



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday, 5 June 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 5 June 2018

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

PUBLIC HEALTH AMENDMENT (SAFE ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CLINICS) BILL 2018 (SHARPE)

First Reading

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

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that I have received a written authority from the Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC, advising that the member for Port Macquarie will have carriage of the bill in the Legislative Assembly.

I set down the second reading of the bill as an order of the day for tomorrow.

[*Notices of motions given.*]

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge in the public gallery Superintendent Luke Freudenstein, NSW Police Redfern Local Area Command, and Maria Jennings, guests of the member for Heffron.

Private Members' Statements

KU-RING-GAI CHASE NATIONAL PARK

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (12:11): Anyone who drives, cycles or walks along Bobbin Head Road, through North Turramurra and past the Sphinx Memorial and the Sandakan Memorial Reserve will pass through the entry station and begin the short downhill winding road to Ku-ring-gai's greatest treasure, the 14,977 hectare Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, the traditional land of the Garigal people. First listed as a conservation area in December 1894, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park includes Barrenjoey Head, Lion Island, most of Long Island and Spectacle Island. It is Australia's second oldest national park and was added to the Australian National Heritage List in December 2006 as a nationally outstanding centre of biodiversity.

The park gained international exposure in the 1960s and 1970s as the location of the filming of the television series *Skippy the Bush Kangaroo*. Today it has much to offer to those pursuing a variety of interests and recreational activities. It is so scenically beautiful and historically significant that the Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment [FOKE] recently pushed for Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park to be World Heritage listed. I wholeheartedly agree with that proposal, and I know it has the support of our local Federal members of Parliament

From the time that Frederick Eccleston Du Faur, a prominent public servant and patron of exploration and arts in both colonial and post-Federation New South Wales, advocated in the late nineteenth century for the preservation of Ku-ring-gai Chase, primarily to protect native flowers from a rapidly expanding neighbourhood, locals and visitors have delighted in spending time exploring its walking tracks, breathtaking lookouts, mountain biking trails and significant Aboriginal sites. There is extensive evidence of Aboriginal use and occupation, with over 800 sites and locations within the park. These include rock engravings and paintings, grinding grooves, stone arrangements, shell middens and burial and occupation sites.

The park has 24 plant communities and more than 1,000 different native plant species, including grevilleas, eucalypts, wattles, heaths and banksias. Several of the species are protected under New South Wales legislation, for example, Caley's grevillea and Bynoe's wattle. The park is also recognised for its diverse fauna that are unique to the Sydney region, with more than 160 species of birds, including eastern rosellas, grey fantails, honeyeaters and robins. Among the 28 mammals that live in the park there are 11 species of bats, ring-tailed possums and echidnas. There are more than 60 species of reptiles, including diamond pythons and goannas, 20 species of frogs and over 100 species of butterflies and moths. The mangroves are full of young fish, crabs, prawns, oysters, insects and micro-organisms that provide food for the cormorants, herons, mullet, spiders and snails. The populations of spotted-tailed quolls, southern brown bandicoots, koalas and eastern bent-wing bats

residing in the park are considered regionally significant, while the breeding colony of little penguins on Lion Island has been the subject of long-term research.

Many visitors come to the park just to enjoy a picnic or a barbecue with family and friends. Others engage in the available water-based activities, including boating at Apple Tree Bay, canoeing, kayaking, paddleboarding and, if licensed, fishing. But perhaps the primary attraction of Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park are the many short walks that cater to all tastes, whether a bird-watcher or someone who appreciates the distinctive appearance and aroma of the wild flowers, would like to experience some local cultural history or just wants to take in a view.

Those who are looking for an unrivalled bushwalk should take the Gibberagong track, a 6½-kilometre journey that starts along a mangrove boardwalk where people can see colourful red crabs scurrying across the mud at low tide. The track then continues through a mini canyon of sandstone to a lookout surrounded by a forest of eucalyptus trees. From there, the bushwalkers can follow the footsteps of the Garigal people to see a rock engraving that features figures and several axe-grinding grooves. The remainder of this spectacular walk takes one through a variety of forest and woodland communities before emerging into the suburb of Wahroonga. All of this is just 26 kilometres from the Sydney central business district.

Prior to 2005, World Heritage sites were selected on the basis of six cultural and four natural criteria. However, the adoption of the revised Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention has simplified the process to one set of 10 criteria. Those criteria include that the object of the listing contains superlative natural phenomena or has areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance and that it contains important natural and significant habitats for in situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation. Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park undoubtedly satisfies those criteria.

Ku-ring-gai residents are very proud of the park and we do not underestimate how fortunate we are to have it outside our backdoors. We have never sought to keep it a secret and have always welcomed the two million annual visitors to the park, knowing that most will return to continue their explorations at a later date. I consider it a matter of great importance that the world be made aware of, and ultimately suitably recognises, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park's outstanding beauty and biodiversity.

SUPERINTENDENT LUKE FREUDENSTEIN RETIREMENT

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:17): I pay tribute to the NSW Police Commander of Redfern Local Area Command, Superintendent Luke Freudenstein, on his retirement from the NSW Police Force. On Friday 8 June, after 37 years as a New South Wales police officer, Superintendent Luke Freudenstein will be retiring. I am honoured by his presence in the gallery today. Luke's departure will be felt deeply. He has worked tirelessly in my electorate to stamp out drug dealing in Waterloo's social housing community and to improve the lives of those tenants. Luke has achieved for the community what was previously unthinkable. His expected stay of six months became 10 years and that decade has two stories to tell. The first is a triumph of law enforcement and the second the transformation of a community.

I first met Luke when I was elected to this House in 2012. Luke commenced as a probationary constable in Manly in 1980 and served across a number of commands until he reached the rank of superintendent in 2006. He was appointed commander at Redfern in 2008. At that point the area had earned a reputation as one of the roughest, most disadvantaged suburbs in Sydney and tensions between police and the local Aboriginal community were high. The tragic death of T.J. Hickey and the Redfern riots had created deep wounds. Violent crime was rife and, in effect, the Aboriginal community and the police were at war. Statistically, across Australia Aboriginal men are more likely to commit crime and be charged and are 15 times more likely to end up in prison than a non-Aboriginal man. Sadly, the situation in Redfern at the time was no different.

Luke remarked that in a single month in 2005 there were 100 robberies in Redfern alone. They were just some of the hundreds of violent robberies and burglaries every year. He does not shy away from stating the fact that most of those crimes were committed by young Aboriginal men; whatever the police were doing, it just did not work. In 2009, Luke started Clean Slate Without Prejudice, in partnership with Shane Phillips of the Aboriginal mentorship program Tribal Warrior. I have previously told the House about this astonishing program. At dawn, three days a week, Luke and his fellow officers join at-risk youths and young offenders for a rigorous session of boxing and fitness, followed by breakfast, then lessons, and then off to school. It started with six police and 10 children; now, 100 participants gather at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence to start their day, and to get their lives back on track. Since Clean Slate started, crime in the area has plummeted up to 15 per cent year on year. Robberies have fallen up to 80 per cent, and there has been a 70 per cent reduction in break and enters. Luke attributes this to the success of Clean Slate.

Rates of crime are falling faster in Redfern than elsewhere in the State. Indigenous crime has slowed from a flood to a trickle. The unprecedented success has seen the program expand, with Never Going Back now providing the same opportunity to prisoners. Luke gets up at 3:30 a.m. on his own time to drive to Long Bay and collect the participants. After boxing, they go off to work experience on the Tribal Warrior boat, and when released they do not reoffend. In my whole life I never considered that simple discipline and routine could have such remarkable results. But more than that, Luke gives these kids a sense of hope and a responsibility to themselves and to each other. Luke believes in them in a way that many of them have never experienced before. Luke shows them another way and gives them the power to choose it.

Luke and Shane repaired the relationship between the police and the Aboriginal community. Gone are the bad old days of blackfella versus whitefella. For nine years, Luke has trained the Redfern All Blacks, the rugby league team sponsored by the Redfern Police Area Command. On their jersey they wear the RACAPTIS—Redfern Aboriginal Community and Police Together in Sport—logo. The logo is of two hands clasped together, one the blue-and-white tartan of the NSW Police Force and the other the black, yellow and red of the Australian Aboriginal flag. It says it all: one team, one community—mates. This is the incredible story of Superintendent Luke Freudenstein. I know that even in retirement he will do so much more. On behalf of the Parliament and the people of New South Wales, I commend the service of Commander Freudenstein to the House and wish him a long and happy retirement.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): On behalf of the New South Wales Parliament I also congratulate Luke Freudenstein on his service to the NSW Police Force and the community.

MYALL CREEK MASSACRE 180TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (12:22): Sunday 10 June, marks the 180th anniversary of the massacre at Myall Creek, near Bingara in my electorate of Northern Tablelands. No doubt, the "Myall Creek massacre" is a term that sounds familiar to many in this place; however, the details of that mass murder and many like it in Australia may not be as familiar to members as they should be. This Sunday a gathering will take place at a granite memorial on a ridge overlooking a bend of the Myall Creek. At that same place 180 years ago, near dusk, 28 valued members of the Weraera tribe and part of the mighty Kamilaroi nation—men, women, children and babies—were set upon by a group of 12 white stockmen, mostly convicts. They were shown no mercy; they were massacred by gun and sword, and their remains were dismembered and partly burnt. It is a dark stain on our country's history. National Reconciliation Week has just passed. As we know, this year's theme was "Don't Keep History a Mystery".

As we gather on Sunday at the Myall Creek massacre memorial site, those descended from the Weraera people will welcome all, including people who trace their connection back to the white settlers and convicts who were witnesses to the massacre. We will walk along the same path that those people took to their death. We will remember that awful day and stories will be told to ensure that the history of that massacre and many others will never be a mystery. We will be generously and kindly welcomed to country. There will be singing and the lives of the 28 will be celebrated and remembered. Once, this was a place of terror and sadness. Now, the massacre site has evolved to become a place of learning, not retribution; and a place for conciliation, not conflict. The Myall Creek massacre was only one of many similar massacres of that time and earlier—and it would certainly not be the last, sadly. However, it is, and should be, a touchstone of our history because of what followed.

For the first time in our country's history, most of the killers were brought to answer for their deeds. Seven of them were tried and convicted in a court of law. Execution for all followed—that was a first. It is important to note that on 26 January that same year—that is, 1838—the Waterloo Creek massacre took place about 50 kilometres south-west of Moree, not far from Myall Creek. It is reported that between 150 and 300 people from the Kamilaroi nation were shot under the direction of one Major James Nunn. It is probably the largest massacre in Australian history and yet, the killers did so with impunity. That would be the story for most of those hidden crimes for another almost 90 years.

Modern Australia is better off for confronting uncomfortable truths such as those presented by the Myall Creek memorial. Only by acknowledging that such things happened—by being openly ashamed that they happened—can we reconcile the past with the present and move forward together as one nation. I urge all Australians to learn and embrace that part of our history. This Sunday I will humbly listen to the stories of my neighbours, remember the hurt caused and think about the way forward. Part of the redress of the past will be developing that iconic part of our history to encourage education and awareness all year round, not just on one day in June each year.

In recent years, the National Committee of the Friends of Myall Creek has developed an exciting plan to construct a state-of-the-art educational centre at the memorial site. Recently I met with the committee's local representatives to receive an update on plans and discuss funding opportunities. The group comes together from

right across Australia and is committed to the project. It will be a major development and one that will raise the profile of the Myall Creek massacre and the forgotten massacres. Plans for the almost \$10 million project are ambitious and I am excited to throw my full support behind the group's plans to seek funding via an application to the New South Wales Government Regional Cultural Fund, which is part of the Regional Growth Fund. It is a brilliant project. I commend the National Committee of the Friends of Myall Creek for its unstinting and generous commitment to increase the profile of the massacre memorial and to ensure that the history of the Myall Creek massacre—and many others like it—never becomes a mystery.

RYDE HUNTERS HILL DISTRICT HOCKEY CLUB

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (12:27): Please allow me to continue my praise of great sporting organisations in my electorate of Lane Cove. Today I will enthral the Chamber with the story of Ryde Hunters Hill District Hockey Club—better known as Ryde Hockey. As we all know, Australians love sport and particularly team sports—whether they be teams for men's or women's National Rugby League, rugby union, Aussie rules, Davis Cup doubles, swimming relays or hockey. There are various formats of the game of hockey: bandy, field hockey and ice hockey. The game itself can be traced back over 1,000 years, but the current form of hockey is about 150 years old and is one of the few team sports played at both the Olympics and Commonwealth Games. Australian hockey teams are at the forefront of the sport in the world today.

Our national men's side is the world's number one ranked team and our women were the pride of the nation when they took the gold medal at the Sydney Olympics. Ryde Hockey has an 80-year history, making it one of the oldest hockey clubs in Australia. It has the largest junior membership in the Sydney metropolitan area—a testament to the strong ties between the community and the sport in my electorate. With support from its members and the New South Wales Government, the club built its state-of-the-art home ground in 1994 at Waterloo Road, North Ryde. Since then an estimated 6,000 players, officials, spectators and members of the community have used the home ground every year. The club takes seriously its responsibility for managing its home ground facility. It has proven to be an ideal partner for government due to its ability to stretch every dollar, whether it be club, government or local business funding.

Today the Ryde Hunters Hill Hockey Club has more than 750 members, comprising of players and non-playing associates. Numerous other graded teams use the Ryde hockey facilities to train, as do various boys, girls and mixed school sides. The club has strong relationships with local enterprises and the site is a community hub for sporting activities. Its facilities are regularly used for soccer, gridiron and multi-sport school holiday programs. In 1936, the club won its first "silverware", taking out the C-grade premiership. The following year the club entered teams in the B-grade and C-grade competitions, winning the B-grade premiership.

Over the years, Ryde hockey has continued to excite the players and entertain the fans. The first 20 minutes of last year's women's first grade grand final—contested by the Ryde girls—has been described as the best phase of the game ever played on Australian soil. Congratulations must go to coach Tim Collier and his superb squad. I am sure members would like some Ryde hockey statistics. The club currently has more than 40 State representative players—10 players in under-21 State national championships; four players in the Junior World Cup; 10 players in senior Australian Hockey League teams; numerous players in the NSW Masters teams; four players in the National Futures Group; four players in the senior Australian development squad; five players in senior national teams; one player in the Australian country team; and a number in national masters teams.

Over the past year Ryde hockey players have turned out in competitions in India, South Africa, South America, Europe, the United Kingdom, Japan and New Zealand. Lane Cove born and raised Tom Craig and Lachi Sharp are teammates in the Australian Kookaburras. They competed at the recent Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and won gold 2-0 against New Zealand. Tom and Lachi, together with Tim Brand, will be representing the Kookaburras for the Australian Champions Trophy to be held mid-June in Holland. The Australian Kookaburras are ranked number one in the world against 165 countries. Off the field, the club has strong guidance with the likes of four-term president Glen Castensen, administrative director Meg Smith and finance director Andy Ramsay. Maurie Dawson gave 25 years of service as president of Ryde hockey. This club performs to the highest level on the field, in the office and in the spectator stands. I thoroughly recommend this club to the House.

BANKSTOWN ELECTORATE TRANSPORT SERVICES

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (12:32): I am furious to read another Government announcement that bypasses the electorate of Bankstown. Across Sydney, 11 railway stations will receive an easy-access lift. Whilst I appreciate that those communities must be delighted and I welcome that announcement, in 2013 Transport for NSW undertook an analysis of railway stations most in need of an easy access upgrade and Chester Hill railway station in my electorate was ranked fourth. It is distressing for my community, particularly

the residents of Chester Hill, Villawood, Birrong and Yagoona, whose railway stations do not have an easy-access lift. Patronage on the Bankstown T3 line has grown from 16 million in 2013 to 28 million in 2018, which is particularly concerning because this community relies heavily on public transport and most certainly relies on jobs in the city.

Less than two weeks ago the *Daily Telegraph* referred to the suburb of Sefton—a suburb that has been neglected. There are three or four shops that are barely active. This suburb has a growing family base but sadly the jobs are not there. People are desperately trying to get onto trains to go to the city. In 2013 the Government removed the inner-west train line—another way of hurting that part of south-western Sydney—which resulted in commuters travelling from Chester Hill, Sefton and Birrong to the city having to change trains three times. It is difficult to comprehend, but passengers boarding a train at Chester Hill or Sefton have to disembark at Birrong because the train terminates.

At Birrong they board a train coming from Bankstown that terminates at Lidcombe. At Lidcombe they board another train to travel either to Strathfield or the central business district [CBD]. For many years commuters enjoyed direct access to the CBD on the Liverpool via Regents Park railway line. This announcement only adds to the Government's neglect of the Bankstown electorate for eight long years. It would be remiss of me not to have raised this issue today. I had intended to raise another matter but I was incensed and livid to read yet again that three railway stations in my electorate—one ranked fourth out of 100 by Transport for NSW as desperately needing an easy-access lift—will not receive them. It is appalling. The assessment process is an utter farce. Most members in this Chamber will not be surprised that that is the case.

Government members have displayed confected outrage in the past couple of weeks, but it is now time to invest in the Bankstown electorate. The Bankstown Hospital and its car park need upgrading; we have 120 demountables in schools; and for the past five years commuters in the Bankstown electorate have had to put up with one less train line, despite the growing community. Recently, maintenance was carried out on the one easy-access lift at the Bankstown train station. For six weeks, commuters were redirected to either Sefton or Lakemba. The train stations at those suburbs do not have large car parks. It is absurd that less mobile passengers have been redirected to those suburbs so they can access the lifts to catch a train to work, school, university or a doctor's appointment. No shuttle bus or support was provided for those less mobile passengers. It was an appalling case of neglect. Hundreds, if not thousands, of commuters desperately rely on the easy-access lift at Bankstown train station.

BATHURST FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (12:37):

A special group in my electorate is the Bathurst Family History Group. Bathurst is one of the oldest inland settlements in Australia and it is important that organisations such as this capture the history and heritage of the local community, especially in books and various other data, to ensure it is not lost. Today I pay tribute to the work it has undertaken. The Bathurst Family History Group is providing the community with the perfect opportunity to explore the histories and lives of past residents who were teachers, nurses, publicans and entrepreneurs. Some were from the migrant camp in the nearby area. The group has looked at the lives of interesting characters from the early 1800s to the early 1900s. The Bathurst Family History Group also participates in cemetery tours, which is a perfect opportunity to discover the characters and events that make up the rich and colourful history of the Bathurst community and its residents.

The Bathurst Family History Group was founded in 1984 by a small number of people who wanted to help each other make progress with their family history research. Through their work, a special story has emerged about families who resided at the migrant camp in Bathurst, which was established in 1948 on a former army site. The camp provided makeshift accommodation in ex-army huts because nothing else was available due to a severe housing shortage at that time. The migrants were housed in iron sheds, wooden barracks and tents. The accommodation was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Many facilities were in poor condition and they needed constant repair. Single people had narrow iron beds set out in a dormitory style. Married quarters were petitioned off into separate sections, but the petitions were flimsy and did not allow for much privacy. Tents were also used to accommodate the migrants.

On arrival in Bathurst, families had few possessions. They were issued with clothes, shoes, linen and towels. They spent the first winter living in tents and then moved into family quarters in the huts. The migrant camp was like a town that at times had a population almost the size of Bathurst. Australia accepted nearly 200,000 migrants until 1950, and as many as 8,000 people lived in the Bathurst camp at any one time. By 1952 more than 80,000 migrants had passed through its gates. One of the stories recounted relates to a child who arrived at the camp 67 years ago. Dutch migrant Adrianus "Aadje" Nicholaas Maria Van Der Klugt, who was just six years old, died after a freak accident at the camp. The family had been at the camp for only a few days when this adventurous

little boy climbed onto the roof of the laundry and fell. The injuries he sustained were fatal. He was interred at the Bathurst cemetery, but his grave has remained unmarked and unknown since his death in 1951.

Through the research undertaken by the Bathurst Family History Group, his grave has been discovered and a headstone and plaque have now been erected. At least 11 members of Aadjie's family attended the special dedication ceremony held recently in Bathurst. A second headstone and plaque have also been placed to acknowledge and represent all the children who died at the migrant camp between 1948 and 1952. I commend the endeavours of the Bathurst Family History Group and its commitment and dedication. The members have worked tirelessly to acknowledge those special elements of our history that should be acknowledged. As a nation we should respectfully acknowledge the contribution and the lives of those who passed through the Bathurst Migrant Camp.

SYDNEY STADIUMS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:41): On behalf of both my constituents and people across the State, I call on the Government to withdraw its plans to rebuild Allianz Stadium at Moore Park. Plans are progressing quickly, with the environmental impact statement expected to go on exhibition this month and the existing stadium potentially demolished before the next election. Allianz Stadium is only 30 years old and was designed by eminent Australian architect Philip Cox. It will cost the Government close to \$1 billion to knock it down and build a replacement a few metres away. The Government has not delivered a full business case for this plan. Its 11-page glossy summary is nothing more than a promotional pamphlet on the contribution of stadiums with some paragraphs on the problems with the existing facility. The pamphlet estimates the cost of a refurbishment at \$714 million, but no detail is provided on how that figure was calculated, the alternatives considered, what works it involves, and how they were costed.

On 28 March I was given a tour of the stadium and shown its challenges. Improvements are needed, but the cost identified by the Government is in excess of \$100 million more than the \$600 million identified by former Premier Baird. Why will the Government not release a detailed business case that lists and costs all options considered so that the public can independently assess the final figure and the decision to rebuild? The answer is probably that the only option considered was a gold-plated refurbishment. The expected cost of the demolish-and-rebuild option has already blown out by nearly \$200 million since the plans were first announced. After claims of billion-dollar financial returns were proven wrong, the Government changed its sales pitch to focus on the matches and events the new facility would attract. However, most of these are already held at the stadium or will move from other State venues anyway.

Meanwhile, the Government has cut funds to essential services and flogged off public assets. We have long social housing and elective surgery waiting lists, our public transport system is stretched, and schools are at capacity. Sports NSW reports a gaping hole in grassroots community sport investment and facilities. The contrast between how the community and big end of town are treated is striking. More than 200,000 people have signed Peter Fitzsimons' online petition opposing the policy. Locally, the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust has lost all recurrent funding and has been forced to make the parklands self-funding through commercialisation, thereby alienating grasslands from public use. Massive redevelopment in surrounding suburbs will bring an extra 60,000 residents from Green Square alone—all living in apartments, all needing green open space to be healthy. There is community concern that Moore Park will be further eroded by the new stadium's relocation adjacent to the park. Crowd spill areas risk relegating Moore Park to just an extension of the Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG].

The community has foiled a number of SCG land-grab attempts at Moore Park, including for the new stadium to be at Kippax Lake. Indeed it is likely that Allianz Stadium was left to become run-down because a new building in Moore Park was always expected. The SCG Trust is already saying that pedestrian pathways are needed through Moore Park to connect the new stadium to the light rail stop and to the Tibby Cotter Bridge. This risks significant loss of soft grass surface and comes after encroachment, including in recent years from the Tibby Cotter Bridge and the light rail. It is unclear how much will be lost from the light rail for substations, the pedestrian bridge, stops, portals, the operations control centre and the drivers' facility structure.

The SCG Trust is hugely influential and has a history of getting what it wants from governments. It can build without a development application though, luckily, the Government has ensured there will be one for the stadium rebuild. The SCG's land was rezoned for commercial, residential and tourist accommodation, and it was excluded from the single governing body set up to manage all State stadiums. The SCG Trust also wants to expand its empire into the Entertainment Quarter and turn it into an elite sports precinct. There are pushes to change current restrictions that require the site to be used for film-related purposes, and we have heard proposals for car parks and hotels on the land.

This is public land set aside for public recreation. When the showgrounds were relocated, the community accepted that the precinct would be used for film-related purposes. It would be an outrageous betrayal if this

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promise was overturned. We do not know where the SCG will relocate its pool and gym, both of which will be removed by the stadium rebuild. Will they be located in the Entertainment Quarter or on their own land? These decisions will likely be made behind closed doors without any community input. Our rapidly expanding population means there is increasing demand for public open space and public recreation facilities, which are vital to health and wellbeing. I call on the Government to withdraw its plans to rebuild the stadium and reinvest funds in the parklands and community recreation.

PARRAMATTA EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (12:46): I bring to the attention of the House the outstanding achievements of Parramatta East Public School in 2018. It is always a privilege to visit local schools, and I recently had the honour of meeting some of the amazing staff, students, Parents and Citizens' Association [P&C] members and the relieving principal, Angela Sparks. Together they have created a wonderful school environment that helps students not only learn but also thrive.

Today I recognise some outstanding students including: Arash Ahmadpour, who has overcome a number of difficulties to achieve excellent results and was elected into the leadership position of sports minister; Peter Zhao, whose outstanding academic achievements have seen him being offered a place at the selective Sydney Boys High School; Khai Pham, whose work demonstrates he is an extraordinary thinker who applies his knowledge both creatively and analytically; Miriama Moqe, whose continued positive attitude towards her studies and attendance sees her making excellent progress across all key learning areas; Peter Dolmany, who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to learning and achieved excellent results, especially in mathematics; and Sultan Kakar, who was selected as an all-rounder in the Sydney West Primary Schools Sports Association cricket team.

These students have shown a great aptitude in the areas of academia and sport, in keeping with the school's motto: Ever Aim High. Great schools have strong community engagement, and I recognise the P&C for its ongoing efforts in 2018. I recognise the past and present P&C presidents—Mrs Sarah Manley, Mrs Dijana Rajic, and Mrs Lodewyke—for their outstanding efforts and achievements in leading school fundraising initiatives. I commend the school community for getting behind its P&C, which raised more than \$25,000 for the school in 2017—this is an amazing result. I also recognise Mrs Linda Dunwoodie for her leadership of the ethics program. Starting in 2016 with 24 students, this program has grown to include 87 students and there are 40 children on the waiting list. Every member of the staff is hardworking, committed and dedicated to ensuring that all children receive the education they are entitled to. They always do the little extra things that make a difference, and the students' results reflect this.

I make special mention of Susan Gardner, Jill Cameron-Smith, Mani Malik, Catherine Bardwel, Kathy Venetsanos, Helen Kafanelis, Julie Douglas, Rita Harita and Marian Musico for their commitment to our students and community that exceeds 15 years. I also recognise Mrs Rena Rogers, who continually receives glowing praise from the staff. They tell me she is the best school cleaner in New South Wales, if not the world. I commend Brenda Curtis for her outstanding leadership and implementation of the school parliament, replacing the captains and vice-captains model. Her leadership team is made up of two prime ministers, and ministers of education, sport, welfare, communication, community, environment and library, and a speaker of the house. This is a wonderful way to actively engage our youth in democracy and society, and gives her year 3 to year 6 students the ability to move motions and contribute ideas on how to improve the school. Once a term her ministers prepare speeches that recap the events that took place during the term. They also discuss and vote on any motions moved. The prime ministers then meet with the principal to discuss the successful motions to determine whether they are realistic.

As a result of this process, the school has been actively engaged in improvements, including the purchase and installation of an outdoor digital clock that enables students to keep an eye on the time while playing and new bubblers near the playground for easy access while playing. Finally, none of this would have been possible without good leadership, and I commend principal Mr Robert Ieroianni for his amazing work over the past eight years. I also acknowledge the dedication, commitment and professionalism of Mrs Sparks, who is an outstanding relieving principal, in advancing the qualities of public education.

MARSDENS LAW GROUP

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (12:51): In 1968 a young man by the name of John Marsden entered Warby's Bakery in Campbelltown and, with his law degree in his right hand and a passion for justice in his left, walked straight past the freshly baked goods and into a makeshift office space out the back. From that small office at the back of the bakery John Marsden, AM, set to work. In what was then a one-man, one-secretary office now stands the offices of the well-regarded and well-respected Marsdens Law Group. I acknowledge and commemorate Marsdens' fiftieth anniversary, especially the group's unwavering commitment to the rule of law and its service to the people of New South Wales, Campbelltown and the broader Macarthur.

Sadly, John Marsden is not with us to celebrate this milestone after succumbing to cancer in 2006 following a lengthy battle, which he fought with the same tenacity that he brought to his legal career and Marsdens. However, I have no doubt that John would be proud to see Marsdens reach this milestone, and even prouder to know that his younger brother, Jim Marsden, OAM, has taken the helm as senior partner and steered the group to continued success. Jim had not always planned to take over after his brother. In fact, Jim recently recalled that he was quite hesitant about joining the firm in 1973, as he and John had personalities like chalk and cheese and was worried that their relationship would not handle working together.

Despite their personality differences, both John and Jim shared a common pursuit of justice and passion for the fair representation of all people. These values of community, excellence, integrity and trust are the integral principles of Marsdens Law Group. Those values come from their parents, Guy and Tibby Marsden, whose work as publicans at the Lacks Hotel in Campbelltown shaped the attitude and values the two men would display as exceptional lawyers, particularly that all people are equal and deserve the same respect and representation. Community is paramount to Marsdens, which identifies it as not only its base but also its home.

Over the past five decades, the law group has always aimed to ensure that its services contribute something of significance to the community it serves, that is, a bond of reciprocity between lawyers and locals. Beyond their professional involvement in the community, Marsdens' employees are also involved in local service groups, such as Rotary, Lions and Quota, as well as sporting organisations, including the Western Suburbs Magpies, the Wests Tigers and even right down to junior football and swimming clubs across our region and great city.

As acknowledged by Jim, this community involvement traces itself back to John, who had a proud record of community involvement, culminating in his service as President of the Law Society of New South Wales for many, many years. These values and principles form the ideology that has driven Marsdens' continued success for the past 50 years and continues to drive it forward today and into the future. While the laws its practitioners work with are amended, repealed and introduced every day in this place, the Marsdens' ideology is both sufficiently robust and well grounded to react to the ever-changing headwinds of the justice system.

This is an ode to the leadership of Jim and his team of partners, and to the commitment of the lawyers and staff of the firm, whose skills are continuously tested by cases and matters that require the finest legal practitioners. With great success comes great demand, and Marsdens certainly has had its fair share of success over the years, with the opening of offices in Sydney, Liverpool, Camden and Oran Park in addition to its Campbelltown office, for its workforce of 14 partners, more than 50 lawyers and more than 100 other staff.

Despite this growth, its focus remains on serving the community that was the birthplace of the Marsden boys and the firm itself—my community and the great city of Campbelltown. I am proud to know Jim and his colleagues, and I am even prouder to acknowledge and celebrate this momentous occasion with them. On behalf of the Campbelltown community and this Parliament—the oldest Parliament, the Parliament of New South Wales—I thank Marsdens Law Group for its continued, distinguished service to our region and diligent response to the many needs it confronts. I wish Marsdens all the very best in the future and many successful years to come.

COLEAMBALLY FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (12:56): I congratulate Coleambally on 50 years as a town. This weekend Coleambally will celebrate 50 years since it was declared a town. It is the newest town in New South Wales. At the time of its creation, the area consisted of six sheep stations supporting just six families. It now consists of 450 farms supporting more than 1,000 people. At the time, the Government resumed those stations and created the Coleambally Irrigation Area. The stations were offered up in ballots to encourage people from all walks of life to get into farming: labourers, teachers, plumbers, mechanics, electricians, carpenters, sons of farmers with no farms of their own, scientists—anyone who was willing to have a go. All those drawn in the original ballots are listed on a display erected by the Lions club and the local council last year.

They had to prove that they had the capability to develop the farms. They had to show that they had capability with finance or machinery. They cleared the farms and built the on-farm infrastructure from scratch. Many of those pioneers spent many years living in sheds because one of the requirements of taking up a farm was that you had to live on the property within 12 months. Even to this day you can see sheds with one end built in, which the farmers lived in during those first years. This brought with it some challenges. I have heard stories from some of those early settlers that during the mice plagues the legs of the beds and tables had to sit in cans full of water to stop the mice crawling up them. And when man was landing on the moon, women in Coleambally were having babies in tents and tin sheds. These people truly were pioneers.

When the first farms were taken up in the very early 1960s, there was a sign saying, "This is where Coleambally will be." There was nothing else there at the time. Coleambally was a designed town and to this day

benefits from some of that design, with a sporting precinct all in one place, light industrial in one spot, heavy industrial in one spot, and the central business district and the schools strategically located. In the late 1970s it was an unusual place in that there were virtually no grandparents, because everyone had moved there to take up one of the farms. I was lucky enough to move to Coleambally for one month's work—that was nearly 14 years ago. It is very much a can-do town. I have been very lucky to be a part of that. In my time at Coleambally Irrigation, the system has been modernised to be probably the best open channel irrigation system in the world.

What has been done there has been done by the locals. They have built ovals, the community club, schools, churches, shops, houses, businesses and retirement homes. Many residents who are still living there today saw all those things built during their time there and have had a big hand in building them. Coleambally is lucky to have community groups that run many of our local organisations. We have a community bank that is run by a local board of directors; a community club that is run by locals; a demolition firm that is run by a board of locals; a nursing home that is run by a board of locals; and Coleambally Irrigation that is run by a board of locals. On top of that, we have the usual football clubs, a gun club, a pistol club, a golf club, parents and citizens associations, Lions clubs, et cetera.

Coleambally is a town with an enormous community spirit of volunteering. This weekend will be a celebration of that. Many events are taking place, including the starting of the Bucyrus, which is a huge dragline that dug some of the original parts of the channel. Three draglines were walked more than 150 kilometres from Murray Irrigation once they had finished digging the channels there. When I say "walked", I mean it. The draglines travelled at a top speed of approximately three or four miles per hour. One could literally walk with them as they moved. When the draglines finished their work in Coleambally they were sold for scrap. But—typical of Coleambally's can-do attitude—the local Lions club purchased one of the draglines from the scrap merchant and, using parts from the others, moved it into town as a permanent display of the history of the area.

The motor on the dragline is still in operating condition and is started every second year when the vintage rally comes to Coleambally. This weekend, it will be started a couple of times. The dragline has a Holden motor for a starter motor—that is how big the engine is—and has five very big cylinders, each of which is like a bulldog tractor and blows beautiful smoke rings as it goes. This weekend Coleambally will celebrate the past 50 years. I congratulate Coleambally and all the people who have made it such a successful community.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I welcome to the public gallery 30 year 10 accelerated legal studies students from Merewether High School. It is nice to see them in the House. I understand it is raining in Newcastle as well as here.

Private Members' Statements

ABORIGINAL CRICKET TOUR

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (13:01): As Co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Cricket and Vice President of the Campbelltown Camden Ghosts cricket club, I acknowledge the Aboriginal cricket tour of the United Kingdom. From 5 June to 12 June, Cricket Australia will send a men's and women's cricket squad to the United Kingdom to compete as the 2018 Aboriginal XI team to commemorate the 1868 Aboriginal tour of the United Kingdom. An Aboriginal cricket team was the first sporting team to tour internationally from Australia 150 years ago. In 1868, 13 Aboriginal players made the trip, and the 2018 tour will have players representing each of the original players. Between the male and female teams, the Ghosts will have five members representing Australia. Cricketers Ashleigh Gardner and Dan Christian will lead the women's and men's teams, which will tour Surrey, Sussex, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and the Marylebone Cricket Club. Each player will represent an original player and their mob on the 1868 teams.

The men's squad includes: Dan Christian, captain, who is representing Unaarrimin or "Johnny Mullagh" of the Wiradjuri mob; Nick Boland, who is representing Grongarrong or "Mosquito" of the Guligan mob; Scott Boland, who is representing Yellanach or "Johnny Cuzens" of the Guligan mob; Brendan Doggett, who is representing Murrumbidgee or "Twopenny" of the Worimi mob; Sam Doggett, who is representing Pripumarraman or "Charley Dumas" of the Worimi mob; Damon Egan, who is representing Jumgumjenanuke or "Dick-a-Dick" of the Gunditjmarra mob; Tyran Liddiard, who is representing Bullchanach or "Bullocky" of the Biripi mob; Jonte Pattison, who is representing Brimbunyah or "Redcap" of the Wiradjuri mob; Nathan Price, who is representing Arrahmunyarrimin or "Peter" of the Kamilaroi mob; D'Arcy Short, who is representing Bonnibarangeet or "Tiger" of the Mitakoodi mob; Brendan Smith, who is representing Lytejerbillijun or "Jim Crow" of the Dhungutti mob; Rex Strickland, who is representing Ballrinjarrimin or "Sundown" of the Wonnarua

mob; Dane Ugle, who is representing Bripumyarrimin or "King Cole" of the Nyoongar and Ballardong mobs; and head coach Jeffrey Cook—who is a great mate of mine—who is representing the Kamilaroi mob.

Each player in the women's team will be representing an Aboriginal mob. They are: Ashleigh Gardner of South Australia representing the Murwari mob; Jemma Astley of New South Wales representing the Wonnarua mob; Hannah Darlington, Zoe Fleming and Naomi Woods of New South Wales and Natalie Plane of Victoria representing the Kamilaroi mob; Haylee Hoffmeister of Western Australia and Emma Manix-Geeves of Tasmania representing the Palawa mob; Sara Darney and Dharmini Chauhan of New South Wales and Sally Moylan of the Australian Capital Territory representing the Wiradjuri mob; Roxanne Van Veen of New South Wales representing the Gundungurra mob; Christina Coulson of Queensland and Coach Shelley Nitschke.

I make special mention of four players—Dharmini Chauhan, Naomi Woods, Haylee Hoffmeister and Hannah Darlington—who will play in the New South Wales first grade premier competition for the mighty Campbelltown Camden Ghosts. The average age of the men players is 24.92 and the average age of the women players is 20.53. This is truly a great achievement for such young players. The players will be wearing a uniform designed by Auntie Fiona Clarke, the great-great-granddaughter of Grongarrong, also known as Mosquito, who was in the original tour. The Ghosts Australian Indigenous players will play in England's marquee grounds, including Surrey's famous home ground in London, Kia Oval, a regular English test match venue. I am sure all players will embrace the experience of touring, playing internationally and, in particular, taking part in an amazing part of Australian cricket history. I commend Cricket Australia for its support of such a wonderful tour. I thank each and every member—whether male or female, player, coach or support staff—for doing our country proud.

MACQUARIE FIELDS ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (13:06): FOMO, or fear of missing out, is a common acronym on social media. There is no fear of missing out for the people in my electorate—just the reality that we have been missing out for years. This Liberal Government blatantly ignores the basic infrastructure needs of my local community. I will give a few examples of the issues that local residents continue to raise with me. This morning thousands of commuters woke up wondering whether they would get a parking spot at the station. They worried whether they would be forced to risk an infringement notice just to park and get to their train on time. This nightmare scenario is not happening at just one station in my electorate; it is happening at all of them. Parking lots at Leumeah, Minto, Ingleburn, Macquarie Fields, Glenfield and Edmondson Park stations are at capacity, all because this Government has failed to provide adequate commuter parking in one of the fastest growing areas of Sydney.

If commuters do manage to find a parking spot, they then need to cram into overcrowded trains or change stations up to three times just to get to work, all because the Government implemented an unfair train timetable that has disadvantaged my constituents. Parents in my electorate are worried about schooling. Some parents know that their kids will be left to swelter in hot classrooms because this Government refuses to provide air conditioning. The parents at Bardia Public School raised \$20,000 to install new air conditioners, only for this Liberal Government to rip them out as part of a refurbishment. Meanwhile, other parents are moving into Edmondson Park only to find that there is no school for their kids at all. The Government has found billions of dollars to spend on upgrading stadiums—that do not need upgrading—and has spent hundreds of millions more in transport budget blowouts, but it has nothing for schools for our local kids.

My constituents are sick and tired of the Liberal Federal and State Governments' ongoing lack of commitment to address the infrastructure deficit. The recent Western Sydney City Deal is a prime example of the fundamental needs of our growing area being deliberately and blatantly ignored. Where is our billion-dollar rail link connecting the Western Sydney Airport to Macarthur and Leppington? Community members in my electorate will not be fooled into believing that this is a good deal for our area because the city deal does nothing to accommodate the explosive growth and ease congestion. They are smart, hardworking, decent people who are not naive or gullible. They will not swallow the political spin or glossy publications designed to dupe them.

The facts are clear. The Macarthur region and south-west Sydney have been short-changed and denied the public investment that they deserve under this city deal. It is a terrible shame that the people of my electorate are used to being given a raw deal by this Liberal Government. They fought tooth and nail to stop the closure of the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] office at Ingleburn. The Liberal Government ignored them. Now local residents, including many pensioners, must drive almost 40 minutes or sit on public transport for more than an hour to get to the nearest Service NSW centre. Just last week the finance Minister announced a new Service NSW centre for Toronto after a community campaign following the closure of the RTA office in that area. My question to the Minister is: What about us? Members of my community have been fighting for years too. My community needs convenient access to essential government services too. But, once again, our needs are being ignored. Where is our fair share?

The budget is due to be delivered in a few weeks. I wonder whether this year will be any different from the previous three? I doubt it very much. For the record, the needs of my electorate are simple: increased infrastructure investment; adequate parking at our stations; reliable and fair train services; air conditioning in our schools; a conveniently located Service NSW centre; schools for our newest suburbs; a lift at Macquarie Fields station; protection of our green space; and for the Government to stop turning my electorate into a developers' dumping ground. I know that this coming budget will be a huge disappointment, yet again, for the residents of Macquarie Fields. But let me make one thing clear to the Premier and her Government: My constituents do not deserve to miss out. We are a growing community. We are hardworking and pay our way. All we want is our fair share. The only way to deliver that is through a Labor government.

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE SPORTS FUNDING

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (13:11): I am proud to be part of a Government that continues to go above and beyond in providing funding and assistance for our local sporting groups. In fact, just recently I was able to secure close to \$50,000 in funding for some local clubs that applied for New South Wales Government local sports grants. These include grants to the Liverpool City Archers, which received \$5,000 towards the purchase of new sporting equipment; Sydney Sirens Women's Ice Hockey Club, which obtained \$4,500 to host an ice hockey participation day; Liverpool Eagles Junior AFL Club, which received \$15,368 to install behind-goal netting at Peter Miller Park; Casula Lakers Baseball Club, which was provided with \$1,800 to purchase training and playing equipment; Liverpool Catholic Club, which was granted \$5,000 to assist it in hosting the 2018 Bocce Australia Raffa Open; Prestons Robins Little Athletics Centre, which received \$6,840 to replace the synthetic turf covering on four long jumps and to assist with coach accreditation and education; and Chipping Norton Football Club, which obtained \$11,000 towards the installation of four new floodlights on existing poles in South Park and towards the purchasing of uniforms and training and playing equipment.

I congratulate all the clubs that were successful in this grants process and look forward to seeing them continue to deliver for our community, especially in providing options for youth in the community to stay healthy and active. This funding is on top of the funding that I was able to deliver for our local sporting groups through the last round of the Community Building Partnership grants. The funding to sporting groups included \$30,000 for Southern Districts Soccer Football Association to install a public awning; \$13,200 to Moorebank Sports Soccer Club to upgrade the players' shelters; \$6,523 for Illawong Athletics to purchase a container to expand and safely secure athletics equipment; \$28,700 for Jenko Sutherland Shire Pony Club to replace the boundary fence; and \$13,300 for Fairfield Liverpool Cricket Association to assist with cricket upgrades to Ernie Smith Reserve. The Community Building Partnership grants program is currently open for 2018, and will remain open until 15 June. I encourage all sporting groups in the Holsworthy electorate to apply for a piece of this funding.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has continued to provide a focus on local sporting opportunities, with the Greater Sydney sports grants program now open. This program allows local communities to apply for a share of up to \$100 million that is up for grabs to go towards new and upgraded sports facilities throughout Greater Sydney. These upgrades provide a funding source that will play a significant role in advancing our local economies and bringing our communities closer together through fostering sports participation. The fund provides grants of between \$500,000 and \$5 million for projects. A 25 per cent co-contribution is required for projects costing more than \$1 million. Providing essential equipment, such as life-saving defibrillators for sports clubs, is also something that the Liberal-Nationals Government has been working towards. The Local Sports Defibrillator Program is a State Government initiative that supports up to 50 per cent of defibrillator cost, training and maintenance. More than 2,500 defibrillators will be installed at community sporting facilities over the next four years as part of the \$4 million program.

I was happy to see that Liverpool City Robins Football Club has received funding through this program. The club has 350 members who play football at its grounds in Prestons. Often the grounds are used four to five nights a week and across the weekend. The club has players ranging from five years old to 50 years old. I am glad that the club has received funding to help provide a defibrillator—I hope it never gets used, but I feel much better knowing that the club has one that could potentially save a life. The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government understands that the cost of participating in sport can often be a large barrier to school-age children getting involved. No parent should have to second-guess whether they can afford the fees. We want to get kids moving and remove barriers to playing sport.

Thankfully, the New South Wales Government introduced the Active Kids Rebate, which came into force at the beginning of this year. This rebate provides a contribution of \$100 for every child to meet the costs of sports registration, membership expenses, and fees for physical activities such as swimming, dance lessons and athletics. This program means that every child in the State has the opportunity to be fit and active in their community.

I thank all the sporting clubs within my electorate for the part they play in creating a strong and cohesive community. I look forward to continuing to work with them to achieve more of these outcomes.

Community Recognition Statements

ANOWAH COMMUNITY LIVING INC.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:16): I address the House regarding Anowah Community Living Inc. On Friday, 25 May, Anowah Community Living Inc held its twenty-fourth annual fundraising dinner. Anowah has been part of our community in Prospect for more than 50 years, providing individual training and support for adults with intellectual disabilities. It aims to increase each individual's independence in all aspects of life and offers assistance to support their growth within the community. I congratulate and thank the chairperson, Anthony Moore, and the team at Anowah Community Living Inc for their hard work and efforts within our community, and for hosting such a great event.

FUTSAL PLAYER CLAY WILLIAMS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:17): I congratulate a young man in my electorate by the name of Clay Williams, who has been selected to represent Australia in the under-10s Futsal team that will tour New Zealand in October. Clay needs to raise \$4,000 to achieve his dreams to don the green and gold for Australia, and he is utilising the Government's Return and Earn program to do so. Clay's campaign has inspired a number of local residents, along with Club Blackhead, to come on board and donate cans and bottles to the cause. Last week I introduced Minister Gabrielle Upton to Clay and his mum, Sandy, who informed us that they have so far raised \$1,840 towards his target. That represents 18,400 cans or bottles returned and not lost in the environment or landfill. I wish Clay great success.

CHARLESTOWN LIFESAVER JESSICA COLLINS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:18): I speak today about an outstanding young surf lifesaver from Redhead Surf Life Saving Club who suffered a tragic accident last Thursday. Jessica Collins, aged 24 and a former Australian surf life saving representative, has no feeling below her shoulders after fracturing the C5 vertebra and damaging her spinal cord while surfing with friends on the Gold Coast. She had bone-fusion surgery on Friday night and remains in the intensive care unit at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane. Her father, Peter, said that Jess is inspiring family and friends with her strength while facing the prospect of never walking again. He said that she is facing a very hard and long road but her amazing will and positive attitude were shining through. Parents Peter and Sandy, her brother, Daniel, and sister Emma have spent time by Jessica's side since Thursday and hope to bring her home to Newcastle in the coming weeks to continue her rehabilitation. My thoughts and prayers are with Jess and her family, and the extended Redhead Surf Life Saving Club family at this very difficult time.

WEST METROPOLITAN CROSS COUNTRY EVENT

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:19): On Saturday, 2 June 2018, I had the pleasure of officially starting the No. 7 West Metropolitan Cross Country event, held at Third Settlement Reserve, Winston Hills—a beautiful part of my electorate of Seven Hills. It was great to see so many people associated with local athletics clubs, including Winston Hills, Kings Langley and Girraween. The runners came from all across Sydney. Some were in training for the New South Wales championships and others were participating just for fun. The event is part of the regular cross country series in the Sydney metropolitan area and for many years been a staple of the Athletics NSW calendar.

The afternoon included two-kilometre, four-kilometre and eight-kilometre runs. All participants started at the 1st Winston Hills Scouts Group hall and then proceeded along Toongabbie Creek, across Oaks Road Bridge towards Hammers Road and back again. I thank David Archbild, the West Metropolitan Cross Country Clubs organiser, for coordinating this great event and also his dedicated helpers, many of whom have been involved with local athletics for many years. It was my pleasure to present the organisation with a defibrillator as part of a recent New South Wales Government grant. I wish all involved success in the future.

RSL LIFECARE MILNE-WOOD MEDAL RECIPIENT BARRY WHITEMAN

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:20): Today I recognise Barry Whiteman, a never more deserving recipient of the RSL LifeCare's Milne-Wood medal, for his consistent delivery of exceptional service to RSL LifeCare. Barry and his wife, Trish, have lived in beautiful Tea Gardens for 17 years and they have devoted their retirement to helping veterans in care at the Peter Sinclair Gardens facility at Hawks Nest. Barry, in his position as liaison officer, was responsible for renaming the centre from Myall Lodge to Peter Sinclair Gardens in 2012, following a long-term friendship with Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair. Barry is a model recipient of the medal. Through his long and devoted association with the RSL, he has upheld the key values of the

RSL LifeCare association of effective leadership and involvement in the community. I thank Barry and Trish for devoting so much of their time to caring for others and for making our community stronger.

CHESS PLUS CREATOR CHRISTIAN SIMPSON

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:21): I congratulate a local resident from Copacabana in my electorate of Terrigal, Christian Simpson, on winning one of Australia's most prestigious awards for design. Christian has created Chess Plus, a board game based upon traditional chess rules that involves new chess pieces that can be merged or de-merged with other pieces throughout the game. Some 536 designs were submitted for the Australian Good Design Awards. Chess Plus was awarded "best in class" in the product design category, which recognises outstanding innovation and design skills. The judging jury said:

This ingenious product re-writes the rules of the traditional game of chess with an imaginative and considered design approach. It is a stunning piece of industrial design coupled with a creative idea sparked by an innocent and imaginative insight. It doesn't get any better than this.

This is a fantastic achievement. I congratulate Christian on designing such a fantastic game.

CABRAMATTA HOLY VIRGIN RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:22): On Sunday 3 June 2018 I had the pleasure of representing Mr Nick Lalich, the member for Cabramatta, at the Holy Virgin Russian Orthodox Church, Cabramatta, to bless the foundations of the extensions to the community centre and/or church hall. The church has embarked on an ambitious program of updating the church grounds and the hall and kitchen areas. I thank Rector Archpriest Boris Ignatievsky, parish secretary Mark Ganin, the parish council and the sisterhood for the kind invitation. Last year Mr Lalich and I dropped into the parish to announce \$50,000 in Community Building Partnership funding to help the church with the renovations. I extend the best wishes of the member for Cabramatta to the Holy Virgin Russian Orthodox Church. He is a very big supporter of this church. In recent times the church community has prayed for the member for Cabramatta and they have asked me to extend their thoughts to him. I again acknowledge the work of the parish in supporting the Cabramatta community.

RIVERINA DANCE FESTIVAL

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (13:23): Last Friday evening I had the pleasure of attending the wonderful Riverina Dance Festival held at the Albury Entertainment Centre. I also had the pleasure of presenting certificates to students selected for the NSW Public Schools State Dance Ensemble, including one to James Fallon High School year 9 student Gabrielle Berry. Now in its twenty-ninth year, the 2018 Riverina Dance Festival was coordinated by Graham Smith from Tumut High School and Katrina Joss from James Fallon High School. Graham was the leading force behind the introduction of the Riverina Dance Camp, running the first ever camp when he was a physical education teacher at James Fallon High School.

I acknowledge the many dedicated teachers, staff and students, who are driven by a passion for dance and have been behind the workshops which culminated in the dance festival, including Katrina Joss, Chloe Sheridan, Yuta Ito, Anni Gifford and Kate Dixon of James Fallon High School, along with co-compere for the night, Danica Coles. I thank them for their dedication and for preparing and presenting our public school students in amazing displays of dance, costume and lighting. I congratulate all the participating students, especially those from James Fallon High School and Lavington Public School.

CAMPBELLTOWN-CAMDEN DISTRICT CRICKET CLUB

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (13:24): The Campbelltown-Camden District Cricket Club is one of the great sporting clubs in my local community. I was delighted to join the club and members of my community at its recent awards presentation to recognise its players and administrators on another successful season. I congratulate all the nominees and winners on their sporting achievements and their sportsperson-like attributes on and off the field. Having lived in the area since the 1980s, I have seen the remarkable improvements at the Ghosts home ground at Raby Oval. It is undoubtedly one of the best, if not the best, regional cricket facilities in New South Wales.

The hard work of Jason Ellsmore and the club's administrators and volunteers certainly have paid off. I take this opportunity to recognise Allan Connolly for his decades of service to the club and our cricketing community. Allan is humble and hardworking. Without his efforts, the club would not be in its current position, both on and off the field. It was fitting that the new clubhouse was named after Allan. I wish the Campbelltown-Camden District Cricket Club every success for the future as it continues to make our community proud.

LAURIETON PROBUS CLUB

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:25): I recognise the Probus Club of Laurieton, which celebrated 25 years since its inception in 1993 with just 13 members. Outgoing club President Bill Blair was acknowledged for his active service in Probus, holding the positions of both president and committee assistant in recent years. The club now has 19 active members and would like to build on its base. It boasts a social interaction and community spirit that is enjoyed by all and is the foundation of the club. When incoming President Trevor Roscoe proudly took over the reins at the Probus changeover dinner, he outlined the club's non-for-profit status and its focus on creating a friendly and inclusive atmosphere for retirees and pensioners.

The Laurieton Probus Club hosts regular events throughout the year, including bus trips, picnic lunches, members' sausage sizzles and tours of local small businesses, and once a year it holds a target shooting day. I strongly encourage anyone who has just moved to the beautiful coastal town of Laurieton or those who are long-term residents to make inquiries through Bill Blair or Trevor Roscoe about joining this outstanding social organisation that dedicates its time and efforts to ensure that members enjoy their weekly gatherings.

NEWCASTLE LIFESAVER JESSICA COLLINS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:26): I pay tribute today to Newcastle lifesaver Jessica Collins, who is inspiring family and friends with her strength while facing the prospect of never walking again after a freak surfing accident at Snapper Rocks last Thursday. Jessica, a former Australian surf lifesaving representative, has no feeling below her shoulders after fracturing the C5 vertebra and damaging her spinal cord. She was face down and paralysed in the water but conscious before being rescued after falling and hitting a sandbank.

At this very tough time and facing, in the words of her father, "a very, very hard and long road", her amazing will and positive attitude were shining through. Jess said, "Don't be upset. Just be thankful that I'm alive." Jessica is a multiple State and national surf life saving medallist. Amazingly, after her fall, she remained conscious and gave instructions to rescuers on her treatment. I pay tribute to Jess and offer my support to her parents, Peter and Sandy, and siblings, Daniel and Emma. Jess has proved her strength, her will and her determination in her sporting expertise and in life. Newcastle is right behind Jess, no matter what the future holds.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): All members of this House wish Jessica very well.

BROWER'S CHARITY WALK

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:27): The good people of the Bland shire will trek through wind and dust to lend a hand. This year 47 local walkers raised an incredible \$19,445 for much-loved local charities Can Assist and Country Hope in the annual Brower's Charity Walk. The tradition began 12 years ago, with the spectacular seven—Greg McIntyre, Trevor Lanyon, Daryl McIntyre, Julie Lynch, Robert Bland, Damian Webster and Mitch Scealy—trekking 58 kilometres from Weethalle to West Wyalong over two days. This year almost 50 pedestrians braved rough conditions to walk 22 kilometres from the Yiddah silos to the Metro in West Wyalong. Over the years a whopping \$273,084 has been donated. I commend this wonderful community for its generosity and spirit.

LITTLE WINGS CHARITY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (13:28): I recognise the invaluable services provided by the Little Wings charitable organisation that transports sick children and their families from regional and rural New South Wales to attend potentially lifesaving treatments at children's hospitals in Newcastle and Sydney. Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with Phil Duvollet, who is the Director of Little Wings, to learn more about the charity's vital work, particularly that which is undertaken by using the Rutherford Airport in my electorate and the John Hunter Hospital in the Hunter. Little Wings commenced its efforts in 2012 with the objective of lessening the impact of traumatic events affecting families with sick children. Little Wings offers shorter trips times, which reduces travel fatigue, allows families more time together and lessens financial burdens. It provides urgent short-notice trips and increases treatment effectiveness by reducing the risk of exposure to infection associated with public transport and commercial flights. Little Wings relies on grants and donations to continue its work. I hope to see further support for such an integral child-related charitable service.

ST IVES JUNIOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUB

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (13:29): The St Ives Junior Australian Football League [AFL] Club was founded in 1968 and will be formally celebrating its fiftieth anniversary at a dinner on Saturday, 16 June. The club, led by President Paul Thompson and his executive, now has a record 22 teams participating in competitions, including at least three girls AFL teams. I was delighted to help the club secure \$30,000 through the Community Building Partnership program in 2017, which assisted it to fund an upgrade to the existing male

facilities and to create dedicated female facilities at the club. I understand that the work involved modifying the canteen to allow room for the girls' facilities. I congratulate the St Ives Junior AFL Club on its fiftieth-year celebrations and wish the club well for many years to come.

WYONG FAMILY HISTORY GROUP INC.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (13:30): Wyong Family History Group Inc. was founded in 1983 and is run by volunteers to promote, research and preserve the family history of members, visitors and Wyong shire pioneers. Last weekend the groups held its thirty-fifth birthday celebrations at Wyong Golf Club. Speakers included Gary Lee; Wayne Dean, who is the current president; Kerrie Metcalfe, former president and current vice-president; and Lynda Smith, foundation and life member. Special awards and life memberships were awarded to John Selwood, Michele Gane, Lynda Smith and Eileen Wheway.

Wyong Family History Group is very active in the community and currently has approximately 300 active members. It has produced a number of resources to support research into family histories including indexes of local cemeteries, the *Wyong and Lakes District Advocate* personal notices 1932 to 1995, the *Wyong and District Pioneer Register*, and the Central Coast Roll of Honour, just to name a few. I congratulate everyone involved in the Wyong Family History Group on their longstanding dedication to local history over 35 years.

NEWCASTLE PERMANENT SURF LIFE SAVING EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:31): The Newcastle Permanent Surf Life Saving Lower North Coast Branch Awards of Excellence were held last Saturday. I congratulate Brian Wilcox, the current Branch President and Deputy President of Surf Life Saving NSW. The following members and groups received recognition: Under-19 Athlete of the Year Clair Van Kampen; Open Athlete of the Year Brock Van Kampen; Masters Athlete of the Year Kim Winter; Team of the Year Cape Hawke Ladies Boat Crew—The Pearls; Junior Branch Handicap Point Score Pacific Palms; Junior Branch Champions Forster; Senior Branch Handicap Point Score Cape Hawke; Senior Branch Champions Cape Hawke; Rookie Official of the Year Gavin Williams; Official of the Year Richard Everingham; Coach of the Year Kevin Boag; Administrator of the Year Richard Brookes; Karen Kelly was highly commended; Volunteer of the Year Bruce White; Support Operations Member of the Year Wayne Barry; Patrol Competition Club of the Year Pacific Palms; Junior Life Savers of the Year Matthew Pieschel and Abby Mulligan; Young Lifesaver of the Year U19 Annalise Romer; Lifesaver of the Year Jeff Horn; and Masters Lifesaver of the Year Andrew Somerville. I congratulate all of them on the work they do in our community.

BELLAMBI SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (13:32): On Saturday night Bellambi Surf Life Saving Club celebrated another successful year patrolling Bellambi Beach. Bellambi is a relatively small club with patrolling members spending up to 160 hours a year patrolling the beach—an incredible amount of time for individual volunteers. In particular I recognise and congratulate John Hobbs and Darren Heath on their 25 Years Patrol Service awards; Gina Crick on her 35 Years Patrol Service award; Les Nichols on his 40 Years Patrol Service award; Halle Bone on being awarded Most Improved Junior; Brody Robertson on his award of Junior Club Person of the Year; Craig St George on receiving the Outstanding Patrolling Commitment award; Tara Robertson on being awarded Senior Club Person of the Year; and Craig Kershaw on receiving the Devotion to Duty award.

I also congratulate Richard Monk on being the newest life member of the club. Richard is a most deserving recipient of life membership. He has done and continues to do an incredible amount of work for the club. His service has been outstanding at all times and he is always willing to lend a hand to support the club, the development of its members and its future prosperity. I wish the Bellambi Surf Life Saving Club every success in the future.

ROTARY CLUBS SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING CHALLENGE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:33): Recently I was delighted to join many Rotary Clubs from across the Central Coast for the annual Science and Engineering Challenge. The competition was first founded by the University of Newcastle in 2000 as an outreach program to local schools and now reaches more than 100 Rotary clubs and 1,000 schools across the country. Its purpose is to engage and stimulate year 10 students with science subjects and to help encourage them to pursue science subjects for their Higher School Certificate and beyond. Some of the challenge events that I had the pleasure of witnessing included an earthquake test, a bridge build and test, the electricity challenge, and catapult construction. I congratulate this year's winners, Gosford High School and Tuggerah Lakes Tumby Umbi Campus. I thank the University of Newcastle for encouraging the study of science among local students and I thank Rotary Club members, particularly Barry Henwood from Gosford, for their involvement. Every year I have the privilege of judging the bridge construction. Some of the ideas and constructions are incredibly exciting.

BASS HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL IFTAR DINNER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:34): Last Thursday I had the honour of attending the Bass Hill Public School's second iftar dinner. It was a fantastic evening of prayers, speeches and stunning cuisine. The iftar is the traditional evening meal that celebrates the daily break of fasting during the holy month of Ramadan and is often a communal and family affair. I thank Bass Hill Public School Principal Melissa Proctor and the staff for their efforts in organising the event. I also acknowledge the local Community Hub. Last year I had the pleasure of helping support its Community Building Partnership grant for an outdoor area. I acknowledge those same ladies for organising the event and the many parents—particularly the mums—for preparing such wonderful cuisine and a lovely dinner. I also acknowledge all the students who were in attendance. It was a wonderful event. It is lovely to see more and more schools joining in the celebration of the holy month of Ramadan.

ARNIE'S TABLE TENNIS CLUB

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:35): I recognise the amazing contribution of Arnie's Table Tennis Club in Laurieton for raising funds for motor neurone disease [MND] through its regular social game of table tennis. Chief organiser Terry Memory first established Arnie's Table Tennis Club after he witnessed firsthand the debilitating effects that the horrible disease had on his brother-in-law, who lost his battle with motor neurone disease. In loving memory of his brother-in-law Arnie, Terry was able to form a group of table tennis enthusiasts in Laurieton to share a social and competitive game while raising funds to support the work of MND Australia.

MND Australia is a national body for people living with motor neurone disease that promotes optimal care outcomes and research development towards finding a cure. MND is a progressive, terminal, neurological disease that can strike people of any age. Each day in Australia two people are diagnosed with the incapacitating disease, two people die from it and more than 2,000 people in Australia are living with MND. The members of Arnie's Table Tennis Club play every Friday between 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. at the Laurieton United Services Club and afterwards share their stories of triumph and defeat over afternoon tea. I thank all the people who participate and contribute to the fundraising efforts.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:36): I acknowledge the fantastic Italian Republic Day festivities that Club Marconi ran on Sunday 27 May in Bossley Park, which more than 28,000 people attended. It was amazing to see the vitality and diversity of Sydney's Italian community in the electorate of Prospect, including the food, dance and culture on display. I acknowledge Club Marconi President Vince Foti and Italian Consul-General Arturo Arcano for their parts in the festivities, as well as the tens of thousands of attendees and the performers, musicians and Italian food stall providers. Buona Festa della Repubblica!

RURAL FIRE SERVICE MEDAL RECIPIENT MARK HOSKINSON

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:37): Not all heroes wear capes, but Kikoiria farmer Mark Hoskinson is a recognisable local legend. In 2007, after torrential rain, the Rural Fire Service volunteer risked his life to save six people, including three children, from raging floodwater. He received a Commendation for Brave Conduct from then Governor General Quentin Bryce for the act. Recently, Mark was one of only seven Australians awarded a prestigious Australian Fire Service Medal for his continued service. Joining the Kikoiria brigade in 1979, Group Officer Hoskinson helped fight the 1997 Tullibigeal fire, the 2009 Mount Mologone fire, the 2011 Yalgogrin fire and the 2016 Paynes Road fire. A born leader, Mark is extremely well respected among the volunteers in the Bland Temora zone. I thank Mark for his service.

CENTRAL COAST OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:38): I thank Central Coast sisters Lisa and Keelan, who have taken the plunge and set up their own business, Central Coast Occupational Therapy, which opened in Erina last week. Lisa and Keelan began their professional career together establishing SENSEational Sports, which is a therapy program designed to support young people with diverse needs to participate in sport. I commend everyone in the community who works to ensure that kids and adults with diverse needs have fun and are included in any aspect of community life. When that includes sport—bring it on! The SENSEational Sports program benefits the soccer community and the community as a whole benefits when all kids, with or without disabilities, are fully included. We will then see the flow-on effects in society and the workplace.

THE HILLS YOUNG LEADERS AFTERNOON TEA

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (13:39): On Wednesday, 23 May, I hosted The Hills Young Leaders Afternoon Tea in the Speaker's Garden. I was joined by Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Minister for

Education Rob Stokes, and Corrective Services Commissioner Peter Severin. I invited business and community leaders from across my electorate and the metropolitan area to provide their insights about what it takes to become a good leader to year 6 and year 12 student leaders from Baulkham Hills.

I hope our young leaders were inspired by the thoughts and philosophies adopted by our current leaders in this great State. I ask the House to join me in commending ClubsNSW Chief Executive Officer Anthony Ball; Consul-General of Japan in Sydney Keizo Takewaka; NSW Rural Fire Service Commissioner Jason Heffernan; Colonel Don Tait, OAM; Commander of The Hills Police Area Command Superintendent Rob Critchlow; Sydney Hills Business Chamber member Nigel Rayner; member for Seven Hills Mark Taylor; and Castle Towers centre manager Martin Ollis, amongst others, who play a part each year in this important program. I could not have asked for better role models to share their influential insights.

PORT STEPHENS ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN-UP

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:40): The community spirit of Port Stephens residents never ceases to amaze me. When 83 shipping containers fell overboard near Port Stephens and their contents started washing up on our pristine beaches, locals rolled up their sleeves in the most inclement weather and started picking up the rubbish. The waterways of Port Stephens are central to our local identity, the tourism industry and the marine park. Residents were not prepared to wait for the official clean-up crews to arrive and set off to begin the clean-up themselves.

A special thank you to the residents of Tea Gardens, Hawks Nest, Tomaree and Anna Bay who filled their cars, trailers and wheelbarrows with rubbish in an effort to clean the beaches. I thank the Port Stephens EcoNetwork group, Marine Rescue, the Winda Woppa Residents Association and local resident Julie Sims who helped spread the word about clean-up efforts. The official clean-up has begun and I will stay in touch with Roads and Maritime Services and local contractor Varley as the clean-up progresses. I am told that costs will be recovered from the shipping company's insurer. I thank everyone for their hard work, care and commitment to our beautiful environment.

MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE ROAD SAFETY PROGRAM

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:41): I advise the House of the RYDA road safety program and congratulate coordinator Laurie Easter. The combined Rotary clubs of Taree, Wingham and Old Bar are continuing their partnership with industry leader Road Safety Education Limited to bring the award winning youth road safety program RYDA to more than 700 students from 10 local high schools during May and June. RYDA is a series of practical and powerful workshops for high school students that challenge them to change the way they think about road safety and lay the foundation for safe road use throughout their lives. Laurie Easter, the RYDA coordinator in Taree, says that one of the great things about the program is that with the support of local Rotary clubs, it can be run in all communities by local road safety and education professionals, including the police. Mr Easter states:

Young people continue to be over represented in road crash statistics.

...

The most dangerous time for any young road user is in the first six to 12 months of being a solo driver.

I congratulate Laurie Easter and the combined Rotary clubs of Taree, Wingham and Old Bar.

PROSPECT ELECTORATE BUSINESS GROWTH

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:42): On Monday 4 June I was honoured to officially open Blackmores' new distribution centre in Bungaribee in the Prospect electorate. This huge facility will store 8,000 pallets of Blackmores product and ship it across Australia and around the world. It will create more than 60 new jobs in Western Sydney and has the potential of growing even bigger over time. This new site is a leader in logistics management in New South Wales. I congratulate Marcus Blackmore, Chief Executive Officer Richard Henfrey, and their team, on this outstanding business growth achievement in Western Sydney.

TERRIGAL PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:43): Friday 25 May was an exciting day at Terrigal Public School. I was joined by the Minister for Education Rob Stokes, Terrigal Public School Principal Michael Burgess and Central Coast Director of Schools Karen Jones. The official sod-turning ceremony signals commencement of construction of the Terrigal Public School. All the demountable classrooms will be removed and replaced with a multimillion dollar education facility that will encompass 10 new classrooms. Terrigal Public School is going from strength to strength. I congratulate the parents and citizens association, School Infrastructure NSW and the school on its fantastic engagement of the public. The council received no objections about the development

application, which shows that working together with the community can have a fantastic outcome. It is an exciting time for Terrigal Public School. I congratulate all the students and families on this great school development.

TRIBUTE TO GORDON HUGHES, OAM

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:44): It is with great sadness that I report to the House the passing of Charlestown stalwart Gordon Hughes, a former Deputy Mayor of Lake Macquarie, a long-serving councillor and a significant contributor to the City of Lake Macquarie. Gordon was a well-known businessman with a strong focus on the economic growth of the City of Lake Macquarie. He was instrumental in establishing the Lake Macquarie Business Growth Centre and was a member of the Charlestown Urban Committee from 1963 to 1974. Gordon was also very active in community life, volunteering his time to a range of organisations including Rotary, Meals on Wheels, the Charlestown Caring Group and the Charlestown and Garden Suburb Uniting Church. Gordon was awarded a Local Government Association Service Medal and a Centenary Medal in 2001 and received his treasured Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] in 2016. I attended Gordon's funeral yesterday, where his family shared wonderful stories about Gordon, the husband of Shirley, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and committed community man. Rest in peace, Gordon, the man I affectionately called "Mr Charlestown".

HOLDEN SCRAMBLE GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:45): Today I recognise the outstanding achievement of the Holden Scramble team for making the Scramble Championship Finals, held at Twin Waters Golf Club from 18 to 21 May 2018. This year the Holden Scramble pro-amateur golf team from Kew, in my electorate, was successful in qualifying for the regional final at Riverside Oaks Golf Club with the amazing team led by PGA Professional Luke Garel, who manages the Kew Country Club Pro Shop. Fellow team players Glenys Cummings, Samantha Ansley, Leah Wright, Julianne Stace, with Luke Garel at the helm, then competed for the National Title at the Holden Scramble Championship Finals. As the member for Port Macquarie, I especially congratulate the Kew Country Club team members on their hard work and commitment, which led to them gaining themselves a spot in the final for the Holden Scramble Championship Finals. They are fantastic role models for other passionate golfers in the Hastings region and their efforts are to be commended.

BEEF IMPROVEMENT FEDERATION CONFERENCE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:46): Well done to Harden farmer Brad Cavanagh, who is jetting off to the land of the free after receiving the Youth Scholarship from the Australian Registered Cattle Breeders Association. An accomplished young cattle farmer, Brad was just 16 when he bought his first three Angus cows. These cows from the Noonee Angus stud led to the establishment of the Hardhat Angus stud in the year 2000. Brad will travel to Colorado on the scholarship to attend the Beef Improvement Federation conference. He will also travel through Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Illinois, Nebraska and Kansas researching Angus genetics and breeding programs. A capable go-getter, Brad is exceptionally worthy of this opportunity, and I look forward to hearing about the latest genetics insights from the United States of America upon his return later this month.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I shall now leave the ~~c~~Chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Announcements

DEATH OF BENJAMIN JOEL SMITH

The SPEAKER: I appreciate the sympathy that all members and staff have shown during the very difficult time my family has been experiencing. The cards, the generosity and the prayers have been overwhelming. Later I will thank you all individually. Thank you to the Premier and the beautiful people on both sides of the House. The member for Maitland sent me a beautiful message. Thank you to the member for Kogarah, and team Cessnock. Thank you, everybody. Thank you also to Deputy Speaker Mr Thomas George. Poor Thomas: When I was in Young for five weeks I did not have much mobile reception, but I watched him and thought, "When I get back there I'll give them such a hard time!" He did give you a hard time, but I am worse.

I thank you all very much. It is times such as this that we all come together and realise the important things in life, such as family, and this is all really a bit of a game. We are all playing our part; we are all doing our job. Whether we are Opposition or Government members, we are all doing our job representing our communities. I think equally highly of you all: Trust me. Whether I am miserable to some of you, or not, I think highly of you all. I thank you for your contributions to the Parliament. I have been here a long time now and I respect you all and love you all, but I will now be horrible to all of you who give ~~me~~ ~~you~~ a hard time.

Mr Thomas George: Throw 'em out.

The SPEAKER: I certainly will. For those in the gallery who do not understand what I am talking about, my son-in-law was killed in a shocking farm accident, leaving my daughter to cope with three baby children. Now we have them at home at our place, and I have become very skilled again at changing nappies and doing all of those things. My other daughter has been wonderful, and my son, but grief sometimes is inexplicable.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Welcome to Vic Alhadeff, spokesperson for the Keep NSW Safe coalition and Chief Executive Officer of the Jewish Board of Deputies, guest of the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage, and member for Vaucluse, and guest of the Attorney General. Vic, I think the world of you. I also welcome students and teachers from the City Link mentor program, guests of the Minister for Police and Minister for Emergency Services, and member for Dubbo.

I also acknowledge a group of teachers and students from Wilcannia Central School, guests of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, and member for Bega, the member for Lakemba and the member for Wyong. I welcome to the gallery students and teachers from the Freshwater Community Bank, guests of the member for Manly. I welcome students, teachers and principal Janelle Warhurst of Beauty Point Public School, guests of the member for North Shore. We welcome all of our guests in the gallery this afternoon.

Announcements

CENTENARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR

The SPEAKER (14:23): On 1 June 1918 Lieutenant-General John Monash assumed command of the Australian Corps, at the time the largest individual army corps of the Western Front. In doing so he became the first Australian officer to fully command the Australian forces in the First World War. In many ways the rise of Monash defied convention. He was a reservist rather than a professionally trained career soldier, and many in the British military hierarchy held reservations about his Jewish-Prussian heritage and status as a colonial. However, Monash impressed with his meticulous planning and grasp of strategy. The official Australian war historian, Charles Bean, called him an "organiser of first rate ability" and said that "from the time of Monash's advent the corps had at its head a very great mind." Trained as a civil engineer, and a veteran of the Gallipoli campaign, Monash was the first military commander on the Western Front to fully coordinate the use of all military resources at his disposal: infantry, engineering, artillery, aircraft and tanks.

It was his planning and leadership that resulted in the breach of the Hindenburg Line on 5 October 1918, which forced Germany to seek an armistice. One leading British historian said Monash was "the only general of creative originality produced by the First World War". A century on, he remains a titan in our national history. He was a leader of renowned intellect, ingenuity and compassion, who was fiercely determined that the men under his command always had the best possible chance of achieving their objective when he called upon them to risk their lives. Lest we forget.

Bills

**NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
(COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL 2018**

TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (SYDNEY METRO) BILL 2018

COAL INDUSTRY AMENDMENT BILL 2018

ELECTORAL FUNDING BILL 2018

**ROAD TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (DIGITAL DRIVER LICENCES
AND PHOTO CARDS) BILL 2018**

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO 2) 2018

ROAD TRANSPORT LEGISLATION MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS BILL 2018

Assent

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of messages from the Governor notifying His Excellency's assent to the abovementioned bills.

*Question Time***MINISTER FOR REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES CODE OF CONDUCT**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:27): I direct my question to the Premier. Prior to Cabinet's consideration of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 and in accordance with the Ministerial Code of Conduct, did the Deputy Premier disclose that he has a personal relationship with Peter Cochran of Cochran Horse Treks and that Cochran made significant—

The SPEAKER: Order! I need to hear the question. I will not tolerate interjections during questions. The Leader of the Opposition has a right to ask his question and I need to hear it. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to repeat the question.

Mr LUKE FOLEY: Prior to Cabinet's consideration of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 and in accordance with the Ministerial Code of Conduct, did the Deputy Premier disclose that he has a personal relationship with Peter Cochran of Cochran Horse Treks and that Cochran made significant political donations to his campaign? Will the Premier conduct an investigation into these conflicts of interest?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:29): The Leader of the Opposition has asked me some very poor questions, but this question takes the cake. The short answer is that I would assume that everyone in public life has a relationship with the former member for Monaro. The question is completely out of order. We all know that when leaders are desperate, they get especially grubby, and that is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition is doing. He knows very well that nothing inappropriate has occurred and that everything has been above board. No wonder the member for Maroubra has been updating his website and increasing his electorate and community visits. The Leader of the Opposition's question is inappropriate. Those matters have been dealt with.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members should not think that they will be able to stay in the Chamber for the entirety of question time if they continue their disorderly behaviour. If they are removed from the Chamber, it will be for the week.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I expect every member of this place to stick up for their communities. I also expect every member to reflect the views of their local communities.

Mr Ryan Park: Especially if they donate.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: That is what good local members do: reflect the views of their local communities.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira should be careful.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If the member for Keira wants to talk about political donations, I am more than happy to have that conversation with the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. Next time he interjects, he will be sent out of the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: To the heart of the question, I have full confidence in everything that has taken place. The Government made its decision based on facts, community views and what is in the best interests—

Ms Liesl Tesch: ~~Off from~~ someone who owns a tourism outlet.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: So you support culling brumbies from helicopters? Is that what you are saying, member for Gosford? What the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues demonstrate yet again today is that they have no conscience and they do not stand for anything.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will continue to ask the Clerk to stop the clock if the Premier cannot be heard in silence. If Opposition members do not like the answer, they should leave the Chamber or object to the bill. However, they will not interject in that manner.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Government based its decision on fact, on what is in the best interests of the community and of protecting the heritage of the Snowy Mountains, and on the plan of management for national parks in that vicinity. That is what good governments do. If members opposite have changed their position on the integrity of national parks and plans of management, they should make that clear. This Government's position is always to make decisions based on what is in the best interests of the community and the people of New South Wales.

COST OF LIVING

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (14:32): I address my question to the Premier. What action is the New South Wales Government taking to address cost-of-living pressures faced by families and seniors?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:32): I thank the member for Port Macquarie for asking a very appropriate question. All of us in this place appreciate that no matter how well our State is doing, families and individuals still experience household pressure and cost-of-living pressures. Of course, the State is doing very well thanks to the good management of the Treasurer and our colleagues. We are leading the nation by a long way. That is why I was very pleased to join the Minister for Finance and Services and the Treasurer this morning in announcing a huge initiative in this year's budget.

Mr Ryan Park: A huge initiative.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The shadow Treasurer does not want families to save thousands of dollars every year on their household bills. I will get to that later. I want to talk about the good news, and I will do that before I turn my attention to him. One of this Government's great successes is the 88 Service NSW centres that it has established across the State. Two new centres were opened or announced last week. The centre in Walgett in Western New South Wales will ensure that communities there are able to access vital services. I am pleased that Toronto will also be getting a Service NSW centre. I know that the member for Myall Lakes is also pleased about that.

At Service NSW ~~people~~ you can undertake 1,000 different transactions ~~at under the~~ one-stop shop. I am also pleased to say that the Government has 40 cost-of-living savings measures across 12 agencies. What we did not have until today was a plan to have a one-stop shop where families and individuals can go to a service centre, call up or go online, and find out what savings they are eligible for in one place. We know this makes a difference because more than 40 per cent of us—including me—are not aware of the kind of savings ~~we~~ one can ~~achieve~~ have. I would have thought the member for Gosford would care about her community and the savings ~~available to her constituent~~ community members could have.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Gosford that that was not an invitation to interject. I call the member for Gosford to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: A typical family in Western Sydney with two children can save \$1,500 a year in areas they may not be aware of. For example, if they have two cars, they will save at least \$720 on ~~the~~ free registration, more than \$500 on the reduction in green slip costs, \$200 on Active Kids vouchers and \$180 on energy rebates. Those opposite do not like us talking about this: Our good news is their bad news and they could never deliver this when they were in government. They cannot handle the fact that we are ~~the~~ party of the worker and the party of families. They cannot handle the truth.

~~If you take a~~ An elderly couple in regional New South Wales, ~~they~~ can save \$2,000 a year through State Government schemes. For example, they receive free car registration through the pensioners scheme and more than \$200 of savings ~~on~~ for their green slips. They are entitled to a gas rebate on average of \$121, and they are eligible for a low income household energy rebate of \$285—things that were never put in place by the Opposition while in government. If they are buying a new appliance, they can also get a rebate of \$400 for a refrigerator and \$250 for a TV—which is not insignificant. They ~~can~~ ~~re~~ is also ~~get~~ a \$450 water rebate ~~for them of \$450~~. An average elderly couple can save \$2,000 a year because of the State Government scheme.

I challenge each and every one of us here to ask our staff and people in our communities—every single constituent—to find out what savings they are entitled to. Our Government has announced these savings: We want to make sure that people know that they are available. I am also pleased to announce that a lot of these measures come in on 1 July—the free registration, for example. A number of these concessions already exist but people do not know that they are eligible for them. We conducted research and found out that only about 60 per cent of people knew that they could be eligible for something. Some members of the community did not realise that they were able to access those reductions by simply ringing up or going in to a Service NSW centre. They thought that, because they did not have a computer, they were not able to access these entitlements. In relation to public demand, we will definitely be providing more information to the community. *[Extension of time]*

Based on our research, which identified a huge proportion of the community who were not aware of the savings they were entitled to, I can foreshadow that the Government will be providing extra public information in the coming weeks and months to make sure people realise all the savings they are entitled to. Not only is New South Wales the State with the strongest economy, the biggest infrastructure pipeline and the most quality

services, we are also now the State that cares and has the capacity to support our families, households and individuals. We know that, no matter how well the State does, people do feel stress about cost-of-living pressures, and that is why we are easing that stress by providing the one-stop shop. I thank all of the hardworking Service NSW staff. They are brilliant. If anybody has not experienced their customer service, I recommend that they test it because it is fantastic. Under Labor, it took three or four hours to get a new driver's licence. I kid you not: This morning I did not give anybody warning that I had to renew my driver's licence, and it took me four minutes, instead of the four hours that it used to take under the Labor Government.

The SPEAKER: The member for Bankstown will cease interjecting. Does the member have a problem?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They cannot handle the truth. An added bonus was that I saved \$90, because I have not lost a demerit point in the ~~past~~ five years.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES CODE OF CONDUCT

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:40): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business. Peter Cochran, a donor to the Minister for Regional New South Wales' election campaign, says he drafted the legislation relating to brumbies in the Kosciuszko National Park. Is this the same Peter Cochran whose business, Cochran Horse Treks, stands to profit from the passage of this legislation? Will the Minister table the form of draft bill that Mr Cochran says he prepared for ~~him?the Minister?~~

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:40): I thank the member for the question. Welcome back, Madam Speaker—though I am sure you did not miss any of this. In 2007 the then Leader of the Liberal Party Peter Debenham, along with Andrew Stoner, signed a memorandum of understanding with pro-brumby advocates in relation to the cultural heritage recognition of brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park, and on top of that access to wilderness areas for horse riders. In 2007 I was not even a member of ~~the National Party~~. I was not a candidate, nor was I looking at an election.

The reality is that this issue has been ongoing since 2000, since the Guy Fawkes River National Park slaughter of 640 horses that were shot from the sky when those opposite were in government. I remind people that those horses were shot multiple times—eight or nine times—and left to die on the forest floor. They included a mare who was foaling and had to abort. Days on, those horses suffered a most horrific death. I want the kids in the gallery to hear this: They suffered a most horrific death in the most inhumane way for the sake of managing numbers. This is when the campaign started—for people across the State, and especially in the Monaro—to ~~addressfor~~ how we manage brumbies ~~and horses~~ in Kosciuszko National Park. These are the facts. As a member who was elected in 2011, and someone who has been committed to the cause since well before any accusations from those opposite, I remind the ~~those opposite~~ that the Labor candidate for Monaro, Bryce Wilson, signed the petition to support the cultural recognition.

On television last week, he said he supports the cultural recognition of horses. But of course, Sussex Street and the Leader of the Opposition have told him otherwise—to oppose the legislation. My job as the local member is to engage with all stakeholders in relation to the brumbies of Kosciuszko and the protection of Kosciuszko National Park. That is my job as a member of this House, and I have done my job in a proactive way by making sure that everybody's voice has been heard—including on a recent trip when those against the brumbies being in the park showed me where the horses were and their impact on the park. All I am doing is advocating on behalf of the 10,000-plus people who signed a petition. There is broad support in my community for the recognition of these horses. This does not dismiss the responsibility of this Government to manage the park in a way that protects ~~itthe park~~.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: All this history is terrific, but it ~~does was~~ not ~~answer~~ the question I asked. My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier has been entirely relevant to the question the member for Maroubra asked. I will continue to listen to the answer. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am talking to the evolution of how we got to this space today in this place, and the legislation before the House, which is because of the community's support, including the rallies in front of Parliament House in 2016, and because of stakeholders in the community who have put forward their view and their vision. There can be claims in the community about who wrote what and what information they provided. Like all of us, whenever we engage with the community, even when we do draft legislation, we consult and we seek input. The legislation has been through the Government's process. We do not have the expertise, so we have called on Parliamentary Counsel to provide the information to us. The bill ~~that~~ is in recognition of public support. Those opposite know they are on a hiding to nothing and therefore are trying to slur my name.

RURAL AND REGIONAL EDUCATION

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon) (14:46): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. How is the New South Wales Government giving rural and regional students new opportunities to access higher education and any related matters?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:46): I thank the member for Barwon for his fantastic question. He is a member who looks after an electorate the size of Germany—it is probably two-thirds of the land mass of this State. He understands the tyranny of distance and how it impacts on our ability to make sure that kids in regional, rural and remote areas of New South Wales have access to the best education in this State. Unfortunately, the futures of some of our children can be determined by what we call a "postcode lottery". The tyranny of distance means the inability to offer our kids in the regions the same options as kids who grow up in Sydney. If there are world-class universities on a person's doorstep, they have the opportunity to choose and to make decisions about higher education, while in the regions that is lacking.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise coming from Opposition members.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Research suggests that students in metropolitan areas are more likely to complete a university degree than those from regional and remote areas. Likewise, the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education found distance study completion rates of only 46 per cent in the regions compared to 76 per cent for on-campus study. The reality for us in the bush is that we have to do it through distance education. Our young people in the regions deserve the same opportunities, the same investment and the same direction as those in the cities. That is why the New South Wales Government is proud of its Country Universities Centre [CUC] model, which was designed and delivered in the regional town of Cooma originally, sponsored by the local council and then by Snowy Hydro. It offers access to tertiary education to 60-plus students who, in previous years, would have had to leave Cooma to go to either Canberra or Sydney, which is a loss to the community.

Today, because of the investment of the New South Wales Government into the Country Universities Centre, the number of students across affiliated centres is approximately 191, which is well above the Government's target of 120 students by 31 October 2018. In the Far West, 76 students are currently enrolled. A number of weeks ago I had the privilege of being in Broken Hill for the official opening of its Country Universities Centre. Of those 76 students, 17.1 per cent identify as Indigenous, compared to the State participation for Indigenous people that sits at just 0.9 per cent. The Government is changing the way it delivers education to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities in regional and remote New South Wales because of the investment and the focus through the new Country Universities Centre model.

A massive 62 per cent of students in the Far West are also first-in-family, which means this is not only just changing the individual's future but also creating an ambassador for those families; that is, not only changing their own lives but also being a positive example for their family. I have touched on the Snowy Monaro region. In Goulburn at a recent community cabinet, along with the Premier and the local member, we had the privilege of opening the Goulburn Country Universities Centre, which already has 52 students—again, a remarkable outcome. Michelle Freebody, who studies at Goulburn, said:

With the assistance of CUC I jumped at the chance to upskill and turned my career goal of being a school counsellor into a reality. I wouldn't have contemplated study except that this centre is in Goulburn now. This is the first time I've had the opportunity to move to the next level of my career but not move from my home.

That is the key to the success of the Country Universities Centre. It is about offering the opportunity while someone remains in their community. The local member, the member for Goulburn, was an advocate who made sure she championed Goulburn to be one of the first new sites delivered. Last week the member for Barwon and the member for the Northern Tablelands were able to announce the next two centres, one in Narrabri and one in Moree. The Government will give the young people of those two communities the opportunity to stay home, live in their town and be part of their community, and ensure they have access to higher education. We on this side of the House want to invest in those children, the next generation of community leaders, business leaders and, of course, political leaders, and we want them to do that while living in the community that they call home. This is our focus: young people and the next generation. When we leave this place we all want to look back at our legacy. Our legacy must be one of opportunity, not just of bricks and mortar, and not just the investment in road, rail, schools and hospitals.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is about the opportunity that we leave the next generation. [Extension of time]

Our Country Universities Centre model means that more and more students ~~right~~ across regional New South Wales no longer have to decide if they will leave their family farm, their family business or their local community. They now have access to an approach that we on this side of the House are very proud of. It changes the way we deliver training and higher education across regional New South Wales. We will make sure that we do not leave any student or any young person behind in regional ~~areas~~ ~~New South Wales~~. That is why we have made the investment ~~in~~ ~~for~~ two more ~~centres of the~~ Country Universities Centres in partnership with the community.

That is the secret to the success behind this: We seek community support, generally from the public but also from our corporate partners. Cooma was lucky to have Snowy Hydro provide the seed funding and ongoing commitment to support the centre. Why? Because it helps us develop ~~its~~ ~~their~~ workforce for the future, especially with Snowy Hydro 2.0. That is why those of us on this side of the House campaigned strongly on Gonski. That is why those of us on this side of the House have funded record level investment in preschools, primary schools and high schools. We believe that education is the pathway to get kids out of disadvantage.

Despite Labor's lies, we are also backing TAFE. We know that the Connected Learning Centre that the TAFE Minister is rolling out is also breaking down that tyranny of distance. The vision of those of us on this side of the House is to continue that investment in opportunities for young people to remain in their communities and to be part of their communities today and into the future. If the tyranny of distance is what divides our communities, then education will be what unites us. That is why we are here: to create a level playing field for the families of regional New South Wales. We will continue to invest in regional communities to make sure we give our youth the best chance to remain part of their communities for the future.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn members that there is too much noise in the Chamber. Members are free to leave if the subject of a question or an answer is not of interest to them. For many country members that question was interesting and its answer was interesting. It is not a joke.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES CODE OF CONDUCT

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:54): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Was Peter Cochran provided with a copy of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill before it was introduced to Parliament?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:54): I thank the member for Kogarah for his question. Today it looks as though all the potential leaders are asking the questions. First it was the member for Maroubra; now it is the member for Kogarah—I am waiting for the member for Strathfield and the member for Keira to ask the next questions. I make this absolutely clear: I am blessed to have so many community members in the Monaro who are passionate about this issue. Families and individuals who have had a connection to the mountains for generations have—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about the bill and whether Peter Cochran was shown the bill before it was introduced in this House. As yet, he has not touched on the bill.

The SPEAKER: He is only 10 seconds into this answer, so let us hear what he has to say.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That was not an invitation for the member for Strathfield to stand up. I know she is threatened because the other leadership contender has jumped up first. A lot of people in my community have contributed to this debate for decades. They have signed petitions, they have turned up for rallies, and they have contributed their own resources to the campaign.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members should listen to the answer. If they do not, I will not allow them to take a point of order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The bill introduced to the House is a commonsense bill that allows us to manage both outcomes. I thank all of the community members who have contributed in one way, shape or form to the debate, which encouraged their Labor candidate to sign the petition and support the bill in this House. Even though he speaks with a forked tongue and will say one thing here and another in front of his community—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order. My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question asked whether Peter Cochran saw the bill before it was introduced and before any other member of this place had a chance to see ~~it~~ ~~the bill~~.

The SPEAKER: I heard the question. I ask the Deputy Premier to more closely address the question that he was asked.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: There are many people—Alan Lanyon, Lisa Caldwell and Peter Cochran—who have proudly contributed to this debate. They are the people who are connected to this issue.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier is now being relevant to the question he was asked.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The reality is that I am a "Johnny-come-lately" to this issue. One thing that Peter Cochran, who was elected to this House 30 years ago and left ~~in this House~~ 20 years ago, did not do was stop the campaign for the brumbies. This man is a strong advocate for an issue that is ~~supported by~~ in line with the community. The bill that has been introduced to the House has had the contribution of so many over decades. It is a bill that I am proud to have introduced to the House.

PARKING FINES

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (14:58): My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the Government cutting parking fines and helping with the cost of living, and are there any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:58): I thank the member for Albury for his question. I welcome the Speaker back. I do not think the Speaker is miserable at all. We have missed her very much. She is by far the fairest Speaker in the land. I wish the House a happy World Environment Day. We know that the Liberal Party is the true custodian of environmental policy. No-one has done more for the environment than the Liberal Party. Today is a very special day for our side of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer has the call. The joke is over. The member for Rockdale will cease interjecting.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government has worked very hard over the past seven years to make New South Wales strong, free and fair. The other day the shadow Treasurer posted on Facebook that we have been in ~~g~~Government for eight years; we have been in ~~g~~Government for seven years. The shadow Treasurer cannot count to seven.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Keira to order for the third time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Opposition cannot transpose that last year onto us. As we know, the ~~previous~~ Labor Government drove the State into the ground. We have repaired the budget, our economy is booming on all cylinders, and we are building infrastructure at a rate of knots.

The SPEAKER: I call member for Bankstown to order for the ~~first~~second time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Government is investing \$80.10 million in infrastructure. Over the next four years, we are left with a \$30 billion infrastructure backlog. Importantly, as the Premier has pointed out, we are completely committed to making life easier and fairer for the people of our great State.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Gosford to order for the second time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: One area that we are reforming, which I announced on the weekend, is parking fines. Parking fines in New South Wales, particularly in Sydney, are higher than those in other States and comparable major cities overseas. In 2016-17, more than 1.3 million parking fines were issued in New-South-Wales, with a total value of approximately \$190 million. The vast majority of the fines were issued by local councils. The base amount is \$110. A parking fine of that amount represents seven hours of after-tax income for a person earning the minimum wage. Parking fines need to strike the right balance between deterrence and fairness. That is why, over the weekend, I announced that the Government would cut the top 10 parking fines issued by the State Government by 25 per cent, from \$110 to \$80.

Our fair fines package also includes a review of confusing parking fines; a grace period of up to 10 minutes, so if someone is a couple of minutes late getting back to their car they will not be pinged by an overzealous parking ranger; the launch of a new website for people to have their say on signs and fines; and a review of all fines, excluding those relating to safety. Since Labor's time in government, parking fines have been set by the State. Currently, the base amount is \$110, which leaves councils with no flexibility to charge less. This is an issue that the councils have raised numerous times on their websites, in letters to constituents and in statements to the media. They have said that this is not their fault; it is the State Government's fault, even though they are getting the lions' share of the revenue. I can understand their concerns.

We have listened and we are here to help local councils with their problems. As a result, as I announced on the weekend, I am providing local councils with the flexibility to charge less than \$110, so they can tailor their fines to the needs of their communities, which I encourage them to do. For context, in the last financial year, local

councils collected more than \$172 million in ~~total worth of~~ parking fines and the State Government collected \$15 million worth. Given this significant amount, I call on councils to reduce their rate of parking fines from \$110 to \$80. I welcome the comments of Clover Moore—I ask the member for Sydney to pass on my regards to her, which I am sure she will not appreciate—who said that she will look at it. That is helpful and I am happy about that. [*Extension of time*]

The only person who ~~came out and~~ said we should not reduce parking fines was Linda Scott, the Labor councillor for the City of Sydney. Under instructions from the Leader of the Opposition, she ~~came out and~~ said that the Labor Party stands against reducing fines.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I say to everybody in the gallery: if you get a \$110 fine, please write a thank you note to the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party. We should not be surprised because every measure that this Government has taken to ease the cost of living—initiatives such as Service NSW—Labor has opposed every step of the way.

[*Interruption*]

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What have you supported Clay?

The SPEAKER: There will be no interchange between the Treasurer and the member for Cessnock. What is the other matter?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We have tried every measure to put this budget back into order.

The SPEAKER: I am trying to prevent an interchange between the member for Cessnock and the Treasurer. Is that what it was about?

Mr Guy Zangari: And another matter.

The SPEAKER: What is the other matter?

Mr Guy Zangari: The longstanding ruling by former Speaker Murray that members should be referred to by their correct titles—not "Clay" but the member for Cessnock.

The SPEAKER: I do not care about former Speaker Murray. The member for Fairfield will sit down.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: You are a much better speaker than Speaker Murray.

The SPEAKER: Members will stop arguing across the Chamber.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It is falling apart for those opposite. We know they are flat today. They are fracturing all around—Fragile Foley is trying to keep it all together. But on this side of the House we are divided.

[*Interruption*]

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We are united. The Opposition is divided. The Government is united in acknowledging their division. One mistake. This Government is united ~~into~~ continu~~ing~~e to deliver for the people of this great State.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will come to order.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome back to the gallery Vic Alhadeff, a friend of many members in the Chamber. It is lovely to see you.

Question Time

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES CODE OF CONDUCT

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:06): Welcome back, Madam Speaker. We are very sorry for your loss.

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms TRISH DOYLE: My question is directed to the Minister for the Environment. The International Union for Conservation of Nature has written to the Minister stating that the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 is inconsistent with the protected areas conservation objective and will be detrimental to

New South Wales' reputation for nature conservation. On World Environment Day, what is the Minister's response to the serious concerns of this global authority about the Minister's failure to protect our precious Kosciuszko National Park?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (15:08): I welcome the question from the member for the Blue Mountains. I also welcome you back, Madam Speaker, and wish you all the very best. We have missed your smiling face. It is good to have you back. Today is World Environment Day. It is an important day, and a day we should all be proud of. I started off today attending a conference and giving a keynote speech to an audience of people who represent our building and construction industry across New South Wales. They are creating jobs for New South Wales. What were we celebrating? It was the twentieth anniversary of the neighbour's policy framework. What is this, ~~members you ask?~~ Labor will not know. What is it about? It is about making our buildings more energy efficient, making sure that we deliver better waste management.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: It is a little early in the answer if it is on relevance, but I will hear the point of order. The Minister will resume her seat. I remind the member for Maroubra that it is my decision, ~~it is~~ not his decision.

Ms Kate Washington: My point of order relates to relevance. The question was whether or not the Minister has been listening to the science and the scientists, not what she was doing this morning.

The SPEAKER: I will listen further to the answer. I am sure the Minister will return to the specifics of the question, but this is a preamble on environmental issues, which is appropriate today. However, I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: It was great last week to be in the electorate of the member for Port Stephens, visiting her reverse vending machine.

The SPEAKER: If members continue to interject, they will not hear the Minister's answer, which continues to be relevant.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: It is relevant; it is about the environment in the electorate of the member for Port Stephens. I was there—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have just ruled on relevance. I will not hear further from the member until members come to order. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Jodi McKay: It is under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I have just ruled on relevance.

Ms Jodi McKay: Kosciuszko National Park is not within the electorate of the member for Port Stephens.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will resume her seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: She is the environment Minister.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time. When I ask you to resume your seat, please do so. That point of order was taken very soon after my final ruling that I would listen further to the Minister. I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: The Opposition is not willing to listen to any of the other great environmental initiatives that this State is undertaking. The member for Port Stephens did not want to hear about the reverse vending machine that went into Medowie, where I visited last week.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: We want the Minister to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: I understand the member's point of order. I ask the Minister to talk about horses—brumbies.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: I am happy to talk about horses. This is a good opportunity to talk about the brumby bill. I fully support this bill. Why? Labor is being disingenuous about this bill.

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

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: This bill is about protecting our sensitive alpine and sub-alpine environment in the Kosciuszko National Park. Labor is being disingenuous.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is answering the question, but members do not want to listen.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: I am now answering the question, but they do not want to listen. Labor is being disingenuous. This bill—are they listening?—actually sets a framework to get the balance right.

[Interruption]

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: Listen to the answer.

The SPEAKER: The member for Maitland has been so pleasantly quiet ~~up~~-until now.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: It is good to hear from the member for Maitland. They are all excited now. I am telling them; if only they would listen. This ~~bill~~ is an important bill. It draws a line in the sand. There has been controversy and polarisation. This bill provides a framework to balance the environment and take care of the brumbies that are part of the cultural heritage of Kosciuszko National Park.

Ms Trish Doyle: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat.

Ms Trish Doyle: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: It is too late: the Minister has concluded her answer. Opposition members will come to order and will demonstrate some level of professionalism.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (15:14): My question is addressed to the Attorney General. What is the New South Wales Government doing to protect communities from incitement to violence?

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (15:14): I thank the member for Coogee for this question and congratulate him on his championing of the vibrant and diverse communities that make up his electorate. There is no more important job for government than keeping communities safe, and this Government has delivered on that job in spades. The Government has made community safety the paramount consideration in matters of sentencing, parole and deciding whether to continue a detention order or extended supervision order for a high-risk offender. The Government has supported the Premier's priority to reduce, by 25 per cent, the proportion of domestic violence perpetrators reoffending. The Government has protected children by toughening sentences for child sex offenders, increasing maximum penalties, expanding the standard non-parole period and increasing penalties for the breaching of a child protection prohibition order.

The Government has implemented an election commitment to halve the definition of a large commercial quantity for methylamphetamine from one kilogram to 500 grams so that more ice dealers face a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. The Government has empowered the Supreme Court to order the supervision or detention of offenders after they serve their terms of imprisonment where they pose an unacceptable risk of committing a future terrorist act. The Government has introduced into the Crimes Act a new offence of assault causing death, and an aggravated version of that offence where it is committed when the offender is intoxicated. The Government has introduced a major package of criminal justice reforms to the high-risk offenders framework, sentencing and parole, which passed through the Parliament in October last year.

The Government has criminalised the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. The Government has ensured that the police have the powers they need to keep the community safe from terrorist threats and introduced a presumption against parole for terrorism-related offenders. The Government has amended the Bail Act to add factors to be considered in the unacceptable risk category before bail is granted and has restricted the activities of people involved in serious crime through serious crime prevention orders and the strengthening of asset confiscation and forfeiture laws. The Government has allowed police to issue public safety orders to prevent a person from attending a place or event if they pose a risk to public safety.

The list goes on and on, and today the Government has added to that list. Government members have listened and acted. The Government has listened to the many groups who were consulted on this new offence. The Government has listened to those groups who have let the Government know their real fears that threats and incitements to violence create in their communities. The Government has listened to the Keep NSW Safe coalition, consisting of 31 community groups and leaders. I particularly congratulate the spokesman for that group, Mr Vic Alhadeff, for his unfailing advocacy and service to the community on this issue.

Ms Gladys Berejikian: He is in the gallery.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: Good on you, Vic. The Government listened to those who have spoken through the 2013 Legislative Council Sanding Committee on Law and Justice report, "Racial vilification law in

NSW". The Government listened to the stakeholders consulted by Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian for his 2017 "Report on consultation on serious vilification laws in NSW". I thank Dr Kerkyasharian for his contribution. The Government has listed and has acted. Today the Government is protecting our diverse and vibrant communities like those in Coogee by introducing the Crimes Amendment (Publicly Threatening and Inciting Violence) Bill 2018 to this House. If passed, this bill will protect individuals and groups in our communities from those who would incite or threaten violence against them. The bill will insert into the Crimes Act a new offence of publicly threatening or inciting violence on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex or HIV/AIDS status.

The new offence will be punishable by up to three years imprisonment and an \$11,000 fine or, in the case of a corporation, a \$55,000 fine. It will replace other serious vilification offences presently in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The incitement of violence towards people because of who they are or what they believe is simply unacceptable. After this legislation passes, jail time will be a real option for individuals who threaten our community safety in this way. This legislation repeals four old, ineffective serious vilification offences in the Anti-Discrimination Act. It replaces them with one offence in the Crimes Act, with a punishment six times greater than under the existing Act. The bill resets our laws. It dismantles the significant barriers to prosecuting the appalling and sometimes vile actions of those who would incite violence. Freedom of speech is the bedrock of our liberal democracy, but so too is freedom from fear. The Government draws the line at those who publicly threaten or incite violence against other people. *[Extension of time]*

No-one in our community—whatever their race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, or intersex or HIV/AIDS status—should be in fear of someone else inciting or threatening violence against them. No-one should be in any doubt that this Government puts community safety first and will throw the book at anyone who threatens or incites violence like that. This Government will not tolerate that sort of behaviour. This Government is committed to protecting our diverse and vibrant communities like those in Coogee for the benefit of all New South Wales residents.

BALMAIN ELECTORATE FERRY SERVICES

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:19): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. When will the Government act to deliver new ferry stops at Glebe Point and Johnstons Bay, given that it has been almost five years since the Government's Sydney's Ferry Future plan identified those stops?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:20): It is not easy being Green, but what has already happened in the Balmain electorate under this Government has to be acknowledged.

Mr Jamie Parker: It is the good local member.

The SPEAKER: We all agree with that.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I think there is a millennial from Tanya Plibersek's office running against the member for Balmain. It is interesting that Labor could not find someone legitimately from the community; Labor has gone for a staffer to stand against the member for Balmain, so we wish him well. Three brand-new commuter wharves—Birchgrove, Balmain and Balmain East—have been built in the Balmain electorate since that excellent report was handed down by the then transport Minister. This Government has also delivered 396 additional Sydney ferry services since that report was handed down.

In November 2017 services were added across the harbour in a number of electorates, including Balmain. Specifically in relation to the two wharves mentioned in the question, the private sector has been expressing some interest. I understand The Greens' philosophical bent against the private sector. I can see the member raising his hands; he agrees. He will be very happy to know that there is some private sector interest, particularly in Glebe, and discussions are happening with the City of Sydney in terms of access to that wharf. The Government welcomes that interest. It will seek to encourage the private sector to look at the two wharves. The Government will be back in the marketplace in this regard fairly soon, given the time that is up in relation to contracts. I thank the member for his interest and note that he has been delivering infrastructure to his electorate courtesy of the Liberal-Nationals Government.

TRANSPORT ACCESS PROGRAM

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (15:22): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Will the Minister update the House on the progress of the Government's Transport Access Program, and are there any other related matters?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:23): There could very well be. I thank the member for Drummoyne for his question. Only this morning I joined him for the

opening of another ferry wharf—Abbotsford wharf. I will talk about the member's tireless work in relation to that program in a minute.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: This Government has now completed 450 projects under the Transport Access Program.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for The Entrance will come to order and listen to the answer.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Since 2011 the Government has upgraded 51 train stations, making them wheelchair accessible—20 with wheelchair accessibility upgrades—as well as 16 commuter wharfs. But the Government is not stopping there. On Monday the Treasurer, the member for Drummoyne, the Premier and I visited North Strathfield station to announce our continued investment in the Transport Access Program. That will come to \$2 million worth of projects either underway or completed since we came to government.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: You did two a year.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: This should be compared with Labor's performance. As the Treasurer said, Labor was delivering two projects a year. Yet Labor members have the hide to squawk.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Bankstown that she is on three calls to order. This is my final warning.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The announcement the Government made means that stations such as Blayney, Kingswood, Mittagong, Roseville, Taree, Wahroonga, Clarendon and Hawkesbury River will be getting upgrades.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. They will cease naming stations where there is no access. Such behaviour is childish.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Now 90 per cent of commuters benefit from the Transport Access Program. The former Labor Government left an appalling legacy. Three stations on the City Circle—Museum, St James and Martin Place—remained inaccessible throughout the 16 years of Labor's term. This Government has made them and suburban stations accessible. Now I turn to related matters. What is ~~quite~~ interesting about Labor members is what they say publicly. They misrepresent the truth. The North Strathfield upgrade had nothing to do with the local member; rather, it was all the work of the member for Drummoyne, who campaigned tirelessly.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: The Minister should ask the member for Drummoyne that question.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Strathfield should learn the standing orders.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: North Strathfield is getting an upgrade because of the work of the member for Drummoyne.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Drummoyne will come to order. He will allow the Minister to continue.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: What happened on 2BL after the press conference? Luke Foley said, "Places like Punchbowl and Unanderra miss out time and time again because it's the Government's re-election that is their priority rather than fixing stations that need it most urgently."

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wollongong should not be tempted to interject.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: What is interesting about the statement by the Leader of the Opposition is Punchbowl, which is on the south-west metro upgrade that will include lift access. Guess who is cancelling it? The Leader of the Opposition is complaining about lift access at Punchbowl and he has announced the cancellation of the upgrade at Punchbowl. I do not know how the member for Lakemba feels about that.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will come to order. If she continues to interject she will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Now I will talk about Unanderra station. Five thousand people commute through the Unanderra station each week, which is less than a thousand people a day. What do we do? We prioritise stations, which is why North Strathfield, with 29,000 commuters a week, is being upgraded ahead of Unanderra. It defies logic that those opposite would politicise a program when the Government is delivering it in great Labor electorates, such as Strathfield, which will become Liberal when a former assistant police commissioner runs for the seat. *[Extension of time]*

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Government will continue to deliver this great program. We talk about tapping on and tapping off. I note that there has been a bit of tapping on and tapping off the electoral roll in the Leader of the Opposition's branch—the Concord, Concord West, Rhodes branch.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am intrigued to know why one of the members of that branch tapped on the electoral roll three times in 10 days last year.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Strathfield seeks to take a point of order.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I know what the member for Strathfield is about to say, and I concur at this stage.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about the Transport Access Program, which I am ~~quite~~ interested in because I worked so hard to get that upgrade at North Strathfield station. I would like to hear the Minister's answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! So would we all. The Minister will return to the leave of the question, which was transport access. The member for Kogarah will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is all about access. In the case of the Leader of the Opposition's branch, it is about access to the electoral roll.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have asked the Minister to return to the leave of the question.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: And I am. I make the point—

The SPEAKER: Yes, and I am listening.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —it is fairly obvious that branch members of the Concord, Concord West, Rhodes branch—

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will let me listen before they jump out of their skin to take points of order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —are going to do what the Labor caucus is not prepared to do: get rid of the Leader of the Opposition, who should be long gone. *[Time expired.]*

Committees

COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Reports

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the report of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development, entitled "Inquiry into Zonal Taxation—Final Report", Report 3/56, dated May 2018 and received out of session on 31 May 2018.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 56/56

Mr LEE EVANS: As Deputy Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee, entitled "Legislation Review Digest No. 56/56", dated 5 June 2018. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr LEE EVANS: I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding Legislation Review Digest No. 55/56, dated 22 May 2018.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LAW AND SAFETY**Membership**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 11 April 2018 Stephanie Anne Cooke was elected Deputy Chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety.

*Business of the House***SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS****Order of Business**

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended:

- (1) On Tuesday 19 June 2018, to:
 - (a) Provide for the following routine of business prior to 2.15 p.m.:
 - (i) at 12 noon, Speaker takes the chair;
 - (ii) introduction and second reading speech on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills; and
 - (iii) the Speaker to leave the chair until 2.15 p.m.
 - (b) Permit the giving of General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) at the conclusion of the consideration of the motion accorded priority.
- (2) On Thursday 21 June 2018, to:
 - (a) Interrupt the business before the House at 11.00 a.m. to permit the Leader of the Opposition to speak on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills.
 - (b) Permit the consideration of General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) to continue until 2.00 p.m.

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:

Public Services

Petition calling on the Government to stop the sell-off of public services and instead invest in public services, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Pet Shops

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Duck Hunting

Petition requesting retention of the longstanding ban on duck hunting, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Powerhouse Museum Ultimo

Petition requesting the retention of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and the expansion of museum services to other parts of New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Short-term Holiday Letting

Petition calling on the Government to ban the conversion of entire homes into short-term holiday lets and to introduce appropriate controls including a short-term letting registration system, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Night-time Economy and Public Transport

Petition calling on the Government to provide all-night public transport to service the late-night economy, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Inner-city Ferry Services

Petition calling on the Government to fast-track project work for ferry wharves and services at Glebe Point; Johnstons Bay, Pyrmont; Woolloomooloo; and Elizabeth Bay, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Marriage Equality

Petition calling on the Government to repeal legislation that denies marriage equality to gender diverse and transgender citizens, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Pride Centre

Petition requesting the Government to work with community stakeholders and commit funds to build a Pride Centre in New South Wales, 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**.

Social Housing

Petition requesting that the Sirius building be retained and its social housing function be continued, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Inner-city Social Housing

Petition opposing the sale of public housing in Millers Point, Dawes Point and The Rocks, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Night-time Economy Mayor

Petition requesting the Government to appoint a night mayor to manage Sydney's night-time economy, **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Plastic Bags

Petition requesting the banning of plastic bags in New South Wales, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Park

Petition calling on the Government to declare a marine park in the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion with sanctuary zones to protect the coastal lifestyle, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Sydney Football Stadium

Petition requesting that the Government upgrade rather than rebuild the Sydney Football Stadium and invest the money saved into health, education and community sports facilities, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

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

Tertiary Campus Sexual Assault Reform

Petition calling on the Government to deliver sexual assault reform on New South Wales university and TAFE campuses by introducing mandatory training for residential college residents and staff, a standard sexual assault reporting model and specialised campus services for sexual assault victims, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Eastern Sydney High School

Petition requesting the urgent establishment of a new comprehensive co-educational public high school in eastern Sydney, received from **Mr Jihad Dib**.

Delhi Road Pedestrian Bridge

Petition rejecting the proposed modification of Delhi Road pedestrian bridge and calling for the bridge to be designed and constructed to protect surrounding bushland, received from **Mr Michael Daley**.

Motions Accorded Priority

MULTICULTURALISM

Consideration

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:34): I bring this motion to the attention of the House as a matter to be accorded priority because—

Mr Jihad Dib: How's your preselection going?

Mr MARK COURE: Really good actually. The interview comments of Luke Foley, the Leader of the Opposition, were deeply divisive, discriminatory and inappropriate. I cannot stand in silence and not acknowledge their impact on the communities affected, particularly in my electorate of Oatley. On Thursday, 24 May 2018, the member for Auburn told the *Daily Telegraph* that "many Anglo families" are relocating from suburbs such as Fairfield and that a "white flight" was occurring across Western Sydney. New South Wales is one of the most multicultural States: We have people from more than 307 different multicultural backgrounds, speaking 215 languages and practising more than 145 religions. The food we eat, the clothes we wear and the sports we play are a reflection of the great story of Australian migration.

It surprises me that the Leader of the Opposition would undermine the invaluable contribution of migrants to our society when his electorate of Auburn is one of the most multicultural areas of Sydney. In Auburn more than 35 per cent of people were born in Australia and three out of four people speak a language other than English at home. One can only imagine how the Auburn community feel following the comments of their local member of Parliament. Many people would be deeply offended by the language used, which we on this side of the House condemn. Every person who comes to this country, works hard and makes a positive contribution to society deserves to be valued. Our greatest asset as a State and a nation is our people.

This Government is committed to maintaining and enhancing our culturally unified society. We are building the schools, the hospitals, and the roads and rail lines through our record \$80 billion infrastructure program. We are committing more than \$10 million to community language schools and hiring more than 10,000 additional frontline nurses, teachers and police. We are investing \$23 million in multicultural programs, including community in partnership interpretation services and local community grants. We have introduced the Premier's Harmony Dinner and the Premier's Iftar dinner, and we are supporting major festivals such as Parramasala and Chinese New Year. On this side of the House we will not play this game of division and race-based politics.

CASTLEREAGH FREEWAY CORRIDOR

Consideration

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (15:37): Mr Deputy Speaker, nothing—

Mr Mark Coure: Try to beat that.

Ms PRUE CAR: I will Mark, do not worry. Nothing symbolises this Government's arrogance more than when the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight visited the Central West of New South Wales in March and jumped for joy about the Bells Line of Road while Western Sydney residents were being told that their lives were about to be turned upside down. To remind members, I have a photograph of the Minister with the Mayor of Parkes and the Mayor of Lachlan jumping for joy and telling everyone that the Castlereagh Freeway Corridor was finally determined. But did the Minister and this Government really think the people of Western Sydney would just allow their homes to be bulldozed because of a cosy deal that the Minister did in The Nationals party room or because The Nationals are still sad and sore and licking the wounds inflicted on them by the member for Orange?

Have those opposite learned nothing from council amalgamations? Have they learned nothing from their attempt to ban greyhound racing and their reckless stadium splurge? People do not like being threatened by governments. Some 4,500 submissions later, the Government claims that it has listened to the community. That is not hard when people have turned out in their hundreds, time and time again, pleading to be listened to. Several weeks ago the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight stood in this place and said to the people of Castlereagh that she knew what they were going through. How could the Minister possibly know? If the Minister knew, how could she have possibly announced, without even talking to the residents of Western Sydney, that people's homes would be entirely swallowed up by a road for her National Party mates?

Those residents are not lot numbers, they are not cells on a spreadsheet. They are people who cannot sleep, they are people who suffer anxiety caused by the Government and they are people in distress because their livelihoods have been frozen. Those residents are members of a hardworking and industrious community who have always done the right thing, but they have been betrayed. What a National Party pickle the Government will have got itself in if it backflips on this issue. Many times I have been proud to stand in this place on behalf of my community and say that the wonderful people in Western Sydney have long memories—and there is no way they will forget about this issue. They know who has tried to destroy their lives, and they know why. The residents know the plan was to sacrifice them for National Party seats over the mountains. People power might prevail in this instance but shame on the Government for getting to this point.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Rockdale that he is on three calls to order.

The question is that the motion of the member for Oatley be accorded priority.

The House divided.

Ayes47
Noes36
Majority.....11

AYES

Anderson, Mr K	Aplin, Mr G	Ayres, Mr S
Barilaro, Mr J	Bromhead, Mr S (teller)	Conolly, Mr K
Cooke, Ms S	Coure, Mr M	Crouch, Mr A
Davies, Mrs T	Dominello, Mr V	Donato, Mr P
Elliott, Mr D	Evans, Mr A.W.	Evans, Mr L.J.
Fraser, Mr A	Goward, Ms P	Grant, Mr T
Gulaptis, Mr C	Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A
Humphries, Mr K	Johnsen, Mr M	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	Rowell, Mr J
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	Wilson, Ms F	

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J	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
Foley, Mr L	Greenwich, Mr A	Harris, Mr D
Harrison, Ms J	Hoenig, Mr R	Hornery, Ms S
Kamper, Mr S	Leong, Ms J	Lynch, Mr P
McDermott, Dr H	McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D
Mihailuk, Ms T	Minns, Mr C	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

Berejiklian, Ms G	Cotsis, Ms S
Gibbons, Ms M	Haylen, Ms J
Griffin, Mr J	Lalich, Mr N

Motion agreed to.

MULTICULTURALISM

Priority

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:47): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Condemns the Leader of the Opposition's "white flight" comments.
- (2) Supports the Government's efforts to promote multiculturalism.

In the electorate of Oatley in the St George region—one of the most multicultural areas in Sydney—we have many people from different multicultural groups.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Say Papalexandropoulos three times.

Mr MARK COURE: What was that? Not true at all.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Oatley will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr MARK COURE: We have people from Chinese, Lebanese, Greek, Macedonian and many more backgrounds. China is the top overseas birthplace of the community in my area. I represent a very culturally diverse district of Sydney, and I am proud to have forged such strong ties with cultural communities over many years across the south of Sydney—in fact, my grandparents who migrated to Australia immediately after World War II moved into Australia Avenue in Matraville, which I think is in the electorate of Heffron. That is where they first met. They worked three jobs—

Mr Chris Minns: They probably voted for Ron as well.

Mr MARK COURE: They probably did, actually. They worked three jobs between them, working extremely hard so that their children could grow up with more opportunities and a better life. My dad and mum were able to attend good schools and live comfortable, carefree childhoods because of the sacrifices and the work ethic of my grandparents. I am sure that many of us in this House have similar stories about family members. I have always been a close friend and supporter of multicultural communities, in particular those communities in my electorate of Oatley and across the St George district. Many Chinese families have chosen to settle in the St George region.

Mr Stephen Kamper: What about the Greeks?

Mr MARK COURE: We will get to them in a second. I feel as though the electorate of Oatley is just one of the many examples of New South Wales as a whole: ethnically diverse, business orientated and home to hardworking families. The history of migrant settlement in Australia is an interesting one. Migrant communities have quickly become an integral part of the social fabric of our broader community. People of all nations have made significant progress in a wide diversity of professions and creative endeavours, ranging from medicine to law, literature, art and, of course, politics.

In just the past decade Mandarin has become the most common language spoken other than English. China is one of the most important trading partners of this nation and will continue to be as we progress further into the twenty-first century. The Australia-China bilateral relationship is based on strong economic and trade ties, a comprehensive program of high-level visits and wideranging cooperation. For example, China is Australia's largest two-way trading partner in goods and services and our largest export market. A significant component of Australia's economic growth is reliant on the Asian region.

I say all of this to put on record that New South Wales could not have achieved what we enjoy today without the contribution of migrants, whether they be Greek, Chinese or Lebanese. Migration has assisted in establishing a critical population base, opening up rural industries, creating towns and cities, constructing infrastructure and forging links within Sydney and around the world. It is clear that migration has ongoing economic and social benefits. I express my appreciation to all migrants, whether newly arrived or those whose grandparents were the first generation to migrate. To them I say thank you.

For the State Labor Leader of the Opposition to say that there is "white flight" as a result of migrant communities moving into certain areas of Sydney means that he has completely ignored the contribution of migrants in our State, in our city and across the nation. The Leader of the Opposition has commented on the refugee climate in Sydney, particularly in western regions. Fairfield was mentioned as a suburb where large intakes of refugees apparently could not match available jobs and education resources. It is disappointing that serious migration and refugee challenges have been belittled by being described in that condescending manner. I acknowledge the wonderful contribution of each and every one of the migrants in Sydney and across the nation.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (15:52): I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House:

- (1) Supports the Government's efforts to promote multiculturalism.
- (2) Calls on all political parties to refuse to preference the One Nation party."

I move that because amendment 1 I believe this is what multiculturalism is about. When members opposite take a position on multiculturalism, I urge them to look at the members sitting behind me. Many Labor members come

from non-English speaking backgrounds and English was often the second language of their forebears who came to this country. For example, I was born in Lebanon. The member for Shellharbour, the member for Heffron, the member for Rockdale—the famous Greek himself—also come from non-English speaking backgrounds. Other Labor members with diverse backgrounds include the member for Macquarie Fields, the member for Blacktown and the member for Mount Druit.

Like other Labor members I have said on many occasions in this place that if those opposite doubt our commitment to multiculturalism they are completely wrong. In reality, the Leader of the Opposition made a sensible call on the Government to ensure that we have the necessary resources to support multiculturalism in this State. About two years ago I spoke in this Chamber about the State Government's decision to take on 12,000 Syrian refugees. At that time I was very vocal that it was a great idea and it was important. But I said that we needed to ensure that we had the resources for them—the schools, jobs and social infrastructure—and we have not had that. When that is called out we should not be accused of making a racist comment.

We are calling out what is required. Common sense dictates that. We hear members opposite talk about their commitment, but I ask: When the budget is handed down in two weeks, will there be increased funding to those areas that need it the most? Will there be increased funding to the places that take the majority of migration such as Fairfield, Bankstown and Blacktown? That has not happened yet. Until it does, it makes it difficult to listen to this confected anger. The member for Oatley spent most of his time reading his speech. If he got out and about in the community, as I know he does, and joined the others he would know exactly what it is about. I suggest the member for Oatley listens. He has had his turn and he will get another one.

I come back to the issue of One Nation. A couple of Thursdays ago we had to listen to people who have not once talked about the value that multiculturalism and diversity brings us and who do not want to share in the different stories. Only a few weeks ago I said that every one of us has a story. There are two Australian stories. The first is the Indigenous story and every other story is a migrant story. Whether people came on the First Fleet, with the cameleers, looking for gold or following the Second World War, those are our individual stories. If we want to talk about multiculturalism, that is what it is: We must value every person's story.

The most important point I make is that I am happy to listen to people's comments, but I am not happy to listen to people accuse us of all sorts of things when we decided that we would rule out a preference deal with a racist and divisive party such as One Nation. My question to members on the other side is: Will they do the same? They will not. They are going to vote it down. This is all confected anger. It is clear and simple. If members opposite believe in multiculturalism, they must make Multicultural NSW more than just an organisation that puts on events. It should get back to being the great Multicultural NSW that it was. If the Government were genuinely sincere, it would support the amendment and in the budget the Treasurer would provide extra money to suburbs such as Fairfield, Bankstown, Blacktown and Lakemba—the places that do the heavy lifting when it comes to migration yet do not get the resources—and put money into schools and TAFEs to give opportunities to migrants. Until that time comes, these are hollow words.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (15:57): As I listened to the member for Lakemba, and two words stood out, "confectioned anger". I cannot see members on the other side even pretending to be angry. I know that half of you do not agree with your leader. You do not want to be defending your leader.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Miranda will direct her comments through the Chair.

Ms ELENi PETINOS: You were all happy to throw him under a bus to the *Daily Telegraph*. We are happier than anyone else that he is there. As long as he is we on this side are very comfortable because the Liberal-Nationals will be returned to government and you all know it. You are not even whingeing or yelling at me. You are all obsessed—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: The member should direct her comments through the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Miranda will direct her comments through the Chair.

Ms ELENi PETINOS: - Members opposite are very upset with One Nation. They are amending the motion to talk about it. Is that because Pauline Hanson endorsed the comments that their leader made? The Greens are not endorsing the comments that were made. On 24 May at 10.34 a.m. Dr Mehreen Faruqi posted on Twitter:

This is absolutely disgusting. Pandering to racism. White flight is just a fancy term for race-baiting.

There has been much discussion in this place about multiculturalism and its benefits. Multiculturalism benefits this country and builds on its rich tapestry, social fabric and cohesion. Like the member for Oatley and the member for Lakemba said, we all have very proud stories of multiculturalism and the way that our families ended up in

this country. As I look across at many members opposite, I know that their families have stories and we are all the product of what happens when multiculturalism works well. So many diverse families have come here and helped to build the culture of this country that we are all so proud of. I think it is atrocious that we are having this debate.

[Interruption]

The Leader of the Opposition made the comments and it is important to have this debate on the record. There are more than 307 ancestries in this State. We speak 215 languages and practise 146 religions. That is a record that we can all be proud of, irrespective of where we sit in this Chamber. We all agree that every person who comes to this country works hard and makes a positive contribution to our society and they deserve to be valued. That should not be taken away by a comment from anyone, particularly the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:00): The Leader of the Opposition will not be lectured on multiculturalism by this Government. To move a motion condemning the Leader of the Opposition is the most serious motion a government can move in this House. Where is the Executive? Where is their courage? The only person left in the Chamber is the Minister for Multiculturalism, and he is not even participating in the debate. Where are they? They think because the leaders of both conservative parties are from non-English speaking backgrounds they have a mortgage on multiculturalism. Do I have to remind members that the conservative parties hardly have an impressive record in this country in relation to multiculturalism? Do I really need to remind them? Do I need to remind them that the leading light of the Liberal Party—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Oatley will have an opportunity to respond shortly.

Mr RON HOENIG: In 1985 the Liberal Party's most successful Prime Minister, John Howard, as deputy leader fought tooth and nail against economic sanctions against an apartheid South Africa. Who opened the door in 1988 to the Asian immigration debate? It was John Howard. Who was responsible for the birth of Pauline Hanson? It was John Howard.

Mr Troy Grant: Point of order: Mr and Mrs Hanson were responsible for the birth of Pauline Hanson.

Mr RON HOENIG: When the Government is in trouble the Minister for Police has to fabricate a point of order. Last year which party was responsible for giving preferences to Pauline Hanson's One Nation? It was the Liberal Party in Western Australia. Which party refuses to rule out doing a deal with that racist party? It is the Liberal-Nationals in New South Wales. Australia is the most successful multicultural country in the world. Australia is a land built by migrants and their children. It is the one country that has been enormously successful at being able to take people from just about every country and merge them with an Indigenous culture to provide a society of harmony. Our responsibility as the representatives of the people of this country is to talk about harmony and being together. It is not to point to one word out of place said by the Leader of the Opposition—who is fighting for refugees escaping genocide in the Middle East—and come up with confected anger when he has already apologised for the remark. How about supporting multiculturalism and not making political capital out of racism?

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:04): By leave: I speak on behalf of The Greens on the motion moved by the member for Oatley. It is important to call "white flight" what it is—that is, racist. The use of that term is completely unacceptable, and seeing it splayed across the front page of the *Daily Telegraph* was disgusting. I do not for a second think that the Leader of the Opposition, nor anyone else in the New South Wales Labor Party, is in any way racist. However, it is crucial that we recognise that the powerful and the influential in our society will take any comment out of context, whip it up and turn it into racist division.

I find it completely unacceptable and unbelievable that the Leader of the Opposition and the people working in his office did not know how the *Daily Telegraph* would take that kind of statement and whip it up. It may have been said in error, but I expect more of an alternative government. I also expect more from this Parliament in the way we conduct these debates. If there is genuine commitment to standing up against racism and to supporting multiculturalism in this Parliament, I will test it by moving an amendment. I want to see whether members are willing to put political pointscoring aside and to make a genuine commitment to that principle. We do not want to give the Liberal-Nationals free kicks when it comes to race and discrimination. Their policies have been appalling at both the State and Federal levels. However, that does not excuse NSW Labor from whipping this into something else in the interests of electoral success. I move:

That the amendment be amended by leaving out all words after "this" with a view to inserting instead:

"House:

- (1) Condemns all forms of racism.
- (2) Affirms its commitment to multiculturalism in New South Wales."

The Greens are committed to multiculturalism. I call on every member in this Chamber to support the amendment. If we are genuinely committed to not scoring political points, we will unanimously support it. If this is about something else, then everyone else will want to score political points. The people who will suffer will be the young women and young men on public transport who will be abused and harassed because of their birthplace or the colour of their skin. It is unacceptable for anyone in this place to condone that.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:07): In reply: It is good that The Greens and the crossbench members are siding with the Government for once on this important motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Bankstown that she is on three calls to order.

Mr MARK COURE: I thank members for their wonderful contributions, and particularly those who have migrated to Australia and who now call it home—specifically New South Wales. This State is home to people from 207 cultural backgrounds who speak more than 215 languages and who follow 145 religious doctrines. I used a quote earlier that is worth repeating, "The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the sports we play"—go the Dragons—"are a true reflection of the great story of Australian migration." I again acknowledge the wonderful contribution that multiculturalism makes to this country. Government members will not play the game of division; we will not play the game of race-based politics.

The member for Lakemba spoke about Pauline Hanson. The one person who backed the Leader of the Labor Party was in fact Pauline Hanson. His comment has turned neighbour against neighbour, not only in Western Sydney but also across New South Wales, and members opposite know that. Coalition members will not discriminate based on race or religion, or the colour of someone's skin. The comment was stupid and silly and, as I said, it has turned neighbour against neighbour and community group against community group. Members opposite should apologise.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment to the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes46
Majority.....10

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J	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
Foley, Mr L	Greenwich, Mr A	Harris, Mr D
Harrison, Ms J	Hoenig, Mr R	Hornery, Ms S
Kamper, Mr S	Leong, Ms J	Lynch, Mr P
McDermott, Dr H	McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D
Mihailuk, Ms T	Minns, Mr C	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

NOES

Anderson, Mr K	Aplin, Mr G	Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)	Conolly, Mr K	Constance, Mr A
Cooke, Ms S	Coure, Mr M	Crouch, Mr A
Davies, Mrs T	Dominello, Mr V	Elliott, Mr D
Evans, Mr A.W.	Evans, Mr L.J.	Fraser, Mr A
Goward, Ms P	Grant, Mr T	Gulaptis, Mr C
Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A	Humphries, Mr K
Johnsen, Mr M	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	Rowell, Mr J	Sidoti, Mr J

NOES

Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

PAIRS

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

Berejiklian, Ms G
Brookes, Mr G
Gibbons, Ms M

Amendment negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question now is that the words stand.

The House divided.

Ayes46
Noes36
Majority.....10

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A.W.
Goward, Ms P
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Aplin, Mr G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Grant, Mr T
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T (teller)
Greenwich, Mr A
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

PAIRS

Barilaro, Mr J

Cotsis, Ms S

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
Gibbons, Ms M

Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N

Motion agreed to.

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

The House divided.

Ayes47
Noes34
Majority.....13

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A.W.
Goward, Ms P
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Aplin, Mr G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Grant, Mr T
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Piper, Mr G
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Foley, Mr L
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T (teller)
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Park, Mr R
Smith, Ms T.F.
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

PAIRS

Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G
Gibbons, Ms M

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

Motion agreed to.

*Bills***CRIMES AMENDMENT (PUBLICLY THREATENING AND INCITING VIOLENCE) BILL 2018****First Reading****Bill introduced on motion by Mr Mark Speakman, read a first time and printed.****Second Reading Speech****Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (165:204):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

****I am pleased to introduce the Crimes Amendment (Publicly Threatening and Inciting Violence) Bill 2018. The bill introduces a new indictable criminal offence of publicly threatening or inciting violence in the Crimes Act. The offence will apply to public threats or incitement of violence against targeted persons or groups in New South Wales. The new offence will replace four existing serious vilification offences contained in the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. Laws protecting identified groups from threats of violence are important to securing the safety of the New South Wales community. The Government is committed to protecting our diverse and vibrant communities for the benefit of all New South Wales residents. Importantly, a new offence of publicly threatening and inciting violence will demonstrate that the Government does not tolerate threats of violence or incitement of violence.

The new offence will replace the following four existing serious vilification offences in the Anti-Discrimination Act: First, serious racial vilification in section 20D; second, serious transgender vilification in section 38T; third, serious homosexual vilification in section 49ZTA; and fourth, serious HIV/AIDS vilification in section 49ZXC. Currently, the highest possible maximum sentence across all serious vilification offences is six months imprisonment or 50 penalty units, and 100 penalty units for a corporation. To date, there have been no prosecutions brought under these offence provisions.

Broadly, the bill will do the following: First, replace the existing serious vilification offences with a single indictable offence in the Crimes Act to demonstrate the seriousness of threatening and inciting violence. Secondly, it will broaden the current grounds of protection to include religious belief or affiliation and intersex status in addition to the existing grounds of serious racial, homosexual, transgender and HIV/AIDS vilification, while updating the existing terminology of "homosexual" and "transgendered" with "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to reflect modern terminology. Thirdly, it will remove the existing disparity between maximum penalties for serious vilification of different protected groups. And, fourthly, it will reflect community standards through an increased maximum penalty. The bill will also clarify that it is not necessary to adduce evidence of the state of mind of any other person apart from the accused or that any other person has acted as a result of the accused's alleged act.

The new offence will be investigated by the NSW Police Force and require the approval of the Director of Public Prosecutions to commence a prosecution. The requirement for the director's consent will provide a safeguard to ensure that the offence is only prosecuted where appropriate, in accordance with the Prosecution Guidelines. Importantly, the amendments strike a careful balance between preventing public acts and threats of violence, and facilitating freedom of expression in New South Wales. The bill follows extensive consultation on and reviews of New South Wales' serious vilification laws. In 1992 the Hon. James Samios, MLC, reviewed the serious racial vilification offence in the Anti-Discrimination Act. A report on this review was presented to the then Government on 27 August 1992.

Among other things, that report recommended that the ground of racial vilification should be extended to cover ethno-religious people and groups, and that the maximum penalty should be increased. In 1999, the NSW Law Reform Commission finalised an extensive review of the Anti-Discrimination Act. Relevantly, the Law Reform Commission recommended that the offence of serious racial vilification be moved to the Crimes Act. In 2009, the then Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Nicholas Cowdery, prepared a paper on the offence of serious racial vilification in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The paper raised the concern that there had been no prosecutions instituted under the existing offence of serious racial vilification in the Anti-Discrimination Act. To date, there continue to be no prosecutions under any serious vilification offence in New South Wales.

In 2012, the then Premier, the Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP, asked the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice to inquire into the serious racial vilification offence in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The Committee on Law and Justice released a report on that inquiry on 3 December 2013. The committee came to the view that the effectiveness of the serious vilification offence in the Anti-Discrimination Act had been hindered by a number of procedural impediments that have prevented practical application of the offence by courts and prosecutors. In November 2016 the then Attorney General, the member for Vacluse, the Hon. Gabrielle

Upton, MP, asked Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian, AO, to undertake broad community consultation on a number of issues relating to serious vilification in New South Wales.

Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian met with 50 groups or individuals during 2017. His report on consultation on serious vilification laws in New South Wales shows that many stakeholders considered that moving the offences into the Crimes Act could be beneficial, as it would clarify police responsibilities for investigating serious vilification offences. Some stakeholders supported including religion as a protected ground, and many agreed that the procedural requirements and maximum penalties should be consistent across all serious vilification offences. The Government has given careful consideration to these reviews and community consultations in the preparation of the bill. The focus of the bill is on conduct threatening or inciting violence, in other words, behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage or kill someone or something.

I will now outline the details of the bill. Schedule 1 sets out amendments to the Crimes Act to insert a new section 93Z into that Act. The offence in section 93Z of the Crimes Act will replace the four existing serious vilification offences contained in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The new offence will be contained in the Crimes Act to allow the NSW Police Force to take a lead in investigation of possible offences, and therefore, to remove some of the current barriers to prosecution. Containing the offence in the Crimes Act will also remove an existing requirement for the president of the Anti-Discrimination Board to make a referral for prosecution within 28 days after receipt of a complaint. Section 93Z will provide that a person who, by public act, intentionally or recklessly threatens or incites violence towards another person or a group of persons on any of the protected grounds listed in the section, is guilty of an offence. Retaining incitement in the offence is consistent with the language used in international human rights instruments, including in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Incitement is already well understood judicially and has an established body of case law. Consistent with the approach taken by Justices of Appeal Ashley and Neave of the Victorian Court of Appeal in *Catch the Fire Ministries v Islamic Council of Victoria Inc* (2006) 15 VR 207 concerning religious vilification, cited with approval in *Sunol v Collier* (No 2) (2012) NSWCA 44, which concerned homosexual vilification, when considering whether a public act is one that would incite violence, this determination should proceed by reference to the effect of the accused person's conduct on an ordinary member of the class of persons to whom the public act was directed, taking into account the circumstances in which the conduct occurred.

To address concerns raised in community consultation and in the 2013 Legislative Council committee report on the difficulties of proving incitement under the current section 20D of the Anti-Discrimination Act, the drafting of the new offence clarifies the following: Recklessness is sufficient to establish criminal intent, and it is irrelevant whether or not, in response to the alleged offender's public act, any person formed a state of mind or carried out any act of violence. The new offence also includes "threatens" as an alternative to incitement in order to criminalise this conduct. By including threatening violence as a limb of the new offence, the prosecution would not necessarily need to adduce evidence that the defendant in fact intended to incite, or was reckless as to inciting a third party to inflict violence.

The protected grounds under the new offence are: first, the race of the person or one or more of the members of the group; second, that the person has, or one or more of the members of the group have, a specific religious belief or affiliation; third, the sexual orientation of the person or one or more of the members of the group; fourth, the gender identity of the person or one or more of the members of the group; fifth, that the person is, or one or more of the members of the group are, of intersex status; and sixth, that the person has, or one or more of the members of the group have, HIV or AIDS. The new offence will broaden the current grounds of protection under the Anti-Discrimination Act to include religious belief or affiliation, and intersex status.

In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on violence motivated by religious intolerance in Australia. While existing laws capture the criminality of some of this conduct, including religion as a protected ground under the offence sends a strong signal that those who incite or threaten the use of violence against a person or persons because they hold, or do not hold, a particular religious view will be held criminally responsible for this conduct. It will also bring New South Wales into line with most comparable Australian jurisdictions that have already expressly included religion as a protected category in their respective anti-vilification laws.

The new offence will also introduce intersex status as a protected ground under the offence to ensure that people who are born with atypical reproductive or sexual organs are protected under the Crimes Act. Intersex status is defined to include having physical, hormonal, or genetic features that are neither wholly female nor wholly male, a combination of male and female, or neither female nor male. Currently, the Anti-Discrimination Act covers vilification on the ground of homosexuality. The new offence will replace "homosexuality" with the ground of sexual orientation. This will modernise the terminology and broaden the existing ground to cover threatening or inciting violence on the ground of sexual orientation. The term "sexual orientation" better serves

the purpose of the offence. Specifically, sexual orientation will mean a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, different sex or of the same and different sex.

The new offence will also replace the ground of transgender status with the ground of gender identity. Currently transgender people are protected against vilification under the Anti-Discrimination Act. The bill proposes to broaden the class of persons who are protected by using the term "gender identity" instead of "transgender". Gender identity will mean the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person, whether by way of medical intervention or not, with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth.

The new offence will retain the protected grounds of race and HIV or AIDS status. Both of these grounds are currently included in the Anti-Discrimination Act. HIV or AIDS status will not be defined under the new offence but means that a person or member of a group has HIV or AIDS. Under the new offence, race will include colour, nationality, descent and ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin. Subsection 2 of the new offence under section 93Z makes it clear that to make out the offence, it is irrelevant whether the alleged offender's assumptions or beliefs about an attribute of a person or a member of a group of persons were correct or not at the time that the offence is alleged to have been committed.

Under the new offence, a public act will include: first, any form of communication to the public, including speaking, writing, displaying notices, playing of recorded material, broadcasting and communicating through social media and other electronic methods; second, any conduct observable by the public, including actions and gestures and the wearing or display of clothing, signs, flags, emblems and insignia; and third, the distribution or dissemination of any matter to the public. An act can amount to a public act even if it occurs on private land. Under the new offence, violence will include violent conduct and violence towards a person or a group of persons will include violence towards property of the person or a member of the group.

Any prosecution of the offence must only be commenced with the approval of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The offence will have a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment or 100 penalty units, or both, for an individual. In the case of a corporation, the maximum penalty will be 500 penalty units. Currently, the highest possible maximum sentence across all serious vilification offences in the Anti-Discrimination Act is six months imprisonment or 50 penalty units, and 100 penalty units for a corporation. The increased maximum penalties will better reflect community standards, and the seriousness of the criminal conduct.

Schedule 2 sets out amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act. Schedule 2 to the bill will repeal all serious vilification offences in the Anti-Discrimination Act. These are the offence of serious racial vilification in section 20D, the offence of serious transgender vilification in section 38T, the offence of serious homosexual vilification in section 49ZTA and the offence of serious HIV/AIDS vilification in section 49ZCX. Schedule 3 to the bill makes a consequential amendment to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to provide that the new indictable offence is to be dealt with summarily unless the prosecutor or person charged elects otherwise.

This bill amends the Crimes Act to create an offence of threatening or inciting violence on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status or HIV/AIDS status. The new offence will replace the existing serious vilification offences that are contained in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The reform strikes the right balance between community safety and freedom of speech. Freedom of speech is a fundamental tenet of liberal democracy. But so too is freedom from fear. The New South Wales Government has listened to the community and is committed to ensuring that any behaviour that puts community safety at risk will not be tolerated. The amendments contained in this legislation will come into effect on a day or days to be appointed by proclamation.

I thank every person and every group that has provided feedback on this topic over the past several years, including the following groups or leaders with whom I have personally discussed the subject matter of the bill on one or more occasions: the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Reverend Anthony Fisher, OP; the Eparch of the Maronite Diocese of St Maroun, His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay, OLM; the New South Wales Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby; the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Glenn Davies; the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines; the Jewish Board of Deputies, especially its Chief Executive Officer Vic Alhadeff and President Jeremy Spinak; representatives of the Keep NSW Safe coalition; and Stepan Kerkyasharian, AO, former president of the Anti-Discrimination Board and author of the 2017 "Report on consultation on serious vilification laws in NSW".

I thank all officers of the Department of Justice who have made important contributions to the development of this bill, including Kelly Roberts, Dr Jacob Campbell and Anita Chen-Hatton. Also I thank Sian Hutchinson from the Department of Premier and Cabinet. I thank my predecessor the Hon. Gabrielle Upton for her extensive work in this area and Tom Payten from the Premier's office, and in my office all staff members,

particularly Mary Klein, my former Chief of Staff Bran Black and my current Acting Chief of Staff Clare Wesley. Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

GOVERNMENT SECTOR FINANCE BILL 2018

GOVERNMENT SECTOR FINANCE LEGISLATION (REPEAL AND AMENDMENT) BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 24 May 2018.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:48): I lead for the Opposition on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018. The bills have a number of components, largely dealing with financial management. It is probably interesting for only a few members, including the Treasurer, the Minister for Finance, my colleague the shadow Minister for Finance and me, and a few others who like all things financial. The Government Sector Finance Bill establishes a new accountability framework for public sector bodies and personnel. This includes clarifying the roles and responsibilities for effective financial management. I will talk about that in a moment.

Secretaries of departments and heads of agencies that are not departments will be accountable authorities—a new concept under the bill. Accountable authorities will be responsible for the performance and financial management of the agency, and accountable to the relevant Minister. I would like to get some clarification from the Treasurer in this respect. As someone who aspires to be the Treasurer, it would be good for the Treasurer to have greater oversight, but I would like to clarify the extent of Treasury's role in accountability arrangements. The Government Sector Finance Bill outlines the proposed roles and responsibilities for all government officers in order to promote compliance with this new legislation and creates a division enabling the regulations to deem unsourced receipts as an appropriation.

The bill also does other things. It expands a range of services, which I will talk about in a moment. The bill provides that the Government can engage to include financial technology providers. This Government has wasted an enormous amount of money on projects in this area. The Government Sector Finance Bill increases the scope of public money that can become part of a central Treasury banking system and removes allegedly duplicated, unnecessary annual and other financial reporting. Performance information will be published in Budget Paper No. 3, and directions by the Treasurer will be expanded to cover new areas in this bill.

Although the Opposition always supports good oversight, I want a number of things clarified. I have spoken to a staff member in the Treasurer's office—it is always worthwhile to talk to good staff members as opposed to those who are not such good staff members—who assured me that the Sydney Motorway Corporation is included in these provisions. The shadow Minister responsible for roads and WestConnex and my good friend the member for Heffron will be keen to confirm this because the Sydney Motorway Corporation has not been a transparent financial organisation by any stretch of the imagination. If that organisation is included in this legislation the Opposition would like the Treasurer to make that clear in his remarks in reply to this debate.

I note that the legislation refers a lot to financial management, which is interesting coming from this Government. I do not want these bills to be like the Fire and Emergency Services Levy Bill. As I am sure the Deputy Speaker would remember very well, the levy was announced with incredible fanfare in this place. It was allegedly the answer to all of our problems and the silver bullet for the way in which the Government collected insurance premiums. That legislation lasted for about seven or eight weeks before the Government had to repeal it. We would not want to see that happen to these bills.

The Opposition wants financial management improved. I hope the bills will do that, because just a few hundred metres from this place there is a work site. I know it is difficult for a lot of Government members to confront that work site that is known as George Street light rail—or perhaps it should be called George Street light fail. This bill refers to financial management and financial transparency; it will affect the light rail project. A few Government members thought I was crazy when I said that the central business district is a disaster. They got commentators and journalists to say, "He doesn't know what he's talking about." That affected my confidence greatly! Much that happens in this House affects my confidence greatly, but in this instance I have been proven to be correct. That project has been a financial disaster.

I am not sure what these bills would have been able to do to manage that situation, but financial reporting will be a key part of this legislation. Financial reporting by government agencies, such as Roads and Maritime Services, and Transport for NSW, has not always been transparent. But nothing beats the Sydney Motorway Corporation from which it is virtually impossible to access information. For a sustained period, the Government

did not want to declare the salary of the chief executive officer [CEO], which was simply stupid. All the Government had to say was, "He's on a lot more than the Premier." It was that simple.

I assume that the Sydney Motorway Corporation's CEO claims the \$90 rebate on compulsory third party [CTP] insurance, as does the Premier. It is outstanding fiscal management, which these bills are purported to implement, to ensure that people who earn \$400,000 receive a \$90 rebate on CTP insurance and that people who live in affluent areas receive \$100 for little Johnnie or little Jan to do their rowing, or their rugby, or their yachting or their archery. In downtown Illawarra, people do not tend to have many of those luxuries and instead use the sport rebate for the simpler sports of rugby league, soccer, netball or tennis. None of that is addressed by these bills. However, the legislation will apply to the Office of Sport, so it will be interesting to see who has taken up the sport rebate, the suburbs in which the recipients live, and whether they need that \$100. I am sure those recipients welcomed the rebate, just as the Premier, whose salary is \$400,000, welcomed in this House a \$90 rebate on her CTP, despite having a driver. Of course the rebate is welcomed. But is that good financial management? That is debatable.

The Premier boasted about not having lost many demerit points, but failed to mention that she does not drive. That is a bit like my friend the member for Kiama boasting about not losing demerit points: He also does not drive. I hope the Treasurer takes seriously the implementation among government agencies of the financial management requirements of these bills. I do not blame the Treasurer for the George Street debacle; rather I blame the Premier in the true spirit of blame. The member for Heathcote should not worry about this. I have seen internal polling for the Heathcote electorate and Maryanne Stuart will solve all his problems. Don't worry, Lee. You have all sorts of troubles.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will be referred to by their correct titles.

Mr RYAN PARK: Although I do not blame the Treasurer for the George Street debacle, I can see why these types of bills have been introduced. When Transport for NSW blows three-quarters of a billion dollars on the light rail in George Street, and when a Premier spends more than \$1 million on Government advertising to announce legislation to increase the Fire and Emergency Services Levy [FESL] and then has the awful experience of having to repeal the very bill she introduced, I can understand why the Treasurer wants to have a very tight governance framework over government sector agencies. An example of this Government not taking fiscally appropriate action is the Office of Local Government, which was on, off, on, off, while in the meantime millions of dollars had been spent on advertising. These bills are all about financial and resource management in the government sector. The clue is in the title of the bills. The legislation refers to consolidating into one Act the financial and resource management of the New South Wales government sector.

I hope legislation like this will ensure that government agencies, such as State-owned corporations, independent agencies such as the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, health agencies and transport agencies, begin to show some financial management and understanding of the proposition that when they are spending taxpayers' money, they should demonstrate a high degree of responsibility, which requires the exercise of a high degree of care and caution. That is what I want to see as an outcome of this legislation. I also want to see government agencies become much more transparent in their reporting. I am sure everyone would like to see the Sydney Motorway Corporation—which exhibited an extreme lack of transparency for months on end—being very clear and transparent about its activities. The corporation's secrecy reached the stage at which we could not even find out how much its CEO is paid, which is simply ridiculous.

The budget is due to be presented in the next few weeks. On behalf of the Labor Opposition, I make it clear that this Government has run out of excuses for its poor financial management. The Government can no longer blame Labor for its mismanagement. That excuse faded away in this Government's first term in office. Believe it or not, this is the Government's second term. There is a point at which governments should stop blaming others. As the shadow Treasurer, I am happy to blame Nick Greiner for something, but generally the Labor Opposition does not do that. I hope the budget demonstrates that this Government has learnt some lessons from its financial recklessness and that its financial reporting, its financial arrangements, its financial transparency and expenditure by Ministers through their departments is executed in a prudent manner. Irrespective of which side of Parliament a member sits, we all have a responsibility to ensure that taxpayers' money is spent wisely. The reality is that this Government cannot deny that its project management has not exhibited the requisite level of prudence.

As I stated at the outset, I lead for the Opposition in debate on these bills. I thank my colleagues for their advice and input. I will listen carefully to the contribution to debate of other members and particularly to the Treasurer, Dominic Charles Perrottet, to hear what he will do to strengthen financial reporting, strengthen the tracking of outcomes and performance, and strengthen transparency. If these bills do that, we may be able to look

forward to a much better approach being adopted by this Government than has been its approach in recent times, particularly to major government projects.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (17:03): My contribution to debate to express my support for the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018 will be brief. The purpose of the bills is to update and consolidate the current framework for the Government sector financial management, which is currently spread across four main Acts. As a consequence of this legislation, this State will see a Government with improved accountability and transparency, and improved information sharing across Government and the public sector; a more efficient government that is bound by less red tape, and is more focused on delivering on outcomes, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of public expenditure; and a more sound financial position as a result of reduced interest expenses and improved debt headroom. This legislation will benefit not only the public sector but, importantly, the people of New South Wales whom we have the privilege and the responsibility of fairly representing in this place.

A great benefit of the new legislation is undoubtedly reform in the area of cash management. The Government Sector Finance Bill broadens the scope of money that can become part of the central banking system. The existing legislative framework prevents certain funds, such as those held by State-owned corporations and in statutory special deposits and special purpose accounts from being deposited into the central banking system. These surplus funds could be used to offset borrowings for total State funding or liquidity purposes until such time that they are used for their intended purpose. Great fiscal advantages can be realised by centralising funds that are currently outside the system—a figure that is estimated at many billions of dollars.

The Government has an opportunity to make the State's money work more effectively for the State so that the Government can deliver increased funding, improved programs and better outcomes for the communities that we serve. The Government can reduce interest expenses and improve debt headroom while agencies continue to retain full access to this money and continue to operate as usual. The Government Sector Finance Bill will assist New South Wales to protect its triple-A credit rating and strong fiscal position as well as maximise the State's ability to realise balance sheet potential.

The Treasurer will also consult with ministers and agencies before any decisions are made as to whether certain funds ought to be placed within it. Where funds are included in the Treasury banking system, the bill will enable the Treasurer on behalf of the Government to provide for interest earned to be credited back to those funds. In addition, the Government intends to exclude private trust money from the central banking system and potentially other types of identified restricted cash. The flexible approach that the Government Sector Finance Bill encourages indicates that it is legislation that will work with our multifaceted public sector and can stand the test of time. This Government made an election commitment to improve cash management practices in New South Wales, and this is a prime example of the Government delivering on its promises.

Another much-needed area of reform in this legislation is that of updating banking and financial service arrangements. This is will offer a modern, fit-for-purpose framework that will deliver significant advantages to the State. Consistent with the NSW Digital Government Strategy launched in May 2017, aimed at transforming the New South Wales Government into a digital, responsive and agile public sector, I note that the Government Sector Finance Bill will include provisions expanding the potential range of financial services and financial service providers that the Government can undertake and contract with. This legislative change coincides with the renewal of the State Government banking contract—enabling immediate benefits.

The changes introduced by the Government Sector Finance Bill give the Treasurer, on behalf of the Government, the power to enter into State financial services agreements, which cover a broader range of financial services, in addition to traditional banking services. The type of financial services the Treasurer will be able to engage, on behalf of the Government, include services concerning the State's borrowings, investments, and derivatives; the receipt, holding, payment or transmission of money; goods and services that are incidental or related to the financial services just mentioned, including, for example, data collection, data analytics, software or any other information technology service or goods.

The Treasurer will also be empowered to enter into State financial services agreements with a broader range of providers. This is expanded with relevant and appropriate controls, as selected providers must be an authorised deposit-taking institution or an entity that the Treasurer is satisfied is subject to appropriate prudential protections. This ensures that the selected providers are suitably regulated, while allowing the Government to take advantage of advancing technology and innovation, for example, through consideration of the use of financial technology firms for some services.

There are important benefits for the State, such as better value for money. As an example, the State can use its purchasing power to obtain benefits such as volume rebates, lower currency margins and lower fees on a broader range of products. This reform is essential to achieving the benefits of central cash management;

efficiency and effectiveness gains by enabling better billing, payments, invoicing and transaction recording by and across the public sector, for example, through greater process automation, digitising of payments and the potential use of a centralised digital identity portal; the potential streamlining of financial services and financial technology products across Government, with usefulness and opportunities for centralising State banking services and information sharing across the public sector; central access to more and better data to enable data insights, as well as data-informed improvements to Government banking and payments processing.

The benefits to the citizens of New South Wales will not just be indirect. Through a more digital, responsive, efficient and agile public service, citizens will also benefit directly through efficiency in terms of straight-through processing and digitised new payment platforms, as well as other mobile and streamlined payments, integrated billing and e-invoicing; a better experience by using innovative technology including opportunities for centralised portals, and cross-product and agency customer experiences, secure and seamless distributions, and timely release of access to funds; and assisting small business interactions with Government and their customers through the use of the latest financial services technology. The Government Sector Finance Bill presents an undeniable opportunity to improve both our access to and use of banking and financial services across Government. It is a chance to bring the people of New South Wales' interaction with Government in line with international best practice, and it is an advertisement showing that the NSW Treasury and indeed this Government, is world class. I commend the bills to the House.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:11): I add my voice to debate on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018. The Treasurer has boldly called NSW Treasury the "gold standard" of financial management. If those opposite somehow believe that selling off the State's assets to cover their losses from earlier failed policies is the "gold standard" of financial management then I have some news for them: the people of New South Wales have very different standards from them and the Government. I fear this bill is yet another chapter in this Government's shameful track record of financial mismanagement, warped priorities and privatisation agenda for the great State of New South Wales.

I think it is important in this debate to take a moment to look at the Government's track record and what it means for our State's residents. Since 2011 I have watched this Government choose vanity projects in Sydney over the critical and overdue infrastructure needs of residents across the State and especially in my electorate of Shellharbour. This Government is caught in a cycle of failures, cost blowouts and sell-offs. Those opposite will propose an irrational and unpopular policy, spend millions of dollars trying to sell it to the people of New South Wales and then backflip at the last minute—effectively wasting millions of dollars of taxpayer funds.

When they do manage to get policy past the planning stage, expect to see due dates pushed back and soaring costs swept under the rug. There is no denying that those opposite are haemorrhaging money and the only source of revenue is the ultimate bandaid solution of selling off our State's assets. I have watched the maintenance backlogs in my local schools pile up. I have watched those opposite threaten to privatise my local public hospital because they are too lazy or too cheap to take care of their own citizens. I have watched the gutting of my local TAFE. I have watched the sell-off of poles and wires, and the cost of electricity getting higher and higher by the day.

The cost of living has skyrocketed while wage growth has stagnated. I have seen cuts to Family and Community Services. All the while those opposite have hatched the brilliant plan to spend \$2.2 billion on stadiums in Sydney. This Government cannot be trusted when it comes to financial management or any other policy area. Take for example this Government's approach to the Albion Park Rail bypass. This is a project that has been talked about for decades, but it is desperately needed right now.

In 2013 the Government wasted \$1.1 million on an embarrassing report into the proposed route of the bypass. The report simply confirmed the same route that was first recommended more than 20 years ago and, to add insult to injury, it took two years to complete. Of course there was also the planning approval debacle for this project, which was finally delivered a shocking 13 long months late. Then when the Government realised it had wasted too much money trying to look busy, it decided to propose cutting a critical element of the project, the Yallah interchange. I am certain that countless other projects across this State are suffering a similar fate. This speaks to a Government that is more interested in looking busy than getting on with the job—and the buck does not stop there.

I remind members what those opposite proposed for Shellharbour Public Hospital. In 2015 the Government made a re-election promise that \$251 million would be delivered to my community for a much-needed redevelopment for the hospital. Unfortunately, that promise was shortly followed by the announcement that the Government was proposing to redevelop under a public-private partnership. Thankfully, after a hard-fought, tireless campaign by our doctors, nurses and the community, the Government finally backflipped on the proposal and gave in to public demand. Members opposite have backed down from their cruel and misguided proposal but they have also cost our community 13 long months of campaigning, and to this day

there still has not been a shovel in the ground. The promise was initially made before the last election and we are now less than 10 months away from the 2019 election and still nothing is being done. This backflip was undoubtedly good news, but those opposite should know that the damage has been done.

The community of Shellharbour has seen this Government's shocking financial and time management skills and it is a memory that cannot be erased. Likewise, while this Government is looking over stadium blueprints and networking with sports clubs, our State's students continue to work in classrooms with broken windows and toilets in unbelievable conditions. The figures released for last year's outstanding maintenance issues within our State's schools totalled a staggering \$775 million. The maintenance backlog within the Shellharbour electorate alone sits at more than \$8.2 million. These maintenance issues are shockingly basic. The most common issues reported were toilet and sewer upgrades, roof repairs, flooring, painting, guttering and broken windows that need replacement.

Sadly, the Government's blatant contempt for our State's students does not end there. Our State Government also has an overdependence on demountables. In Shellharbour 41 demountable classrooms are currently taking up precious playground space. This Government has lost sight of what is important. It is willing to spend \$2.2 billion on stadiums in Sydney but it will not guarantee safe, clean schools for our students. I ask members of this House to think about the difference that a share of \$2 billion could make to their local community. They should think of the schools and hospitals that could be built and the services that could be delivered to local residents.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): Order! The member for Newcastle will have an opportunity to contribute to the debate.

Ms ANNA WATSON: Each of these issues points to one larger, central problem with this Government. This Government's track record of financial mismanagement, warped priorities and merciless privatisation agenda brings into question the effects of these bills and the Government's financial style more broadly. More than 200,000 people signed an online petition opposing the Government's decision to spend more than \$2 billion on Sydney stadiums. Our citizens are already telling us where their priorities lie and that members opposite have not been listening—they never do. Regardless of how this bill is framed, the people of New South Wales will not forget this Government's reckless financial history.

They know where this Government's priorities lie. They have seen it waste a disgusting amount of money on unpopular proposals only to perform an embarrassing backflip a few months later. The people of New South Wales have seen the cost of countless projects across the State blow out and they have seen those costs swept under the rug. They have seen our State's valuable assets sold off to cover losses and for short-term gain. I am grateful that the gold standard of short-changing our State's citizens being set by members opposite will become the "old standard" come March 2019.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:19): I contribute to debate on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018, and I support the bills. These bills have the potential to transform financial management practices in the State of New South Wales. It is hard to believe—listening to what the member for Shellharbour has said—that we even have a State of New South Wales. This Government turned this State around. We fixed the books in New South Wales and got the economy running. We have delivered a State that is now the envy of the nation. New South Wales has the lowest unemployment rate and the strongest economy in the nation. When this Government came to power in 2011 this State had the worst economy in the nation and the highest unemployment rate. So we will never be lectured by members opposite about financial management. They had the most appalling record of financial management in the history of this nation. The last people this Government will take financial advice from are those opposite.

In the area of reporting, these bills have significant advantages. First, the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 enhances accountability through the simplification of reporting requirements. In addition, it improves the overall quality of reporting and, thirdly, it refocuses the purpose of reporting from compliance to performance. In short, these changes provide the same information in a clearer and more accessible way. The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 will help to simplify reporting, which is a key issue. This will occur by reducing the duplication in the information reported by agencies and, importantly, improving the type of information that is reported and how it is reported. Overall, this will result in better-value information, as well as reductions in the cost of preparing an audit.

For example, the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 allows for certain classes of entities to be exempt from reporting certain types of information. This could include where the relevant reporting is made elsewhere, such as in the reports of their other, related entities. In addition, it will also provide a mechanism to combine the annual reporting information of agencies so that it can be presented in a more meaningful way. This involves

grouping the information of multiple agencies where doing so would give the public a better understanding of how the agencies and, in turn, the public sector are performing in relation to the achievement of outcomes.

The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 takes a principles-based approach to setting requirements for the content of annual reports. It ensures flexibility in the quantum of information reported, depending upon individual agency characteristics, at the same time as maintaining true transparency and accountability. The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 will also place a strong focus on performance. The bill will streamline annual reporting requirements, which reduces the spotlight on compliance information and increases the focus on telling the story of an agency's performance for the reporting year, covering both financial and non-financial performance. At the same time the compliance information, which currently dominates annual reports, will be presented in a way that ensures transparency without eclipsing the important performance indicators. This will be achieved through arrangements for reporting set out in the regulations and in the Treasurer's Directions.

As I have already said, the changes in this bill place a clear focus on transparency and accountability, while introducing a more practical legislative framework. Financial reports must still be prepared in accordance with Australian accounting standards. All the information currently in annual reports will continue to be required to be publicly available in those annual reports. Ultimately, at least the same amount of information will be available. However, it will better match the needs of people who read the reports and it will deliver tangible value to the public sector. The Government intends for annual reports of State agencies to be structured in such a way that information is included about the functional performance of the agency. This will help to record the individual agency's performance in administering and delivering programs and services to better provide for all people in New South Wales, including in my home region of the Central Coast.

Multiple agencies on the Central Coast are doing an amazing job delivering services on behalf of the Government. I highlight the Central Coast Local Area Health District as a classic example of an agency delivering a major infrastructure project costing \$348 million. The member for Shellharbour complained about the hospital in her electorate, and I note that on the Central Coast two regional hospitals have been given the funding they should have received during the 16 long years when those opposite were last in government. The Labor Government was in office for 16 years but never spent the required funds. We are delivering funding for hospitals all over the State.

Dr Hugh McDermott: You've had eight years to do it.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I note the interjection by the member for Prospect, but I also note that the emergency ward of Gosford Hospital started operating last week, ahead of schedule. This hospital was delivered ahead of schedule and \$20 million under budget, which means the Government has been able to deploy the money that was saved to develop a medical research unit and medical school on the same site. I note that those opposite, when in government, did not deliver this hospital; we have delivered not only the hospital but also a medical school and research unit, which will employ an additional 700 people on the Central Coast. That is how to create jobs in a region properly.

Another important component of this legislation is the more comprehensive accountability that it will introduce for the New South Wales public sector. The existing Public Finance and Audit Act currently contains civil recovery provisions that allow for the recovery of a debt in certain circumstances. This would cover cases where, for example, a government officer loses government money or property through misconduct or culpable negligence. The bill before the House contains simplified and more appropriate civil recovery provisions that allow for the recovery of a debt where there has been a loss that is the result of misconduct, or the result of a deliberate or serious disregard of reasonable standards of care, or where there has been a dishonest and unauthorised gift of government property. I note that this will include the introduction of a new accountability framework for public sector bodies and personnel. It will provide further clarity on the roles and responsibilities for accountable authorities and support more effective financial management in the New South Wales public sector.

Secretaries of departments and heads of agencies that are not departments will be classified as accountable authorities. These accountable authorities will then be responsible for the performance and financial management of the agency, and will be accountable to the relevant Minister. In his second reading speech, the Treasurer noted that key roles and responsibilities of accountable authorities—that is, secretaries of departments and heads of agencies—include developing and maintaining the policies and procedures regarding financial management, ensuring compliance with the government sector finance legislative framework, establishing and maintaining effective risk management procedures, ensuring the integrity of financial and performance information, and ensuring that expenditure of money for the agency is done in a way that is authorised.

Finally, I thank all Treasury staff and the Treasurer's office for their diligent work on this legislation, and a long list of people who have contributed to the drafting of these bills. I thank Neil Ackland, Adam Coonan,

Jeanne Vandenbroek, James George, Michelle Gregory, Kyla McCarthy, Eva Wang, Jennifer Lauria, Isaac Wall, Fiona Walmsley, Emma Frampton, Jenny Vandenbroek, Sid Samant and Steve Fryer. I give a shout-out to the Crown Solicitor, Lea Armstrong, and her solicitor, Michael Granziera, as well as the Audit Office of New South Wales for their help in bringing this legislation before the Parliament. As I said, the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the cognate Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018 will ensure that the New South Wales public service is more accountable and is as effective as possible. This will ensure that all people in New South Wales, including the good people on the Central Coast in my electorate of Terrigal, benefit from a more accountable, more responsible government that is working for them. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:28): On behalf of The Greens, I address the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018. There are many positives in the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018, but I will not go through its positive elements. Instead I note that there is a major missed opportunity in the bill. The Treasurer likes his slogan, "Strong, free and fair". If the Government does not introduce follow-the-dollar provisions in bills like the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 it shows that the Government is weak, not free and unfair. I will spend some time talking about the importance of the Public Accounts Committee [PAC] recommendations and what happened in Victoria when that Government introduced follow-the-dollar legislation. The committee's recommendations should be enacted to ensure that our legislation follows public money that is invested in non-government and private sector arrangements to ensure that it is well spent.

I highlight concerns held by The Greens, which I would appreciate the Treasurer addressing. First, I am sure members know there is concern that the legislation will mean the Treasurer will be able to intervene more easily in the budgets of agencies. Agencies should have a level of relative independence and the capacity of the Treasury to engage directly in a negative way in agency budgets should be minimised. This legislation changes the power dynamics of Treasury and the Government more generally, including giving Treasury a capacity to direct independent agencies, like the Office of the Auditor General. Those agencies can refuse and publish the reasons. However, the bill changes the relationship that currently exists and, in my mind, the Treasurer has not made a clear case to justify this change.

When it comes to changes in budget reporting, this legislation introduces performance indicators, which The Greens view as a positive and overdue step. However, the concern is that this step may detract from financial details in the budget. The budget is already very vague, and we need to ensure that there is sufficient detail for proper analysis. I would appreciate it if the Treasurer could confirm that the introduction of performance indicators will not detract in any way from the financial details that are already in the budget. I also call on the Treasurer to clarify when and why some annual reporting requirements will be removed from agencies. The budget does not contain many financial details about specific programs, and generally detailed annual reports are very important. I call on the Treasurer to outline when and why annual reporting will be removed from agencies. It is important for all those studying the budget to recognise that some detail in agency annual reports should not be lost.

Most importantly, the bill ignores many key recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee. I foreshadow that The Greens will move amendments in the other place that involve five points. First, we will move amendments to introduce follow-the-dollar legislation, which is very important because a lot of public money is being used to deliver funds to private organisations and public-private partnerships [PPPs]—for example, the outsourcing of care. The Greens feel it is important to make sure there is scope to introduce the type of legislation that was passed in Victoria in 2016. The PAC recommended that similar legislation be introduced in this State. Secondly, The Greens will move amendments to introduce mandatory requirements for the Auditor-General to conduct a review of the budget, which was contained in the PAC recommendation as outlined in the "Quadrennial Review of the Audit Office", published in February 2018. The Treasurer usually requests the Audit Office to review the budget, but under the new system this has not been done for the past two years.

Thirdly, The Greens will seek to introduce provisions that allow the Audit Office to assess the performance outcomes of agencies—another worthwhile recommendation in the PAC report. Fourthly, we propose to require the budget papers to include a statement on risk to the budget and budget projections as a result of climate change. Finally, we will introduce amendments to require the budget papers to list spending on specific program areas for each agency. We note that in the last budget there was only one paragraph for the whole of the early childhood education sector, which is not good enough when members of Parliament and members of the public seek to interrogate the budget to come up with information about what the budget provides.

I move to follow-the-dollar laws and why The Greens think they are important. The bill provides enough scope to introduce an amendment that confers follow-the-dollar powers on the Auditor-General. These powers were introduced in Victoria in 2016, and exist to varying degrees in other States. I note that New South Wales is dead last when it comes to follow-the-dollar provisions. The National Audit Office also received follow-the-dollar

powers in 2012. Public spending on programs and projects being carried out by the private sector goes largely unchallenged, with the Auditor-General lacking necessary powers to trace and account for the spending of public money.

Introducing follow-the-dollar laws will extend investigative powers to the Auditor-General regarding non-government organisations. We have seen the scams, rorts and problems that have gone on in the at-home care sector. In other States there are opportunities to follow the dollar, but we do not have those options in New South Wales. In these cases, the Auditor-General can approach companies directly and require them to provide information on their spending of taxpayers' money. This will vastly improve government transparency and financial accountability for public programs that have been carried out by the private sector. This need to enhance third party accountability is critical in view of the proliferation of multibillion-dollar projects delivered jointly by the public and private sectors as well as the outsourcing of essential public services.

Under follow-the-dollar laws, the Auditor-General will be able to consider and report on a much wider pool of programs and services, including community services operated by the not-for-profit sector, prisons operated under contract with the private sector, and transport infrastructure built and operated under public-private partnerships. Introducing these powers was recommended by the Public Accounts Committee, and we support that recommendation. The Government has talked about accountability and transparency but it is rubbish unless there are follow-the-dollar laws that mean there can be proper investigations. We have confidence in the Auditor-General's office and acknowledge the work it has done, which in our view helps make our community and public service stronger. The New South Wales Government is engaging increasingly in PPPs for major infrastructure projects. Public-private partnership procurement is considered for any project where capital value exceeds \$100-million. As of July 2017, there were 36 active PPPs with \$20 billion in capital invested since 2014. We believe there needs to be an opportunity for the Auditor-General to have the capacity to examine these projects.

I conclude on the outsourcing of care. The Department of Family and Community Services [FACS] increasingly outsources its functions. In March 2017 the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2 held an inquiry that found \$2.8 billion in government funding was provided in 2015-16 to non-government organisations to deliver services to people with disability, children and young people, and social housing. The inquiry found there is a limited independent oversight of funding directed towards the non-government sector and endorsed the Auditor-General's request for follow-the-dollar powers. The Government is being asked to provide these powers yet is failing to deliver. The committee recommended:

That the NSW Government make legislative amendments to extend the performance audit function of the Auditor-General to include audits of all non-government organisations who have been provided with State funding to deliver child protection related services.

Performance auditing under follow-the-dollar legislation would be beneficial in this sector. Why? In 2017 two public cases of alleged financial mismanagement by non-government organisations providing care services renewed calls for follow-the-dollar legislation. The charities included organisations run by Eman Sharobeem and the Guardian Youth Care charity run by former Wallaby Glen Ella. The Government responded by rejecting the calls for oversight and saying it did not want to add any regulatory burden or duplicate functions. The call for increased transparency is also relevant to the Tune report. As the media provided information, the Tune report found that the costs of out-of-home care were rising as a result of government outsourcing from Family and Community Services to the non-government sector. It was reported that the cost of a child in foster care in the non-government sector was \$41,000 compared with \$27,000 for a child in FACS care.

This puts an end to the claims that outsourcing is always the better alternative when it comes to costs. We have clear support for follow-the-dollar legislation. The New South Wales Auditor-General's 2017 report recommended the introduction of legislation. The Government is ignoring it. The Public Accounts Committee in its "Quadrennial Review of the Audit Office 2017", dated February 2018, recommended that the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 be amended to enable the Auditor-General to follow the dollar. The Government is doing nothing; it has refused to act. We know that there is support across the country for this legislation. It has been introduced federally and in other jurisdictions. It is an embarrassment that we are not providing the kind of oversight that we know the Auditor-General's office can offer. I support Liberal member of Parliament the member for Davidson, who provided in a report that the Auditor-General:

... should be able to audit the performance of non-government organisations on behalf of the Government departments to increase transparency and accountability. Expenditure of NSW taxpayer funds, from appropriation to final expenditure, should be subject to potential monitoring by an independent agency.

I conclude with those wise words of counsel and encourage the Government to take up these legislative proposals.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:38): Through passing the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018, this Government intends to further simplify, update and consolidate the legislative framework that governs public sector financial

management. It can also be seen as foundational legislation that creates new management architecture for New South Wales in the twenty-first century. In introducing the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018, the Treasurer commented:

... government must be the only organisation in the world that measures success in the size of the spend, rather than the outcomes that are achieved. The amendment will shift government thinking in this space.

This Government wants to switch the focus from spending to performance to achieve worthwhile outcomes for the people of New South Wales, while upholding the core values of performance, accountability and transparency. The purpose of this reform is to improve performance, increase savings and extend the efficiencies of the New South Wales Government by focusing on departmental performance and outcomes. This will be achieved by introducing a number of measures, including reducing service duplication and red tape, lowering interest expense, improving debt headroom and expanding information sharing for fiscal decision-making.

The bill continues to focus on one of the Government's key strengths: being innovative, and adopting systems that keep us competitive, efficient and, most importantly, effective. It is common knowledge that innovative economies are more productive and able to adjust faster to structural change while delivering higher-quality services. After 16 years of a Labor do-nothing government, when stability was preferred over innovation, we are now taking calculated measures to move this State firmly but steadfastly into the new global economy. An example of this is when tendering for bank services. The bill will allow the Government to access a wider range of banking services and utilise a more extensive range of innovative financial products and services. This progress is vital for the long-term strength of the New South Wales economy.

This bill will make it easier for Ministers to access information for resource allocation decisions by enabling more cross-sharing of information among agencies. It also introduces a new framework for assessing accountability across public sector bodies and personnel. This includes making secretaries of departments and heads of agencies that are not, accountable authorities. Accountable authorities will be responsible for the performance and financial management of the agency and accountable to the relevant Minister. The bill clarifies their roles and responsibilities, especially regarding financial management. The Government wants even greater transparency of government spending, especially at the departmental level, and we are willing to legislate for it.

This bill highlights the Government's commitment to delivering an outcomes-based performance framework for the public sector, which includes modern and relevant arrangements with financial services institutions. The bill expands the range of services and service providers that can be engaged by government to include financial technology providers such as PayPal. This will help streamline services and make it easier for people to use safe payment options when undertaking financial transactions with the Government. The purpose of outcomes budgeting is to drive better value for taxpayers' dollars and improve the quality of public spending. The outcomes budgeting framework does this by establishing a direct link between total spending and contribution to State outcomes. Fundamental to this change is the preparation and maintenance of robust performance information. This means that the Government can be judged based on what we achieve for the community, not on how much we spend.

The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 will provide Ministers, the government sector, Parliament and, most importantly, the public, with better information about how agencies achieve their State outcomes by supporting the Government's shift to outcomes budgeting. The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 will strengthen the Government's focus on performance and outcomes in financial management by requiring agencies to keep records and information about performance. The new legislative framework will also enable the Treasurer to issue directions about the type of information about its performance that every agency must keep as a minimum.

Given that the framework of this new legislation is broader in scope than the current legislation, directions issued by the Treasurer will be incrementally expanded. This includes providing the Treasurer with more effective oversight of resource allocation by allowing him or her to request financial information in order to make better budgeting decisions. This oversight by the Treasurer does not extend to various independent agencies, such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Audit Office of New South Wales, which will continue to be exempt from Treasurer's directions.

I have spoken about the Audit Office and I heard the comments made by the member for Balmain. Putting on my old Public Accounts Committee hat, I should respond and make some comments. I, too, note with disappointment that the Government has not seen fit to make what would be a simple amendment to the Public Finance and Audit Act to include follow-the-dollar powers. This was twice recommended by the Public Accounts Committee that I chaired in the last Parliament and by the Auditor-General. It was also recommended in the quadrennial review to which the member for Balmain referred. These powers have been adopted by many other Australian jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth Government.

The member for Balmain was correct in stating that recent Victorian legislation similarly enables the Victorian Auditor-General effectively to undertake what I would describe as vigorous audits of public expenditure at every step of the spending chain. This was an opportunity to expand the New South Wales Auditor-General's powers similarly to better oversee fiscal accountability of not only departments but also external organisations that are increasingly funded to deliver public services under the Government's umbrella of responsibilities. I do not resile from my earlier comments, and I will continue to push for that reform within government. I mention that in the context of not only this bill but also the comments made by the member for Balmain.

The New South Wales Government's financial administration will greatly benefit from these reforms. The legislation provides a flexible framework that will enable the Government to move with the times and to adopt innovative financial practices quickly. It also provides for the implementation of outcomes budgeting and better information-gathering powers for informing budgetary decisions. This should lead to improved performance, governance and risk management in the public sector. It is also about providing more streamlined service delivery for the people of New South Wales while helping this State to maintain its triple-A credit rating. New South Wales continues to pave the way in public fiscal management by adopting innovative technologies and advances that further improve accountability and transparency. The 2018-19 budget papers will further detail the State outcomes in which this Government is investing.

The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 in turn provides a legislative framework to underpin these State outcomes for the people of New South Wales. I emphasise that the Government is doing this for the people of New South Wales. They rightly expect that government will pride itself on what it achieves and not on how much taxpayer money it spends. This Government is focused on the outcomes it achieves for the public. These bills will provide a modern, forward-looking legislative framework for the financial management of this State. A tightened legislative framework for fiscal policy will ultimately also improve the bottom line and service delivery for the people of New South Wales. I am pleased to commend the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018 to the House. I also commend the Treasurer and his staff for their excellent work.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:48): The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the cognate Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018 are being enacted to provide for more transparency in a number of government agencies, including the Audit Office of New South Wales, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Judicial Commission of New South Wales, the Electoral Commission and others. Good financial management is key to the functioning of those agencies. It is extremely important that these bills are enacted in a way that will achieve their objectives. The legislation states that the principal reforms to be introduced include:

- (a) to require all GSF agencies to have accountable authorities that are responsible for the performance and financial management of their agencies,
- (b) to specify the respective roles and responsibilities of accountable authorities for GSF agencies and government officers under the proposed Act,
- (c) to rationalise and extend the use of Treasurer's directions to regulate financial management by GSF agencies (including in relation to their financial arrangements),

That is an interesting reform. The legislation continues:

- (d) to provide for a consultation mechanism for the Treasurer to follow before recommending the making of certain kinds of regulations or giving or making certain kinds of directions or determinations,
- (e) to provide for there to be automatic appropriations to be given to the responsible Ministers for GSF agencies for the amounts of certain kinds of money the agencies receive or recover,
- (f) to reform the way in which working accounts in the Special Deposits Account are established and used,
- (g) to provide for budget control authorities issued by the Treasurer to replace current expenditure control authorities issued by the Treasurer,
- (h) to specify the circumstances in which government officers can lawfully make gifts of government property,
- (i) to provide a statutory basis for Ministers to make act of grace payments (sometimes called *ex gratia* payments) and to delegate the power to do so,
- (j) to expand and clarify the authority of the Treasurer to enter agreements concerning financial services (including for banking services and financial arrangements) on behalf of the State or GSF agencies,

That is another unusual and good reform. The list continues:

- (k) to create one consolidated set of provisions for annual reporting by GSF agencies and to provide for more flexibility in relation to reporting requirements ... ,
- (l) to enable the Treasurer to require the preparation of financial reports about the management of accounts in the Special Deposits Account ... ,

- (m) to provide for the keeping of performance information about GSF agencies,
- (n) to require and facilitate the sharing of certain information about GSF agencies in respect of their financial operations and performance,
- (o) to clarify the extent to which functions under the proposed Act can be delegated and to whom,
- (p) to provide for civil recovery in connection with the unauthorised or inappropriate use of government resources and related money.

It is worth quoting that list because this legislation will deliver significant and important reforms to government agencies. A number of Acts have regulated different agencies and their financial arrangements for many years. Consolidating them is a good move. However, I agree with two previous speakers in respect of follow-the-dollar powers and how they could have been introduced, and perhaps should have been introduced, in this legislation. The Government and the Opposition should continue to agitate to make that happen. Increasing the Auditor-General's powers to be able to follow where the dollars go in the public sector and where the contract money goes would reflect what happens in other States and in the Commonwealth. This is not a groundbreaking policy; it has been enacted in Victoria and by the Commonwealth Government. We are lagging behind and we should follow their lead.

Those positives having been noted, this is about transparency and accountability in the public sector. It is a shame that the Government is not required to adhere to the same level of transparency and accountability as the public service in its spending of taxpayers' money. I will detail some of the areas in which this Government has blown money and some of its financial mismanagement over the past eight long years. We all know that the WestConnex project has blown its budget by \$8 billion; the Parramatta Light Rail project has blown out by at least \$2 billion; the Sydney Metro project has blown out by \$1.5 billion; and the NSW TrainLink Intercity Train project budget has blown out by at least \$1.1 billion. We also know what is happening with the Sydney stadiums proposal, which will cost at least \$2.2 billion if it goes ahead. At least \$600 million has been wasted on the CBD and South East Light Rail project.

Something like \$269 million has been wasted on the Learning Management and Business Reform. The Government's financial mismanagement of the Northern Beaches B-Line has meant \$200 million has been misspent. The Opal card system has wasted at least \$63 million. The Sydney Metro Northwest Skytrain has wasted \$49.7 million. The Nepean River green bridge has wasted \$29 million. The Albert Cotter Bridge has wasted at least \$13 million. There has been \$250 million in blowouts on consultants. A new computer administration system for schools has blown out by at least \$93 million. Just think how many classrooms could have been air conditioned and how many upgrades could have been done for \$93 million. The ticketing system for the Opal card is \$63 million over budget. There has been \$75 million wasted on fees to bankers, lawyers, accountants and public relations consultants for the privatisation of the Port of Newcastle, Port Botany and Port Kembla. And to top it off, one of my favourites: \$77.9 million has been spent on legal fees to protect the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr Daryl Maguire: Point of order: The member is straying from the leave of the bills. I ask that he direct his comments to the bills and not continue to take political opportunities.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order. The member for Prospect will return to the leave of the bills.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: I am very pleased and thank the member for Wagga Wagga for interjecting there because I have come to the end of my list, so my speech is finished. I commend the bills to the House. I believe they should be used for the accountability of the public sector. It is just sad that we do not have the same amount of accountability and transparency at a ministerial level.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (17:56): I make a contribution to debate on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and cognate bill. I listened to the diatribe from the member for Prospect. He seemed to fail to understand the purpose of the bills. The Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 is welcome to the Parliament and I expect a raft of members will want to speak in debate on it. The bill is to consolidate in one Act a new framework for government sector financial and resource management in New South Wales. Currently, financial management in the government sector of New South Wales is governed by a number of Acts.

The Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 contains provisions dealing with public finance administration, including in relation to accounting arrangements, public banking and appropriations. It also provides for the appointment of an Auditor-General, establishes the Audit Office and contains provisions relating to the conduct of audits for various kinds of public authorities. The Public Authorities (Financial Arrangements) Act 1987 enables certain public authorities to enter into financial arrangements, including investments and joint financing arrangements, and provides for approval for those arrangements.

The Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985 and Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984 make provision for annual reports by government departments and certain statutory bodies, respectively. The provisions of each Act are largely the same. Section 39 of the Constitution Act 1902 requires all public moneys, including securities and all revenue, loans and other moneys whatsoever, collected, received or held by any person for or on behalf of the State to form one fund, called the Consolidated Fund, except as otherwise provided by or in accordance with any Act. The bill will consolidate in one Act a new framework for financial and resource management in the government sector of New South Wales, including provisions in relation to financial arrangements and annual reporting by certain agencies of the government sector, called government sector finance [GSF] agencies in the bill. I note it is a cognate bill and makes a number of reforms.

The principal reforms to be introduced by the proposed Act are as follows: to require all GSF agencies to have accountable authorities that are responsible for the performance and financial management of their agencies; to specify the respective roles and responsibilities of accountable authorities for GSF agencies and government officers under the proposed Act; to rationalise and extend the use of Treasurer's directions to regulate financial management by GSF agencies, including in relation to their financial arrangements; to provide for a consultation mechanism for the Treasurer to follow before recommending the making of certain kinds of regulations or giving or making certain kinds of directions or determinations; to provide for automatic appropriations to be given to the responsible Ministers for GSF agencies for the amounts of certain kinds of money the agencies receive or recover; to reform the way in which working accounts in the Special Deposits Account are established and used; to provide for budget control authorities issued by the Treasurer to replace current expenditure control authorities issued by the Treasurer; and to specify the circumstances in which government officers can lawfully make gifts of government property. A number of other changes are also made in the bill.

I have listened to the debate so far with interest. A review was carried out on this. I remember the member for Davidson making a contribution. I made the comment to him that I suspect that we should include in this unions and those non-government organisations [NGOs] that are fronts for political operatives that receive government funding and should be accountable. We should take every opportunity to put the microscope on those organisations. I commend the Treasurer for bringing the bills to the House, as detailed as they are. The bills themselves are quite large. It is clear that a lot of people—Treasury staff and officials—have made contributions. I thank them for the work they do on behalf of taxpayers.

I say to the Treasurer that I expect we will have more reforms brought to this Parliament. I am happy to put forward that those organisations that receive government funding now through fronts should be included in it too, because I know government gives money to certain organisations that should not be receiving it as they are using it for inappropriate purposes. I would like to see the Treasurer focus on some of those things. I think members of the public would be shocked if they realised how some of those funds are being diverted to support some of those operatives that in some cases continue to attack the Government using funds supplied by taxpayers. The fact of the matter is they hide behind the cloak of NGOs or other authorities in a way that I think is quite dishonest. I am glad to have made a contribution. These are fantastic bills. I congratulate the Treasurer and thank all those who have made a contribution.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (18:03): I am pleased to make a contribution to debate on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and cognate bill. The Government Sector Finance Bill establishes a new accountability framework for public sector bodies and personnel. It covers all public financial management matters with the exception of audit functions. The bill seeks to clarify roles and responsibilities and introduces a new concept of accountable authorities for secretaries and heads of agencies that are not departments. Accountable authorities will be responsible for the performance and financial management of the agency and accountable to the relevant Minister. The bill outlines the proposed roles and responsibilities for all government officers. It creates a provision for deemed own-source receipts to be considered an appropriation and establishes the means to operate working accounts within a special deposit account, clarifying the types of money that may be paid into it from a working account and who has the authority to spend funds in those accounts.

The bill expands the range of services and service providers that a government of the day can engage to include financial technology providers, and removes duplication and unnecessary financial reporting. It provides for performance information to be published in Budget Paper No.3 and directions by the Treasurer to be expanded and published. The bill specifically exempts the Audit Office, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Judicial Commission, the NSW Electoral Commission and the NSW Ombudsman from the scope and provision. The bill repeals a number of bills and renames a few others, all of which, for those interested, can be reviewed further in the explanatory notes. There is no doubt that the bill has a narrower audience than many other bills debated in this place. Some wags have even said that the bill is eye glazing and bound to guarantee a good night's sleep. Nevertheless, it is an important bill to make sure that the performance of all public sector agencies and departments in New South Wales are up to the standards expected for the delivery of services and the spending of taxpayers' money.

As the role of the public sector continues to evolve and greater expectations are placed upon it, Parliament must be assured, on behalf of taxpayers, that it is getting value for money from public servants employed to deliver services and from non-government and other organisations contracted to provide services. Whilst the bill may not excite the senses as much as other bills introduced in this House, the financial management framework in which the public sector operates in New South Wales is critically important. After all—and I am sure my colleague the member for Macquarie Fields would agree, as all economists stick together—a dollar provided by the taxpayer can only be spent once; not twice or three or four times, as other members in this place may believe. Subsequently, keeping the first principle in mind, we as Parliamentarians—distinct from the Executive of the day—need to make sure that every one dollar of taxpayer money is allocated and spent efficiently.

We are also seeking to manage a range of departments and agencies with competing mandates too many times in individual silos. It is now a cliché that we should be considering at every opportunity how to streamline departmental functions from silos to having a whole-of-government focus. But as the problems we are called upon to deal with become more complicated and more complex, the concept of whole-of-government functions also becomes more complicated. Responsibility for who does what and provides what is now dispersed among many players. Accountability and who to hold to account for who does what and provides what is also less easy to judge—perhaps by design on too many occasions to avoid ultimate responsibility and accountability. But there is no escaping one fundamental fact: in a Westminster, liberal democracy, as we practice it by long historical tradition in the oldest Parliament and Executive in the country, the government of the day, regardless of its political complexion, is held ultimately responsible and accountable to this House. The government of the day is held responsible for the performance of the public sector, its departments and agencies. Ministers are held accountable to this Parliament and, through us, to the people of New South Wales. In his second reading speech the Treasurer said:

They will make government more efficient and reduce the cost of interest on borrowings, delivering savings for taxpayers. They will improve the outcomes that government spending achieves, delivering real improvements to the lives of the people of New South Wales. The reforms will increase our capacity to fund and invest in the services and infrastructure we all rely on and they will hold government and the public sector to higher standards of accountability and transparency.

They are worthy objectives, but arguably those lofty goals are not reflected in the Government's spending priorities. For example, just yesterday a community in my electorate that has campaigned long and hard for the upgrade of Unanderra railway station was disappointed once again by the effort to, as the Treasurer said, "... improve the outcomes that government spending achieves ...". While the Government boasted it was spending funds in the upcoming budget to upgrade 11 more train stations, it stuck the dagger into the backs of the communities in Unanderra, Cordeaux Heights, Berkeley, Farmborough Heights and Mount Kembla.

Nearly eight years after the Premier as the then transport Minister ripped away funds allocated by the Labor Government in 2010, the Government she leads remains stubbornly resolute in denying funds to upgrade Unanderra railway station. I know someone is about to interject and criticise me for raising these issues, but this goes to the heart of what we are talking about with government spending. We have to have more than a slogan when it comes to the leadership of government. It was revealed that the people of Unanderra, Cordeaux Heights, Berkeley, Farmborough Heights and Mount Kembla will not get lifts built at Unanderra railway station under this Government.

Mr Daryl Maguire: Point of order——

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I will get to the point before the member for Wagga Wagga interrupts me.

Mr Daryl Maguire: First, when a member takes a point of order it is appropriate that the member with the call resumes his seat. Secondly, the member is straying from the leave of the bills. Unfortunately, this is the second point of order I have had to take on this. I ask you to draw the member back to the leave of the bills. Members have opportunities to harangue the Government on private members' day or in private members' statements. We would be happy to hear the member's concerns then.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! I uphold the point of order. The member for Wollongong will return to the leave of the bills.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: It is terribly sad that the member for Wagga Wagga is upset by this, but if he continued listening rather than taking the point of order that we all saw coming we would have gotten to this point. If there is a new standing order that we cannot criticise the Government in debates about bills, what are we doing in this place? This comes back to the claims by the Treasurer that the bills are leading the way in financial management and directing taxpayer money to its greatest benefit. My next point is about the discount rate that is used for the assessment of prioritisation of infrastructure projects. The Treasurer has criticised the shadow Treasurer, the member for Keira, about our desire to review that discount rate, based on the fact that interest rates in Australia have been at record lows for some time.

Even today, 20 months and 20 decisions of the Reserve Bank on, we still have record-low interest rates. This comes back to the question of whether the Government is considering all elements in its financial management. There is real debate going on about the level of the risk-free rate that is used in the calculation of the weighted average cost of capital. The weighted average cost of capital and the risk-free rate are fundamental to government management and financial management because they are about the assessment of the prioritisation of projects. It might be a rather narrow focus to take and a rather specialist topic of debate, but it adds to the whole decision-making process and financial management of the Government. Artificially high discount rates distort decision-making on public projects, which leads to the squandering of public money.

Given that we are currently debating prioritising a splurge on stadiums over providing disabled access, it is an important part of the debate around the financial management of the State. The bills contain provisions for the content of the budget papers. The provisions outlined in the bills will improve the content of information provided in the budget. However, I also suggest that the Treasurer consider including broadening the content of the budget papers to include forward estimates for all individual programs, capital projects and a measures statement similar to those published in the Commonwealth budget papers. These matters were first raised in the January 2012 NSW Commission of Audit interim report, which concluded:

A further weakness in NSW financial reporting is the lack of reporting across the forward estimates years. Information on measures and variations, where published, is not always published across the forward estimates.

These improvements in budget papers content would further enhance financial transparency. The Opposition will not oppose the bills.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:12): I contribute to debate on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and cognate bill. The member for Keira has put to the House the Opposition's position. I endorse his views, whatever they might have been, as I am bound to do. I took the opportunity to read the Treasurer's second reading speech on the bills, which he made on 24 May 2018, in an effort to get some insight into what they are about. I know that some members of this House are riveting intellectuals who have a far greater ability than me to understand second reading speeches, but I found most of what the Treasurer said to be incomprehensible.

When I read an incomprehensible second reading speech and see a convoluted bill introduced, I am notoriously suspicious that there is something in the bill that members are not meant to quite understand. I sought to use Google Translate to try to understand some of the provisions mentioned in the Treasurer's second reading speech! I have come to the conclusion that if this bill is enacted by the Parliament it will amount to a complete takeover of the entire public sector by the Treasury. It is a complete takeover of every single public sector organisation.

Mr Daryl Maguire: You oppose the bill?

Mr RON HOENIG: The Parliamentary Secretary interjects and suggests that I oppose the bill. He knows as well as I do that I am bound by caucus decisions and do not have the right or liberty to oppose the bill. However, as a matter of philosophy I do not necessarily oppose direct control of government and public sector organisations. I do not necessarily support taking State-owned corporations off budget and giving them the pretence of having a separate board and then pillaging their money back into Treasury.

Mr Daryl Maguire: That is what Bob Carr did.

Mr RON HOENIG: The Parliamentary Secretary interjects. For eight long years the Government has been doing the same thing. Lest the member for Wagga Wagga think I am making this up, I will refer to some of the provisions of the bill and to the second reading speech. The Treasurer says:

This legislation expands the range of services and service providers that the Government can engage to include financial technology providers The proposed legislation also increased the scope of public money that can become part of the central Treasury banking system [TBS]. Currently, the framework prevents State-owned corporations and some other entities from depositing their funds into the central account.

That is called grabbing the State-owned corporations' [SOCs'] money. The Government should either provide public sector services through Government departments with funds going directly to the Minister or, alternatively, have State-owned corporations with independent boards operating competitively like the private sector. The Government cannot have it both ways.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: They still are.

Mr RON HOENIG: That is not right. The Treasurer has said:

Secretaries of departments and heads of agencies that are not departments will be accountable authorities—a new concept under the bill. Accountable authorities will be responsible for the performance and financial management of the agency and accountable to the relevant Minister.

These agencies are supposed to be accountable to their boards. Could somebody please explain to me the reforms introduced by this bill and why one of the reforms is:

... to expand and clarify the authority of the Treasurer to enter agreements concerning financial services (including for banking services and financial arrangements) on behalf of the State or GSF agencies ...

The Government even wants to take control of State agencies' bank accounts. It wants to infiltrate every single part of the public sector. Every single Minister of the Crown in this Government and future governments is basically surrendering the control of his or her department or State-owned corporation to the Treasury boffins. It is not enough that the Government rips off State-owned corporations' dividends—not from profit but out of a Treasury circular that gets issued in May, even before the end of the financial year. It is not enough that, under competition policy, the Government rips out revenue on the basis of tax equivalent payments that have been created because these State-owned corporations are supposed to be competitive, although they might be monopolies. The Treasury boffins want to get their sticky fingers into every conceivable area of the public sector, including its banking arrangements. Another of the reforms is:

(n) to require and facilitate the sharing of certain information about GSF agencies in respect of their financial operations and performance,

I thought that was what the boards of the State-owned corporations were for. The Government should either get rid of those corporations and put them back into government departments, where they used to be until the 1970s or 1980s when Nick Greiner created all these corporations, or, alternatively, allow them to be efficient and accountable to their boards—boards which the Treasurer and the portfolio Minister appoint. I spoke to the member for Keira, who has spoken to the Treasurer. I made inquiries about the Sydney Motorway Corporation. I think the Treasurer will tell the House that the Sydney Motorway Corporation will be one of these Government sector organisations. I have looked at the definition in division 2.2 and I cannot see where it could possibly fit within it, but I could be mistaken.

These bills seem to set quite a dangerous precedent or, alternatively, takes us back to the situation before the election of the O'Farrell Government, eight long years ago, when the Treasurer's powers were somewhat restricted and the finance Minister's powers were somewhat enhanced. I suspect that that is probably the motivation for these bills. Because of the complexity of the bills, I believe that the other place ought to spend some time—probably in the Committee stage—to find out the exact intention of the Government. Once Treasury gets hold of every single part of the Government sector, what will happen—it happened in the Commonwealth many years ago—is that Treasury will start supplanting policy, based upon its control of finance. Whilst the Opposition does not oppose these bills I am notoriously suspicious of Treasury's motive in proposing them. I do not see it as reform; I see it as a simple takeover.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations)

(18:21): In reply: I thank members for their contributions to the debate on the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 and the cognate Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018. I thank the Opposition, in the main, for its sensible support of these bills, and I thank the members of the Government who spoke in support of these bills. In particular I thank the shadow Treasurer, the member for Keira, and the members for Shellharbour, Prospect, Balmain, Miranda, Wagga Wagga, Terrigal, Davidson, Wollongong, Macquarie Fields and Heffron for their contributions to this debate.

In 2013 this Government made a commitment to update and refresh an outdated framework to guarantee and futureproof the robust financial management of the State. As outlined in the second reading speech, the Government's approach to financial management transformation—or FMT, as it has been known across the public sector—has involved a three-pillar process. The first pillar is a new financial management system—known as Prime. Prime enables end-to-end management of the budget—from the program planning stage to the allocation of funding, tracking expenditure, and the benchmarking of results. The second pillar is the Outcomes Budgeting Framework—a suite of policies to support outcomes-based budgeting and reporting.

This Government has already overseen the implementation of the first two pillars of this reform. The Government Sector Finance Bill and the cognate bill represent the third and final pillar of this reform. Together these bills will deliver reforms that strengthen accountability, transparency, performance and innovation in the New South Wales Government. This legislation, developed through an extensive consultation process with the broader Government sector, delivers financial management legislation that is modern, innovative and transparent. It will be an exemplar of good governance. It is sensible reform that will make the Government more accountable yet more efficient by improving information-sharing and reducing red tape.

It will strengthen the Government's focus on performance through outcomes budgeting, enhancing the quality and effectiveness of public expenditure. It will deliver better value on the State banking tender, facilitating access to innovative financial services from a broader range of providers. It will introduce better cash management

practices, reduce the State's interest expenses, improve debt headroom and protect the State's triple-A rating. The member for Heffron said that moving money into the Treasury bank system would, in some way, compromise the ability of agencies to access those funds. That is not the case; it simply centralises funds within the Treasury banking system. They will continue to have access. The member for Heffron also made a point about the Sydney Motorway Corporation. That is an agency now. It will be an agency following the passage of this bill.

In short, this legislation shows that this Government is firmly of the view that, to deliver the best on the front line, we must optimise our back office. This is what we will achieve through this legislation. To ensure a smooth transition, the reforms under these bills will be carried out in stages. The first stage is proposed to commence on 1 July 2018 and will be for all provisions except those relating to financial services and arrangements, act of grace payments, gifting of government property, annual and financial reporting, budget papers, statutory deposit accounts and appropriations. The second stage is proposed to commence on 1 December 2018 and will implement the new financial services and arrangements provisions. The remaining and final provisions are proposed to commence on 1 July 2019.

I also note that the contribution to the debate by the member for Balmain referred to the "follow the dollar" powers of the Auditor-General. I acknowledge in the context of this debate that he has expressed some support for the "follow the dollar" powers for the Auditor-General. This program of legislative reform has focused on public financial management matters rather than the scope of the powers of the Audit Office. Any discussion on the authority of the Audit Office to evaluate the spending of government funds by external organisations, such as non-government organisations or private sector partners, should be discussed in the context of changes to the Government Sector Audit Act 1983. Changes to the authority of the Auditor-General are not within the scope of this legislation and this debate. While I thank Opposition members for their concern in relation to that matter and their contribution to this debate, I want to be clear that that proposed amendment is not relevant.

In conclusion, I commend NSW Treasury for the extensive consultation process it has undertaken with the whole of government in making sure that this reform has the support of government agencies. Concerns were raised by the Labor Opposition in respect of the powers of agencies to access funding. It is with the agencies' support that this bill has been introduced. More importantly, the consultation process will ensure that, ultimately, these bills will support the work of this Government in providing the essential services and infrastructure that we all rely on. As Treasurer, I will ensure that this consultative approach will continue throughout the implementation of these reforms. Again, I thank the tireless work of the financial management team in NSW Treasury for its extensive efforts since 2013. It has been a long journey in bringing this reform to fruition. The team should be commended for that work. I commend these bills to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that these bills be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Perrottet.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): By leave: I will deal with the Government Sector Finance Bill 2018 in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1.1 to 1.9, 2.1 to 2.11, 3.1 to 3.7, 4.1 to 4.17, 5.1 to 5.7, 6.1 to 6.37, 7.1 to 7.18, 8.1 and 8.2, 9.1 to 9.19 and 10.1 to 10.2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1.1 to 1.9, 2.1 to 2.11, 3.1 to 3.7, 4.1 to 4.17, 5.1 to 5.7, 6.1 to 6.37, 7.1 to 7.18, 8.1 and 8.2, 9.1 to 9.19 and 10.1 to 10.2 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): By leave: I will now deal with the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018. The question is that clause 1 be agreed to.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (18:28): I move:

No. 1 **Proclamations to commence Schedule 2**

Page 2, clause 2 (2), line 7. Omit "Schedule 1". Insert instead "Schedule 2".

The Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018 must be considered in detail because of a drafting error. Clause 2 (2) refers to schedule 1 in error and should state "Schedule 2".

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that clause 2, as amended, be agreed to.
Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that clauses 3 and 4 be agreed to.
Clauses 3 and 4 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that schedule 1 be agreed to.
Schedule 1 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that schedule 2 be agreed to.
Schedule 2 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that schedules 3 and 4 be agreed to.
Schedules 3 and 4 agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I move:

That these bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

KOSCIUSZKO WILD HORSE HERITAGE BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 23 May.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (18:31): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. I state at the outset that the Opposition not only will oppose the bill in the Legislative Assembly but also will oppose it in the Legislative Council. If Labor is elected to government in March 2019, the bill will be repealed if Parliament lacks judgement and passes it now. Many questions about this bill are raised at the outset that do not relate to the text of it—for example, how the bill came to be brought to this House for debate. It is not within any of the portfolio responsibilities of the Deputy Premier. It lies within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for the Environment.

The Minister for the Environment would be shuddering at the thought that she, her office and her department would have anything to do with this bill in its current form. I know that she would have wanted to have nothing to do with it. This is an RHIP bill—a rank has its privileges bill—whereby the Deputy Premier has decided to concoct an issue principally to polarise people, to pick a fight that does not exist and to disseminate among the public an issue that is really for local consumption only. The Deputy Premier wants to use this bill to contrive and concoct controversy in and around his electorate. If he has to bring a bill that is so ill-considered and unscientific to Parliament, that shows that he must be worried about his prospects of re-election.

Why was the Minister for the Environment not the Minister who introduced this bill? The answer to that question is that she does not want to have anything to do with it. In the light of media comments in recent weeks, some people have suggested that the Deputy Premier received donations from Peter Cochran and that there may be some improper motivation for the bill. Time will tell. The bill provides for a wild horse community advisory panel to be appointed by the Minister. We will see some of the characters that he will appoint to that board, and we will be able to judge—

Mr Brad Hazzard: Point of order: The purview of the bill is laid out in the objects and the detail of bill. It is not up to the member to canvass beyond the terms of the bill and certainly not to attack any member of Parliament under the guise of the bill. He should stick to the leave of the bill.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: To the point of order: For a hundred years in this place the practice has been that debates on bills, particularly when a member is leading for a party, can be wideranging and, as long as they are sticking to matters within the bill, the Speaker has always given speakers latitude. I do not know what I am speaking on if I am not speaking on—

Mr Brad Hazzard: Not to lay out assertions against individuals or anybody else.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I am not. One is entitled to question the motivations of a Minister or Government for bringing any sort of legislation before the House. I will wait for your ruling, Mr Temporary Speaker.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I uphold the Minister's point of order. It is very early in the debate and, if we continue this way, we will be here until very early tomorrow morning. I ask the member for Maroubra to return to the leave of the bill and to not make assertions about anything that is outside the bill.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: We will see who is appointed to the community advisory panel by the Minister. We will then be able to judge some of the motivations behind introducing this bill. The Kosciuszko National Park was the creation of the Labor Party and Bill McKell. When it was formed, the National Party fought against its formation and it has been fighting against it for 75 years.

Mr Andrew Fraser: There were horses in there then.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: There were horses there then, along with a number of other pests like pigs, goats, deer and horses, and there is a whole heap of pests in that park now. The bill in its current form will throw away 75 years of conservation consensus and undermine the entire national parks and wildlife system. It seeks to place wild horses above all other environmental and cultural values in the Kosciuszko National Park, which is one of the most iconic national parks in Australia, if not the world. There is a potential for this bill, if passed, to contribute to additional irreversible damage to the soil and to water, including the Murrumbidgee River. There is a potential for it to contribute to damage that has already been done to unique and threatened species and to endangered ecological communities within the national park. It also has the potential to undermine cultural and Aboriginal heritage of the park and, as we have seen in some of the reports compiled by this Government, contribute to risks of public safety.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Point of order: Whilst the member does have a degree of licence, as he is apparently leading for the Opposition, if he is going to make assertions he needs to make them in the context of the particular provisions which he asserts give rise—

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: No, I do not.

Mr Brad Hazzard: This is not an opportunity for the member for Maroubra to make a broad-ranging attack on the Government about whatever he feels like postulating. He must speak to the bill; that is the purpose of debate. If the member wishes, he can move a different motion. This debate is about the bill.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Further to the point of order: What I said was that if this bill is passed in its current form, it will lead to things like irreversible damage to the soil, further damage to unique and threatened species—

Mr Brad Hazzard: On what basis?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I have said that I will get to it. I can assert anything I want in here.

Mr Brad Hazzard: No, you can't—you have to speak to the leave of the bill.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I am speaking to the bill: I have said that, if it is passed, it could lead to these things. I will wait for your ruling, Mr Temporary Speaker.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Maroubra will speak to the leave of the bill.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I am speaking to the bill. If the Government does not want the bill criticised, it should not introduce such legislation into the House. Kosciuszko National Park is the most visited national park in New South Wales outside the Greater Sydney region. Visitation has grown by 52 per cent from 2014 to 2016. More than two million visitors a year visit this national park. We are concerned that the bill puts many aspects of value in that park at risk. It provides for a couple of things to occur. One of them is that the plan will "identify the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within identified parts of the park". That language in itself is curious. "Identified parts of the park" will have to be identified at a future date, because we do not know what parts of the park are being talked about. To provide for the bill to identify the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations, it seems that the Deputy Premier is wishing for sustainability to be visited upon the populations of horses in the park by sheer passage of the bill—because, if nothing is done about the numbers of horses in the park, they will in time not be sustainable.

The language itself is curious. It sets out a hierarchy, almost by mere insertion, with the wild horse populations in the park being of greater value than any other aspects of it. The bill fails to define what heritage value is, what sustainable wild horse populations are, the identified parts of the park and other environmental value to the park. One of the things that concerns the Opposition is that the Deputy Premier—even though it is not really in his portfolio—will oversee this, and the Minister for the Environment will be given the discretion to alter the draft plan as she sees fit before the Government adopts the plan.

The bill creates a wild horse community advisory panel appointed by the Minister, which will provide advice on the preparation of the plan. There is no guidance in the bill about who should be on that panel. One can contrast the community advisory panel with the Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan from the Office of Environment and Heritage's Draft Wild Horse Management Plan, which I will talk about in a minute. One thing that is objectionable about the bill is that it overrides the National Parks and Wildlife Act—an iconic piece of legislation passed in 1974 to preside over the vast tracts of national parks in New South Wales that are the envy of the world.

Bob Carr added about 400 of them to the inventory, and they are objects of envy for other countries around the world. It is particularly objectionable that the bill overrides the objects of that Act. It provides further that, should there be an inconsistency between the adopted wild horse management plan and a national parks plan of management, the adopted wild horse management plan prevails. That is entirely unacceptable. Further, the bill specifies that the plan of management for the Kosciuszko National Park must ensure that it recognises the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within the park. It also sets aside provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, but there is no guidance in this bill on how to achieve sustainability.

Finally, the bill ignores careful recommendations of the 2016 draft Wild Horse Management Plan and does not provide a humane approach to the management of wild horse populations within the park. A moment ago the member for Wakehurst was proclaiming that I cannot walk in here and make assertions without evidence, which he knows is untrue. Let me give him some. I refer him to the Office of Environment & Heritage NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Draft Wild Horse Management Plan 2016. The good Minister is a friend of mine, and for his benefit I will quote some of the salient parts of the report:

NPWS has a legal duty to protect the range of natural and cultural values within the park, and a responsibility to minimise the impact of introduced species, including those of wild horses. However, the issue of wild horse management within Kosciuszko National Park is often highly contentious and emotive. There is a diverse range of views in the general community and deeply polarised views between major stakeholder groups about if, and how, wild horses in the park should be managed.

The draft plan is based on a thorough review of the 2008 Kosciuszko National Park Horse Management Plan, and has been developed with input from an Independent Technical Reference Group, an extensive community and stakeholder engagement process, and a review of the heritage significance of wild horses in Kosciuszko National Park.

This Draft Wild Horse Management Plan has three objectives:

1. To reduce the impacts of wild horses on the natural and cultural heritage values of the Kosciusko National Park by reducing the overall population of wild horses using a range of cost-effective and humane control measures.

There is none of that in this bill.

2. To reduce and mitigate the risk of adverse wild horse interactions or incidents with park visitors and the public more generally.

There is none of that in this bill.

3. To involve the community in the ongoing management of wild horses in Kosciusko National Park through active participation in research, monitoring and control programs where possible.

There is not much of that in this bill, and in the future we will see what the panel does. The report's vision for wild horse management in Kosciusko National Park is:

To conserve the outstanding values of Kosciusko National Park with the support of the community through active, adaptive and humane management of wild horses to minimise their impacts on natural, cultural and visitor values, while acknowledging the cultural and social impacts of the Kosciusko National Park and wild horse population.

The report goes on:

This 2016 Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan ... is the third iteration of a wild horse management plan for the park. It applies to the entirety of the park—

Not just to certain parts of the park—

and builds on the 2003 Horse Management Plan for the Alpine Area of Kosciuszko National Park ... and the 2008 Kosciuszko National Park Horse Management Plan ...

This Draft Wild Horse Management Plan is the result of an extensive and detailed review of the 2008 Horse Plan.

The review concluded that key objectives of the 2008 Horse Plan have not been achieved. In particular, objectives to exclude horses from a number of key areas and reduce their numbers in other areas have not been realised. Trapping using lures and removal—the only method employed during the life of the 2008 Horse Plan—was costly, time consuming and did not effectively reduce the wild horse population.

Since the wild horse management program began in 2002, NPWS has removed 3183 horses from the park. However, there are still horses present in the key areas where exclusion was the aim. Moreover, numbers have not been reduced to a level where there are no longer impacts on the park's natural and cultural values or visitor safety ...

...

A new plan is needed to guide the management of wild horses in the park into the future.

This legislation is not that new plan. A moment ago, when I asserted just how important Kosciuszko National Park is, the two good members opposite—the Minister for Health and the member for Coffs Harbour—interjected and scoffed. Let me quote from their Government's report into this park.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Point of order: The member is asserting that my colleague and I have somehow diminished the importance of Kosciuszko National Park, but that is complete rubbish. If the member is not going to stick to the leave of the bill, at least he should stick to the truth.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I will listen carefully to the member for Maroubra to make sure that he keeps to the leave of the bill.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I would expect nothing less from you, Mr Temporary Speaker. The report states:

Kosciuszko National Park, at 689,600 hectares, is the largest national park in New South Wales and one of the largest conservation reserves in Australia. The park is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Located in the south-east corner of the Australian mainland, the park straddles the Great Dividing Range where it is known as the Snowy Mountains.

The park is very important, preserving a range of special places and values, including:

- the only true alpine zone in mainland Australia and extensive subalpine areas
- the highest mountains on the Australian mainland, including Mount Kosciuszko
- the most extensive peatlands in the Australian Alps
- glacial landforms and karst (i.e. limestone) systems
- unusual plants and animals, including 21 species found nowhere else
- the headwaters of major rivers, namely the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Snowy
- a significant range of historic and cultural values.

The report goes on:

True alpine areas in Australia cover less than 0.01% of the continent. ...

As part of the review of the 2008 Horse Plan, an Independent Technical Reference Group (ITRG) was established to provide rigorous, scientific and technical advice on the management of wild horses in the park. The group found that wild horses do have negative impacts on the environmental values of the park and therefore need to be managed to reduce those impacts. In particular, the ITRG found that wild horses have a significant negative environmental impact on Australian alpine and subalpine ecosystems in the park. This is particularly true for alpine bogs, waterways and drainage lines

...

The bogs referred to by the ITRG are part of the NSW Montane Peatlands and Swamps Endangered Ecological Community. The Commonwealth recognises components of this community as the Alpine Sphagnum Bogs and Associated Fens Endangered Ecological Community. These bogs and wetlands are extremely important as filters and storages for water as well as habitats for threatened species, for example, corroboree frog and broad-toothed rat.

I do not need to sell this report to anyone; it speaks for itself. I congratulate the department on preparing this comprehensive report. It lists pages of actions and if the Government really wanted to deal effectively with brumbies in the Kosciuszko National Park in a humane way, it would have adopted the recommendations in the report, but I note that the Deputy Premier has chosen to do otherwise. Today I received a copy of a letter addressed to the Minister for the Environment, Gabrielle Upton, dated 4 June 2018 from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature [IUCN]. I will read this letter onto the record:

Re: Representations Regarding the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018

Dear Minister,

I have the honour to say that the Office of Environment and Heritage of New South Wales is a long-standing and valued member of IUCN, and was our partner and host for the successful IUCN World Parks Congress 2014. We continue to work with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) on important issues such as the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas, launched in Sydney, and on the broader agenda of nature and its relevance to human health and well-being.

IUCN makes representations on matters relating to nature conservation globally, in accordance with IUCN's Statutes and the Resolutions of the World Conservation Congress. IUCN does so with the support of scientific and policy experts in the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, in matters pertaining to the effective governance and management of protected and conserved areas. Over many years, Commission Members have raised concerns regarding the management of wild horses in protected areas in the Australian Alps, and we have monitored the ongoing research and technical discussions regarding this matter. The Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 has been published recently for public comment, and we wish to draw your attention to several aspects of great concern to IUCN and to members of the World Commission on Protected Areas in Australia.

We are concerned that the Bill raises substantial issues for protected area policy and will create poor precedents for Australia and beyond. The key points we wish to highlight are:

Kosciuszko National Park is a unique protected area, recognized in Australia as an area of "outstanding heritage significance" and is listed on the National Heritage List in accordance with the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Many of its alpine and sub-alpine plants and animals are endemic to this area, and exist nowhere else on earth.

The Bill makes provision for a Draft Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan to be developed and adopted, that is intended to protect the "heritage value" of wild horses while ensuring other environmental values of the park—including values identified in the Plan of Management for the park—are also maintained. It establishes a Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel to advise the Chief Executive Officer of the OEH regarding this plan.

The Bill charges the OEH with the responsibility to develop a Management Plan, on the advice of a Panel that does not require the inclusion of any scientific or policy experts on nature conservation, and that must reconcile the conflicting objectives of maintaining the conservation values of the Park, while maintaining wild horse populations. The Bill prioritizes an alien species, bred from domestic stock, which demonstrably damages the fundamental values of the protected area, and is inconsistent with the protected area's conservation objective and the existing Plan of Management. The possibility of retaining large numbers of wild horses cannot be reconciled with the stated values of the Park.

The Bill asserts the primacy of the adopted Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan over the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and the 2006 Plan of Management of the Park, and removes the provisions of the Act in relation to "anything done to carry out or give effect to the adopted plan". The Bill risks the removal of established management zones, catchment protection and environmental planning provisions as defined in the Plan of Management. The Bill, therefore, has the potential to undermine the primary purpose of this protected area—to protect native wildlife and to safeguard important ecosystem functions—and significantly weakens the relevant legislation regarding this Park. This would create a precedent of great concern.

Throughout the world, IUCN urges best practice effective management based on strong legislation and plans of management. The NSW government has such legislation and the relevant Plan of Management is based on the designation of Kosciusko as an IUCN Category II National Park. Therefore, IUCN would expect that the park's management will be in accordance with the definition, which requires that areas will be managed in a natural state to protect large-scale ecological processes. The intention of this Bill to override the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, and possibly other legislation, such as the Threatened Species Act, creates a disturbing precedent at both national and global levels.

As a science-based organization, IUCN is well aware that there is a strong scientific basis for asserting that wild horses negatively affect the integrity of the Park and the values for which it was established. This is supported by the government of NSW's Threatened Species Scientific Committee which recently determined that feral horses in the park were a "key threatening process" affecting the integrity of this protected area, and recommended that wild horse numbers should be greatly reduced. The antithetical proposal implied by the Bill, to maintain wild horses within the park, appears to ignore this expert advice.

IUCN is concerned also that the implications of this proposed new Bill have social and economic implications as well as conservation impacts. One of the primary functions of protected areas is to maintain the integrity and functioning of natural ecosystems in support of societal needs. In this regard, the Alps are catchments for much of the fresh water of the region, a source which will become increasingly important as climate change advances. Wild horses damage the hydrology of the alpine ecosystems, particularly through breakdown of streambanks and damage to wetlands, and hence will reduce the adaptive capacity of the ecosystem, with negative impacts for local communities.

We look to the NSW Government to find a science-based outcome in this case, that respects the status of the park as an IUCN Category II protected area and National Heritage listed site, that respects the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, is consistent with the Kosciuszko Plan of Management, and that ensures that management decisions on wild horse management are made by experts whose primary focus is conservation. Damage to the ecosystem and biodiversity values of the Kosciuszko National Park due to the proposed management actions would be detrimental to the reputation and status of Australia and NSW's record for nature conservation. There exist alternatives for the recognition of the role of wild horses in Australia's pioneer history that would not damage the National Park.

IUCN stands ready to offer our assistance and expertise in any way that will help to avert the negative implications of this Bill, and to ensure the long term maintenance of the values of the Park.

Yours Sincerely,

Inger Andersen,

Director General IUCN

No-one would doubt that the brumbies in the Kosciuszko National Park are an iconic population in the minds of Australians. The Deputy Premier has used as a justification for this bill the horror of aerial culling that occurred a few years ago. No-one supports a return to that. That was unacceptable. It was a mistake and should not happen again. The bill does not provide the balanced and scientific basis that should support the proper management of brumbies in balance in that national park. There is plenty of evidence in the hands of this Government. Good work has been done by the Office of Environment & Heritage under the Draft Wild Horse Management Plan. The bill is a curious one. It throws all of the evidence to hand out the window and we will not support it.

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (19:00): I support the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. In doing so I draw to the attention of the House the inhumane massacre of more than 400 brumbies in October 2000 in Guy Fawkes River National Park. I place on the record, as I have previously, the absolute whitewash by Dr AW Inglis, who is the Chief Veterinarian of the University of Sydney who said nothing was done incorrectly. The reality was 225 charges of animal cruelty were brought against the RSPCA and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and eventually they got off with a slap on the wrist. Those opposite make assertions and talk about some financial arrangement between a prior member of this House—who happens to still be a

member of the National Party and donates to the National Party—and try to suggest an improper financial motive for him putting the bill forward, which is absolutely ludicrous. I will read a small section from an article written by Tim Lloyd on 18 January 2014, which appeared in *The Advertiser*:

They served Australian troops in the Boer War and the first war and proved superior to all other military horses in the harsh, dry conditions of Syria and Palestine. They even outperformed the camel in its own land.

The historic charge of Australia's 4th Light Horse Brigade at Beersheba was only possible because the horses went without water for several days as the troops outflanked the Turks. The knowledge that the only means of watering their horses if they took Beersheba must have been at the back of the troops' minds when they decided a cavalry charge armed only with bayonets rather than to dismount and attack the Turks with their rifles. About 70 horses were killed in the charge.

The commercial Walers business drew to a close in 1930s although the horses had one last burst of popularity when wartime petrol was expensive or scarce.

After that, many Walers were let loose, unwanted, to find their own future. Some do still end up being rounded up as youngsters and sold as ponies to keen young horse riders, but most of them are on their own.

Australians have never been comfortable with the notion that the horse that once helped define the nation in campaigns such as Beersheba are now treated as feral pests.

We have wild horse populations in the Guy Fawkes River National Park and right up in the ranges in the Northern Tablelands. We have them in Kosciuszko National Park. I point out to the member for Maroubra that the explanatory note and the overview of the bill says:

... cause a draft wild horse heritage management plan to be prepared for Kosciuszko National Park. The draft plan is to identify the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within identified parts of the park and set out how that heritage value will be protected while ensuring other environmental values of the park are also maintained. **Clause 6** requires the Chief Executive to give notice of the public exhibition of the draft plan and to invite the public to make representations on the draft plan.

Clause 12 provides that an adopted plan prevails to the extent of any inconsistency between the adopted plan and a plan of management under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and requires future plans of management prepared under that Act for Kosciuszko National Park to recognise the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within parts of the park.

A management plan could be fencing; it could be anything. I am the first one to admit that wild horses damage the Australian landscape with their hooves. So do wild cattle, donkeys and feral red deer. The red deer in Dorrigo National Park, which is a World Heritage area, have been promoted by National Parks as something that tourists can come to look at. Are they native to Australia? No, they are not. Are they cloven-hoofed? Yes, they are. Is the National Parks and Wildlife Service getting rid of them? No, it is not. If we are going to manage these wild horse populations—the Deputy Premier has even suggested in the media that the population could be brought down to as low as 600—we must have a plan of management that will enable us to do it humanely. We do not need to do it as it was done in Guy Fawkes in October 2010. If anyone is interested, I have the photos on my computer. I can show them mares that died and aborted foals on the ground that took days to die because of a botched attempt at aerial culling in hilly country.

There is evidence that aerial culling can work on feral pests such as donkeys, camels and other animals on flat open plane. I have read a lot of information on it. Normally, in those situations, one would use an average of 2.2 bullets per animal and the animal would die within 15 seconds. That is a humane kill. But aerial culling has proved to be inhumane. This is an opportunity to look at the conservation and the values of the Kosciuszko National Park to manage the brumby pest as it should be managed. But, at the same time to provide an opportunity for those horses that remain and that are direct descendants of the horses that were involved in the charge of Beersheba, other events in World War I and later in other campaigns, to remain and do minimal damage—if not zero—especially to the sensitive parts of Kosciuszko National Park. This debate has been ongoing in the Northern Tablelands and in Kosciuszko for more than 20 years.

Ms Gabrielle Upton: Too long.

Mr ANDREW FRASER: For too long, as the Minister for the Environment said. I congratulate the Minister for the Environment and Deputy Premier John Barilaro on putting together legislation that will enable the management of not only the brumbies but also areas that need protection within the park. I have watched just about every documentary that has been made on the horses in Kosciuszko and other parts. The corroboree frogs are surviving quite well. Are they subject to some interference from brumbies? Yes, they are. If a committee is considering a management plan, it has to work out whether to fence those areas to keep the horses out or what to do. I looked at the creation of red gum national parks by Frank Sartor, who went down to the red gum and said to the people, "This is not about a national park; this is about The Greens' preferences in Sydney."

When we hear the member for Maroubra—I presume we will hear from the member for Newtown—tell us about how to manage regional New South Wales, the challenge I put to him is to tell me whether any part of Sydney can ever be returned to its natural state. No, it cannot. What has been destroyed by generations will never be returned to a pristine state. This Government is trying to conserve what is there across the State. In the 2017

fires in the Pilliga National Park, the national park area was burnt and thousands of koalas were incinerated. I know that because I was out there at the time and I spoke to officials from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Yet, that was whitewashed by the Labor Government. This Government is proactively managing brumbies, while at the same time conserving areas within the Kosciuszko National Park that need to be conserved.

I commend the Minister for the Environment, who is in the Chamber. I commend the Deputy Premier for taking a proactive stance. I condemn the Labor Party for its bizarre attack on political funding in question time today. It was nothing but a slur on the Deputy Premier and on the people who have been trying to solve this for generations. The horses have a great historical significance to every Australian—those who have come recently and those who have given us the freedoms that we enjoy today. I urge members opposite to support this legislation, stop playing politics and stop trying to get The Greens' preferences in exchange for opposing this legislation. The Opposition did nothing while they were in Government except inhumanely slaughter animals in Guy Fawkes. The Opposition did nothing about feral pigs, foxes or cats, yet they stand up in this place and lecture the Government. I commend the legislation to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (19:10): I speak on behalf of The Greens on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 introduced by The Nationals. The Greens oppose the bill. When it comes to protecting our national parks and our wildlife, The Nationals have no credibility and cannot be trusted. This bill requires the Chief Executive of the Office of Environment & Heritage to prepare a draft wild horse management plan for the Kosciuszko National Park. This plan must identify the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within certain parts of the park and how to protect the park. This plan must include the advice of the Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel, which is established by this bill and is a panel of at least six members appointed by the Minister.

The plan will be exhibited and then carried out. The heritage plan will prevail over any plan of management for the park. The Greens recognise the damage caused by wild horses to the natural and sensitive environment of Kosciuszko National Park. The bill will legislate to keep wild horse populations in the park permanently, and that is unacceptable. The Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel seems designed to be stacked against control of the wild horse population, with no dedicated ecologist position. The New South Wales Greens support a scientific approach to the control of the wild horse populations in the Kosciuszko National Park and the reduction of harm caused by invasive species to the ecological values of the park.

Invasive species must be managed humanely by encouraging non-lethal methods, while ensuring that if lethal measures are used as a last resort they must be used humanely and through professional, effective and scientifically proven methods. We believe it is critically important to invest in non-lethal methods that can improve animal welfare outcomes while ensuring environmental protection. I foreshadow that The Greens will move amendments to the bill in the upper House. To make it clear, I will end how I began: when it comes to the protection of our natural environment, when it comes to animal welfare, The Nationals in this place have no credibility and cannot be trusted.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (19:13): The Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 is a great disappointment because I fear that it will never attain its object, which is to recognise the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within parts of Kosciuszko National Park and to protect that heritage through a wild horse heritage management plan. The political process behind the making of this bill and the laying of it before the House undermines its legitimacy, which means that sooner or later it will be overturned. In the framing of the legislation and what that means as a precedent for the regulation of national parks more generally is just poor law, which also undermines the legitimacy of the bill, which means that sooner or later it will be overturned.

Both of those flaws ensure that there will not be a consensus on the great controversy at the heart of the bill—that is, how we manage an introduced species, the wild horses or brumbies of the Snowy River, who reside in one of our greatest national parks. Without that consensus, those opposed to the brumbies will continue their campaign and oppose this legislation, should it become law. As a consequence, sooner or later it will be overturned. That is not good for either party to this controversy, and it is not good for our community that looks to this House to govern in the best interest of the State. The first issue I raised, the politics behind the bill, will ensure that many in our community will never support the bill if it becomes legislation.

After eight years, where is the Minister for the Environment on the bill? Instead, the Deputy Premier, the member for Monaro, has taken carriage of the bill in what looks like a desperate attempt to make himself look useful to his constituents. I think it will ultimately fail dismally, not only because the member for Monaro is the most unlikely in the House to achieve a consensus on anything, but also because members know that he has accepted a \$10,000 political donation from a horseriding business operated by Peter Cochran, a former National Party member who resides in the electorate. Of course, those opposing the brumbies will ask: Did a \$10,000 political donation change the law? Consequently, the legitimacy of the bill if it becomes legislation will be fatally undermined.

I come to the second point, the framing of the regulation. Why cannot any of the more reasonable members on the Government benches see that any bill that regulates activity in a national park and seeks to explicitly override the National Parks and Wildlife Act—as this bill does in section 12—ensures that a management plan for Kosciuszko National Park will not operate because it is inconsistent with the management plan directed specifically at wild horses? Those things will ensure that many in our community will never support the bill should it become legislation.

The Government should have paid greater attention to the history of the park. Members on this side of the House know the significance of Kosciuszko National Park because it was a creation of the McKell Labor Government in 1944. Incidentally, McKell rode on horseback when he toured the countryside that he would then create as a national park for the State. McKell established a trust to manage the park, but he was wise enough to not appoint the local member, a Labor man at the time, to the trust because he knew that the member supported the interests of the graziers. That group was most likely to be affected by the creation of the national park.

This is a missed opportunity and, as I said, a great disappointment after eight years of the Liberal-Nationals Government in the State. People in my community—and there are many horseriders on the Central Coast, including my daughter Lily—want to see the brumby protected in the national park. They also know that the environment needs to be protected if horseriding and the future of the brumby is to be ensured. That requires a consensus and proper management in the national park. The Government has shown that it is not willing to manage our national parks more effectively because it has cut staff and reduced numbers of people whose lives have been dedicated to operate and protect our State's national parks. However, the failure to achieve a consensus is the main reason that this bill will ultimately fail.

The Labor Party has a six-point plan to protect the brumby and the environment. This bill is a great disappointment and a lost opportunity. This bill is the result of political desperation and not consensus between the groups who support and oppose the brumby. It will only harden their positions. They will not come together, and will continue to campaign for their positions, instead of reaching a consensus which will protect the national park and the brumby. We could have done a lot better. I hope I am wrong, but this bill will not achieve its aim. For that reason, it should not be supported by the House.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (19:19): I speak in strong support of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. It strikes the right balance between protecting the environment and the heritage value of the brumbies that have been in the area for nearly 200 years. Brumbies are part of our alpine heritage. The bill acknowledges that if left unchecked, they are an unacceptable risk to the fragile environment of the Kosciuszko National Park. It is our largest national park, which has been acknowledged in the House today. It is also on the National Heritage List.

The simple fact of the matter is that there have been years and years of consultation, but no way forward that has balanced the competing interests in this important national park. Since 2014 we have been consulting on a plan of management on this issue, including, since 2016, on a revised plan of management. There has been no landing point; only polarisation and controversy. The uncertainty that we are taking away today by debating this bill and making it the law is a way forward. The lack of a way forward up to this point in time has restricted the Government's ability to manage environmental impacts, fuelled concerns that the heritage values will not be recognised, led to threats to national park staff and families and, frankly, left all stakeholders frustrated.

But now the bill is before the House. It is the circuit breaker needed to address a longstanding division about the future of the brumbies in the park. Some conservation groups want major reduction in numbers or eradication of the population. Other groups want an unsustainable population. The bill amends the National Parks and Wildlife Act to recognise and protect the heritage values of a sustainable wild horse population; to provide for their active management; to reduce impact on the environment; and to provide that their management will take account of a community view—a widespread view—as well as technical and scientific expertise. Amendments require the Minister for the Environment to adopt a heritage management plan which spells out the values that are protected; how that protection will be delivered; how to identify zones in the park where a sustainable population of brumbies can actually be; and how brumbies outside those zones will be controlled.

The Minister for the Environment needs to consider advice from National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council and NSW Heritage Council before adopting the heritage plan of management. A community advisory panel will be appointed, and monitoring and research will be supported by an independent technical advisory group. I wonder whether anyone in the Labor Party on the other side of the House has read the bill. The bill gets the balance right. It provides a pathway, it provides for a discussion informed by community views and it takes the advice of a future plan of management.

That framework has been missing and now it will be in place. It recognises and protects the heritage values of the wild horse population in Kosciuszko National Park. The bill ensures that a sustainable population of wild horses will be retained in parts of the national park, so that the heritage values of that unique group of wild horses are respected and will exist into the future. The brumbies are a unique part of the alpine heritage. For many of us, they represent a link to our pioneering and pastoral past. Yes, they are an introduced species and there have been impacts such as localised soil erosion and impacts on water quality. That is why this bill delivers certainty for a framework for those future discussions about what the plan of management must be. It is smart. It is active. It is humane in the management of the horses. We set that framework up today.

The first point to be made is that the bill is specific to the protection of brumbies in the Kosciuszko National Park and nowhere else. The bill will recognise the heritage value of a sustainable brumby population within the park and protect that heritage. It will require the Chief Executive of the Office of Environment and Heritage to prepare a wild horse heritage management plan to: detail the heritage values of the brumby population within identified parts of the park; set out how those values will be protected while ensuring other environmental values of the park are maintained; take into account the objectives of both the proposed Kosciuszko Wild Horse Management Act and the National Parks and Wildlife Act; and take into account the matters that are required to be considered in preparing a plan of management under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. It will also require public exhibition of a draft wild horse heritage management plan. It will require consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council and the NSW Heritage Council. It will clarify that the adopted wild horse heritage management plan will prevail if there is any inconsistency with the park plan of management for Kosciuszko National Park.

One very important aspect of this bill is that it will provide the framework for managing the impacts of wild horses across the park to protect the park's special values. It is an iconic place. It has the headwaters of the Snowy, the Murray and the Murrumbidgee rivers. It has outstanding scenery, landscape and Aboriginal and historic cultural heritage values. As we have acknowledged in the House today, these values underpin a national and global reputation that attracts many visitors each year and contributes significantly to the regional economy.

Yes, the introduction of the species has affected the park over time. Let me be clear: there will need to be a reduction in the overall size of the brumby population to achieve that balance with the fragile alpine environment. It is not a question of protecting only the heritage values of the horses or of the environment—both are important. Both contribute to the qualities that make the Kosciuszko National Park such a special place. We must and will find a balance of solutions to protect the heritage values of the wild horses and the environment of the national park. The management plan proposed by this bill is the mechanism to achieve this balance. That is something that the Opposition and speakers who have expressed a contrary view would support but have been mischievous in representing the bill as anything more than that.

The heritage management plan will identify the heritage values of the brumby and the zones in parts of the park where a sustainable population of brumbies will be maintained. Outside of the identified zones the plan will provide directions on how wild horses are humanely controlled and the values of the national park are looked after. The bill will provide that the wild horse heritage management plan will prevail, as I said, if there is any inconsistency. It will also require future plans of management for the Kosciuszko National Park made under the National Parks and Wildlife Act to recognise the heritage values of sustainable wild horse populations in the park.

Let me assure members, those two plans will not be in conflict; they will work together. The bill requires the wild horse heritage management plan to identify the heritage values of sustainable wild heritage populations in parts of the park. It will set out how the heritage values will be protected while ensuring other environment values are maintained. In doing so, the bill specifically references, as the Opposition and other members will see, those values referenced in the Kosciuszko plan of management. It is a balance. We are getting the balance right. We are doing things that everybody else has failed to do. We are providing a framework where the balance can be achieved.

We are consulting with communities. The community panel will have membership representing the local community, at least one Aboriginal person, and experts in conservation, recreation, tourism and animal welfare. The technical advisory group will provide important information we need to make rigorous, evidence-tested decisions about what will be in this plan of management. The discussion about what the plan of management will contain is yet to take place but what is made clear by this bill is that it will strike a balance between preserving this fragile alpine and subalpine region and recognising the heritage values of the brumby in that environment.

It is the way forward that Labor should be signing up to. It is the way forward that is consistent with the six-point plan that has been spoken about by the shadow Minister. I think Labor and those people who do not support the bill are being mischievous. They are ignoring the impasse. They are not providing what good

governments do, and what we are doing through this bill, which is the framework for the future that balances the environment and the heritage values of the brumby inside that important environment.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:29): The Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 will give the wild horses living in the Kosciuszko National Park cultural and heritage value. A heritage management plan will be created for the horses, which will override other management plans for the national park where there is inconsistency. Culling of the horses will stop, and protecting them will be a priority regardless of any conflict with the biodiversity of the unique alpine and subalpine regions. At face value, this bill pits environmentalist against animal welfare defender. The horses are doing serious irreversible damage in the Snowy Mountains, particularly around water sources, and are putting 27 threatened species at risk from habitat loss. At the same time, culling the horses can involve cruelty, particularly from aerial shooting and roping.

The Threatened Species Scientific Committee identified serious damage in the Kosciuszko National Park from the wild horse populations. It recommended a new management approach and called for a reduction in their numbers. The 2016 draft management plan sought to strike a balance between protecting the region's biodiversity and retaining horses in the national park. Part of the plan involved reducing numbers, and part of the plan involved identifying areas that could accommodate horses and areas that must remain off limits.

The Government has said that under the bill it will now manage wild horses solely by relocating them to areas that can accommodate them. There is little information on how this will work or how wild horses will be prevented from growing in numbers and spreading to areas they will damage. The Government says that it must override the draft management plan to prevent cruelty from culling. But the Government does not have to adopt the draft management plan and can use whatever control method it considers fair.

Meanwhile the Government subsidises horseracing, which causes significant suffering from harsh training regimes and track injuries. Furthermore, cruelty to animals considered pests or feral is not limited to horses in the Snowy Mountains—horrible culling methods on introduced species are common. Rabbits, for example, are poisoned with 1080 and Pindone and infected with calicivirus; these result in a slow and painful death. Surely the focus should be on reducing cruelty in population management of feral animals rather than singling out a certain animal in a certain location that we think worthy of escaping cruelty.

Not enough has been done to advance humane population control. The Government refused to support my Animal Welfare (Population Control Programs) Bill 2014 for trap-neuter-return [TNR] programs which would have allowed community volunteers to desex animals in a colony so that they stop breeding. TNR has proven to stabilise and reduce cat numbers in colonies and there is growing evidence of success in other situations. My bill presented new opportunities to understand the science behind TNR and apply it beyond street cats to other situations. There could have been opportunities for wild horses in the Snowy Mountains.

In his second reading speech, the Minister said that fertility control measures for wild horses are still evolving but they have been used across the American rangeland with promising results. More investment is needed in fertility control but I am concerned that giving the wild horses heritage and cultural values will result in fewer resources and trials because reducing wild horse populations will be contrary to the heritage protections required under the bill. Other humane population control methods could also suffer. If wild horse populations grow significantly, we will have a serious problem to deal with in the future that risks creating support for cruel mass culling. More humane methods, which take longer to show success, will not have been advanced and will unlikely be adopted. I am concerned that the bill will prevent holistic and scientific management of the Kosciuszko National Park for biodiversity protection because protecting the horses will have to be prioritised.

All plans of management for this ecologically unique and fragile protected national park will have to recognise the horses as culturally significant. Environment groups see the bill as a significant downgrade to protection of an area that is already at risk. The national park is under immense pressure from climate change and there are multiple proposed new threats, including walking and cycling trails, ski resorts, and the Snowy 2.0 pumped hydro extension project. Logging could even return to the adjacent Murray Valley National Park. The Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel's role and the way it will interact with the Threatened Species Scientific Committee or the Independent Technical Reference Group are unclear. However, it is clear that the panel will be involved in decisions about horse management. And yet, it will not include an environmental representative as an expert despite the potential environmental destruction that can be caused if horses are not managed properly.

Animals should always be treated as beings that can suffer and feel pain and that need to be able to act out their behaviours. This should be the case regardless of whether they are used for agriculture, for racing, bred for sale as a pet, or are an introduced species or cultural icon. If the only way to protect animals from cruelty is to give them special heritage status then we cannot call our society humane. The focus in dealing with wild horses must be to expand a range of humane population control measures. This bill will do nothing in the field of humane population management, but it could let wild horse populations expand unchecked. Threatened animal species are

at risk and the current problem is only going to be harder to deal with in the future. This bill is not the way to protect animals. Indeed, it could make them worse off and I cannot support it.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (19:36): I am always intrigued when our colleagues from central Sydney make contributions to the House and I am always fascinated when I hear these contributions because they show that there are two parallels in this State. Whilst I sat quietly listening to the member for Sydney, who always rises to make comments, I found myself disagreeing with a number of his points. The Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 is long overdue in this Parliament. It was introduced to the Parliament by the Deputy Premier. This issue has been a festering sore in New South Wales for many years—ever since I have been in this place. What really sticks in my mind is the massacre at Guy Fawkes River National Park, where the former Labor Government, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and others used helicopter gunships to shoot and maim horses in the national park.

Ms Julia Finn: It is not the Vietnam War.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE: I note the interjection from the member for—which electorate does she represent temporarily? The member who is interjecting lives in an inner-city central business district electorate. I suggest that if the member saw the photos and news articles of the torment and devastation that was wreaked on those horses that were rotting in the national parks and providing food for dingoes and wild dogs, and if she saw horses' guts hanging out and mares forced into foaling because of what occurred, she would have a different opinion. This is a reality. It is in black and white in newspapers and the member can google it. The fact is that the general public disagreed vehemently with the way the Labor Party went about that massacre, and the public disagree with the unchanged policy that would allow National Parks and Wildlife Service staff and others to carry out that reduction of horse numbers through the use of helicopters and gunships.

That is off the table. We now have this piece of legislation to debate. Importantly, there are provisions in the legislation—that have been ignored by members of the Labor Party and inner-city dwellers—that would allow the advisory panel to come up with the answers to questions that some members opposite have posed. This will allow for a plan to be finally put in place that will manage the wild horse population. It will not explode. The question in all of the debates has been: What is a reasonable number of horses that can be maintained in certain areas of the national park? The question is: How can we protect the environment? There are places that can be damaged by hard-hoofed animals. We all recognise that. It is about balance.

The bill, when put into practice, will deliver responsible management of wild horses, the best outcomes for the environment and will allow people—with far more knowledge than some who have already spoken on the other side of this Chamber—to make a contribution to the Minister on how we should manage the population. Over the years of the debate it has been suggested that the number of brumbies should be somewhere around 6,000, 8,000, 10,000 or 2,000. That has been of great concern to those people who value the heritage of the brumby. There can never be consensus on that. I would suggest that at some point in the future the Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel will be able to carry out an investigation and agree that there is an appropriate number, and then we can all work to it.

Feral animals live in this State and across Australia. We want to see them dealt with humanely. We can deal with them by a number of means and methods. Whether they be foxes, pigs, goats, wild dogs, camels, donkeys or horses, no-one wants to see them treated cruelly. Any decent, fair-minded Australian would not want to see animals cruelly treated, but the fact is they must be managed in a sustainable way. A program to reduce numbers to an agreed level is the way to go. The Kosciuszko National Park is an enormous area. Some areas that are sensitive to the hard hooves of horses and other areas can be used to maintain a reasonable population.

When I was a child and growing up in the outback, we humanely disposed of animals. Sometimes, sadly, due to drought and other causes it was sheep and cattle, but there was always a use for that product. We used to track and catch goats. We would put up traps on the water, capture those goats and send them off to Peterborough where they were turned into dog food. These days captured feral goats are sent off to Saudi Arabia and other places because of the value of that meat. Indeed, horse meat, as much as people might not like to talk about it, is a valuable protein and there are countries that enjoy the taste of that flesh. Despite not being a huge one, there is a market for it.

Feral animals such as pigs, foxes, et cetera all cause damage to the environment. If we caught cats, desexed them and let them go, tomorrow they would still kill native birds, reptiles and the precious fauna and flora that we have. They would destroy it, so they must be removed. But it must be done humanely. We have a number of means available to us. I do not think that catching cats, desexing them and letting them go again is an appropriate way to go, the same way that I do not think catching horses, pigs, or goats, desexing them and letting them go again is appropriate. They need to be removed and used in some way. I do not believe we can use foxes

except for their skin. We can certainly use pigs if we remove them, deworm them, feed them, et cetera. We can turn them into salami. Perhaps the Deputy Premier might like to provide some recipes for that.

The fact of the matter is that those animals can provide protein, fur or something of value. Horses are the same: They can be rehomed and tamed for riding. Of course, we all know the history of those horses but some will need to be disposed of. That is the reality. Horses can damage themselves and become lame and some get sick and must be removed. That is the humane thing to do. We have seen pictures of beautiful stallions leading a wild mob of horses and heard poems such as the *Man from Snowy River* but the reality is that a lot of the horses are inbred and unhealthy and, if captured, they need to be dealt with humanely.

Mr Greg Piper: Rubbish.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE: It is not rubbish. Many horses are not in the best of health, are sick or have broken a leg and are hobbling around the park. They need to be removed. That is the reality; that is life. We have to face up to that. As much as it might pain some members who have contributed to the debate, life is tough and we have to make tough decisions. This bill will help us make those tough decisions in a reasonable, balanced way. It will give everyone a say and allow us to manage our national parks and a sustainable wild horse population. I congratulate the Deputy Premier, who introduced the bill to the House, and everyone who has been involved with this issue over the many years I have been in this place. It is a positive step forward, and I wish the committee well.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (19:46): I oppose the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. I do so today, of all days, on World Environment Day. The bill is an attack on the National Parks and Wildlife Act. It will create provisions that override the National Parks and Wildlife Act in order to protect an animal that is not a native species and that is present in unsustainable numbers in Kosciuszko National Park. There is no doubt that there is a place for the brumby population within the national park but it needs to be sustainable, and the bill does nothing to address that. The bill is about undermining the National Parks and Wildlife Act to repay the generosity of horse trek business owner Peter Cochran in supporting the member for Monaro, the Deputy Premier. The bill is an absolute disgrace. Its biggest advocate is on social media boasting of his involvement in drafting the bill. That takes the Government's fondness for outsourcing to new levels of disgrace.

The Kosciuszko National Park is incredibly significant. It is the most visited national park outside Sydney. Those tourism numbers are not based purely around the brumbies. The park is a huge tourism asset, mainly because it is home to alpine sports such as skiing, fishing, snowboarding, trekking and similar activities. The bill will prioritise the interests of one business operator over the interests of others in this most significant park. We should not forget that this park was established approximately 75 years ago by then Premier Bill McKell, who rode through the alpine areas and saw the degradation wrought on the park by grazing. At the time members of the National Party fought the area's listing as a national park. Now The Nationals are going out of their way to undermine the very important conservation status that the park enjoys. I repeat: It is an absolute disgrace.

We heard from the Minister for the Environment—it is strange for her to speak on the bill on World Environment Day, but she also seems to support the Government's attacks on native vegetation. She said the bill is about getting the balance right and that there have been no previous plans. In fact, the bill junks the 2016 draft wild horse management plan, which—contrary to what the member for Wagga Wagga said—did not advocate aerial shooting of horses. In fact, it specifically excluded that as a method of control in parts of the park that are threatened by horses. We have heard a lot of misinformation in this debate, and even more in the second reading speech. The Deputy Premier claimed that the bill will ensure that no horse will be shot or culled except in extreme circumstances. However, there is no provision for that in the bill; it does not deal at all with methods of population control. It is very misleading to claim that that is what the bill is about. Claiming that the draft management plan advocated aerial shooting is a misrepresentation, as is declaring that the bill will prevent aerial shooting.

What will be damaged by this bill? Australia has one alpine region, with flora and fauna unique to the planet. On the Victorian side of the border people are keen to control the brumby population properly. It is a very special place, with internationally significant ecosystems. The 2004 report of the Kosciuszko Independent Scientific Committee referred to the international significance of the park and noted that, in addition to it having two international environmental listings, it has huge international value. It has a suite of karst areas, particularly the Cooleman and Yarrangobilly Karst, and soils of great scientific value, especially the alpine humus soils, fossil soils and remnants of fossil soils.

The alpine areas are prime examples internationally of mid-latitude alps, including vegetation with 21 endemic species and 33 rare species from a total of 204 flowering plants; subalpine ecosystems providing habitat for a number of rare animal species, including the mountain pygmy possum and the corroboree frog; incredible subalpine treeless flats and significant valleys; and threatened or near-threatened species, including 13 vertebrate species that have been listed by the World Conservation Union, such as the mountain pygmy

possum. The park has natural fire regimes that have evolved over thousands of years and created the internationally significant subalpine, montane and lowland landscapes.

All of this is under threat from the damage caused by a large wild horse population in the park. That population needs to be managed, but the bill does not do that. The brumbies are not the iconic species of the Kosciuszko National Park or our alpine regions; those species are the southern corroboree frog and the mountain pygmy possum, which are both endangered. It is a disgrace that the bill places the conservation of a population of horses over the functions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and the preservation of all other species, particularly two iconic threatened species. These are the reasons Labor will repeal the legislation if it is enacted. We have consulted the local community as we are keen to make sure that we adopt the right approach—and this bill is not it.

We have a six-point plan to protect the park. The Opposition wants to ensure that the plan of management for the park is the primary management document, not the plan pertaining to wild horses. We want to restore resources to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, which has had \$121 million cut from its budget over the past two years. It has been gutted. We want to minimise the impact of pest species through adequately funded and effective control programs that cover all feral animals in the park. We want a scientific assessment conducted and a proper count of the horse population undertaken. Wild horses should be acknowledged for their cultural value, but they should be managed in parts of the park where the degradation that they cause would be less problematic.

The horse population should be sustainable, and at the moment it is not. This is the type of bill we would have if the population were not sustainable. In fact, we have an overpopulation of horses in the park. The Opposition also wants to repair the mountain catchments, but that will not happen if there is constant erosion caused by an excess of horses. As I said, this bill is an absolute disgrace, and to be debating it on World Environment Day is an embarrassment. Members should reject the bill.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (19:55): It would be wonderful to be able to stand with members of the Government on the side that will win this debate on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 and to have a warm fuzzy feeling as a result of reaching a compromise between ecological protection and the protection of heritage horses, but I cannot. I will not be lectured about my role in this place as others have been. The member for Sydney implied that perhaps he should not be speaking on the bill. His interest in this issue is as valid as that of any other member.

I was confronted with a decision about how far I would go in respect of this legislation. I do not ascribe any sinister motives to the introduction of this bill, nor do I suggest that the Deputy Premier is too close to someone by the name of Peter Cochran. Let us stop doing that. Sometimes a government can make a mistake for other reasons, and that is what I think has happened in this case. Members may well have good intentions and they may be trying to find a balance, but sometimes no such balance exists. These horses have been in the Snowy Mountains for a couple of hundred years and to naturalise them or to give them citizenship or special status is silly. As a matter of fact, it is a bizarre precedent and we should be very careful about doing it.

Am I a mountain man? Have I ridden horses around the Snow Mountains? I know that the Temporary Speaker, the member for Albury will have done so. However, my family does come from the area. My paternal grandparents and extended family come from the Tumbarumba region and I have spent some time there. I have also spoken to my family about the bill. My background is in environmental conservation in more temperate zones. I have never been confronted with an exotic creature or feral animal being ascribed a particular characteristic that afforded it special recognition. That is a nonsense and a dangerous path to follow. It is a sentimental argument that does not stand up to scientific scrutiny.

People have done fabulous research work in this area for many years and it is clear that we will never rid that environment of brumbies. They are a successful invasive, exotic animal. Every feral species that is strong in an environment is there only to the detriment of native animals. That is a fact of life. They are not symbiotic; feral animals will not benefit native animals—unless, of course, native animals can feed on their carcasses. This issue has been ignited in large part by the horrendous events that occurred in Guy Fawkes River National Park. When it was revealed 10 years ago what had happened there we were horrified.

However, we are ascribing some higher level of stupidity and incompetence on the part of the National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] if we think it has not learnt and improved its methodology as a result. I know that many people in the service were traumatised by the vision of what happened and how some animals died. Of course, the horses in Guy Fawkes River National Park were not in good condition. The NPWS did not decide that because it had nothing much to do it would kill some brumbies. The serious drought in the area led the service to make that decision because many of the animals would have died a tortured death anyway.

Kosciuszko National Park is an amazing and unique park. It is home to our highest mountain. Mount Kosciuszko is about 7,400 feet, which is not high in world terms but it is all we have. It is a genuine subalpine and alpine environment and the horses are damaging it. I do not think anyone would argue about that; everyone agrees that that is happening. The question is how we manage the situation. In normal conservation terms, one would remove 100 per cent of the animals, if possible. Of course, it is simply impossible. Members have provided lists of feral animals, and I can throw in a few more—for example, donkeys, camels, goats, deer, cats, dogs, rabbits and, of course, the ubiquitous fox. We will never be able to get rid of them. I cannot imagine that we would contemplate keeping some of them. If we can get rid of them completely, we should. That is what conservation is about. In fact, that is an extremely unnerving suggestion.

I note that Opposition members have talked about repealing the legislation. I would not be surprised if an enlightened Coalition government did the same. This defies all logic and science. I have seen not one jot of credible support for this plan from anyone with scientific or environmental qualifications. There may well be some qualified support, but I would put that "qualified" in a different category. There are certain people for whom this is a political reality and they must find the best possible solution. However, I strongly believe this is not a good precedent. It would be fantastic if we could find a compromise. I am sure we would all like to find an easy way out of a difficult situation. Most of us would not enjoy the prospect of killing horses, which are sentient creatures. I am sure we will hear about that from the Animal Justice Party representative in the other place. That is a quandary facing many of us.

I feel that this approach is wrong-headed. It flies in the face of conservation practice that we have followed in the past—or would have followed if we had had the resources to do so—and sets a very dangerous precedent. Good luck to the Government. It has the numbers and its bill will pass this House. I hope members on this side are wrong and that everything will be wonderful: The horses will be rounded up and moved out of the very sensitive areas, we will find people to break them in and kiddies, mums and dads will be riding around on brumbies, enjoying the heritage of this "wild colonial horse". But I think that is a forlorn hope. As I have said, it is highly likely that a future Labor or a Coalition government will review this issue, because this is not well-considered legislation.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (20:05): I speak against the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. This unprecedented bill is a personal project of the Deputy Premier in consultation with former Nationals member for Monaro and horse trek business owner Peter Cochran. The bill throws away 75 years of conservation consensus and undermines the entire national parks and wildlife system. The bill seeks to place wild, feral horses above all other environmental and cultural values within the Kosciuszko National Park. If this bill is passed it will lead to irreversible damage to soil, water—including the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers—unique and threatened species, and endangered ecological communities within Kosciuszko National Park. It also undermines the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the park and risks public safety.

Failure to protect the park will lead to the loss of jobs and tourism investment that are vital to the region—something that seems to be lost on members opposite. Kosciuszko National Park is the most visited national park in New South Wales outside the Greater Sydney region, with visitation growing by 52 per cent from 2014 to 2016 at more than 2.196 million visits each year. Specifically, the bill puts the recognition and protection of the heritage value of feral horse populations within parts of Kosciuszko National Park above all other species by requiring a draft wild horse heritage management plan to be prepared. This plan will be required to identify the heritage value of sustainable feral horse populations within identified parts of the park and set out how that heritage value will be protected while ensuring that other environmental values of the park, including values identified in the plan of management for the park, are also maintained.

However, the bill fails to define "heritage value", "sustainable wild horse populations", "identified parts of the park", or "other environmental values of the park". The Minister is given discretion to alter the draft plan as he or she sees fit before adopting it. The bill creates a Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel appointed by the Minister, which would also provide advice on the preparation of the plan. The bill overrides the National Parks and Wildlife Act. This is unprecedented. The bill also provides that should there be any inconsistency between the adopted wild horse management plan and the national park's plan of management, the wild horse management plan prevails. That is unbelievable. Further, the bill specifies that the plan of management for Kosciuszko National Park must ensure that it "recognises the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within parts of the park". It also sets aside provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1967 that prohibit any operations from being undertaken on national park land that do not accord with the park's plan of management.

Finally, the bill completely ignores the careful recommendations of the 2016 draft wild horse management plan and does not provide a humane approach to managing wild horse populations within the park. Prior to introducing this bill, the Government had not endorsed the 2016 draft wild horse management plan. The plan was the result of years of community consultation and in-depth reviews of the scientific evidence of the

impact of wild horses on the alpine environment of Kosciuszko National Park. It recommended reducing the wild horse population from 6,000 to fewer than 3,000 horses in five to 10 years, and then to 600 horses within 20 years. The culling and methods of culling are the most controversial aspects of this debate.

The second reading speech claimed the bill will ensure that no horse will be shot or culled, except in circumstances where a horse is injured or sick. However, the bill makes no provision for this in any way. The bill does not deal with methods of population control nor the humaneness of such methods. The second reading speech also stated that the Government will appoint a new independent technical reference group, implement a research and monitoring program, undertake a new count of horse numbers, and implement a marketing campaign for the rehoming of horses. These are not provisions in the bill and no funding is identified.

Deputy Premier John Barilaro's second reading speech contained a few little furbies that have since been revealed to be incorrect. The Deputy Premier told Parliament that brumbies from the Snowy Mountains played an "integral role" in the Australian Light Horse campaign during World War I. However, the cultural heritage report prepared for the National Parks and Wildlife Service found no definitive evidence that this was the case; it found simply that it was "possible" some went into active service. It is not surprising that brumbies from Kosciuszko were not a key source of horses for World War I. Brumbies were of poor quality and viewed as only useful for meat exports. The horses that actually did support the war effort were Walers. They were bred in their thousands across Australia to support colonial expansion and export trades. Today the Waler breed is secured, with two established stud lines.

The Deputy Premier also asserted that brumbies would not have been used at the Sydney Olympic Games opening ceremony if they were not considered to be part of "the Australia of today". In fact, the horses that appeared at the Sydney Olympics were Australian stock horses—a breed largely established from 15 founding horses selected in the 1970s. They were not brumbies. The cultural ties to brumbies that people from the Snowy Mountains and Australia have are real and important to celebrate. But the cultural aspects of brumbies in the region can be maintained with, for example, brumby herds held on private property, as has occurred in South Australia's Coffin Bay. So we should look beyond the Deputy Premier's information on brumby history and management options.

Labor will not support this ill thought through wild horse bill because it ignores science and the irreversible damage that unmanaged wild horse populations have done to Kosciuszko National Park. This magnificent park is a tourism jobs powerhouse—which, as I have said, seems to have been lost on those opposite. This magnificent national park, established in 1944 by Labor Premier Bill McKell, holds special significance for Australia, with its unique environment being home to many threatened species, such as the mountain pygmy possum, the southern corroboree frog and the broad-toothed rat. The park is home to 21 species of flowering plants in the mountains that are found nowhere else on earth. The peatland soils are unique, as are the alpine and subalpine bog and wetland catchments, which help to supply high-quality water to the Murray-Darling Basin.

Have those opposite even thought about these issues? The entire park is listed as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO, and Blue Lake is listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Not only is there irrefutable scientific evidence opposing this bill; the RSPCA has come out against it as well. The RSPCA says that the Government's plan ignores evidence and should be reconsidered. The Government expresses concern about animals being culled and other issues, but the RSPCA says that the Government's plan will "veto evidence-based management" of the horses' environmental impact. It is an absolute disgrace. In addition, the International Union for Conservation of Nature—an amazing international organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland—came out very strongly against this legislation. In a letter written to the Minister for the Environment the organisation stated:

As a science-based organisation, we are well aware that there is a strong scientific basis for asserting that wild horses negatively affect the integrity of the park and the values for which it was established.

That is supported by the Government's own Threatened Species Scientific Committee, which recently determined that feral horses were a key threatening process affecting the integrity of the protected area. It beggars belief that the Government is introducing this bill that flies in the face of all its Government-endorsed research for the sake of the Deputy Premier's electorate in the south. If the Government wants to look at the science-based research, the facts and the figures and base its decision on something that has scientific rigour it need look no further.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (20:15): In speaking in debate on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 I echo the sentiments of my Labor colleagues who have already spoken about the proposed legislation. It is remarkable to me that a bill on a strictly environmental matter was introduced to the Chamber not by the Minister for the Environment but by the Deputy Premier and "Minister for TAFE Cuts". It is remarkable because this matter is completely unrelated to the Deputy's Premier's ministerial responsibilities. Yet, here he is, introducing a bill for reasons that we can only speculate on. As my Labor colleagues have explained, the bill

would put wild horses—a beautiful animal but, nevertheless, an introduced pest—above all other ecological, environmental and cultural values within the Kosciuszko National Park. That fact alone speaks to the absurdity, recklessness and short-sightedness of the bill. For that reason, Labor is opposing the bill and will be repealing it in government in the fullness of time.

The concern for us in the meantime is the environmental destruction and degradation of our national park by wild horses that will be allowed to run unchecked, causing irreversible damage to soil, water, rare and threatened species and the endangered ecological communities that are unique to the Kosciuszko National Park. We can always tell that a government is in terminal decline by the legislation or the agenda it enacts in the final months before an election it expects to lose. Instead of introducing measured, sober policymaking and sensible legislation the "Leadership B Team" and a collection of hangers-on and political deadwood on the frontbench are in here week after week ramming through all the weird and wacky garbage, the fringe nonsense and the special interest insanity that their major donors and preselectors are desperate to see written in to the statutes before they lose office. And so it is with this brumbies bill.

The bill was written by a Nationals member of Parliament, but not one currently holding office. It certainly was not written by the most derelict Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage in living memory. The bill is the personal project of Peter Cochran, a former member for Monaro and a business owner who has monetised horse treks through the national park. That is what this is actually about. It is about the personal profits and self-interest of a former member of Parliament and Nationals identity from the area represented by the Deputy Premier. It is not about heritage, the environment or even about animal welfare, as some proponents of the bill have attempted to make it. In fact—and I say this as a person who grew up in the bush and worked on farming properties—it is bewildering to me that the very people who ought to understand the importance of controlling pest species are the ones lining up to support the bill.

Opposition members will not be swayed by the misty-eyed carry-on of The Nationals members who wish to twist this debate and argue the merits or not of managing pest species in our national parks and on our farming lands. Labor is the only party in this place that can be trusted with our national parks. Labor's legacy of creating, expanding and protecting crucial areas of pristine wilderness is unmatched by any other political party. I note the work of Bob Debus and Bob Carr during the 1990s and 2000s, who signed into existence vast areas of national park across New South Wales, and reiterate that Labor will do everything in its power to protect that legacy from the wreckers and environmental vandals in The Nationals. To that end, Labor has a six-point plan to protect the Kosciuszko National Park.

We first promise to ensure that the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management is the primary management document guiding the operation of the park. We will do this because we understand that the best people to make decisions about the health and future of a national park are the experts within the National Parks and Wildlife Service itself. They should not be undermined or tripped up by ad hoc legislation that diminishes their capacity to do their jobs in line with their professional experience and expertise. Secondly, we will restore the resources to the National Parks and Wildlife Service that the Liberal-Nationals Government cut and restore the capacity to protect the pristine environment and threatened species of the Kosciuszko National Park. We commit to this because we have seen the impacts of the relentless cutbacks this Government has made. Unlike the incompetent and derelict Minister for the Environment, Labor shadow Minister Penny Sharpe will stand up in the Cabinet room for our national parks and will not take a back seat to a member who runs garbage legislation through Parliament on behalf of his or her preselectors and donors.

Thirdly, Labor will minimise the impacts of pest species, both plant and animal, through adequately funded and effective control programs. That includes wild pigs, dogs, deer and horses. The fourth point of our plan is that we will conduct a scientific assessment and count of the horse population in consultation with key stakeholders. The fifth point is we will ensure that the cultural value of wild horses is acknowledged and we will manage the wild horse population in a manner guided by the 2016 Draft Wild Horse Management Plan. We will maintain the ban on aerial culling and pursue humane and ethical population management practices such as fertility control and a rehoming program. The last point in the plan is that Labor will repair the mountain catchments by establishing a highly trained Kosciuszko works crew dedicated to halting erosion and restoring and repairing the slopes, wetlands and mountain streams that are currently under threat as a consequence of the wild horse population in the park.

I note for the Government's benefit—though I expect it does not care—that the proposed legislation has faced universal condemnation by environment groups, the scientific community, academic experts and national parks service staff. Stakeholders from the tourism industry, recreational fishers, land rehabilitation groups and wild horse rehoming organisations have also opposed the plan. On the other side of the debate we have The Nationals and former member for Monaro Peter Cochran boasting on social media about the bill and the benefits they expect to reap from it. I oppose the bill in its entirety. The Blue Mountains community—located as it is

wholly within a national park—understands the importance of allowing national park staff, conservationists and environment experts within the scientific community to guide the management planning of our national parks. National parks are enjoyed by tourists and visitors, but that is not strictly speaking their reason for being.

Our national park estate exists as an exercise in conservation, environmental management and protection. National parks do not exist only to provide a playground for tourists—especially where the use of the park by tourists causes damage to endangered ecological communities or puts at risk the biodiversity and physical condition of unique landforms and river systems. If tourism can co-exist alongside conservation values and the pristine environment in our national parks then we are all the more fortunate. But we cannot prioritise one use, one activity or one small business venture over the overwhelming evidence, which tells us that these landscapes must be protected and preserved. I hold very grave concerns about the creeping commercialisation of our national parks more broadly.

Under this Government every opportunity to monetise and commercialise our national park estate is pursued. Likewise, the ever more frequent commercial letting of our botanic gardens and public spaces such as The Domain and Hyde Park continues apace. This Liberal-Nationals Government is an untrustworthy, reckless and—very possibly—corrupt outfit, so I oppose the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill. I oppose the bill and commend Labor shadow Minister for the Environment Penny Sharpe for crafting the principled, thoughtful and sensible position the Opposition has brought to this debate.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (20:25): On behalf of the Government I support the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. The bill seeks to recognise and protect the heritage value of the wild horse population in Kosciuszko National Park to resolve a longstanding debate on the issue. The bill will ensure that a sustainable population of wild horses is retained in parts of the national park so that the heritage value of this unique group of wild horses is respected and exists into the future.

There has been passionate debate about the management of the wild horse population of Kosciuszko National Park for many years. The issue has been a controversial and often polarising one. More than 20,000 people participated in forums and discussions to inform the preparation of the previous Draft Wild Horse Management Plan. In 2016 more than 10,000 people, including the Labor candidate for Monaro, signed a petition calling on the New South Wales Government to save the brumbies. This bill represents a critical point in the lengthy and contentious debate about the wild horses called brumbies. Their presence and cultural heritage values in Kosciuszko have been debated in the community and by environmental groups for years. This bill is about balance. It will provide a framework for actively managing the impacts of horses across the park whilst—I emphasise this—protecting the park's special values.

The bill will shift the discussion away from disagreements about legal culling and eradicating wild horses and bring various community groups, environmental groups, scientists and the Government together to work on how best to maintain a population in suitable areas and actively manage the population in order to protect heritage values and the environment. The bill will provide, for the first time, a clear and unambiguous direction about future wild horse populations. The heritage management plan required by the bill is a mechanism to achieve this balance. The bill is the result of long-term efforts by members of the community, whose voices have finally been heard. It is a sensible approach and takes on board the opinions of local people who have had long and enduring relationships with brumbies and the high country. It recognises that heritage matters and that it is worthy of protection.

Once the bill passes into law, finalising a wild horse heritage management plan in consultation with the community, scientific experts and advisory bodies will be a priority. The plan will outline the heritage value of the horses within identified parts of the park—I emphasise that it is within identified parts—and set out how those values will be protected whilst ensuring other environmental values of the park are maintained. The bill does not promote maintaining a specific number of brumbies in the park or increasing that number. It simply recognises the heritage and cultural value of the brumby and will set out a humane framework for managing their numbers to ensure that the balance between protecting the environment and the heritage value of the brumby is reached.

We hear claims that the horse population is increasing by 20 per cent per year but there is no evidence to back up those claims. At the same time, the same groups are claiming that 20 per cent die every year from natural causes. That is why we need to better understand horse numbers, their breeding cycles, where they range and where they have a minimal impact on the environment. This is all about getting the facts. The Government will invest in rigorous research and monitoring programs—I applaud that, because without the facts most of this discussion becomes emotional—and, thereafter, talk to the community and scientific experts to get accurate information on the wild horse population, which will inform decisions about where intervention is required. A community reference group and an independent technical advisory group will be established. These groups will ensure that all voices in the community can have a say and that the process will be guided by solid science and best practice techniques.

The wild horses of Kosciuszko National Park are a part of our unique alpine heritage, representing a link to our pioneering and pastoral past. They have been a part of Kosciuszko National Park for 200 years. We have heard and understand the depth of feeling about this on both sides of the fence. The Government has listened to environmental experts. The bill is the mechanism that ends the conflict and achieves a balanced solution that protects the heritage value of wild horses and the environment of the national park. I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (20:29): I make a contribution to debate on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 on the basis that I come from a family with Snowy Mountains heritage. I support the bill because I come from a grazing family on the Monaro. I am the great-grandson of a grazier who used to take cattle up through the mountains. Those opposite want to talk about the state of Kosciuszko National Park. It is a disgrace that a fire went through that region and devastated the alpine country. That fire occurred because of a lack of management. Those opposite should have a look at the area.

I have read comments in the paper by the Leader of the Opposition, who claimed that Kosciuszko was being turned into a horse ranch. What a load of rubbish. The wild horses are part of our heritage. This Government recognises the families there and the enormous contribution the pioneers have made to that region for generation after generation. The contribution stretches from the construction of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme through to the grazing on the Monaro and the modern-day tourism industry which supports people who are actually interested in the park. Members opposite have failed to read the objects of the bill to see what it is all about. If they reckon they know best because they are some sorts of lefty greenies, they can sit there and smirk. I will back my family heritage against that of the member for Port Stephens and the member for Maitland any day.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: I ask that you direct the Minister to address his comments through the Chair. He is reaching across the table and suggesting that there is something personal going on between Opposition members.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Opposition's way of dealing with wild horse numbers is to support an effort to shoot the animals from helicopters. That usually results in the animals being left to die over a couple of days. Those opposite seem to think that is humane. I have heard all sorts of numbers thrown around about the wild horse population in Kosciuszko National Park. I have heard that there are 18,000, 4,000 or 7,000. The park is a pretty big place. The beauty of this bill is that it goes to the heart of management of the park, and that comes back to my point about the fire. It happened in 2003, if my memory serves me correctly. Some of those alpine areas will take more than a century to recover from a fire that occurred because the park was not managed well. Country people know what went on for many years—mismanagement of the forested estate.

The member for Port Stephens is laughing. She thinks it is funny that this fire destroyed thousands of hectares in the alpine region because of a lack of management. The Government has stated clearly that it is possible to manage the horse numbers in a sustainable way to protect the environment, protect the wonderful tourism opportunities that stem from it, and protect our heritage and cultural values. Those members opposite are the same group of people who will tell say that people cannot ride horses through wilderness areas because it might do environmental damage. But a number of bridle tracks and stockhorse tracks exist—particularly through the south-east, through the mountains and down through to the coast. This Government has opened up the wilderness areas that Bob Carr and his ilk shut down. Members opposite seem to take a holier-than-thou approach because Bob Debus did something. That is what this goes to the heart of.

Ms Kate Washington: Wow.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Wow, yes. The member for Port Stephens does not care—she thinks it is all right to shoot wild horses from choppers and let the animals lie there dying for a couple of days. That is what the Labor Party is arguing and that is what it did.

Ms Kate Washington: I am not arguing that.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: You are not arguing that? Thank you. I will have that recorded. This bill is sensible in every facet. In 2011 we signed a clear memorandum of understanding with the Snowy communities in relation to the brumbies. I cannot understand why the Labor Party will not support this bill when we look at what the draft plan is designed to do. It spells out the management plan, which is to identify the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within identified parts of the park. Therein lies the key point—in some of the plains it is appropriate to manage it well. In some of the high country and alpine areas that is what this is about—managing the horse populations across the park. The bill clearly talks about the environmental values of

the park being maintained. Why would members opposite oppose that? Again, the key point out of all this is that we want to engage people in the know, not a bunch of so-called—

Ms Kate Washington: Scientists.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is interesting that you talk about scientists. Where were all the scientists before the park burnt? When my family was managing cattle through the mountains the Aboriginal people would do the burning. Here we have an appropriate process for the management of the brumbies.

Ms Kate Washington: Which you have not done for eight years.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: That is versus what you did in government to country areas. Guess what? The people have not forgotten it. The member for Port Stephens does not know what she is talking about. She will talk about scientists and all of that nonsense.

Ms Kate Washington: What? Like we have not lived in country areas all our lives?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The member for Port Stephens will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: One thing I can tell you about your chances, member for Port Stephens, is that you are only going to be here for one term, and it is starting to show. There are very clear parts of this bill that are important to understand. It sets out the relationship with the National Parks and Wildlife Act. It talks about the necessary regulations. It talks about the advisory power. Let us look at the make-up of the advisory panel. There is one Aboriginal person. Are members opposite going to oppose that? There are community representatives from the locality. Are they going to oppose that? There is also someone involved in animal welfare. I have had discussions with people in the area about rehoming. We had a brumby on our farm at Berida. It was a stocky little thing.

Brumbies can be rehomed, they can be taken to the knackery, and they can be managed sustainably. Why would members opposite be opposed to someone in animal welfare being part of the advisory panel? Members opposite are going to oppose a conservationist being on the panel. That is what they are arguing. This is political for the Labor Party. We know where their preferences come from and we know their behaviour. They have a big problem with the inner city vote now because The Greens have taken them over. I find it bewildering that we have had inflammatory language from the Leader of the Opposition about this. I would be interested to hear what Labor Party people in the region think.

Ms Shelley Hancock: They don't care.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: They don't care. They are happy to be driven by their political masters in Sydney. *[Extension of time]*

The point is that we have local people who want to manage a local issue and play to our heritage, tourism and conservation principles in one of the most special parts of the country. I think members opposite are playing political games with this. They have never been there.

Ms Kate Washington: I have never been there?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Have you been to Kiandra? Where have you been? Thredbo?

Ms Kate Washington: I grew up in Tumut.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: I am not sure what the Minister's issue is but he needs to direct his comments through the Chair and not cast aspersions on the experience of Opposition members.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I heard that the member for Port Stephens was born in Tumut. She should go back to Tumut, go to the pub and find out what they have to say about her voting against this bill. I would be interested to know.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Prior to the member for Port Stephens entering the Chamber the member for Blue Mountains and the member for Newcastle were heard in silence for the entirety of their contributions. The Minister will be shown the same respect. If the member for Port Stephens cannot listen in silence she can leave the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The point is that members opposite are acting for politically expedient reasons and are not seeing the bill for what it is worth. It is about supporting Snowy communities, the environment and the incredible tourist operators who do an amazing job. No-one is denying that this needs to be done in a sustainable way. That is the commonsense element of the bill. The brumbies are part of our history. For a lot of people in the Monaro and in electorates like mine it matters a lot. Members opposite have ignored all the required conservation and management of the park. They caused the place to be burnt to the ground through their inaction and lack of resourcing.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Where did those fires start? Victoria. Don't you even know that?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The member should go and look at the destruction caused by those wildfires because of the Labor Party's attitude towards appropriate bush management. It would not matter whether it was a fire in the mountains or brumbies. We have said very clearly that there is no better way to do this than to have local people involved so that we can get some great outcomes. What I have seen from members opposite and the inflammatory language I have heard from the Leader of the Opposition about horse ranches is just ridiculous. I am happy to stand alongside the member for Monaro, who is very much in touch with what is going on. Those communities are wanting this and have wanted it for years.

I invite members opposite to get an understanding of this issue, instead of coming in here with their typical rhetoric that is all about The Greens preferences. They are holding up Bob Debus as some sort of Messiah for the environment when all he did was lock areas up and not manage them with any appropriate resources. Bob Carr extended one great big national park from border to border and did not put in any resources to manage it. This Government is prepared to protect our heritage and do that in a responsible and sustainable manner around conservation. The reality is that the Labor Opposition again has demonstrated why Labor is not fit to govern. Through the Chair, I say to Labor members: Go and get The Greens preferences and be proud of yourselves, but the community in the bush wants this.

Mr David Harris: One Nation preferences.

Ms Kate Washington: Because it makes diddly squat of a difference, if you really want to know.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: One Nation preferences.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Labor members want to talk about One Nation. Guess what? My leader has not been endorsed by Pauline Hanson, unlike their leader. One thing I will say very clearly is that this is a matter of enormous importance to the Snowy communities. I fully support this bill. It is a shame that Labor members do not. I am very surprised that the good member for Port Stephens, who was born in Tumut, would speak against those communities.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (20:45): I do not really want to comment on what we have just seen and heard, but I will say that I have been to Thredbo and Kosciuszko on a number of occasions as a tour operator. There are many reasons that I want to contribute to debate on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. Like my Labor colleagues, I simply cannot support this bill. It is very difficult to know where to start, but I will begin with a declaration, as any member of this House should when they want to discuss issues that they have had some involvement with.

As a former tour operator whose company took tours into the Kosciuszko park, perhaps I am a little more qualified than are some members who have participated in this debate—the Minister who preceded me epitomises that—to deal with certain issues. I am more qualified than most to speak on the need for proper management of any environmental impact of the brumbies in the park. I declare that I no longer have any financial interests in the company, which I sold in 2016. My husband is an employee of that company. When my husband and I owned that company, in 2003 we experienced significant financial loss as a result of the Thredbo fires. We would take people to those parks. I am not sure that my husband does that currently with the new owners of the company, but it is good to state these matters on the record. There has been a bit of discussion of people who do not want to be clear and transparent about their pecuniary and other interests in matters we debate in this House.

The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, who preceded me in this debate, referred to management of the park. If we consider the number of brumbies in the park over the past eight years of this Government, we are faced with a doubling of the number. In 2009 the number was in the vicinity of 8,000. As at 2013-14, the numbers have increased to 17,000. That is a huge increase as a result of a lack of management by this Government. While the brumbies are seen in some quarters as iconic to the Kosciuszko landscape—and that cannot be denied—they cannot be allowed to undermine the environmental integrity or the value of other fauna or flora within the park. In fact, this bill puts the recognition and protection of heritage value for the wild horses, or the brumbies, within parts of the Kosciuszko National Park above all other species by requiring a draft wild horse heritage management plan to be prepared, yet the legislation fails to define such vital aspects of such a plan.

If a plan was in place it would include basic things such as heritage value, sustainable wild horse populations, identified parts of the park, or other environmental values of the park. If we do not have definitions of core concepts in this bill, how can it be meaningful in any way whatsoever? At best, this is just sloppy drafting. But given that have a Deputy Premier who has introduced this legislation, despite the fact that its provisions fall within the jurisdiction of the Minister for the Environment, and given that we have a Deputy Premier who had his donor here just a few minutes ago and who, we heard today, is compromised by potentially undeclared donations from one tour operator in the park, we have to consider what motivations there may be for the Deputy Premier to introduce the legislation. Is this a captain's call? Is this what a Liberal in tan pants has brought The Nationals to?

I notice that not a lot of The Nationals are participating in this debate. They have had to have time to collect their thoughts and muster some intestinal fortitude to sell out the people in their communities. Contrary to what the Deputy Premier may think, there is more than one tour operator who uses that park. There are hotels, motels, and all sorts of other people who use the park. Earlier the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure referred to what people who live in those areas would think. I went there with the Labor candidate for Monaro, Bryce Wilson. Although it feels as though it was just yesterday, it was a few months ago that we went down to Jindabyne and right through that whole area. We spoke to tourism operators who use the park. They are appalled by the lack of support from this Government in the form of a plan for tourism. For the Labor Opposition to be lectured by the member for Bega and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure about this legislation is simply ridiculous.

I again make the point that this legislation will set one tour operator against all others, which is not the way to create a sustainable tourism environment and it is not the way to create a sustainable environmental policy. If this Liberal-Nationals Government fails, as the Liberals and Nationals have done so many times before, to protect the environment, it will be a watershed failure of government. This park is one of our most pristine wilderness areas in this State and in this nation. It is a place that was used by our First Nation people for some 20,000 years for collective feasting on the bogong moth. It is a place where skiing started in Australia back in 1861. It is a place where the National Chase Snowy Mountains park began back in 1906. It is the place that Bill McKell proclaimed as the Kosciuszko State Park in April 1944. It is a place that was declared as the Kosciuszko National Park in 1967. There are migrants all over this nation who owe their new start in Australia to this park. This park is more than some wild horses and a Government that is pandering to one tourism operator. This is the heritage of our nation. It is not about some brumbies that someone wants to make money out of and otherwise get some mileage out of.

Many of our most rare and threatened plant and animal species occur within the boundaries of this park. It contains some nine separate wilderness areas that have been identified in the latest management scheme. The park is home to one of Australia's most threatened species, the corroboree frog. Why is the Deputy Premier not dying in a ditch over that? It is because his donor does not take tours to see the corroboree frog. He also probably does not take tours to see the endangered mountain pygmy possum. Good policy should be evidence based, yet this Deputy Premier does not accept the scientific evidence.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The member for Oatley will come to order.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I love how Government members shout over the top of me and the Chair does not stop them.

Mr Mark Coure: Do you want me to take a point of order on relevance?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The member for Oatley will come to order.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: The member for Oatley should keep interrupting because it is working for him. Instead of accepting scientific evidence, the Deputy Premier would prefer to accept the donations of tour operators in his electorate.

Ms Shelley Hancock: Point of order: If the member for Maitland wishes to criticise the member for Monaro in this manner, she should do so by way of substantive motion. She knows that. That is Standing Order 73. I know what happened last week. But the member for Maitland should cease attacking the member for Monaro, unless she does so by way of substantive motion. The member for Maitland should know better. She has been a member of this House long enough.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I ask the member for Maitland: Do you wish to move a substantive motion?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: No, thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker. I just want to speak to the bill and express valid concerns—which include the carriage of this legislation by someone in a marginal seat who has no ministerial responsibility or jurisdiction to deliver it—about the way this bill has been introduced to this House. It is appropriate in a democracy that members have the opportunity to question that. The Deputy Premier is

conflicted and compromised. A majority of the Independent Technical Reference Group, which compiled the 2016 draft management plan, reportedly have written to the Government arguing that "rigorous scientific and technical advice" should apply to future management of the wild horses. Labor Opposition members agree with the scientists. I note an earlier interjection that was equating scientists with socialists. Members of the Government belong to the Flat Earth Society. They just do not get it.

Members on this side of the House agree with the scientists. We support the six-point plan released by my colleague the shadow Minister for the Environment to save the national park and manage the wild horse population. We on this side of the House argue that the primary document to guide the operation of the park should be the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management. We know this will only work if the National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] is adequately funded. This Government has been cutting funding for the service to the bone, and all the service's resources are being diminished. We have seen the damage caused by that. Labor's plan has a place for our iconic brumbies. [*Extension of time*]

Our plan does have a place for the iconic brumbies by doing a scientific assessment and count of the horses, retaining a smaller population and consulting with stakeholders. Contrary to the Government's slurs, our plan maintains a ban on aerial culling, will establish a formal rehoming program and will increase capacity for humane population control measures. The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government is trying to ram this bill home late in the Coalition's second term—and hopefully this Government's last term. This is an emotional bill to appease the contributors to the Deputy Premier's election war chest, not an informed piece of legislation that will work to manage the complex ecological, environmental, conservation and tourism aspects of the park—it is none of those things. The Minister for the Environment should remain focused on evidence-based environmental outcomes for Kosciuszko National Park, rather than letting the Deputy Premier introduce into this place a conflicted and compromised piece of legislation that we have been told has been drafted by one of his donors. What has been the response to this bill from the rest of our community?

Mr Stephen Bromhead: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73, which states:

Imputations of improper motives and personal reflections on Members of either House are disorderly other than by substantive motion.

I submit that the member is making allegations against the Deputy Premier not by substantive motion, and therefore the member should be called to order because her imputations are disorderly.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I remind the member for Maitland that this is the second point of order taken under Standing Order 73. She should stick to the leave of the bill. If she wishes to attack another member, she should do so by way of substantive motion.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: There has been universal condemnation of the proposal by environment groups, scientists, academic experts and former NPWS employees, along with a range of key stakeholders in the tourism industry, except for the important stakeholder opposite. Others who have condemned the bill are recreational fishers, land rehabilitation groups and wild horse rehoming groups, who have all opposed the plan. Jobs are a huge consideration, and I know that Labor's candidate for the seat of Monaro in the coming election has had a lot of representations about jobs that will be impacted should this legislation pass this Parliament.

Mr Mark Coure: How many signed the petition?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I cannot understand how any member of The Nationals would be prepared to compromise themselves on this bill.

Mr Mark Coure: They should sign the petition.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: They know the importance of eradicating feral animals in land management. Why would they consider passing legislation which impacts on one of our most pristine environments? At the end of the day, this bill goes to the issue of trust in this Government. On the one hand, we have the weight of scientific evidence, while on the other hand, we have one donor, who has helped to draft this bill. I know who I trust on this issue.

Mr Mark Coure: Step outside and say this on the steps of Parliament.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! I call the member for Oatley to order for the first time.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: In his second reading speech the Deputy Premier claimed this bill would ensure that no horse will be shot or culled, except in circumstances where a horse is injured or sick; however, the bill makes no provision for this in any way. The bill does not deal with methods of population control or the humaneness of any of those methods. The Deputy Premier stated also that the Government will appoint a new

Independent Technical Reference Group, implement a research and monitoring program, undertake a new count of horse numbers and implement a marketing campaign for rehoming of horses. These are great things, but they are not in the bill. This bill has been drafted to advantage one person in this State, not to advantage the Kosciuszko National Park. This bill is a shame, and those opposite should be ashamed of themselves if they support it. It is a disgrace.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The behaviour of members in this Chamber is disgraceful. Standing Order 52 states that members will be heard in silence. There are far too many interjections from both sides of the House. Members should be ashamed of themselves and should show respect for other members. The member for Charlestown will be heard in silence.

Ms Anna Watson: Let's hope so.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! As a former Temporary Speaker, the member for Shellharbour knows that it is disorderly to interject. I direct the member for Shellharbour to remove herself from the Chamber for a period of 20 minutes.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Shellharbour left the Chamber at 20:58.]

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (21:00): My contribution to the debate on the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 will be brief. The bill seeks to place wild horses above all other environmental and cultural values within the Kosciuszko National Park, attributing the same cultural values to an introduced species as to the natural environment, which is something I cannot, and will not, support. My strong opposition stems from the following reasons: First, this bill ignores science and the irreversible damage that unmanaged wild horse populations have undeniably had on Kosciuszko National Park, and I believe a more ethical approach would be to launch a plan to protect the park's fragile environment and the threatened species that live there, as Labor has done. I and my Labor colleagues stand with the scientists, tourism operators, anglers, environmentalists and land rehabilitation groups, with whom we share the argument that this bill should not be supported.

In 1944 Labor Premier Bill McKell established Kosciuszko National Park, which holds special significance for Australia with its unique environment being home to rare threatened species such as the mountain pygmy possum, the southern corroboree frog, and the broad-toothed rat. These are species that require protection, ironically, from habitat degradation caused by the animals this bill aims to protect in this very park. The broad-toothed rat, for example, is a tubby, compact rodent, chubby-cheeked, with a short, wide face and ears, and long, dense, fine fur. It is a native species that can be found in the wet alpine and subalpine heaths and woodlands in Kosciuszko National Park. Unfortunately, wild horses degrade the poor little broad-toothed rat's habitat and cover, which greatly disturbs the species. The broad-toothed rat is one of many species affected by the overpopulation of brumbies in the park, and I find it disappointing that we are not arguing to protect any of these other species this evening.

Secondly, this bill poses a threat to vital jobs and tourism in the region. In failing to act to protect the park's natural environment, this Parliament, if it supports this bill, will be failing to protect local people. It is well known that Kosciuszko National Park is the most visited national park in New South Wales outside the Greater Sydney region, with a visitation rate that has grown 50 per cent from 2014 to 2016. More than two million people visit the park to experience its natural beauty every year. I know that if we were seeing this trend in my electorate of Charlestown, I would be doing everything within my power to continue the job growth in the best interest of my constituents, not acting to send job growth backwards as this bill will do.

Furthermore, I cannot support this bill because it contradicts the Government's own environment department's Draft Wild Horse Management Plan for Kosciuszko National Park, which contains recommendations to reduce brumby numbers in the national park by up to 90 per cent. This is a management plan that aims to conserve the outstanding values of Kosciuszko National Park with the support of the community through active, adaptive and humane management of wild horses to minimise their adverse impacts on natural, cultural and visitor values, while acknowledging the cultural and social values of the Kosciuszko National Park wild horse population.

If the Government did not consider the recommendations of its own department, as well as conservation professionals, scientists, environmentalists and land rehabilitation groups in creating this bill, then what consultation is this bill really based on? It would seem as though the only people consulted in the drafting of this bill were local business owners, like former member for Monaro, Peter Cochran, who happens to operate a horse tour business in the region. In the Deputy Premier's second reading speech, he stated that "culling is cruel and barbaric", citing statistics from Guy Fawkes River National Park. I found this to be quite a flawed argument, given that independent reports on that particular cull have found that it was successfully carried out in a humane way.

As an alternative to culling, regardless of how humane it may be, the Government is proposing that brumby numbers be managed by trapping and rehoming programs, supported by a marketing campaign to promote

brumby adoption. It seems to me that rehoming wild brumbies would be a difficult task and it would appear that the provision for this in the bill is destined to fail, as even wild horse rehoming organisations oppose it. They know that trapping and transporting wild horses is an incredibly difficult task and, more often than not, horses are injured.

Finally, the Deputy Premier and those opposite argue for the humanity of this bill. Yet even the RSPCA—an organisation whose mission statement is that animals must be treated humanely—is publicly strongly opposed to this bill, claiming that it ignores evidence and should be reconsidered. The RSPCA has also stated that the protection of wild horses from lethal culling inside Kosciuszko National Park will "veto evidence-based management" of their environmental impact and that the bill would also make it impossible to conserve the unique environmental values of Kosciuszko. We need to address humane methods of brumby population control, and this bill completely ignores that. I encourage other members of the New South Wales Parliament to look beyond the Deputy Premier for information on the brumbies' history and management options when voting on this legislation.

I reiterate that this bill places wild horses above all other environmental and cultural values within the area. It is a recipe for irreversible damage to soil, water, threatened species and endangered ecological communities within Kosciuszko National Park. It ignores the careful recommendations of the 2016 Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan and does not provide a humane approach to the management of wild horse populations within the park. As a result it threatens the livelihoods of many people who rely on the tourism benefits of environmentally sympathetic and sensible management of Kosciuszko National Park for their jobs and their income. This bill is a retrograde step for one of our most important and loved national parks, and I oppose it.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (21:07): The Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 shows that the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government is more than happy to depart from commonsense, scientifically based, expert-informed land management principles in favour of their political donors and to the detriment of the broader community. In a remarkable piece of spin, the member for Monaro, John Barilaro, and his dodgy Government have attempted to dress up their longtime mismanagement of our national parks estate as a tribute to the "heritage" of the brumby. The bill has little to do with heritage and culture. It has been written for and by a Nationals donor, whose relationship to the Leader of The Nationals was not disclosed to Cabinet when this legislation was being endorsed. Its aim is not to maintain the sustainability of the magnificent Kosciuszko National Park, nor is it interested in supporting the broader tourism industry connected to the booming Snowy Mountains region. Its obvious purpose is to protect the profits of John Barilaro's mates and his own votes.

Mr Stephen Bromhead: Point of order: The point of order relates to Standing Order 73, which states:

Imputations of improper motives and personal reflections on Members of either House are disorderly other than by substantive motion.

This is not a substantive motion in relation to—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I uphold the point of order, because there was an imputation there. I remind the member for Port Stephens to speak to the leave of the bill.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: It is a shame that this particular standing order was not applied similarly in the last sitting week, but I will move on. The ridiculous dichotomy that the Government is trying to push—that one either respects the local heritage value of the brumby or wants them all gone—is absurd. This issue is not a zero-sum game; there is a reasonable and science-based approach to the problem. There are hundreds of local businesses relying on the continued protection of the Kosciuszko National Park, but those voices seem to have been lost in this superficial exercise. Our national parks estate is one of the oldest in the world. While the majority of our national parks have been created by Labor governments, they have in the past enjoyed bipartisan support and recognition of the important role that they play in the State's ecosystem, economy and tourism. Sadly, this bill trashes that longstanding consensus.

The Kosciuszko National Park was created by one of the great Labor Premiers of the State, Sir William McKell. As Premier, McKell also created the State's first conservation department and was instrumental in the creation of the Snowy Hydro scheme. This legacy makes the Deputy Premier's attempt to undermine the biodiversity of the area all the more abhorrent. Our national parks protect the entire biodiversity of a region, from the plants and insects to the waterways and landscape. However, this issue is about not only the protection of the environment but also the protection of jobs that rely on a healthy Kosciuszko National Park. Unlike the Premier, Labor wants to protect all local jobs—not just those related to donors to The Nationals. And that is the risk here—

Mr Stephen Bromhead: Point of order: Standing Order 73, relating to imputations of improper motives and personal reflections. If the member for Port Stephens wants to talk about protecting donors and other things,

that is an improper motive and imputation. It is simple: If the member for Port Stephens would stick to the standing orders, we would not have this issue, but she constantly flouts your previous ruling.

Mr Chris Minns: To the point of order: There is no imputation in the statement read by the member for Port Stephens. She simply stated that someone involved had made a donation to the Leader of The Nationals Party. That is factual.

Mr Stephen Bromhead: You're misleading the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The member for Kogarah has the call.

Mr Chris Minns: That's a serious charge. I hope you can back it up.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Members will direct their comments through the Chair.

Mr Chris Minns: For the member for Port Stephens to impute an improper motive, there would have to be a verb in there. You would have to say that a donation was made and that actions happened on the back of that. The member for Port Stephens made a comment to the House that the Deputy Premier received a donation. He has not denied that—in fact there is a register that has recorded that, which any member of Parliament can access immediately. I ask you to rule against the point of order in the interests of debate and consistency.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I uphold the point of order. I draw the member for Port Stephens back to the leave of the bill.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: I like to hope that this is a place of truth. To continue my contribution to debate on the bill, I say that to protect the entire region a reasonable and science-based approach must be used. I would not have thought that anyone in this place would have an issue with the concept that planning and protection of national parks ought to be guided by experts; clearly, the members opposite do. Instead, for the first time ever, this bill will override the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and place the importance of one species above the wellbeing of all other species in the Kosciuszko National Park.

It is telling that the bill was introduced into this place by the member for Monaro, rather than the Minister for the Environment who has jurisdiction and ministerial accountability in this area. Today in question time, the Minister once again demonstrated her lack of interest and understanding about the environment. But we know the member for Monaro is keen to impress his constituents. However, there is a downside to getting political benefactors to draft legislation. In his second reading speech the member for Monaro claimed that this bill would ensure that no horse would be shot or culled, except in circumstances where a horse is injured or sick.

However, it turns out that the bill makes no provision for these restrictions. The bill does not deal with what methods of population control will or will not be allowed, which is a very convenient truth. The member for Monaro claimed also that this bill would see the Government appoint a new Independent Technical Reference Group, as well as implement a research and monitoring program, undertake a new count of the wild horse population, and implement a marketing campaign for the rehoming of wild horses. However, it is very clear that none of those provisions are in the bill and zero funding has been identified.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I caution the member for Lismore to not interject.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: The bill is a terrible indictment of the member for Monaro, given his departure from commonsense, science-based, environmentally centred solutions, and his capitulation to political donors. It reeks of political opportunism and expediency. I am pleased that Labor will oppose the bill. I am also proud of the plan that Labor has announced to protect Kosciuszko National Park from 2019, when we form government. Only Labor will undo the Deputy Premier's mess and ensure that the plan of management for Kosciuszko National Park is the primary management document to guide the operation of the park; a plan guided by experts.

Labor will restore the important National Parks & Wildlife Service, which has had its resources slashed by the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government. A Labor Government will work to minimise the impacts of introduced species, both plants and animals, through adequately funded and effective control programs that are reasonable and science based. With this effective management of introduced species in mind, Labor will conduct a scientific assessment and a count of the horse population, and use the Government's 2016 Draft Wild Horse Management Plan as a basis for sustainably managing the wild horse population, which was a plan developed by experts, not by populist politicians.

Perhaps the most important part of Labor's announcement is a commitment to repair the Kosciuszko mountain catchments by establishing a highly trained Kosciuszko works crew. Labor will ensure that work is undertaken to halt erosion in the mountain catchments, damaged by the wild brumbies, and will restore the current

eroding slopes, wetlands and mountain streams. The work will restore the best possible water delivery from the catchments to the Snowy scheme and for downstream farmers, towns and cities. I commend the shadow Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Penny Sharpe, for her work on this policy, hand in hand with Labor's candidate for the Monaro, Bryce Wilson, whose strong connection with his community means that he knows that his community values the Kosciuszko National Park and all that it stands for and all that it holds. I also acknowledge the Opposition Leader, a former shadow environment Minister. *[Extension of time]*

The Leader of the Opposition has had a long commitment to not just protecting but also celebrating our national parks. This stands in stark contrast to the attitude of the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government and indeed the Minister for the Environment. In my electorate of Port Stephens I hear the frustration from residents who know and love our national parks. They see the staff being cut, resources drying up, and maintenance repairs taking longer and longer. I grew up in the Snowy Mountains region and country New South Wales, and like many people in Port Stephens I live there because of its natural beauty. Like many of my constituents I know the value of national parks. Recently we had summer bushfires raging through our national parks and I heard the concerns of local Rural Fire Services staff who saw that cuts to national parks had reduced the amount of backburning being done, while fire breaks and access roads were not being maintained. It is clear—

Mr Thomas George: That's not true.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: It is true and I stand here, having had those conversations. It is clear that this Government—

Mr Stephen Bromhead: The National Parks ~~and~~ Wildlife Service has spent a decade not doing any burn-offs. We have done more in the past five years—

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: Mr Temporary Speaker, I ask that you speak—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I am in charge here. I remind the member for Myall Lakes that the member for Port Stephens will be heard in silence. If the member wishes to contribute to this debate, he can seek the call later.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker.

Mr Mark Coure: It is relevant, seriously.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I have made my ruling. I ask Government members to keep their comments until they have the call. The member for Port Stephens has the call.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: It is clear that the Government is failing in its role as custodians of our national parks. It is clear with this bill that it will continue in that vein and do worse. The member for Monaro should tear up this bill and replace it with one that he or the Minister for the Environment has written that actually protects the biodiversity of our national parks, and understands the value of it to our local jobs and local economies. Alongside all of my Labor colleagues, I oppose this bill.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (21:20): Like my colleagues on this side of the House, I oppose the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 based on the science I have read. The Temporary Speaker will be happy to know that I will not refer to donations as other members have done and the role they may or may not have played. I will leave that to others. I will stick to the science. I refer to an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* by Professor Don Driscoll, President of the Ecological Society of Australia and Director of the Centre for Integrative Ecology at Deakin University, who is probably more qualified than many of the people who have spoken in this debate. In relation to the Deputy Premier's bill, Professor Driscoll states:

In tabling his bill, Barilaro argued the legislation would give long overdue recognition of brumby culture, while avoiding the cruel slaughter of thousands of horses in culls proposed in the Draft Wild Horse Management Plan for Kosciuszko National Park.

Professor Driscoll also went on to say:

But many things in Barilaro's speech are questionable. For example, he overstated the supposed cruelty of culling horses and the cultural importance of keeping horses in Kosciuszko National Park. Barilaro told Parliament that culling is cruel and barbaric, citing statistics from Guy Fawkes National Park.

Reading the independent report that was written by Dr A. W. English, head of the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney—someone who has a whole range of qualifications—one would question how the Deputy Premier came up with those comments. The report says that what happened in Guy Fawkes River National Park was necessary because those horses were starving to death as a result of bushfires. The horses were dying a cruel death and the culling that took place there was appropriate. Dr English made suggestions—

Mr Andrew Fraser: You're a fool.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: I am quoting from a scientist. It is not my opinion; it is a scientist's opinion. If you want to call him a fool, get your qualifications out.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I remind the member for Wyong to direct his comments through the Chair. I remind Government members that every member in this place deserves to be heard in silence. If a member wishes to contribute to the debate, he or she should seek the call.

Mr Andrew Fraser: I have made my contribution.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): We appreciate the contribution of the member for Coffs Harbour. The member for Wyong has the call.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: As I said, this is not my opinion. These are the opinions of scientists who are well qualified in their field. If members want to argue with that, they should write them a letter. The report was done independently and has a different result to the one suggested by the Deputy Premier. That independent report found the cull was well run and carried out humanely. Those are the facts. The horses in Guy Fawkes River National Park were short on food after a bushfire and some had starved to death. Rapid culling was humane compared with prolonged suffering from starvation. That is what happens when the population is allowed to become too large. It puts pressure on the ecosystem and if there is a fire they starve. That is a far worse outcome. We should rely on science in this place rather than the rubbish that we have heard from members opposite. The independent Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan was produced by experts—fancy that. The Don Driscoll article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* states:

By removing the capacity to humanely manage horse numbers with culling in Kosciuszko, the "brumby bill" will leave a growing horse population that is increasingly vulnerable to cruel mass starvation events.

It also states:

This Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan has been developed with input from an Independent Technical Reference Group, an extensive community and stakeholder engagement process, a review of the heritage significance of wild horses in Kosciuszko National Park and a thorough review of the 2008 Kosciuszko National Park Horse Management Plan.

This is a thorough document that is the product of extensive research done by experts who have spent a great deal of time coming to conclusions versus this bill, which has appeared from nowhere for various reasons. I will not go into those reasons. Donations might have something to do with it, but I will not go there. It has no scientific foundation and has suddenly wiped out the work of every reputable person in the State who has examined this issue and experts across the border. Victoria has taken a totally different approach, and one based on science. This bill represents The Nationals' tail wagging the dog; this is the Liberal Party succumbing to pressure from The Nationals. Many people in the Liberal Party are not comfortable with this legislation because they think we should rely on science, facts and experts and that there should not be other reasons for introducing it. The Opposition recognises the heritage value of brumbies; no-one is saying they have no value. However, Professor Driscoll states:

Barilaro also told Parliament that brumbies from the Snowy Mountains had an "integral role" in the Australian Light Horse campaign during World War I.

However, the cultural heritage report prepared for the NPWS finds no definitive evidence that that was the case, simply that it was "possible" some went into active service.

It is not surprising that brumbies from Kosciuszko were not a key source of horses for World War I. Brumbies were of poor quality and viewed as only useful for meat export. Horses that went to support the war effort, the "Walers", were bred in the thousands across Australia to support colonial expansion and export trades.

Members opposite should question the Deputy Premier and find out what reports and research he has that contradict the cultural report, which was prepared by experts. This place should rely on facts, not what his mates tell him. In fact, that is happening in the corner now. Experts have put a lot of time and effort into this issue. They have done extensive consultation and research, but their findings have been thrown out the window by members opposite. They do not care because this is a totally political bill. It has nothing to do with looking after horses or the park. The article further states:

Barilaro asserted that reducing horses to 600 in the park "aims for the extinction of wild horses". With the brumbies in Kosciuszko found to be the same genetic stock as most other horses in Australia, and with 400,000 feral horses around Australia, this concern is unfounded.

In comparison, there is a real risk of a statewide or global extinction of unique animals and plants, as expanding horse populations destroy their habitat. Species like the southern corroboree frog and the Guthega skink are already threatened with extinction and are vulnerable to impacts of horses.

Those animals may not be sexy, but if we were talking about feral pigs or feral deer would we be debating a bill designed to protect them? This bill represents one interest group getting its way without any scientific basis. The Opposition has a six-point plan that will do what needs to be done; it looks at the science, it preserves the park,

and it preserves the brumbies. That is what a government should do; it should not serve up the rubbish being debated today. Members can refuse to believe me, but they should believe the scientists, the experts and the committee that has done so much work. The Deputy Premier should note the words of an immortal song:

Casts her wild note over water and cloud
That's the way it's gonna be, little darlin'
We'll be riding on the horses, yeah.

Blow the rest of the park and the animals that will be driven to extinction; members opposite will look after their mates.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! I remind members on both sides of the House that the member with the call should be heard in silence.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (21:30): National Parks are among New South Wales' most precious assets, and the assets managed by the National Parks & Wildlife Service [NPWS] are extraordinary. They contain our best water catchments and carbon sinks, and our most precious natural heritage. They are also important for our wellbeing. The national parks of this State are an important part of our natural capital, delivering services to our communities worth many billions of dollars every year. Our natural heritage is also a fundamental aspect of our cultural heritage and our national identity—it is who we are. The assets in our national parks are literally irreplaceable and their replacement cost in an accounting sense is incalculable. Despite that, this Government is culling NPWS staff across New South Wales and allowing our beautiful national parks to slowly become degraded.

Kosciuszko National Park holds special significance for Australia because of its unique environment and rare threatened species, such as the mountain pygmy possum, the southern corroboree frog and the member for Port Stephens' favourite, the broad-toothed rat. We have 21 species of flowering plants in the mountains that are found nowhere else on Earth. The peatland soils are unique, as are the alpine and subalpine bog and wetland catchments that help to supply high-quality water to the Murray-Darling Basin. The entire park is listed as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO, and Blue Lake is listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

NPWS staff tell us loudly and clearly they are in survival mode under the Liberal-Nationals Government. They have been subject to cuts—cuts to staff and services. The introduction of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 is yet another attack on the integrity of our national parks. Last year our national parks experienced a massive increase in visitors, despite the fact that the NPWS had been stripped of staff and managers are now responsible for larger and larger areas, managed with fewer and fewer staff. The Natural Resources Commission submission to the review of pest management clearly outlines that capitulating to brumby lovers will bring future grief to the Government, cause immense suffering to horses, generate welfare concerns and create very damaging environmental outcomes. Tom Bagnat from the National Parks & Wildlife Service stated that the 2015 control measures, which consisted of trapping and rehoming, were not keeping pace with the growth in the population.

Under the current management system, horse numbers increased from 1,700 in 2003, to more than 4,000 in 2009 and had reached 6,000 in 2014, despite the removal of 2,300 horses. The Labor Party has a strong commitment to the integrity of national parks and will not support the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. The bill ignores science and the irreversible damage that unmanaged wild horse populations have done to Kosciuszko National Park. This bill, which places the wild horses above all other environmental and cultural values within the park, is a recipe for irreversible damage to soil, water, threatened species, and endangered ecological communities within the park. It also undermines the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the park and risks public safety. It ignores the careful recommendations of the 2016 draft Wild Horse Management Plan and does not provide a humane approach to the management of wild horse populations within the park.

Kosciuszko National Park is the most visited national park in New South Wales outside the Greater Sydney region, with an increase of 52 per cent from 2014 to 2016 and a total of more than two million visits each year. Labor is genuinely concerned that a failure to protect Kosciuszko National Park will lead to a loss of jobs in tourism that are vital to the region. We on this side will not eliminate the brumbies altogether. We will work with science to ensure that damage by wild horses does not go unchecked as we know there is too much at stake to risk the benefits the park brings to the region for tourism and employment. Labor commits to restoring to National Parks & Wildlife the cuts by the Liberal-Nationals Government to protect Australia's only alpine national park's pristine environment and threatened species. Who is charged with the long-term custodianship and management of our national parks in the interest of the people of New South Wales? Clearly, it is not a government that introduces a bill to allow introduced feral animal species numbers to go unchecked.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (21:34): In reply: There is a term called "confected

outrage". I have been sitting in my office listening to those opposite. I will go through their concerns point by point, but the reality is that it is clear tonight—as it has been clear in the public domain over the past week or so—that not only their local candidate, but also the Leader of the Opposition and those opposite do not understand the bill. It is clear that is the case when debate on the facts is put aside and the attack is on the person. Those opposite attacked me and they attacked Peter Cochran. They tried to make this about donations. They played the grubby game that Labor is renowned for: getting into the gutter and attacking the individual rather than looking at the facts and what the Government has proposed.

I am happy to take my time at the lectern to pull apart Labor's six-point plan or to show those opposite that their six-point plan is actually in line with what we on this side are saying. Let me make this absolutely clear: First, the brumby bill does not override anything in the National Parks & Wildlife Act. Second, the brumby bill is about the cultural connection of these horses to the park, which all those opposite say they accept: there is some cultural heritage connection. Those opposite used the term "heritage horses". Their local candidate signed a petition in support of the brumbies having a cultural connection to the park and only days ago confirmed his commitment on camera. But those opposite have decided to play politics rather than to look at the issue at hand.

Ms Liesl Tesch: The integrity of the national park.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am happy to talk about the integrity of the national park, because on Labor's watch nothing was done about the number of the horses. Those opposite talk about the numbers growing over the past two decades. Remember: Labor was in government for 16 years. Labor's only approach was to slaughter the horses from the air, which resulted in a community outcry.

Mr Thomas George: It was a disgrace.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It was a disgrace. National Parks officers were charged under the instruction of those opposite—their Minister's sign-off on the instruction to cull from the air. We are here today because of what happened in 2000 at Guy Fawkes River National Park. We are here today because the community supports a bill that recognises, for the very first time, the cultural connection, but not to the detriment of the environment or to Kosciuszko National Park. The bill is in line with community sentiment—how we manage numbers and how we manage the park. We knew Labor had lost its way when those opposite made this debate about the person and did what they always do: get into the gutter, led by the Leader of the Opposition and matched by every other member. They come to towards castle and want to attack me and my reputation or those who have supported the bill. They chose to come into this House to hide behind parliamentary privilege to attack. They should be ashamed of themselves and their attacks on individuals. They can sit there and laugh and they can pretend—it is confected outrage tonight.

I thought a number of those opposite were going to cry at the lectern because of the impact they thought we were having on Kosciuszko National Park. Tonight I will pull together their six-point plan and attach it to what I am putting forward as the brumby bill, but in line with the management plan for Kosciuszko National Park. This bill does not stand alone, but those opposite will pretend and use whatever language they can to argue otherwise. That is why I again speak in support of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018. I acknowledge the speakers on this of the House, especially the environment Minister, Minister Upton, who has had the courage to make the tough decision to find a balance between the outrage in the community that resulted from the culling and shooting under the watch of those opposite, and to understand that the community expects better and a humane way of managing the numbers.

I acknowledge the member for Coff's Harbour; the member for Wagga Wagga; the member for Ryde, of course; the member for Bega, whose family has a connection to the Monaro that no-one else in this place can claim, who gets it, who understands it, who is passionate, who understands the community; and other Government members who have spoken on this bill. I will not acknowledge those opposite, because they chose to play in the gutter. My colleagues have spoken about why this bill was introduced and how it balances the community's attachment to the brumby with the environment.

Mr Chris Minns: Such a sook.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: You go back and get your Chinese donations, mate.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: It is Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier cannot have it both ways. He has a glass jaw on this. He talks about people going in the gutter, but then he has gone further down himself.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! There is a lot of emotion in this debate. I am sure the Deputy Premier is returning to the leave of the bill.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The member for Maitland has just admitted that she went to the gutter on donations and the attack on individuals.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: It is Standing Order 73.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! I have already ruled on that point of order. If the member is going to repeat the same point of order—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: It is now on me, because the Deputy Premier is trying to mansplain what I am saying.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I am finding it difficult to hear the Deputy Premier, so I will ask the member for Maitland to resume her seat.

Mr Andrew Fraser: To the point of order: We have heard personal attacks on the Deputy Premier all night and today during question time. For those opposite to take points of order under Standing Order 73 because they claim their reputations have been impugned is laughable. I ask that the Deputy Premier be given an opportunity to respond to this debate in the manner in which he has been attacked.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I call the Deputy Premier back to the leave of the bill.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: My colleagues have spoken about why this bill has been introduced and they have stayed with the facts. They referred to factual information, unlike those opposite. The bill balances the community's attachment to the brumby with the environment. I will focus on some of the misinformation that is being spread by those opposite and ensure the facts are clear. This bill does not confer protected species status on the brumby, as those opposite argue. It does not give them automatic citizenship within the Kosciuszko National Park. It simply recognises the heritage and cultural values of the brumby and in doing so puts an end to the conflict in the community about whether they will be slaughtered in their thousands.

Brumbies are, and will continue to be, managed to protect the environmental values of the Kosciuszko National Park, but in a humane way. Trapping and rehoming programs will continue—they will not end. We will increase promotion of rehoming and adoption so that we can increase the number of brumbies that are removed and rehomed rather than sent to abattoirs. This bill is not intended to be the horse management plan; it is the framework for a new management plan that will be developed separately, taking into account the heritage value of the brumby and the environmental value of the Kosciuszko National Park.

Labor has announced that it will oppose the bill, and we have heard that debate tonight. Instead, Labor has presented its own plan on managing brumbies. What is interesting is how closely Labor's plan copies the plan put forward by this Government. Labor put forward a six-point plan in its press release—actually it is more like an 11-point plan when you count them up, but we know how poor Labor is with numbers. I will address each point. Labor proposes to "ensure that the plan of management of Kosciuszko National Park is the primary management document to guide the operation of the park." We are already doing that. The Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management is, and will continue to be, the primary management document under part 5, section 81 (4) of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

Labor proposes to "restore resources to the National Parks and Wildlife Service." Under the current restructure of the National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS], there is no reduction in staffing levels at Kosciuszko National Park. The restructure is creating new roles, and in the Monaro electorate staffing levels will rise by more than 10 per cent. Labor proposes to "minimise the impacts of pest species (both plants and animals) through adequately funded and effective control programs." We are already doing this. Between 2011 and 2016, pest control programs for Kosciuszko National Park and the Southern Ranges removed 2,037 foxes, 1,844 pigs, 1,377 wild dogs, 944 deer, 846 goats and 251 cats through trapping and shooting programs. We laid 43,736 baits for wild dogs, 6,734 baits for foxes, 667 kilograms of bait for pigs, 3,852 kilograms of bait for rabbits and ripped or fumigated 2,092 rabbit warrens.

Pest control programs in February and June 2016 targeted pigs, goats and deer, and resulted in the control of 314 animals. Another program in February 2017 in Kosciuszko National Park resulted in the control of 183 animals. Labor proposes to "conduct a scientific assessment and count of the horse population in consultation with key stakeholders." Our new framework proposes a brumby count and a scientific assessment. In fact, we will go further and establish a community advisory panel, a research and monitoring program and a marketing campaign to promote the rehoming and adoption of brumbies out of the park. Our media release stated that the proposed changes include:

...

- the establishment of a Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel to advise the Minister of appropriate management approaches for the brumby
- a research and monitoring program that scientifically informs future wild horse management plans
- a brumby count to gain a more accurate assessment of brumby numbers and where they range
- a marketing campaign to promote re-homing and adoption of brumbies that need to be removed from the park.

According to its press release, Labor proposes to "ensure wild horses are acknowledged for their cultural value by retaining a smaller population in the park where degradation is less critical", "increase resources and research capacity for humane population control measures such as fertility control", "establish a formal and well-resourced rehoming program", "ensure that horse populations in identified sensitive landscapes are actively managed" and "maintain the ban on aerial culling". This bill is about acknowledging the cultural value of the brumby; that is why we are here tonight debating it. The bill acknowledges for the very first time the cultural and heritage connection of the horses to Kosciuszko National Park.

Clause 4 sets out the object of the bill, which is to recognise the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within parts of Kosciuszko National Park and to protect that heritage. The new framework also proposes relocating brumbies to less sensitive areas and reducing numbers in more sensitive areas of Kosciuszko National Park. Clause 5 of the bill requires the draft plan to identify the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within identified parts of the park and set out how that heritage value will be protected while ensuring other environmental values of the park are also maintained. Our media release states:

The heritage management plan will specifically prohibit lethal culling of the brumby, aerial or otherwise, and will identify those areas in the park where brumbies can roam without causing significant environmental harm ...

If brumbies are found in highly-sensitive alpine areas of Kosciuszko National Park, resources will be allocated towards relocation first, followed by re-homing, should population numbers grow too high.

In my second reading speech I said:

This bill does not promote maintaining any specific number of brumbies nor does it promote increasing the number of brumbies within the national park. It simply recognises the heritage and cultural value of brumbies and shifts the focus away from lethal population-control methods. In fact, this bill will set a framework for managing brumby populations in a humane way. It is about balance.

The plan will provide a humane approach to the management of brumbies. Former environment Minister Speakman asked for an independent review of the efficacy of fertility control in controlling horse numbers. In my second reading speech I said:

Vaccines for immunological control of fertility methods are still evolving. If this method becomes effective in larger populations, then it will and should be used. In the meantime, the New South Wales Government will launch a marketing campaign to promote adoption and rehoming. The aim is to increase the number of horses that can be rehomed outside the park rather than sending them to the knackery.

...

This bill does not promote maintaining any specific number of brumbies nor does it promote increasing the number of brumbies within the national park. It simply recognises the heritage and cultural value of brumbies and shifts the focus away from lethal population-control methods. In fact, this bill will set a framework for managing brumby populations in a humane way. It is about balance.

The management plan will retain the ban on aerial culling—something that the New South Wales Government ruled out explicitly in 2014. Labor proposes to:

... establish a highly-trained Kosciuszko works crew dedicated to halting erosion in the mountain catchments and restoring and repairing the current eroding slopes, wetlands and mountain streams.

Integrated pest management control programs are already carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Service to reduce impacts before erosion control and rehabilitation. NPWS regularly carries out specific rehabilitation programs in the Kosciuszko National Park, including pest control programs and improving park infrastructure. All park programs are managed to mitigate environmental disturbance during the activity, and ongoing. Labor's six-point brumby plan is as hypocritical as it is ill informed and misleading. We need to remind the public that it was Labor that ordered the botched aerial slaughter of 600 brumbies in the Guy Fawkes River National Park in 2000. What Labor does not tell the public is that in 2002, in response to the community outrage that followed the slaughter—there is no other word for it—Labor recognised the heritage connection of brumbies to the early Walers and Light Horse regiments. Humane brumby relocation, removal and rehoming operations have continued successfully in that area ever since, which is in line with what is planned in Kosciuszko National Park. A population of brumbies remains within the park today.

Labor attempted to claim credit also for the establishment of Kosciuszko National Park. I need to correct that. The Leader of the Opposition said, "Labor created Australia's great alpine national park in the middle of

World War II the Country/National Party fought it then and ever since." Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition either has a poor grasp of history or is attempting to rewrite it. Kosciuszko National Park was created on 1 October 1967 by a Coalition Government under a Liberal Premier. Labor members speak with forked tongues, depending on what happens in front of a camera, what happens in the House, what their local candidates must say and what Sussex Street says needs to be said. Labor cites concerns about the bill leading to a loss of jobs and tourism, but in its own media release it acknowledges that the national park is a tourism jobs powerhouse, with visitation growing by 52 per cent between 2014 and 2016, which was all achieved under this Government.

In fact, between 2008-2010, under Labor, visitation to Kosciuszko National Park plummeted by more than 200,000 people. Since the Coalition Government was elected in 2011, we have increased visitation by more than one million people. If there is a custodian of the national park that understands its tourism value, let alone its value from an environmental and conservation perspective, it is the Liberal-Nationals Government. We are not only speaking it, but also seeing it through with action—unlike those opposite, who are trying to rewrite history. Labor cannot speak in opposition to this bill while lauding the Victorian plan when that plan is the same as what we are proposing. Labor cannot commit to repealing this bill because it is proposing an alternative that is no different. Again, the Opposition says one thing but means something else.

Let me turn to the Labor candidate for Monaro, Bryce Wilson, who recently put on record that he opposed the bill. He said that, if elected, Labor would repeal the bill. It is very clear that Mr Wilson will say, do and sign whatever it takes to get into Parliament. In 2016 he, the local Labor candidate, signed a petition that was presented to me as the local member. The petition expressed deep public concern at the absence of State Government legislation that recognises the cultural heritage, history and values of the wild horse population within Kosciuszko National Park and called on the New South Wales Government to introduce legislation to recognise and protect them. Labor's candidate for the Monaro electorate signed a petition but when Sussex Street rang—when the Leader of the Opposition turned up—he changed his mind.

That is typical of Labor candidates, who will do whatever their masters tell them to do. Over the past 12 months, Bryce Wilson has misled brumby advocates regarding NSW Labor's position on this matter. By pledging to recognise the heritage value of the Snowy Mountains brumbies and his subsequent backflip, Bryce has yet again proven that he cannot be trusted to stand up for the people of the Monaro. There are two possible scenarios behind Mr Wilson's backflip: He will either sell his beliefs down the creek at the beck and call of Sydney Labor or he was happy to lie to brumby advocates across the Monaro and sign a petition he did not agree with, hoping that this would never be tested in Parliament.

Mr Greg Warren: Are you worried? We've got you on the ropes, mate.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: You guys have seen the polling.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! Members will come to order. The Minister will be heard in silence. I remind him not to incite interjections.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I love the member for Campbelltown. He is the only member on the other side of the Chamber who promotes and supports nuclear energy. God bless him.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The Deputy Premier will return to the leave of the bill.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I return to some observations made by the Independent Technical Reference Group in the 2016 report. Many of those on the crossbench and in the Opposition have pointed to the technical reference group report of 2016. The "Final Report of the Independent Technical Reference Group: Supplementary to the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Management Plan" was a key and commendable report that informed the previous draft wild horse management plan. It made a number of points that I think make clear the facts rather than the fiction that those opposite are caught up on. The report from the Independent Technical Reference Group was unable to reach a conclusion on trends over time in horse numbers or density. I am talking about the report of the Independent Technical Reference Group, which those opposite have quoted from tonight.

The report considered that the estimate of 6,000 horses in the park to be a reasonable working number but did not conclude that the estimate was accurate. If those opposite do not know the numbers of horses how can they attribute the damage to the horses? The report found that passive trapping and mustering in small groups had the lowest relative impact on animal welfare. Importantly, the report acknowledged that the eradication of wild horses from Kosciuszko National Park is not achievable. It is just not possible. If anyone in this Chamber says that they have a plan to remove every single horse from Kosciuszko National Park they will know that it is fiction. It is misleading. The brumby will always have a place in Kosciuszko National Park.

This bill does not conflict with the report's conclusions; nor does it overwrite any environmental objectives of the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management. The bill is very much aligned with the Victorian wild horse plan, which those opposite decided to point to tonight. Remember, at one time Victoria allowed cattle grazing in the high country. So if those opposite want to point to the Victorian Government as the informed Government in this space they should look at the history. Some legal reports have attempted to pit the Victorian Government's plan against the New South Wales Government's plan. I assure the House that the plans are, essentially, the same. The Victorian Government has confirmed that it will maintain a population within the park. It acknowledges that a population of brumbies will remain in the park; so has the New South Wales Government. Victoria has ruled out lethal culling; so have we.

Victoria has adopted trapping, relocating and rehoming as primary control methods; so have we. Victoria has opted to promote rehoming and adoption; so have we. There is virtually no difference between the two plans other than the fact that this Government has made a decision to legislate to recognise the same cultural and heritage values of the brumbies that the Victorian Government has recognised in its plan. The Victorian plan rules out further exploring fertility control as a humane management approach, whereas the New South Wales Government has not. Vaccine fertility control methods are still evolving, as I mentioned earlier. Should this method become effective in larger populations, it should and will be used. In conclusion—

[Interruption]

You guys do not want to hear it because it is clear that I have been able to pull apart your six-point, or 11-point, plan and align it with the Government's position. Either you do not understand the bill or you choose to speak with forked tongues—

Mr Andrew Fraser: Greens' preferences.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: You do whatever it takes to gain Greens' preferences—or all of the above. The truth is that you believe in the bill. You believe in the legislation and you believe in the management plan of the Government.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: I ask that the Deputy Premier direct his comments through the Chair. He has admitted that this is a stunt to increase his own election chances.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The member for Maitland will resume her seat. The Deputy Premier will draw his remarks to a close.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Those opposite have a six-point plan—or an 11-point plan because they cannot count—that is aligned to the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill 2018 and the Liberal-Nationals Government's plan to manage horse numbers and protect the environment, but they are playing politics. It may be because of some tough battles that those opposite will have in inner Sydney seats, where their members are playing for Greens' preferences or, more likely, Greens' primary votes. That is the only reason Labor members are opposing our bill. They are not opposing the bill as a matter of principle—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The member for Campbelltown will come to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Labor is not opposing the bill on the facts in relation to the management of horses. Those opposite have decided to play politics, and unfortunately have left the poor Labor candidate for Monaro high and dry. He signed a petition calling on this Government to legislate. Unfortunately, he does not have the courage to stand up to those opposite, who come to this House to play politics, mislead and hide in cowards' castle. They make accusations and attack individuals. Wild brumbies have been roaming the Australian alps for almost 200 years, and are part of the cultural fabric and folklore of the high country. I have said many times, inside and outside this House, that nothing is more synonymous with the Australian outdoor lifestyle than the brumby—from their *Man from Snowy River* heritage to the integral role that the Snowy Mountain bush horses played in the Australian Light Horse campaign during World War I.

This bill is not driven by self-interest. This bill has been 18 years in the making. It started in the communities that grew up with wild horses over generations and were horrified at the brutal cull of 600 or more brumbies in the Guy Fawkes River National Park, which occurred over three days in 2000. This bill is the culmination of years of grassroots efforts by my constituents, my community and those who are passionate about this issue in the Monaro. They grew up in the Snowy Mountains region, as did their mothers and their fathers before them. They, like me, want to ensure the preservation of the park's precious environment as much as does anyone else. I am the local member and I know how important it is to ensure the park's long-term future so that generations can come and enjoy its natural beauty and environmental splendour, which of course includes the

brumby—that wildlife icon in the national park that epitomises the national park itself. I commend this bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

Ayes48
Noes35
Majority.....13

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Donato, Mr P
Evans, Mr L. J.
Gibbons, Ms M
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Goward, Ms P
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr A.W.
George, Mr T
Grant, Mr T
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Pavey, Mrs M
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Greenwich, Mr A
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T (teller)
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T. F.
Washington, Ms K

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
Brookes, Mr G
Griffin, Mr J
Notley-Smith, Mr B

Cotsis, Ms S
Foley, Mr L
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

*Private Members' Statements***WESTERN SYDNEY HOMELESSNESS**

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (22:12): The 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] census data that was released just over a month ago unfortunately highlighted the homelessness crisis that has confronted New South Wales since 2011, in particular in Western Sydney and, of great relevance to me, in the Bankstown electorate. The data confirms a significant increase in homelessness in Western Sydney from 2011 to 2016 that is considerably higher than for the remainder of the State. New South Wales has had the highest increase in homelessness of any State or Territory. Overall, the figures increased from 28,000 in 2011 to close to 38,000 in 2016. They show a spike of 37 per cent compared with the nationwide increase of 14 per cent.

Significantly, many parts of Western Sydney have homelessness rates such as 51 per cent in Parramatta, 44 per cent in Campbelltown, and 46 per cent in Penrith. In my area of Canterbury-Bankstown there has been an alarming increase of 79.6 per cent—from 1,300 in 2011 to almost 2,500 in 2016, which is by far the largest increase in Western Sydney. This is, of course, a major concern. The census data also revealed that the rate of homelessness for young people aged 19 to 24 in New South Wales has increased by 92 per cent. It is very concerning that more than 74,000 clients were supported by specialist homelessness services in 2016-17, and yet those services were only contracted to deliver services for 58,000 clients that year.

In the electorate of Bankstown a number of organisations work very hard to curb homelessness, including the Bankstown Women's Health Centre, which is run by the outstanding Mariam Mourad. Every week Mariam tells me tragic stories of women who have left their husbands often due to domestic violence. Those women struggle to find a safe and secure home. One story I heard was about Saile, a woman who has been brave enough to come forward and speak to the ABC and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Saile resided for decades in Bankstown before she sadly found herself homeless in 2015. She was abused by her husband and she left the family home with their three children. The Bankstown Women's Health Centre tried to assist her, and finally Saile found a temporary home in Bexley. It was difficult for Saile and her children because the home was temporary. She said:

You're living on the edge because you don't know what's going to happen next. They might cut your Centrelink, and then you can't afford the rent and you have to leave, or they put up the rent and you can't afford it.

I never say no to work, I work hard to not go back to refuge and not go back to being homeless. I don't want my kids to go through that ever again.

These words are, of course, heartbreaking, but, sadly, , are a stark reality for many. In Bankstown close to 2,500 people are on the waiting list for social housing, with more than 100 of them being on the priority list. Applicants are waiting for five to 10 years for just a one-bedroom home. Those figures are disturbing. Indeed, a recent Anglicare rental analysis showed that less than 1 per cent of rental properties are affordable for people on low incomes in Greater Sydney. The lack of an affordable housing strategy in New South Wales has left thousands on low incomes unable to find a rental home, particularly in areas like Bankstown. I pay tribute to the many organisations that work hard in my electorate to provide support for families in difficult circumstances.

I acknowledge that there is much work to be done to try to curb homelessness. The latest census data figures are startling and of great concern. The Government should address homelessness. It is particularly concerning to know that many parts of Western Sydney are affected, with many families finding themselves homeless for the first time. We are also seeing young people couch surfing, people living in garages and people living in cars. That is the reality for many families in Western Sydney, including in Bankstown. Yesterday another family in desperate need of housing came to my electorate office. It is not good enough. At a time of unprecedented economic growth, it is critical that the Government prioritise supporting social housing in New South Wales. *[Time expired.]*

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (22:17): I thank the member for Bankstown for her contribution, particularly as it related to youth homelessness. I acknowledge the wonderful contribution of community groups in not just Bankstown but all areas of Sydney, including the south-west. Wednesday 18 April was Youth Homelessness Matters Day. I acknowledge that the community needs to do more to relieve homelessness. The member for Bankstown mentioned homelessness statistics, and they are worrying with 42 per cent of homeless people being under the age of 25 and more than 28,000 Australians aged between 12 and 25 being homeless on any given night. I note that 70 per cent of homeless people leave home to escape family violence, child abuse or family breakdown. The first and most common way young people experience any form of homelessness is by couch surfing. Homelessness should be seen as an experience and not an identity. There needs to be an increasingly early identification and intervention process in homelessness, particularly youth homelessness

KIDS OF MACARTHUR HEALTH FOUNDATION

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (22:19): On Saturday night I attended the annual fundraising ball for the Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation, which once again was an outstanding success. I was welcomed by wonderful hosts Paul and Margaret Wakeling, who were great company, and I thank them for a most enjoyable evening. Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation was established by a group of local Macarthur businesspeople, paediatricians and healthcare workers who wanted to try to make life easier for children and their families in our community. After 18 successful years, those responsible must be very proud of what they have achieved. They started by selling raffle tickets in our family hotel. They have gone from running chook raffles on a Saturday afternoon to raising hundreds of thousands of dollars at their annual ball.

Paediatric medical equipment is purchased with money raised from the annual fundraisers, making treatment for the kids of Macarthur a little easier. For the parents of sick children in the Macarthur region, the fundraisers have enabled their sick child to be treated closer to home, meaning they can keep the family together and maintain a sense of stability. The Macarthur community has always been very supportive of and generous to the Kids of Macarthur, contributing through the foundation or organising their own fundraisers. This year's fundraiser aims to purchase a SonoSile X-Porte, which is an ultrasound system that will eliminate the need for patients and their families to travel to the Children's Hospital at Westmead for examinations. I thank my colleague and great mate the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research, Brad Hazzard, who kicked off the night with a contribution, on behalf of the Government, of \$50,000 towards the fundraiser. Minister Hazzard has been an exceptional supporter of the Kids of Macarthur, as was his predecessor, Jillian Skinner, who never missed a ball—one of her favourite events.

The foundation can only continue with the support of the board chaired by Bruce Hanrahan and deputy chair Paul Wakeling. The chair is supported by Tim Bryan; Julie O'Keefe, who chaired the dinner committee and did an outstanding job; Amanda Ramsey; Dr Andrew McDonald, former member for Macquarie Fields; Dr Ric Dunstan, whose lovely wife, Donna, sold raffle tickets in the pub 18 years ago to kick off the foundation; Dr Raymond Chin; David Marsh; and Adam Seton, from Marsdens Law Group. Each year, chief executive Denise McGrath and her hardworking committee put together a wonderful night, and I thank them for their continued dedication to make each annual fundraiser such a success. I thank also the dedicated sponsors, some of whom have been on board since day one: Campbelltown Catholic Club, Campbelltown RSL, Ingleburn RSL, Wests Campbelltown, Macarthur Engineering, Macarthur Travel and Cruise Centre, Perich Group, Rotary Club Narellan, Scandinavian Profiles, Total Kerbing Solutions, Bottlemart, Eden Spa, Wakeling Automotive, Bradcorp, Fairmont Homes, Camden Hire, Camden Signs, Dignan and Hanrahan Solicitors, In Macarthur Magazine, Snap Printing, Craig Plowes and Danny Neville, McDonald's Macarthur, Waratah Pre-Release Program, St George Bank, Ahscroft Enterprises, Camden Council, Emohruo Financial Services, Karitane, Kelly and Partners, Marsden Law Group, Michelle Rofe Funerals, Roofworx, St John's Park Bowling Club, My Gateway, Southwell Engineering, TRN and Wollondilly Shire Council.

The Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation has been the driving force in providing much-needed equipment for sick children in our region. As I said, the foundation started from humble beginnings and is now providing vital equipment for our local hospitals and community. I thank each and every member associated with the Kids of MacArthur Health Foundation for their wonderful efforts over the past 18 years. The fundraising ball was fantastic, with wonderful entertainment and great company. The sell-out audience of more than 600 enjoyed a terrific night. The foundation needed to raise more than \$80,000 to buy the machine, and was very grateful to the Minister for kicking off the night with a \$50,000 donation. I say well done to all involved.

ST HELIERS HEAVY HORSE FIELD DAYS

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (22:24): On the weekend of 19 and 20 May well-known Upper Hunter community event the St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days took place at the Muswellbrook Correctional Centre exhibition grounds. The event, which is in its twenty-second year, attracted crowds from all over the district and State, with the competition attracting 63 horses for competition, a testament to its success. The St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days event was formed in 1996 and is a great weekend for people with an interest in breeds such as Clydesdales, Shires, Percherons, draught horses and other heavy horse breeds. It might be noted that in the twentieth year of competition the *Better Homes and Gardens* television program showcased the St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days, which helped to create an overwhelming interest for visitors to attend the wonderful equine event in our part of the world. The competition is open to all heavy horse breeds and runs over two days. The event's official opening is on the Saturday afternoon and is followed by an impressive grand parade.

I congratulate Tom and Pam Parry from Dalswinton, who were big winners on day one of the St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days after being awarded Supreme Young Exhibitor and Supreme Led Exhibit with Charlotte, an 18-month-old Clydesdale. Following the grand parade, Senior Assistant Superintendent Noel McEachran of St Heliers Correctional Centre presented the prestigious Governor's Pick to John Reedy and his "Four in Hand"

Clydesdale. Throughout the field days other events include lead, ridden, slide obstacle, ploughing, long reining, log snig, heritage and show horse drawn vehicles, pumpkin snatch, work day challenge and a few more. I believe it is important to highlight the heavy horse because they played an important part in Australian rural history. While the Upper Hunter region is rightly famous for its contribution to the equine world, the heavy horse, as opposed to the thoroughbred, is too often the overlooked sibling when people think of equines.

For those who are not competing but spectating there are stallholders selling arts and craft, antiques, leather work and memorabilia. There are also demonstrations throughout the weekend. People are encouraged to camp for the two days and make a weekend out of it. I congratulate the hardworking committee of the St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days that put together a wonderful event this year. They are Louise Turner, Kylie Sercombe, Jed Moffitt, Lindsay Vonbun, John Reedy, Pam Parry, Tony Parry and Heather O'Sullivan. Without those hardworking volunteers festivals of this standard would not take place. I offer my sincere congratulations to the inmates and guards of the correctional centre who helped in the upkeep of the grounds for the magnificent event. There can be no doubt that the St Heliers Heavy Horse Field Days at Muswellbrook will continue long into the future.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (22:28): Like my friend and colleague the shadow Minister for Family and Community Services, and shadow Minister for Mental Health, I draw to the attention of the House a crisis that is occurring in New South Wales and my electorate of Campbelltown. Homelessness is on the rise, and the number of people sleeping rough in New South Wales has skyrocketed over the past five years. Addressing homelessness is far too often ignored and pushed to the sidelines. Too often we only think of an individual homeless person while the bigger issue remains largely invisible. As easy as it is for us to continue to overlook it, homelessness is increasingly common and something that we must take seriously. Census data shows that between 2011 and 2016 homelessness in New South Wales increased by a massive 37 per cent, which is more than double the national average of 14 per cent.

In my electorate of Campbelltown the increase in homelessness has been considerably higher than in the rest of the State, increasing by 44 per cent since 2011. The number of people living in overcrowded buildings has also exploded since 2011, increasing by almost 75 per cent across the State according to census data. While people of all ages face the consequences of the crisis, it affects young people more than most. Since 2011 the number of young people aged 19 to 24 who are homeless has increased by more than 90 per cent. In 2016 a Mission Australia report found that one in seven young people are at risk of homelessness, which is a standard we simply cannot accept. Former Chief Executive of Mission Australia, Catherine Yeomans, is quoted as saying, "These results indicate that a disturbing number of our young people are at risk of homelessness."

The report also found that it is increasingly likely for young people who are homeless to suffer from mental illness, drug and alcohol use, and disrupted schooling. The link between mental health problems and homelessness is clear and they are problems that many organisations such as Homelessness NSW say are intertwined. A 2013 report by the Mental Health Commission of NSW showed that people with mental health issues represent a large proportion of those sleeping rough and that up to 75 per cent of homeless youth suffer from mental health issues. The report showed also that individuals with substance abuse issues are also more likely to be chronically homeless, and that people with substance abuse issues who are sleeping rough require specialist support.

It is clear that tackling the crisis in mental health care and providing a support framework for people with substance abuse issues is crucial to tackling homelessness as well. Unemployment among young people is also a serious contributing factor to homelessness. Yfoundations, the New South Wales peak body for youth homelessness, found in its Skills to Pay the Bills program report that unemployment among homeless young people was 55 per cent, compared with the youth unemployment rate of 13 per cent and the State unemployment rate of less than 5 per cent. Chief Executive Officer of the Council to Homeless Persons, Jenny Smith, said:

A perfect storm of increasing reporting of family violence, decreasing housing affordability for families with kids, a pitifully low Youth Allowance and rising youth unemployment is contributing to the crisis levels of homelessness we're seeing amongst our youth.

I agree with Ms Smith. The increases in homelessness demonstrate that once again this Government needs to take action. I call on this House, this Parliament and this Government to take the action that is required. [*Time expired.*]

TORONTO SERVICE NSW CENTRE

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (22:33): Every day is a good day in Lake Macquarie but we have had a couple of very good days over the past week. I am pleased to inform the House about one of them. In October 2015 I presented to the Parliament a petition signed by more than 11,000 people who were outraged that

the State Government intended to close the Toronto Motor Registry. Despite that outrage, the closure went ahead and the Government opened a Service NSW office some distance away at Warners Bay. I have no problem with the one-stop-shop model of providing services to the people of this State—in fact, I believe the model is very good—but taking those services out of Toronto and putting them at the back of a hard-to-find commercial area at Warners Bay was the wrong decision.

The site has poor public transport access and is located in the very north of my electorate, which is a long way from where the majority of residents reside or carry out their usual business. In fact, people from suburbs such as Morisset, Bonnell's Bay, Cooranbong and the Rathmines area faced a round trip of about 70 kilometres to visit the Service NSW office at Warners Bay. Some of those people who rely on public transport faced a round trip of about six hours. But I am pleased to say that this story has a happy ending, and I am delighted to inform the House about it.

On Friday I was joined by the Minister for Finance, Services and Property at Toronto to announce that the Government will establish a full-scale Service NSW office in Toronto and aim to have the doors open by the end of this year. In many communities such an announcement might barely register a ripple of interest, but in Lake Macquarie we know the value of government services and investment. This is a victory that I and many people in my community have fought for over a number of years. I can inform the House that news of services returning to Toronto registered an unprecedented level of response from my constituency, with thousands of people posting messages through my social media channels or contacting me directly. The Lake Macquarie community never gave up on its campaign for services and, to their credit, the State Government and finance Minister listened.

At the moment, Service NSW offices are located at Warners Bay and at Toukley, which is further south on the Central Coast. They are both a long way from the 8,000 people who live on the Morisset peninsula and the many thousands more who live at Cooranbong, Wangi Wangi, Rathmines, Coal Point and, of course, Toronto itself. Recently I had to visit the Warners Bay Service NSW centre. There were so many people there I thought I had wandered into McDonald's on the M1 at Port Macquarie on the first day of school holidays. It was really full and busy. As I briefly mentioned earlier, the centre is poorly located at the back of a busy bulky goods commercial centre that runs off Hillsborough Road. I am pleased that the Warners Bay centre will remain operational once the Toronto centre is open, but I must reiterate previous representations I have made in the House regarding the Hillsborough Road precinct that people use to access the centre. I draw to the attention of the Minister for Roads that I, the member for Charlestown and our communities still have grave concerns about the safety of that road. That was one of the problems with the location of the service.

Regardless, the decision to open a new Service NSW centre at Toronto was excellent and sensible on many fronts. An investment like this at Toronto will provide a boost for other Toronto businesses that have done it tough in recent years, including during the significant reconstruction of the town's main retail and business strip. The Service NSW office will bring more people into town to do business, pay their bills and do their shopping instead of being forced elsewhere. It will also mean that local communities will have access to more government services than just the Roads and Maritime Services they lost in 2015. Along with the traditional services offered by what was formerly the Roads and Traffic Authority, Service NSW provides access to about 40 government agencies including the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Land and Property Information, education and training programs, legal information and even police services. The Lake Macquarie community and I are extremely pleased to be getting those services back in the Toronto area. We thank Minister Dominello and the Government for listening and delivering.

WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE ARTS FUNDING

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (22:38): Last Tuesday I had the great pleasure of welcoming to my electorate the Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Don Harwin, to visit Batlow, Wagga Wagga city and Lockhart. It was a terrific occasion. The Minister and I travelled early to Batlow to join the Batlow Development League where the Minister made an announcement of funding of some \$44,000 to help refurbish the literary institute. The literary institute hall was refurbished using a grant of nearly \$300,000 that was awarded last year. The additional \$44,000 will buy lighting and sound equipment and will enable the community to use that meeting space to hold conferences.

Indeed, the CiderFest conference was held there this year. It attracted people from all over Australia and guest speakers from England. It was a great success. A number of weeks ago I was able to announce funding of \$1 million to build a new library and attach it to the institute. The fabulous old building that was built in the 1920s has been refurbished and maintained by the development league. The construction of a new library, which will provide an ergonomic environment for the community, will be connected to the meeting space and the refurbished hall. That announcement was welcomed by the community. I pay tribute to the development league.

The Minister and I then travelled to Wagga Wagga where we joined Mayor of Wagga Wagga, Greg Conkey, and Luke Grealy, who is the director of the Museum of the Riverina. There the Minister announced funding of almost \$3.2 million to refurbish the museum, build new exhibition space and connect all the existing exhibitions to make them accessible for people who have mobility issues or a disability. The Museum of the Riverina is a fantastic resource. It has terrific staff that do a wonderful job of showcasing our history to visitors, tourists and locals. People need to know where they have been to understand where they are going. I would recommend that people throughout Australia and the world visit the museum to see the history that is encapsulated. We have a fabulous history preserved under the careful guidance and hands of the staff of the Museum of the Riverina.

The Minister and I then went to beautiful Lockhart—the Verandah Town—where the verandahs have been preserved and are still in place. In recent times the main street has been upgraded with paintwork. The community also raised funds to pave the street with pavers displaying the names of families who lived and pioneered in Lockhart. We joined the mayor and committee members of the Museum of Lockhart to announce a grant of \$74,000 to upgrade the Billabong service station, which was a Ford dealership next door to the museum.

Our Government partnered with the council and the museum committee to build a new museum—which has been completed—in order to get the precious goods that were flooded in 2010 and 2012 above the height level of the floods. The new museum is above the level of the floods and next door to what was the original museum. Three buildings have now been acquired. The \$74,000 grant will help to fit out the new Billabong exhibition space, which will allow equipment that is precious to the community to be put under cover and attract tourists to the region. It is already working—tourism numbers have increased with the support of our Liberal-Nationals Government in partnership with the Lockhart Council and its hardworking volunteer committee.

We then went to look at the site of the new Riverina Conservatorium of Music. The conservatorium is the recipient of \$10 million to rehouse the institution. The Riverina Conservatorium of Music has 1,200 students drawn from an enormous geographical area. We showed the Minister the next stage in that great project, which is to build an exhibition and performance space. All in all, it was a great day for the Wagga Wagga electorate and a terrific pleasure to have the Minister visit our area.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga, and Parliamentary Secretary, and congratulate him on his strong advocacy for Wagga Wagga. The Batlow CiderFest looked like a particularly fun day from what I saw.

Mr Daryl Maguire: There were 8,000 people.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Eight thousand people enjoying cider. It could not be better.

STOCKTON BEACH PRESERVATION

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (22:43): "An environmental emergency continues to unfold at Stockton Beach. Members may recall that earlier this year I spoke about the topic as a matter of urgency. I asked the Minister for the Environment to come and visit the beach and speak to the locals who were scared that their beloved suburb may soon become an island due to the rate of erosion. The situation has not resolved itself but has only become worse—as it will continue to do until the Minister gives it the attention it so sorely needs and deserves. However, the situation has taken such a turn that I must now approach another Minister; that is, the Minister responsible for NSW Crown Lands. The issue of most concern is the exposed old Stockton tip, which sits on the beach at Stockton. The tip comprises two sites, one owned by Hunter Water and one owned by NSW Crown Lands. It has come to light that the tip is on two pieces of land and two State government agencies are responsible for them. We have now discovered that only one agency is remediating the site. The other, incredibly, is not.

The NSW Crown Lands site has a geo-fabric cover to stop the waste from flying out into the wind and water. On the other site, Hunter Water has moved 10 metres of offending material beyond the reach of the water. The cover on the NSW Crown Lands site was meant to contain the waste temporarily until the authorities took care of the clean-up. However, this past weekend's wild weather has uncovered the load. Stockton locals have contacted me and provided photos of the waste on the beach and asked me what is happening with the clean-up.

I was under the impression that Hunter Water was in charge of the clean-up, so I contacted it yesterday. I was told that it had removed the refuse on its land back from the shoreline by 10 metres. However, the rest of the tip crossed over onto land owned by NSW Crown Lands. Because it has not had the refuse removed, it is now washing into the ocean. Why? When Hunter Water got onto the clean-up earlier this year, why was NSW Crown Lands not on the other side of the tip doing its job? Hunter Water crews have been inspecting and maintaining the

covered waste on its land regularly, but the mess on the other side of the tip remains unmaintained and a risk to residents and beachgoers.

What is going on? This is a clean-up failure and an absolute failure by this Government. The tip is on land owned by two different government agencies. How has the Government failed to coordinate a clean-up effort in response to an environmental mishap of this scale? How is it that Hunter Water realised the extent of the job and got organised to tackle the challenge but NSW Crown Lands did not? Why was a team not formed in the same way that Hunter Water did and a crew not put on site? For all we know, there may still be extremely hazardous building materials on the NSW Crown Lands site, including asbestos and hydrocarbons.

I invite Minister Toole to inspect the old tip on Stockton Beach. I call on him to take action and to put a stop to this deteriorating situation. Why does he not demand that his agency take immediate action, form a team and get out there as a matter of urgency? We now have three Ministers in this Government responsible for this old tip and the destruction of part of Stockton's beautiful beach. We have one acting on the situation for Hunter Water, one looking away in NSW Crown Lands and the third also looking away; that is, the Minister for the Environment, and I will deal with her later. This beautiful beach is being turned into a hazardous space where no-one can tread for fear of harm caused by refuse from the old tip. I implore Minister Toole to take control of this situation and to ask his agency to act now as a matter of urgency. Why has Hunter Water done the work but not NSW Crown Lands?

As a side note for the Minister for the Environment, for some months the Opposition has been circulating a petition to save Stockton Beach. We are just 200 signatures short of the 10,000 we need to force a discussion in this Chamber. That discussion will focus on Minister Upton's apathetic snub to the people of Stockton. She has had her head in the sand for the past 12 months. Her failure to progress coastal management reforms have resulted in Stockton Beach washing away under her watch. Just as we did with the Newcastle Buses debate, we will send Stockton residents and businesspeople affected by this arrogant Government to Parliament House so that Minister Upton will finally face them and explain the reasons for her terrible inaction.

ASQUITH SOCCER CLUB FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (22:48):

I acknowledge a milestone for one of Hornsby's great sporting organisations, the Asquith Soccer Club. For 50 years this club has been an institution in Hornsby. Run by dedicated volunteers, it has grown into a mighty force and a tough competitor in the local competition. Priding themselves on being the "friendly club", the members have helped to foster a love of soccer amongst the entire Asquith community. In fact, many families have dad or mum in the senior divisions and kids in the junior teams, making it truly a family club.

The club is run by a group of hardworking local volunteers who fill the roles of managers, coaches and committee members. These volunteers are the lifeblood of the club. Countless volunteers have gone through the Asquith Soccer Club over the past 50 years—too many to mention today. I thank them all for helping to make it the club it is today. Their dedication to their local club is nothing short of amazing. I am not surprised the kids keep coming back to play for the mighty white and blues year in and year out.

Their hard work does not stop with the club. They get involved in many community events, such as Carols at Asquith Oval, which raises money for the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter. I thank the life members of the Asquith Soccer Club: Sam Castelnuovo, Alan Davis, Neil Harris, Derek Harwin, Tony Stephens, Gary Tyerman, Chris Hemming, Stephen Hemming, Jeffrey Meyers, Jason Brown, Richard Pilgrim, Michael Pursche and Michael Leuenberger. A life membership is never given lightly by a club, and some of these volunteers have given more than 40 years to the mighty white and blues. I thank them for their dedication to our local community.

The current committee is led by club president John Humphreys, with Daryl O'Brien assisting as secretary. Evan Byrnes, Grant Harlow, Adrian Scott, Julie Creasey, Mark Williams, David Haron, Keiron Rice, David Bury, Evan Byrnes, Matt Westrip, Robert Lee, Ryan Farrow and Pia Scott all assist in the day-to-day running of the club. Without these amazing volunteers and all the volunteers who came before them, Asquith Soccer Club would not be the club it is today.

The Asquith Soccer Club first entered a team in 1969 in the division 2 competition. The team won the championships that first year and throughout the 1970s the Asquith strip dominated the division 1 competition. The all-age team also regularly made it into the top four. In 1979, the first-grade team was the runner-up and took out the one and only KDSA Cup for the club. The reserve grade side was also the premier team that year, making it an extremely successful year for the club. The next 10 years saw a dip in the club's success. While the top team could not break the drought, the reserve grade side was able to win three straight titles from 1982 to 1984. This decline continued until 1992, by which time the division 1 team had slipped down to division 4.

However, the community was behind the club and the volunteers, players and supporters were determined to see it succeed again. Over the next 10 years they continued to pour their heart and soul into the club. By 2001 it was back in division 2 and won the title, which saw it promoted to the Premier League. The club was then a strong competitor again. It went on to win the Premier League title for five years in a row. This set the record for the most consecutive Premier League titles won by any club. In 2004 Asquith Soccer Club was the runner-up in the NSW Champion of Champions Tournament, and the Premier League Reserve Grade side also won that year. With this great success, the club has grown stronger and by 2009 had men's teams in first grade and reserve grade in the Premier League, and in division 3, division 4, division 5, division 6 and the over-35s. This was also another year in which the Premier League side took the trophy honours.

Asquith Soccer Club is not only about the men's sides. In 2009 the club had all-age division 1, division 4, and over-35 sides in the women's leagues. More recently, it has moved away from the Premier League squads and instead focused on the grassroots development of up-and-coming players and significant growth in girls' and women's football. The club now has three women's teams ensuring that up-and-coming junior girls have senior teams into which they can progress. In 2014 the division 4 team took out minor and major premierships and earned promotion to division 3. The men's over-35 team was the runner-up and the women's over-35 team won the division 2 competition. The junior teams had five out of seven competitive aged teams reaching the finals series.

This season, 2018, the Asquith Soccer Club achieved another milestone: more than 500 active registered players across 34 teams. It has almost doubled player participation in seven years and it has more teams than ever across juniors, youth, girls, women's, all age, 35s and now men's over-45s. The players, parents and local community, including small business sponsors, identify with the values and spirit of the club. Their support at Asquith Oval for their teams and the club as a whole is nothing short of phenomenal. One often finds home games attended by families having picnics on the sidelines.

Asquith Soccer Club recently won the Hyundai Goals for Grassroots, which saw the junior teams take the field with the Sydney Football Club players during the A-League final. The club is also the deserving recipient of a local sports grant, which has provided much-needed funding support to purchase playing strips, footballs and equipment such as a defibrillator for Asquith Oval. This club is a shining example of the character of the people of my electorate, which I am proud and privileged to represent. I extend congratulations to Asquith Soccer Club on reaching this impressive milestone. May there be 50 more successful years of football ahead.

The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 22:54 until

Wednesday 6 June 2018 at 10:00.