



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 21 June 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 21 June 2018

The Speaker (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock) took the chair at 10:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Documents

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Performance and Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled, "Shared services in local government", dated 21 June 2018, received this day and authorised to be printed.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

FORESTRY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill with amendments. I order that consideration of Legislative Council's amendments be set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

CRIMINAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE) BILL 2018

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill without amendment.

FORESTRY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of the Legislative Council's amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 21 June 2018

No. 1 GOV No. 1 [C2018-089A]

Page 5, Schedule 1 [8], proposed section 60ZR. Insert at the end of line 14:

, and

(c) to enable landholders to carry out forestry operations in a sustainable manner in areas of the State to which this Part applies, and

(d) to ensure that differences between private native forestry and native forestry operations in State forests or other Crown-timber land are recognised, including in the application of protocols, codes, standards and other instruments.

No. 2 GOV No. 2 [C2018-089A]

Page 6, Schedule 1 [8], proposed section 60ZT, lines 24–28. Omit all words on those lines.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

Motion agreed to.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (SOCIAL HOUSING) BILL 2018**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Pru Goward, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (10:13): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. The bill amends the Residential Tenancy Act 2010 and the Housing Act 2001 and is integral to the Government's vision of a fairer, safer and more sustainable social housing system in New South Wales. This bill represents the next stage in implementing key aspects of the Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy that will deliver an improved and expanded social housing sector and respond to the changing needs of social housing tenants and the community.

The New South Wales Government continues to lead the way in social housing reform through the implementation of future directions. The Government is delivering more social housing and more opportunities for tenants to engage in supports that break the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage and provide a better social housing experience. Whilst the Government is improving social housing through future directions, it is essential that the law remains relevant and champions fairness in the system. The Government will ensure that tenants who do not respect and honour their responsibilities or seek to take advantage of the system by wilfully damaging property or fraudulently seeking a benefit are held accountable for those actions in the same way that private tenants are accountable for such conduct. I am confident the community would expect no less.

Causing damage to public and Aboriginal housing or committing fraud disadvantages those doing the right thing. By damaging a property, a tenant forces money to be spent on repairs that otherwise could have been spent elsewhere in the social housing system. Additionally, a tenant who commits fraud prevents someone truly in need and waiting on the social housing register from receiving housing assistance. This bill will ensure that the Government can take appropriate action against the very small minority of tenants who do not value their property and the assistance this Government and the community provides. The bill will ensure that community housing providers who manage social housing properties are able to continue to effectively address the needs of tenants and the safety of the community at a local level.

This bill is the culmination of an extensive consultation process, including consultation with non-government service providers and peak bodies and government agencies. Let me make it very clear: The amendments contained in this bill will not impact on the vast majority of good, responsible and law-abiding tenants who look after their property and do not take advantage of the system. In fact, I believe tenants will welcome these changes. Good tenants are sick of having their public spaces damaged and their own representations wrecked by those doing the wrong thing.

These amendments are intended to send a clear message that tenants have a responsibility to look after their properties and be honest in their representations when claiming a benefit from the Government, whether accommodation, rental rebate or subsidy, or another form of housing benefit. Most certainly people on the waiting list would expect this. The first major reform in the bill relates to the mandatory termination of a tenancy agreement where the tenant is convicted of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act. Schedule 1 to the bill inserts a new section 154FA into the Residential Tenancies Act that will require the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to terminate a residential tenancy agreement where the tenant has been convicted of a rental rebate fraud offence under sections 69 and 69A of the Housing Act, unless the tenant satisfies the tribunal that exceptional circumstances exist that justify not making the order.

Tenants commit rental rebate fraud where they make a statement that they know is false or misleading or deliberately omit to provide relevant information about the personal and financial circumstances of the household that causes them to receive a greater rental rebate than they are entitled to, or where they fail to notify the Land and Housing Corporation of a change in relevant circumstances within 28 days with the intention of retaining or continuing to obtain a benefit to which they are not entitled. Currently the Land and Housing Corporation has power under the Housing Act to initiate criminal prosecutions for rental rebate fraud.

However, if a tenant is convicted the Land and Housing Corporation does not have the power to then seek an immediate termination of the tenancy. Instead, the Land and Housing Corporation must backdate the rent to its correct level and take civil action in the tribunal to seek a termination of the tenancy agreement on the

grounds of failure to pay rent on time. By the time the tribunal process and any appeals have been exhausted, tenants found guilty of fraud may have remained in the property for over a year before their tenancy is terminated.

Additionally, the tribunal has discretion not to make a termination order for rental arrears and tenants may also pay back the rental arrears, which allows them to continue residing in public housing despite having defrauded the system. The current system advantages those who are found guilty of breaking the law at the expense of those waiting for social housing. This clearly does not effect a fair and equitable social housing system. It drives disadvantage by putting the most vulnerable members of the community at risk by not providing them with the benefit of social housing at the earliest opportunity.

In addition to the insertion of new section 154FA to the Residential Tenancies Act under schedule 1, schedule 2 to the bill also updates the offence provisions in the Housing Act to make it clear that a person commits an offence if they make a statement knowing that the statement is false or misleading or if they omit something which makes the statement misleading where they make the statement to obtain or claim a benefit from the corporation or the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services [FACS] or to deceive a member of staff of the corporation or the Department of Family and Community Services or to affect the rate or amount of a benefit from the corporation or the secretary.

As is the current case, it is an offence for a person to fail to notify the corporation of a change in relevant circumstances within 28 days with the intention of retaining or continuing to obtain a benefit. To ensure fairness, the tribunal will retain a discretion not to make a termination order where the tenant satisfies the tribunal that exceptional circumstances exist. Where the tribunal does not make a termination order, it will be required to provide written reasons for the decision. As I observed previously, the vast majority of public housing tenants are responsible, law-abiding citizens and will not be affected by these new termination provisions. Indeed, they will welcome these changes, as will those on the waiting list.

The second element of the bill relates to rental bonds. Schedule 1 to the bill inserts new provisions into the Residential Tenancies Act to allow the Land and Housing Corporation and the Aboriginal Housing Office to require tenants to pay a rental bond at any time before the end of a residential tenancy agreement, whether that agreement is a fixed term tenancy or a continuing tenancy, and to take action in the tribunal to seek a termination order for the non-payment of a rental bond, in the same way as the non-payment of rent. The Government is committed to creating a more financially sustainable social housing system which reinforces tenant responsibility and encourages behavioural change for tenants who cause damage to their property.

A critical part of breaking the cycle of disadvantage involves supporting individuals to address their problems and empowering tenants to take responsibility for their actions. Where tenants damage their social housing property the Department of Family and Community Services has to unnecessarily spend money on repairs that otherwise could have been spent elsewhere in the social housing system. Property damage also delays a housing outcome for a vulnerable client as the damage must be fixed before a property can be re-let. In response to this challenge, Future Directions originally proposed that a bond be charged to all new public housing tenants on sign up to a social housing tenancy. However, there was strong stakeholder concern, which I shared, that this would unfairly punish those who are unlikely to cause damage, including elderly tenants.

In response, the Government will implement a risk-based bond scheme that targets those at higher risk of damaging their public housing property. The bill inserts a new section 156D into the Residential Tenancies Act, which enables the Land and Housing Corporation and the Aboriginal Housing Office to require a tenant to pay a bond at any time during the term of their tenancy agreement, whether that agreement is a fixed-term tenancy or a continuing tenancy, if they were not required to pay a rental bond at the commencement of their tenancy and if they belong to a class of tenant specified in guidelines approved by the Minister for Social Housing. A rental bond will only be required if a tenant has caused significant damage to his or her property in accordance with these ministerial guidelines.

For existing tenants a rental bond will only be required if they cause significant damage to their property after these amendments commence and the ministerial guidelines are approved and published. The bond can only be required to be paid if the tenant is given at least 14 days written notice of the amount of the rental bond to be paid and the date by which it has to be paid. A rental bond will also be required of former public housing or Aboriginal housing tenants who are returning to public or Aboriginal housing who have caused significant damage to their public or Aboriginal housing properties within the previous six years.

This will be done using existing provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act, which allow a landlord in any residential tenancy agreement, including a social housing tenancy agreement, to require the tenant to pay a rental bond at the time the tenancy agreement is entered into. For these tenants, the requirement to pay a bond will be a condition of the residential tenancy agreement when they sign up. Again, I emphasise that the vast majority of responsible and law-abiding tenants have nothing to fear from these reforms. Nothing will change for them.

The primary goal of this new rental bond scheme is to target the behaviour of a minority of tenants who do the wrong thing. The changes will help reinforce tenant responsibility, encourage behavioural change and deter future property damage.

Of course, safeguards will be put in place to ensure that the needs of vulnerable clients are taken into account, as well as any extenuating circumstances faced by social housing tenants. For example, no rental bond will be required of a victim of domestic and family violence where the damage is caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence. Additionally, FACS currently applies discretion when determining tenant damage to consider whether ill health or an inability to maintain the premises has contributed to the damage. Should the discretion be exercised, a tenant damage charge is not imposed and accordingly a rental bond will not be required. To ensure its affordability, the bond will be able to be paid in instalments and payments will be able to be deferred in extenuating circumstances, including where the risk of financial hardship is high. The bond will also have a maximum cap, which will be \$1,400 indexed annually at Centrelink consumer price index. These and other details of the rental bond scheme will be set out in the ministerial guidelines, which will be publicly available.

The bill also inserts a new section 156C into the Residential Tenancies Act, which will allow the Land and Housing Corporation or Aboriginal Housing Office to give a termination notice and make an application to terminate a residential tenancy agreement and for the tribunal to order the termination of an agreement where a tenant fails to pay all or part of a rental bond. However, a tenant who pays the outstanding rental bond or enters into a repayment plan will not be required to vacate the premises and the agreement will not be terminated. The failure to pay a bond as required will be treated in a similar way to the non-payment of rent, with the same safeguards before the social housing landlord can take action to terminate a tenancy agreement for failure to pay a rental bond. In all other respects existing provisions will apply, such as those relating to the deposit of bonds, claiming the bond at the end of the tenancy agreement and the resolution of bond disputes by the tribunal. We ask no more of our clients than those who are renting in the private market and have modified the scheme for social housing tenants to take into account the particular vulnerabilities of our clients.

The third element of the bill relates to terminating a tenancy agreement of a tenant who is a registrable person. The Social Housing Management Transfer Program under Future Directions will deliver better services for tenants in New South Wales through the transfer of tenancy management of more than 14,000 properties to community housing providers. However, in order to ensure that those community housing providers are able to effectively manage public housing properties, it is essential that they are able to quickly respond to any safety issues that arise for tenants and the community. The bill amends section 58B of the Housing Act to give approved community housing providers, as defined in section 58A, the same powers as are available to the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to terminate the tenancy of a registrable person who is renting public housing. The power can only be exercised on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police if the commissioner considers that the presence of the tenant at the social housing property places any neighbours in the locality or the tenant at risk of being physically harmed or injured.

An additional safeguard will be placed on community housing providers exercising this power whereby the approved community housing provider will only be able to terminate the tenancy of a registrable person with the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services. Guidelines will be prepared to assist approved community housing providers in the exercise of these powers that set out what will be required in order to obtain the secretary's approval. A specific requirement will be that the power under section 58B is to be exercised by the chief executive officer or chair of the board of the approved community housing provider. Where the power is used, a registrable person will not be rendered homeless, and it is the requirement of the legislation that other suitable accommodation must be found for the person.

The final element of the bill gives the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services the power to investigate and pursue prosecution for private rental subsidy fraud. The bill updates the offences relating to public housing tenant fraud in sections 69 and 69A of the Housing Act and extends the offences so that they apply to fraud arising in private rental subsidies or other benefits paid by the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to tenants who are not in public housing. A private rental subsidy is a subsidy paid to clients who meet eligibility criteria to enable them to live affordably in the private rental sector. The private rental subsidy is calculated on the basis of the income and assets of a household. If a tenant fails to properly disclose household income or assets, they may be obtaining a benefit to which they are not entitled. This prevents the Government providing assistance to other people in need, particularly priority approved applicants on the New South Wales social housing register who are in urgent need of housing support.

Under the present system, the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services does not have the power to investigate or pursue prosecution for private rental subsidy fraud under the Housing Act in the same way that the Land and Housing Corporation can investigate and prosecute rental rebate fraud. This is because the offences under the Housing Act only apply to fraud against the Land and Housing Corporation, which is the

landlord for public housing tenants. Although the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services can refer private rental subsidy fraud to the police for criminal prosecution, in practice, such cases are not a priority for investigation. The bill addresses this problem by amending sections 69 and 69A to put the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services on the same footing as the Land and Housing Corporation.

Consequential amendments to sections 69B, 69C, 73 and 74 (2A) will enable the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to have the same powers to access and obtain information, documents or evidence to prevent, investigate and prosecute fraud as the corporation and will enable the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to recover any rental rebate or benefit that was obtained by fraud. The reforms go further than the current provisions by extending the conduct to tenants who wilfully make misleading statements or omissions as well as the existing provisions relating to the making of false statements or representations. These changes will mean that the Government can ensure that private rental subsidies are provided only to those who need them.

In conclusion, the bill marks another significant milestone towards building a more equitable social housing system and implementing the Government's future direction strategy for social housing in New South Wales. As I have said many times, the amendments in the bill target only those doing the wrong thing in public housing and will not affect the large majority of law-abiding and responsible tenants. We owe it to applicants on the social housing register to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by people seeking to abuse the system who, by their actions, stop others from accessing social housing benefits sooner. We owe it to other tenants living in social housing to reduce tenant damage so that money spent on resulting repairs can be spent elsewhere in the social housing system. The bill will make the social housing system that much more fairer and equitable. It reinforces the importance of personal responsibility and respect for public property and the benefits that tenants have received. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

CRIMES AMENDMENT (MISCONDUCT IN PUBLIC OFFICE AND OTHER MATTERS) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Jamie Parker, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (10:35): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

On behalf of The Greens, I introduce the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018. Corruption clouds good judgement and it diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity in our democracy. It erodes public confidence in government and has the potential to steer our State off the path to prosperity. In the past seven years that I have been in this House, I have been alarmed by the corruption issues that have been uncovered by the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] and the steps that many have taken to avoid the law. In fact, we now have two former Cabinet Ministers in jail and one former Cabinet Minister set to stand trial next year. We have a cricket team of former Liberal members of Parliament who were implicated in unlawful behaviour, which resulted in several resigning from this place.

Over the decades, successive governments have passed hundreds of laws in this Chamber, making clear criminal penalties for a range of offences from drink-driving to public violence. One area of law that we have failed to address is the issue of corruption, bribery and misconduct by public officials. In New South Wales corruption is still by and large governed by common law offences that are relatively complex with no set minimal penalties. As a result, they can be difficult to apply in some instances. The evolution of corruption legislation is of core interest to this State, and especially to the Legislative Assembly. It is our responsibility to ensure that legislation is relevant, comprehensive and effective in the future. In particular, it is important to meet the expectations of the community when determinations are made by the ICAC but when members of the public are disappointed when those determinations by the ICAC are not translated into criminal prosecutions. The object of the bill is to create indictable offences to prohibit corruption, bribery and misconduct in public office. The bill amends the Crimes Act to specifically prohibit:

- (a) current and former public officials misusing information obtained in an official capacity,
- (b) public officials engaging in official conduct, or exercising influence, for dishonest purposes,
- (c) public officials acting in matters in which they have a pecuniary interest,
- (d) the bribing of public officials,
- (e) public officials accepting bribes,

- (f) conspiring to dishonestly obtain a benefit from, or to defraud, public authorities or public officials. Schedule 1 inserts provisions in the Crimes Act 1900 in relation to proposed section 215 which defines "public official" as an individual having public official functions or acting in a public official capacity, and includes any of the following:
 - (a) a person employed in a Public Service agency or any other government sector agency within the meaning of the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*,
 - (b) a person who performs work for the Crown under a contract—

That would include services as a member of the NSW Police Force—

- (c) a person who holds or performs the duties of an office established by a law of the State,
- (d) a person who is otherwise in the service of the Crown,
- (e) a judicial officer within the meaning of the *Judicial Officers Act 1956*,
- (f) a member of Parliament.

New section 216 makes it an offence for a public official or former public official to use information obtained in his or her capacity as a public official with the intention of dishonestly obtaining a benefit for any person, including the public official, or dishonestly causing a detriment to another person. The maximum penalty is seven years imprisonment. New section 217 makes it an offence for a public official to engage in official conduct with the intention of dishonestly obtaining a benefit for any person or dishonestly causing a detriment to another person or for a public official to exercise influence as a public official with the intention of dishonestly obtaining a benefit for any person, or dishonestly causing a detriment to another person. In each case, the maximum penalty set out in this proposed legislation is seven years imprisonment.

New section 218 makes it an offence for a public official to deal with matters in an official capacity if the public official has a pecuniary interest in the matters. The maximum penalty set out in this proposed legislation is seven years imprisonment. New section 219 makes it an offence to bribe a public official. The maximum penalty is seven years imprisonment. New section 220 makes it an offence for a public official to receive a bribe. The maximum penalty is seven years imprisonment. New section 221 makes it an offence to: conspire with another person with the intention of dishonestly obtaining a gain from, or causing a loss or substantial risk of loss to, a third person, where the third person is a public authority; and to conspire with another person with the intention of dishonestly influencing a public official in the exercise of the official's duties as a public official. In each case, the maximum penalty is seven years imprisonment.

New section 222 provides that the proposed part is in addition to, and does not derogate from, other offences about corrupt practices. As I said at the outset, New South Wales has not had a noble history, even in recent times, with the issue of corruption. We are indeed blessed in this State to have the Independent Commission Against Corruption, a body which has excelled at investigating and exposing corrupt conduct. However, while the ICAC is able to identify where corrupt behaviour has taken place, translating those findings into criminal charges is not always straightforward. The Greens have introduced this bill to ensure that there is a clear statutory offence around bribery and misconduct, in particular, to ensure that the application of the law is clear not only to the courts but also to the public.

In its submission to the ICAC committee's inquiry into prosecutions arising from ICAC investigations in 2014, the Independent Commission Against Corruption highlighted the need to create a range of new criminal offences that capture corrupt conduct including: misconduct in public office, bribery and conspiring to defraud a public official, and public officials having a pecuniary interest in government contracts. In its submission to the inquiry, ICAC made those matters clear which has been one of the main motivators for we Greens to move this proposal. We want to follow on from ICAC's recommendations in 2014 that requested the creation of this range of new criminal offences. The legislation that I propose on behalf of The Greens, we believe, encapsulates the submission from the Independent Commission Against Corruption. We believe that this Parliament should take heed of the proposal by the ICAC and I encourage all members to support this bill. In its submission to the inquiry, ICAC stated that:

... members of the public should readily have available, via legislation, a succinct and clear statement of the offence of misconduct in public office and the maximum penalty that may be imposed where the offence is found to be committed.

This proposed legislation does that, and ensures that the courts and prosecutors do not rely on common law offences, but there are clear statutory offences, as set out by this Parliament, to provide clear direction to prosecutors and also to the courts. The Independent Commission Against Corruption also went on to say:

This is consistent with the notion that the criminal law should be accessible and comprehensible, and that members of the public (and in this particular case, public officials) are informed of the seriousness with which society regards breaches of public duty and are able regulate their conduct accordingly.

Quite simply, the ICAC asked the Government to close the gap between its powers to investigate and the powers of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to prosecute by introducing new criminal offences that capture corrupt conduct. Since 2014, the Government has not undertaken that process. Accordingly, we Greens have drafted this bill with the assistance of Parliamentary Counsel and, through the engagement of a range of stakeholders, has culminated in us introducing the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018. Because this request by the Independent Commission Against Corruption has not been acted on by the Government for four long years, this bill aims to finally provide a response.

I want to address the issue of other jurisdictions and how this statutory approach, rather than relying on common law, is in fact the norm in the rest of our country. New South Wales lags behind the Commonwealth and other States that already have statutory offences dealing with misconduct by public officials. Under the Criminal Code Act it is an offence, punishable by up to five years imprisonment, for Commonwealth public officials to exercise their official duties or use their influence to benefit or harm someone dishonestly. The Australian Capital Territory and Queensland criminal codes contain similar offences with a penalty of seven years imprisonment. When The Greens drafted the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018 we looked at these jurisdictions not only in terms of the way that the legislation was shaped in other jurisdictions but also in similar codes in relation to the issue of penalties.

In relation to penalties, as I have already made reference to in the proposed sections, the bill proposes a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment, which brings it into line with codes in the Australian Capital Territory, and in Queensland, which contains similar offences and also have a penalty of seven years imprisonment. In Victoria there are various common law and statutory offences that could encompass corrupt conduct. In the South Australia Criminal Law Consolidation Act it requires proof of a public officer acting "improperly", defined as acting "contrary to the standards of propriety generally and reasonably expected by ordinary decent members of the community". That is an aspiration that this Parliament should support. People in the community should expect that public officials and politicians, which this bill captures, should act as is reasonably expected by ordinary decent members of the community.

Sadly, in New South Wales two former Cabinet Ministers are in jail and, as I mentioned, a near cricket team of Liberal members of Parliament has been implicated by the ICAC in unlawful and corruption behaviour. But we do not have the statutory offences that allow the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to take clear and concise action, and the lack of statutory offences do not provide the type of clarity that public officials require in order to demonstrate to them the seriousness with which this Parliament takes corrupt conduct. Queensland and the Northern Territory have a separate provision around "abuse of office" offences, which appear to apply to public officers who abuse their office in the absence of a dishonest intention.

The definition of a "public official" is also relevant. The Commonwealth and other States have expanded the definition of public official for the offence of misconduct in public office to encompass contractors, which is a valuable measure that we have incorporated in the bill. New section 215 deals with the meaning of "public official" and subsection (5) includes a person who performs work for the Crown under a contract for services. This Government is increasingly privatising services and using contractors. Hence the inclusion of contractors, who are using taxpayers' money to undertake activities on behalf of this State, should be captured by provisions to protect against bribery and misconduct and to protect against public officials acting in inappropriate ways.

I turn now to the common law. The Director of Public Prosecutions uses the common law to pursue actions against corrupt or otherwise inappropriate behaviour by public officials. Public sector procurement is especially vulnerable to corruption. Indeed, several recent investigations by the Independent Commission Against Corruption have involved public officials who had a direct financial interest in a company or business using their public official functions to award contracts to their company or business. Other examples of this conduct are public officials who use their position to influence another public official to unwittingly award a contract to their company or business, and public officials using inside or commercially privileged information to obtain an advantage in the awarding of contracts.

There has been a lack of understanding in the public sector of the conflict of interest involved in this type of conduct and this has been demonstrated in several reports by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. A criminal offence needs to be created to reflect community attitudes about the seriousness of such conduct. In fact, the Independent Commission Against Corruption recommended this in its submission to the inquiry by the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption. It was clearly pointed out that criminal law should be both accessible and comprehensible, and that members of the public should see this in light of the concerns that have been raised.

We know there is a tainted history of planning and development decisions in New South Wales. We also know that former members of this House who were implicated in unlawful behaviour and found to be corrupt by the Independent Commission Against Corruption have had to resign. The people of New South Wales want us to

do everything that we can to expose and stop corrupt behaviour. The community has moved beyond being satisfied only by the exposure of corruption; it now expects justice to be served. This bill is an essential step to restoring public confidence in government decision-making. It paves the way towards preventing our State from being compromised by corrupt behaviour. In conclusion, I thank the NSW Parliamentary Counsel for its efforts and the parliamentary research library for its support. I urge all members to support the bill.

Debate adjourned.

PUBLIC FINANCE AND AUDIT AMENDMENT (STATE-FUNDED PRIVATE ENTITIES) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Ryan Park, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (10:53): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am proud to introduce this important bill. I note that the member for Davidson is seated at the table. The member for Davidson previously chaired the Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee, of which I am a member. That committee recommended the introduction of the "follow the money powers" for the Auditor-General. These laws will give the New South Wales Auditor-General increased power to check how billions of taxpayers' dollars are being spent by organisations that have won lucrative contracts from the State Government. The Public Finance and Audit Amendment (State-Funded Private Entities) Bill 2018 comes in the wake of the scandalous evidence given at the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry and in the face of strenuous opposition by the Government.

Currently, if the State Government awards a contract to a private organisation, the Auditor-General is powerless to investigate how that money is being spent, even if there are suspicions that the money is being misspent or misappropriated. The Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee and the New South Wales and Commonwealth Auditors-General, including current New South Wales Auditor General Margaret Crawford, have recommended that new powers be granted to ensure that public money is properly spent by private organisations. For too long, the Premier has bitterly opposed this reform. In July 2017 she said that there were enough powers in place. Under Labor's plan, the so-called follow the money laws would give the New South Wales Auditor-General the power to investigate the performance of private contractors and other non-government organisations that receive money from the State Government. These powers are necessary as tens of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money have been improperly used in the past by private and non-government organisations.

This bill will ensure that taxpayers' money is used appropriately. It also has the support of the Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee, as well as the support of members on the other side. In light of the evidence given in the banking royal commission, it is timely to make sure that taxpayers' money is spent effectively and appropriately. This bill will do that. Unfortunately, we have seen scandalous activity, particularly in vocational education and training, under this Government. Millions of dollars have been spent on these entities and they have been wasted. Training and educational outcomes have not been delivered, yet this Government continues to talk about being fiscally responsible with an effective and responsible budget. I thank the member for Davidson and others opposite for the work they have done in this space and for raising this issue with the Government. I also thank my Labor colleagues. We will continue to put forward legislation to ensure that taxpayers' money is used effectively and that our taxpayers benefit from the way in which that money is spent. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2018

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2018

NSW GENERATIONS FUNDS BILL 2018

STATE REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

SNOWY HYDRO LEGACY FUND BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 19 June 2018.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members to extend the usual courtesy to the Leader of the Opposition. His budget reply speech will be heard without interruption.

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (10:59): This is the Government's eighth budget—eight budgets for a Government well into its eighth long year. It is a government defined by three characteristics: an ideological obsession with privatisation, waste and incompetence in the delivery of projects, and the wrong priorities. The Liberals and Nationals are, above all else, committed to privatisation, in any circumstance and on any occasion. It is their answer to everything. Given the choice, they will always side with the banks and the big end of town rather than with the community. More than \$50 billion worth of public assets has been sold, with serious consequences for the long-term health of our economy.

In 2014 the Government sold Liddell Power Station to AGL for effectively nothing, despite the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] telling the Government it would mean higher electricity prices. The Liberals and Nationals did not care that high power bills hurt every household and business; they just wanted to privatise. Now, just four years later, we have the bizarre spectacle of the Deputy Premier wanting to nationalise Liddell—to buy it back. Here is some advice for the Bombala Bolshevik: If he did not privatise it he would not have to nationalise it. In 2015 the Premier sold Vales Point Power Station for \$1 million. The new owners promptly valued it at \$730 million. The Premier brings all that priceless banking experience to the table. Imagine what \$730 million could do for our schools and hospitals. The Liberals and Nationals promised that electricity privatisation would mean lower power bills. Instead, high prices punish families and power shortages damage industry.

The port privatisations are thwarting competition and entrenching a private monopoly. Secret deals deliberately designed to hurt Newcastle and the Hunter are making it economically impossible to develop a container terminal. In an open trading economy like ours, ports are an essential piece of infrastructure. Instead of promoting competition to boost productivity and lower costs, the Liberals and Nationals entered into secret deals to stifle investment, hurt exporters and block jobs growth. If such an anti-competitive arrangement were ever concocted in the private sector, the participants would be jailed. The Liberals and Nationals were so ashamed of what this privatisation has done to Newcastle that they tried to hide the truth. I welcome the ACCC investigation into the ports and await the findings with great interest.

I turn to hospital privatisation. Across regional New South Wales—at Shellharbour, Maitland, Wyong, Goulburn and Bowral—communities know what the Liberals and Nationals tried to pull off: to put profits before patients and privatise our great public hospital system. In the face of massive opposition from health workers and local communities, we have seen them back away—for now. But we know it is just a short-term political fix—an attempt to get them through the next election—because the Liberals and Nationals believe only in one thing above all else: privatisation. The Treasurer himself calls it the "golden key". They even want to privatise the ABC.

In Newcastle we have seen the damage caused by the privatisation of public transport. More than 1,000 people came to a public meeting at Belmont to protest. I met Pauline Graham of Belmont North. Pauline has a granddaughter, Tahlia, who has multiple disabilities. Before privatisation Tahlia caught the bus to get to her part-time job at Swansea McDonald's and to attend day programs four days a week. But after Tahlia was stranded at Mayfield following privatisation, due to having to change buses multiple times, Pauline now has to drive her everywhere. These are real people hurt by privatisation.

The last Premier came from the banks, and this one did too. The last Premier returned to the banks, and this one hopes to do the same thing one day. A banker-led government always sells the people's assets and always hurts the people on the way through. The Liberals and Nationals told the people of New South Wales at the last election that they would privatise electricity to pay for infrastructure. They guaranteed that electricity prices would not go up after privatisation. They lied. Prices went up by 20 per cent last year alone. And they make people pay again for their infrastructure through unfair new tolls, 40-year extensions to existing tolls and toll increases double the rate of inflation. They have also more than doubled the entry fees to the Powerhouse Museum. The public always pays. If our opponents are re-elected they will be straight back to their old tricks, with more privatisations—hospitals, water, the rest of the electricity network. You know they want to.

Today I announce Labor's privatisation pledge: a commitment to the people of this State that we will call a halt to this destructive privatisation scam, and a guarantee that under Labor the sell-offs will stop. Under Labor there will be no privatisation of our public hospitals, no privatisation of water, no more electricity privatisation, and no privatisation of public transport services. The Government's delivery of infrastructure projects reveals its waste and incompetence—billions of dollars are being squandered. In 2012 WestConnex was announced as a \$10 billion road project to connect Western Sydney to Sydney Airport and Port Botany, and to renew the Parramatta Road corridor. Six years on, the cost has blown out to more than \$17 billion, yet it will not go to the city, it will not go to the airport and it will not go to the port. It will end in monstrous traffic jams.

Today Parramatta Road is more congested than ever because of the thousands of extra vehicles that use it to escape the unfair M4 toll. Property owners have been treated with contempt. The public relations stunts have been endless, but honest information about the project is suppressed. The Sydney light rail is the Premier's personal vanity project, but she cannot say when it will be finished or how much it is going to cost. A scar of semi-permanent construction sites lines the route, small businesses are being destroyed and there are multiple court cases for deceptive and misleading conduct.

The Auditor-General found that the New South Wales Government "did not effectively plan and procure the CBD Light Rail project to ensure it maximised value for money for New South Wales". The Premier's pet project, the Sydney light rail, is a monument to her Government's incompetence. The Liberals and Nationals chose to buy new intercity trains from overseas instead of having them made here. Skilled workers and good businesses in the Illawarra and the Hunter were overlooked. And some comic genius from the Liberal and Nationals parties has delivered the State new trains that do not fit the tracks. The Government is now going to have to compromise safety standards to get them into service.

Labor members will do better on infrastructure because we will break the culture of secrecy that has allowed this Government's incompetence to thrive. Today, Labor announces a four-point plan to end the waste and incompetence on infrastructure delivery. First, a Labor government will hold a judicial inquiry into the WestConnex and Sydney light rail projects to establish exactly how those projects have gone so badly wrong and it will provide full public accountability. Secondly, we will not use special purpose vehicles such as the Sydney Motorway Corporation that are designed to escape legitimate scrutiny and freedom of information laws. That has been central to this Government's culture of secrecy and it has to end.

Thirdly, we will ensure that no construction contracts are signed before planning approvals are received. The Government has never explained why it did this on the new M5 Motorway. Fourthly, we will legislate to require Infrastructure NSW to provide health checks each year on the progress of major projects and publish them. The public has a right to know what is going on. Frontline health, education and public transport services are missing out because billions of dollars are being squandered in blowouts and delays to the Sydney light rail and WestConnex projects. We have to stop the blowouts, the deceit and the waste. The four measures I have announced today will end the secrecy and provide a cleansing dose of transparency.

A new fast rail line between Westmead, Parramatta and the Sydney central business district—the western metro—is Labor's top transport priority. It will connect the two major centres of the Sydney metropolis and reduce travel times between those centres. It will greatly improve public transport for three million Western Sydney residents. Labor's sense of urgency about this project is shared by Infrastructure NSW. It advised the Government this year that the western metro is a higher priority than both the northern beaches tunnel and the F6. It said:

Infrastructure NSW considers that the F6 Extension and Beaches Link both need to be weighed carefully against other potential government sector investments. In a constrained fiscal environment, a near term decision to invest in these new motorway connections serving the Eastern Harbour City may mean deferral of projects elsewhere in Greater Sydney which may have greater city-shaping impacts.

Unlike the Government, the Labor Opposition accepts the advice of Infrastructure NSW on this. A Labor government will deliver the western metro years earlier than a re-elected Liberal Government would. We will reallocate billions of dollars tied up with the northern beaches tunnel to the faster delivery of the western metro. The Premier should accept the advice of her infrastructure experts, swallow her pride and drop the northern beaches tunnel—we know it was only ever a by-election stunt—and accelerate the western metro. She should drop the northern beaches tunnel. The political future of the member for North Shore is just not worth the cost.

Labor's transport priority will be the western metro. We will pursue this project instead of the northern beaches tunnel and we will not proceed with the Bankstown line conversion. The case for metro rail is to deliver Sydney new, additional rail lines. The Liberal Government's Bankstown conversion is another property play, another developers' picnic and a plan to cram more than 100,000 more people into new apartments along the Canterbury-Bankstown corridor. The overdevelopment of our suburbs—new apartment towers without the parks, playgrounds and social infrastructure that are so needed—is damaging our people's quality of life.

To add insult to injury, this Government recklessly assaults the urban and natural environments. There have been massacres of trees, proposals for motorways cutting through the Royal National Park and a deliberate assault on the unique alpine values of the Kosciuszko. We will also ensure that that every cent of the Snowy Hydro proceeds goes to projects that create jobs across regional New South Wales. That was a policy I announced in May last year—and a policy The Nationals and the Liberals were forced to adopt this year. We will support and grow our regional centres. We will confirm our commitment to the Illawarra and Central Coast with comprehensive job action plans.

The Liberal and Nationals members' plan to spend billions on Sydney sports stadiums confirms that they have the wrong priorities for our State. My conscience tells me that it is wrong to spend \$2.2 billion on Sydney stadiums when desperately ill people are turned away from mental health clinics, often with tragic results. The Liberals and Nationals want to waste \$800 million rebuilding the Sydney Football Stadium with 45,000 seats, even though the teams that play there struggle to get crowds of 15,000. Their plan is to commence the demolition of the existing stadium before they have planning approval for a new one. That is a scandalous abuse of process.

Can anyone imagine demolishing their old home before they have a contract in place for their new one? And—from the same comic genius who brought us trains that do not fit the tracks—under their plans, \$2 billion later, their stadium splurge will deliver fewer seats at Moore Park and Olympic Park stadiums than are there today. Labor will not support the Berejiklian stadium splurge because it has the right values and the right priorities. Labor stands for more nurses, teachers and police—not \$2 billion on two Sydney stadiums. Our State is facing a schools overcrowding crisis. It has not happened by accident. We have a crisis today because the Liberals and Nationals cut \$1.7 billion in education funding in 2012. Actions have their consequences. Year after year, the Liberals and Nationals neglected our schools and refused to invest in our children's futures.

Since 2011, the Nationals and Liberals have closed 21 more schools than they have opened. The schools announcement in this budget is an admission of their failure—a failure to plan and a failure to look after our children's futures. Labor will not support splurging \$2.2 billion on Sydney stadiums when 120,000 kids are being taught in demountable classrooms. When he became the Minister for Education, the member for Pittwater promised a dozen new schools each year on his watch. In 18 months, he has delivered just one comprehensive school—Wentworth Point—and that was late and without air conditioning. Of the 170 projects announced last week, there are only 13 new schools to be opened years down the track.

A few months ago I announced that Labor would take \$300 million from the Berejiklian stadium splurge to install air conditioning at the public schools most in need. I wanted to spark action from this Government after eight years of neglect. I was right. I started this, and today I am going to finish it. We will add \$300 million that we will take from the Berejiklian stadium splurge to the \$500 million budget allocation and Labor—only Labor—will air condition every public school in New South Wales. Our priority is air conditioning classrooms, not corporate boxes at the Liberal Government's new stadiums.

[Interruption]

Whatever you can do, we can do better—on time and on budget. Yours is not an air-conditioning policy; ours is an air-conditioning policy. Our summers grow ever hotter and ever longer. Labor will not leave our classrooms as the only State government buildings without air conditioning. We will not put schoolchildren and their teachers through that. This forms part of our comprehensive plan for dealing with the schools overcrowding crisis. Surplus government land will go to build new schools and expand existing schools in an unprecedented schools building program. Every new public school will have child care or before and after school care facilities on site. All new schools—public, Catholic and independent—will be exempt from local infrastructure charges. When it comes to schools, Labor will always do so much more than the Liberals and Nationals. We will put schools before stadiums.

The heartlessness of our conservative opponents is revealed by their treatment over the past seven years of vulnerable children and families, people with disabilities and the aged. Their cuts and closures have hurt too many of our State's most vulnerable people. The Liberals and Nationals have now had eight budgets to fix our health system. Instead, elective surgery waiting lists have grown to almost 78,000 patients and the hospitals are not properly staffed. Mental health services are inadequate. Drug rehabilitation services are underfunded as well. Sadly, too many families know the damage that ice can do. That drug is causing great damage right across our State. It is taking a heavy toll on our young people—especially in rural and regional communities. The number of deaths relating to methamphetamines doubled in seven years. It is a devastating drug that causes violence and psychosis. It is destroying lives. Family members, friends, police, emergency and health workers bear the brunt of the devastation this cheap and addictive drug causes. We cannot keep doing what we are doing—it just is not working. I am determined not to leave this problem unaddressed.

A Labor government will combat head on the scourge of ice with a plan for compulsory detoxification and rehabilitation of severe ice addicts. We will take the most dangerous ice addicts off our streets and out of our emergency departments and get them the help they need. We will open six clinics across the State for the mandatory detoxification and rehabilitation of patients with severe ice addictions who are a threat to the community and themselves. There will be six facilities with a total of 150 beds. Four facilities will be located in regional New South Wales. The clinics will treat up to 1,300 ice addicts a year and will be staffed by specially trained nurses, health professionals and security guards. This is a health-based therapeutic approach and not a punitive response to individual ice addicts. It protects the community and provides addicts with the intensive treatment they need to recover from their addiction.

It is time for a decision on a final location for the new Tweed hospital. The Nationals and Liberals, and their member for Tweed, have delayed it for too long. Labor rejects The Nationals' push to overdevelop Kingscliff. A Labor government will build a new Tweed Hospital at Kings Forest—protecting our State significant farmlands at Cudgen. After eight budgets, the Government has a terrible record of scandalous privatisations; soaring electricity prices; tolls, tolls, tolls; ports rorts; a schools overcrowding crisis; members of Parliament moonlighting as property developers; water theft; forced council mergers; the greyhound ban; never-ending attacks on the environment; undermining of the Independent Commission Against Corruption; and waste, incompetence and blowouts on WestConnex, the Sydney light rail and other infrastructure projects. The Government's eighth budget is not a budget for our State's future. It is a budget designed as part of a desperate campaign to attempt re-election.

But all the media stunts, public relations spin and pork barrelling cannot hide the fact that at its core this Government has the wrong priorities. It puts stadiums before schools and hospitals. After eight budgets, the case for change is clear. Labor wants to build a secure future for everyone in this State, whether they live in Sydney or our great regional areas. Labor will govern for the long term. We will rebuild TAFE, improve the quality of people's lives, and put schools and hospitals before stadiums. Now more than ever, Labor stands for a fairer future with opportunities for everyone and a fair go for all.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that these bills be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I move:

That these bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2018-2019

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (11:24:1): I move:

That this House take note of the Budget Estimates and Related Papers 2018-2019.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I set down the resumption of the debate on the Budget Estimates and Related Papers 2018-2019 as an order of the day for a future day.

Bills

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (MORATORIUM AND RESTRICTIONS ON RECOVERING ENERGY FROM WASTE) BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 12 April 2018.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (11:26): I speak in opposition to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Moratorium and Restrictions on Recovering Energy from Waste) Bill 2018. One of the key features of the bill is to introduce a blanket prohibition on energy-from-waste developments in the Sydney Basin area and 13 other local government areas, as well as placing a moratorium on such developments in other parts of New South Wales. I will comment on the geographical scope of the bill in due course. The bill also seeks to establish an expert advisory body on energy-from-waste technology that must be consulted for all applications that require development consent. The bill is moved by the new member for Blacktown. It is appropriate to reflect on the former member for Blacktown and whether he would have introduced such a bill.

The former member for Blacktown, John Robertson, was in many respects an ornament to this place. It was a great shame that we did not have a valedictory speech from him to recognise his important contribution to the democracy of New South Wales. John Robertson took over as leader of the Labor Party after the disastrous leadership of the now Senator Kristina Keneally, who led the Labor Party to the worst defeat it has suffered in the history of this Parliament. The only benefit to the Australian Labor Party of that result was—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Was me.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I was going to say, was the introduction of the new member for Heffron, who is a member of greater substance than the former member of Heffron. He makes significant contributions to

this place on a regular basis. The now Senator Kristina Keneally's main contribution to the Labor Party was delivering a caucus after the 2011 election that could meet in a phone box. That was Kristina Keneally's contribution to the Labor Party. The Labor Party was then led by the former member for Blacktown, John Robertson, who was, it must be acknowledged, a great thinker.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Are you going to talk about the incinerator?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I am coming to that. John Robertson was a traditional Labor member of Parliament in the old-fashioned way of Labor leaders, a man trained on the tools—not at the leftist university where most are now educated. John Robertson was a gentleman. He would engage with those on the opposite side, he was a thinker, he was a man of depth, and he led Labor at a difficult time. It is important to democracy to have a strong Opposition and he was a strong leader of great depth and a man of great character—as is shown by the fact that he is now working for Foodbank. He did not seek to ingratiate himself financially but is pursuing a cause of benefit to the community. He is to be commended.

I will visit Foodbank and see what he is doing in his new job because I have so much respect for him. Would the thinker, would the man of depth and principle, the former member for Blacktown, have introduced this bill? I suggest he would not have. There is a high degree of cynical politics about this bill, which I will highlight. Having heard the Leader of the Opposition's reply to the Budget Speech, I was reminded of how John Robertson's leadership ended, which was by a knife in the back from the current Leader of the Opposition, the member for Auburn.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order: The member for Ku-ring-gai might think this bill is hilarious, but it is a matter of importance to the people of Western Sydney; it is a matter of life and death. I ask that the member be directed to return to the leave of the bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Ku-ring-gai to remain relevant to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Moratorium and Restrictions on Recovering Energy from Waste) Bill 2018.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The point I was seeking to make is a matter of fact and public record. It is an important matter relevant to this bill because this bill does not take account of scientific evidence or facts or the historical fact that the current member for Auburn stabbed the former member for Blacktown in the back to take leadership of the Opposition. It is a prerequisite to Labor leadership. Those opposite want to ignore the facts. All I am doing is stating facts.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order: The member is flouting your ruling. The member is clearly ignoring the Chair's direction to remain relevant to the bill. The Government is using the member for Ku-ring-gai to defend an incinerator in Western Sydney.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Ms Prue Car: The point of order is relevance. Mr Deputy Speaker, the member is flouting your ruling to remain relevant. The member for Ku-ring-gai is playing politics with the issue of burning waste in Western Sydney and throughout New South Wales. It is a joke being perpetrated on behalf of the Government.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I direct the member for Ku-ring-gai to restrict his comments to the leave of the bill.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I do not know why those opposite are wasting time. Opposition members are taking spurious points of order instead of allowing facts and evidence to be debated in relation to the legislation. It is regrettable that those opposite are willing to waste the time of this Parliament with their spurious interjections. The constant interjections while I am trying to speak are rude and unbecoming of members of Parliament. It continues. The member for Prospect was replaced by John Robertson on the Paul Murray program because of his incompetence—and once again he is red in the face. The member has had more troubles than Pauline in *The Perils of Pauline*. The member for Prospect has more front than a hippopotamus.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Ku-ring-gai to return to the leave of the bill.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I was speaking to the lack of evidence and justification to demonstrate that the measures contained in the bill are necessary or appropriate. In his speech during the second reading debate, the member for Blacktown cited "potential" impacts to air quality, to the environment and to human health as reasons for advancing the bill. I assure the House these are issues that the Government and the planning system take seriously. The planning system provides a robust system in which to assess and manage developments such as energy-from-waste facilities while ensuring that air quality, the environment and human health are protected. The Labor Party wants to ignore all of that.

I am not sure whether members opposite have read the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act or are aware of the substantial protections within that Act and whether this bill will duplicate unnecessarily and in an inconsistent fashion those protections. The planning system provides a robust framework in which to assess and manage developments such as energy-from-waste facilities whilst ensuring that air quality, the environment and human health are protected. A blanket prohibition such as this is a rigid approach that contradicts the merit-based assessment framework established by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 under a Labor government. What was good for the Wran Labor Government is apparently now not good for the Luke Foley Opposition.

Ms Prue Car: Maybe technology has advanced since then.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I acknowledge that interjection. The technology is irrelevant. It is the environmental impact of the technology that is relevant. That is the logical fallacy behind the bill and the reason why the Government opposes it. A merit-based assessment approach is considered more appropriate than a blanket prohibition, which is unnecessary, disproportionate and unjustified. It is interesting that those who keep interjecting, who are disrespectful and impolite and who are laughing, including the member for Prospect—who is a great entertainer and regularly turns beetroot in the face—

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The discourtesy and lack of politeness is never-ending. In putting forward this bill, the Labor Party stands for disproportionate, unnecessary and unjustified laws. It shows great insight and is a microcosm of the Opposition's philosophies, in comparison to those of the Government, which operates on sound principles based on facts and scientific evidence—concepts that are foreign and unknown to those opposite. The measures in this bill will only serve to discourage innovative waste management in New South Wales at a time when such innovation is urgently needed. The planning system already excludes certain development on specified land use zones set out in State and local environmental plans and policies. As a mayor and somebody who operates in this area in that role, the member for Blacktown should know that.

For example, electricity generating works are permitted only in rural, industrial and special use zones and not within residential zones. The member for Blacktown is a mayor; for goodness sake, he should know that. He has staff to advise him on the planning laws and who are experts in this area so he should know all this. Yet he puts forward a bill that pretends not to be the current law in this State. The provisions in the bill propose an additional permissibility layer by prohibiting energy-from-waste development in the Sydney Basin and other parts of the State regardless of the underlying zoning of the land. A blanket exclusion zone is not currently applied for other electricity generating works, such as coal-fired power stations or other potentially controversial provisions. There is no justification to introduce an inconsistent provision that applies only to a specific type of energy-generating development. All members know that an important hallmark of the rule of law is consistency.

One of the problems with the Labor Party, and the union movement that supports it, is that, as we know from Sally McManus, they do not believe in or support the rule of law. Sally McManus stated on 7.30, "We only believe that you need to follow laws that we agree with." She said that to Leigh Sales on 7.30 not so long ago. That is a fundamental difference between the Labor Party and the Liberal-Nationals Coalition: We believe in the rule of law. The Labor Party used to believe in the rule of law. In the more than 100 years of its existence, one never heard anyone from the Labor Party propose the violent overthrow of our system of government. There was respect for the law and a belief that members would debate the law in this Chamber and, when a majority of the Parliament passed a law, that law should be obeyed until it was changed politically.

Sally McManus said, "No. We only have to follow the laws that we think are just laws and good laws." That is a fundamental difference in the philosophy behind the major political parties in this country and their observance of the rule of law. We see through this bill the advocacy of inconsistent philosophies of law. Of course, it is very difficult for the judiciary to apply the law when different principles of law operate within the one piece of legislation. It causes great difficulty in statutory construction when there is one philosophy of law behind the majority of an Act of Parliament and a completely different philosophy of law behind other parts of the Act. Consistency is an important principle of lawmaking. It is an important principle of the rule of law and we need to call it out when the Labor Party, through its virtue-signalling legislation, proposes inconsistent bills that provide an inconsistency in the law that is highly undesirable.

The proposed bill is incompatible with the current planning framework in this State that assesses development proposals on their merits. This is the importance of an evidence-based decision-making process that respects and follows the rule of law. Blanket prohibitions, as proposed by this bill, deny proponents the opportunity to have their development applications considered at a project level, which is a well-established

feature of our planning system. The merit-based approach allows decisions to be made with regard to the specific circumstances and locations of a development based on quantifiable facts and assessment data.

Major projects such as energy-from-waste facilities require environmental impact statements that set out all the matters likely to affect the environment. The Department of Planning and Environment, along with other relevant agencies, are legally required now under the current legislation—without this bill—to thoroughly review the project and consult with the community and local councils before reaching a decision. If the member for Blacktown, and the Mayor of Blacktown, walked into the planning section of his council and spoke to some employees of Blacktown City Council that is what they would tell him. He does not need to believe me; he can talk to some of his council employees who are experts in the area and ask them, "Is what Henskens saying correct?" He can text them now if he wants to; he can ask them.

Mr Edmond Atalla: I can tell you that you are not correct.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: But he does not do it. I am assisted by the genius opposite me, who continues to interject. He says I am wrong. Go and ask the experts; go and ask the people who know the law.

Mr Edmond Atalla: I have.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I have read a lot of legislation over the years and I am telling the member for Mount Druitt that that is what the law says. He would not have read a piece of legislation in his life. He probably has hardly read any of the legislation he has voted on in this place, so he should not tell me what is in the Act. I am telling him that that is in the legislation and if he wants to argue something else, he should go and point it out to me. The current law, as opposed to the phoney bill that Labor has brought to this place, states that if the assessment demonstrates on the evidence that a project has negative impacts that cannot be managed, then it will be refused. That is the current law. This bill is unnecessary. It is contrary to evidence-based decision-making, which is currently the law in this State. Conversely, projects will be approved if the impacts are found to be acceptable and manageable. That is the law: an evidence-based, merit-based approach. This approach is not unique to New South Wales. It applies in other jurisdictions of Australia. Many of them are Labor jurisdictions. No justification in support of the bill has been given to warrant a departure from this merit-based, sensible approach, which is based on the facts of individual cases.

Mr Edmond Atalla: Tell that to our residents.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The member for Mount Druitt says that, but the only reason is because Labor's method of operation is fear, loathing and scaremongering. It is straight out of the Graham Richardson playbook of politics that Labor always operates from. The merits and the facts of the case are important and that is what this current planning system delivers. In addition to the current planning framework, air quality legislation administered by the independent Environment Protection Authority also applies to projects such as energy-from-waste facilities. The Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and the Protection of the Environment Operations (Clean Air) Regulation 2010 both have stringent requirements that apply to these developments.

I note that the 2010 clean air regulation was a Labor regulation. Why is it inadequate? Why is a Labor regulation that was passed by the former Government inadequate to deal with this situation? I would be interested to hear from members opposite why their regulation, which was passed by a Labor Minister in 2010, is inadequate? Are they going to stand up and say, "We got it wrong. We mucked up the regulation. There was something wrong with it."? That was a clean air regulation that was intended to apply to all the air in New South Wales.

Mr Lee Evans: Even the hot air.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Not just the hot air.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! The member for Ku-ring-gai will not be distracted by interjections.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: That is clean air around heavy industry emitting significant pollution. That applies to the Port Kembla steelworks, for example. There is nothing unique about the way in which the challenge to clean air is created. It applies to all the air in New South Wales, and that regulation was passed by the Labor Government. The member for Blacktown did not explain in his second reading speech why the 2010 Labor regulation in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, which has a merit-based approach at the development level, was somehow wanting. That piece of legislation applied to steelworks and other pollution-emitting industries. There was no explanation such as, "We are terribly sorry; we have been wrong all these years. We were wrong for the 10-plus years of the Wran Government and the 16-plus years of"—I will not go through all the leaders because there were so many of them before 2011. There was no explanation for that legislation in the second reading speech of the member for Blacktown.

In 2016, the Environment Protection Authority released the approved methods for the modelling and assessment of air pollutants, which sets out air quality targets, to ensure that air quality and human health are not compromised. Despite those legal protections that I have drawn to the attention of members, Labor and The Greens continue to operate scare campaigns about air quality around road tunnels and the like. The bill is another example of their virtue signalling, which is not evidence-based and ignores the current legal frameworks for the protection of our environment that have been in place for a long time.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, they should protect our environment. I am not arguing that there is anything wrong with this current legislation. In fact, I am saying it is great that we have the current legal framework. It has a consistent merit-based approach for protecting the environment, and this bill is unnecessary. It is for Opposition members to justify why that broad-based legislation, which applies to all manner of industry and the effect on their environment, should be thrown out the door and ignored and a special piece of legislation such as this one created. For the benefit of the member for Mount Druitt, who does not read legislation, I point out that the bill—

Mr Edmond Atalla: Just because you're a lawyer, it doesn't make you knowledgeable.

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Have you read it?

Mr Edmond Atalla: Yes, I have.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Okay. New clause 7A.1 within the new part 7A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act defines critical zones for air pollutants to mean the Sydney Basin area and the local government areas of the City of Blue Mountains, Kiama, City of Shellharbour and City of Wollongong, and the local government areas of the Central Coast, City of Cessnock, City of Lake Macquarie, City of Maitland, Muswellbrook, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton and Wollondilly. Coincidentally, the areas outside the Sydney Basin include only the electorates where the Labor Party has members of Parliament or hope to have members of Parliament. What is the difference between areas of the Upper Hunter and other regional areas of New South Wales? Why does the Labor Party hate regional areas of New South Wales so much that it does not include them in its consideration? Could it be the Graham Richardson whatever-it-takes mentality? Labor has framed a piece of legislation that is virtue signalling to the electorates it hopes to win.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! In accordance with Standing Order 52, the member for Ku-ring-gai will be heard in silence. If Opposition members continue to interject they will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I will move away from environmental protections for air and refer to other environmental protections. The Noise Policy for Industry 2017 also creates a framework for assessing the noise impacts from industry and sets out requirements for acceptable noise levels and what measures need to be enforced to manage noise levels. It provides guidance on how to determine achievable statutory noise limits and operational requirements. Environmental protection licences are issued that impose operating conditions on licensed facilities to make sure that facilities are managing noise impacts in accordance with the requirements of existing legislation.

In 2015 the NSW Energy from Waste Policy Statement was adopted, which notes that using waste to produce energy can offset other non-renewable energy sources but it will be supported only if it will deliver positive outcomes for people and the environment. The Coalition Government respects the environment and the impact that it has on people. Human activity must be sympathetic to the environment and the people who live within it. That is the current legislative framework and the reason this bill is unnecessarily duplicating, and in some ways is entirely inconsistent with, the current legislative environment. The policy aims to ensure that such development does not compromise the health of the community and the environment. In doing so, the policy adopts a risk-based approach. Accordingly, higher-risk facilities must meet more stringent assessment criteria but are not prohibited.

These technical criteria ensure that emissions are below certain levels that may pose a risk to the community and that facilities meet international best-practice standards. This approach is deliberate and maintains high standards to protect community and environmental health but seeks to avoid creating a roadblock for innovation. This is a philosophical issue. We are not Stalinists. The New South Wales Parliament traditionally has not been Stalinist. The Labor Party may traditionally have been Stalinist but the New South Wales Government is not. A Stalinist approach ignores evidence, follows the Graham Richardson playbook and prohibits things regardless of their merits and the evidence.

That leads to the backwardness we saw in Eastern Europe, where its economy languished behind the development that was allowed in the West through innovation. Government does not have all the good ideas on human development; the community needs to have incentive to innovate and to do things better. When we prohibit things we exclude even the investigation of how things can be done better. This is the fundamental philosophical difference between Government members and Opposition members. An unwilling Stalinist, the member for Rockdale, has just entered the Chamber. His heart is not in that sort of Stalinism; he knows that innovation is important. He knows that innovation and incentive is the great human motivator for betterment.

A bill such as this promotes an entirely different philosophy—a philosophy that is not based on merit or evidence. It is obstructionist, obdurate and against the evidence. As I have already explained, the proposed bill is inconsistent with the approach adopted in current environmental policies. The policy does not place a generic ban on energy-from-waste facilities. It should also be noted that the Government is working towards securing energy supplies for the people of New South Wales. This means not only supporting traditional energy sources and the burgeoning renewable energy sector but also considering innovative and emerging sources of energy. Prohibitions, by their very nature, discourage investment in innovative waste management technology.

The Government is also investigating options for better waste management across New South Wales, largely in response to China's National Sword policy and Australia's limited capacity to process its own waste, including landfill. The restrictions and moratorium that this bill seeks to create will stifle growth and innovation in the waste management industry. Unwarranted regulatory hurdles and roadblocks, such as those proposed by the bill, will be avoided not only because they are unnecessary under our current planning protections and environmental protections but also because they may completely frustrate efforts to respond to novel challenges that face this industry. Innovation in waste avoidance, minimisation and management should be actively sought, while maintaining high levels of assessment rigour in the environment and on human health. The bill proposes the establishment of an expert advisory body.

Mr Stephen Kamper: You are not on it.

Mr Ron Hoenig: If you interject you just give him something else to talk about.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The member for Heffron is right. He said that if members interject the more there is to talk about and the more time it wastes. I do not know why Opposition members want to waste the valuable time of this Parliament with discourteous interjections. It is regrettable. It is terrible that the standards of the Parliament are declining because of the behaviour of members. It ought not to occur. I should be allowed to make important points without being interrupted by Opposition members. It is regrettable that it continues. The bill proposes the establishment of an expert advisory body to be consulted on energy-from-waste developments. Such a body is unnecessary and duplicative, particularly as experts are already consulted through the development assessment process. Creating a new body will only add red tape and result in delays in the assessment process. I am reminded of Jacob Rees-Mogg, a Conservative member of the House of Commons.

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: Don't go there, mate.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: As the member for Macquarie Fields would know, he has become a bit of a social media superstar. The member for Macquarie Fields, who was educated at the University of London, will be sympathetic to this. Jacob Rees-Mogg reminds us of the problem of floccinaucinihilipilification—a word that needs to be used more often. It means the habit of estimating something that is minute or worthless. This is the reverse of that. Mr Matthew Ross, who is the head of languages and teaches Latin at Barker College in my electorate, will be happy to see the revival of these important Latin words in our dictionary. In fact, Wikipedia says that word is—

Mr Edmond Atalla: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. More pollution is coming from the mouth of the member for Ku-ring-gai than from this subject matter. The member should return to the leave of the bill.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! There is no point of order. The member for Mount Druitt will resume his seat.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I feel as if I have just been mauled by a dead sheep. Barbs like that from the member for Mount Druitt are almost intolerable. The wit and intelligence that emanates from the other side sometimes knows no bounds. I acknowledge Beth Keswick. She is a visitor from the United Kingdom. She reminded me of the speech by Jacob Rees-Mogg to which I have referred. The planning system already requires extensive consultation with the community, key government agencies and independent experts, including experts in human health risk and energy-from-waste technology. It is therefore not necessary to increase the holding costs and uncertainty faced by proponents who wish to bring forward innovative solutions by introducing an expert advisory body because many experts are already involved in the current environmental protections we have. The

Labor Party loves bureaucracy and red tape, but it is unnecessary to have multiple expert bodies to consider developments. That would not be in the best interests of innovation in any area of our State, including waste management, and particularly at a time when that industry needs to adapt to China's decision to reduce waste imports, and landfill options are limited.

Energy-from-waste technology is new to New South Wales. After an extensive public consultation process, in 2015 the NSW Environment Protection Authority released the Energy from Waste Policy Statement to increase investment in energy-from-waste infrastructure and to deliver regulatory certainty to industry and confidence to the wider community. The rule of law, consistency and certainty are all highly important matters for the betterment of our community and the way in which that can be achieved. The policy statement provides a robust and modern framework for the State, aligned with international best practice. It also outlines the policy framework and technical criteria for the operation of purpose-built, energy-recovery facilities proposing to process residual waste that would otherwise go to landfill. Energy recovery provides an opportunity to recover energy from waste, offset the use of non-renewable energy sources and avoid methane emissions from landfill. The independent NSW Environment Protection Authority recognises that recovery of energy from waste has the potential to deliver positive outcomes for the community and the environment, as well as ensuring best use is made of waste materials.

I note that the Minister for Education is in the Chamber. He understands the importance of evidence-based decision-making. In fact, the Minister understands the environment and planning laws better than most. He understands the robust protections that are already in place for the kinds of developments that this bill would prohibit, regardless of their merits. That is really the issue: The bill will prohibit activity regardless of the merits or benefits, and regardless of an assessment of the detriments. It wants a blanket prohibition or a rigid Stalinist approach, which is entirely inconsistent with the normal concepts of the rule of law or the rule of merit- and evidence-based decision-making. It is regrettable that this philosophy of rigid Stalinism is being brought forward in this Parliament. Indeed, it shines a light on the different philosophical approaches of the two sides of this Parliament. On our side, we adopt what used to be Labor policy through the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the 2010 air quality regulation, of which I have made mention. It used to be part of Labor policy to have general policies that apply to the State as a whole to protect the environment. This bill has a kind of a spot prohibition approach, regardless of the merits of the case.

The development is the first proposal for a purpose-built energy-from-waste facility to be assessed against the NSW Energy from Waste Policy Statement. Four energy-from-waste facilities have been approved in Western Australia and the largest, which is in Kwinana, has approval to process up to 400,000 tonnes per annum of household waste. To date, none have commenced operation. Waste-to-energy technology is being used globally to generate energy from waste. There are more than 2,000 energy-from-waste plants operating globally, with around 80 facilities in the United States, more than 1,000 facilities in Japan, including 21 in Tokyo alone—there are a few people in Tokyo that I am sure those opposite would know—and more than 400 facilities throughout Europe. In Paris, one of the world's great cities, there are three energy-from-waste plants, with capacities ranging from 460,000 tonnes per annum to 700,000 tonnes per annum of household waste. This technology is not some kind of aberrant—

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: Point of order: I know that the member for Ku-ring-gai likes to filibuster in legal chambers, but I remind him that this Chamber does not have billable hours. I move:

That the question be now put.

The House divided.

Ayes30
Noes48
Majority..... 18

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Finn, Ms J
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Scully, Mr P

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Daley, Mr M
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Parker, Mr J
Tesch, Ms L (teller)

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Doyle, Ms T
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Piper, Mr G
Warren, Mr G

AYES

Washington, Ms K

Watson, Ms A (teller)

Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
 Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
 Constance, Mr A
 Davies, Mrs T
 Elliott, Mr D
 Fraser, Mr A
 Goward, Ms P
 Gulaptis, Mr C
 Humphries, Mr K
 Lee, Dr G
 Nottley-Smith, Mr B
 Pavey, Mrs M
 Rowell, Mr J
 Stokes, Mr R
 Tudehope, Mr D
 Williams, Mr R

Aplin, Mr G
 Brookes, Mr G
 Cooke, Ms S
 Dominello, Mr V
 Evans, Mr A.W.
 George, Mr T
 Grant, Mr T
 Hazzard, Mr B
 Johnsen, Mr M
 Maguire, Mr D
 O'Dea, Mr J
 Petinos, Ms E
 Sidoti, Mr J
 Taylor, Mr M
 Upton, Ms G
 Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
 Conolly, Mr K
 Coure, Mr M
 Donato, Mr P
 Evans, Mr L.J.
 Gibbons, Ms M
 Griffin, Mr J
 Henskens, Mr A
 Kean, Mr M
 Marshall, Mr A
 Patterson, Mr C (teller)
 Provest, Mr G
 Speakman, Mr M
 Toole, Mr P
 Ward, Mr G
 Wilson, Ms F

PAIRS

Catley, Ms Y
 Cotsis, Ms S
 Foley, Mr L
 Haylen, Ms J
 Lalich, Mr N

Barilaro, Mr J
 Berejiklian, Ms G
 Hancock, Mrs S
 Perrottet, Mr D
 Roberts, Mr A

Motion negatived.

Business interrupted.

*Motions***DEAFBLIND AWARENESS WEEK**

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:26): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the last week of June 2018 is Deafblind Awareness Week, which will be launched on Sunday 24 June 2018.
- (2) Notes that deafblindness can have a significant effect on a person's quality of life, even when the hearing or vision impairment is mild.
- (3) Acknowledges the work and efforts of the DeafBlind Association (NSW) for its ongoing support and promotion of Deafblind Awareness Week.

Deafblind Awareness Week aims to inform the community about deafblindness, which is identified as a combination of sight and hearing impairment that can cause difficulties with communication, accessing information and mobility. Deafblind Awareness Week will launch this Sunday, 24 June 2018. The celebrations include an acknowledgement of the birthday of an amazing woman we would all know about, Helen Keller—an author, academic and deafblind person. The DeafBlind Association (NSW) President, Irene McMinn, and association members Carleeta Manser, Lisa Chen and Ros Sackley will all attend the 5th World Federation of Deafblind General Assembly and the 11th Helen Keller World Conference.

I am thrilled that New South Wales will be represented at the world conference in Spain, which is a unique forum attended not by professionals working in the field but by those people with lived experience of deafblindness. The theme of the 2018 conference is "Our rights; Our Voice; We lead the Way". The conference provides a platform for people to share their experiences of living with deafblindness and learn from the similarities and differences of these experiences from a range of people around the world. A Declaration on the Rights of Deaf-Blind Persons was adopted in 1977 at the inaugural world conference.

The DeafBlind Association (NSW) was established in 1989 and aims to advance the cause of deafblind people through communication, advocacy and education. Many people would not be aware of the impacts of deafblindness. Deafblindness can have a significant impact on a person's quality of life, even when the hearing or vision impairment is mild, as the two senses usually work together to compensate for each other. There are an estimated 2,500 deafblind people under the age of 65 living in Australia, and 500 of those live in New South Wales. This number is estimated to be significantly higher if older people were to be included. The development of a statewide disability inclusion plan was mandated through legislation introduced by this Government in 2014.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan has led to a range of activities that have helped build on the inclusion of people with disability in this State. More than 180 public sector managers and participants in the New South Wales public service graduate program have undertaken training in upholding the rights of people with disability. This initiative will continue throughout 2018 to deliver the training to an additional 250 participants in the Public Service Commission's graduate program in 2018. The Government is committed to opportunities for all people to participate fully in their communities. This commitment aligns with Article 2 of the Declaration of Rights of Deaf-Blind Persons, which identifies the right of deafblind people to expect that their capabilities, their aspirations to lead a normal life within the community and their ability to do so shall be recognised.

In 2016-17 the Government provided funding to establish a disability community partnership program with Sport NSW, ClubsNSW, the NSW Business Chamber and Settlement Services International. The achievements of this partnership include raising the awareness of disability inclusion, creating more jobs, growing social and sporting opportunities, building the business case for inclusive tourism, and the promotion of inclusion programs. In addition to the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan, all local councils in New South Wales are required to develop disability inclusion action plans in consultation with their local communities and people with disability. This requirement was achieved on 1 July 2017 and is delivering many positive changes, including NSW Department of Education teachers and staff completing more than 11,300 accredited training courses on the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and Disability Standards for Education 2005, and a commitment by this Government to allocate \$890 million over four years to deliver an accessible transport infrastructure.

Another example of the Government's commitment to disability support and inclusion is the Ability Links NSW program. This is an initiative of the Government to support ongoing reforms to the disability service system in New South Wales. The program is delivered through coordinators known as "linkers", who aim to provide a local first point of contact to assist people to engage a range of community, mainstream and, when required, disability services. In April this year Minister for Disability Services Ray Williams announced more than \$40 million for the Ability Links program to keep connecting people with disabilities to their communities. This fund will provide 295 linker positions across New South Wales, including 70 for Aboriginal-specific linkers.

In moving this motion on Deafblind Awareness Week, my goal is for us all to become more aware of those in our community with deafblindness and to understand the difficulties they may face with communicating, accessing information and mobility. In preparing to speak about this topic today, I have been informed of a range of different activities and initiatives for people suffering with different disabilities, particularly with deafness or hearing loss. I acknowledge the work of Hear For You and the Deafness Forum, which have been working with me in founding just this week a parliamentary friendship group, the Parliamentary Friends of Hearing Health and Wellbeing. This group will work to engage members of Parliament and members in the community who experience deafness.

Deafblind Awareness Week also gives us the opportunity to think about those who experience both deafness and blindness as a combination, and the unique challenges it presents for them. I commend in particular the DeafBlind Association (NSW) for its work with the deafblind community. I wish its members an enjoyable time in Spain at the World Federation of Deafblind General Assembly, and thank them for their education of the wider community through Deafblind Awareness Week and throughout the rest of the year.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (12:33): I thank the member for North Shore for moving this motion about Deafblind Awareness Week and for acknowledging the important work undertaken by the small but very impressive team at the DeafBlind Association (NSW). I recently had the pleasure of meeting with members of the DeafBlind Association (NSW), who allowed me a very memorable insight into the world of people living with dual disability of hearing and vision impairment. I think we should all pause for a moment to think about what we are talking about here: We are talking not just about people who have a hearing impairment or a vision impairment but about people who have the dual disability of vision and hearing impairment. That is something I find very difficult to imagine. Insight can be gained from the description by the World Federation of the Deafblind: "It is the most isolating of disabilities."

In my meeting with the committee of the DeafBlind Association, as is often the case with many meetings I have, I learnt far more from it than I imparted. My takeaways were many, both from what we discussed and how it was discussed. On the day I met with Association President Irene McMinn, Association Secretary Sharon

Dennis, Vice President Mark Hoarau, Development Coordinator Shel O'Toole, association founder Janne Bidenko and Carleeta Manser, together with an interpreter who also had someone supporting her. We had a roundtable discussion. A roundtable discussion is perhaps something we take for granted in this place, but when there are people around the table who are deafblind it takes on a whole other meaning. There were no obvious complications because the members of the committee participated fully.

For Carleeta to participate in the discussion—as she did fully and insightfully—she employed a style of signing that I had not ever seen before called hand-over-hand. Indeed, Carleeta apparently introduced this style of signing to Australia, so she is an impressive woman indeed. It involved Carleeta feeling the signing of her interpreter. In a roundtable discussion you have to feel the signing of the person who is explaining what is happening with multiple people. It was an impressive display for me and spoke volumes about the barriers faced by people with the dual disability of deafness and blindness. Through their advocacy and by demonstration, the association helped me to understand the enormity of the barriers faced by people with the dual disability to engage and interact with the world around them. And the barriers are not just physical—there are the social issues and stigma that come with it.

It was difficult to hear that the dual disability is sometimes accompanied by speech impairment, so often the people affected can be treated as if they have an intellectual disability. For someone with a lesser degree of impairment, the barriers that they face are often not understood. On behalf of their members, I commend the work of the DeafBlind Association and its efforts to reduce those barriers. It was also impressed on me that people who are both deaf and blind face different challenges than people who only have a vision impairment or a hearing impairment. Whilst the cohort of people with the dual disability in New South Wales may not be large, the barriers that they face are huge, which goes to the heart of the importance of disability advocacy groups and peer support networks like the DeafBlind Association.

Last year the DeafBlind Association was involved in the powerful #standbyme campaign, joining with other disability advocacy groups from across the State to fight against the cuts to funding that this Government was about to impose on the entire disability sector. From the outset, Labor stood alongside disability advocacy groups in support of their campaign, committing to ongoing funding. As a result of the impressive campaign and the loud voices raised across New South Wales in support of disability advocacy, the Premier capitulated and provided short-term, conditional funding. Leader of the Opposition Luke Foley understands the importance of disability advocacy and has committed to funding the sector in perpetuity—not the "two-year, let me just get through an election" conditional funding lobbed up by the Premier at the eleventh hour.

Whilst the sector welcomed the backflip, round two of the #standbyme campaign is up and running, with pressure now being placed on the Government once again to match the commitment made by the New South Wales Opposition and to fund disability advocacy groups in perpetuity. The irony of the DeafBlind Association being involved in that campaign is that it is not funded at all by the State Government, and never has been. It participated in the campaign, all the while knowing that it would not gain anything, even if there was success. Its message was that the Government allow the association to receive funding. I commend the member for North Shore for acknowledging the important work of the DeafBlind Association (NSW), but I ask that she and her colleagues take it a step further and request the Government to include the DeafBlind Association in the funding offered to other advocacy groups. What the DeafBlind Association explained to me—and the member for Kiama might not be interested in this—

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: I cannot believe that a member of the Opposition would attack someone who is visually impaired. What a disgrace you are. What a grub you are.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): Order! There is no point of order.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: That was not an attack—the member for Kiama was continuing to interject. The DeafBlind Association explained to me that due to the lack of funding and resources, it does not have the ability to reach out to all the people who it knows are deafblind in New South Wales. The association makes the important argument that funding should be based not on the size of the community supported but the size of the barriers faced by that community. At the moment it is doing a lot with very little, which the member for North Shore mentioned today. With President Irene McMin, Carleeta Manser, Lisa Chen and Ros Sackley attending the 5th World Federation of Deafblind General Assembly and the 11th Helen Keller World Conference in Spain this week, I commend their actions and thank them for all their hard work.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:40): I support this motion moved by the member for the North Shore. Deafblindness is a combination of sight and hearing impairment that causes difficulties with communication, access to information and with mobility. On Sunday 24 June Deafblind Awareness Week will be launched. As the member for North Shore mentioned, the date aligns with the birthday of Helen Keller, a well-known deafblind woman who was an academic, political activist and lecturer. During Deafblind Awareness Week,

representatives of the DeafBlind Association (NSW) will attend the 5th World Federation of Deafblind General Assembly and the 11th Helen Keller World Conference in Spain. There are approximately 500 deafblind people living in New South Wales who are aged between 18 and 65. Estimates identify that if people over the age of 65 were included, that number would likely be tenfold. Deafblindness can affect communication, learning, orientation and mobility, social relationships, self-esteem, independence, education and employment.

Disability inclusion legislation was introduced by the Government in 2014 and led to the creation of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan. The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 has four focus areas: developing positive community attitudes and behaviours, creating liveable communities, supporting meaningful access to employment, and improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes. Through the implementation of the State Disability Inclusion Plan, training on upholding the rights of people with disability has been delivered to a total of 180 managers and graduates of the New South Wales public service. In 2018 the focus on graduates will continue, with an additional 250 training places. Targeting graduates in the public service is a strategy that aims to provide long-term benefits. Many of these graduates will become the leaders of the future New South Wales public service, and their knowledge will influence how they design and deliver services to the community and the behaviour they model to their colleagues. In addition, these partnerships aim to create employment, social and sporting opportunities.

To encourage more people with disability to visit our wonderful State, the Government is working alongside business, government, council and community partners to develop an inclusive tourism plan. Article 4 of the Declaration of Rights of Deaf-Blind Persons outlines the right to economic security and to secure work that aligns with individual capabilities. Employment of people with disability is a priority for the Government. It is leading the creation of jobs for people with disability through a whole-of-government strategy—Jobs for the Future. See the Possibilities is a public awareness campaign that the Government developed to highlight to employers and the wider community the positive impacts of providing employment opportunities to people with disability.

The *Employable Me* documentary series was sponsored by the New South Wales Government in partnership with the ABC and Screen Australia, and premiered on the ABC in 2018. The series follows people with neuro-diverse conditions such as autism and Tourette syndrome who are seeking employment. More than two million people were reached through each episode. This helped break down many barriers and stereotypes. On Monday 18 June I took part in the awareness campaign and posted a photo of myself on Facebook wearing red and white, as requested by the DeafBlind Association (NSW). I thank the association for its continued advocacy and for inviting me to participate in its campaign.

Today I am again wearing red and white for the campaign, and I notice that the member for North Shore is also wearing her red and white. I hope that helps to raise awareness of the cause. I look forward to hearing more about the association's innovative ideas through its participation in the world conference in Spain. Again, I thank the member for North Shore for moving this motion.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (12:44): I note that the last week of June is Deafblind Awareness Week. Deafblindness can have a significant effect on a person's quality of life, and I acknowledge the work of the DeafBlind Association (NSW). A deafblind person can be in a room full of people and be completely isolated. It is an incredibly debilitating impairment. That is why I make a contribution to debate on this important motion. Deafblindness is the combination of vision and hearing impairment to the degree that it affects learning, mobility and socialisation. Deafblindness is not the same for everyone. Every deafblind person is different, depending upon whether they have low vision and poor hearing, have low vision and are deaf, or have a profound loss of both senses. Each of these impairments relies heavily on the other senses to give meaning to the world of someone living with deafblindness.

Whilst their support needs are often acute, the particular issues facing deafblind people broadly reflect the issues facing all people with a hearing impairment—namely, access to services and support, forecast increased prevalence and the need for greater understanding about causes of deafblindness. The Australian DeafBlind Council stated that some 300,000 people in Australia are deafblind, and an estimated 500 people in New South Wales are both deaf and blind. However, the tragic reality is that there is a lack of appropriately qualified interpreters to assist deafblind people to access health services and community support, causing immense distress for those most affected.

These people deserve equity. I acknowledge the DeafBlind Association (NSW) for paving the way in deafblind awareness through respect, trust and teamwork. The DeafBlind Association creates a safe and comfortable environment for individuals with deafblindness. Although we do not have a branch of the DeafBlind Association in my electorate of Charlestown, we do have the services of the Deaf Society, which operates out of The Place. It provides a number of support and advocacy services for deafblind people. The Deaf Society is one

of Australia's leading providers of specialist services for deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing people and their families. Its focus is ensuring access to all areas of life on an equal basis with others.

Services offered by the Deaf Society include employment support, education and training, Auslan training, National Disability Insurance Scheme support, family support, assistive technology, everyday life skills, support coordination, youth programs and more. It would be beneficial to have the presence of the Deafblind Association in the Hunter, as there are approximately 10 to 15 people there who are deafblind. But I acknowledge the issues raised by the member for Port Stephens in relation to funding and the difficulties that would be experienced by the DeafBlind Association in establishing itself in the Hunter. Those 10 to 15 deafblind people have been supported by the Deaf Society through the establishment of and regular participation in their own social group. This year that group will celebrate its third anniversary.

It is apparent in the experience of deafblind people in my area that there is not enough support for them. More training of support people needs to occur to enable full social participation by deafblind people. In addition, there are no trained occupational therapists who are able to properly support deafblind people. Further training and resources are clearly needed in the area. I encourage others to make a contribution to Deafblind Awareness Week by wearing red and white and by attending a morning tea if there is one in their area. Finally, I commend the member for North Shore and previous speakers on the motion.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (12:49): I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the debate and acknowledge the efforts of the DeafBlind Association (NSW) for its ongoing support and promotion of Deafblind Awareness Week. I congratulate the member for North Shore on bringing this important motion to the House. I agree that it deserves priority this morning. The association's efforts are assisting to educate the broader community about people who have a combination of sight and hearing impairment and how this impairment can impact their communication, access to information and mobility. The member for Holsworthy acknowledged that the Deafblind Awareness Week celebrations are timed to align with the birthday of the remarkable deafblind woman known to so many, Helen Keller.

Deafblindness has a significant effect on people's lives as 90 per cent of the information we receive is through our ears and eyes. Even when hearing or vision loss is mild, it can still have a significant impact on how a person functions, as the two senses usually work together to compensate for each other. As mentioned by the member for Charlestown, every deafblind person is unique and has different needs. It is estimated that there are around 2,500 people nationwide, and 500 residing in New South Wales, who are deafblind. The estimates are significantly greater if people over the age of 65 are included in this data. In 2014, New South Wales passed legislation to promote the inclusion of people with disability through aiming to increase positive attitudes and behaviours, liveable communities and improving access to employment and mainstream services.

The NSW Disability Inclusion Plan was developed through the passing of the legislation and has provided a platform for the implementation of innovative projects and activities to meet the priorities of the Act. This Government is leading the creation of jobs for people with disability through Jobs for the Future, which is a whole-of-government strategy. Increasing the participation of people with disability in public service employment is a priority of this Government and it is in the process of developing a robust plan to make these improvements. Many members would be familiar with the *Employable Me* documentary series. The series was sponsored by the New South Wales Government and was delivered through a partnership between my department, the ABC and Screen Australia. I am very pleased to report that around two million people were reached through each episode.

Another example of the Government's commitment to people with disability is the Ability Links NSW program. It is an initiative of this Government. "Linkers" are specialists in their local area who use their knowledge to assist people with disability to engage a range of community, mainstream and disability services. Linkers work with people to link them to opportunities within their community that assist them to meet their goals and achieve their dreams. This Government is well aware of the value the Ability Links program provides not only to people with disability but also to the broader community. That is why in April this year I announced more than \$40 million to continue the Ability Links program.

More than 129,000 service connections and one million community connections have been made since the program's inception in 2013. I consider the promotion of awareness of the deafblind community extremely important and I thank the DeafBlind Association (NSW) for its work to educate the wider community through Deafblind Awareness Week. I urge all members in this House to support the campaign in their electorates during the last week in June.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:53): I am proud to be here representing the family of people with disabilities in New South Wales, especially as we approach Deafblind Awareness Week. I thank people with disabilities for their background support and commit to improving the quality of life for people with disability in our State. But I am sitting in a Parliament with no fire escape access out the back door for people who use

wheelchairs and I am perched at a table with a mobile lectern. There are heavy doors out the back and no additional budget this year for change—we still have a way to go. But it is an exciting time as we talk in the community about people with disability.

The deafblind is a group that is often not spoken of. Deafblindness is a unique and isolating disability resulting from the combination of both hearing and vision loss or impairment. Few of us can even imagine what that would be like to live with. This has a significant effect on every aspect of daily life. It hinders communication, it hinders socialisation and it hinders mobility. We all have unique disabilities and we all have our own abilities. People with deafblindness are a diverse group because of the varying degrees of their vision and hearing impairments. Most people with deafblindness have some hearing or sight, or both. There is a wide range of forms of deafblindness. There are many causes of deafblindness.

If someone is born with sight and hearing difficulties it is congenital deafblindness. Acquired deafblindness is when someone loses hearing or sight later in life. It is possible I am joining that group as my hearing and sight decreases as I age. Then there are more specific cases, each with their own unique challenges. Those in the first group are born blind and lose their hearing as adults. They can continue to use speech as their main communication and have a variety of hearing devices to help them to communicate. Those in the second group are born deaf and lose their sight as adults. This group is culturally deaf and uses sign language to communicate. A person with deafblindness may strongly identify with the blind culture or the deaf culture, or in some cases neither, as well as with the culture of their family or community. Understanding the complexity of each person's culture is important for communication, language and learning.

This means there is a wide range of communication methods, including speech, oral and aural communication; various forms of sign language including tactile and deafblind fingerspelling, alternative and augmentative communication; and print and braille. As with many people with disability, people who are deafblind can and do participate in society and reach their goals. But they need the right supports and services. I commend the work of the DeafBlind Association in this State advocating for better support and recognition of their members. I thank the association for its support of the Stand By Me campaign run by the NSW Disability Advocacy Alliance. It received no funding and stood to again receive no funding but realised the importance of advocacy in this State.

It is an exciting time when people with disability in this State have access to opportunities and choice like never before. It is important to work not only to improve the quality of life for people with disability, but also to increase the employment outcomes for people with disability across New South Wales. Under the years of the Liberal-Nationals Government, the employment of people with disability in the public sector has decreased from 4.7 per cent to 2.9 per cent, with a goal to increase this to 5.6 per cent by 2027. As I sit here in my wheelchair in a place that has not budgeted for increased access to my workplace, I say, "Come on—we have to improve the future for people with disability."

I acknowledge the member for North Shore for bringing this important motion to the House and look forward to working further with the member for Kiama on the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities to get more people with disability into Parliament. I send my love and support to all members of the DeafBlind Association (NSW) and say happy birthday to Helen Keller for next week.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:57): By leave: I thank all members of the House who have made a contribution in this debate today. As the only member in this place who is legally blind, I have some understanding and insight into what those with deafblindness experience, and I commend the DeafBlind Association for its great work. I cannot imagine how challenging it would be to have a condition that means you are limited in both sight and hearing. I am blessed to have the senses that I do; there are those far worse off. I remember my parents telling me a story that, when I was born, the doctors basically told my parents, "He won't amount to much."

Mr David Elliott: That was very intuitive!

Mr GARETH WARD: The Minister has commented that it was prophetic. The reality was that in the 1980s there was not much understanding of these conditions, particularly the albinism that resulted in me being legally blind. I do not like to talk about it much. The reason I do occasionally is to say to those with disability that they can achieve what they want to achieve. I am a boy who attended Bomaderry Public School and Bomaderry High School, I went on to serve the community on council and now in the State Parliament, and I have completed several university qualifications. I want my service in this place to be an example to others with disabilities—whether deafblindness or other challenges—that they can achieve. Those on all sides of politics want to see people of varying abilities and capacities reach their full potential. I am pleased this motion is being discussed in the House today.

For those who do not know the history of Helen Keller, she was an amazing woman. I have to say that this will probably be the only time I will say something positive in this Chamber about a member of the Socialist Party, as she was. She was born in Alabama in 1880 and of course was the first person with deafblindness to achieve an arts degree qualification. She was tutored by the amazing inspirational tutor Anne Sullivan, who broke through the condition she had in order to unlock the potential inside Helen that enabled her to be an inspirational person who travelled the world, had published some amazing documents and inspiring research and writing that is an example for people with deafblindness to follow and realise that they can walk in her footsteps.

The upcoming conference in Spain is apt because the Spanish government, particularly the Catalan government in Barcelona, has been inspirational in its support for people with disabilities. Our Department of Transport could learn much from a visit to Spain, where blind people, for instance, are given a remote to activate lights so that they know where they are; they can sense them. Also, when that remote is pointed in the direction of buses and other modes of public transport, it tells the person the number of the bus and where it is going. There is a similar situation with the electronic message board at bus stations. Spanish public transport stations have innovative design. There are plenty of tactile markings for the blind and vision impaired not just around public transport but also around the general streetscape. Much can be learned by other governments from what they have done and continue to do.

I am slightly disappointed that Opposition members have chosen to politicise this motion. This should be about celebrating the wonderful things that people with disabilities have achieved. Naturally, I agree that we can always do better, but one achieves greater goals and greater ambitions by looking to those who have succeeded. I look up to so many people who have less ability than others. People with disabilities come into the world and have to compete on the same playing field as everybody else. Very often it is those challenges they face and those barriers they have that make them even more determined so they are able to achieve and succeed. I thank the member for North Shore for moving this motion. I commend the motion to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:01): In reply: I moved this motion because Deafblind Awareness Week, an initiative of the DeafBlind Association (NSW), commences this Sunday. It is important to acknowledge the unique challenges faced by those who have both deafness and blindness. I thank all members who contributed to the debate today—they were all supportive of the interests and needs of the deafblind community. I thank the member for Port Stephens, the member for Holsworthy, the member for Charlestown, the member for Port Macquarie, the member for Gosford and the member for Kiama. The member for Port Stephens spoke of her experience of meeting and having roundtable discussions with the DeafBlind Association (NSW) and the empathy she developed through experiencing firsthand complications in trying to communicate and the barriers faced.

An interesting observation was that she learned the DeafBlind Association (NSW) had never received any government funding. She raised concerns about funding for disability advocacy. I place on record my congratulations to the Premier, who earlier this year announced \$26 million to fund disability advocacy for the next two years. I note that funding was never provided to the DeafBlind Association (NSW) when Labor was in government. As all members know, the member for Holsworthy is a strong supporter of people with disabilities. Before she came to this place she worked for TAD Disability Services, which provides equipment and services for people with a disability. Indeed, she has her own family connection as well. She spoke about the employment of people with disabilities and about ensuring their economic empowerment; she has had firsthand experience in giving people that support.

The member for Holsworthy did not speak about her personal experience but I commend her for her contribution to the debate. She is a stalwart and strong advocate for people with disabilities. Indeed, she made sure that we all knew about wearing red and white, as I am, to support the DeafBlind Association. I hope members have posted that on social media. The member for Charlestown referred to the unique challenges in her community. Even though the DeafBlind Association does not have an agency within the Charlestown electorate, she congratulated local services that support local people with disabilities and referred to the third anniversary of a community group.

The Parliamentary Secretary, and member for Port Macquarie spoke about disability inclusion and jobs for the future. She referred to the *Employable Me* documentary, which was sponsored by the New South Wales Government and was viewed by more than two million people. The impact of that documentary on individuals in understanding the capacities and abilities of people with a disability to do many different jobs, be included in the workforce, and be respected for their capacity and skills was very powerful. I thank her for bringing that to our attention. The member for Gosford spoke about her personal experience with a disability and about cultural identification. She pointed out that people with a disability in New South Wales today have access to opportunities and choices like never before. I take that as a ringing endorsement of the initiatives of the New South Wales Government. We all know that the member for Kiama has been a strong advocate for people experiencing

blindness, in particular, as he does. He referred to Helen Keller and opportunities across the globe from which we can learn to better improve our experiences locally. I thank all members.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE FUNDING

Debate resumed from 24 May 2018.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (13:05): It is with great pleasure that I make a contribution to this motion and point out a few things that are of great benefit to the State and my electorate. This Government's record school maintenance investment is having a real impact in addressing maintenance work across the State and the Government is committed to continuing that process. We are committed to ensuring that our schools are in the best condition they can be, and that is why we are investing a record-breaking \$747 million over the next four years to reduce the list for maintenance such as roof repairs, painting and replacement of carpets. This investment is in addition to the \$6 billion that this Government is investing in the development of new and relocated schools and major school upgrades.

Latest figures show that this Government has slashed the State's planned school maintenance list by more than \$200 million—or by about a quarter—in the past 18 months following its record maintenance blitz. The school maintenance liability does not include any maintenance that poses a safety risk to students or staff. Similarly, any broken items in classrooms that affect teaching and learning are addressed as a matter of priority by the school or Department of Education. I will touch on Labor's record. Labor members crow about this issue but over their last four years in government Labor committed less than \$214 million towards reducing planned maintenance in our schools. That is only 28 per cent of the amount this Government has committed over the same period. We are investing a record-breaking \$747 million over the next four years. We must not forget that maintenance is also a snapshot in time. Labor referred to the Government's alleged lack of investment in schools yet Labor obviously does not understand the numbers as it is counting depreciating schedules. There may very well be items that do not need to be maintained for another five, seven or 10 years, depending on the item.

There are a number of expenditure items related to school maintenance in my electorate of Upper Hunter for the current financial year. I shall highlight just a few. They include: \$270,612 for Dungog High School; \$107,901 for Dungog Public School; \$322,522 for Gloucester High School; \$387,314 for Gloucester Public School; \$205,648 for Gresford Public School; \$74,491 for Denman Public School; \$47,208 for Barrington Public School; \$264,998 for Jerrys Plains Public School; \$289,783 for King Street Public School in Singleton; \$114,275 for Merriwa Central School; \$171,335 for Muswellbrook Public School; and \$116,214 for Muswellbrook High School. Even Premier, a small village outside Quirindi, has been allocated expenditure of \$141,977. Singleton High School has been allocated \$1,032,899. That is an exceptional investment in maintaining our schools and ensuring that we ease the maintenance backlog that Labor left us.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (13:10): I am happy to speak on this own-goal motion moved by the member for Myall Lakes. As has been said in this place on a number of occasions, shortly after the Government was elected to office in 2011 the Minister for Education issued a media release to the public to condemn the Labor Government for daring to leave a \$147 million backlog in infrastructure maintenance. In the following four years, that blew out to \$1 billion. Even though Labor was in opposition by then, somehow that problem was caused by Labor. I do not understand the Liberal-nomics on that one. When the Minister issued that media release he was either incompetent, which I do not believe to be the case because the Minister for Education at the time was doing a good job, or he was lying to the people, which I do not believe, or the figures we are using in 2018 are nowhere near the truth. I believe the third option is probably closer to the real story.

The member for Upper Hunter said that Labor spent somewhere in the vicinity of \$200 million over its last four years in government. If the backlog in 2011 was \$147 million, that means that Labor dug deep into that bucket of \$200 million. As the member for Upper Hunter acknowledged, maintenance is an ongoing problem. As quickly as carpet is replaced, in six or seven years it needs replacing again. As quickly as a wall is painted, in six or seven years it needs painting again. The Government must acknowledge it has a fundamental problem with its figures. It must acknowledge the amount of money that has been taken out of education during its tenure is worth noting.

The Government has put efficiency dividends in place. For the first six years, the efficiency dividend was 1.5 per cent. We can all figure out that six multiplied by 1.5 equals nine. Last year the efficiency dividend was 2 per cent. Nine plus two equals 11. This year the Government will go for a 3 per cent efficiency dividend. Eleven plus three equals 14. It is straightforward maths. It means that 14 per cent has been taken out of every government

department's budget. Whether it is for police, corrections, education or health, 14 per cent of the money that those departments could, and should, have had is gone.

It is not hard to explain why there has been a massive blowout in the backlog of basic public school infrastructure maintenance. There is not a backlog because there was a huge problem waiting to be dealt with or because the money has not been available in budgets to deal with it. It is because choices have been made along the way, such as the choice to impose the efficiency dividend—which nobody wanted—and the choice to spend money on a metro system and stadiums. People in my community have made it very clear that they do not want the stadiums and they will not benefit from the metro. Students, teachers and schools in the Cessnock electorate are hurting as a result of the decisions made by this Government. When Government members stand up to crow about this fictitious \$1 billion, one of two things is true: either they are misleading the public and not telling the truth, or they simply have not done their homework. Labor will not support the motion, but I commend the member for Myall Lakes for moving it.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:14): I celebrate and acknowledge the New South Wales Government's record investment in school maintenance, which is \$747 million for the next four years. I thank the member for Myall Lakes for moving this motion. This commitment, which is part of our people's budget, is a continuation of the hard work being done every day to upgrade and fix our schools and invest in our young people. We have heard that over the school holiday period \$110 million in maintenance work was carried out in public schools across New South Wales. During the Christmas break, in the Cootamundra electorate alone, \$1.9 million was spent on projects in 18 schools, including \$376,796 for Cowra Public School, \$269,041 for Junee High School, \$172,905 for Narrandera Public School, \$52,799 for Quandialla Public School, and \$25,000 for Illabo Public School. Every child deserves to have access to great facilities and wonderful teachers and receive an excellent education. That is what this Government is delivering.

While students were enjoying their well-earned summer break, work to keep their schools up to standard—such as roofing, painting and flooring—was carried out without any interruptions. It is vital that we keep our schools in a condition that enables teachers and students to enjoy their classes without disruptions. The work did not stop at Christmas. I am seeing new upgrades roll out across the Cootamundra electorate. In recent months while driving down the road I have seen a new roof go on the Junee North Public School and a raft of improvements to classrooms from West Wyalong to Narrandera. In Cootamundra alone, the anticipated spend for the 2017-18 financial year is more than \$5 million. This includes \$876,796 for vital maintenance at Cowra Public School. Recently I visited Grenfell Public School, which has received \$323,363 for new roofing on six buildings.

This Government's record school maintenance investment is having a real impact on addressing maintenance work across the State, and we are committed to continuing this process. We are committed to ensuring that our schools are in the best condition. That is why this Government is investing a record-breaking \$747 million over the next four years to reduce maintenance lists such as roof repairs, painting and replacing carpets. The latest figures show that this Government has slashed the school's planned maintenance list by more than \$200 million, or one-quarter, in the past 18 months following our record maintenance blitz.

In the coming months, a further \$100 million will be allocated for maintenance, with schools with the longest maintenance list being prioritised. It is important to note that school maintenance liability does not include any maintenance that poses a safety risk to students or staff. Similarly, any broken items in classrooms that affect teaching and learning are addressed as a matter of priority by the school or the Department of Education. Admittedly, these are dry numbers, but their impact is huge for country students who were forgotten for so long under the former Government. From now on, air conditioning will be installed in classrooms and libraries in all new schools and school upgrades. This Government is also investing \$500 million towards air conditioning in up to 1,000 public schools, many of which are across regional and rural New South Wales.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (13:18): School maintenance is an important issue. As the member for Cootamundra said, access to excellent facilities is extremely important for all students. The member also said that schools with the longest maintenance lists will be prioritised. That is fantastic. Unfortunately, the Blacktown electorate received no money for school maintenance. That is a disgrace. The maintenance backlog for 2016-17 was more than \$10 million. Blacktown South Public School has a maintenance backlog of \$1.1 million. The maintenance backlog for Blacktown Girls High School is more than \$1 million. Blacktown Boys High School maintenance backlog is more than \$1.3 million and Doonside High School has a maintenance backlog of \$1.2 million.

I am happy to say that Doonside High School has come down the list, not because of what the member for Cootamundra said about safety being prioritised but because asbestos was dripping from the ceilings in the school. The Government was dragged, kicking and screaming, to shut down the building in order to fix it. Unfortunately, Blacktown is not as privileged as other places in the Sydney metropolitan area and asbestos was installed in a lot of our schools. From time to time, kids—being kids—play rough and sometimes break walls.

Many schools across Western Sydney have ceilings with spray-on asbestos that was used to provide sound insulation and warmth. Those schools need to be prioritised. I remember when I was at Doonside High we used to put our hands up and knock the ceiling as we walked down the stairs. No-one told us it contained asbestos. Unfortunately, students did that for generations without knowing what they were touching.

Thankfully, in one building the asbestos has been removed but it needs to be removed from all schools. The Government is matching the Labor policy that the Leader of the Opposition improved on today to install air conditioning in schools. The Government talks about its priorities but not one school in the Blacktown, Mount Druitt or Prospect electorates was identified to receive air conditioning. Western Sydney has 14 to 18 extreme heat days each year. Studies show that they will increase during the next 10 to 15 years. Why have schools in Blacktown not got a single cent in this budget, despite the Government boasting about the \$747 million? Blacktown is one of the youngest electorates in this State and has almost 20 schools. It has plenty of schools yet it does not get its fair share of funding.

Doonside station was identified as the twelfth most in need of repair. The Government has already upgraded something like 47 stations and has announced upgrades for a further 11. Fifty-eight stations will get an easy access upgrade with the provision of lifts while Doonside station, which was ranked the twelfth most in need when the Premier was transport Minister, is not even on the list of considerations. I do not have any faith in this Government; its prioritised list is not based on fairness. It seems to be totally discriminatory against the electorate of Blacktown on a range of fronts. This Government should be condemned.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:22): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Lakemba, Upper Hunter, Cessnock, Cootamundra and Blacktown for their contributions to this debate. I commend the member for Cootamundra and the member for Upper Hunter for their outstanding work as local members fighting for the maintenance of schools in their electorates. When the Labor Party was in government it left an almost \$1 billion maintenance infrastructure backlog and closed 92 schools—one of which was the great Macquarie Boys High School, which took in children from North Parramatta and Dundas. They are low socio-economic areas that have a real need for schools. We are building a new school in Parramatta.

This Government's general recurrent budget is almost 50 per cent larger than the budget provided by those opposite in their last year in government. Judging from the lies and misrepresentations of Opposition members, people would think this Government has cut the Education budget. But it has increased it by 50 per cent. This Government has provided about three times as many teachers as the former Labor Government provided. We are providing \$6 billion for school infrastructure funding over four years, which is the same amount the former Labor Government spent over 14 years. This Government is providing in four years what it took the former Labor Government 14 years to provide. This Government is spending 2½ times more this year than those opposite spent in their last three years in government.

An extraordinary and colossal school build is underway across New South Wales. We have 110 projects currently under construction and an additional 40 that will commence this year. As part of the budget, we have announced that planning will commence for an additional 22 schools that will be added to the pipeline of development. The former Labor Government closed 92 schools but this Government has 110 projects underway, another 40 planned plus another 22, making a total of 172. This Government is delivering more teachers, more recurrent funding and more infrastructure. That does not include this Government's great announcement that it will air condition our schools.

The member for Cessnock and the member for Lakemba said this is an own goal, but we are proud to have \$747 million in the budget over the next four years to address the maintenance backlog that the former Labor Government left behind. Mr Temporary Speaker will remember when the former Labor Government closed Terrigal Public School; it was terrible. We are building Terrigal Public School and Wamberal Public School to make up for what they did not do in their 16 shameful years in government. Seven classrooms will be built at Old Bar Public School. Obviously it has not been put out for contract yet so the full amount is not in the budget. The budget is absolutely fantastic news for all schools in my electorate. I commend this motion to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (13:27): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises that housing is a human right.

- (2) Recognises that it is the Government's role to ensure that all people in New South Wales have access to safe, secure, habitable and affordable housing.
- (3) Commits to addressing legislative and policy barriers which prevent people from enjoying this right.

I am pleased to speak on behalf of the many people in New South Wales who find themselves without a place to call home, who live with rental stress or who are unable even to consider the prospect of affording their own home. The Greens vision for housing starts with a simple and fundamental belief that housing is a human right. That is a basic concept that I hope everybody in this Chamber supports. Unfortunately, successive State and Federal governments have made decisions that have treated housing not as a right but as a commodity to be bought and sold for profit and subject to the fluctuations of the market—and with profit and return on investment as the priority rather than the need to provide a safe and secure place for someone to live.

We have all been placed in a pitiful state, where hundreds of thousands of people find themselves as pawns to a commodity market that determines whether they will have a roof over their heads and whether they will have to spend significant amounts of their income on rent. The budget has a \$3.9 billion surplus at a time when we have a growing crisis in homelessness and housing affordability. I am pleased to acknowledge the work of my colleague Justin Field, who has put forward the proposition that we need to start a wellbeing index. Such an index would measure the health of our State and not only its finances. It is meaningless to make homelessness a priority if we do not invest in the affordable housing measures we need. The Greens believe people have the right to a roof over their heads. Like education and health care, it is not a privilege and it is not an optional extra.

I ask members to imagine public schools that charge hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees, which would mean that some children would not be able to get an education. Imagine having to present a credit card to pay the up-front cost of treatment for a heart attack. Imagine all of our schools being full and children having to wait to attend, just as people must now wait for 10 years to access public housing. We would see 14-year-olds and 15-year-olds not being schooled or starting school as teenagers. We would not tolerate that situation if it were to occur in the health or education sectors, and we should make a commitment not to tolerate it in the public housing sector. Something has gone desperately wrong if we do not address this crisis.

South Australia has done better with the delivery of affordable housing. Everyone says that there is no silver bullet for the housing crisis. There may not be one simple solution, but there are numerous obvious solutions. We have the ability to deliver more investment in social and public housing to address the waiting list and the backlog. We could introduce a housing-first plan to reduce homelessness in this State. We could set mandatory targets for inclusionary zoning to deliver affordable housing as part of all new developments in New South Wales. A cost-free measure could be introduced immediately to reduce housing stress for 30 per cent of the New South Wales population.

We can also put an end to no-grounds evictions for renters so that dodgy landlords cannot kick them out. With so many cranes in the sky and so many new apartments springing up all around us, it is wrong that we can walk down King Street, Crown Street, Martin Place or in a local park and still see people sleeping rough. It is clear that new developments are not addressing the homelessness crisis. We must take an approach that does not see housing only as a profit-making exercise; first and foremost, it must be about giving people a warm place to call home.

This is not exclusively a city problem. Parramatta, Gosford and regional towns across New South Wales are also experiencing a housing crisis. We in this Chamber could solve this problem now. There might be resistance, and big corporates and those with vested interests in the property market might reject the notion of housing being a fundamental right. However, we must declare today that housing is a right that governments must be responsible for delivering. We must recognise that when it is cold and raining it is not okay for anyone to be sleeping on a park bench. It is not okay for us to accept that as an inevitable reality. As I said, housing is a human right. We must radically switch our agenda and priorities and say that we want a commitment to the idea of housing as a basic right. The Government must adopt a policy of delivering housing for everyone who needs it in New South Wales.

Like The Greens, this Government must recognise that there are solutions. There might not be one simple solution, but there are solutions. It will take courage, commitment, determination and passion to solve this crisis. If we are committed to finding solutions and if we recognise that housing is a human right, we will continue to push in the right direction. If we are committed, we will ensure that people are not sleeping rough and that they are not living under housing stress. If we are committed, we will address the fundamental human right of every citizen of this State to have a safe, habitable, affordable and secure home.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (13:34): The Government agrees with the member for Newtown that affordable housing is, and should be, a priority. We must do everything we can as a government to give everyone the opportunity to have safe, affordable, long-term housing. We must also take care of the most vulnerable in this

State. Housing affordability is certainly a challenge in Sydney. The Government recognises that challenge and it is prioritising providing long-term solutions. However, the past seven years have delivered a perfect storm in the housing sector. We have faced a confluence of compounding factors that began with pent-up demand created by 16 years of undersupply.

When the Coalition came to government in 2011, the annual home completion figure was about 23,000. That was an all-time record low. This State needs about 40,000 homes to be completed each year to meet demand. The Government is proud of being able to deliver a record high number of homes to the people of New South Wales. Record low interest rates have also fuelled the market, as has demand from property investors and the expanding population of Sydney. This Government is responsible and it knows that it must cater for the people who are moving to Sydney, who are expanding their families and who are moving out of home.

I think it was Bob Carr who declared some years ago that Sydney was full. That is not an option and ignoring the problem will only exacerbate it. Hoping it will go away will not provide solutions. We must deliver not only homes for the people of this State but also the infrastructure they need. That is achieved by having the best planning for the right areas. The member for Newtown said that there is no silver bullet to solve the housing issue. The Government has attacked the problem on numerous fronts. I am proud to say that it has increased the supply of land and developed precincts for the 40,000 new homes that we need each year. I am pleased to say that the Government delivered those 40,000 new homes last year. My electorate of Parramatta is also proud that it did the heavy lifting by delivering 4,700 new dwellings last year.

The Government is also looking after first home buyers by offering great stamp duty concessions for properties valued up to \$650,000. I met a great couple who bought a \$650,000 villa and who saved close to \$25,000. Of course, governments must look after our vulnerable citizens. That is why this Government has the biggest social housing building program in the country. It is the biggest and the best. The \$22 billion Communities Plus program will deliver 23,000 new and replacement social housing units, of which 500 will be affordable housing units and 40,000 will be private houses.

Communities Plus will see the development of major mixed-tenure development sites across Sydney at Telopea, Waterloo, Arncliffe, Redfern, Ivanhoe and Villawood. The Government has also announced the second phase of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund, which will target an additional 1,200 dwellings. That will take the total number of social and affordable dwellings to 3,400. I am extremely proud of the Telopea redevelopment in the great city of Parramatta. The aim is to revitalise the area and to realise its potential. This initiative has been welcomed by the community. It will deliver approximately 640 homes, which will provide an opportunity to create a new, vibrant, mixed and cohesive community of up to 4,500 new homes, 3,500 of which will be private homes and approximately 1,000 social affordable homes.

The great thing is that we are increasing the supply, we are increasing the number of social and affordable housing, we are renewing the stock and we are creating a great, new, vibrant community and realising the potential at Telopea. Telopea has had a chequered history but the vast majority of people there are wonderful and deserve better. This proposal looks at building a whole new community anchored by the light rail, with the creation of a new piazza, shopping centre, library and community hall. There will be wonderful coffee shops and areas for people to enjoy. Travelators will be installed under the buildings so that the elderly will not have to walk up the steep inclines to access the light rail. This is a great project. Expressions of interest for people who want to partner with the Government have now closed.

The Government is very proud of the project. The community is saying, "Bring it on." People are looking forward to it. When I talk to people in the community they are very excited about it. It is only appropriate that I acknowledge Minister Goward and Minister Roberts for their commitment to this \$2.5 billion project to be delivered over the next five to 10 years. I conclude by recognising the great leadership and dedication of Ann Skews and Peter Anderson from the Land and Housing Corporation. They have done a wonderful job in the past three years of getting this project off the ground, with Government support, so that Telopea becomes all it can be and realises its potential. It is another fantastic story in this Government's narrative.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:41): I support the motion before the House. I recognise it is this Government's role to ensure that all people in New South Wales have access to safe, secure, habitable and affordable housing. The Government needs to address legislative and policy barriers that prevent people from enjoying this right. The Premier came into the leadership position saying affordable housing was her number one priority. It is a great shame that the package that she has put forward has gone nowhere near meeting her aspirations and her statements on this issue. In fact, it was a huge missed opportunity to significantly address Sydney's housing affordability crisis. The package of measures fails to deliver tangible relief to low- and middle-income earners, who are struggling to get a home. That applies to the Hunter and the Illawarra as well.

Instead, the Government delivered a tight-fisted grab of initiatives that failed to deliver on the Premier's promise that she made on her first day in office—that everyone will get a home. One need only look at the Sydney median house prices, which have gone up from half a million dollars to \$1.15 million, and the State Government's stamp duty haul, which has doubled to \$10 billion a year. The Premier has simply showered first home buyers with a little spare change. What this Government really needs to do is look at Labor's policy on affordable housing.

Real differences would happen then for ordinary working couples and working people. With Labor's policy, they would get discounts on rentals of up to 30 per cent and the policy would mandate 25 per cent of affordable housing on government-owned land. For a start, when government land is sold and rezoned for residential development, Labor would mandate 25 per cent of the dwellings to be affordable housing. With private housing, those of us on this side would mandate 15 per cent affordable housing on privately developed land. Those opposite could take a leaf out of our book because these are real, tangible measures that will deliver results. Good policy delivers good results. Those opposite have been in government for nearly eight long years and eight budgets and we have seen very little from them.

People in Sydney and the Hunter are suffering incredibly under this Government and its terrible response to the crisis in housing affordability. We on this side also support Federal Labor's great proposed reforms to negative gearing which limit the benefit to new housing as well as halve capital gains discounts. We would call for these reforms. We would increase the taxes on foreign investors in line with Victoria, increase the surcharge on stamp duty from 4 per cent to 7 per cent, increase the land surcharge from 0.75 per cent to 1.5 per cent, and introduce a tax on properties that are vacant for longer than six months. There are up to 90,000 vacant properties in greater Sydney. That is why we would introduce that policy. The Government can learn a lot from the Opposition. Median house prices have grown 41 per cent in the Hunter alone. Annual growth in Newcastle is 9.1 per cent. Only at the beginning of this month, I was with our shadow Minister, Mr Daley, saying that this Government should do more for housing affordability in Newcastle and the Hunter because they have received such a poor and terrible response from the Government to this crisis.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (13:45): I am pleased that that speech ended; I was exhausted. Could have, should have, would have, but never did in 16 years. It is terrible. I am exhausted.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Eight long years. What are you doing? Very little.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is the respect we get when we deliver infrastructure to the Newcastle region. It is unbelievable. The word "thankyou" is such a difficult word to pronounce these days. I am proud of the Government's record in providing social and affordable housing. It is in stark contrast to the 16 long, rainy years of those opposite.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: It has been eight long years and what have you done? It is a big priority.

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

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: They had no long-term plan for new supply, no plans for new forms of investment into social and affordable housing and no ideas about how to improve the lives of tenants. In fact, they still have no idea whatsoever.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Eight long years. We had a great policy.

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

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: I will leave.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is probably a good idea—leave. The best those opposite could do in 16 years was to wash their hands of all responsibility, declaring, "Sydney is closed for business. Sydney is full." How could anyone forget those comments? It took a Coalition government to come up with a real plan for social and affordable housing. We on this side of the House are committed to ensuring that the most vulnerable people in our community have a place to live and are supported so they can break the cycle of disadvantage. Look no further than this year's budget. The money we have put into this area will guarantee we can help those most in need and most vulnerable. It is not possible to do that without a strong economy, despite what those opposite say.

The Government also understands the need for a housing continuum that ensures the most vulnerable in our community have a place to live. This includes affordable rental housing—housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of very low- to moderate-income households and priced so that these households are also able to meet other basic living costs. As part of the \$22 billion Communities Plus program, the Government is looking to bring to market more than 500 new affordable dwellings. For instance, at the Macquarie Park site Ivanhoe, the

Government is targeting at least 120 affordable housing dwellings. It is also overseeing the development of major mixed tenure development sites which will include affordable housing across Sydney in locations such as those alluded to by the member for Parramatta: Telopea, Waterloo, Arncliffe, Redfern and Villawood, just to mention a few.

Another key government contributor to affordable housing is the Social and Affordable Housing Fund. The Social and Affordable Housing Fund will aim to deliver up to 30 per cent of dwellings as affordable housing, a target that this Government can achieve—unlike targets set by those opposite. In March last year the Premier and Minister Goward announced that five parties received contracts under phase one to deliver 2,200 additional social and affordable homes and tailored support services in metropolitan and regional New South Wales. That is crucial. We want police, nurses and our critical clusters of employees to be able to live in areas where we need them most. The New South Wales Government also announced last year an additional 1,200 new dwellings as part of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund phase two to take the total number to 3,400. This second stage will continue phase one in providing homes and tailored support to those on the social housing waiting list. I am proud that this Government is helping to transform the lives of some of the most vulnerable in our community and to deliver affordable housing for those who need it.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (13:49): I commend the member for Newtown for bringing this important motion to the House and for working with the Government and Opposition to garner unanimous support. New South Wales has an affordable housing crisis. Tonight in our State some 40,000 people will sleep rough. That is equivalent to almost an entire electorate of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Clearly, more action is needed in this area. Homelessness is increasing in New South Wales. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], there has been a 37 per cent increase in homelessness in New South Wales, the highest rate across Australia. While the number of homeless children has gone down, nearly 60 per cent of people who are homeless are under 35 years of age. Figures show that 11,000 students are homeless. There are 60,000 families on the New South Wales social housing waiting list. Anglicare's 2017 Rental Snapshot shows only 1 per cent of private rentals are affordable for people on low incomes across the greater Sydney region. As the member for Newtown and I are uniquely aware, this problem is much worse in central Sydney.

When we look around this city we see cranes everywhere, but they are not building affordable housing. Those cranes are building penthouses and commercial premises. There is no mandated target towards affordable housing as there is in other cities across the globe. San Francisco's affordable housing target for developments is 12 to 33 per cent, Montreal's is 30 per cent; Vancouver's is 20 per cent; and South Australia's is 15 per cent. Washington DC's target is 8 to 10 per cent. Sydney's target is a mere 1 to 4 per cent. That is not enough, given the crisis we are in. These numbers are critically important and should inform policy, but so should the individual stories and experiences of people who are homeless.

Those 40,000 people who are sleeping rough include people who are escaping domestic violence and family violence, young kids who have been kicked out of home just because they are gay, refugees and asylum seekers who have just had their income support cut off by the Federal Government, people who have suffered a workplace injury, people with drug and alcohol issues, and people who—because of the State Government's addiction to pokie taxes—are problem gamblers, resulting in them becoming homeless. Tonight young men and women will use phone apps to trade sex for shelter, such is the crisis in New South Wales. We must all work hard on this issue. We must make sure we are working with and for our constituents who are homeless and at risk of homelessness. We must make sure we set strong targets for affordable housing. We must embrace what New Zealand is embracing: a housing first policy. The solution is 100,000 affordable rental properties in New South Wales, and we should work with the corporate sector to deliver them. I commend the member for Newtown for bringing this important motion to the House.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (13:53): By leave: The Government is investing record amounts of money in support of people who are homeless. This is a priority of the Government to address a genuine need in our community. Our investment in homelessness services and programs has increased by 43 per cent over four years. The Government is supporting more people than ever before. New South Wales has the biggest social housing building program of any State or Territory in the country. We are doing more for those experiencing homelessness, more for families living in social housing, and more for families experiencing domestic violence. This is more than Labor ever did or ever could have done.

I am sure that all members of this House would like to see homelessness resolved and for people in need to have their needs met. It is a complex and difficult problem that does not want for interest in solutions. When Labor was in government, it did not have the funds to solve the problem because it could not manage money. The Labor Party did not know how to run a healthy private sector economy, so there were no inflows to government that would result from that. It also did not know how to handle public sector finance, so there was no money to

give to programs like these. It is because we run the Government and finances so well that we have the capacity to meet the needs of the community.

We have a range of options in New South Wales to support people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. We have Rentstart bond loans that provide a loan of up to 100 per cent of a rental bond to help people establish a tenancy in the private market. We have Rent Choice, private rental assistance and subsidies, including targeted programs to help women leaving domestic violence and young people establishing themselves in the private rental market. In the past 12 months alone, our specialised mental health services and Family and Community Services [FACS] outreach teams have permanently housed more than 200 people who were sleeping rough in the inner city. This field needs a combination of services for people whose needs range in complexity. One thing alone cannot solve this issue. We cannot just build houses and say the job is done when people may have mental health issues, domestic violence, drug addiction or a range of other issues which underlie the problem.

We have Link2home, a specialised 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week phone line that directs at-risk people to services. We have pop-up housing offices to take services directly to people who are sleeping rough. We have launched a social benefit bond to support a youth foyer and we have Rent Choice Youth. This side of the House is making lives better by introducing innovative programs designed to break the cycle of disadvantage and encourage people to exit the social housing system. Through Future Directions for Social Housing we are providing more opportunities for tenants to undertake education and implement programs so that they can find work and move out of the social housing system, freeing up precious social housing for those in yet greater need. These new programs would never have been delivered under Labor. This is probably not because of lack of interest, will or concern but because of lack of capacity to manage money and make available the resources that would provide these programs to people in need.

Our \$22 billion Communities Plus program will create 23,000 new and replacement social housing dwellings, 500 affordable dwellings and 40,000 private housing dwellings. The Social and Affordable Housing Fund will deliver 3,400 social and affordable dwellings. Our Millers Point sales are funding the provision of more than 1,500 new homes for vulnerable families. We will continue to deliver for vulnerable families where Labor failed and where Labor would have continued to fail because it followed policies which prevented it from having the capacity to follow through on what it talks about. Everybody in this House wants to tackle the issue of homelessness. Everybody in the community recognises the challenge, but it is this side of politics that has the capacity to deliver those programs that are needed.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I welcome the students and other guests in the gallery. I hope you enjoy your afternoon in the New South Wales Parliament.

Motions

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (13:58): In reply: I am pleased that this motion in support of housing as a human right will pass through the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. I thank the members for Parramatta, Newcastle, Drummoyne, Riverstone, and Sydney for their contributions. As the only female voice in this debate, I acknowledge that homelessness is increasingly an issue for older women. Our mothers and grandmothers have worked to care for families over many years and now do not have the superannuation and housing security that they need. Homelessness is a fundamental priority of this Parliament.

It is unacceptable to The Greens that prioritising housing profits and housing developments is more important than solving the housing crisis in this State. Today members in this Chamber have shown support for ensuring that housing is a fundamental human right—as are health care and education. It is unacceptable that people do not have a safe and secure place to call home. It is not okay that 60,000 people are on the public housing waiting list. It is not okay that there has been a 37 per cent increase in the number of homeless people in New South Wales, yet we continue business as usual. The New South Wales Ombudsman's report titled "More than shelter—addressing legal and policy gaps in supporting homeless children", indicates that in 2016-17 just over 5,000 children and young people aged between 12 and 18 years presented on their own to a homelessness service to seek support or a place to stay, and that more than one-third of them were in the younger age bracket.

It is completely unacceptable that young people, older women and many others in our community are suffering because our housing crisis is not being taken seriously. But there is also a good news story. The stories recounted by the member for Sydney were truly horrific but we know that there are genuine solutions to solve this crisis right now. The University of Sydney, under the leadership of Professor Nicole Gurran, has completed a

study into the mechanisms used in this country to increase the supply of affordable housing. So we know that there are mechanisms that this Parliament can put in place to solve this crisis and put an end to homelessness in New South Wales. These things are possible. For example, the South Australian and Western Australian governments have put mechanisms in place to address the housing affordability crisis in those States. I repeat: One of the simplest things this Government can do—and it would cost it nothing—is to introduce legislation that puts an end to no-grounds evictions. That would provide security and safety for many people who are currently living in the insecure private rental market.

In conclusion, I acknowledge the outstanding work of a number of organisations with which The Greens work closely: Homelessness NSW, Shelter NSW, Tenants' Union of NSW, Sydney Alliance, REDWatch and other local resident action groups, Inner Sydney Voice, Better Planning Network Inc, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre that is doing amazing innovative work in the homelessness area, Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre and the 90 organisations in the Make Renting Fair Coalition. I am committed to keeping housing on the agenda both in this Parliament and in the community until the housing crisis in this State is addressed and everybody has a place to sleep at night.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Bills

MODERN SLAVERY BILL 2018

Messages

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council agreeing to the Legislative Assembly's amendments to the abovementioned bill.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to Mike Norton, guest of the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills, and the member for Northern Tablelands. I also welcome members of the National Seniors Sydney East group, guests of the member for Maroubra.

Welcome to Mr Yasser Abed, Consul-General of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mr Mohamad Farghal, Deputy Consul-General of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Mr Amir Salem, President of the Australian Egyptian Council Forum, guests of the member for Mount Druitt.

Welcome to Councillor Ben Gilholme and Brooklyn Taylor from Alive4Life Holistic Allied Health, guests of the member for Campbelltown. I welcome students and teachers from Penrith Christian School, guests of the member for Londonderry. I welcome students and teachers from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, guests of the member for Heffron. I welcome all other visitors to this last question time for some weeks.

Question Time

STATE ASSET PRIVATISATION

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:19): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Chairman Rod Simms said, "When you meet people in the street and they say, 'I don't want privatisation because it boosts prices and you dismiss them' ... recent examples suggest they're right", does the Premier still maintain that privatisation is the golden key, as the Treasurer claimed two days ago?

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind Government members that the Premier does not need any assistance in answering questions. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:19): I welcome this question from the Leader of the Opposition because we had to sit in silence throughout his diatribe against privatisation today. He thinks we have short memories. I want to read out what he said in 2015. This morning he talked about ports and the Hunter. In his 2015 budget reply speech he said, "Consider our ports. I see no compelling need for the State to own ports in 2015." That is what he said in 2015.

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Back then he was trying to say he was no longer old Labor; he was new Labor. He said, "Consider our ports. I see no compelling need for the State to own ports in 2015." But it gets better. He also said in 2015 that he did not mind the private sector. He said, "I do not believe that public is always good and private is always bad. For me, what matters is what works. I meant to say—"

The SPEAKER: Order! It is a bad start to question time. Opposition members who are interjecting will be removed from the Chamber. Those who have been removed before will be removed again today. The record of some members is not good.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: He said again in the same speech—

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Maitland that she will be directed to leave soon.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In his budget reply speech, when supporting port privatisation, he said, "I meant what I said on the day I was elected the Leader of the Labor Party of New South Wales." Don't they regret it now! He said, "I will champion an enterprising private sector and an essential public sector." The Leader of the Opposition is a hypocrite, a fake and a phoney.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Today he gave another diatribe on stadiums. He needs to apologise to 2GB. Members will remember what he said about ANZ Stadium. He said, "Yep, yep, yep."

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the Premier. There is too much the noise in the Chamber. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. The member will cease interjecting

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: He supports privatisation and then he does not; he says one thing and then he says another.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: How can anyone believe a word that comes out of his mouth?

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Kogarah to order for the third time. That is my last warning. The member for Kogarah will come to order. I will not take another question until the House comes to order. I understand that it is the last day of the session. Members will cease interjecting. Members who want to argue about having been removed yesterday will be removed again because nobody argues with the Speaker. Government members will come to order. They are not assisting the Premier by talking across the table. The House will come to order.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery Inta and Ian Scully, parents of the member for Wollongong. The member for Wollongong is one of the good ones. He does not interject or make a noise—most of the time.

Question Time

STATE BUDGET

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (14:25): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How does the 2018-19 budget make life better for people across this State, and are there any alternative approaches?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I remind members that some of them are on three calls to order. The member for Londonderry will come to order. The Treasurer will be heard in silence.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:26): What a day. I woke up this morning very excited—budget reply day, my second favourite day of the year.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I was thinking big things, big ideas, bold policies, big infrastructure. I had a press conference organised for midday; I even wore my second favourite tie just for the press conference. But what a lifeless, lacklustre, lethargic let-down by low-energy Luke. It was so bad I had to cancel the press conference.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: There is so much noise in the Chamber it is difficult to hear. I will take the member's point of order knowing that he is generally an honest person.

Mr Guy Zangari: The member for Auburn and Leader of the Opposition was not referred to by his correct title. Under Standing Order 73 the Leader of the Opposition should be referred to by his correct title.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I remind the Treasurer to refer to members by their correct title. Government members will come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I had to cancel the press conference because there was nothing to which I could reply. But there were a few things of interest. Within four minutes of his speech the Leader of the Opposition had cancelled four projects, placed two under review so he could cancel them later, and the one project to which he committed we are already building. That is the difference: This Government is building for tomorrow and delivering for today. The Labor Party is reviewing tomorrow and cancelling today. He cancelled the F6, the Western Harbour Tunnel, the Northern Beaches Tunnel and the Metro South West in the first four minutes of his speech.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. Government members are being outrageous. I call the member for Kiama to order for the first time. I hope this is not a frivolous point of order.

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. Perhaps the Treasurer could spend the next two minutes and fifty-two seconds telling us where the great disappearing FESL went. Where did the FESL go?

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The Treasurer is being relevant. The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That was the first budget reply speech in the history of the State where you walked in and walked out with less than you had when you came in. That was not a budget reply speech; it was a cancellation notice. What I like about the Leader of the Opposition though is that at least he is honest. He knows, and the public knows, that there is nothing to deliver because Labor can never fund anything. Labor opposed the poles and wires—the golden key to our prosperity, the one factor that has seen our State surge ahead and has enabled us to boost our economy and make record investments in health, education and roads. Our net worth is now reaching a quarter of a trillion dollars—\$87.2 billion in infrastructure over the next four years.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the second time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What is more interesting is what was not in his budget reply speech. Were there any new schools and hospitals?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Were there any extra nurses, teachers or police?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Was there anything to help families?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Were there any tax cuts for businesses?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Was there anything practical for the Indigenous community?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Was there anything for women?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: All Luke Foley gave to the people of New South Wales today was a list of things that Labor will not do, and that makes sense because doing nothing is what Labor does best. I did not think it was possible to deliver a budget reply speech without numbers—and there were no numbers. But it was because the Leader of the Opposition is focused on only one set of numbers—his leadership numbers. And

we know after that speech his days are numbered. I saw boss lady. Boss lady was there—she was winking at Minns.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Jihad Dib: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. The question was about the budget.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer has the call. There is no point of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Leader of the Opposition did have one number. The centrepiece of his speech was the air-conditioning policy. He has promised to air-condition every classroom across New South Wales. Whether they need it or not, Frosty Foley will be there with air conditioning. If people are in Thredbo or in the Snowy Mountains they should not worry—Frosty the Blowman will be there.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will refer to the Leader of the Opposition by his correct title.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Sorry, the Leader of the Opposition. There was a number that he put to that policy—\$800 million. [*Extension of time*]

He opposed our \$500 million, for which we worked hard, and he put \$300 million on top—so \$800 million for air conditioning for every classroom. I got my people to cost this.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The cost has come out at between \$1.1 billion and \$2.2 billion.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I have checked this with the Minister for Education.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I spoke to Treasury and asked what type of air conditioners the policy of the Leader of the Opposition could deliver. Treasury said, "No worries, Treasurer. We'll send you something up", and here it is—a folding fan; one for every classroom.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Treasurer about the use of props.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: But batteries are not included because that would get us up to about \$1.1 billion. This policy is the biggest air con in the history of this State. All Luke Foley will deliver to the people of New South Wales is higher taxes and more debt. This side of the House will continue to put the people of New South Wales first.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We will continue to invest in schools and hospitals across the State.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We know that Labor can never do it because it has opposed everything we have proposed to deliver prosperity to this great State.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wyong will come to order. Many members are already on three calls to order.

TWEED HOSPITAL

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (14:34): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. I refer to his statement of 2 May, in which he said a site in Kingscliff had been selected for the new Tweed Hospital. Given the Minister for Health contradicted the Deputy Premier with an announcement on Monday that he is now considering three other sites for the Tweed Hospital, how long will this selection process delay the completion of the hospital?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:34): In this place normally a Dixier comes from one's own side of the House. I am number three today. The member for Tweed is going to ask me a question about Tweed Hospital infrastructure—I do not know whether I should answer the question now or later. What I heard this morning in the budget reply speech in relation to Tweed Hospital was the announcement by Labor that we were returning to the bad old days. All members know the Leader of the Opposition was endorsed in this place

by Eddie Obeid and Ian Macdonald, and all remember part 3A, where the Minister made a decision around development.

A consultation process is in progress through the Department of Health relating to sites. The local member has done the right thing to bring the community to the table to suggest other opportunities. The Minister for Health was there this week, talking to the community, and short-listed three sites. This morning we heard from the Leader of the Opposition that Labor has already picked the site. He has already made a planning decision, but why? Why would he pick Kings Forest? Let me make it clear: The Kings Forest site is owned by property developers Leda Holdings Pty Limited, a company owned by Mr Bob Ell. Without too much difficulty the Government was able to discover some interesting information—

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier is making imputations against another person. If he wants to do so he should do it by way of substantive motion. He is being rhetorical and it is unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat. I will continue to hear the Deputy Premier.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The question was about Tweed Hospital and the site. This morning in the budget reply speech the Leader of the Opposition announced that the Kings Forest site would be the site on which Labor would build the hospital. The Government announced funding of \$534 million, but Labor will move the hospital. I have been handed a note that says, "The Opposition Leader tomorrow intends to be up there to shake hands with the developers and the owners of Kings Forest site." I question that. Leda Holdings has donated at least \$66,000 to the New South Wales Labor Party. Leda Holdings has donated at least \$12,000 to the Queensland Labor Party. Mr Ell, the director of Leda Holdings, also has interests in North Steyne Investments Pty Limited and—wait for it—has donated \$110,000 to the New South Wales Labor Party. North Steyne Investments has donated \$48,000 to the Queensland Labor Party. What we heard this morning in the budget reply speech by the Leader of the Opposition is that he intends tomorrow to go to Tweed to shake hands with the developer to remind us of the bad old days of Labor—part 3A planning. Oh, no; another note! This is difficult. The Government had only a small window of opportunity—

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. The question was, "How long will this delay the process for Tweed Hospital?"

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being entirely relevant to the question.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The greatest threat to Tweed Hospital will be the Independent Commission Against Corruption investigation into those opposite because of what I have just learnt. I apologise to the House; I had limited time before question time to do the research. As I am in the House at the moment, my office is still researching and more information will probably come to hand. By the end of question time there may be record amounts of investments, as those opposite would call them, in the Labor Party. This is a serious matter. If members remember, the campaign for which those who were elected in 2011 fought hard—I was part of the class of 2011—was about the corruption of those opposite relating to planning decisions that have seen a number of Labor members in jail.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time. Has the Minister completed his answer?

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, I will keep going.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is the member for Strathfield going to tell me how to do my job again?

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I am happy to tell you how to do your job, because only the member for Kiama has been called to order on the other side of the House—and this is a shocking performance by those opposite. The Minister is going through a raft of little notes that he has. The question is about when this hospital will be built.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I will keep this note for later. The question is about Tweed Hospital. Watch this space. Part two is about to begin.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (14:41): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the 2018-19 New South Wales budget delivering the jobs and infrastructure that New South Wales needs and deserves? Is the Premier aware of any alternatives?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:42): I thank the member for Coogee for his question. I would have thought that, on a day when the Leader of the Opposition gives his reply speech, he would back it in and get his frontbench to back it in, but his backbench has asked the questions today. Those opposite do not have confidence in backing it in. I have been in this place for 15 years and that is the first time I have heard a budget reply speech that did not mention the budget; nor did it mention the economy, jobs or infrastructure, TAFE, apprenticeships or frontline staff. It did refer to an infrastructure strategy which was to cancel projects but also to slow down projects. Why do I say "to slow down projects"? The Leader of the Opposition's one big ticket item was, "Just cancel every project, except for the West Metro." Then he said he is going to make it quicker. That is what he said, but he also said in his budget reply speech:

Labor will not award a single contract for the construction of a project until all planning approvals have been received.

In the same breath, Labor has also claimed to accelerate the West Metro. There are a few problems with that: It will take 3½ years in total to obtain all necessary planning approvals for the Metro West.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the third time. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I bet you wish you had done your planning on the light rail; it would have saved him a lot of headaches.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant. There is no point of order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Don't worry, it's coming to Maroubra.

Mr Michael Daley: A hundred bucks it doesn't!

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. That is very aggressive behaviour. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Labor said it would not award a single contract. It will take 3½ years in total to obtain all the necessary planning approvals for the Metro West, given the quantity of approvals required for various components of the project. Those opposite do not understand infrastructure. What this Government has been doing is a proven strategy for obtaining staged approvals. It means that tunnel boring machines will be in the ground for Metro West by 2022. Using the Opposition strategy it will take 3½ years to get the planning approvals, followed by another three years for the inquiry. That project would never start.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Maroubra that it is not a debate.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I remind members that when the Opposition was in government it promised the metro. It got \$87 million from the Federal Government for planning and it had to give it back because it could not do its homework. You cannot believe a word that comes out of the mouth of the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time. The member for Cessnock will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Today the Opposition has shown yet again a lack of understanding of what it takes to run New South Wales. It has a lack of work ethic. There is blatant hypocrisy demonstrated by their leader who says one thing in here and another out there. This Government is proud of the budget it delivered and its focus is on jobs, infrastructure and services. It was interesting to see how worried the Labor backbench was following the performance of the Leader of the Opposition. All I can say is that a number of members were quite slow to stand after his speech. The slowest was the member for Prospect—he is not looking too happy. Another member who was a little slow off the mark was the member for Kogarah. He just had a meeting with boss lady today—I wonder what they were discussing. The member for Port Stephens will not be here after next March: We are going after her.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier is talking about various members when the question was about infrastructure. The Premier cannot answer a Dixer from her own backbench.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. You have to listen to the question before you take a point of order, otherwise you make a bit of an idiot of yourself. The member knows the point I am making.

Ms Jodi McKay: You just called him an idiot.

The SPEAKER: I did not.

Ms Jodi McKay: You just called a member of this Chamber an idiot.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield, with her past behaviour towards other members, should not comment.

[*Extension of time*]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for Coogee for reminding me of the question he asked me on jobs and infrastructure. Today we have confirmed the Labor Party policy to abolish the F6, WestConnex, Metro Southwest, the West Harbour tunnel and the beaches link. Labor has today promised to slow down the Metro West for at least five years. That is Labor's commitment to infrastructure. While the Labor leader flops and flounders, this Government is getting on with the job of building New South Wales.

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order: The Premier is misleading the House. The Leader of the Opposition did not say that at all.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. There is nothing in the standing orders relating to misleading the House. I ask that members read the standing orders. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Nice try. Those opposite can deny the words that came out of his mouth but it is in *Hansard*.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order: I ask that the Premier be asked to direct her comments through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: I will do that. I ask the Premier to direct her comments through the Chair.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As the Opposition cancels projects and slows down infrastructure policies, the Government is getting on with the job for the people of New South Wales. The Leader of the Opposition has again demonstrated an incapacity to stand for anything, work hard or write policy.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Does the member for Maroubra have a genuine point of order, for a change?

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order is Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has been relevant. That is not a point of order. The member will resume his seat. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the third time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We know that the Leader of the Opposition is not a person of his word. Today Mr Medich was sentenced, and the judge described the crime as "heinous" and "abhorrent". I ask the Leader of the Opposition, "Why haven't you yet returned the money you said you would?"

PUBLIC SCHOOL AIR CONDITIONING

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (14:50): I direct my question to the Minister for Education. Will the Minister adopt the policy of the Leader of the Opposition and ensure that every public school in my electorate and across the State is air-conditioned?

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (14:51): Sometimes in this place we thank a member for their question and that is not entirely honest, but this time I genuinely thank the member for his question. If I can provide a piece of advice for a young player in this place: When he is given a question on the backbench read it carefully first. He does not have to ask it. In relation to air conditioning in our schools, the whole point of this exercise is to ensure that our schools are fit for purpose and that students, teachers and visitors to our schools are comfortable. We must design schools in such a way that they are thermally passive and energy efficient. I can inform the member for Wyong that his old school, Point Clare Public School, was recently the beneficiary of a significant upgrade that included air conditioning.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Wyong that he will be directed to leave the Chamber if he continues to interject.

Mr ROB STOKES: It is a great opportunity for me to update the House on the work that the Government has been doing to make schools as thermally comfortable as possible. The Government has conducted an audit of every school over the past year to determine the plant and equipment relating to air conditioning that exists and to identify electrical capacity and grid constraints in order to provide the evidence base to formulate a

sensible, balanced policy to ensure that every classroom across the State is as comfortable as possible. We have been doing this work for more than a year so I am well aware of the issues, the challenges and the constraints involved in what is a very—

Mr David Mehan: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I know the member for The Entrance is going to take a point of order on the specifics of his electorate, but the Minister has been relevant on air conditioning. I will listen further to the Minister; he is contextualising the issue. The Minister for Education is making a good contribution regarding this subject.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Very technical.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Rockdale does not understand what the Minister is talking about, he should talk to him later and he will explain it. I am interested in this—we all should be—and I am listening. Any member who does not listen will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr ROB STOKES: Our policy has been the result of a careful analysis of the conditions on the ground in each and every school. Our policy has been through a proper budgetary process. It has been through a portfolio assurance process. We know precisely what the capacity of our schools is, and we have appropriately calibrated our policy to ensure that we will do what we say and that what we say is possible. I simply say that I am in a position to know that the commitment of the Leader of the Opposition is either laced with ignorance or venality—it is one or the other.

Mr David Mehan: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr David Mehan: My point of order is Standing Order 129. I asked about schools in my electorate.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is talking about air conditioning and cooling generally. The Minister is being relevant.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: To the point of order: The Minister can be as erudite as he likes and use nice words like thermal comfort, et cetera—

The SPEAKER: The member for Maitland will resume her seat. As I said, members can ask the Minister what the words mean later. We will get the member a dictionary. "Erudite"—good word.

Mr ROB STOKES: I do not quite understand what that point of order was all about; nevertheless, I simply say that the advice I have received already is that the commitment of the Leader of the Opposition, as rubbery as it is, is a blank cheque. It is not properly funded and cannot be delivered within the envelope he is talking about.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Lakemba will resume his seat. The Minister is being relevant. I will not entertain points of order that are a waste of time. Very few Opposition members have any grounds to raise breaches of standing orders. It is tiresome that members who have been in the Parliament so long still cannot understand the standing orders.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:58): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. How does the 2018-19 budget continue the infrastructure boom in regional New South Wales, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any threats to the development process?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:58): I thank the member for Tweed for his question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. All members who have been called to order for the first or second time are now deemed to be on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I acknowledge the fantastic local member for the Tweed, someone who continues each year to deliver, including last year the big announcement around health and the hospital. This year we are seeing major upgrades at Tweed River High School, Tweed Heads South Public School, Kingscliff High School and Kingscliff Public School. The member for Tweed knows how important education is, especially in regional areas. I recap my previous answer. I took special note of the budget reply speech this morning from the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party in relation to Tweed Hospital. We have made the commitment; we

have funded it. They have brought recycling to a new level where now they are going to recycle our announcement to another site—our money to benefit one of their donors.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Your money!

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Yes, absolutely, because it is this side of the House that has made the tough decisions—

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: It is unacceptable for Opposition members to scream in that manner when their leader is taking a point of order.

Mr Luke Foley: My point of order is Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier is suggesting improper motives and, if he continues, I will have to refer members to all of the donations to those opposite by—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That is not a bad point; I welcome that point of order.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Kogarah from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 for the rest of the day.

[The member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 15:00 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The point of order related to donations. This gentleman was entitled to donate. I am not questioning donations; I am questioning those opposite who are interfering with the process, which is what Labor typically did previously. I will refer—and these are not my words—to a young man called Mark Aarons, a former senior adviser in the New South Wales Labor Government who has publicly stated that the relationship between NSW Labor and Bob Ell is one which is built on pay for play.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. The question was about regional infrastructure. This is not about that.

The SPEAKER: The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Hospitals are no longer regional infrastructure and also threats to planning processes, which are those opposite. Mark Aarons said:

In December 2005, when I was advising premier Iemma, I received a phone call from NSW ALP secretary Mark Arbib. Arbib told me that Bob Ell of Leda Holdings, was a significant donor to Labor's coffers and had a problem with his development proposal on the far-north coast.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: Twenty-five thousand to your millennium forum, Gladys, just for starters—

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat or he will be removed from the Chamber. The Leader of the Opposition is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The Leader of the Opposition is very sensitive as to why he made a captain's call today to bypass health infrastructure's independent process relating to identifying the right site for the people of Tweed to build a hospital, not just for today but for the future, taking into account, of course, as we are all aware on the North Coast, issues around floods. But this morning the Leader of the Opposition came to this House on the advice of an honourable member—and question marks around the word "honourable"—Walt Secord, who advised the Leader of the Opposition to make a captain's pick to bypass a process, which is typical of part 3A, typical of Labor pre-2011 and the sort of corruption we stopped when we came to power.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I am aware of the clock, member for Tweed, and I know you wish to request an extension of time. I will take the point of order, but I warn the Leader of the Opposition that if he does what he did last time he will be out of the Chamber. He is on three calls to order and I have warned him four or five times to resume his seat. What is the point of order?

Mr Luke Foley: It is Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier should have the guts to move the motion if he wants to allege improper motives or, even better, move another censure because that went really well for him.

[Extension of time]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: This question is about the—

Opposition members: Time! Time!

The SPEAKER: I just gave him two minutes, you blockheads. Why don't you listen?

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms Jodi McKay: Madam Speaker, I ask that you withdraw that comment. You are the Speaker of this House and you should treat every member on this side with respect.

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

[Interruption]

I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Strathfield from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 for the rest of the day. It is a shame that the member for Strathfield took that comment personally. I was not indicating anybody in particular.

[The member for Strathfield left the Chamber at 15:04 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will resume his seat for the moment. I granted the Deputy Premier an extension of time of two minutes. Opposition members did not hear that and that is why they were calling out that his time had expired. The Clerk will reset the clock. Does the member for Cessnock wish to take a point of order?

Mr Clayton Barr: I want to address the standing orders. As you know, under Standing Order 49 you have a responsibility to maintain order in this House. That is done through the standing orders.

The SPEAKER: Then why not assist me in that role by behaving yourself?

Mr Clayton Barr: Standing Order 131 (3) requires—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will resume his seat or he will be removed from the Chamber.

[Interruption]

I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Cessnock from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 for the rest of the day. He knows better than to argue in that ridiculous manner.

[The member for Cessnock left the Chamber at 15:06 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The points raised this afternoon are quite serious because they go to the integrity of members opposite who take advice from the Hon. Walt Secord about a site that they have chosen made a captain's pick, which is related to an interest of the Labor Party. Let me recap that Leda Holdings donated \$66,000 to the New South Wales Labor Party. Leda Holdings donated another \$12,000 to the Queensland Labor Party.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. That was an imputation of improper motive by the Deputy Premier.

The SPEAKER: Against whom?

Mr Greg Warren: Against the Leader of the Opposition. If the Deputy Premier wishes to raise anything untoward he should move a substantive motion and we can debate it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order. The Deputy Premier will be careful about impugning improper motives against members of this Chamber.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am recapping that members opposite have decided to pick Kings Forest as the site for the Tweed hospital. I must inform the House that North Steyne Investments donated \$48,000 to Queensland Labor and \$110,000 to NSW Labor. My question is about process when health infrastructure, independent of government, is going through a genuine—

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: My point of order relates yet again to Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier, while he is at it, should outline to the House all the donations received by Coalition parties and candidates from the gentleman they have signed to a confidentiality agreement while they take his land.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: This is not about the donation itself; it is about interference in an independent process.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 72, which states:

A Member shall not use offensive words against:

- (1) The Sovereign or the Governor;
- (2) Either House or its Members;
- (3) A member of the judiciary;
- (4) A statute, unless moving for its repeal.

The SPEAKER: I wish I had a dollar for every time I have been abused by the member for Maitland and others. The member will resume her seat. She was removed from the Chamber yesterday because she kept arguing after I told her to resume her seat. There is no point of order.

CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (15:10): My question is directed to the Minister for the Environment. Given that Queensland, South Australia and 171 countries have banned per- and polyfluoroalkyl [PFAS] substances, will the Minister ban these dangerous chemicals? If not, why not?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (15:10): I thank the member for her question. Labor members have obviously run out of budget questions to ask. They have run out of puff. Now they are turning to an important issue. I am pleased to talk about the work that this Government is doing to support our communities across New South Wales. In those areas where PFAS substances have been unearthed as a potential contaminant of our environment, we have done some important work. In the absence of leadership from the Federal Government, we have stepped up to the plate.

The member for Port Stephens knows that the Premier and I have visited Williamtown to meet her constituents to ensure that we directly address their concerns. That is important. We will stand with the communities that are affected, particularly the community of the member for Port Stephens. It is a genuine issue. We have connected reticulated water from the town. We are looking at every possible way to support the communities that may have concerns. The Premier and I are holding their hands while we address those serious issues. I have been asked a question about PFAS at the end of a parliamentary session. Let me take this opportunity to talk about the important supporting work we are doing for the environment in New South Wales. Opposition members do not want to talk about that work. They cannot stand the truth. We have allocated a record amount of \$2 billion to protect our environment.

Mr David Harris: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister was asked specifically whether the Government will ban PFAS. It was a simple question.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will listen further to the Minister. She can provide a context to an explanation in any manner she chooses. The Minister has the call.

[Interruption]

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: I am happy to address that interjection. The member for Port Stephens knows that this Government cannot ban PFAS. The responsibility for that lies directly at the feet of the Federal Government and the things it has done. The member for Port Stephens knows better than anyone in this House that we have held the hands of the communities that are affected by this and we will continue to do that. The member is laughing. She would serve her community much better if she stopped politicking over this issue and joined us in supporting her local community.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Port Stephens from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 for the rest of the day.

[The member for Port Stephens left the Chamber at 15:13 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: Under Standing Order 74 the Speaker has the right to intervene when there is disorderly conduct.

The SPEAKER: That is why I throw you out.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: The Minister was completely out of order. She was having a debate with the member for Port Stephens.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Stephens was arguing rather aggressively with the Minister. The member for Maitland will resume her seat.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: Let me uplift the spirit of Opposition members today.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Maitland from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 for the rest of the day.

[The member for Maitland left the Chamber at 15:15 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: We have made a \$2 billion commitment to protect the environment. That is good news in our budget. I will talk about some of the investment into our environment that the Opposition does not want to hear. We are looking after the electorate of the member for Port Stephens, who has left the Chamber, with \$45 million to protect koalas—an iconic species that we want to protect. If this is the last question from the Opposition after this Government has delivered a fantastic budget for our community, it says much about the Opposition's leadership. We will protect the communities that are affected by PFAS.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gosford will stop shouting or she will be removed from the Chamber.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: We have acted. It is a Federal Government issue. We have a strong budget commitment to the environment.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease shouting across the Chamber at Ministers at the lectern like the member for Gosford was doing.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister has finished her answer.

Mr David Harris: This is about the comment you just made.

The SPEAKER: About the member for Gosford interjecting and arguing with the Minister at the lectern, which is completely out of order?

Mr David Harris: Yes. My point of order relates to Standing Order 74. If Ministers direct their comments to members on our side and it leads to our members being removed from the Chamber but no action being taken against the Minister, we have to feel that this is a very biased place. If proper rulings were made both ways our members would not be forced to respond.

The SPEAKER: As always, I appreciate your comments because you have experience and wisdom in this Chamber. Thank you very much.

SMARTPHONES AND CYBERBULLYING

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) (15:16): My question is addressed to the Minister for Education. How is the Government addressing smartphone use in schools and combating cyberbullying?

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (15:17): Madam Speaker, I know this issue is dear to your heart. I thank the member for East Hills for his question. Recently it was great to be with him at Picnic Point High School, where Principal Sharon Byron is doing great work. The member showed he is in contact with his local community; he painted the school as a child. I notice that smartphones are distracting many of us in the Chamber right now. Smartphones are a necessary technology. They are ubiquitous in the modern world but they are problematic in the hands of people—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members who purport to be interested in educational issues should be listening to this answer. The Minister has the call.

Mr ROB STOKES: Smartphone technology is useful and essential to modern life, but it is also dangerous in the hands of people who might lack the skills or maturity to be able to deal with the power that technology unlocks. In the past 12 months a range of recent studies in journals such as *Computers in Human Behaviour*, *Computers and Education* and *Cyberpsychology* have pointed to serious challenges presented by the

use of smartphones, particularly in a school environment. They relate to addiction, social anxiety, isolation, cyberbullying and other mental health and wellbeing concerns. There are also issues of simple distraction. Smartphones can distract students from the business of teaching and learning.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Granville and the member for Blue Mountains think this is funny they can leave the Chamber. The member for Blue Mountains will come to order.

Mr ROB STOKES: Smartphones can cause young people to become isolated in playgrounds and they often separate people from the world that is happening around them. In many ways they are the bane of teachers' existence. In schools I go to teachers constantly raise with me classroom management issues caused by the inappropriate use of smartphones. Parents are often at a loss to know how to approach the issue with their children. I know that problem confronts some members in this Chamber today. What is the right age to make phones available to young people and what rules should surround their use? School is really the crucible of communication for our young people. It is where they discover the concept of literacy and learn about the communication tools they need to be well rounded and fulfilled members of our community. Those skills are also essential to their economic productivity over the longer term. That is why we need to examine the use of technological tools based around communication to ensure that we teach our young people the skills they need to use the technology appropriately.

Ms Trish Doyle: Reduce the class sizes. Support the teachers.

Mr ROB STOKES: I note the interjection. We already have reduced class sizes from what they were under members opposite. We are taking the concerns about smartphones seriously. That is why we have commissioned world-leading child psychologist Michael Carr-Gregg to undertake a review of world's best practice in managing smartphone use within schools. We know there are prohibitory regimes in Sweden and in France. We also know there are more permissive regimes in American cities, states and school districts. In Italy there have been some experiments with bans. Ultimately, in light of experience, there are problems with the practicality of bans. There are also some pedagogical advantages to being able to access smartphones, particularly for senior secondary students. We have asked Michael Carr-Gregg to look into those issues. We are the first jurisdiction in Australia to undertake this work. We believe it is valuable because we understand that our young people operate in a digital world. They need to learn the skills necessary to operate this technology. [*Extension of time*]

It is also important that we do not allow this technology to interfere with the cognitive development of young people. We need to equip them with skills to use this technology effectively to communicate in a healthy way and to be able to engage with the world around them. Pasi Sahlberg, Finnish education expert and now professor of education at the University of New South Wales, said it is important that we teach children healthy ways to grow up in a digital world. That is what our review is all about and that is our focus.

Smartphones are a useful way to do research. For example, I used one to research some of the claims made by the Leader of the Opposition in his budget reply speech relating to privatisation. I read on the internet on my smartphone that the Labor Party undertook 19 school public-private partnerships [PPPs] when it was last in office. In fact, one of the challenges this Government had to unravel was at a school where the parents and citizens association wanted to install air conditioning but the PPP permission had to be sought from the operator of the school, who was seeking an extortionate price because of the contract Labor entered into. So much for the Opposition's claims of being the party of air conditioning in schools. The Opposition's commercial ineptitude ensured that it was more difficult and more expensive to air-condition schools. That is a harbinger of what Opposition members would do if this State were ever in a sorry position where they were on the Treasury benches.

STATE BUDGET AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:24): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that climate change is a pressing issue for our State and the Treasurer failed to mention it in the Budget Speech, can the Premier explain why for the third year in a row the New South Wales Government has underspent the Climate Change Fund?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:24): I thank the member for Newtown for her question and I note her ongoing commitment to climate change and environmental issues. At least the member for Newtown is consistent on where she stands on these issues, whereas those opposite never mention climate change unless it is going to get them a headline. I am incredibly proud of the Government's record in dealing with climate change and environmental issues. I can advise the member for Newtown that in due course the Government will be making further announcements about the Climate Change Fund. We are yet to announce a number of exciting initiatives about this in the community, but I take this opportunity to restate some of the really great announcements that we have made in recent times.

Our NSW Koala Strategy was a first for New South Wales. Never before has this State had a strategy to protect our koalas. So those who are fearful about the future of our koala population can now rest assured that this Government is ensuring their protection. I was concerned to learn that in the last half century alone 25 per cent of our koala population has been decimated in this State. The Forestry Corporation of New South Wales has returned land to preserve koala habitats, a koala sanctuary has been provided at Port Stephens and Taronga Zoo has been given further resources to undertake more research. That is just one example of a recent decision we have made in relation to the environment. I am also proud of the overarching climate change and environmental features in our planning documents.

The Minister for Planning is to be commended because for the first time in the history of this State we will be creating a new green canopy for Greater Sydney. Over the next decades five million trees will be planted in New South Wales. In addition, we appreciate the importance of duplicating—in some cases quadruplicating or multiplying by eight times—the number of trees removed during major infrastructure projects and we also have a huge commitment to tree canopies. In New South Wales we have the largest renewable projects in Australia—whether from solar or other renewable energy sources. This Government has also called for tenders on solar panels for government buildings. At every opportunity we are promoting and supporting action on climate change.

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order: My question specifically asked why the Government has underspent the Climate Change Fund.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is being relevant to the question. I am sure she will turn to the budget shortly.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Contrary to what has been alleged about this year's budget, the Treasurer mentioned in the Budget Speech that for the first time we will be issuing green bonds through social impact investment to incentivise people to invest in environmental initiatives in New South Wales. The Government is making decisions to support the environment. It is also encouraging the private sector to invest in our initiatives. Finally, the member for Newtown can rest assured that the Government will have more positive things to say about the Climate Change Fund. I repeat: I am incredibly proud of what we have announced to date and there is more to come.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (15:28): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. In light of the Government's commitment to reserve \$3 billion this year for Sydney Metro West, \$1.9 billion for Sydney Metro City and Southwest and \$2.4 billion to complete Sydney Metro Northwest, is the Minister aware of any threats to those projects?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:28): I thank the member for his question. It is always good to get the last question of the parliamentary session. I was tempted to ask those opposite where they are going to have their budget reply party tonight, but I think we are going to have it. It will not be in Walt Secord's office, unless you are the Leader of the Opposition—he will be there. What a great speech. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his last budget reply speech. I also applaud him on his last question time.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: And his last point of order.

Mr Luke Foley: I was going to say the member opposite will be delivering the budget speech in reply next year, but we are going to win his seat.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I thought that the member for Liverpool had written the budget reply speech, given some of the socialist connotations in it. Socialism is alive and well in the Labor Party with Fidel Foley telling us that there will not be any more privatisations. Since there will not be any more private sector involvement in this State, who is going to drive the Metro West project that he is planning to build? I cannot see Alex Glasson sitting over a computer driving it. The whole idea of engaging the private sector to run transport services is to deliver better outcomes.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The interesting thing about his speech was—and this will upset the member for Newcastle—he did not say that he was going to tear up the Keolis Downer contract. He did not say that he was going to reverse anything. In fact, he said he was basically going to keep them. As the Premier alluded to earlier in question time, the Leader of the Opposition made the point in his budget reply speech that no more

construction contracts will be signed before planning approvals are received. Let us take a minute to think about that. The Sydney Metro City and Southwest project has around 16 contracts. The planning approval process is staged so we can get on with construction at various stages. The claim that the Leader of the Opposition made today that somehow Labor will build the Metro West more quickly than the Liberals and The Nationals is both ridiculous and absurd. It will be 36 months before he even goes to market to arrange someone to do the tunnelling. That also takes time. By the time they get through Luke Foley's processes it will be five years down the track before they even start building.

Sadly, the Leader of the Opposition does not understand that we have already commenced a lot of work to start Sydney Metro West, including drilling 40 holes between here and Parramatta to determine the best route for tunnelling. We have started doing the necessary work to deliver this project. I am glad that the member for Bankstown is talking. Guess what? Last night about 300 people turned up to a meeting in her electorate in favour of the Metro West. The point is, her community wants the metro.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will cease interjecting or she will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: What do we have from Luke Foley?

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bankstown for the last time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: He has put out press releases saying that he is going to axe it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Bankstown from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 for the rest of the day.

[The member for Bankstown left the Chamber at 15:33 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms].

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I do not think anyone from Labor should be mentioning developers this afternoon. Anyway, the Leader of the Opposition cops a question from Channel 7, "Is it still your priority to scrap Bankstown metro?" And guess what he says? He said, "It is not as high a priority ..." Labor does not know how to build metro; we do. *[Extension of time]*

There is no doubt that we are the party that will deliver the metro, and quickly, to the people of Western Sydney, in the same way that we are delivering the Sydney Metro City and South West rail. I have two minutes left until the end of the session and I have to say that—

Ms Trish Doyle: Point of order: In accordance with Standing Order 58, I move:

That the member for Bega be not further heard.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. Is the member seriously moving that the member be not further heard?

Ms Trish Doyle: Yes.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes22

Noes56

Majority.....34

AYES

Atalla, Mr E
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Foley, Mr L
Hornery, Ms S
McDermott, Dr H
Tesch, Ms L (teller)
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Kamper, Mr S
Mehan, Mr D
Warren, Mr G

Car, Ms P
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Hoenig, Mr R
Lynch, Mr P
Park, Mr R
Watson, Ms A (teller)

NOES

Anderson, Mr K

Aplin, Mr G

Ayres, Mr S

NOES

Barilaro, Mr J
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Goward, Ms P
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Parker, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr A.W.
George, Mr T
Grant, Mr T
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Donato, Mr P
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gibbons, Ms M
Greenwich, Mr A
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Pavey, Mrs M
Piper, Mr G
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Motion negatived.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (15:41): In accordance with Standing Order 60, I move:

That the member for Bega be heard for a further 10 minutes.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes52
Noes28
Majority.....24

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A.W.
George, Mr T
Grant, Mr T
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
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
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
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Goward, Ms P
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

Atalla, Mr E
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J

Bali, Mr S
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L

Car, Ms P
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A

NOES

Harris, Mr D
 Hornery, Ms S
 McDermott, Dr H
 Parker, Mr J
 Tesch, Ms L (teller)
 Zangari, Mr G

Harrison, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 Mehan, Mr D
 Piper, Mr G
 Warren, Mr G

Hoenig, Mr R
 Lynch, Mr P
 Park, Mr R
 Scully, Mr P
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Motion agreed to.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:46): What a disgrace to try to gag a Minister during question time. Cop this, what we have seen in the Tweed is the most corrupt, outrageous behaviour by a Leader of the Opposition in this place for a long time. The last time Walt Secord handed a piece of paper to a member here it was to John Aquilina over Cecil Hills, and he had to resign. Today the Leader of the Opposition came into this place and talked about a corrupt process, when there is an independent process underway by the health Minister—

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: If Opposition members are taking points of order to waste time, I will have the Clerk stop the clock. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Jihad Dib: It is a valid point of order. I refer to Standing Order 73, imputations.

The SPEAKER: Against whom?

Mr Jihad Dib: Against the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: I will listen further to the Minister. If that is the case, I will warn the Minister not to impugn improper motives against another member in this House. Members will be quiet so I can listen to the Minister's answer. I cannot rule on points of order unless I can hear what is being said.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: What we heard in this place today was a budget reply speech that touched on a whole raft of issues around infrastructure. As the infrastructure Minister, I am interested in this subject. We heard the Leader of the Opposition, supported by his shadow health Minister, introduce into this House some sort of location for a hospital when an independent process is underway through Health Infrastructure—

Mr Stephen Kamper: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129, relevance.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being relevant. The member will resume his seat or he will be removed from the Chamber. I know that Opposition members have been given instructions.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: There is no doubt that the lack of leadership, the complete lack of and utter disregard for an independent process—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will be removed from the Chamber if he continues to interject.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —that is going on in the Tweed, involving the community and involving Health Infrastructure at arms-length—

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —and to have the Leader of the Opposition in here promoting a site of a Labor mate who has donated to him—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will stop screaming.

Mr Paul Lynch: I have two points of order. The first is the egregious breach of standing orders by the Minister in refusing to sit down when a point of order was taken. With respect, he cannot be allowed to ignore the standing orders with so much contempt.

The SPEAKER: What is the second point of order?

Mr Paul Lynch: The second point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question—some time ago now—was about rail projects. Whatever the Minister is talking about now has nothing to do with the question he was originally asked.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the first point of order. Members will resume their seat when I ask them to do so.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I was referring to Health Infrastructure. The Government has very clear independent, at arms-length processes. While I was listening carefully to the budget reply speech, suddenly this paragraph popped up out of nowhere in relation to Tweed Hospital. No other health facility got a mention about its site and location except the Tweed. It is interesting because the member for Tweed is facing off against Mr Craig Elliot, who happens to be the husband of the Federal member up there. It is obvious that this afternoon the Leader of the Opposition and his shadow health Minister in the other place have a bit of explaining to do to the community in relation to what was said in this House today. It is no laughing matter when we see a Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —who lacks any sense of policy credibility—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —and any leadership ability come in here and, on behalf of a Labor donor, talk about a hospital location.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. Opposition members will not scream at the Minister, That is my job.

Mr Paul Lynch: I have two points of order. The first is, once again, the Minister's utter contempt for the standing orders in refusing to sit down when he has been told to do so.

The SPEAKER: I am not sure whether it was utter contempt, but I uphold the point of order.

Mr Paul Lynch: My second point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Minister is now impugning improper motives by the shadow Minister for Health. That must be done by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: I will listen further to the Minister.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We heard the budget reply speech given today, and there is no doubt that some serious questions need to be answered.

Ms Trish Doyle: Trains. Talk to us about trains.

The SPEAKER: The member for Blue Mountains will come to order. Go and write a children's book on trains, good on you.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The first question for the Leader of the Opposition is: Who put that paragraph in the speech? The second question for the Leader of the Opposition is: Is it a Labor donor? The third question for the Leader of the Opposition relates to the fact that Craig Elliot, the husband of Justine Elliot and former employee of Walt Secord, are all involved.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The fourth question for the Leader of the Opposition is: Why is he disregarding Health Infrastructure's independent, at arms-length process around the siting of this hospital?

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: This is a cash-for-budget reply speech from the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. I seek assistance from the frontbench. If the Minister cannot hear me, I ask the frontbench to tell him.

Mr Greg Warren: I also have two points of order. The Minister continues to not resume his seat when, Madam Speaker, you have repeatedly asked him to do so.

The SPEAKER: I have asked the frontbench to inform the Minister when he is asked to resume his seat.

Mr Greg Warren: The second point of order is under Standing Order 73. The impugning of improper motives has continued. The Minister is now speaking about people who are non-members of Parliament.

The SPEAKER: Non-members of Parliament?

Mr Greg Warren: Members of the public.

The SPEAKER: That does not relate to a standing order.

Mr Greg Warren: It is impugning an improper motive when the Minister refers to those people in questionable terms.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member is time wasting. He will resume his seat.

Mr Greg Warren: The Minister should do so by way of substantive motion.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Government is very concerned about what we have heard today.

The SPEAKER: Order! I place the member for Blue Mountains on three calls to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I can assure members that the Government will continue to look closely at what is going on in the Tweed in relation to this matter. The Tweed has a fantastic local member who is honourable and who is committed to working with the local community in relation to the siting of this facility. Here is one warning to the Leader of the Opposition—

The SPEAKER: Whichever Opposition member is calling out, go back to the bar. You are acting like children.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Leader of the Opposition must sack his shadow health Minister for today's budget reply speech. If he does not, he must resign for this grubby behaviour. Labor has learnt nothing since it left office.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: Don't forget the \$25,000 to Paul Nicolaou.

Mr Luke Foley: If the Minister is remotely serious he will move a censure motion. Come on big lad, come on.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Why don't you resign? Go and resign. Go outside and resign. Go outside. You are a dead man walking, Luke Foley. Get outside and resign with your shadow health Minister. You are finished. You are absolutely finished. You are corrupt.

Mr Luke Foley: Andrew, don't let fear hold you back.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. If members continue to take points of order, question time will run to 6 o'clock.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The question is: Will the Leader of the Opposition do the right thing and save caucus having to hold a ballot in September? That is the question. There are a bunch of local members who want you gone. They are saying it to my face, they are saying it to everyone's face. You are finished, Luke Foley.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Government signed a confidentiality agreement with Leda Holdings over that site. He announced the site last week. You have done exactly the same thing.

The SPEAKER: The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. There is no point of order. I remind the member he is on three calls to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I have been reminded the only problem for the Labor Party leader this afternoon is that this information came from the Labor Party to the Deputy Premier. The Leader of the Opposition needs to sack his shadow Health Minister this afternoon and if he does not he should go for the road too because he is hopeless. The people of this State know it. Guess what? Nobody in the history of this place has given a budget reply speech for Labor mates. Quite frankly, the Leader of the Opposition has corruptly affected the Tweed and the location of that hospital.

Committees

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Reports

Mr MARK TAYLOR: I table the report of the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics entitled, "Review of the Code of Conduct for Members", dated June 2018. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

NSW OMBUDSMAN

Reports

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I table the report of the NSW Ombudsman entitled, "More than shelter—addressing legal and policy gaps in supporting homeless children", dated 21 June 2018, received this day and authorised to be printed.

INSPECTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Reports

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I table the report of the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled, "Report concerning a Complaint by Mr John McGuigan, Mr Richard Poole, Cascade Coal Pty Limited, Mount Penny Coal Pty Limited and Glendon Brook Coal Pty Limited about the conduct of the Independent Commission Against Corruption in Operation Jasper", dated 21 June 2018, received this day and authorised to be printed.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Pet Shops

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

Pymont and Ultimo Bus Services

Petition calling for improved bus services to Pymont and Ultimo, 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**.

Glebe Island Multi-User Facility

Petition calling on the Government to commission an independent impact assessment of the proposed Glebe Island Multi-User Facility and to protect adjacent residential amenity by imposing operating conditions such as night and weekend bans, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Minister has lodged a response to a petition signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Rob Stokes—Jannali East Public School Assembly Hall—lodged 16 May 2018 (Ms Eleni Petinos)

Committees

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 56/56

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 57/56

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:01): I move:

That, in accordance with Standing Order 306 (7), the reports of the Legislation Review Committee, being Orders of the Day—Committee Reports Nos 1 and 3, be considered together.

Motion agreed to.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I congratulate the member for Manly on the breakfast this morning for the Invictus Games. It is a great initiative. I look forward to continuing it in my electorate and I hope all members of this House do the same. The question is that the House take note of the reports.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: I thank members for the opportunity to speak to the Legislation Review Committee's fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh digests for the Fifty-sixth Parliament. In Legislation Review Committee Digest No. 56/56, which was tabled on 5 June 2018, the committee examined the nine bills introduced in the last parliamentary sitting week of May. The committee also reported on one regulation subject to disallowance. I will draw the Parliament's attention to some of the issues raised in that week's digest. The Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms) Bill 2018 seeks to prohibit discrimination on the ground of a person's religious beliefs or religious activities. The committee noted that the bill inserts provisions which conflict with other aspects of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, such as freedom from discrimination on the grounds of marital or domestic status and homosexuality. The committee referred these provisions to Parliament for consideration.

The next bill I speak to is the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill (No 2) 2018. The bill amends a number of Acts relating to courts and crime-related matters. The committee noted a number of issues with this bill concerning provisions which may unduly trespass on a person's right to a fair trial. One of the issues related to amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 that introduce the concept of terrorism evidence. Under the amendments, a prosecuting authority cannot be required to give an accused person a copy of an item that the authority decides is terrorism evidence. Although there are some safeguards within the bill, the committee noted that a fundamental principle of the rule of law is that all parties are equal before the court and an accused person should be able to know the case that is being made against him or her. The committee referred this issue to the attention of Parliament.

I now turn to Legislation Review Digest No. 57/56, which was tabled earlier this week and which examined six bills introduced in the first sitting week of June. The committee also reported on one regulation subject to disallowance. The first bill in this digest that I note is the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Bill 2018, which makes a number of reforms to child sexual abuse laws in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. These reforms increase the maximum penalty for persistent sexual abuse of a child from 25 years to life imprisonment. This offence also applies retrospectively, which may expose some offenders to a considerably higher maximum penalty than would otherwise have been applied at the time of their offence. This may offend principles of retrospectivity in criminal law, including that laws should not impose heavier penalties than were applicable at the time the offence was committed.

However, the committee noted that where the offence is being used retrospectively, the sentencing court must consider the maximum penalty that applied to the offence at the time it was committed. In light of this, and noting the recommendations of the royal commission, the committee made no further comment. The second bill to which I refer is the Water Management Amendment Bill 2018. This bill implements reforms introduced as part of the Water Reform Action Plan in December 2017 and aims to streamline and provide certainty around water management in New South Wales.

One of the issues identified in this bill was that a number of provisions defer matters to the regulations, including various offences attracting significant penalties; for example, up to 2,250 penalty units for an individual. The committee prefers that substantive matters are addressed in the principal legislation so it can be scrutinised by Parliament. While some administrative matters may be appropriately handled by the regulations, the bill also defers some more substantive matters as mentioned. The committee drew the large number of matters deferred to the regulations to the attention of Parliament.

The last legislative instrument to which I will refer is the Crimes (High Risk Offenders) Regulation 2018. This regulation makes provisions for the constitution and procedure of the High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee when it exercises its function under the Terrorism (High Risk Offenders) Act 2017. One of the issues considered by the committee was the membership of the committee in relation to these terrorism offender functions. The current legislation provides that the assessment committee should consist of certain members, including representatives from a wide variety of government bodies nominated by the secretary or commissioner of the relevant agency.

In contrast, the regulation provides for a narrower range of representatives for terrorism offenders, and does not require them to be nominated by the relevant agency head. The reason for these membership differences is unclear and, as such, the committee drew the regulation to the attention of the Parliament. That concludes my remarks on the fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh digests of this Parliament. I encourage everyone to read the full digest, which is available on the Parliament's website. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions. I commend the digests to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (16:06): I will refer also to the fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh digests of this Parliament. Within the fifty-sixth digest, which is dated 5 June, the committee considered eight bills and commented on five and considered and commented on one regulation. In relation to the regulation the function of the committee is to consider all regulations whilst they are subject to disallowance by resolution of either or both Houses of Parliament. In doing so the committee considered the Crown Land Management Regulation 2018. The object of this regulation is to make provision with respect to a number of matters in connection with commencement of the Crown Land Management Act 2016.

The committee noted that the regulation provides that taking part in any gathering, meeting or assembly on Crown land may be prohibited by direction or notice. The committee further noted there is no guidance on what basis a decision to prohibit an activity on Crown land may be made. It further noted that prohibiting individuals from taking part in any gathering, meeting or assembly may unduly trespass upon the rights of individuals to peaceful assembly for a common purpose of expressing their views. The committee drew this to the attention of Parliament. I understand that as a consequence of this the matter was ventilated before the Legislative Council this sitting week.

In relation to the fifty-seventh digest the committee considered six bills and commented on all of them. It considered one regulation and commented on that. One of the bills considered was the Crimes Amendment (Publicly Threatening and Inciting Violence) Bill 2018. The object of that bill is to amend the Crimes Act 1900 to create an offence of publicly threatening or inciting violence on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex or HIV-AIDS status. The bill will "prohibit a person from intentionally or recklessly, by a public act, threatening or inciting violence towards another person or a group of persons on any of the following grounds: background, including race, religious belief or affiliation; sexual orientation; gender identity; intersex status; or HIV-AIDS. The committee noted that the bill may be seen as a trespass on the right to freedom of speech or expression. However, the committee further noted that the right to freedom of speech is not absolute and can be limited to achieve a desired purpose. As a consequence the committee made no further comment. Members will be aware that the bill passed both Houses of Parliament this week. That concludes my comments on the digests. I commend the digests to the House. I thank my fellow committee members and the secretariat that supports the committee.

Reports noted.

Committees

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC)

Reports

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (16:10): I contribute to debate on report 7/56 of the Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee entitled, "Examination of Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports February 2016 to September 2016", dated 19 June 2018. This is the fourth report of the Public Accounts Committee performance audit review program to be tabled in the Fifty-sixth Parliament. Performance audits are conducted by the Auditor-General to review whether New South Wales government agencies spend taxpayers' money efficiently, effectively, economically and in accordance with statutory requirements.

One of the ways the Public Accounts Committee exercises its oversight role is to follow up the recommendations made by the Auditor-General to agencies in its performance audit reports, to ensure that agencies have responded appropriately to the Auditor-General's recommendations. As part of this follow up, the committee questions agencies on measures they have taken and, if considered necessary, conducts public hearings to gather additional information by examining agency representatives. The process has proven to be an effective means of testing action taken on performance audits and maintaining a high level of scrutiny of the agencies under review.

During this inquiry the committee examined 10 performance audits and after considering agency responses to each audit the committee determined that three of those audits had been satisfactorily completed, with the agencies concerned fully implementing the Auditor-General's recommendations. These were audit reports into early childhood education, realising the benefits of the Service NSW initiatives, and the sale and lease of Crown land. Additionally, the committee sought further clarification on aspects of agency responses to three other performance audits, namely, franchising of Sydney Ferries network services, monitoring food safety practices in retail food businesses, and supporting students with disability in New South Wales public schools. After receiving additional details regarding the action taken to meet Audit Office requirements, the committee is satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken.

The committee did not consider that recommendations contained in the remaining four performance audit reports had been fully addressed. To conduct a more detailed examination of these reports, the committee held a public hearing on 12 February 2018 to seek further information. The audits examined at the public hearing were: managing unsolicited proposals in New South Wales; performance frameworks in custodial centre operations; reintegrating young offenders into the community after detention; and red tape reduction. The committee's further scrutiny of these four audits made findings resulting in 10 recommendations to address shortcomings in the implementation of the Auditor-General's reports.

The first set of the committee's recommendations relate to the unsolicited proposals process. While noting some progress in enhancing public reporting on such proposals, the committee believes further improvements can be made. These include investigating possible models for establishing minimum financial thresholds when assessing unsolicited proposals, developing a more rigorous methodology for quantifying and assessing unsolicited proposals, and advising Local Government NSW about how to establish a framework of best practice for assessing unsolicited proposals at local government level.

Another set of recommendations deals with custodian centres, both structurally and operationally. The committee would like to see more work done to further progress the monitoring and benchmarking of individual prisons, including reporting on the design capacity for each prison. In addition, Juvenile Justice should improve the transparency of its management of juvenile offenders by publishing data on reintegration measures and better coordinate the provision of vocational training to improve community outcomes. Finally, the committee has concerns about the delay in action taken on the Greiner review into red tape reduction, which is critical to ensure that any current disproportionate regulatory burden can be alleviated. The aim should be to create more efficient and effective government policies and programs, resulting in reduced delays and minimising negative impacts on business, industry and the broader community.

In conclusion, I thank the Auditor-General, Ms Margaret Crawford, and the hardworking staff of the Audit Office for their cooperation with this inquiry. I thank my fellow hardworking committee members and the committee secretariat, headed by Bjarne Nordin, who do an outstanding job. I thank staff from all the departments, including Hansard, for all their assistance in the preparation of the report. Last night the Audit Office of New South Wales won awards for a number of its reports. The Audit Office of New South Wales is doing an outstanding job.

Report noted.

Bills

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO 2) 2018

Assent

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor assenting to the bill.

Matter of Public Importance

REFUGEE WEEK

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:17): This week is Refugee Week, an important opportunity to highlight the struggles and successes of the world's refugees and this year's theme is "#WithRefugees". At a time when refugee numbers are possibly at their highest ever levels and refugees are frequently demonised, it is important for all those of good conscience to stand with refugees. Refugees have made a fantastic contribution to modern multicultural Australia and it is clear from all the evidence that for the overwhelming majority of refugees, after a few difficult years of adjustment, they repay our generosity many times over. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR], at the moment around the world, 68.5 million people have been displaced by conflict and persecution—25.4 million are refugees and 3.1 million are asylum seekers. This is on top of another 40 million internally displaced people. Indeed, 57 per cent of them come from just three countries, with 6.3 million from Syria, 2.4 million from South Sudan and 2.6 million from Afghanistan.

In any one year around 100,000 of these people will be resettled to third countries of asylum like Australia. While Australia has a refugee intake of around 18,000 per annum and over many decades has taken in more than a million refugees, the countries hosting the most refugees have far fewer resources and support many more—up to 3.5 million refugees in Turkey alone. Refugee Week has been celebrated in Australia since 1986 and in 2001 the first celebrations of World Refugee Day were held on 20 June. In urging people to stand with refugees this year, the UNHCR has launched a petition that seeks to ensure every refugee family has somewhere safe to live, every refugee child gets an education, and every refugee can work or learn new skills to make a positive contribution to his or her community.

Each of these is important as more and more people spend longer and longer in refugee camps. When the United Nations Refugee Convention was signed in 1951, the idea of supporting the resettlement of refugees was envisaged as a rapid process—initial provision of safety from harm and then resettlement. Today most refugees spend years in refugee camps and settlements and most will not be resettled. Accordingly, the UNHCR has adapted the way it provides support to reflect this, and this is reflected in the focus on education and economic contributions. In 2006 I briefly lived and worked in the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp in Accra, Ghana. It housed 40,000 refugees, many of whom had been there for up to 10 years. They did not have formal work rights and many of those who did work in the informal sector were exploited. I worked with an organisation that provided vocational education. We found that of the people in the camp, those former combatants who were unaccompanied, especially those who had been separated from their families as child soldiers, were the least likely to have had any further education since arriving at the camp.

Earlier this year I visited Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia and with the support of the UNHCR I visited refugee camps in Rwanda and Ghana, and returned to the camp where I had worked, which is now a settlement. I was pleased to see the changes in the way the UNHCR and its partner agencies administer the two camps, reflecting the acknowledgement that refugees can and should use their time in the camps productively, learning or earning. They are also far better integrated into the local community than previously. At the camp I visited in Rwanda, 56,000 Burundian refugees live in a well-managed camp that has been in place for only three years. Local children attend their schools and refugee children attend local schools, one of which is the largest in Rwanda with 19,000 students, including 3,000 refugees. Burundian nurses work in the camp hospital and the camp marketplace is full of businesses run by refugees. It is a big turnaround from the way things used to be managed.

In the Granville electorate we have seen waves of migration driven by people fleeing conflict as refugees or through family reunion since the Lebanese civil war. In recent years there has been a large influx of refugees from Afghanistan and Iran and they are making a great contribution. There are large numbers of Afghan and Persian restaurants and other businesses. They are so good that food tour businesses come to Merrylands now. In the first few years in particular, refugees face major challenges. Holroyd High School in my electorate supports dozens of refugee students every year. Their current school captain, Baraa Omar, is a refugee from Syria who has been in Australia for four to five years. She has an infectious enthusiasm and is involved in so many activities at the school. She is excelling academically and in sport. She has given back enormously to Australia even though we have not yet given her citizenship. Throughout Australia we have seen over decades refugees who have succeeded in every possible field, as well as succeeding to provide a safe and secure home for their families. Refugee Week is a great time to highlight the contribution made by refugees and their genuine needs, and I urge all members to stand with them.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:21): I speak in support of Refugee Week 2018 and thank the member for Granville for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. This year's theme for Refugee Week is "#WithRefugees". This theme encourages all Australians to stand with refugees to ensure people who are forced to flee from their homes can live with dignity and hope. Refugee Week is a significant time for us to stand together in unity and respect to celebrate the invaluable contributions of refugees to our community and State. The United Nations has recognised that the world is witnessing high levels of displacement and New South Wales has played its part in welcoming humanitarian migrants into our community. The majority of the 15,634 humanitarian migrants who came to New South Wales from 1 December 2015 to 5 December 2017 were people displaced by the Syria-Iraqi conflict.

From 1 July 2017 to 4 May 2018, 54 per cent of all the refugees who came to New South Wales settled in south-western Sydney, with 16 per cent of them coming to the Liverpool local government area, which covers the majority of my electorate. As many in this House may or may not be aware, the Liverpool region is already a melting pot of culture, with 160 nationalities speaking 150 different languages. I am especially interested in how the New South Wales Government is supporting these communities, and especially these refugees. The New South Wales Government has committed more than \$146 million across four years from 2016-17 to ensure the right services and supports are in place to assist new arrivals to settle. The investment targets employment, health, education, legal support, community and youth services. In a short time the results have been significant.

They include increased access to employment pathways, the continuation and establishment of new specialised refugee health services, increased knowledge of legal rights and responsibilities, support for school-aged children to settle in schools and greater assistance for refugee families to connect with their community. As at 14 June 2018, the Refugee Employee Support Program has enrolled 3,075 participants, placed 491 participants into sustainable and skilled employment, placed 834 participants into education training, with the majority in Smart and Skilled training that is fee-free for refugees and asylum seekers up to certificate IV level, and supported 686 participants to have their overseas skills and qualifications recognised, which is important.

The New South Wales Government is committed to ensuring that people who have been granted Temporary Protection Visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas are supported so they can achieve positive settlement outcomes. In metropolitan areas, Multicultural NSW is collaborating with service providers to empower Safe Haven Enterprise Visa holders and Temporary Protection Visa holders to make informed decisions about relocating to a regional area. Multicultural NSW is working with the Department of Premier and Cabinet regional coordination group to support councils, employers and communities to attract those visa holders.

I pay tribute to the dedicated and passionate staff and volunteers at that Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre for the important work they do for refugees in south-western Sydney. They work with newly arrived migrants, refugees, and diverse communities to build their capacity to take part in local life, particularly in Liverpool and its surrounding areas as well as further afield. They provide vital services such as providing casework and group activities to help migrants and refugees settle well and participate in Australia. Such services include information and referral to other services; playgroups and parenting support, of which I am a massive fan; youth services including homework support, youth casework and recreational activities; classes and courses such as English, art and computer classes; employment and training opportunities; aged care support; social groups; and festivals and community events.

Once again I thank staff at the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre—in particular, Kamaile Dabboussy—for all they do in assisting refugees in south-western Sydney. I also acknowledge Muslim Scouts Australia, which is supported by the Islamic Charity Projects Association. It does a fantastic job of helping refugee children through the 1st Liverpool Scout Group. Once they are identified as refugees, it helps them to integrate and learn about the area. I know it works hard in the community and should be congratulated on its efforts. As we reflect on how lucky we are to live and work in a peaceful, cohesive and multicultural society, Refugee Week is an opportunity to consider whether we are doing all we can as a society to assist those impacted by conflicts overseas.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:27): I thank the member for Granville for bringing Refugee Week to our attention. As other members have said, the theme for Refugee Week this year is #WithRefugees, which embodies unity and respect. I acknowledge the people in the gallery who have made the effort to listen to the matter of public importance. The Legislative Assembly will always be the people's House and visitors are welcome at any time. There is a global need to ensure that people who are fleeing their home are doing so with hope and dignity. I acknowledge the Welcome to Australia group and its outgoing chief executive officer, Mohammad Al-Khafaji. That group advocates for and coordinates a positive response to those seeking asylum, refugees and new arrivals. While we have Refugee Week and World Refugee Day, we must go beyond the idea of having just one day when we focus all our attention on one thing. We must focus our attention all the time. Refugees should not be celebrated for only one day. They are part of our society and we must keep them in mind all the time.

A couple of years ago I travelled to Lebanon with the member for Granville, the member for Bankstown, the member for Cessnock and the member for Auburn. The member for Granville and I visited a refugee camp, which had young Syrian kids. It was an eye-opening experience. The member for Granville talked about the refugee camps she has worked in. While it was heartbreaking it was also inspiring to see the resilience and the strength of those families doing their best. Nobody would leave their homeland unless there was a threat to their life. They know they are not leaving their home to go somewhere with better conditions; the trip itself is perilous. If they are lucky, they will survive it. If they are really lucky, they will end up in a place where the world is a little better.

Refugees have been arriving in Australia for a long time. Some people demonise refugees. They make out that there is a problem. If we consider them only in that vein, we would never end up with someone like His Excellency Van Le, the thirty-fifth Governor of South Australia. I met His Excellency Van Le about a month ago and I told him how he has inspired me. This gentleman came to Australia on a refugee boat in the 1970s and he has become the Governor of South Australia. Not only are all refugees welcome here; we also want them to succeed. They are just as important as any other person in our community and we hope to see the next Mr Van Le in many of them.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:30): I thank members for allowing me to make a contribution to debate on this matter of public importance. The member for Holsworthy and the member for Lakemba noted that the theme for Refugee Week 2018 is #WithRefugees. The purpose of Refugee Week is to highlight the responsibility of each of us to ensure that people who are forced to flee their homes can live with dignity and hope. I thank the member for Granville for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House. I note her firsthand experience of working in a refugee camp. I take this opportunity to talk about Alli McGoldrick, a young lady in my electorate who has had a similar experience in a refugee camp. She is experiencing what it feels like to be a refugee. Alli will eat the same food as Syrian refugees. It may sound like a

gimmick, but it is far from it. Alli is serious about undertaking a seven-day ration challenge to raise awareness of the plight of refugees around the world.

Recently she told our local paper, the *Macquarie Port News*, that the fundraising initiative is called the Ration Challenge. Alli said she has wanted to do something like this since 2016 when she worked in a refugee camp. She learnt firsthand what it was like to be a refugee, experiencing the living conditions and eating food rations. She also spoke to refugees about what it was like to be displaced. Alli said that the food rations given out were incredibly small and basic and were the same day in, day out. She said:

While I was there, I would try to give out additional food to people to help with both nutrition and mental wellbeing and that is why this challenge is something I am particularly passionate about.

Alli McGoldrick is a local champion and an amazing young lady. She said she has a strong desire to help people in need and the Ration Challenge is an obvious way to do that. Alli is also raising money for refugees and so far has collected more than \$1,000. I acknowledge Alli's family and friends who have supported her in her campaign to raise awareness of the plight of refugees. Having raised \$1,000 to date, Alli has increased her goal to \$1,500. I congratulate Alli and wish her well in her challenge. I will make a contribution to her campaign and encourage other community leaders to do the same.

To mark Refugee Week, the Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services Migrant Settlement Project, in partnership with the Mid North Coast Refugee Support Group, will host an event on Saturday 23 June at Charles Sturt University. Emmanuel Musoni will speak about the resettlement of refugees in regional Australia and the Mingoola resettlement program. He is the chair of the Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development. Emmanuel was born and raised in a refugee camp until he was 16 years old. He is strongly committed to and passionate about advocating for better settlement and integration of refugees and migrants of African background in the Australian community.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:33): In reply: I thank the member for Holsworthy, the member for Port Lakemba and the member for Port Macquarie for their contributions. Refugee Week is important. It was great to hear about the things that are being done in our communities to stand with refugees across the State. The member for Holsworthy told us about the huge concentration of refugees who have settled in south-western Sydney. In recent years people have come from Syria and Iraq. We heard about the work being done by the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre and Muslim Scouts Australia. Similarly in my area, the Community Migrant Resource Centre does a fantastic job supporting refugees as well as many other organisations, particularly the House of Welcome and Arrupe Place.

The member for Lakemba talked about the great work being done by the Welcome to Australia group. I went on a trip with friends to a Syrian Refugee Camp in Zahle in Lebanon. The camp was run by the Melkite church and it was very confronting to see so many people struggling day by day through no fault of their own. I heard the great inspirational story of Hieu Van Le, the Governor of South Australia. Similarly, the Catholic Bishop of Parramatta, Vincent Long Van Nguyen, also came as a boat person from Vietnam during the same period. The member for Port Macquarie told us about the great work being undertaken by Alli McGoldrick on the seven-day ration challenge.

My friend Emmanuel Musoni is involved with the Mingoola rural resettlement program being run by the Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development. That is an inspirational story. They noticed that people coming to Australia from the Congo, in particular, had agricultural backgrounds but were settled in Sydney and really missed their former life working on a farm. We are starting to understand more and more that when people leave everything they own and their family and friends behind, they do not leave behind what they know; they bring their skills with them. It is important if we want to stand with refugees that we give them an opportunity to use their skills, which is what the rural resettlement program is doing.

There is so much happening to support refugees and so much evidence across our wonderful State of refugees really succeeding, making a great contribution and repaying our generosity. It demonstrates that everybody who casts aspersions on refugees, demonises refugees or thinks that all of those millions of people are pulling a scam are wrong. We are right to stand with refugees. It is the right and good thing to do.

*Bills***APPROPRIATION BILL 2018****APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2018****NSW GENERATIONS FUNDS BILL 2018****STATE REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018****SNOWY HYDRO LEGACY FUND BILL 2018****Returned**

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bills without amendment.

*Community Recognition Statements***TRIBUTE TO BILL SNOWDEN**

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:37): I pay tribute to the late Bill Snowden, who passed away earlier this month. In 2016 Bill Snowden was awarded an Australia Fire Service medal for his 46 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. From 1986 to 2015 Mr Snowden was the group officer of Tinonee, Burrell Creek, Krumbach, Firefly and Mount George brigades. Bill was widely respected and admired by all who knew him and he will be dearly missed by all. Our thoughts and prayers are with Shirley, her family and all those who loved Bill. Recently I had the pleasure and honour to speak with Bill, to award him a certificate and medals and to see him and Shirley at the Tinonee Fire Station on its recent open day.

WYONG MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:38): Two weeks ago I had the great pleasure of seeing yet another performance by the Wyong Musical Theatre Company. *Rock of Ages* was its latest offering and it promised to take us back to the times of big bands with big egos playing big guitar solos and sporting even bigger hair, and it certainly lived up to expectations. The Tony Award-winning musical had the young and talented Quinn Carter as its musical director and Jillian Logan as the director. I am extremely proud to have the Wyong Musical Theatre Company operating in my electorate and showcasing the talent of our local artists in the recently built Wyong Art House. I look forward to seeing the next performance of the Wyong Musical Theatre Company and congratulate it on a great rendition of *Rock of Ages*.

SLICE OF HAVEN

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:39): This year our premier food event Slice of Haven kicked off on Sunday 27 May in my electorate to celebrate fine culinary cuisine and local fresh produce. Thousands of people turned out in perfect weather to experience the festivities of this number one food event in New South Wales. Supported by the Camden Haven Chamber of Commerce, this premier event for the Hastings region attracts thousands of people each year to experience local bands, markets and food stalls on the banks of the Camden Haven River, located in the beautiful seaside town of Laurieton. Chamber of Commerce President Sue East thanked local community organisations for their tremendous support and for donating their time and efforts in achieving another record crowd—more than 15,000 people passed through the gates. Sue acknowledged the generous support of the Camden Haven Hockey Club—Snake Pit, Camden Haven Surf Life Saving Club, New South Wales State Emergency Services Camden Haven Unit, Camden Haven Girl Guides and the Watch Training Traffic Control team. These volunteers perform a number of duties that contribute to the event's overall success. The theme for this year's event was "Flavours of our Generations" and the stall holders and attendees wore styles of clothing from years past.

BASEBALL PLAYER RIXON WINGROVE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:40): I acknowledge and congratulate 18-year-old Rixon Wingrove of Garden Suburb, who recently left for the United States to take up a baseball contract with the Philadelphia Phillies. Rixon completed his Higher School Certificate at Cardiff High School in 2017. He is the sixth and youngest baseballer from Newcastle to be invited to play for a major United States baseball team. Last year Rixon represented Australia in the Under-18 Baseball World Cup championships in Thunder Bay, Canada. He is one of seven members of that team to be invited to join a United States team. Rixon is the fourth generation of his family to play baseball for Newcastle. He is a credit to the area and I wish him all the best playing with the Phillies.

MINI-MOS COMMUNITY FUN RUN AND FAIR

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:40): Last weekend around 2,500 runners of all ages braved the cold conditions at the Mini-Mos Community Fun Run and Fair, which I was pleased to attend. This annual fundraiser collects money for Mosman Public School and its nominated charities, Raise Foundation and SeeBeyondBorders. This year marked the thirty-sixth year of this event. On the day more than 1,300 kids and parents ran two kilometres, more than 600 runners ran five kilometres and close to 500 runners ran 10 kilometres. More than \$25,000 was raised for the Raise Foundation and SeeBeyondBorders from direct donations and fundraising activities. I congratulate the winners and placegetters: in the 10 kilometre men's, Liam Adams, Jordan Gusman and Kevin Batt; in the 10 kilometre women's, Abigail Regan, Marnie Ponton and Charlotte Wilson; in the five kilometre men's, Ed Goddard, Jonny Gusman and James Poison; and the three girls in year 5 to year 7 who won the five kilometre women's, Fleur Cooper, Mia Fry and Sophie Kusano. I offer my special thanks to the Mosman Public School, the parents, the parents and citizens association and the whole community.

KNITTING WITH HEART INITIATIVE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:42): Contributions can be made in many ways: Some prefer to donate their money, some to donate their efforts and some to donate their time. A great example of talented women who make such contributions is the Canterbury Community Centre knitting group, Knitting with Heart. They are a collection of remarkable women who meet on a weekly basis to knit for those less fortunate. Their amazing works include beanies for the homeless, blankets for nursing homes, muffs with sensory and fidget stimuli for those with autism spectrum disorder and dolls for our Christmas toy drive. These small but great contributions are a source of pride for our community and a silver lining for those who may be experiencing some difficult circumstances.

I acknowledge the efforts of these women who come together every week not for themselves but to put a smile on the face of someone experiencing hardship. That is something worth commemorating. I commend Ms Alison Matthews, Social Inclusion and Wellness Coordinator at the Canterbury Community Centre, who organises and manages this great initiative. I have joined the group before but I have promised that I will learn to knit with them. I end with the famous quote by Winston Churchill: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

INVICTUS GAMES

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:43): Today I recognise four individuals who joined members of this Parliament to raise awareness of the Invictus Games, which will be held in Sydney this October. These four individuals made up a panel to discuss the importance of social connectedness, the healing power of sport and how members in this place can connect with local veterans in each of our communities. Mr Adrian Talbot is a former commando with the British Royal Marines. Adrian represented Australia in swimming and cycling at the first ever Invictus Games, winning two gold medals. He is currently the manager of the RSL LifeCare Homes for Heroes program. Garth Callender is a former major in the Australian Army and a veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan. Garth was critically injured in 2004 and went on to tell his story in his book *After the Blast: An Australian Officer in Iraq and Afghanistan*.

Benjamin Webb is an Afghanistan veteran who has dedicated his life to improving support services for veterans and their families, which he does passionately as the manager of the veterans centre at Dee Why. Gwen Cherne is a contemporary widow advisor from the War Widows' Guild of Australia. Gwen is an advocate for widows, current serving members, veterans and their families. I am sure members in this place will join me in thanking Adrian, Garth, Benjamin and Gwen and the Invictus Games organising committee for this morning's breakfast.

BURRAGORANG—THE LOST VALLEY EXHIBITION

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:44): Earlier this year at the fabulous Lost Bear Gallery in Katoomba I had the privilege of attending the exhibition opening and book launch for Robyn Collier's "Burraborang—The Lost Valley". The event celebrated four years of Robyn's commitment and dedication to her work and coincided with the sixtieth anniversary of the flooding of the Burraborang Valley in New South Wales. Robyn's work is, quite simply, breathtaking. She has been painting since the early 1970s and has become one of Australia's most prominent wilderness landscape artists.

Robyn is a master of her craft, producing unique work that is renowned for its portrayal of light and her connection to her surroundings. She is incredibly generous with her knowledge, imparting years of priceless experience in workshops throughout Australia and New Zealand. This willingness to share her wisdom speaks volumes of Robyn, not only as an artist but also as a human being—generous to a fault. In attendance on the

evening were former Greens leader Bob Brown and renowned historian and author Jim Smith, along with an adoring crowd, all gathered to share in celebrating the work of this incredible woman.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:45): I recognise The Junction Works and Share Care that have merged to increase disability support services for people of Western Sydney. The two facilities have the same core values of creating new possibilities and opportunities for those with a disability, and to improve the lives of those suffering from hardship and disadvantage. The support services that both organisations provide are remarkable. Combined, the two organisations have more than 20 different sites around the south-western Sydney area. The services that they provide to the community include disability support, therapy services, social support and practical support for young people.

The merger means that the individuals who use Share Care will now be able to access facilities from The Junction Works, including its allied health team. The organisations give people who have a disability or who are suffering from hardship the opportunity to learn real-life skills, which help individuals to be ready for the workforce. The merger is an extremely positive move for my electorate. I thank Share Care and The Junction Works for all the hard work and commitment that they put into running the organisations.

TRIBUTE TO VINKO BEZIC

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (16:46): I offer my sincere congratulations to Vinko Bezic on his recent acknowledgement by Bayside Council and Mayor Bill Saravinovski. Mr Bezic has been a longstanding advocate for multiculturalism in Sydney and is involved with a number of organisations that represent the Australian-Croatian community. Mr Bezic is also an outstanding photographer and the photographer of choice within the St George community for many decades. Mr Bezic is a fantastic example of the success of our multicultural community, and sometimes I wonder if he will ever stop giving back. Perhaps his largest sacrifice to our local area is giving up his son, my friend Dr Ron Bezic, to serve on Bayside Council. Dr Bezic does not quite have the same talent for photography as his father but I understand that his father passed down the love of the lens as Dr Bezic is a keen telescopist. I thank Vinko once again for all his work and congratulate him on his award.

SYLVANIA HEIGHTS COMMUNITY AND YOUTH CLUB

Ms ELANI PETINOS (Miranda) (16:47): I acknowledge Sylvania Heights Community and Youth Club that recently celebrated its sixtieth anniversary. In 1958 Sylvania Heights was a relatively new suburban area emerging from the bush, with new families moving in. Through the determination of a group of residents, Sylvania Heights Community and Youth Club was founded to improve amenities and generate a sense of community through sport. Since then, the club has brought our community together through a mutual love of sport. It has provided an outstanding service and the club's achievements have made our community a better place to live.

The success of the club would not be possible without a dedicated committee. I acknowledge the hard work of the 2018 executive: President John Allingham, who has dedicated more than 40 years of volunteer service to the club; secretary Jenny Buchanan, who has dedicated more than 35 years of service to the club; vice president Trent Jorden; treasurer Tony Robins; and registrar Sue Foster. I congratulate Sylvania Heights Community and Youth Club on its many successes over the past 60 years and I wish it even greater success for the next 60.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:48): For the past three years I have had the pleasure of hosting the Rotary International Model United Nations Assembly [MUNA]. This competition brings together students from high schools across Sydney and asks them to solve the biggest issues of our times. This year MUNA met in New South Wales Parliament on 19 May. Dozens of school students were in attendance. The speakers were fantastic and there was no better venue for the occasion than the Chamber of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, the oldest Parliament in Australia. I acknowledge Graham Wilson and Cheryl Deguara for their work in arranging and organising the assembly, and for all the students who debated on the day.

PREMIER'S ANZAC MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:48): The Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarship is an incredible initiative that enables students from all backgrounds the opportunity to experience a 13-day educational pilgrimage across the battlefields of Western Europe. Chloe Brown from St Joseph's Catholic High School in Albion Park is one of those who has been selected as recognition for her interest in Australian history. I am proud that Chloe has been rewarded for her hard work and unwavering interest in this discipline. All of the applicants should be commended for their strong leadership qualities and passion for Australian history.

This is a sensational opportunity for Chloe to represent our community and I once again congratulate her on being selected and wish her all the very best on her journey into the future. This is an extraordinary recognition of a young woman who is passionate about Australian history and her community and has been recognised amongst an enormous number of students who could have been selected. She was selected because of her skills, her talents and her abilities. She deserves every ounce of recognition and I am pleased to use the time of this House to acknowledge her selection today.

ACADEMY OF CHEERLEADING

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:49): The Academy of Cheerleading is a fun and exciting cheer and dance club that provides both competitive and non-competitive classes for four-year-olds and up. I am sure the member for Kiama would like to attend the cheerleading classes. He would be a good cheerleader. The classes are team based, where athletes learn how to work as a group and also practise problem solving and leadership skills. The friendly coaches assist athletes to improve their strength, flexibility, coordination and confidence, while at the same time forming great friendships. It is in a superb location very close to the Shellharbour City Centre—in the best electorate in New South Wales—has a great coaching team and awesome athletes and parents.

NSW SENIORS FESTIVAL LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT HEATHER WHITTAKER

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (16:50): Recently I had the pleasure of having morning tea with an amazing 92-year-old lady to present a NSW Seniors Festival Local Achievement Award. Heather Whittaker, who spent 53 years of her life at Murrumbidgee, has lived in Leeton for the past 21 years. She is an extraordinarily community-minded lady. Her community service includes a decade of membership and executive positions on the Leeton RSL Sub-Branch, the NSW RSL Women's Auxiliary, the Murrumbidgee Country Women's Association [CWA]—since 1950—Legacy, War Widows' Guild of Australia and the St Peter's Anglican Church.

Always helping others in the community, Heather regularly visits and assists less able members, assists with fundraising activities and eagerly contributes to craft projects. She has been recognised by three organisations with life membership for her outstanding contribution, including the NSW RSL Women's Auxiliary, the NSW RSL and the CWA. Heather is also the patron of the Leeton RSL Women's Auxiliary. She is Leeton's sole World War II veteran, marching in the Leeton Dawn Service and main march, and also attending the Whittaker service. Heather joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1944 for two years of service. Congratulations, Heather.

CONTRIBUTOR JADE WHEATLEY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:52): I commend the efforts of Jade "Red" Wheatley from my electorate of Charlestown. Jade has made a significant contribution to the progress of adaptive surfing in the local area, with ambitions to one day hold an adaptive surfing tournament in Newcastle. At 19 Jade lost both his legs below the knee in a construction accident. For the past three years he has competed in the World Adaptive Surfing Championship in California. He also once walked from Newcastle to Manly to help raise money for people to attend the same championship. Now 36, Jade is a strong advocate for others with a disability who still wish to surf, assisting with the annual Amputee Surf Day, which is rapidly becoming an attraction in Newcastle. I commend Jade for his efforts to give back to the community by allowing people to get a taste of our beautiful surfing beaches.

GRAFTON MEALS ON WHEELS

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:53): I congratulate Rhonda Raven, who after 24 years has decided to retire from the Grafton Meals on Wheels. Rhonda has done a bit of everything during those years, including working as a kitchen hand, looking after the paperwork, ordering supplies and acting as manager. Grafton Meals on Wheels supplies 2,378 meals a month to the local area, as well as supplying between 200 to 300 meals plus sweets to both the Ballina and Evans Head areas each week. On behalf of the House, I acknowledge and thank Rhonda and the many other wonderful volunteers who give their time so freely to assist others less fortunate. I hope you have a wonderful retirement, Rhonda, and enjoy those trips away with Jim.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS RECIPIENT MAURICE BREEN

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:53): I recognise the great Mauri Breen, who received an Order of Australia Medal in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List for his services to rugby league and industrial relations. Mr Breen was the driving force in the establishment of the Wyong Leagues Club in Kanwal, with a strong passion for sport, youth and the community. In 1963 the father of three came to Wyong as a coach from Coonabarabran and quickly realised the club needed amenities on the ground and more public support. He took

up the long fight for the club, quickly finding the perfect block on Lake Haven Drive and brazenly knocking on the owner's door. The newspaper reported that he said to the owner, "I've come to buy your land." The owner said, "Everyone wants to buy my land." He replied, "I'm a bit different. I haven't got any money and I don't want to develop it." After a 10-year battle, he was finally successful, along with others, and established that fantastic facility at Canmore. Mr Breen was also the union representative on many building sites, including local power stations, Wyong Hospital and Erina Fair. Congratulations Morry Breen, OAM.

ABBOTSLEIGH

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:54): Abbotsleigh has been one of the outstanding schools in the Ku-ring-gai electorate since it relocated from North Sydney to Wahroonga in 1898. It has a strong history of academic performance, attaining an average ATAR of 93 in the 2017 Higher School Certificate, and it has a wide range of co-curricular programs, achieving excellence in sport, music and the performing arts. In April this year six senior athletes from the school competed in the ISF World Schools Cross Country Championships in Paris, France. This was the first time Abbotsleigh had been the Australian representative at the championships, which are held every two years.

Under the expert coaching of James Fitzgerald, Hannah Cerezo, Rosie Fordham, Olivia Hogg, Annie Magnussen, Sarah McDermott and Abbey Rockliff performed above pre-race expectations and powered past 21 other participating countries to finish second behind Morocco. Further, all six girls placed in the top 50 out of the 150 athletes, with year 11 student Abbey winning the event. The result was the product of a great deal of hard work, and I congratulate the team on an outstanding result.

BLUE MOUNTAINS ART EVENTS

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:55): I am very fortunate to live in a creative and diverse community. The Blue Mountains is home to artists, performers and creative thinkers. The Blackheath Art Society winter exhibition is held each year on the June long weekend. It has many inspiring works that beautifully showcase the Blue Mountains. Sharon and Victor Peralta run Gallery One88 Fine Arts in Katoomba. This fledgling gallery has given Katoomba Street a new lease on life and has attracted audiences from far and wide. Recently, Debra Kennahan's "Little Big Woman" sculptural exhibit was inspiring, as is the woman herself.

The Queen's birthday weekend would not be the same without the Bent ART exhibition, which features works by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex visual artists. They combine colour and beauty with a touch of politics and irreverence. There is something for everyone at Bent ART. I congratulate the artists, the curators and the organisers of our wonderful Blue Mountains exhibitions.

CENTRAL COAST BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:56): On Sunday 10 June, the incredible Central Coast Craft Beer and Cider Festival was held at Kincumber Hotel in my electorate of Terrigal. Now in its seventh year, this event exhibits a range of drinks, street food stalls, exhibits and entertainment. There were about 2,000 visitors in attendance, including me and my wife, Jill. Local events like this provide brewers from across Australia with the opportunity to showcase a variety of craft beer and cider varieties. I acknowledge two of the local brewers who were involved: Six String Brewing Company and Block n Tackle Brewery. It is local businesses like these that make the Central Coast such a great place to live and work. I congratulate Chris and Ryan from Six String and Pep from Block n Tackle on their contribution to our local economy. Finally, I must acknowledge Serena Coleshill from Kincumber Pub for her work in organising this fantastic community event. We are all looking forward to next year's festival.

TEXAS MUSIC MAN BRAD HINES

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:57): I acknowledge a great individual, international music superstar and friend. Of course, I am speaking of Texas music man Brad Hines. Brad has toured around the world, including my electorate of Wollondilly, and has many hits and sings many songs that are real, personal and awesome. I have had the pleasure of meeting Brad and his wonderful family many times. For someone so famous, he is humble and caring and a man of integrity. My family and I love his music, including songs such as *Why*, *Forever in his debt* and *The way it all went down*. Recently, Gwen Stefani and Blake Shelton listened to him and loved his music. I take this opportunity to congratulate Brad on the release of his music, both new and old, on a new platform, and I wish him all the best for the future. My top three artists are Brad, Garth Brooks and Alan Jackson. He is a friend and someone I highly respect. See you soon mate!

PENNANT HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ANITA CORNEY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (16:58): Hornsby will be saying goodbye to a wonderful principal this term, Anita Corney. Anita has spent the past 37 years teaching

the next generation, and what an amazing job she has done. She will be retiring from Pennant Hills Public School at the end of this term and I know she will be missed. Anita has been described by parents as providing an inclusive environment and a wonderful learning place for kids. She has been a passionate believer in bringing technology into the classroom and ensuring that students are prepared for this new world we live in. As Minister for Innovation, I can attest to the great work she has done.

Over the past four years, Anita has worked incredibly hard to ensure Pennant Hills Public School is the best place it can be, and I am sure she has treasured all her time there. Anita has worked in both regional and rural New South Wales and has had a dedicated career in education. We thank her for her service to our children. In her retirement she can now enjoy her second passion much more—the AFL and the Sydney Swans. Thank you, Anita, for the enormous work you have done for our local community, and I wish you and Peter all the best in retirement.

BIG MUSIC NASHVILLE DEALER AWARD RECIPIENT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:00): I congratulate Mosman resident Richard Berkman and his brother David, who own the Big Music store in Crows Nest and are cementing its reputation as one of the best music stores in the world. The shop owners will travel to Nashville, Tennessee, next month after being nominated in three categories in the Top 100 Dealer Awards. It is the second year the store had been nominated in the awards, and this year it got the nod in the Best Sales and Marketing, Best Store Design and Music Makes a Difference categories.

The store runs an annual festival called Lord Howe Island Rockfest and has also brought music into the classrooms on the isolated island. This work has earned the store its nomination in the Music Makes a Difference category. Every child now plays an instrument and Big Music conducts online lessons and supplies instruments. Big Music sends three bands, made up of the teachers and students at the store's music school, to play at the festival, and the children from the island also get a chance to show off their musical talent on stage. I applaud Richard and David for their efforts in educating children in music and I wish them all the best at the Dealer Awards in Nashville.

LIVERPOOL HOSPITAL STROKE TREATMENT

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (17:01): Today I recognise Liverpool Hospital for its excellence in stroke treatment. A national audit conducted by the Stroke Foundation recently found that Liverpool Hospital, along with five other hospitals, provides the best acute stroke care in Australia. I am extremely proud of Liverpool Hospital as it continues to advance, develop and grow, and we look forward to its further growth. In the past year I have had the privilege of going to the openings of the new cancer research facility and the cyclotron facility at Liverpool Hospital. The ongoing development of the Liverpool Hospital and its facilities continues to add to the integrated healthcare system in south-west Sydney. Once again, I congratulate Liverpool Hospital on its excellence in acute stroke treatment. I am very proud to have such amazing staff and facilities in my electorate.

NURSING VOLUNTEER JOANNE DIMIT

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (17:02): Today I acknowledge Joanne Dimit of Caringbah for almost two decades of volunteer service at Sutherland Hospital. Joanne felt inspired to begin volunteering in a local nursing home in 1998 after her husband passed away from dementia. A year later she found herself in Sutherland Hospital and since then has dedicated her time to staffing the information desk and helping people find their way around. Joanne is one of 370 volunteers at Sutherland Hospital and says that she loves the company and meeting new faces. Her passion to give back to our community has allowed her to help hundreds who are unsure of where to go, and she always takes the time to mention that pensioners can get three hours of free parking. At 94 years young, Joanne is an inspiration to everyone, and she shows that no matter how old you are you can still get involved in volunteering and giving back to the community. I commend Joanne for the countless hours of support she has provided to staff, patients and their families, and I thank her for her years of dedicated service.

RESOURCEFUL AUSTRALIAN INDIAN NETWORK

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:02): Today I acknowledge in the House a wonderful organisation in my electorate, the Resourceful Australian Indian Network [RAIN], located in Penshurst. I thank the entire team of the organisation led by Sudha, and the entire management committee. RAIN was established less than 10 years ago and it does an outstanding job in my local electorate. It also operates at the Hurstville Senior Citizens Centre. I recently went to the organisation's book launch and concert. The book was about cooking and medicinal techniques for the Indian community. The network has a large community group and many people from all over the local area attended. I once again thank Sudha and the entire management committee of RAIN.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (17:04): I congratulate Robert Jordan of Yowie Bay, who was made a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for "significant service to business and commerce, particularly through the commercial property industry, and to charitable causes". Mr Jordan has served as the managing director of Westfield and was the founding chairman of Westfield Charities Fund for Disabled Children. He also serves as deputy chairman of Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre. I congratulate Ms Kim Buhagiar, who received a Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] for "service to the community". She has worked for 30 years with community centres in southern Sydney. She has been recognised with the Kim Buhagiar Community Hall in Penshurst named in her honour in recognition of her contribution to the local community.

I congratulate Mr Peter Kazacos, who received an OAM for "service to the community through charitable organisations". He is the co-founder and managing director of Your Angel, a not-for-profit charity organisation providing direct support to individuals in need and those living with physical and intellectual disabilities. He is also a director of the Koori Kulcha Aboriginal Corporation, an enterprise that is focused on providing education and employment for Indigenous people via training them in catering, cultural awareness and the arts. I congratulate Ms Rhonda Talbot, who received an OAM in the Queen's Birthday Honours for "service to the community through social welfare organisations". She has been a member of the Sutherland Shire Area Tenants Council since 2001 and has served as chair since 2008. She volunteers at the Riverwood Community Centre and has received Cook community awards in 2006 and 2017 for her work as part of the Sutherland Shire Area Tenants Council.

DAVIDSON ELECTORATE BUS SERVICES

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:05): I recognise that of the more than 2,000 extra weekly bus services to be rolled out across New South Wales in the next 12 months, more than 1,000 services will be dedicated to the northern beaches. The increased services will be part of the \$1.5 billion investment for bus services throughout New South Wales, with the Government clearly focused on delivering improved public transport services in key areas. The extra bus services will improve access to the Northern Beaches Hospital and meet the growing demand in the Frenchs Forest area. This follows more than 3,200 extra weekly services introduced last November, including more than 2,000 weekly B-Line services. Two new routes will service the hospital: the 141 from Manly to Austlink via Balgowlah and the 193 from Austlink to Warringah Mall via Frenchs Forest. This recognises the significant efforts of people in my electorate to lobby for these services, including Keith Moss in particular. Route 169 will be extended to access the new hospital and other services will be enhanced. It is great news for the local community. I thank the Minister.

VARUNA AND SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:06): I congratulate the Varuna team on the Varuna and Sydney Writers' Festival that was held earlier this year and for enabling and growing the festival from its humble beginnings 17 years ago. In particular, I congratulate Veechi Stuart, Amy Sambrooke, Rebecca Goosen, Vera Costello and Kathy Dobson on the festival team. It was fantastic to acknowledge the Dark family who bequeathed Varuna to the writers of Australia 30 years ago. Sadly, Mick Dark died in 2015 but it was wonderful to have Jill along. The board members of Varuna, particularly David White, Susan Hayes and Jennifer Scott, were in attendance when I was there listening to the incredible Tara Westover. There were international and Australian artists, poets and performers and it was the most fantastic festival. I congratulate those involved.

LEETON COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (17:07): I recognise the extraordinary dedication of three people from Leeton who were recently honoured at the NSW Seniors Local Achievement Awards for their extraordinary commitment to the community through volunteering. Geoffrey Bull, Lindsay Clemson and Jim Kidman were honoured for their dedication to the Leeton Community Op Shop. These gentlemen have devoted countless hours of their time to the Leeton Community Op Shop, which has just celebrated its second birthday. Geoffrey Bull, or "Bulli", has many different roles in the op shop but has most recently discovered he has a creative talent for the shop window display. Lindsay Clemson runs the front counter and has said coming in to volunteer makes his life so much richer. James "Jimmy" Kidman runs the ragging program in the basement of the shop, where he mentors men who work at the shop under various programs, including probation and parole, and teaches them new roles while providing a listening and supportive ear. He is also involved in Leeton Men's Shed. I congratulate Geoffrey, Lindsay and Jimmy and thank them for their commitment to our community and for making a difference to the lives of so many people.

*Private Members' Statements***COFFS HARBOUR SLIPWAY**

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (17:08): Tonight I speak yet again on behalf of the Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-operative and the people of Coffs Harbour. A few years ago the Coffs Harbour local council was given more than \$1 million to fix up the boat ramp. The boat ramp has become such a mess that at Easter people were injured and boats were wrecked. The whole box and dice needs to be re-looked at. At the same time, we have had community consultation on what we want at the jetty. Unfortunately, it has been hijacked to some extent by The Greens, who speak loudly but without substance. Beginning tomorrow, we will make announcements about a precinct plan for the harbour.

I call on the Government to allocate funds to rebuild the slipway, and I do not mean the current hardstand where the local fishing fleet has to pay up to \$4,000 to have their boats lifted in and out of the harbour by crane. A lot of those boats are timber-hulled and fragile. I can imagine them being dropped or even collapsing whilst being lifted in slings. I would like to see the slipway moved from the northern side of the harbour to the hardstand area on the southern side that was constructed by W.E. Smith Engineering to shift pressure vessels out of the harbour on barges. I think it would fit beautifully with the precinct plan. I believe with very little work the hardstand that is already there could be modified into a true slip. By "true slip" I do not mean something that relies on slings or a runway whereby we pick boats up and lower them into the harbour. We need to be able to pick up boats of up to 80 or 90 tonnes and put them in the harbour. The only way that will work is by building rails and a slip.

I request that Minister Toole and the lands department immediately assess the site, get on with the job and also put in a rock groyne to protect the recreational boat ramp. Sand pours into that boat ramp and makes it dangerous. It is, has been and always will be dangerous until we build a better groyne. By doing this, we could kill two birds with one stone: We could provide the commercial fishing fleet in Coffs Harbour—the only safe harbour on the North Coast—with a safe and cheap facility that would fit fishers' budgets. At the same time, we could resolve safety issues at the boat launching ramp for recreational craft.

In the past a travel lift has been proposed. Everyone thinks Birdon Engineering of Port Macquarie was contracted to build it, but it was not. Birdon Engineering was announced at some stage as a preferred tenderer, but my understanding is that it is now out of the process. We have a perfect opportunity to provide a safe, secure and affordable slipway for the commercial fishing fleet in Coffs Harbour and other parts of the North Coast while at the same time delivering a safe and secure boat ramp that will allow the recreational fleet to launch boats during holiday times. Many people from out of town have approached me and said that they will not return to the area because of the dangerous recreational ramp. I ask Minister Toole and his department to get on with the job. We have cash in the bank these days. Let us start now while making sure that in the short term we can give recreational fishers safe access to the ocean and the harbour and provide a safe and affordable facility for the commercial fleet.

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:13): I acknowledge members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association who are in the gallery this afternoon. They have been waiting for quite some time, and I thank them for visiting us. I acknowledge Ashfaq Ahmad President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community Penrith chapter. The chapter is growing and I congratulate him on that. I also acknowledge Director of Interfaith Harmony Dr Omer Khan, President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Australia Waqas Ahmed, and other members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Australia does a lot of work, in particular with young men. Since becoming the member for Londonderry, it has been my great privilege to come to know this community, many of whom are based in Western Sydney.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association was formally established in this country in 1979, but its history in Australia spans the more than 115 years since the arrival of Afghan cameleers. The community's headquarters are located in my electorate at Marsden Park at Australia's largest mosque, Masjid Baitul Huda. Last week I visited the mosque for Eid celebrations. It was a fantastic day. I place on the record how proud I am to represent this generous, peaceful and productive community. It is a community that preaches the inspiring message of love for all, hatred for none. Since coming to know this community, I have been made aware of many issues relating to the persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslims around the world. It has been distressing to learn of the discrimination and violence inflicted on the community, and I speak in Parliament tonight to acknowledge this terrible situation and give a the community a voice.

The Ahmadiyya are an international revival movement within Islam. They categorically reject discrimination, persecution and violence of any kind. Because of this—unbelievably—the community is heavily persecuted in countries such as Pakistan and Indonesia. Their peaceful beliefs and their fierce opposition to

violence are sadly misunderstood. That is tragic. I was shocked to learn that since 1974 they have been denied voting rights in Pakistan, which was recently reinforced in the general assembly elections. The Ahmadiyya are often socially boycotted and expelled from jobs and educational institutions, which is something that we would not accept.

Ahmadi places of worship, buildings and other sacred sites have been consistently attacked over the past year. A couple of weeks ago a 100-year-old Ahmadi mosque was destroyed in Pakistan under the supervision of government authorities. In recent times the news of the suffering of Ahmadis in Pakistan has been acknowledged around the world, and I acknowledge it in this place tonight. International leaders such as the Prime Minister of Canada, former and current United States Secretaries of State and the Prime Minister of Australia have acknowledged the contribution that this community has made to Australia.

Despite facing bitter persecution in numerous countries, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community continues to advocate for universal human rights for all religious and other persecuted minorities. Likewise, it invests heavily in women's equality, education and empowerment programs. I am sure that members now understand why I am so proud to represent this community. The community holds various open interfaith peace symposiums and public dialogues, including to remove misunderstandings among people and to achieve inter-religious harmony. It has been a privilege to attend many of those events.

In Australia the community contributes in many ways, including by participating in Clean Up Australia Day for 15 years, marching on Anzac Day, participating in the Red Cross Door Knock Appeal, fundraising for the Cancer Council and the list goes on. I thank the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association for its continued good work in the community and for promoting peace. Since being elected, it has been my great privilege to learn more about the Ahmadi and to attend many events. I look forward to working together to promote greater understanding and tolerance. I thank all members of the community in the gallery for attending Parliament this evening.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:18): I acknowledge the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association and congratulate the member for Londonderry on raising awareness of this wonderful organisation. I have visited the mosque on many occasions and welcome the members present in the gallery. As the member for Londonderry stated, the association headquarters are located in Marsden Park. Since its formation in 1889, the association has led by example to promote peace, harmony and love. The appalling mistreatment and discrimination that occurs around the world deserves attention and action. I acknowledge the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association for the contribution it makes in Australia and Sydney through fundraising and donating blood to the Red Cross, participating in Clean Up Australia Day and performing other community actions. I acknowledge the contribution the community makes to Western Sydney and elsewhere.

WINSTON HILLS DEVELOPMENT

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:19): The suburb of Winston Hills is a magnificent example of a flourishing local community in the Western Sydney electorate of Seven Hills. Winston Hills sits within the City of Parramatta local government area and houses almost 12,000 constituents, predominantly working mums and dads and kids who study locally and love to be active on weekends. Winston Hills is named after former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Sir Winston Churchill, and its development began in the 1960s. Like other suburbs in my electorate, Winston Hills has themed street names, including streets named after literary writers, such as Bronte, Shelley and Twain; characters from Greek mythology, including Troy Place; and scientists such as Einstein and Edison. From Oakes Road, which stretches through Old Toongabbie and Winston Hills, one can see beyond the Parramatta skyline to the towers of the Sydney central business district.

The area has three primary schools and—just outside—Model Farms High School. There are many sporting opportunities in the area, including at the Winston Hills Soccer Club and Winston Hills Little Athletics Centre. Many residents who first purchased homes in Winston Hills still live there today. That is a testament to the character of the area and its people. There is a special character area status over most of the suburb, ensuring the retention of the original farmhouses that were built when the land was known as Model Farm Estate and was zoned as one of the last green belt releases in Sydney. The special character area status includes a subdivision plan that is characterised by curvilinear street designs, gully parklands and wider and less deep allotments than traditional subdivision patterns. House construction is "wide fronted" with low, horizontal lines.

This appearance is created by a number of factors, including the siting of houses across the allotments, garages integrated with the houses, simple low-pitched roofs with ridges parallel to the street, overhanging eaves or verandahs and window and door detailing. Most homes are of brick construction with tiled roofs. There is a mixture of single, split level and two-storey homes. Wall finishes include face brick, painted brick and cement rendering. There are additions on some houses, in both brick and lightweight construction. The residents of Winston Hills would like to see their neighbourhood continue to resemble this, and I support the call from the Winston Hills residents against development group for this to be included in the City of Parramatta's local

environmental plan [LEP]. Members of the group include Joseph and Patricia Camilleri, Matthew Carroll, Peter Gempton, Robert Mashford, Elizabeth Mulheron and Georgina Vajlak. I thank them all for their efforts.

I also note that last week the City of Parramatta moved a motion to commence a concerted lobbying campaign, seeking the support of the local members of State Parliament, to convince the Minister for Planning to allow LEPs to include special character area controls and for these areas to be exempt from State environmental planning policies that allow development that does not comply with the provisions of the special character areas code. The motion noted that the council's existing planning rules have defined certain areas of the City of Parramatta local government areas as special character areas. The planning rules, which are contained in the development control plans, are written to protect the existing character of the respective residential area while allowing homeowners to undertake a reasonable level of development to improve their homes.

I recognise one of the Winston Hills schools in my electorate. St Paul the Apostle Primary School was established in 1973 by the Sisters of the Holy Faith and has expanded over time to house more classrooms and facilities for its 400 students and 23 diligent teachers. The school is a beacon of the local Catholic community and is led by Principal Mrs Marian Bell. The Parents and Friends Association executive committee includes president Rennee McClintock, vice-president Kylie Prideaux, treasurer Kirsten Carter, secretary Vanessa Cassin, social and event coordinator Mirna Jasser, and general members Nikki Cummins, Leena Dib, Patrizia Mangione, Linda Spina and Penny Wallace. They all do a great job representing the interests of the school. I was pleased to recently award them a school gardening grant. I wish them success in the future.

COWRA DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:23): After first raising the issue in my inaugural speech seven months ago, I reaffirm the need for a new hospital in Cowra. Cowra District Hospital, which was built in 1958, is a 34-bed facility that provides both acute and community-based services. It is a huge building, but its condition is deteriorating and it is increasingly unfit for modern medicine, with the emergency department a particular area of concern. Increased medical technology has allowed Cowra District Hospital to treat the highest level of triaged cases, whereas previously those patients would have been transferred to Sydney via helicopter. In one way, this is fantastic news. I am pleased to report that in the first quarter of 2018 there were improvements in the time taken for patients to leave the emergency department and the time taken to transfer patients from ambulance to hospital care.

However, for anyone who has seen it, it is almost unbelievable that the staff continue to improve and perform in such challenging conditions. The emergency department has moved several times since the hospital was built and its current location is cramped and simply not big enough for medical staff to perform at their best. There is no safe space to which staff can retreat when circumstances dictate. Worryingly, disability access is entirely inadequate. The front entrance is on a steep incline and presents an extreme hazard to wheelchair users, such that reception staff are often recruited to help patients enter. The staff at the emergency department work in a high-pressure environment, with people's lives in their hands. Although the local health district has invested considerably to ensure staff and patient safety, the space is simply not good enough.

Recently, I invited Parliamentary Secretary for Southern New South Wales Bronnie Taylor, Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health Leslie Williams and Cowra Mayor Bill West on a tour of the facility. We were shown around the hospital by Scott McLachlan, Chief Executive of Western NSW Local Health District, and health services manager Pauline Rowston. I thank them again for their time. I was immediately struck by the spirit of teamwork that was tangible when we saw the staff at work, and I am proud of the investment our Government has made in them.

In February this year I announced that two new nursing and midwifery positions for the hospital had been filled. The New South Wales Government has committed a record \$15.3 billion in acute health services in the State this year. An additional \$3 million will deliver more elective surgeries, with the Western NSW Local Health District successful in receiving \$976,000 through the Increasing Access to Elective Surgery Initiative. In the first quarter of 2018, the hospital performed 22 more elective surgeries overall compared with last year, with 100 per cent of its surgeries performed on time. I applaud health Minister Brad Hazzard and his department for their commitment to ensuring that our hospitals are adequately staffed and surgery is accessible not only in Cootamundra but also around the State.

But it is really crunch time in Cowra. While the emergency department is arguably the most pressing issue, during our visit I also stressed to my colleagues the broader need for a brand-new hospital. Cowra's current hospital was officially opened in 1958, replacing the original hospital that is still located on the same site. It is now 60 years old and was built to accommodate a different model of care delivery. In 2018, the building fails to deliver as effectively as the staff who work there.

The staff are working in a huge space, where long walks along corridors impact the effective delivery of care. It is impossible to provide services in a consolidated and efficient manner. The doors are not wide enough for the safe transfer of moveable beds and the parquet floors are a hazard as they are difficult to clean effectively and may be infection risks. They are also, in some cases, in a state of disrepair. More broadly, the delivery of medical care has altered enormously since the hospital was built. Technology has improved; however, the population is ageing and living longer. The nature of disease and treatment has changed. For example, chemotherapy and dialysis can now be performed at Cowra instead of at metropolitan facilities.

Now is Cowra's time. I stand shoulder to shoulder with Mayor Bill West and the community of Cowra on the absolute need for a commitment to be made. I am proud of the records of the health districts in my electorate and the work of their dedicated staff. I believe this Government is committed to closing the gap between metro and country. In the meantime, I will continue to fight for a new hospital for Cowra.

STATE BUDGET

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (17:28): This evening I will talk about a number of initiatives in the Bega electorate. In doing so, I thank the Treasurer for his work on the budget that, in essence, resulted in the Bega electorate being funded to a level never seen before. This year \$250 million worth of infrastructure is being allocated to this country electorate. My community remembers the 16 long years of Labor it had to endure when Labor did not feel the need to fund anything of importance to the community. I will touch on some of those issues.

For years Labor has run down the TAFE system in Bega. Labor tried to tell the community that TAFE is closing; it tried to attack TAFE in an unacceptable way and basically misled the community about the Government's commitment to TAFE. I am pleased to confirm that in this year's budget \$8.5 million has been committed to a new community learning centre in Bega. This will enable the delivery of an education precinct that will incorporate the University of Wollongong access centre, Bega High School and the new TAFE precinct. More than likely we will see a sod turning next month and the erection of a building over the next six months, which will facilitate courses being offered, in particular to young people seeking vocational education. That is a wonderful outcome.

People will be blown away when they see the new Bega TAFE. I think it will change lives; it will certainly reduce the number of people having to leave the area to undertake courses at other TAFE campuses. The \$8.5 million investment means that this is a new and innovative approach to the delivery of TAFE courses. It is certainly a slap down to the Labor Party, which thought it was its right to attack Bega TAFE and the TAFE system on the far South Coast over recent years. Also incorporated in this \$258 million budget are major investments for a new fire station at Eden and, importantly, the new bridge at Batemans Bay. Recently the Premier visited and confirmed \$26 million for a new indoor aquatic centre for Batemans Bay. This facility will incorporate a number of water bodies, including a learn-to-swim pool, a warm water pool for seniors and people with disabilities, a lap pool, a kiddies pool and a water park for tourists.

As part of the new investment, \$8 million will go to the performing arts, and I pay tribute to Jeannie Brewer from PerFex and Carolyn and Jackie Hardie for their work on the indoor aquatic centre. Recently the Deputy Premier and I were pleased to announce funding for the Twyford Hall Theatre, a 200-seat theatre in the heart of Merimbula that will be a regional facility to enable our performing arts to expand and give those with the skills an opportunity to develop their craft through this wonderful new theatre. The budget enables us to come back to the community on a number of other initiatives that are of importance, including Bundian Way and Pambula Hospital, where further assessments are currently underway to establish the needs of those who will benefit from those two important developments.

For the benefit of members, Bundian Way is incredible because of what it will mean for our local Aboriginal people. A special walking track from the ocean to Mount Kosciuszko will be built for the local Aboriginal community. This year's budget has not happened by accident; it has come about through the Government's hard work and financial management. In particular, the poles and wires transaction has given us the head room to invest back into the regions—in particular, Bega TAFE, the new ambulance station at Eden, the airport upgrade, the port upgrade at Eden and the new swimming pool and bridge at Batemans Bay. It is all very exciting.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:33): I congratulate the outstanding member for Bega on the record spending in his electorate. From the beach to the bush, from Sydney to regional and rural New South Wales, we are seeing record funding across the State, particularly in rural and regional New South Wales—building for tomorrow but delivering for today. We have record spending across a number of projects, such as \$8.5 billion to upgrade Bega TAFE and \$250 million for a fire station, bridge upgrades, the indoor aquatic centre and performing

arts. These are projects that Labor neglected for 16 years. The member for Bega is an outstanding member of Parliament. I am biased because I am his Parliamentary Secretary.

Mr Jihad Dib: And a good one.

Mr MARK COURE: And a good one. I thank the member for Bega for his outstanding efforts on this budget and over the past seven years in government.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): Order! I remind the member for Rockdale that he is on three calls to order.

LAKEMBA ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (17:35): Yesterday and the day before I had in front of me many budget line items and figures. The overriding question was: How will this budget help the people in my electorate? It is a dynamic and interesting but low socio-economic electorate. How will this budget help them get ahead and to feel more secure and confident about their future? If they are parents, how will they feel about the future of their children? Sadly, after four State budgets, my predictable answer was that there is not much there. It was the same answer last year and the years before that. People are doing it tough; wages have been flat for a long time. Even the Treasurer has been forced to downgrade his forecast for wage growth to an anaemic 2 per cent. Taking inflation into account, it is fair to say that people's wages are stagnant or going backwards.

My electorate has many hardworking public servants and frontline workers and they are concerned about the caps on public service pay and threatened cuts. People on low fixed incomes such as Newstart, on disability or aged pensions or in insecure or low-paid casual work—which is becoming more prevalent—are finding that keeping a roof over their head and a meal on the table is challenging. Many people come to my office clutching energy bills showing inexplicably high and confusing jumps in charges. They hope that there has been an error, but more often than not the bill is correct. It is outrageous. In a few weeks I am hosting a Bring Your Bills Day, together with my colleagues Sophie Cotsis, the member for Canterbury, and Steve Kamper, the member for Rockdale. We are optimists. I am hoping that people will be able to better understand their utility bills and will change energy providers to obtain a better deal. I anticipate that in many cases there will be no plan B. The fact is that privatisation of the poles and wires has resulted in higher electricity prices for families and small businesses. Premier Baird pledged during the 2015 election that prices would not go up but prices have gone up 20 per cent this financial year. That is a huge rise.

Mr Stephen Bromhead: They have skyrocketed.

Mr JIHAD DIB: And it is hurting. I am sure people in the Myall Lakes community are hurting as well. When assessing a budget, it is wise to look for what is missing. This year quite a few things that are not in the budget concerned me, such as a meaningful investment in supporting our homeless youth.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): Order! I remind the member for Lakemba that private member's statements are for matters related to members' electorates. He should not be canvassing issues before the House.

Mr JIHAD DIB: Some time ago I attended a homeless youth event in my electorate. I was hoping that this budget would allocate some money for them. The NSW Ombudsman said that we must provide quality care to the homeless. More than one-third of homeless people are children. Children as young as 12 are fronting up to charities, the police, schools or hospitals declaring that they have nowhere to live. Many of them are in my electorate. As a parent, that shocks me. It shocks me also that in a budget that has been tagged the "people's budget" homeless children and youth have been forgotten.

It has been clear for a very long time that this Government does not believe in TAFE. Usually, TAFE enrolment figures are released in the budget papers, but not this year. The Government clearly wants to hide those figures because, as we know, TAFE has had devastating cuts. Based on the budget figures and on leaked internal TAFE documents, we know that 175,000 fewer students are enrolled in TAFE and 5,700 teachers and support staff have been sacked. In my electorate, the Chullora campus has been wound down. I know firsthand that those cuts have hurt Bankstown TAFE, which is another key location for students in my electorate. I know also that unscrupulous private providers have ripped off many local students. Some of those students are mature-aged students who want to make a go of their lives but they have been unable to do so because they have been ripped off. They want their TAFE back.

The budget papers talk about additional police. I acknowledge that more police officers will be employed in New South Wales but I had hoped that this budget would have provided for more than the 100 additional officers over the coming financial year across the whole of New South Wales. I hoped that in my electorate the wonderful Campsie and Bankstown local area commands, which I have spoken of in glowing terms many times

in this place, would have been recipients of additional funding for police officers. Yesterday I asked the Government to give us the details of its claimed genuine commitment to schools. Punchbowl and Banksia Road public schools have been identified to receive upgrades but we have been given no details of these upgrades. Parents have asked me what is going on, and I have had to tell them that I do not know. This Government does not like to tell us. That is perhaps why we need a judicial inquiry. There is no new money in the budget to address the crippling school maintenance backlog across the State. This Government is ploughing on but it is not listening to experts or communities. It is more concerned about maintaining power and selling public assets. People across this State do not want billions of dollars spent on stadium rebuilds; they want this money spent on communities. *[Time expired.]*

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:40): I am willing to educate the member for Lakemba about the State budget. In this State budget there is funding for the launch of more trains and more train services that will directly benefit the T8 train line, which, when fully implemented, will run up to eight services in peak times in the early mornings and late afternoons. The budget also has funding for upgrades to Canterbury Hospital, in the member for Lakemba's electorate. The budget funds the launch of the Creative Kids Rebate, which will help families with a \$100 grant per schoolchild to help to meet the cost of creative extracurricular activities such as language classes, performing arts and music lessons. The New South Wales baby bundle is a package designed to support new parents. The State budget details funding for upgrading schools—

Mr Jihad Dib: Quick, put it in an email.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): Order! The member for Lakemba will refrain from interjecting.

Mr MARK COURE: —and commuter car parks that residents will benefit from. *[Time expired.]*

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I warn the member for Lakemba that interjecting is disorderly. The member was heard without interruption and will extend the same courtesy to other members.

WOMEN IN LAW CELEBRATION

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (17:41): I recently attended a celebration of 100 years of Women in Law in New South Wales at one of my local law firms, Coutts Solicitors and Conveyancers. Principal Solicitor Adriana Care began her practice approximately 10 years ago, and establishing an all-female practice was certainly unique. At the time there were well-established law firms in the Macarthur area, but Adriana knew she was doing the right thing even though she encountered a lot of criticism. It was wonderful to host Adriana in Parliament House yesterday with another prominent local lawyer, Brett McGrath. They were here to see the Attorney General and to advocate for our area. Adriana told me that she has more than 35 female employees and, finally, one male employee.

After working for major law firms in Sydney, Adriana felt there was a missing link in the law fraternity in the Macarthur region. Adriana knew from her experience that women, at times, need to speak to other women about legal matters knowing there is a natural understanding of their issues. In the beginning the firm, with one employee, only focused on conveyancing. Ten years later the firm is well established, recognised and respected. I am sure Adriana did not realise at the time that she was following in the footsteps of Miss Jolie Smith, who opened her first law practice in Sydney in 1927.

In 1902 the first woman graduated with a law degree, and 1918 saw the New South Wales Parliament pass the Women's Legal Status Act (NSW) 1918, giving women the right to practise law. The first woman lawyer was admitted to the New South Wales Bar in 1921. Over the past 100 years, women have made great inroads into the legal profession, including the first female Attorney General in New South Wales, my colleague and great friend Gabrielle Upton, MP, who was appointed in 2015. It was not until 2017 that the first female chief justice was appointed to the High Court. Let us just say it has taken a while, but the ladies have finally reached their well-deserved goal.

The Coutts Solicitors and Conveyancers firm has been very successful, winning numerous awards. The firm was the winner of the 2015 NSW Business Chamber Award for Excellence in Small Business and the winner of local business awards in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2017. The firm also gives back to the community, supporting many local charities. Recently, Coutts became the major sponsor of one of the women's cricket teams at the Campbelltown Camden Cricket Club, the Ghosts. We are very proud of that.

Like all businesses, the firm's success is due not only to the hard work of management but also to the dedication of the staff. I am sure Adriana would appreciate my acknowledging her partner, Alexandra Johnstone, and staff, Belinda McLean, Carina Novek, Marlie Caban, Luisa Gaetani, Allyce Silm, Kaisha Gambell, Rebecca Watts, Carrie Alton, Melina Costantino, Kylie Fuentes, Natali Vujica, Gennie Mack, Ashlei Paget, Christine

Johnsen, Danielle Scriven, Emma Harrison, Kelly Irving, Riley Earle, Elyse Strahan, Orla O'Keeffe, Rose Moore, Brooke Courtney, Tiana Zuvela, Isabelle Maarseveen, Natalie McKittrick and the one and only gentleman in the firm, Daniel St George. He would have to be a saint, wouldn't he! The firm also has a consultant, Rob Mallik—I think he keeps Daniel company.

From the original office at Narellan, the firm has expanded to Picton, Campbelltown, Cessnock, and Sydney. It is a great achievement for a local woman in my community—a local lawyer who is a tremendous advocate. As I said, only yesterday Adriana was in Parliament House advocating to the Attorney General about a Macarthur law precinct. Well done to each and every person at Coutts Solicitors and Conveyancers.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS RECIPIENT MICHAEL PRICE

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:46): I acknowledge the well-deserved award of the Medal of the Order of Australia to Mr Michael Price in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Michael is the long-serving Chief Executive Officer [CEO] of the Intellectual Disability Foundation of St George, a fantastic organisation that does outstanding work for adults with intellectual disabilities across the St George area. In his 25 years as CEO, Michael has helped steer the foundation through waves of growth and change, overseeing its expansion to the point where it now provides employment opportunities to more than 160 people with intellectual disabilities across two operations, with a third operation recently acquired for future development.

The foundation's first social enterprise business, Ascalon Enterprises, runs a non-perishable food packaging business where employees can gain the skills and experience required to work in a modern food production facility. From maintaining hygiene systems to forklift driving, the Ascalon operation gives real-world industrial skills to those who would have great difficulty acquiring them in any other way. The foundation's second business is the Bayside Garden Centre, a joint venture established with the then Rockdale City Council and now Bayside Council in 1994. It functions as a commercial nursery, supplying council as well as wholesale and retail customers. In this way, it teaches horticultural skills and gives customer interaction experience to those who need a quieter, outdoor workplace.

Recently the foundation purchased a third social enterprise business called Cush'n Soft, a major manufacturer of padded toilet seats for the aged, disability and post-operative care markets. Given how well the Intellectual Disability Foundation of St George and Michael have developed and expanded their first two social enterprise businesses, I look forward with great anticipation to seeing what they do with this exciting new opportunity. In addition to his lifelong work with the Intellectual Disability Foundation, Michael was at the forefront of establishing the Bexley Community Bank branch of Bendigo Bank. This returned a much-needed community service to the people of Bexley after the local Commonwealth Bank branch was shut down in the wave of branch closures that hit our communities in the early 2000s. If this history of service to our community was not enough, Michael also served in the Australian Army for 26 years prior to his military retirement in 1993 at the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

I meet with Michael every couple of months, as he is a fountain of information on disability issues. He has a deep, hands-on understanding of the disability space that few others can match and he is forever highlighting areas where things could be done better. A great passion of Michael's is the challenge of finding effective long-term housing solutions for older people with intellectual disabilities. Modern medicine has extended the lifespan of intellectually disabled people significantly, which is a wonderful thing, but it means they are now starting to outlive their parents in a way that historically they did not. It is typical of Michael that he has the foresight to grasp this issue early and begin the work towards long-term solutions.

More immediately, Michael is an expert at helping intellectually disabled adults and their carers navigate the many teething issues of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It is astonishing how often he will foresee a likely problem and be able to offer sound advice as to a workable solution. In 2013 Michael was deservedly named the then Rockdale Council's Citizen of the Year—public recognition of his outstanding efforts to that point. Five years on, I am delighted to see his further recognition with this award of the Medal of the Order of Australia. Michael has set an example through his decades of community service that I can only hope will inspire others to give their time and effort in a similar manner, and I have no doubt that he will continue to lead by example for many years to come. This honour is thoroughly deserved and I am proud to congratulate Michael Price, OAM.

MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:51): I refer to highlights in the budget in the Myall Lakes electorate, the most important of which is a further allocation of \$20 million to enhance the stage one redevelopment of Manning Base Hospital. Stage one includes a multistorey car park, which is already open. Later this year the underground car park will be opened and on the first floor there will be new oncology and renal dialysis facilities. That has come about with the first \$20 million. The second \$20 million tranche for stage one is

the next floor where medical imaging and other services will be conducted. After the medical imaging has relocated, that part of the hospital will be rejigged for pathology, pharmacy and medical records. But that is not the end of the redevelopment.

I am still fighting and advocating for funding for the stage two redevelopment of Manning Base Hospital. I am always talking with the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the health Minister and I have taken them to the hospital so that they can see for themselves what I am talking about. I am pleased that the second part of stage one has been included in this budget. Bricks and mortar are not everything; it is also about the services provided and the hospital staff who provide them. Medical staff on the frontline in war zones provide fantastic medical service and specialist care out of tents.

Since it has come to office the Government has increased the number of staff and specialists at the Manning Base Hospital, with 60 extra staff. We have increased the turnover of the hospital by 28 per cent. Just recently Dr Rob Hislop was appointed, joining Dr Brij Verma and Dr Viji Venkoba Rao in the intensive care unit at Taree Hospital. The Wingham Rehabilitation Hospital has a new rehabilitation specialist, Dr Ganashan. Many regional areas lack a psychiatrist but Dr Charles Estimbeiro will commence work at Manning Base Hospital. I am pleased to see a new director of the emergency department at the hospital, Dr Mustafa Majeed Omar, and a few months ago I informed the House that a second oncologist, Dr Marchett from Brazil, has been appointed to the hospital.

In 2011 we had an oncology department but no oncology specialists. For 42 days of the year a specialist would travel from Newcastle—in fact, in 2010 a specialist visited only on 12 days. People were dying before they got to see a specialist. We needed a permanent oncologist and in 2013 Dr Ted Livshin was appointed as the medical oncologist. He was to stay for six months but he is still there and now a second oncologist has been appointed. The shadow Minister for Health, the Hon. Walt Secord, visited Taree where he did nothing but scaremonger and tell untruths. He told a community meeting that the Government had downgraded oncology. Hang on: When Labor lost office we had no oncologist; now we have two. The Hon. Walt Secord must have driven past the hospital blindfolded because the Government is in the process of building a big, new oncology unit.

I am also fighting for a public hospital at Forster. A petition is being circulated that has more than 7,000 signatures. The local Labor Party candidate remarked to me, "Fancy petitioning your own Government." I want public support to show the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Health that we are fair dinkum. We want more public facilities at Forster. In the budget last year \$1.7 million was allocated for Taree Police Station and this year it received a further \$10.7 million in funding. The local Labor Party candidate said a few months ago, "Glossy brochures and everything else does not mean anything. It is all smoke and mirrors." Last year's funding was used to plan for new cells and other facilities and in a few months a new building will be constructed. In this year's budget \$3 million in funding was allocated to paint the Martin Bridge at Taree. That is fantastic news. I have highlighted only a few things, and next time I will inform members about some of the other great things that are happening in the electorate of Myall Lakes.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN CONVENTION

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (17:56): On Sunday 27 May I had the pleasure of welcoming delegates to the 2018 International Council of Jewish Women's Quadrennial Convention on behalf of the New South Wales Government. This was the twenty-third quadrennial convention and female Jewish leaders from more than 16 countries attended. The theme of the convention was "Evolving Beyond tradition—The Impact of Women's Perspectives and Developing Roles". It was a pleasure to speak at the opening dinner and to welcome all the convention delegates to our great State on behalf of the Premier and the New South Wales Government.

The International Council of Jewish Women [ICJW] was established in 1912. It represents more than one million Jewish women across five continents and Jewish women and women's organisations in 34 countries. The ICJW has immense influence. It has consultative status at the United Nations as a non-governmental organisation with the Economic and Social Council. In this capacity it has an active role and is represented on the UNICEF Human Rights Committee, the United Nations Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Sustainable Development. The ICJW is a strong and effective international advocate for gender equality and this was reinforced by its membership in numerous divisions across the world.

Our national organisation equivalent, the National Council of Jewish Women Australia [NCJWA], was founded in 1923—not that much later than the ICJW. Today the NCJWA boasts nearly 2,000 members across six branches, including the active New South Wales division that I have grown to know well. The NCJWA is strongly committed to social justice and women's issues through its advocacy, community services, philanthropy and education. The NCJWA runs some fantastic programs. For example, in the New South Wales division Mum for

Mum is a free non-denominational program where new mothers or those who need a little extra help have access to emotional support from trained volunteers who are mothers themselves. This program has helped more than 300 mothers from more than 50 backgrounds. I commend the coordinator of the Mum for Mum program, Nadene Alhadeff, OAM. Nadene is the wife of Vic Alhadeff, the Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. Nadene has provided invaluable help to many mothers and their families. I also note that about three months ago she received an award from Randwick council for her work as a good citizen.

Programs like Mum for Mum help and foster women, no matter what their age—in the case for Mum for Mum, it is for women of child-bearing age—to fulfil their highest potential. I was gratified to share with the audience of international women that in New South Wales in the past year alone female employment has increased by 6 per cent. That means that nearly 106,000 more women are working in New South Wales compared with this time last year—that is a big jump. Organisations like the ICJW and NCJWA (NSW) help us communicate this important message but also support the success that this message represents.

Numerous women of prominence spoke at the conference, including Bondi local Ronni Kahn, founder and chief executive officer of OzHarvest, Australia's leading food rescue charity. Ronni recently launched with me, on behalf of the New South Wales Government and Woolworths, an important program that is aimed at minimising food waste. It is called the Fight Food Waste campaign and 35,000 people have already signed up to receive weekly newsletters to help them understand how they can better reduce food waste across New South Wales. At the dinner there were prominent community leaders including Vic Alhadeff, whose wife, Nadene, I mentioned earlier; Lynda Ben Menashe, also from the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies; Hinda Young, Director of the Sydney Melton Program; and Gael Hammer, who founded the Sydney Women's Tefilla Group. There was a panel discussion on "Women within Modern Orthodoxy" and films were shown.

I also mention Robyn Lenn, OAM, immediate past President of the International Council of Jewish Women, who was handing over leadership to a new president at this conference; Penelope Conway, who is the new leader; and Vicki Nadel, OAM, and Sylvia Deutsch, who are co-presidents of the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia. It was great to take part in welcoming this group to Sydney and New South Wales and to commend them for their strong work across our community and nationally.

WYONG ELECTORATE PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:01): Today I talk about a developing scandal in my electorate. I held fire on the issue, waiting for the budget to see whether the Government had properly funded the section of the Pacific Highway that goes through Wyong. I was insulted the day after the budget when Mr Scot MacDonald in the other place went on local radio and said that the Government was taking steps to make sure the project is ready to be funded in full, implying that it was not shovel ready. I can inform Mr Scot MacDonald and the Government that I obtained information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act, which I have had for quite a while, and I know the real situation. In 2016 the Government finished planning the project. It got the business case approved and bought the property. It readied the design and construct tender documents—and then they were shelved.

Government members have the audacity to tell my community that the project is not ready to progress. The documents are there, the work is done, and it is ready to be funded and moved forward. According to the NRMA, this road is one of the worst in New South Wales. It is 1.2 kilometres long and has a traffic jam every day. In 2011 I started the process by making sure the options studies were done. All the time this Government has been in power—including when a Liberal member represented the electorate—it has done nothing. It has not started the project and people in my area are absolutely fed up.

The problem is that Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] have put in place a new process called "project optimisation". The Government would not allow me to have that document—it rejected my application. But it gave me all the emails that travelled back and forth from the department, talking about the project optimisation report—which is nothing more than a stalling tactic to not fund the project. When it was proposed—I have it in the emails that I received—the project was, so to speak, a poster child. The Government held up the project as being one of its best that—this is what it said—"actually already demonstrated what projects need to do to assure vibrant town centres". It acknowledged that the people in RMS had done a good job and that the process that had been followed was a good one.

Following the election, another \$1.5 million was spent on planning. But planning what? My constituents have a right to ask that question because since 2016 more than \$3 million has been spent on continued planning. Over the life of this project, \$27 million has been spent on planning. Members who are waiting for things to happen in their electorate must question why \$27 million was spent without a single shovel in the ground. It gets on my goat. I gave the Government the opportunity to come forward with proper funding in this budget. I thought, "The business case is there, the land has been bought, everything is in place and the contracts have been written,

so all they have to do is move forward with it." But they did not. The Government came back with more money for planning.

What is the Government planning now? According to the emails I receive, it keeps throwing the engineers little challenges to distract them. They call them "what-ifs". What if this happened? What if we did this? What if we did that? What if we did this? What if we did that? It is a delaying tactic. The local economy and progress in the town of Wyong is being held up because this Government does not want to commit the funds needed to complete this project. If real planning were being done, I would not have a problem. But I know that the work was finished in 2016. Two years later, we are still waiting. It is absolute rubbish. My community will not put up with it, and the Government will start hearing about it big time from now on.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:06): One thing that really gets my goat is members of the previous Government lecturing us about the infrastructure and transport spend. Those guys had 16 years.

Mr Gareth Ward: How many?

Mr MARK COURE: Sixteen years, and they still did not get it right.

Mr David Harris: In my electorate we spent \$700 million on roads.

Mr MARK COURE: Listen here, Curly, do not come into this Chamber and lecture us about the transport and infrastructure spend. The Labor government failed to deliver metros or one single transport plan. In fact, Labor did not even take a transport policy to the 2007 State election. It had up to 10 transport plans and could not deliver one of them. Curly, do not come into this Chamber and lecture us about your failures during 16 years in government—a government that you were part of.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): Order! I call the member for Kiama to order. The member for Wyong is on his final warning. He was extended courtesy during his speech and he should give the same courtesy to the member for Oatley.

KIAMA ELECTORATE STUDENT LEADERS FORUM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:07): I am pleased to inform the House that on Wednesday 23 May 2018 I hosted the eighth annual Kiama Electorate Student Leaders Forum in the Parliament of New South Wales. Students from seven high schools across the region participated in the forum. The high schools included Nowra Anglican College, Kiama High School, Bomaderry High School, Shoalhaven High School, Albion Park High School, St Joseph's Catholic High School and The Illawarra Grammar School. I acknowledge each of the 33 student leaders who participated and represented their schools with such great pride and distinction, and the teachers and year coordinators who also attended to help supervise their students.

Starting with my old school, Bomaderry High School, I acknowledge the two school captains, Luke Day and Ruby Adams, as well as Jessie Boardman, Brendan Low, Jessica Weakley, Noah Thomas, Jade Mustapic and Jade Dedomenico. I also thank their personal development, health and physical education teacher Trish Rogers. From Nowra Anglican College, I acknowledge Chloe Newman, Sophie Emery, Cooper Thomson, Aidan Wearne, Megan Hamaty, Lachlan Sutton, Samantha Legzdin and Connor Tytherleigh. I also thank their senior school teacher and student leadership coordinator Rachael Tagg. From Kiama High School, I acknowledge school captains Nicholas Gregory and Lauren Perry, and vice captains Alexander Wunsch and Josie Mansell. I also acknowledge their Teacher, Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Jane Littrich.

From Shoalhaven High School, I acknowledge Elisha Wright Smith, Taylor Hancock, Makayla Puckeridge and Charmaine Gale. I also acknowledge their Head Teacher, Wellbeing, Natasha Clark. From Albion Park High School, I acknowledge Stephanie-Chase Horton. From St Joseph's Catholic High School, I acknowledge Samantha Kerr, Lucinda Maddren, Nick Riveiro and P. J. Ong. I also acknowledge and thank their teacher, Mrs Maria Oliverio. From The Illawarra Grammar School, I acknowledge Alexander Saddi, Benae Kuiper, Darcy Fisher and William Barber. I also acknowledge and thank their teacher, Dean of Senior Students, Jean Burton.

My thanks to the Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, who took time out of her extremely busy schedule to talk to the students. I also thank my friend the Minister for Education, the Hon. Rob Stokes, and the Minister for Mental Health, Women and Ageing, Tanya Davies. These leaders addressed students on their roles and responsibilities within the Government. The student leaders received a tour of Parliament and had the opportunity to experience question time in the bear pit to see democracy in action and just one of the many ways in which the Government is held to account.

My favourite part of the forum is hearing from the student leaders about the issues that matter to them. The issues raised at the forum included youth mental health; creating local job opportunities for young people;

eliminating drug use and addressing the current ice epidemic, particularly in the Shoalhaven region; introducing more cycleways and footpaths; improving public transport, removing graffiti and stopping vandalism; reducing homelessness and providing additional support; banning the use of plastic bags in supermarkets and general stores; establishing a new athletics track in the Shoalhaven; and investing in clean renewable energy.

In my inaugural speech in this place I said, "The challenge of the leaders is to create more leaders, not more followers." It may not be the easiest objective to achieve, but it is one for which all members of this place must strive. That is why I have held this forum every year since being elected in 2011, and I will continue to do so into the future. The young people of our communities need to know that their representatives genuinely care about their views and opinions. While these young leaders may not be able to vote yet, they are the custodians of our future communities. Indeed, if this group of young people is what we have to look forward to then our future is in very bright, capable and safe hands—in fact, the sooner the better.

Members of Parliament are here to represent our communities. The youth of our communities far too often are under-recognised for their great work and achievements. It is important that they have a chance to have their say. I profoundly understand the importance of listening to our young people, giving them a voice in government and developing the next generation of leaders by offering them opportunities like this forum. This is something in which all responsible members of Parliament must be engaged. I was also pleased to hear the topics raised in the student leaders' debate, which related to what they would do if they were Premier for a day.

I thank Jacob Sich and Nick Cusack from my office, and Ben Blackburn, my longest serving staff member, for liaising with each of the schools and organising yet another successful event. I take this opportunity to commend all the student leaders who participated; they certainly are the leaders of tomorrow. I was thoroughly impressed by the depth of ideas and talent displayed by each of the student leaders, who proudly represented their schools. I commend the idea of a student leaders forum to all members of this place. It is important that we listen to young people and give them a voice. This platform is one that they can share with us, and I look forward to hosting the ninth annual Kiama Electorate Student Leaders Forum next year.

LISMORE ELECTORATE

Mr THOMAS GEORGE (Lismore) (18:12): Last week I had the pleasure of joining my Federal colleague Kevin Hogan, the member for Page, and members of Kyogle Council in turning the sod on the \$5 million upgrade of Culmaran Creek Road. This project is more than a road upgrade: It allows companies like Mara Seeds and Mara Global Foods and local cattle producers to get their produce to domestic and international markets, while creating an extra 26 jobs for our community. The project is funded jointly by the New South Wales Government, which has provided \$2.6 million; the Federal Government, which has invested \$2.1 million; Kyogle Council, which has provided \$245,000; and, importantly, Mara Seeds and Mara Global Foods, which contributed \$60,000 to see the project go ahead.

The Larsson family has farmed land around Culmaran Creek, west of Mallanganee, for four generations, starting in 1914 when Charles Larsson bought a few hundred acres and cleared the land for farming. In 1945 Henry Larsson was called home from war to continue the dairy and pig production. He also thought ahead and amalgamated smaller farms and united them under one title. I can well remember being the stock and station agent for the Larsson family. Henry Larsson was a leader in his field of livestock production, together with his two sons, Stuart and Keith. When Stuart Larsson took over in 1967, he changed the direction of the farm and introduced the first beef herd to that property.

Following the beef crash in 1974, Stuart made a decision to innovate, and the Larsson farm was the second on the North Coast to plant soybeans. Stuart's son, Ross Larsson, returned home to help Stuart in 2006 and develop organic cattle markets. Today, Mara Organic runs 900 breeders and is a supply base to produce animals suited to premium markets. Economic growth in rural areas relies on agricultural commodities, industrial products and natural resources being able to move to market efficiently.

This story of a family in Mallanganee and the impact it has had on the local economy is the reason our Government is continually investing in meaningful infrastructure across the electorate of Lismore and across regional New South Wales. The Culmaran Creek area is renowned throughout the Northern Rivers as being one of the top cattle producing areas. The Larsson family, together with other families that surround that property, has been there for generations and continues to produce world-class cattle and other products from the Culmaran Creek area.

Last week I was also very pleased to be able to congratulate Val Gardiner on being awarded life membership of The Nationals at our annual general conference in Cowra. Unfortunately, I could not be in attendance at the conference because I had the honour of opening Primex Field Days at Casino and therefore could not offer Val my sincere congratulations at the time. Val joined the party in 1966 and held the Tenterfield branch

secretary role continuously for 30 years from 1983 until being elected chair in 2003. Val always ensured the branch met once a month without fail, and also took branch meetings to smaller communities, helping to maintain party interest and membership in those areas. Val was my first port of call when Tenterfield township was included in the Lismore electorate at the last election. She is an empathetic and enthusiastic member of our party and the community. She has always been there to help a lot of people right across the community. Her contribution not only to the party but also to the community is highly valued. Congratulations, Val, and thank you for all your support and service to the cause of the community and the party.

ROAD TOLLS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (18:18): In its budget the Berejiklian Government announced that it was proceeding with the privatisation of Sydney Motorway Corporation. When Sydney Motorway Corporation is privatised in August it will lock in increasing tolls on the M4 for years to come. Western Sydney has been stung with a new M4 toll, property owners in my electorate have been treated with contempt and the Sydney Motorway Corporation has been used to shield WestConnex from public scrutiny. The Leader of the Opposition announced earlier today that Labor's plan to combat mismanagement, incompetence and waste includes a judicial inquiry into WestConnex to establish exactly how these projects have gone so wrong, and will provide full public accountability. The widened M4 section of the WestConnex project cost around \$500 million, and this money will be recouped by the Government through tolls in less than three years. But the M4 toll will stay on for decades to effectively pay for the other stages of the road project, including the M4-M5 link and the widened M5.

The toll will go up every year, at or above the rate of inflation, for 43 years. M4 traffic dropped by 32 per cent in the first full week of tolls to approximately 942,000 trips compared with average volumes in the weeks before the charges were introduced in August 2017. It caused chaos across my electorate, with people unable to get out of their driveways on the choked rat runs through Granville. In November the chief executive of Sydney Motorway Corporation said traffic figures had dropped 25 per cent on the M4 since tolling started compared to a forecast 40 per cent drop, so it was "a really great story". No Western Sydney motorist agrees.

New figures reveal that since the toll was reintroduced there are on average 42,000 fewer vehicles using the motorway every day. By May this year 154,000 cars and trucks were using the M4 per day compared to an average of 196,000 vehicles before the toll was introduced. The Berejiklian Government said the business case projections were for 164,000 cars per day by 2031. Whichever way you look at it, drivers are turning off in droves to avoid paying the toll between Parramatta and Homebush, and they are turning off at Church Street. There is the cost of paying the toll. There is the unfairness of paying a toll for a road which has already been built and the concerns about safety on the M4. Motorists exiting the M4 at Church Street are taking back roads or rat runs or opting to take the jammed Parramatta Road, which makes short local journeys take ages. My constituent Despina got in touch with me about the queuing at the Church Street off-ramp. She said:

Just the other day I was driving to work and day-care with my 2 year old son. I was travelling in the second lane from the left at 80km/hr. The left lane was banked up and at a standstill. A ute in that lane pulled out in front of me and I had to slam on my breaks. It was only because of my quick reflexes that a serious accident did not occur. I was very shaken up by this incident. Unfortunately, I have seen this happen many times to other drivers. It is not safe for a lane on the freeway to constantly be at a standstill whilst others are going 90km/hr. Surely something must be done about this before a serious accident occurs.

Anyone who drives on the M4 in the morning is caught in the queue to exit at the Church Street off-ramp that stretches back kilometres. It is frustrating as the traffic slows to a crawl in the area and scary when other motorists cut into traffic as experienced by Despina. It is so dangerous and accidents are so frequent that people have started calling the off-ramp "crash alley". The Government has no solution to this. In fact the Government wants this to occur because it deters people from taking the off-ramp. They stay on the road and pay the toll to avoid getting stuck in that queue. And the Premier says she wants more and more people to pay the toll.

This Government is obsessed with privatisation. With Sydney Motorway Corporation to be privatised, the Government will lock in increasing tolls on the M4 for years to come. The Government's toll relief package has been exposed as a huge con job. As appalling as it is—the idea of the Government funding incentives for drivers to use private motorways—last night Channel 7 reported that 97 per cent of Sydney toll users will not spend enough to qualify for the scheme, and most who will do not live in Western Sydney. So Western Sydney motorists will keep paying, and paying, and paying—both the toll and registration.

Not only has the Berejiklian Government put in place a toll that will go up every year at or above the rate of inflation for 43 years on the M4, but it is hitting Western Sydney with a double whammy by reducing alternative public transport options for people to choose. Residents believe this is a con to get them to pay the toll. The Government's new train timetable means Western Sydney residents face longer commuting times to the city and an increased number of interchanges for services, making trips longer and far more inconvenient. For instance, western line trains no longer stop at Granville, Auburn, Harris Park and Clyde from 6.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. on weekdays; passengers are no longer able catch direct trains to any stations further west than Parramatta; and

passengers have slower trains to the city due to their stations being skipped. The Berejiklian Government has the wrong priorities. The people of New South Wales deserve better.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:23): Today I speak about the New South Wales 2018 budget and what it means for the community of North Shore. I am proud of the Government's budget because it delivers on the commitments that I have been fighting for: roads, rail, schools and the local environment. This budget will deliver the infrastructure and community amenities that make a real difference to people's lives and will ensure North Shore remains a great place to live, work and raise a family. This budget is about building for tomorrow while delivering for today, but it is the result of many years of hard work by this Government to turn New South Wales' finances around. The investment we are making in big and small infrastructure can only be achieved through strong economic management and by putting people first.

Some of the highlights of the budget for the community of North Shore include funding of more than \$500 million to get the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link shuttle ready and \$4.3 billion to continue delivering Australia's largest public transport project, City Metro, which will have two stations in my community. A big highlight to me is funding to commence planning of upgrades to Neutral Bay Public School, a new primary school and high school in St Leonards, and \$10 million for a Sydney Harbour Scenic Walk and a national park at Middle Head. The budget includes \$87 billion in funding for infrastructure across the State and a number of initiatives that will be important for people across my community, including reforms to payroll tax thresholds for small businesses and investment in the skills we need for the future through up to 100,000 apprenticeships.

This budget creates a stronger, fairer and more prosperous New South Wales and the benefits flow through to my community of North Shore. As I mentioned earlier, the most exciting announcement for me is the funding for my local schools. When I was first elected to this place, I already knew that the changing demographics of my community meant that more and more people would raise families in apartments. About half of the residents in the North Shore live in apartments. Many years ago, we thought people would not raise families in apartments, but for many reasons—not so much Sydney's challenging housing market but the vibrancy and beauty of my local community—people are choosing to stay in a dense and vibrant area and to raise their children in an apartment block. A number of kids in my apartment block go to local schools.

This change has increased pressure on our local schools—in particular, Neutral Bay Public School. The kids there have three separate lunch breaks because there is not enough playground space for them all to play together. The school has adapted significantly over time by cutting classrooms in half to double classroom capacity and cutting up half of the library to make three new classrooms. It is a victim of its own success in many ways because people want to live in the catchment area, which is continually decreasing to meet the needs of the community. About 1,000 kids attend that school already, and this investment in planning money is welcomed by the school and relieving principal Nadia Tobia. It was fought for by former principal David Shuster and by the school council, including president Kim Thompson and previous member for North Shore Jillian Skinner, who has had many decades of association with the school.

When the Minister for Education joined me at the school last year he saw how necessary this upgrade was. I am proud that, by working with the community, we have been able to get this commitment across the line. The budget also includes funding for a new education precinct in St Leonards with a new primary school and high school, and it continues to fund the new Cammeraygal High School senior campus. Considering the population increase in the North Sydney area around North Sydney Demonstration School and the pressure on both Cammeraygal High School and Mosman High School—two schools where I am in the catchment area—the new primary school and high school will have flow-on effects across my community. They will also take some of the pressure off the schools and students who attend our wonderful local public schools.

It is no surprise to people in this place that I am thrilled about the commitment of \$500 million to progress the Western Harbour Tunnel Beaches Link. Traffic along Military Road can slow to a crawl of 12 kilometres per hour in peak hour. More important than the time it takes to use Military Road is the problem of rat-running in our local streets. I am proud that this project, once completed, will return local streets to local communities, make them safer and make North Shore an even better place to live than it already is. I congratulate the Government on this budget. It is an investment in local schools, public transport, roads and our local environment. This will make a huge difference to the community of North Shore.

KEMBLA GRANGE PRISON PROPOSAL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:28): Last Sunday I was lucky enough to attend a Community Fun Day hosted and organised by the Residents Against Dapto Jail community group. It was cold and windy, but that did not stop the community from turning out in force. There was a petting zoo, face painting, balloon art and

a sausage sizzle, and their slogan was simple: Picnics, not prisons. I thank the organisers for inviting me to come along. The whole day was an incredible and positive reminder of how united this community is in its opposition to the Liberal Government's proposal.

This group is 100 per cent against Gareth's jail. The community has come together and has spent countless hours writing, organising and working to stop this Government's proposal to build a prison in its backyard. This group is one of the most active and dedicated community groups I have ever had the pleasure of working with. It has such a strong message. It is willing to fight for its dreams and for its future. I am incredibly proud to represent its interests in this House. As this House would be aware, Corrective Services will begin holding community engagement forums regarding this proposal on this Sunday, 24 June. These community engagement forums are this Government's chosen form of community consultation.

While I do not believe this qualifies as adequate consultation, I know that my community is ready to finally get some answers and to give genuine, unedited feedback on this proposal. I hope the member for Kiama takes the time to attend these community consultation sessions and to listen to his community. There should not be any issues with his diary this time—after all, he was the one who announced the consultation dates and this is his jail. I recently wrote to the Minister to make sure he knew what questions have been asked in order to prepare his representatives for this Sunday. In case the Minister somehow missed both my letter and my email, this is a summary.

First, there are questions that relate to the site selection: Why was this site selected? What selection criteria were used? What other sites have been considered within my electorate, within the Illawarra and outside the Illawarra? There are questions about the details of the proposal: What stage of planning is it up to? What will it look like? How big will it be? What security level will it have? Will it be publicly or privately run? What about the zoning constraints for the site? Thirdly, what about the timing of the proposal? When will a decision be made? If the project is to go ahead, how long will the whole process take? There are questions about what impact this proposal will have on local infrastructure. Where is the traffic management plan? How and why is it that this Government can identify land for a correctional facility but not for any of the necessary schools required for West Dapto's population growth? What impact will this proposal have on local transport links and roads?

Then there are questions about the possible community impacts of this proposal. What will happen to the Catholic cemetery on the site, and the people who have already been interred there? Would a correctional facility have any impact on local crime rates? Will floodlights be on 24 hours a day? The next group of questions relate to the economic impacts of the proposal: What are the specific economic benefits of a correctional facility? How many jobs will be created in the construction and running of the facility? How many of those jobs will go to local residents? Will local house prices and insurance premiums be impacted? If so, will home owners be compensated? Lastly, there are the questions relating to the environmental impact of the project: Has a review of environmental factors been undertaken?

What will be done about flooding in the area, given this proposal is located on a well-known floodplain? Every one of those questions has been submitted to my office at some point by a concerned resident since this Government's announcement. Ultimately, my opinion is that, regardless of the answers to these questions, this site is not and will not be appropriate for a prison. That is what my community is telling me. However, those opposite have proposed it and my community has questions. I hope that this Sunday it will finally get some answers from those opposite. My community has made it clear: Gareth's jail is not welcome in West Dapto. This jail is not welcome in any part of the West Dapto or Kembla Grange area.

GREAT WALK FOUNDATION

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (18:33): In 2007 Jonathan Green and Mark Mulock were sitting in a pub when John jokingly suggested he would run to Bathurst. From there the idea to fundraise for charity was mooted and the Great Walk Foundation was born. The inaugural walk took place from Blaxland to Bathurst. However, each year since it has been from Bathurst to Blaxland. The Great Walk Foundation is just another fantastic example of how philanthropic and supportive Penrith community members are towards each other. As one would expect with such an arduous journey, a number of foot injuries were sustained in the first year, so unsurprisingly these two guys went and found Trent Baker, a local podiatrist, to join the team.

Since then, the walk has continued to grow. Celebrating its eleventh anniversary this year, a team of 10 set off on 22 May for the 170-kilometre trek. Over the five days, the walkers travelled from Bathurst to Tarana, Tarana to Lithgow, Lithgow to Hartley Vale, Lawson's Long Alley to Blackheath, Blackheath to Hazelbrook and finally Hazelbrook to Blaxland. Along the way, a sportsmen's night was held at the Gardners Inn in Blackheath, with sporting legends such as Doug Walters, former Panthers Brad Drew, Brad Waugh and Mark Geyer, and the great Englishman Bill Ashurst in attendance. The foundation's mission is to focus on community

needs within the Penrith, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury regions. Of the funds raised, 100 per cent goes to nominated charities. This is possible as there are no administration fees or running costs. All accommodation and meals and any equipment is donated or purchased by the walkers.

To date the team has raised more than \$1 million and a number of local organisations have been recipients, including the Penrith Community Kitchen, the Queen of Hearts Foundation and Riding for the Disabled. One of the foundation's biggest contributions to date has been to the Nepean Hospital Children's Ward, which now has two humidicribs thanks to the team's fundraising efforts. This year, the team included Trent Baker, Tony Bowden, Dave Crossman, Jonathan Green, Mark Mulock, Cameron McInnes, Greg Nelson, Graham O'Kell, Rob Wearn and Mark Geyer. I congratulate the businesses that get behind the Great Walk Foundation, including Penrith Waste Services, One Point Health, Mulgoa Quarries, Direct Accounting, Glenmore Park Plumbing, Equiptrade, Knickerbocker Hotel in Bathurst, the Gardners Inn Hotel in Blackheath, Lapstone Hotel in Blaxland, and the Pioneer Tavern in Penrith.

To support the Great Walk Foundation, One Point Health will be undertaking a 100-kilometre, 12-hour nonstop AlterG Anti-Gravity Treadmill walking challenge, with all moneys raised going directly to the Great Walk Foundation. Each year Panthers legend Mark Geyer holds a luncheon at the Pioneer Tavern to raise significant funds for this wonderful foundation. Everyone at The Great Walk Foundation deserves our thanks for the magnificent fundraising efforts that they have undertaken over many years to assist local charities. The team is the heart and soul of what it means to be from the Western Sydney, Penrith, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury community. The team walks from Bathurst to Blaxland to raise funds, and many people now get behind them. At the end of the walk, everyone has a drink at the Lapstone Hotel and the event draws a pretty good crowd. This year was no different.

Once again, the great walk is about making sure that people who have the means support others who do not always have the funds or resources. It is about having a really big heart. Anyone who has been to the children's ward or neonatal intensive care unit at Nepean Hospital and has seen the little babies in the humidicribs knows that every dollar the Great Walk Foundation has raised for the Nepean Hospital and those families goes towards giving those children a great start in life. Whether it is the work the team has done through the Queen of Hearts Foundation to fight domestic violence, or the work it has done to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to experience riding a horse, the Great Walk Foundation is one of the great groups of Penrith that gives back to Penrith at every opportunity and it does so with the great walk and its contribution every year.

LICENSED VENUE LOCKOUT LAWS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:38): It is four years since the 1.30 a.m. lockouts and 3.00 a.m. closures were imposed on all licensed venues in the central business district, entertainment, Oxford Street and Kings Cross precincts, and the late-night economy has been withering since. It is now time to fine-tune restrictions and make the city an exciting place at night again. The lockout laws provided a useful circuit-breaker for the then escalating violence and antisocial behaviour associated with late-night hot spots, but they cannot sustainably be retained as standard conditions if we are to have a vibrant and diverse city at night. A number of venues have closed and the once bustling Kings Cross and Oxford Street precincts have become near desolate after midnight. Emerging artists have fewer options to perform live because there are fewer venues and shorter venue opening hours, and venues are less likely to book artists that do not already have an established following. The effect of the half-hour lockout and trading extension for live music venues has been limited. While I welcome the lifting of the liquor freeze for live music venues, it is unlikely to make the difference that is needed to revive business and consumer confidence in Sydney as an after-dark attraction.

At the same time, daytime music events are being targeted by sniffer dog operations that are invasive and becoming more authoritarian. Two weeks ago, New South Wales police promised to refuse any ticketholder entry into the Above and Beyond concert if a sniffer dog sits next to them—even if no drugs are found on the person. Many of my constituents were outraged at this approach and said it is part of a wider attack on young people going out and having fun. Sydney has developed more of a reputation for being a police state than an entertainment destination.

Last year the City of Sydney sought comment from the public on its discussion paper, *An Open and Creative City: planning for culture and the night time economy*. The findings were released this week. More than 10,000 people made submissions and overwhelmingly supported longer trading hours, more places to go and more diverse options for venues after dark, including smaller scale events. Also last year the City of Sydney set up its creative city and nightlife advisory panel, consisting of people from creative, cultural and nightlife sectors. It will advise the city on how to implement the changes supported by the community through its planning rules. The panel is also advising the city on how it can implement its various cultural and nightlife policies and strategies such as the OPEN Sydney strategy.

The mood for change can be seen in the strong community campaigns to save venues in my electorate. The block that is home to the Bourbon and Empire hotels on Darlinghurst Road was slated for demolition to build a block of 83 apartments. While two licensed premises were to be included, they would be much smaller. Other purposes would have been lost, including a pharmacy, medical centre and commercial offices. The community outrage over the proposal's loss of diversity and vibrancy in the Kings Cross hub brought together people who live and go out in the Cross in a fantastic grassroots campaign which resulted in the developer withdrawing its plans.

The old and much-loved Four in Hand Hotel in Paddington is being sold and there is talk of a developer turning the iconic pub into apartments. The Paddington community has come together to "Save the Four" and Woollahra council is now looking at ways to impose planning protections on the area's social heritage, including pubs. My position remains that lockouts should not apply to well-managed venues, small bars and live music and entertainment venues. This will ensure that venues that promote a rich social fabric for our city can remain viable. Venues that do not contribute to violence and antisocial behaviour but help civilise our night-time culture should not be subject to the same level of restrictions as those with a history of violence and poor management.

Measures such as saturation zones, late-night transport and renewable late-night licences should be introduced to ensure late-night precincts do not become hubs for violence and antisocial behaviour. The 1.30 a.m. lockout was lifted in the Oxford Street precinct for the Mardi Gras parade. Police tell me that this occurred with few incidents and people who attended have said that it was one of the best Mardi Gras ever. We continue to wait for action from the New South Wales Government Night-Time Economy Taskforce, including a music action plan and a late-night economy master plan. We need to move fast. Sydney's economic prosperity will suffer if we let the city become boring, cultureless and lifeless at night. I call on the Government to make Sydney's night-time economy an urgent priority.

SHIRE WOODWORKING CLUB TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (18:42): I congratulate the Shire Woodworking Club on its twentieth anniversary this month. The club started in April 1998 in Oyster Bay, when 18 woodworkers met to discuss setting up a woodworking club for the Sutherland shire. Within the year, the club was incorporated and the members began their first projects, crafting toys for children in Papua New Guinea. The club became more involved in the local area after 1998 as it hosted market days, arts and crafts shows and demonstrations. The club continued to make toys, which were donated to the Salvation Army to distribute at Christmas. By 2002 the club's equipment included a woodworking station, router and router table, jigsaw and other small accessories. That year the club established the Al Usherwood Award to encourage members to enter an item of excellence. To this day the club still has an excellence award and a major annual competition for woodworking.

During the 2000s, the club continued to grow. Its primary aims were excellence in woodworking, including safety and training, and the production of toys for charity. The club was now using its Oyster Bay premises three times a month between meetings and demonstration days. The club continued to purchase new equipment, including dust filtration units and a bandsaw. By this stage the club had donated toys to a number of organisations, including children's wards at Sutherland, Westmead and Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick, the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Salvation Army. The club was also involved in numerous community events such as the Seniors Festival of Arts and Crafts, "Jazz and Blues" at Hazelhurst Arts Centre and craft weekends at its Oyster Bay clubhouse.

The club outgrew the Oyster Bay premises and decided to lease a scout hall at Lilli Pilli. The club spent around 1,500 hours to renovate the hall in 2011. I attended its official opening in March 2012. The new clubhouse, located at Lilli Pilli, was a great success for the club, with membership growing 21 per cent in the first year of the new clubhouse. The club now has 80 members—the greatest number in its history. It continues to focus on the health and welfare of its members. The club includes safety as a separate item on the agenda for each monthly meeting and has an accreditation system to make sure that each member can use the equipment competently. The average club member is around 70 years old and the club has stated it has an emphasis on involving older people as part of the club.

Since moving to Lilli Pilli, the club has continued to acquire new equipment, including a ducted dust extraction system in 2015, which has made working easier. The club also now has two annual competitions that attract more than 20 entries each year. The club has now helped more local organisations by providing toys as well as other major projects. Sutherland Shire Family Services, Project Youth, John Franklin Christmas Lunch and Kingsway Community Church have all been supported by the club. The club has also made model MRI machines for hospitals to prepare children for their procedures. Other projects of the club include a swish ball table to be used at Vision Australia in Caringbah, stakes and supports for poppies displayed at Cronulla Beach for Anzac Day in 2015 and a specialised table and bed supports for a young girl with a disability. I thank the volunteers

at the Shire Woodworking Club for the countless hours they have spent making items for various charitable causes and also ensuring that the club is an active organisation that keeps seniors engaged in our community.

CENTRAL COAST ELECTORATE SPORTS FUNDING

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:46): Sport plays a significant role on the Central Coast. In fact, it is safe to say that more people on the Central Coast are involved in sport and recreation than in any other non-compulsory leisure activity. All sports clubs and organisations in our region play a part in making the Central Coast community such a fantastic place to live, work and raise a family. Indeed, sporting participation across all ages but particularly for school-aged children is very high on the Central Coast. Recent Active Kids Rebate uptake figures show that so far 7,055 vouchers have been used in the Gosford electorate, 6,817 vouchers have been used in The Entrance electorate, 8,252 vouchers have been used in the Wyong electorate and 7,875 vouchers have been used in my electorate of Terrigal.

I have spoken many times in this Chamber about the Active Kids program because it is delivering fantastic benefits for my Central Coast community. Parents, carers and guardians are able to apply for \$100 per year per school-aged child, which can be spent on registration, participation and membership costs for sport, fitness and active recreation activities. This demonstrates our Government's commitment to helping kids get active because we know that active kids are happy kids. The Active Kids program is also an important part of one of the Premier's Priorities to reduce rates of obesity in children. The Active Kids program is budgeted for four years and, as I have said, since beginning on 31 January is already having an extremely positive impact on the Central Coast.

Another way that the State Liberal Government is helping to develop local sport is the Local Sport Defibrillation Grant Program. Across grassroots sporting facilities in New South Wales, \$4 million has been committed to install more than 2,500 defibrillators over the next four years. In this most recent round of applications, there were two successful sport clubs in the Terrigal electorate. Erina Archery Club received \$1,250 to co-fund a defibrillator and Terrigal United Football Club received \$1,250 to co-fund a defibrillator. Indeed just a few weekends ago, I was at Duffys Oval with Sharon Baxter, President of Terrigal United Football Club, to spread the news of this defibrillator funding and to raise awareness about cardiac problems.

All football players, particularly those in the over 35 years and over 45 years teams, are at risk of cardiac arrest. That is why it is so important to ensure that local sports clubs are adequately resourced to respond to emergency medical needs when required. Sharon and volunteer club members told me about an incident last year when a man playing in the over 45s team suffered a cardiac arrest while on the field. Luckily, one of his teammates is a general practitioner and was able to identify the problem and act quickly to save his life. That is why the Government is helping to fund life-saving defibrillators for clubs across New South Wales, including those in the Terrigal electorate.

The Terrigal United Football Club is one of the largest clubs in my electorate, with around 1,400 members and more than 100 football teams. In fact, the club is so big that it has three home grounds: Duffys Oval, Terrigal High School oval and Terry Oval in Springfield. I announced last weekend that Terry Oval will receive a defibrillator. Junior and senior games are regularly played at that oval and an estimated 660 people visit the location every Saturday for local football games. I pay tribute to the club president, Sharon Baxter, and her team of volunteers who are committed to working for their 1,400 club members.

Earlier this month, I was delighted to host the Minister for Sport, Stuart Ayres, on the Central Coast. Minister Ayres travelled to the coast to join me in announcing recipients of the Local Sport Grant Program funding. I congratulate the Terrigal Rugby Club, Avoca Kayak Club, Erina Rugby League Football Club, Woodport Netball Club, North Avoca Surf Life Saving Club, Saratoga Junior AFL Club and Gosford City Basketball and Sports Stadium. Each of these sport clubs has received funding to improve its facilities and resources, purchase equipment, pay for uniforms or undertake training. As part of the Minister's visit to the Central Coast, I convened a roundtable of our region's sports stakeholders to help them identify and discuss sporting needs and opportunities that are available to the community. I thank The Entrance Councillor Jilly Pilon and John Mouland, Karen Tucker, Luke Silkowski, Mardi Love, Steve Allen, Ian Robilliard, Mark Tipple, Sarah Ferman, Paul Barnett, Chris Parker, Brad Wilson, Marilyn Caruana, Scott Cunningham, Matthew Skinner and Kieren Moore for joining the Minister and me for this valuable discussion.

I strongly encourage all local sports clubs in my electorate to take advantage of the funding available to improve sport facilities and increase community participation, whether it be through the Local Sport Grant Program, the Local Sport Defibrillation Program or other opportunities. As I have previously said, active kids are happy kids, which is why this Government is working hard to provide sporting opportunities for families and local clubs. We are committed to ensuring that every local community in New South Wales benefits from the Liberal Government's strong economic management. I am 100 per cent committed to ensuring that the Central Coast community, including my electorate, gets its fair share.

STATE BUDGET

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) (18:51): On Tuesday the Liberal-Nationals Government handed down a budget that many are saying was for all of New South Wales. When I look at the detail, some of the real winners were the people of East Hills. Two points highlight just how good this budget is. It was evident when even the Federal member for Blaxland, Jason Clare, tried to claim credit for our funding announcement for Bankstown hospital. It became even clearer today when it was compared with Labor's budget, which delivers nothing for our community. The Federal member is trying to claim credit for the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals announcement to upgrade Bankstown hospital. He clearly was not watching when I raised the issue in this House and he was not aware of the countless meetings I have had with the Minister, the local health district, hospital staff and locals. The last time he Clare wrote to the New South Wales Minister for Health was in 2014. However, I will consider his attempt to take credit for it as a compliment.

This year's budget handed down by our Treasurer has set aside \$25 million for the upgrade of Bankstown hospital. The funding will go towards the expansion of the Bankstown-Lidcombe emergency department, new features for children and better care and facilities for people with mental health conditions who attend the emergency department. The upgrade does not stop there. The hospital has been allocated additional funding, which has been set aside for planning for future upgrades. The Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital emergency department will be able to meet the growing demand of our community. However, I will continue to fight for future redevelopment opportunities of the whole hospital and not just a temporary solution.

For years our local hospital was ignored by Labor as it took us for granted. Local staff, patients and their families deserve better. The funding announced by this Liberal-Nationals Government will deliver world-class healthcare facilities. This is a win for the people of East Hills. On Tuesday it was pretty obvious that this was a great budget for the people of East Hills. From the youngest to the oldest, from the mothers to the tradies and the small businesses, we are all winners. We will benefit from subsidised child care, reduced payroll tax, more apprenticeships and more creative kids—and yes, we got Henry Lawson Drive.

Just how good our budget was became even clearer today when I listened to the Leader of the Opposition speaking about it. I listened for "East Hills", and guess what? There was nothing, not a single mention of our community. I thought the Leader of the Opposition might mention Bankstown, but I was even more shocked when he stated, "We won't proceed with the Bankstown metro conversion". Not only does the Leader of the Opposition not say that he is giving something to East Hills, he says he is taking things away from Bankstown. If the Federal shadow Minister for Trade and Investment, Jason Clare, really wants to comment on the New South Wales budget, I ask him to condemn the New South Wales Labor leader for his budget.

RIVERSTONE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (18:56): I update the House on what I consider to be a momentous inclusion in the State budget, that is, the allocation of funds to acquire a site for a new hospital at Rouse Hill. I am glad that the member for Castle Hill is in the Chamber because this announcement equally affects his electorate. This announcement is historic because I believe it will be the first new hospital in the Sydney metropolitan area since 1982. I acknowledge that there have been upgrades to hospitals and replacement hospitals in the area but new public hospitals are major investments. While we know that this Government is readily building new hospitals in country towns and regional centres right around New South Wales, most of those projects are for replacement or upgraded existing facilities. A brand-new public hospital in the Sydney metropolitan area is a rare event.

I am delighted that this project will come to fruition and that the funds have been made available in this budget for the acquisition of a site. Construction will commence in the next term of parliament, as was promised. We are on track for what was initially committed in 2015 by then Premier Mike Baird and then Minister for Health Jillian Skinner. That commitment is a result of the privatisation of the electricity poles and wires, a transaction that Labor would not have embarked upon. Labor actively opposed the transaction and would say today that on principle it would not embark on such a transaction.

Under Labor the funds that have been made available for this historic step would not have been available. We would not be getting a new hospital in the north-west of Sydney but for that transaction. The Coalition Government made a decision to recycle assets into productive sensible uses in the community's interest. I thank former Premier Baird and former Minister Skinner, along with current Premier Berejiklian and Minister Hazzard, for delivering this great boon for the people of north-western Sydney. I acknowledge the advocacy of my colleagues the member for Castle Hill, the member for Hawkesbury and the member for Baulkham Hills who have all put their shoulders to the wheel to make sure the Government's commitment came to fruition with this announcement. I particularly thank Minister Hazzard, who has put up with my constant nagging for this project.

The new hospital at Rouse Hill will serve the North West Priority Growth Area, an area of north-western Sydney where eventually there will be 90,000 new dwellings. Some of these dwellings have already been completed; we have rolled out new suburbs and many more are still to come. The eventual infill capacity of those new releases will be 90,000 new dwellings housing about 250,000 people. It is a huge development in a new part of Sydney, and this prudent Government's response to provide a new public hospital is entirely appropriate. It is an entirely appropriate step to plan for the future of the region and the needs of the residents as new suburbs are developed.

There is no doubt that the hospital development will take time. It will be a gradual process, starting small and getting bigger, as has happened in the development of every other public hospital. I note that the Government is also expanding Blacktown hospital, Westmead Hospital and others in the region to make sure that we meet the needs of existing residents. The Government is putting about \$1 billion into Westmead Hospital and about \$700 million into Blacktown-Mount Druitt hospitals. It is not as if the Government is putting money into one hospital and not another; it is certainly meeting the needs of the whole region. Those capital investments are being matched by increases in frontline services: increased numbers of doctors, nurses, midwives, allied health professionals and, in this budget, funds for 750 extra paramedics.

Since 2011 there have been more than 16,000 nurses, midwives, doctors, allied health professionals and hospital support staff added to our health system in New South Wales. It is a massive commitment of frontline services and of people serving our community. That has only been possible because of tough financial decisions and good financial management by this Government. This Government has had to do some things that have been opposed by those opposite but which were manifestly in the public interest in order to be able to deliver this sort of outcome for the people of our communities.

I am delighted this evening to be able to welcome the first steps towards the new public hospital in the Rouse Hill region. Today we do not know where that site will be, but now that the money is in the bank, in the hands of the health department, the department will be able to go shopping, visit real estate agents and come up with a site that we will learn about in the not-too-distant future. It is great for the north-west of Sydney and for the whole of the Sydney metropolitan region to see a new public hospital on the way.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I thank the member for Riverstone and acknowledge his advocacy for the Rouse Hill hospital.

TRIBUTE TO GABE SMITH

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (19:00): I was recently contacted by local Rouse Hill business owner Michael Whybrew of Action Paintball who had received a call from the father of a terminally ill young boy whose dream was to shoot a paintball gun. Gabe Smith is a 13-year-old boy who was diagnosed with an atypical teritoid rhabdoid tumour [ATRT] when he was just 11. Gabe, who has a terrific sense of humour, has been fighting strongly since the day he was diagnosed. Gabe completed his treatment in August 2017 and was in remission for six months but the cancer aggressively returned. There is no known cure for relapsed ATRT cancer.

For the last four months, Gabe has been in palliative care at Bear Cottage, Manly, and he has been having the time of his life. Gabe's father, Matt Smith, and mother, Rachel Hilditch, talked with Gabe about things he may want to do and experience. He has met some amazing people, like Sydney Swan Lance "Buddy" Franklin. He has cooked with celebrity chef Ed Halmagyi, had lunch with pro surfers Mick Fanning and Adrian Buchan and spent time with Cronulla Sharks star Josh Dugan. One of the things Gabe really wanted to do was to play paintball, which under current legislation was not allowed because a person must be 16 years or older. When Michael at Action Paintball contacted me, I knew that we needed to get this done for this young boy.

Together with the NSW Police Force, we were able not only to facilitate the approval for this to happen but to make it an experience that no-one involved could ever forget. I particularly want to thank NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller and his Chief Executive Officer Stephen Whyte who, within 24 hours of my contacting them, approved the entire process. On Friday 8 June, officers from the Northern Beaches Police Area Command collected Gabe, his best mate and his father, Matt, from Bear Cottage and took them to North Head where they were met by a police PolAir helicopter. They were taken for a ride over the Sydney Harbour Bridge to get a close look at the bridge climbers and were then flown to a secured landing zone near Action Paintball Games, Rouse Hill.

Gabe arrived to see his name adorned on a large welcome sign and he was greeted by some of Australia's best professional paintball players, including the legendary Iceman. These players have had incredible national and international achievements and some of them presented Gabe with medals they had won, signed jerseys and even a championship ring. Gabe wore the New South Wales Police overalls he was given by Local Area

Commander Rob Critchlow and the amazing police officers from my own Hills Local Area Command. I, along with the others, wore the standard paintball gear. We then headed out to watch Gabe do some target practice before seven of us lined up like lambs to the slaughter to face Gabe and a barrage of paintballs. I believe he hit his father first with a single shot. Then it began; a hurricane of paintballs rained down on all of us.

I was getting hit left, right and centre. We all ran for cover and I made the decision to peek my head around the corner to see what was going on. Whack! The first and only headshot of the day got me. Well done, Gabe. I wonder how many people would love to be in Gabe's shoes and shoot their local member of Parliament, albeit with a paintball. Afterwards, we gathered back inside at Action Paintball for lunch, which was kindly provided by Darren Pettit, the owner of local restaurant Meze Me. Gabe was then driven back to Bear Cottage by the State Highway Patrol, who did a short but very quick detour through Galston Gorge for a little extra excitement to cap off the day. I thank Michael Whybrew and all the staff at Action Paintball Rouse Hill for hosting this day and for reaching out to me and letting me know about Gabe's plight.

I thank also the many members of the paintball community who banded together to make the dream of a young boy a reality. Most importantly, I thank Rob Critchlow, Superintendent Commander of The Hills Local Area Command and a good mate of mine. He went with a simple request for an officer to attend on the day and decided he was going to turn it into a full-day experience if he could, on behalf of Gabe. His efforts in getting the PolAir helicopter involved along with the Northern Beaches Police Area Command and the State highway patrol are to be commended. A large contingent of officers from Castle Hill also participated, like I did, and also bore the brunt of many paint balls.

In closing, I would like to say to Gabe Smith: it was an honour to meet you, your family and your friends. He achieved what I thought no-one would ever have a chance of achieving, and that is getting me on a paintball field. And Gabe, at the tender age of 13, you also have achieved being the first person under the age of 16 to be able to get on a paintball field in the whole of New South Wales. They say "Making one person happy will not change the entire world, but it can change the world for that one person". In this case, making that one person happy has changed all of us who took part on the day. A big shout-out to June, Jacky and Ali, my office staff, for going above and beyond—as they usually do—to make this a special one-off day for a very special young lad.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:05): I commend the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services for bringing this inspirational story to the House. It was a wonderful collaborative effort. I represent part of the northern beaches and I am well aware of the great work that is done for young children at Bear Cottage, which also should be commended. Indeed, all the parties to whom the Minister referred ought be commended. The Minister should be commended not only as the local member but also as somebody who, through his ministerial portfolio of Youth, has demonstrated that he is a man with a caring nature and is also able to contribute in a practical way to making the lives of young people better.

ETTAMOGAH RAIL HUB

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (19:06): On 31 May I announced massive funding from the New South Wales Coalition Government for businesses on the border. Colin Rees, Kellie Rees, Cameron Jackson, Rob Perkins and the team at the Ettamogah Rail Hub, a little north of Albury, have worked exceptionally hard on their plans to expand an amazing rail freight hub which is located strategically just 10 kilometres from Albury's central business district, which has the facilities of a major regional city, is linked into the Sydney-Melbourne national rail lines and sits right beside arguably Australia's most significant business highway, the Hume Freeway. One cannot imagine a better location for a rail and road freight interchange. What a place to conduct business logistics and freight transport.

Clients of the hub enjoy the efficiencies both in terms of cost savings and time management. This is about making it quicker, easier and more affordable to manage freight across this vast continent and even on to export markets. From its earliest beginnings in July 2009, this has been a matter of private enterprise in command. Private money has been put on the line, dreams have been dreamed, and a comprehensive vision articulated with skill, commitment and passion to the State Government. I was incredibly pleased to bear the good tidings to Ettamogah Rail Hub, along with \$7.6 million in grant money. The project, which is funded as part of the Fixing Country Rail program, will see siding capacity increased by more than five kilometres. The siding upgrade will improve rail efficiency by enabling trains of up to 1,200 metres in length to be loaded off the main line. The use of longer trains will cut delivery times and allow more goods to be transported by rail, reducing costs for both producers and consumers.

This grant reminds us why we choose to live and work in New South Wales. It is because this Government is bringing wealth, growth, employment and opportunity to regional New South Wales and in particular to Albury. It might come as a surprise to anyone who has not been paying attention for these past few years but this Government is breaking the mould. It does not do things necessarily the way that previous or other governments

worked. This grant is, fundamentally, taxpayer money. It does not come from some kind of magic box hidden under the bed. We are prudent in how we spend people's money. But spend it we do, especially when we are approached with a business or plan that is capable of really taking off with an appropriate injection of financial or other support. When a project stacks up and is realistically competitive, the Government will support it. This Government is providing 100 per cent of the funding being sought—as it has with Albury's airport expansion, tourism plans to improve access to the Murray River across three council areas, the planned emergency department for Albury Hospital and more. The New South Wales Government is supporting projects that will benefit not only the people of the Albury electorate but also Victorians.

I thank Colin, Cameron and the staff of the Ettamogah Rail Hub for their efforts to make this transport hub a success. I wish them all the best for the future and I pass on the best wishes of the New South Wales Government. I have seen the plans and I know that a wonderful expansion will now be a reality. This will bring business, growth and opportunities to the border region. The rail hub has roots stretching all the way back to Colin's mother, who launched her own freight business in the mid-1950s—South Suburban Taxi Trucks—with "two hundred pounds on the kitchen table". It seems many lessons about business were learned at that table. Colin took up the mantle, starting a timber transport business, then haulage and plastic distribution and then on to rail. The third generation, represented by daughter, Kellie, has now well and truly joined the family industry. They are a force to be reckoned with.

As I mentioned, the grant to Ettamogah Rail Hub was provided under the Fixing Country Rail program. It is well understood that freight transport adds considerably to the costs of products and materials that make the transition from regional factories and farms to the ports at or near our major cities. Huge distances and difficult logistics problems must be overcome on a daily basis. Fixing Country Rail is not just about supporting business; it is about creating and maintaining jobs, growth and economic productivity in regional New South Wales by reducing the cost of getting goods to market or to the next stage in their processing. Whole communities benefit. If we can help keep costs down, we will be continually sharpening the competitiveness of Australian businesses and the nation itself. Infrastructure and its renewal, replacement and improvement is one area where there is room for government to step in and provide a timely funding boost that renders expansion possible. There is a famous saying that is intended to express caution to someone who is just a little too optimistic and who therefore risks disappointment. It goes like this:

Sometimes the light at the end of the tunnel ... is a train.

At Ettamogah, we have wanted to see those long trains coming, and optimism and sheer hard work have been rewarded. Congratulations to Ettamogah Rail Hub.

WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER ANDREW MARTINI

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:11): Andrew Martini is a St Ives local and TAFE NSW student who won a gold medal in the Restaurant Service category at the WorldSkills Australia 2018 National Championships. He received the prestigious award after competing in Australia's largest skills competition, which was hosted at the International Convention Centre Sydney earlier this month. Andrew's win has secured him a place on the Australian WorldSkills team, known as the Skilleroos, to compete with the world's best at the forty-fifth WorldSkills International competition finals to be held in Russia next year. After his win, Andrew commented:

I know the next few months will be tough as I will be in training for the event and I really hope the whole country gets behind Team Australia for WorldSkills 2019 like they do our sporting teams.

TAFE NSW students such as Andrew Martini are in high demand because of their relevant and practical skills. I am pleased that the recent budget announcements for TAFE and vocational training will help open up further opportunities for many young people like Andrew. He is showcasing how vocational training can lead to successful employment and career opportunities. I wish Andrew and the Australian Skilleroos all the best for the forty-fifth WorldSkills International competition 2019. As his local member of Parliament, I am proud of Andrew and the achievements he is making in an area that does not receive the same attention that we focus on our sporting achievements. I endorse Andrew's comments. Let us get behind Andrew and the Australian WorldSkills team.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:14 until
Tuesday 7 August 2018 at 12:00.**