accessible to a person in New South Wales and that contravenes any requirement of this section.

That is an important provision in a number of respects because, first, it recognises one way to avoid restrictions imposed by this Parliament is to publish from outside New South Wales. This provision makes it clear that it will capture activity that is happening within New South Wales that may be emanating from outside New South Wales. Significantly, there are substantial penalties. Under the new section 33H (1) (b) the maximum penalty for a corporation is \$55,000. Under subsection (2) there are several prohibitions. It is important to note in subsection (1) (b) that a gambling advertisement must not depict children gambling, which I think is very desirable. Under subsection (1) (d) gambling advertisements must not suggest that winning will be a definite outcome when participating in gambling activities.

Under subsection (1) (g) there is a requirement that gambling advertisements must not "be published otherwise than in accordance with decency, dignity and good taste". From my point of view I would say that that would stop all gambling advertising because it is inherently indecent, undignified and in bad taste. However, we will have to wait to see whether the courts interpret the legislation in accordance with my views. Importantly,

under subsection (1) (h) gambling advertisements must not "include any inducement to participate, or to participate frequently, in any gambling activity (including an inducement to open a betting account)". New section 33H subsection (3) states:

A reference to an inducement under subsection (2) (h):

(a) includes an inducement that involves an offer that is not available to persons resident in New South Wales ...

That subsection picks up one of the tricks that has been used to try to circumvent existing New South Wales restrictions, whereby nationally broadcast advertisements in the past have contained a rider that says, "This inducement is not available to New South Wales residents." But the fact that it is being broadcast to New South Wales effectively achieves that purpose. I commend the Minister for plugging this loophole. This provision stops that activity from continuing and carries with it substantial maximum penalties of \$55,000 for corporations. I anticipate that this will be a significant deterrent to such activity in the future.

New section 33H subsection (4) has penalties for advertisements in writing which do not contain the prescribed advisory statement warning against the dangers of gambling. Again that carries a maximum penalty of \$55,000 for a corporation. Subsection (5) is a transitional provision that stops existing arrangements from continuing if they infringe this legislation that the Minister has brought before the House. I cannot finish without referring to new section 33I, which has provisions dealing with gambling related advertisements during sporting fixtures. Subsection (2) states:

A person must not publish a gambling advertisement in relation to a sporting fixture during the sporting fixture including during any breaks in the sporting fixture.

Again that carries a maximum penalty of \$55,000 for a corporation. There are some exceptions. Of relevance is the definition in subsection (6) (a) of an "extended sporting fixture":

a sporting fixture that is scheduled to take place over a period exceeding 4 hours ...

Under subsection (3) "extended sporting fixtures" are exempt from that exclusion which effectively means that the prohibition on gambling advertisements is limited to sporting events of four hours or less. There are other exemptions including the exemption under new section 33I (4) (b) for advertisements published on the internet. Those advertisements are exempt because they are already covered by Federal legislation—the Interactive Gambling Act. There is also an exemption for publication of advertisements in gambling premises which are, of course, restricted premises to which children under the age of 18 years cannot be exposed. New section 33J has important restrictions on gambling inducements with the maximum penalty of \$55,000 for a corporation. I commend the Minister for tightening this area and introducing socially responsible and desirable legislation.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:33):** I support the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills—the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. I refer to the Gaming Machines Amendment Bill 2018 in particular and acknowledge the excellent work of the Minister and his team on this bill and the cognate bills. The Government recognises that the majority of Australians gamble responsibly. Earlier the member for Gosford referred to her experiences of people with gambling addictions. Recently I outlined my experiences of people with gambling addictions to ABC radio presenter Mary-Louise Vince. As a child I grew up in a household where one of my parents was affected—is affected and always will be affected—by problem gambling. Given my experiences when growing up, I am sure I have had more involvement with this legislation than any other member in this House.

We should understand that problem gambling is an addiction. It is something you cannot grow out of. It is something you need assistance with. I was proud to discuss my story openly on the ABC Central Coast radio. If it gave someone the opportunity to realise that there is help available through clubs and other organisations across the Central Coast then it will have been worthwhile. When I was growing up my father's gambling addiction was difficult for my family to deal with. As an only child I experienced the constant stress on my family unit. My mother is an incredible woman and worked through it with my father. They have been married for almost 50 years. They deal with his addiction on a daily basis and they deal with it very well. Back then you did not discuss this issue socially.

There has been a dramatic social change and people now actively engage with and discuss that problem. I encourage anybody in a family unit, be it the person suffering the addiction or another family member, to speak up and get help for that loved one. Help is always available. I will never forget the assistance that Gamblers Anonymous gave to my father. He realised there were those worse off than him. I am proud of what he has achieved living with his addiction. Not a day goes by when I do not think about my parents' commitment to work together through that problem.

This bill is aimed at improving the Government's response to gambling-related harms by beefing up its harm minimisation tools with respect to gaming machines, which I am delighted to see. During the public review of the Local Impact Assessment [LIA] scheme many submissions noted that while LIAs are useful tools to manage gaming machine movements, more could be done to ensure the scheme is equipped to tackle the risk of gambling-related harms, some of which I detailed earlier. The bill proposes a number of changes to the LIA scheme to ensure harm minimisation remains at the forefront of all gaming machine decisions.

First, the improved LIA scheme will change the way communities are classified, shifting from using local governments areas [LGAs], which in the case of the Central Coast is enormous, to using local statistical areas [SAs] to better understand and analyse how communities are impacted by gaming machines. Under the proposed changes, the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority will now rank all communities in New South Wales according to their statistical area level 2, known as SA2, which is a statistical boundary developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Statistical area level 2 is a medium-sized statistical area that is smaller than an LGA, and is designed around whole gazetted suburbs or rural localities. That is a defined and smaller area to target.

These local statistical areas will provide more relevant and detailed insight into the way communities interact socially and economically with gaming machines so that harm minimisation measures can better target and respond to gambling-related harms. As part of the reform package the Government announced there will be an increased focus on an area's relative socio-economic disadvantage. This change is aimed at giving the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority the tools it needs to more accurately assess the likely risk of gambling-related harms in the community. The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas [SEIFA] are generated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics based on an area's relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage.

The updated LIA scheme has built in the SEIFA scores of all SA2s in New South Wales to more accurately identify those areas where correlative factors associated with problem gambling are highest, including unemployment and average incomes, to offer greater protections to areas that need it most. For the first time, the Government will also prevent any additional machines moving into areas with the highest risk of gambling-related harm through the local impact assessment process. Earlier, the member for Gosford spoke of this in her contribution to the second reading debate. I outlined that information during the ABC radio interview.

A regional cap will be introduced for all SA2s classified by the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority as band 3, which are the areas where the risk of gambling-related harms are highest. The cap means that no more gambling machines can be introduced into these areas through the Local Impact Assessment scheme and will ensure that the number of gaming machines in band 3 areas can only go down. That is a vital piece of information. I will repeat it: The cap will mean that no more gambling machines can be introduced into these areas through the Local Impact Assessment scheme and will ensure that the number of gaming machines in band 3 areas can only go down, contrary to what has been said in the media, which is absolutely incorrect.

The improved Local Impact Assessment scheme will also double the consultation period from 30 to 60 days to ensure that the community has more opportunity to have a say, allowing decision-makers to be better informed. The enhanced community consultation process is designed to give community members more opportunity to comment on the impacts of gaming machines on a community, which will allow the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to better understand the likely consequence of additional gaming machines being introduced into an area.

The bill creates a new function for the Responsible Gambling Fund, which will now manage the allocation of all community contributions made through the LIA process. This move will mark the first time that hotels and clubs have contributed funding to the Responsible Gambling Fund, which currently allocates funding to gambling harm minimisation activities from funds contributed by The Star casino. Currently under the LIA scheme, venues have a choice in where the funds go when they are making a contribution to the community as part of their threshold increase application. There is currently no requirement that this money go to harm minimisation. Having a new centralised distribution of contributors through the Responsible Gambling Fund ensures that funds generated through the Local Impact Assessment process are now specifically targeted at gambling harm minimisation, health- and social-related services for local communities.

This change not only reflects the Government's commitment to reducing gambling-related harm but also increases the benefit to the community by investing more into helping people affected by problem gambling. The introduced gaming machines leasing scheme will also have additional harm minimisation features. While the proposed leasing scheme will not be subject to forfeiture, the impact leasing has on the overall forfeiture scheme will be limited by restricting eligibility to be a lessor venue to only small venues. The overall statewide cap on the number of gaming machines will continue to be applied. That is such an important factor. It effectively means that the number of poker machines in New South Wales can now only decrease.

Lessee venues will be required to pay an additional annual levy to the Responsible Gambling Fund, which will be used to fund gambling harm minimisation and treatment services around New South Wales. These measures show the Government's ongoing commitment to reducing gambling-related harm, while ensuring that venues with gaming machines continue to make a positive contribution to the New South Wales community. That fact needs to be highlighted. There are some amazing clubs on the Central Coast. Their generosity is boundless; they have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars across the Central Coast.

Some of the outstanding clubs in my electorate include Breakers Country Club and the Erina Rugby League Football Club. I spend a lot of my time at Mingara Recreation Club because almost every function on the Central Coast seems to be held there as it does such an amazing job. These clubs put back into the community. They also monitor, and do everything they can to assist problem gamblers by requiring responsible behaviour. The clubs take their responsibility to the community very seriously, as does the Government.

As I said at the start of this speech, as a child I lived in an environment where there was problem gambling, so I regard the harm minimisation factors as the most important part of this legislation. I would encourage anybody who is living with a problem gambler, or anyone who has a problem, to do something, say something and get the help they need. In addition to acknowledging the Minister, I acknowledge his outstanding team: Sally White, Ashley Gardiner, Angeli Lee and Jackie Boylan. They have done an amazing job with this piece of legislation. I also acknowledge the staff from the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority, who have also contributed to this game-changing legislation for New South Wales. I am so proud to be part of a Government that is delivering legislation like this for the people of New South Wales. I commend the bills to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Private Members' Statements*

**DUBBO ELECTORATE WOMEN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services) (18:44):**

On behalf of the Dubbo community and of regional New South Wales more broadly, I congratulate Juliet Duffy, the REX Airline Regional Woman of the Year 2018 in New South Wales, who is from Dubbo. Nine years ago Juliet started Regional Enviroscience, an occupational and environmental hygiene consultancy business, out of her rental property garage in Dubbo. Still the director today, Juliet employs more than 23 people and provides career opportunities for both young and mature-aged workers in the fields of science, technology, engineering and maths [STEM]. Juliet holds a Master of Sustainable Management from the University of Sydney and has been managing asbestos, hazardous materials and environmental issues since 1988, when the first national code was implemented.

Viewed as an expert, particularly in the field of naturally occurring asbestos, Juliet is a sought-after speaker at industry conferences nationally and internationally, and she frequently travels the State educating government organisations, including councils. The success of Juliet's organisation has meant significant employment and economic gains for regional New South Wales. Importantly, it has also made the community safer by improving its access to specialised occupational and environmental hygiene expertise, normally limited to the high-end-of-town metropolitan based consultancies and laboratories. Juliet takes her role as a leader in STEM seriously by mentoring young women and in her current voluntary board positions with Western Research Institute as Deputy Chair and in the past with Regional Development Australia Orana and Orana Arts. We are incredibly proud of Juliet's achievements and her contributions to local employment outcomes and to STEM.

I also congratulate the wonderful Melinda Gleeson, New South Wales Dubbo Electorate Woman of the Year. She was recognised for her commitment to bring positive change to the region through her contribution to the Trangie community and regional sport. Melinda was the driving force behind the 2015 Inaugural Ladies League Tag competition and established a Trangie team, of which she was a player. She also managed the Ladies Western Division League Tag team 2016, is a member of the Trangie Netball Club, helped start Trangie Netball Club in 2017, of which she was vice-president, coached a junior Trangie team for the past five years and played as a senior member. In addition, she is the vice-president of Trangie Swimming Club and has been on the committee for the past three years. But it does not end there: Melinda Gleeson has been secretary of the Trangie Magpies Rugby League for the past two years. In her spare time, she is a volunteer at numerous community events within Trangie. Trangie has a wonderful community that fund raises enormous amounts of money for respite care through its local race club. Melinda is loved by everyone in the Trangie community.

Juliet Duffy and Melinda Gleeson represent many of the great women who reside in the Dubbo electorate. As the local member, I was enormously proud to join Juliet at the ceremony at the International Convention Centre, where she was recognised on National Women's Day and honoured by the Premier and other dignitaries, including the Minister for Women. It was a fabulous event. I was proud and chuffed to be there when her success

was recognised. I know everyone in Dubbo is enormously proud of her. Likewise, I know the residents in Trangie, which is a cracking little community, are thrilled to bits to have a local Women of the Year come from their small community. Yesterday Melinda Gleeson and her co-workers came for afternoon tea and we had a fabulous cake. For the benefit of my wife, I did not have any cake as I am in training for the Kokoda Track. I congratulate them on their success. I am proud to have these two fabulous women in the Dubbo electorate.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (18:48):** The Minister for Police has talked about two incredible women who live in his electorate, Juliet Duffy and Melinda Gleeson. He is proud of them. Regional and rural areas are fortunate to have many women who work in business or as volunteers. They are the backbone of our local areas; they create the social fabric of our local areas.

The Minister, who is the local member for Dubbo, is immensely proud of the efforts of the women in his electorate. I acknowledge Juliet Duffy, who won the Regional Woman of the Year Award on International Women's Day. Juliet was one of four finalists of regional New South Wales and was a part of the awards ceremony held at the International Convention Centre. It is important to acknowledge the significant contribution to society of those amazing women. I congratulate the Minister and member for Dubbo on being proud of those women and for proudly drawing the attention of the House to their participation.

### ELECTRICITY PRICES

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (18:49):** The cost of electricity continues to be a source of real anxiety among, as well as a significant burden to, my community. I regularly make representations on behalf of my constituents who have been seeking a review of an electricity bill, or help a constituent to read their bill, or assist a constituent to navigate the unnecessarily complex electricity market. With that in mind, I welcome the recent preliminary report of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, which confirmed what my constituents know too well: We in this State have some of the highest electricity prices in the world.

The report highlights significant concerns about the operation of the National Electricity Market, which is leading to serious problems with affordability for consumers and businesses. The report finds that since 2007 electricity prices have increased by 63 per cent on top of inflation. Privatisation has been central to the development of the National Electricity Market. In this State privatisation was commenced by the Greiner Government with the corporatisation of State electricity providers. The current New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has continued down that path and gave away our State's largest power station, Liddell, to AGL when it sold Macquarie Generation group to AGL in 2013-14. At the same time, the Wallerawang Power Station was sold to EnergyAustralia, which then immediately closed that station. That cost New South Wales 1,000 megawatts of electricity and led to an increase in the price of electricity for New South Wales citizens and business.

AGL has confirmed it will close Liddell in 2020. In my view, the only part of its plan that has any certainty attached to it for replacing the 2,000 megawatts of generation capacity, which Liddell was built to generate, is the commitment to upgrade the nearby Bayswater power station, which will add only 100 megawatts to the network. The report of research undertaken by Professor Andrew Blakers and his team from the Australian National University's centre for sustainable energy systems is welcome. They conclude that by 2020, which is in just a couple of years time, wind and solar photovoltaic, supported by pumped hydro storage and linked to high-voltage interconnectors, will be "decisively cheaper than new coal or gas". Blakers says Australia's electricity market "could reach 100 per cent renewable electricity with high reliability and at zero net cost within a decade". That is an exciting prospect.

The opportunity to make people's lives a little easier and to support jobs must not be allowed to be captured by the private for-profit sector and the failed National Electricity Market. The private actors operating in the market system, which underpins the National Electricity Market, have no incentive to do more than extract the maximum profit possible from the system. Labor already has promised to re-regulate the electricity market. What is also needed is a decided plan to reduce electricity prices in this State. At the 2015 election the Liberal-Nationals Government, when Gladys Berejiklian was a member of Cabinet, promised that privatisation of electricity would bring electricity prices down. Since then, prices have continued to increase out of control. The Berejiklian Government still has no energy policy. My community understands the cause of the current situation.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest):** Order! I remind members to direct their comments through the Chair.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN:** Privatisation and deregulation—brought to you by the current New South Wales Government! The Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing, who is trying to speak over me, and his Government have presided over record-high electricity prices. The current Government has no plan to reduce

electricity prices. The Liberal-Nationals Government deserves to be condemned for what it has done to electricity prices in this State.

#### WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (18:54):** There has never been a better time to live in regional and rural New South Wales—

**Ms Liesl Tesch:** Hear, hear!

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE:** —under a Liberal-Nationals Government. I acknowledge the member's interjection agreeing with me. Recently I joined with the Mayor of Wagga Wagga and others to announce some fantastic funding for Robertson Oval and McDonalds Park as part of our Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund. With more women participating in sporting competitions around Australia—which is a fantastic thing—there is a need to upgrade some facilities, including change rooms that are old and antiquated. The Government is delivering \$664,672 to upgrade the female change rooms at Robertson Oval and McDonalds Park where rugby league, rugby union, cricket and other sports are played. All sporting groups have welcomed the funding.

On the same day we also announced \$250,000 of funding for adult laydown change facilities, which is an important initiative that I encourage other communities to embark upon. As people with disabilities get older their parents struggle to find appropriate places to take care of their loved one's toileting and changing needs. The \$250,000 will be used to build two adult laydown change facilities. One will be in partnership with the Leisure Company, which provides fantastic services for people with disabilities, and the other will be in partnership with Wagga Wagga council.

We also announced \$250,000 to improve playground equipment, soft fall areas and landscaping at Cox Park, Flinders Street Park, Graceland Detention Basin, Mangoplah Sports Ground, Paddy Osborne Park, Undurra Drive Park and Uranquinty Neighbourhood Park. The Government wants children to play outside and to exercise. The funding will encourage parents to take their children to the park and encourage kids to engage. In addition, the Government will provide \$350,000 for new Hot Shots courts at South Wagga Tennis Club. The tennis community has welcomed that funding as well as the Government's previous commitments to upgrade other sporting and tennis facilities.

In Tumut I joined Mayor James Hayes and the general manager to announce \$297,130 of funding to upgrade the Bull Paddock, which is a large football field. The Government recently provided funds to light the paddock. This nearly \$300,000 will go towards installing a new drainage system and laying a new surface on the Bull Paddock, the focus of sport in Tumut. I also announced \$1 million of funding for a new library in the fantastic town of Batlow. The money will enable meeting facilities to be built so that the new library can be used even more than it is used now.

I also joined the mayor and other officials in Wagga Wagga to turn the first sod on Livvi's Place, which is a playground designed specifically for children with disabilities. The total cost of the project is \$500,000, to which our Government has contributed \$350,000. It is the only such playground in regional and rural New South Wales. Why not build the first one in Wagga Wagga, the largest inland city? Those are just some of the projects that the Government has funded as part of its program of investing in regional and rural New South Wales. I suspect that as we work through the \$4.1 billion of transition funding from the Snowy Hydro that is in addition to the \$6 billion we will continue to make good news announcements for regional and rural communities.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (18:59):** I commend the member for Wagga Wagga for the incredible work that he is doing in his community. He is a great member. He said that this is the best time to live in regional and rural New South Wales, and he is absolutely right. The Wagga Wagga community can be proud that it has the best ever local member for Wagga Wagga. The Stronger Country Communities Fund is sending millions of dollars into our communities: It is going to playgrounds, sporting fields and amenity blocks. These are the things that make a difference to our local communities. As the member for Wagga Wagga said, improvements to facilities such as the oval and local parks are ensuring that local communities are set up for the future. The Government is looking after the generations to come. I congratulate the member for Wagga Wagga, an incredibly hard worker, on spreading a lot of love in his local area.

#### SYDNEY METRO SOUTHWEST PROJECT

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (19:00):** The member for Bathurst and I might go to Wagga Wagga and have a look at the playground for disabled kids that the member for Wagga Wagga referred to. I call on the Government to reconsider its plans for the Sydney Metro. It has been almost two years since I first urged the

Government to reassess its route and stations for the Sydney Metro Southwest project. I told the House then that the location of the Waterloo station was a mistake. It represented a missed opportunity to provide for the fastest growing and most densely populated urban renewal zone in Australia: Green Square east, between Zetland and Waterloo, near Danks Street. The New South Wales Government seems deadset on making yet another error with this project. Not only is the Waterloo stop in the wrong place, but the whole alignment through my electorate is wrong.

Sydney Metro does not service the rest of the urban renewal corridor that runs from Waterloo through Zetland and Rosebery. Those suburbs probably cannot be adequately serviced by light rail, but I commend the City of Sydney for setting aside reservations for such a project anyway. In any case, the Government has decided on a route and an alignment for the metro, and I am determined to make the most of it in the interests of Heffron residents. Today I met with a group of concerned and well-informed Alexandria residents who have put together a comprehensive written submission outlining their concerns with this project, namely the oversight of not locating a metro rail stop in Alexandria. I have previously made representations requesting that the Government consider a metro rail station at Alexandria, but they were rejected out of hand.

Alexandria is a rapidly growing suburb. It is at the fringe of the mammoth Green Square project and the Ashmore Estate project. Alexandria is smack bang in the middle of the "global economic corridor" from Sydney's central business district [CBD] through to Sydney Airport and Port Botany. It is also in the heart of the City of Sydney's southern employment lands, a significant segment of industrial land still remaining in close proximity to the CBD. Put simply, Alexandria is one of the most important suburbs in the most economically significant precinct in the country, and this Government will not connect it to its city-shaping metro project. The Sydney Metro from Bankstown to Rouse Hill will feature 31 stations across a 66-kilometre route, with each station about two kilometres apart. Bizarrely, the longest stretch between stations is in my electorate, between Waterloo station and Sydenham.

Alexandria is the midpoint between those two stations and is crying out for its own metro stop. The metro tunnels cross the interface of Alexandria's residential and industrial precinct at Euston Road and Maddox Street. It would be the perfect location for an Alexandria metro station and would require no alteration of the tunnel alignment. However, the New South Wales Government wants to completely pass it by. It is an astoundingly poor decision. We should be taking the advice of the London Underground: "Mind the gap." I have read the Government's preferred infrastructure report, which apparently examined the viability of such a station. Despite meeting the same criteria as the Waterloo, Martin Place and Pitt Street station assessments, and exceeding the criteria for Crows Nest and Barangaroo, Alexandria was dismissed as not meeting the project's objectives. Are we planning our major transport projects by a roulette wheel? There has to be some respect for an objective assessment process.

I conclude by warning that Alexandria is facing a disaster. It will bear the brunt of the WestConnex project when the St Peters Interchange dumps more than 62,000 vehicles every day onto local roads, with no prospect of their dispersal. It will be too late then to put more buses on or to simply build a light rail line. The whole suburb will choke. If the residents and workers of Alexandria are to have any prospect of getting out of their homes and to work, they need metro rail and they need it soon. It is infuriating that the Government is happy to build a mammoth motorway through the heart of my electorate, but not to put a railway station in the most glaringly obvious location possible. I call on the Minister to reconsider the Governments' decision to reject a metro station at Alexandria. I am happy to provide this submission to the Government tonight. I urge the Government to set aside the belligerence with which it ordinarily treats these sorts of suggestions and to take the time to meet with these very impressive residents who have done a substantial amount of work, and hear their case.

#### **EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (19:05):** I bring to the attention of the House the importance of protecting those who protect us. I am, of course, talking about the brave men and women of the NSW Police Force, the Ambulance Service of NSW, Fire & Rescue NSW, the NSW Rural Fire Service and the State Emergency Service. I refer not only to paid staff but also to volunteers. The men and women of our emergency services are tasked with a most difficult and challenging mandate. Each day they strap on their boots and go to work to protect the community, and they face adversity each step of the way. They all hope to return from their work at day's end to be with their family and loved ones. Sadly, the reality is that the dangers our emergency responders face are such that injury and death are very real possibilities. But there is much we can do to provide them with safety and protection—whenever a safety issue is identified across these workplaces action must follow.

It is the responsibility of every employer to provide a safe work environment where reasonably practicable. Whenever a safety issue is identified and reported to an employer, or the employer is aware through other means, the employer has a primary duty of care to ensure its workers, paid or volunteer, are not exposed to risk to their health and safety. The New South Wales Government is the employer of our emergency services

personnel and it is this Government's responsibility to meet its obligations. The Government has a duty of care and a duty to consult; it must exercise due diligence and manage work health and safety risks for those men and women. One such manageable risk is the danger faced by emergency services personnel when they are performing their duties on or near roadways—namely, the risk of being impacted or struck from approaching or passing motor vehicles travelling at high speed.

Our emergency services personnel must concentrate on many things when they are walking and standing in areas of danger in close proximity to fast-moving motor vehicles—that distance can sometimes be measured in inches. The Government mandated 40-kilometre school zones, and rightly so. It was deemed necessary to impose those enforceable reductions in speed in response to the risks posed to schoolchildren. However, the locations and times were not fixed for school buses. Appropriate signage and an accompanying education campaign via media was also undertaken. School students and teachers are protected by those enforceable speed reductions. Road workers who perform their work on and near roadways have been afforded the same protection.

Indeed, a 40-kilometre speed zone is often employed by road workers to mitigate danger to them and signage is used to alert the drivers approaching those areas. Ironically, these speed reduction zones are often enforced by the NSW Police Force. In September 2017 I made representations to the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services, and to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, informing them of the risks faced by our emergency services men and women in performing their duties on foot, either on or near roadways. Since then my office has been inundated with reports from police officers and other emergency services personnel who have been either struck or almost injured by motorists in the course of their duties.

As a police officer performing my duties on or near roadways, I too have experienced the dangers associated with fast-moving vehicles being in close proximity. It should not take another injury like that which occurred near Campbelltown recently or a death before appropriate work health and safety obligations are adhered to. This matter requires urgent attention. Employer consultation with emergency services personnel is required, and these risks must be managed. If we afford a level of protection to school students and road workers—as we should—do our police officers and emergency services personnel not deserve the same protection should they deem it necessary? Let us protect those who protect us. Let us help them to get home safely to their families and do our bit to ensure they live long and fulfilling lives. Let us respond to the dangers we are now aware of, and provide an enforceable 40 kilometres per hour speed limit.

#### **EASTWOOD LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS**

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (19:10):** I acknowledge in the House the outstanding contribution of Mr Hugh Lee, OAM, as Chairman of the Ryde Lunar New Year Celebrations in Eastwood for the past 10 years. The celebrations have enjoyed enormous and ever-growing success for the past decade. The Eastwood Lunar New Year Celebrations are a highlight of my calendar each year, as I am sure is the case for many of my constituents. Although I am looking forward to seeing the event's continued success next year, it will sadly be without the leadership of Hugh Lee, who is stepping down from his role as chairman this year, in the Year of the Dog—I note that Mr Lee has turned 80.

Hugh and the other members of the organising committee have taken the Eastwood Lunar Year Celebrations from a relatively small event a decade ago to the incredible, thriving festival it is today. Celebrating its tenth anniversary this year, the organising committee—in partnership with Ryde council and various sponsors—delivers one of the best-attended Lunar New Year celebrations in Sydney. Tens of thousands of people attend each year, celebrating culture, food, music and dance. The festival begins with the annual cooking competition, where local politicians and community leaders have the opportunity to show off their cooking skills—or, in my case, lack of cooking skills. I take this opportunity to congratulate the redoubtable member for Parramatta, Geoff Lee, who won the cooking competition this year in a raid on Eastwood from Parramatta—and it was the first time he had entered. Dr Lee stole our cooking prize!

The next in the order of celebrations is the Eastwood night markets, when the plaza in Rowe Street comes alive with Lunar New Year themed lights and an array of delicious food. We finish with the grand celebration on the final weekend of the New Year. There the community is treated to a morning of dance and cultural performances, as well as food and market stalls. The highlight of the grand celebration has to be the incredible lion dance, where the performers jump from platform to platform in an impressive display of fitness and acrobatics. I always spare a thought for the dancers wearing the large lion costume in the hot Australian sun. I should add, of course, that Hugh is more than welcome to set up another festival in Epping if he wants to go on for another 10 years. We cannot let the member for Ryde, Victor Dominello, have all the fun entertaining my constituents in the neighbouring suburb of Eastwood, and there is currently an opening in the calendar for the Chinese Moon Festival in September.

I will mention some of the other volunteers who help to make the Eastwood Lunar New Year Celebrations such an outstanding success. My friend Anthony Ching is always a source of support and encouragement to me. He makes sure that I am always on top of the events that are coming up and I occasionally drop in to say hello to the members of the Eastwood Chamber of Commerce, of which Anthony is a member. I should also mention the ever-supportive Tony Tang, who not only has assisted in organising the festival but also almost won the cooking competition in 2012 with his Turkish hamburgers. He came second to another friend and supporter, Agnes Shim from the Korean Women's Association.

Lunar New Year is celebrated by both the Chinese and the Korean communities—the two largest communities in my electorate. It would therefore be remiss of me not to mention also my Korean friends Lieutenant Colonel Paul Kim and William Seung, who, along with Agnes Shim, attend many of the Lunar New Year events and are always there to lend me their advice and support. One of the iconic characters to join us each year in Eastwood is Johnson Cheng, who takes on the persona of the God of Fortune. Disguised behind his decorative headdress, long beard, and make-up, Johnson brings the famous character to life as he greets the people of Eastwood at the grand celebration.

After speaking with Johnson this year, I discovered that he is one of my constituents. He told me that he was delighted to see himself in full costume on one of my community newsletters after receiving a copy in his letterbox. I again thank the organising committee for another successful year of celebrations. I wish Hugh Lee well and thank him for his enormous contribution to the community over the past 10 years. I look forward to catching up with him again soon.

### NEPEAN HOSPITAL UPGRADE

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (19:14):** Nepean Hospital is one of the most important institutions in my electorate, and I am proud that this Government is continuing to deliver the resources that it needs to continue providing world-class care to the people of Penrith. We have announced the largest investment in Nepean Hospital in its history—a \$576 million upgrade that will help us continue to cater for a growing community. Labor likes to talk about its commitment to funding health in New South Wales, yet it has not considered Nepean Hospital important enough to commit even one dollar to an upgrade. This proves beyond doubt that this so-called commitment to health funding for the Penrith community is nothing but talk. We are not just investing in infrastructure. Under this Government, we have seen the budget for the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District increase by 50 per cent since we were elected in 2011.

Recently, I was delighted to join the Premier, the Minister for Health, and the member for Mulgoa, who is also the Minister for Mental Health, in welcoming 56 new interns for 2018 as part of the New South Wales Government's provision of a record 999 medical graduates across the State through its \$107 million internship program. We have seen the addition of a ninth birthing room to the existing Nepean Birthing Unit, which is helping the hospital to meet current demand until the upgrade is completed. The unit was renovated to increase capacity from eight to nine birthing suites and a new assessment room was also commissioned. The region continues to experience a growth in the number of births, and Nepean Hospital has more than 5,000 births every year. It takes a dedicated community to make such an important institution like Nepean Hospital work.

It is also important to recognise the outstanding work that is done by the Penrith Hospital Auxiliary, whose members donate their time and energy to raising approximately \$35,000 each year through stalls held each month at the hospital. The auxiliary has 34 volunteer members and it always welcomes new members, particularly ones who can bake cakes and make craft items for the stalls. Each and every one of those auxiliary members deserves our thanks for all they do. I pay particular tribute to June Hewett, who has been a member of the auxiliary for 27 years and is a remarkable example of public service to her local community. I also acknowledge registered charity Our Community Cares Penrith, and the many community-minded businesses it represents, for donating 11 new chemotherapy chairs to the Nepean Cancer Care Centre.

The chairs were specially designed according to feedback and suggestions from Cancer Care staff, for whom patient comfort is the number one priority. Those who contributed to the donation were the Lions Club of Emu Plains, the Nepean Business Network, the Great Walk Foundation, Emu Sports Club, Property Central Penrith, Cafe 2773 in Glenbrook, and Helping Hands. Nepean Hospital has also opened a new cardiology day only unit, which will allow some patients to have a shorter hospital stay. I also thank all of staff who work hard every day at the hospital to provide a world-class level of health care to the Penrith community. I assure them and the people of my electorate that this Government will continue to provide the funding and the resources they need and deserve.

I am immensely proud that one of the key achievements we have secured in this term of government, and which is now under construction, is the \$576 million upgrade to Nepean Hospital. It is a recognition of the growing

Penrith community and of the number of people who choose to call Western Sydney and Penrith home. It is also a fantastic recognition of the work that is being done by the Medical Staff Council and the administration at the hospital; the council, the doctors and the staff have been passionate advocates for the hospital. We are seeing some wonderful innovations take place every day. Whether it is the introduction of new technology, new work practices or new nursing techniques, every day the staff at Nepean Hospital are improving what they do to ensure that they offer better care to every person who needs treatment at the hospital.

The council and the community have also embraced the broader precinct, ensuring that it is not just about the hospital but also about creating jobs and new opportunities for people across Penrith. This builds on the early work of the Penrith Health and Education Precinct, and I recognise all those people across the Penrith business and political communities who have advocated for such investment. The cornerstone is, without doubt, the \$576 million upgrade, but the investment is also supporting the hardworking staff, doctors, nurses and volunteers who make Nepean Hospital a world-class health institution.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:20 until  
Wednesday 14 March 2018 at 10:00.**