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Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 8 August 2018

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 8 August 2018

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (SOCIAL HOUSING) BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 7 August 2018.

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (10:11): I am very pleased to support the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. The Government wants to ensure that the social housing system is fair and equitable for all. We want to ensure that the system is able to provide support to those in need at the earliest opportunity. But we also want to ensure tenants take responsibility for their actions and respect the privilege that they have been provided.

When a person receives a social housing benefit to which they are not entitled, they prevent someone who is more vulnerable from receiving access to the benefits that stable housing brings. Additionally, where a tenant causes damage in public housing they are diverting resources away from building better and more social housing and into repairs and maintenance costs that would not otherwise have been required. That is not fair to tenants currently in the social housing system, who are sick and tired of their reputations being wrecked by those doing the wrong thing and those who are waiting for support on the NSW Housing Register.

The aim of the bill is to create a fairer and more equitable social housing system by ensuring that social housing resources are provided to those most in need and not to people seeking to take advantage of the system. This includes imposing mandatory terminations by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] where a tenant has been convicted of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act 2001, empowering the Secretary of Family and Community Services [FACS] to investigate and prosecute allegations of private rental subsidy fraud and implementing a risk-based rental bonds scheme.

The bill also provides approved community housing providers with the power to terminate the lease of a registrable person on the recommendation of the Commissioner of NSW Police and with the approval of the Secretary of Family and Community Services. To focus on mandatory terminations for those convicted of fraud, rental rebate fraud currently occurs where a tenant fails to disclose his or her income, or deliberately provides incorrect details regarding their household composition, income or assets, which results in a tenant receiving a greater rental rebate than he or she is entitled to receive.

A public housing rental rebate is provided in recognition of some tenants having fewer means than other members of the community to meet the essential costs of housing, especially in high cost locations such as Sydney and coastal areas. Where a person obtains a rental rebate to which they are not entitled it results in a social housing property being used by a person who could potentially satisfy their own housing needs elsewhere. In order to combat fraud, FACS actively investigates and prosecutes allegations of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act 2001 as agent for the Land and Housing Corporation, which is the landlord of the property.

However, astonishingly, even after a successful conviction is recorded by a local or District Court on the basis that the tenant has defrauded the public housing system, there is no provision that allows for FACS to terminate the tenancy immediately. Instead, FACS must backdate the rental subsidy to the correct level and then seek termination from NCAT on the basis of rental arrears. It is a time-consuming process that I am advised has in some cases taken far more than a year and does not provide a guarantee that a tenant who has been convicted of fraud will lose their right to remain in public housing. During that time the property could otherwise have been allocated to someone truly in need of assistance.

This simply does not meet the community expectation that those who defraud the public housing system should lose the benefit of public housing and lose it immediately. In response, the bill inserts new section 154FA into the Residential Tenancies Act to mandate that NCAT terminate a social housing tenancy where the tenant

has been convicted of an offence under section 69 or 69A of the Housing Act unless the tenant satisfies the tribunal that exceptional circumstances exist. Importantly, FACS will be able to make an application for the termination of a tenancy agreement by giving notice in writing to the tenant concerned but does not have to give the tenant a notice of termination.

The Government strongly believes that the amendments proposed will improve the process to terminate the residential tenancy agreements of those who have been convicted of fraud and decrease the time it takes to re-let the property to a person who is actually in need. Other amendments proposed in this bill also contribute to this Government's commitment to building a fairer and more equitable social housing system that supports the most vulnerable. This includes giving power to the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to investigate and prosecute private rental subsidy fraud to prevent people from accessing it inappropriately.

It includes the introduction of a risk-based rental bond scheme that targets only those causing damage in public and Aboriginal housing. As many speakers on this side of the House have already stated, if you do the right thing in public housing you have nothing to fear from the changes proposed. Nothing will change for you. This bill is simply designed to crack down on wreckers and rorters who seek to take advantage of the privilege that has been provided to them to the detriment of others. Anyone who chooses to oppose this bill clearly does not have the interests of the vast majority of tenants at heart.

Anyone opposing this bill clearly would rather support those who cause damage to or defraud public housing than stand up for those doing the right thing. They clearly have no interest in ensuring that those doing the wrong thing are held accountable for their actions, and they clearly have no interest in making the social housing system fair and equitable for all. I encourage all members of the House to support the bill to stop people taking advantage of the system to the detriment of those most in need.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (10:18): I welcome this opportunity to speak in support of the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. The bill supports the Government's Future Directions strategy for social housing in New South Wales, which is delivering more opportunities for tenants to improve their lives and to reach their potential in creating a better social housing experience. In return for those improvements, the Future Directions strategy places responsibility on tenants to be accountable for their actions. This Government will not stand idly by while convicted fraudsters are allowed to remain in the social housing system. This Government will not stand idly by while a small minority of tenants continue to think it is okay to damage their public housing property—trashing what others would value. As a result of the Department of Family and Community Services being able to take direct action, others will have an opportunity to take advantage of the social housing system.

I note the comments made by the member for Murray regarding this issue. The bill targets those doing the wrong thing and sends a clear and strong message that defrauding the public housing system or damaging public housing is not acceptable. The bill allows, for the first time, the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to investigate and prosecute alleged subsidy fraud when a client receives a private rental subsidy, in the same way that the Land and Housing Corporation is able to investigate and prosecute rental rebate fraud for those living in public housing. This is important because private rental support is often provided to those who are in the greatest need of housing support.

In particular, the private rental subsidy, which allows a tenant to reside in a private rental property while paying public housing rent, is provided only when a tenant has no alternative options to resolve their immediate housing need. Simply put, those who are receiving a private rental subsidy that they do not deserve should be investigated and prosecuted to the full extent of the law in recognition that they have prevented someone who is truly in need from receiving support. We regularly see those situations on the Central Coast. While the Department of Family and Community Services can refer those matters to the police, in practice they are not a priority for investigation. The bill will discourage people from seeking to obtain a benefit that they do not deserve. It sends a clear message that the Department of Family and Community Services will not only fine those people, it will also commence a criminal prosecution.

The proposed legislation supports the implement of the Future Directions strategy through the introduction of a risk-based rental bond scheme. The risk-based approach for public housing rental bonds responds to stakeholder concerns that the original rental bond scheme proposed under the Future Directions strategy would unfairly punish those who are unlikely to cause damage, particularly the elderly. Instead, through the provisions of this bill, the Government will introduce a rental bond scheme that targets those causing damage in public and Aboriginal housing by requiring a bond to be paid by existing tenants when they cause significant damage or by returning tenants who in the previous six years have a history of causing significant damage in public and Aboriginal housing. As the member for Murray said, if people are not doing the wrong thing, they have nothing to worry about.

This provision acknowledges tenants who have a high risk of causing damage and provides an incentive for them to change their behaviour. It also futureproofs the cost of rectifying intentional damage by providing the ability to access a bond at the end of a tenancy, should the need arise. In developing the rental bond scheme, the Government has been mindful of the complex needs of our tenants. To ensure that the imposition of a bond does not result in financial hardship, bonds will be able to be paid in instalments over a two-year period or longer, and payment can be extended in extenuating circumstances. Additionally, discretion will continue to be exercised, taking into account a tenant's health and medical circumstances. Furthermore, no bond will be placed on a tenant when the damage is found to have been caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence.

The bill supports the implementation of the Future Directions strategy by providing the power to approve community housing providers to terminate the lease of a registrable person on the recommendation of the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force and with the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services when there are safety risks. This will support the finalisation of the Social Housing Management Transfers Program, which will deliver better services for tenants in New South Wales through the transfer of management of more than 14,000 properties to community housing providers from 20 October 2018.

The transfer of management will result in increased tenancy support options and improved sustainability of the social housing system through increased revenue from Commonwealth rent assistance. It is imperative that community housing providers are able to act quickly in responding to safety issues that arise for tenants and the broader community, particularly in relation to registrable persons. The bill therefore extends part 7A of the Housing Act 2001 to extend the power to terminate the lease of a registrable person, which is currently available to the Department of Family and Community Services, to approved community housing providers who have been authorised by the Minister, who is present in the Chamber, on the recommendation of the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force.

An additional safeguard has been inserted into section 58B which specifies that an approved community housing provider can only exercise its power to terminate the tenancy of a registrable person with the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services. This Government is getting on with the job of delivering more and better social housing across New South Wales. As a government, we will not shy away from making these hard decisions to ensure that the system is fair for everyone and we will not shy away from ensuring that the system provides support to those who truly need it. This bill takes a balanced and measured approach to target those doing the wrong thing whilst ensuring that the vast majority of good social housing tenants are not punished for the actions of a few bad eggs.

In conclusion, I thank Minister Goward and her team for their hard work on this legislation. Just last week Minister Goward joined me in my electorate at Green Point Community Centre for a homelessness and domestic violence forum. We know that the issues in the Family and Community Services portfolio—homelessness, domestic and family violence and social housing—require different levels of government to work with non-government providers. There is always more to be done, which is why the Minister and I met with and listened to the needs of those working on the ground.

I am pleased that we are a government that listens to stakeholders and community members and then acts to implement the best policies for our State. That is why legislation is being introduced to deliver more opportunities for tenants to improve their lives and reach their potential. No clearer demonstration of the Government listening was the session at Green Point last week. I thank the Minister for her generosity and time and arranging for that important stakeholder engagement. We are not going to stand by while a small minority of tenants continue to think it is acceptable to damage public housing property when someone in desperate need could utilise and appreciate it. I encourage all members to support this legislation to ensure that the social housing system is fair and equitable for everyone in New South Wales.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (10:27): On behalf of The Greens, I speak on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018, which seeks to implement a bond scheme for public housing tenants that includes termination of tenancy for non-payment and introduces mandatory termination of tenancy where someone living in public housing or community housing is found guilty of certain fraud offences. Minister Goward stated in her second reading speech that this bill aims to send a clear message to tenants that they have a responsibility to look after their properties and be honest in their representations. I have a clear message to Minister Goward, the Liberals and The Nationals: you are the ones shirking your responsibilities when it comes to looking after public housing properties and the people who live in them and you are the ones who are not being honest in your representations when it comes to the potential outcomes of this bill.

This week is National Homelessness Week. This year the Minister for Family and Community Services, and Minister for Social Housing has chosen National Homelessness Week to introduce a bill to this place that places further financial hardship and pressure on public housing tenants and makes it easier for people living in public and social housing to be evicted if they are not able to pay. I have a pop quiz for those playing along at

home: What happens to a person when they are evicted from public housing? You do not have to be an expert to get that one right. They become homeless. Perhaps Minister Goward thinks that National Homelessness Week is about doing what you can to contribute to homelessness. The bill before the House today has two key functions: to implement a bond scheme for social housing tenants that includes termination of tenancy for non-payment and to allow the termination of tenancy where the tenant is found guilty of certain criminal offences. This bill will enable public housing providers—

Ms Pru Goward: It's okay for fraudsters to continue.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: When the member for Newtown addresses her comments through the Chair I will intervene.

Ms JENNY LEONG: Apparently the rental bond will be required only if a tenant has caused significant damage to the property. Details of how that will work are set out in ministerial guidelines which we have not yet seen. In addition, under these yet to be seen guidelines, existing tenants will be required to pay a bond if they cause significant damage to a property. Again, apparently no rental bond will be required of a victim of domestic or family violence if the damage is caused by the perpetrator. However, it is unclear how this will be determined and, if the incident happened as a result of a domestic violence incident, how it will be applied. We have been assured that the ministerial guidelines state that these requirements will not be imposed on people with ill health or those who are unable to maintain the premises.

Homelessness Week is usually an important time for people with compassion and a heart to highlight the challenges that homeless people face. However, the Liberal Minister for Family and Community Services, and Minister for Social Housing has a different approach. Let us cast our minds back to this time last year when she observed Homelessness Week by rushing through legislation that increased police powers and forcibly removed homeless people from Martin Place. Rather than acting with compassion and using the stark reality of the tent city set-up in Martin Place to address homelessness, the Minister simply tried to remove the problem from her sight. Happy Homelessness Week from the Liberal Party and The Nationals. If I had been asked last year whether this heartless act which is so lacking in compassion could have become worse, I would have said, "No", but it has become worse.

Tenants who are slapped with a bond of \$1,400 presumably will receive a letter telling them that they have to pay it within 14 days. If they are on a basic Newstart payment they are getting \$545.80 a fortnight which is \$272.90 per week. Imagine how stressful it would be for tenants to receive a letter advising them that in 14 days they would have to pay five times their weekly income. Let us put this into perspective. On my calculation the Minister for Family and Community Services would receive a letter advising her that she would have to pay \$30,630, which is five times her weekly salary, within 14 days. I have read the bill and I know it is possible for tenants to pay that back over a number of years. Imagine the stress to which those vulnerable people would be subjected when they have a large debt hanging over their heads for three years and when they are earning only a miserly amount on a Newstart allowance and are trying to get their lives back on track. It is cruel.

Aside from the extreme financial hardships that this legislation would impose, The Greens are concerned about the punitive nature of the bill. This is the second attempt by the Minister for Family and Community Services, outside the criminal justice system, to impose an additional punishment on people living in social housing. We have seen that in relation to the local allocation strategy and we are seeing it again in this bill. This bill imposes a mandatory requirement for the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to terminate tenancies as a result of tenants committing certain criminal offences.

Ms Pru Goward: Fraud.

Ms JENNY LEONG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask you to direct the Minister not to interject. The Minister was heard in silence. Perhaps the Minister is defensive because we will see—

Ms Pru Goward: You debase this Parliament.

Ms Tamara Smith: Point of order: According to standing orders the Minister should direct her comments through the Chair.

Ms JENNY LEONG: I seek an extension of time.

Leave not granted.

Mr Chris Minns: That is outrageous. They have had to listen to 10 minutes of a contradictory point of view and they have fallen in a heap. It is ridiculous. We listened to them for the past hour.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the member for Kogarah raising a point of order?

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: In accordance with standing orders I move:

That the member for Newtown be further heard for a period of five minutes.

Question put.

Division called for.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: MEMBER'S SPEAKING TIME

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the member for Newtown to continue her speech for a further period of five minutes.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Chris Minns: Is this in order?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am ruling it in order. The division is called off, as per the motion of the Leader of the House.

Bills

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (SOCIAL HOUSING) BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Division called off.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (10:39): For members who might not have been watching what was happening in the Chamber, I began to call out the Minister for Family and Community Services for introducing a bill so lacking in heart and compassion during Homelessness Week. The Minister began to interject, causing my time to be lost and I requested an extension of time.

Mr Kevin Conolly: Point of order: The member has been given additional time to address the bill, not to criticise the Minister or talk about other matters.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Newtown has the call.

Ms JENNY LEONG: The Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018 will create more homelessness in New South Wales by evicting vulnerable public housing tenants. The bill will make it mandatory that the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] evict people who are convicted of certain criminal offences. Claims that this punitive bill will promote behavioural change by tenants are clearly misguided. When it is often underlying mental health, drugs or alcohol, or domestic violence issues that cause the problems, the real behavioural change must come from the Minister and her departmental staff who are clearly failing in their obligations to provide support, essential maintenance and assistance to those on the public housing waiting list. The bill will place further unnecessary pressure on vulnerable people who are living in social housing. Those people may be struggling to maintain their tenancies as a result of a lack of mental health support, which is also a responsibility of the Liberal-Nationals. They may be survivors of domestic violence, people with a disability, people who are elderly or people who are at risk of negative social and health outcomes or circumstances.

A broad range of stakeholder groups including the Tenants' Union of NSW, Homelessness NSW, Shelter NSW, People with Disability Australia, the NSW Council of Social Service and the Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of NSW have raised serious concerns about this bill and issued a joint statement calling for "the plan to be dropped amid concerns it will make life harder for people living in public housing, increase administrative costs of the Family and Community Services department, and be unlikely to have any benefits for the department in costs or tenant behaviour." In their statement those key organisations referred to the announcement to introduce this bill as a "surprise change from the NSW Government". That begs the question as to what the Minister was referring to when she stated in her second reading speech:

This bill is the culmination of an extensive consultation process, including consultation with non-government service providers and peak bodies and government agencies.

I ask the Minister to clarify in her reply which non-government service providers and peak bodies she consulted and what they actually said. It would be quite misleading to say that peak bodies were widely consulted if, when they were engaged in that consultation, they opposed the introduction of these measures. Many other questions also need to be answered because ministerial guidelines are being referred to that are as yet unseen and potentially not drafted. It is all unknown. Will people living in public housing be required to pay a rental bond irrespective

of whether they have taken full responsibility for the damage and paid for its cost? What if they did not cause the damage? How is damage defined? When was it caused and what are the exemptions? Who determines whether it was a perpetrator or a survivor of a domestic violence incident who caused the damage? Given the department's track record on inspections and maintenance, could this mean that tenants will be forced to pay bonds for damage caused years ago by former residents or that are the result of the failure of Housing NSW to maintain its properties?

We know that the current maintenance backlog for public housing is out of control. Tenants living in public housing are already responsible for damage and cleaning costs. There is no need for this bill. It is a punitive measure, and another way for the Minister to evict people from public housing to address the disgraceful waiting list as a result of failures of successive governments in New South Wales to invest in adequate public housing to address its outrageous backlog and the ever-growing numbers of homelessness. The Minister is creating a cruel game of musical chairs that will increase housing insecurity and financial stress for those most in need. It will disproportionately affect people with mental illness and who are most vulnerable, and be used as an excuse to target specific groups. People in need of a place to call home will be stuck in a loop of housing insecurity: They will be kicked out of public housing and become homeless, approached by a homelessness housing specialist team when they are sleeping rough, placed back on the waiting list with priority status, and then enter the cycle again.

The Greens oppose this bill and condemn the Minister, and the Liberal Party and The Nationals for this heartless and cruel legislation introduced in Homelessness Week. This bill will seek to further increase the financial hardship on those who are most in need and do not have a safe and secure place to call home. It should also be noted that the New South Wales Labor Party is not opposing this bill, which is disappointing to me, housing advocates, public housing tenants and vulnerable communities. The contribution of the member for Sydney makes it clear that it is The Greens and the Independents in this place who are standing up for social justice and are the real Opposition. I know that the Liberals and the Minister would prefer me to not be in this place and raise these concerns, but I also know that the hundreds of thousands of people who face housing insecurity and the reality of being evicted because of these cruel and heartless policies and pieces of legislation are pleased that we are here. The Greens oppose this bill. It is an absolute disgrace.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (10:46): I take issue with the last comment from the member for Newtown, particularly that The Greens and the Independents are the only ones taking this responsibility seriously. Although I appreciate the passion of the member, nobody in this place has a mortgage over empathy, compassion, caring and wanting to make sure that the vulnerable and the voiceless in our community get the support and care that they need. The suggestion by the member that there is a lack of heart or empathy from this Government or the Minister is nothing but cheap politics. It is clear from some of the interjections that her comments have no basis and were emotive at best.

I will now address the bill in some detail to clarify some comments that were made. I am proud to support the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018, which fundamentally delivers a fairer and more equitable social housing system in New South Wales. It has genuine compassion. I speak with some authority on this. There are more than 1,201 social housing tenancies on the northern beaches. They are administered and looked after by Bridge Housing. The chief executive officer, John Nicolades, who I have spoken with on a number of occasions, is doing a fantastic job. It is absolute rubbish to hear members opposite saying that those of us on this side of the House have no empathy or compassion.

Unlike members opposite, this Government continues to deliver on its commitment to build more social housing, and to provide more opportunities, support and incentives for tenants and applicants to avoid and/or leave social housing and create a better social housing experience for tenants through the implementation of its Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy. Through Future Directions, the New South Wales Government now has the biggest and best social housing building program in the country, something that people would not have thought was the case at all, had they listened to what the member opposite just said.

Our Communities Plus program is delivering 23,500 new and replacement social and affordable housing dwellings, our Social and Affordable Housing Fund is delivering 3,400 social and affordable housing dwellings across phase one and phase two, and our Millers Point sales program is delivering more than 1,500 new homes for vulnerable families—all properties that members opposite have opposed every step of the way. Whilst this is an incredible result for our tenants, we must also act to address inequities in the system that have resulted in a vast majority of tenants and applicants who do the right thing being punished by those who do not. That was missing from the comments of the member for Newtown.

Where a person fraudulently claims a benefit they are not entitled to, they have diverted assistance from being provided to someone who is truly vulnerable and in need of assistance. If a tenant commits property damage the Department of Family and Community Services [FACS] must spend money to repair the damage—money that otherwise could have been invested elsewhere in the system. The bill sends a strong message that tenants

should be held accountable for their actions. It sends a strong message that if they choose to take advantage of the benefit that they have been provided, there will be consequences for their actions.

The bill has four components, including the introduction of a risk-based rental bond scheme, imposing mandatory terminations for those convicted of fraud under the Housing Act 2001 unless exceptional circumstances apply, empowering the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to investigate and prosecute private rental subsidy fraud and allowing authorised community housing providers to terminate the lease of a registrable offender on the recommendation of the Commissioner of the NSW Police and with the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services. Those are all eminently sensible policies that most people would agree are needed.

I understand that the risk-based rental bond scheme has been developed following consultation with stakeholders. The member opposite asserted that this was not the case, but that is simply untrue. The consultation suggested that the rental bond scheme proposed under Future Directions unfairly punished those that were unlikely to cause damage, including the elderly. The Government has listened to this feedback and is instead proposing that only those who cause significant damage to public housing will have to pay a bond. This is a fair and balanced approach and means that if tenants do not damage their property they will not be charged a bond.

We need to ensure that provisions for the complexities of our tenants are also incorporated into our new bond scheme, which is why safeguards will be put in place to ensure that the needs of vulnerable clients are taken into account. I note from Minister Goward's second reading speech that this includes that no bond will be required where property damage is caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence. I will put that on the record one more time because it has been suggested that that is not the case: I note from Minister Goward's second reading speech that this includes that no bond will be required where property damage is caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence.

Other factors that will be taken into account when assessing the damage include any health concerns of the tenant and their capacity to maintain the premises. I am advised that where such issues are evident, FACS has discretion not to impose a tenant damage charge and where this discretion is exercised no bond will be imposed. The bill also ensures that those convicted under the Housing Act 2001 for rental rebate fraud will have their tenancies terminated by New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] unless exceptional circumstances apply. This responds to the outrageous situation that a tenant may remain indefinitely in public housing following a conviction, whilst FACS is forced to use other mechanisms to remove the tenant. Those mechanisms are time consuming and do not guarantee an eviction.

The changes in the bill will also allow for a vulnerable person who requires housing assistance to be housed sooner. The bill also enables the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to investigate and prosecute those who misuse private rental assistance. This will ensure that assistance is not being provided to those who do not deserve it and that private rental support is allocated only to the most vulnerable. Most tenants value the benefit they have been provided and have nothing to fear from the provisions of this bill. Indeed a large majority would support the Government's approach as they are sick of being stigmatised by those seeking to do the wrong thing. The bill is a fair and balanced approach that ensures that the Government can continue to support the most vulnerable, whilst holding those that seek to take advantage of the system to account.

I encourage all those who seek to ensure that our social housing system delivers for those in need to support the bill. I encourage all who believe that the social housing system should be fair and equitable to support this bill. I end where I began: It is simply unfair and untrue to suggest that those on this side of the House do not have any empathy or compassion when it comes to caring for the vulnerable and the voiceless in our community. We do. That is demonstrated by this bill and by the good work of this Minister. It will continue to be demonstrated by the good work of this Government. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (10:54): I speak to the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. I state at the outset that Labor will not be opposing the bill but, as with many of this Government's bills, we are concerned that most of the detail will be revealed in the regulations down the track. It is difficult to know how a bill will work without the fine detail. Many social housing tenants live in my electorate and one of the most frequent complaints I receive is about social housing tenants, particularly those who live in unit blocks, who are doing the wrong thing and causing problems for others. I support the general thrust of the bill, and I am sure most people in social housing would also support it, because there should be restrictions on those who deliberately seek to cause damage or to not look after their public housing property, particularly when it impacts on their neighbours.

Recently I held a mobile office at Wyong where many elderly social housing residents again told me how their lives were being impacted by other residents who were doing the wrong thing—whether breaking the law, unruly or threatening behaviour, or causing damage not only to individual units but also to common spaces. For

instance, often social housing residents pull cars apart to work on them in the communal car park and thus take up general parking spaces. I repeat: I agree with the general tenor of the bill—namely, that there should be consequences if people are doing the wrong thing; however, in my role as the shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs I am concerned about the detail of the bill.

I note that in her second reading speech the Minister outlined that there will be protections for people in certain circumstances but I ask the Minister to address in her reply whether there are sufficient protections for situations, for instance, where a partner or parents who are involved with drugs and/or alcohol engage in destructive behaviour and there are children involved. I am concerned that if parents damage social housing property when they are on a drug and/or alcohol binge then their children will be penalised if they are removed from that accommodation. I appreciate that this is a hard one, but the interests of the children should always be put first. Indeed, I am sure all members would agree that children should not suffer the consequences of their parents' actions.

In a bill like this we have to be careful that in trying to fix a problem we are not creating another problem that can then multiply into a range of things for young people—for instance, children missing education because they are constantly on the move. In particular, I want to ensure that there are sufficient protections in rural and remote areas, which do not offer a great deal of options for children if people are removed from their accommodation. Another area of concern is where children have a disability. As a former principal I know of a single mother who had a severely autistic 10-year-old son. The boy broke every window and every door in their home and he bashed holes in walls. She was doing the best to keep him under control but even with a one-to-one aide we had trouble with him when he was at school. Again, the Minister has said that there will be protections but I want to make sure that if children with disability are involved then that will be taken into account and there will be no punitive actions.

The other interesting issue is around fraud. I am sure we all know of public housing tenants who have other people staying with them—someone may ring our offices to complain that people are there who should not be and that this has not been reported. That is fair enough; such fraud should be investigated. But one issue I have become aware of, particularly in regional New South Wales, concerns sorry business. For those who do not know, sorry business is an Aboriginal cultural practice that may involve family members travelling quite long distances to attend funerals. They sometimes stay with relatives for a number of months. In regional areas young people are required to attend sorry business on a regular basis because of the high death rates among Aboriginal people in our regions due to a whole range of reasons. This affects their school attendance.

As part of sorry business, relatives of the deceased person who have travelled far from home may stay with other family members. I do not know whether that is a notifiable issue. If the person the relatives stay with for sorry business is residing in social housing or Aboriginal housing, will that be taken into account? It may be simply lack of knowledge on the part of the tenant that it is contravening their lease. Will that be considered and will there be cultural exemptions for practices such as sorry business? When we consider bills such as this we should take into account cultural practices and keep in mind that a one-size-fits-all approach certainly does not work.

In Aboriginal communities there are often extended family situations and times when family members stay with relatives because of domestic violence or drug and alcohol issues, or for employment reasons. There could be a whole range of reasons that social housing tenants, perhaps because of a lack of knowledge or because they are unable to interact with government—they are often quite scared of government—are not able to notify that their circumstances have changed. I would hate to think people would be penalised because of their cultural practices. I would appreciate it if the Minister will address those issues specifically when she replies to the debate.

There may be provisions in the regulations covering those matters, but we cannot see the regulations so we do not know. These issues are well worth raising particularly, as I mentioned, where children are involved. I believe strongly that children should not be penalised for the sins of their parents. Unfortunately, some young people are born into terrible situations. Parents should do the right thing and behave in an appropriate manner, but children—particularly very young children—cannot control that. It would be terrible if a bill such as this had harsh unintended consequences for children whose parents have done the wrong thing.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (11:03): It is a great pleasure to join my colleagues on this side of the House to speak in support of the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. This bill is about creating fairness and equity in the social housing system, and I commend Minister Goward on her leadership in this area. At the outset, I state my support for the many social housing residents in my electorate—some 800 people. A day does not go past when I do not interact with some of those constituents. Many of this Government's initiatives are about creating more public housing, which is a great. For example, we have seen the sale of some high-value public housing in inner-city areas that was home to only a small number of tenants. We

can put those assets to better use and accommodate the increasing demand for social housing. That is most important.

I note that many of the tenants transferred from inner-city public housing have chosen to live in my electorate, which is fantastic. I am proud of my staff for their support of tenants in my area. They do a wonderful job and we have a good relationship that has allowed us to score many wins for my community. There are many people with medical conditions in public housing and we are supportive of those individuals in my electorate. Where would they be without public housing and the support of the New South Wales taxpayers and of this Government? The queue for public housing has grown over the years, which is a sad reality of life. We must do what we can to support public housing tenants.

A small number of tenants create havoc and do not appreciate the privilege of living in public housing. There are those with mental health issues who do not have appropriate supervision for their complex situations, including supervision of medication, and who can create problems for other tenants. This bill creates fairness and equity within social public housing. The bill will ensure that those in need are not prevented from accessing public housing by those who take advantage of the privilege afforded to them. The overwhelming majority of tenants take pride in where they live. There are members of this House whose grandparents or other family members required public housing at some point in their life, and they took great pride in their home.

A minority of tenants cause damage to public housing property and this bill will create an incentive to change that behaviour. It is a commonsense bill. A long line of people are waiting for public housing, and this asset must be preserved—not to do so is criminal. Authorised community housing providers who manage properties will now be able to take quick action against the small number of people who do not treat taxpayer-funded public housing with respect. I have noted from experiences in my electorate that it is a complex legal issue and a bureaucratic nightmare to evict a problem tenant who is causing havoc in a housing complex. This bill responds to that issue and to community safety concerns.

The provisions of this bill are designed in recognition that the vast majority of social housing tenants are good people who value the benefit they have been given. The provisions of the bill only capture the wreckers and the rorters who do not value the privilege afforded to them. The bill will enable the Government to implement the risk-based rental bond scheme, terminate the lease of those convicted of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act 2001 and give the secretary of FACS the power to investigate and prosecute private rental subsidy fraud. It is common sense and no different from what happens with other rental properties.

These are fair and balanced approaches that mean that those who choose to cause damage or commit fraud are held accountable for their actions. It is a commonsense approach and no different to any other rule that if a constituent does the wrong thing, they pay the price. The risk-based rental bond scheme will mean that tenants causing significant damage in public housing or those who have a history of causing damage will be required to pay a bond in recognition that they are at higher risk of causing damage in the future. Again, it is no different to any other law. We have insurance for our cars. If we do the wrong thing, our premium goes up and we become a high risk. The same principle applies here. It is encouraging people to do the right thing. The bill will go under the radar and affect only a small number of people who are doing the wrong thing. I put on record that those in public housing have nothing to worry about because the overall majority do the right thing. Unfortunately, the bill targets a small number of people for whom we have to create legislation to ensure that they do the right thing.

I am advised that the rental bond scheme has been adjusted to note the complexities of social housing tenants. Members opposite have said that a number of people will not be covered by the scheme and that it will create hardships and other complexities. The bill takes their concerns into consideration. Additionally, payments of the bond may be deferred in exceptional circumstances, and that will cover many of the concerns of members opposite. There are provisions for exceptional circumstances in individual cases of hardship. The bill proposes changes to the Residential Tenancies Act to mandate the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to terminate a social housing tenancy when a tenant has been convicted of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act unless exceptional circumstances apply. Again, there is capacity for flexibility, which is important for any bill that is before this House.

I support the changes because they ensure that a tenancy agreement can be terminated quickly and efficiently for those who have been convicted by a court for abusing their privileges. Thousands of people are waiting to get into public housing and a small number of people are deliberating rorting the system and creating problems. This is a huge problem in my electorate. Those people are not worthy of public housing when others who have done the right thing are still waiting for social housing. The bill provides the same power of the Land and Housing Corporation to the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services to investigate and prosecute private rental subsidy fraud. Again, there is parity and this is common sense.

While I am informed that the Department of Family and Community services can currently report allegations of private rental subsidy fraud to the NSW Police Force, resources in the police sector are limited. Often, through no fault of the police, those allegations are not a priority for the police to investigate. We want those circumstances investigated as soon as possible. Private rental subsidies are often provided to the most vulnerable applicants on the public register and we must act to ensure that they are provided only to those in need. By and large, I support the bill. I commend Minister Goward for her work and leadership in this area and the important sector. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (11:13): I make a contribution to the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2008. In doing so, I acknowledge the community groups' joint statement on public housing bonds and the points that they make. In a joint statement, the Tenants' Union of NSW, Homelessness NSW, Shelter New South Wales, People with Disability New South Wales, New South Wales Council of Social Service, Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of New South Wales have submitted this, amongst other things: People who need public housing are amongst the most poorest in NSW, and asking them to pay thousands of dollars in bonds will be a massive barrier to accessing essential housing. This surprise change from the NSW Government is a blow to people in desperate need of a home. They also submitted:

This is also a baffling beginning to the Homelessness Strategy outlined in the budget introducing measures that will make getting a roof over your head more difficult.

Leo Patterson, Senior Policy Officer of Tenants NSW, said:

The time and money the department will spend on administering the system would be better spent on providing new housing, completing the maintenance backlog or providing more assistance to homeless people.

Karen Walsh, the Chief Executive of Shelter NSW, said, amongst other things:

The policy will have a serious impact on those people already doing it tough.

Katherine McKernan, Chief Executive Officer of Homelessness NSW, said:

This is not only creating further barriers for people in accessing housing but it will also mean that homelessness services will potentially have to use brokerage funding to cover it. The government may end up paying for these costs itself.

I appreciate the sentiments and comments made by those organisations but the Government, which manages public housing, must make decisions in a way that protects the overwhelming majority of the tenants that it houses. For this reason the Opposition does not oppose the bill. The Opposition recognises that as a matter of policy some action needs to be taken. It is all well and good for The Greens to advocate a social justice policy, to be holier than thou, to attack the Opposition for the stand it takes and to impute to the Labor Party some failing over its position. The Greens will never be in government and will never have to make decisions balancing the needs of public housing tenants who are poor, vulnerable and suffering disabilities. There must be recognition of the need for a policy balance—but that does not mean that the Government, in introducing this bill, is actually right.

However, The Greens need to learn a lesson—that is, if they want to advocate for the most vulnerable, particularly if that government is conservative, and they seek changes of substance as distinct from playing politics, then prancing up and down in this House and making such comments as those made by the member for Newtown is not the way to achieve that goal. We all have different philosophies in an adversarial environment where we attack each other on policy but it is another matter to pretend to be holier than thou. This bill requires substantial amendment, as recognised by the Legislative Review Committee, a bipartisan committee required to examine legislation to prevent unfairness or the Government seeking to legislate excessively in respect of a problem. Legislation Review Digest No. 58/56, tabled some time after the introduction of this bill, contains a number of very valid criticisms that the Legislative Council will need to consider.

I hope that Mr David Shoebridge, with the support of the Opposition, will use the skills I know he has to effect improvements to the bill. I hope he will not take the same approach as the member for Newtown, because this bill has serious fundamental flaws, as identified by the Legislative Review Committee. It is the function of the Legislative Review Committee, under the Legislation Review Act 1987, to report to both Houses of Parliament as to whether any bill, by express words or otherwise, trespasses on personal rights and liberties; makes rights, liberties or obligations unduly dependent upon insufficiently defined administrative powers; or makes rights, liberties or obligations unduly dependent upon non-reviewable decisions. The committee has raised a number of issues of substance and concern in respect of this bill which I say require changes. The committee recognises that the Government should have means to take appropriate action against tenants who do not respect the properties they are tenancing. That is the view of the committee, the Government and the Opposition. However, the committee states:

... given the Bill applies to tenants in social housing there is a real risk that there will be some people who will be unable to obtain or remain in social housing as they cannot afford to pay a bond.

The committee also notes that there are aspects of the risk-based scheme that remain unclear. For example, it is unclear how a class of tenant will be determined or how long a person will remain classified in this class of tenants. The Minister outlined that this section will be applied where the tenant has caused significant damage to the property. However, how this is to be determined is not detailed in the Bill and may lead to an inconsistent application of the scheme.

That is a valid criticism of the bill. The bill needs to be amended to ensure that inconsistency in application and approach does not occur when Housing is dealing with the most vulnerable people, many of whom have substantial social, psychiatric or drug addiction problems. More seriously, the committee invites this House to consider Article 11 (1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, of which Australia is a signatory, stating:

... which recognises the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family, which includes adequate food, clothing and housing.

Given the above circumstances, the Committee refers to Parliament—which includes this House—whether the requirement for some social housing tenants to pay a rental bond unduly trespasses on their right to housing.

If it does not intrude or trespass on that right, then a provision should be contained within the bill. If it does trespass on a right under the international covenant, of which Australia is a signatory, it must expressly say when that right will be trespassed upon. The committee states:

Section 58B (1A) and (1B) amend the Housing Act 2001 and outline provisions for the termination of a concurrent lease of registrable persons in certain circumstances. A concurrent lease of a registrable person may be terminated under this provision by the making of an order with the approval of the Secretary.

In her second reading speech, the Minister stated:

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.

That is outlined in section 58C of the principal Act. The committee states:

The Bill extends the power of the Secretary to approve the termination of a concurrent lease of a registrable person by order of an approved community provider. This may be seen to trespass on the right to housing of a registrable person.

Where a registrable person has a right, if that right is intruded upon it is for the Parliament to decide whether or not that right should be impacted upon. It is not a decision to be made by an official of the Executive and certainly not by the Executive. The committee also made reference to proposed section 156D. [*Extension of time*]

Proposed section 156D defines the rental bond guidelines as "guidelines approved by the Minister for the purposes of this section." The proposed section also requires the guidelines to be made publicly available. The Legislation Review Committee observed that "failure to pay all or part of a rental bond is grounds for terminating a social housing tenancy agreement". The committee states:

The Committee generally prefers that substantive matters be dealt with in principal legislation. Given that the matters deferred to the rental guidelines includes the definition of "class of tenant" and the amount of the rental bond, the Committee considers these are matters more appropriately addressed in principal legislation and subject to parliamentary scrutiny.

That issue is a serious failure of the bill. If a standard is going to be developed that allows for the removal of a class of tenant because of a failure to pay a bond, then the standards that are to be applied should be determined by Parliament. It is for Parliament to decide what those standards or rules should be; it should not be for the Minister or an officer within her department to decide. Over a number of years, a practice has developed in the State where standards of behaviour and the rights of individuals are being abrogated by Parliament and handed to the Executive, which in practice means officials employed by the Government. As a legislative arm and representatives of the community, we cannot allow anybody but Parliament to decide the standards of behaviour that should be tolerated. It is for Parliament to decide what standards impact upon the rights of individuals.

Tenants, whether they are public housing tenants or private tenants, have rights and a security of tenure associated with their lease arrangements. Public housing tenants are in a special category. The only point on which I agree with the member for Drummoyne is that the overwhelming majority of public housing tenants are law-abiding, decent and respectful people who are appreciative of the fact that they are provided with public housing. There are problems in the public housing area; I have considerable problems in my electorate, particularly in the Waterloo area. One difficult tenant can impact adversely on the quality of life of all residents and force people to live in fear. When I was first elected to Parliament, there were people in my electorate who were frightened to go to their mailbox because that is where they would be assaulted. But the whole nature of public housing is that government must house people who are mentally ill, have psychiatric disabilities, have drug addiction problems, are on parole or are pending criminal charges.

As a society, we must house these people, and that always brings social problems and creates issues for others. But under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, they are all entitled to housing. If we are to impact upon their entitlements and want to determine a standard of behaviour, it must be

decided by the Parliament; it must not be decided by individual bureaucrats or a Minister. The bill requires considerable work. I thank the Legislative Review Committee members for their bipartisan efforts. The committee's report was tabled in this House yesterday afternoon. I urge the Minister to ensure that the committee's views are considered and that this bill is properly amended when it is determined in the other place.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (11:28): The Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018 seeks to introduce a number of amendments that will clamp down on problematic and destructive tenants and those who have committed fraud in order to secure social housing assistance. Coming from an electorate with a high demand for social housing assistance and one of the longest waiting lists in the State, I frequently speak to constituents who are in desperate need of help but there is simply not enough supply to cater to their needs. Rumours are plentiful about individuals who have secured social housing assistance through fraudulent means; however, it appears as though the department is often left powerless to stop them. Furthermore, the most common complaints my office receives from social housing tenants regarding their fellow tenants are about their destructive and antisocial behaviours that cause a great deal of stress and anxiety, while placing a hefty financial burden on the department that is required to pay for the repairs.

Following the introduction of the bill, Family and Community Services [FACS] will be able to charge existing tenants a bond in the instance when they have recklessly caused at least \$500 worth of damage. The rental bond will be set at four weeks market rent up to a maximum of \$1,400. The tenant will be given the option of paying up-front or by paying in instalments over 24 to 36 months depending on the tenant's financial circumstances. Tenants will be required to pay a rental bond irrespective of whether they have taken full responsibility for the damage and/or paid for the damage. The new system will incentivise problematic tenants who wilfully cause destruction to social housing stock to rein themselves in and think twice before intentionally smashing through a wall, shattering a window or breaking through a door.

Like my colleagues, I emphasise that in order to have a fair and just measure of whether any damages were caused by the tenant a thorough property condition inspection should be carried out. Any property at which an inspection has not been completed should not be subject to the proposed rental bond scheme. It would be unfair and unjust, especially given the enormity of the maintenance and repairs backlog and the poor condition of so many social housing properties throughout the State. In addition to cracking down on those who wilfully damage housing stock, the bill will subsequently require the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to terminate a social housing tenancy when the tenant has been convicted of serious fraud in relation to his or her housing claim. Presently, FACS has no powers to terminate a tenancy based on a fraudulent claim; however, changes in the bill will make that possible.

Through the Minister's second reading speech and the shadow Minister's contribution it has been made abundantly clear that the bill is not intended to be used against tenants who unintentionally submitted the wrong form, withheld information or provided incorrect information. The intent of the bill is not to crack down on or be unfair to the social housing tenants who are doing the right thing or those who are caught in the middle of a bad situation. The objective is to stamp out antisocial behaviour and wilful destruction of social housing properties and to reinforce to those individuals that their behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated any longer. I do not oppose the bill.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (11:32): The Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018 has two functions: to implement a bond scheme for social housing tenants that includes termination of tenancy for non-payment, and to allow for the termination of tenancy when the tenant is found guilty of certain criminal offences. The stated aim of the bill is 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". On the face of it, it seems perfectly reasonable. If people who are being supported into housing damage a property there will be consequences and we should provide a mechanism for a rental bond if there is a risk. As I said, that sounds reasonable. The problem is that in practice the scheme is a stick and we are dealing with people who are in the most vulnerable circumstances.

The bill creates another barrier for many people who are already set up to fail by virtue of extreme financial stress, mental health issues, intergenerational trauma, recovery from addiction or active addiction, who have a disability or who are victims of domestic violence. I note that the bill contains a provision for an exception for damage caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence. I commend the Minister for that, but it may not always be straightforward. The reality is there are questions about how that will be administered and the onerousness of investigating such things.

I commend the member for Newtown, our housing spokesperson, for her passion. Quite frankly, we need people in this place to passionately stand up for those who do not have a voice. I know that on a daily basis my inner city colleagues and many members across the Chamber, as well as my office staff, are supporting people

who have recently come off the streets or face going back to the streets. The member for Sydney spoke about that yesterday. As I said, the bill seems reasonable, but once we dig down into it, The Greens have some real concerns.

Labor members say that this needs to be done in a bipartisan manner. We would have expected that but, for example, the concerns of Shelter NSW have not been taken on board. I can only hope that before the bill goes to the upper House, the Minister makes some social justice changes. Shelter NSW has raised concerns that the bill creates more barriers for people who are already at the margins, and concerns about the administrative difficulties in implementing such a scheme and the reality for the department.

Over time we have lost the real sense of public service. We now have ministerial departments that are wedded to Ministers. That is problematic. Once upon a time, reports would be leaked and we would get truly independent information, but those days are gone under this Government. The rental bond scheme could push vulnerable individuals into deeper disadvantage. It is crucial that members of Parliament see the guidelines to assess the impact of the scheme, but they have not been made available. That is a trend in this place. In my term I have seen that the devil is in the detail and the detail is not coming before the elected representatives of the State. The bill will create additional cost for the Department of Family and Community Services, which could be spent on housing. We know that the backlogs are real and the demand is high. In my electorate alone, 360 applicants are waiting for social housing in the Ballina allocation zone, with 22 on the priority housing list.

The expected waiting time for all properties in the Ballina zone—from studios to one-bedroom flats and upwards—is five to 10 years. In the Byron Bay zone, 115 applicants are waiting for social housing from Housing NSW, with 17 on the priority waiting list. The expected waiting time for a family is five to 10 years and for single people it can be more than 10 years. In the city, it is much worse. According to the recent census, housing stress and homelessness are big concerns in my electorate that need to be addressed. I fear how the rental bond scheme will play out. The bill will not only create further barriers for people seeking housing but also mean that homelessness services will potentially have to use brokerage funding to cover it. That is literally a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Ms Pru Goward: Absolutely. That's why we're not doing it.

Ms TAMARA SMITH: I note the Minister's interjection but I am not sure that she can control what the not-for-profit homelessness services do. How are they going to be able to say no to people who, as a consequence of this stick, will be on the streets and sleeping rough the next day? That is a compelling and hard question. I do not know how they will address it. I wonder why the Minister has not looked at incentives, but I acknowledge that sometimes she does. There is no time to delve into it now, but one incentive is ownership. We have seen models around the world, particularly in the United Kingdom, of people being able to become rent-buyers. They actually end up owning these properties. What better incentive could there be to look after a property than ownership?

All of the holistic approaches and the support services for disadvantaged people living at the margins—services that target social injustice, financial stress, mental health issues, intergenerational trauma, addiction or recovery from addiction, disability and domestic violence—are declining. So this becomes the thin edge of the wedge. I am very disappointed that this is the way forward. There are many innovative ways to instil in people a sense of pride in where they live. With respect to those factors that are beyond people's control, where is the support, the modelling and the education about those things? I know that in my electorate education is a big part of supporting people, particularly Aboriginal people, so that they do not end up in trouble when it comes to paying their rent on time or managing their responsibilities.

I hope that some amendments are made to this bill in the upper House because the concern that the Opposition has is shared by Shelter NSW and many other advocates for homeless people across the State. That concern is that the real effect of this bill—the lived experience—will be that people will face further barriers to securing safe homes. After all, the whole point of social housing is to provide safe homes. The previous speaker mentioned antisocial behaviour, but I do not see how this legislation addresses antisocial behaviour. Legislation should be about support and incentives for people to show pride in their homes. It is a minority of people who participate in antisocial behaviour, so it seems to me that this is not a fair and just bill.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (11:42): I support the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. As we have heard, this is a bill that makes amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and the Housing Act 2001. It aims to make the social housing system fairer by ensuring that public housing is available only to those who need it. The New South Wales Government is leading the way in social housing reform through the implementation of the Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy, which provides the key aspects of this bill.

Unfortunately, when public housing tenants cause damage to public housing properties or commit fraud it disadvantages the whole community, and that is why this bill is being introduced. The people who are

disadvantaged the most are those who are in need of housing, because funds that have to be allocated to fix properties damaged by tenants could have been allocated somewhere else in the portfolio. When fraud occurs families or people trying to get ahead miss out on public housing spaces due to the dishonesty of others. That is not fair, and that is what this bill seeks to fix. To assist the broader community with these issues, this bill will enable the Government to take suitable action against the small fraction of social housing tenants who do not seem to value the property that the community and Government provide for them.

Additionally, the bill will give community housing providers who manage social housing properties the ability to efficiently and effectively continue addressing the needs of tenants and the safety of the broader community at a local level. It should be made very clear that the amendments provided in this bill will not impact the majority of responsible, law-abiding tenants who look after their properties as if they were their own and who do not try to commit fraud against the people of New South Wales.

I meet regularly with the many public housing tenants who live in my electorate and they tell me that they are sick and tired of having their communal spaces damaged by other residents who have little or no respect. They also dislike those who have been dishonest and live in public housing. They are doing the right thing and they expect others to do the same. These tenants also treat their properties as if they were own and they expect their neighbours to do likewise. I believe that many public housing tenants, like the ones I have met with, will welcome these changes with open arms because they will know that this will provide a level and fair playing field for everyone.

This legislation will provide for a mandatory termination of a tenancy agreement where the tenant has been convicted of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act. To accomplish this, new section 154FA has been included into the Residential Tenancies Act, and 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. In conjunction with new section 154FA in the Residential Tenancies Act, schedule 2 to the bill updates the offence provisions in the Housing Act to make it clear that a person will commit an offence if they make a statement knowing that the statement is false or misleading, or if they omit something that makes the statement misleading when they make the statement to obtain or claim a benefit from the corporation or the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services, 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.

Currently, public housing tenants must notify the corporation of a change in relevant circumstances within 28 days, otherwise it is an offence if they have failed to notify as it shows the intention of retaining or continuing to obtain a benefit. To provide for fairness, the tribunal will be provided with discretion to not make a termination order where the tenant satisfies the tribunal that exceptional circumstances exist. That is important and I am really glad that it has been included in the bill. Members know from our meetings with constituents that situations do happen. Our constituents tell us about their circumstances and why things are becoming more difficult for them. Importantly, the tribunal will be required to provide written reasons for a decision where the tribunal does not make a termination order.

As I said earlier, the vast majority of public housing tenants are responsible, law-abiding citizens and will not be affected by these new termination provisions. They will only affect those who are not being fair with the system. New provisions are provided in this bill for the introduction of rental bonds for tenants, with the rental bond required to be paid at any time before the end of a residential tenancy agreement. The Government is in strong support of breaking the cycle of disadvantage, supporting individuals to address their problems and empowering tenants to take responsibility for their actions. I repeat: When tenants damage their social housing property it affects the broader community—financially and socially. The Department of Family and Community Services then has to spend money on repairs unnecessarily, money 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 my office we regularly find that people are waiting for homes and we are told those homes are being fixed because of damage occasioned by a previous tenant. That is not fair to people who are struggling. If that damage had not been done in the first place then we would not have those delays. A rental bond will be required only if a tenant has caused significant damage to his or her property in accordance with these ministerial guidelines. It should be noted that a rental bond for existing tenants will be required only if they cause significant damage to their property after these amendments commence, and the ministerial guidelines are approved and published. New section 156C will be inserted into the Residential Tenancies Act to 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.

The bill will also provide for termination of a tenancy agreement of a tenant who is a registrable person. The bill provides for the amendment of 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. It should be noted that this power can be exercised only 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. As I said, we have seen that situation in my electorate and I am pleased to see that provision included in the bill. I know that it will make people feel safer and it will make a difference. I am glad that the Minister has taken that on board.

I thank the Minister for Social Housing, the Hon. Pru Goward—who has been in the Chamber throughout the debate on this bill—the department and her staff for bringing this bill to the House. I know that this legislation will help to create a stronger and fairer social housing system that is focused on supporting those in our community who are law-abiding and responsible public housing tenants and who are doing the right thing, while ensuring that they are not disadvantaged by those who seek to abuse and mistreat the system. I commend the bill to the House.

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) (11:50): In reply: I thank all members who have contributed to the debate on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. It is very impressive to see members reflecting conversations with public housing tenants who are their constituents. It reflects the engagement that so many backbenchers and members of Parliament have with all sectors of the community. In particular, I thank members representing the electorates of Bankstown, Coogee, The Entrance, Epping, Newcastle, Sydney, Charlestown, Murray, Terrigal, Newtown, Manly, Wyong, Drummoyne, Heffron, Fairfield, Ballina and Holsworthy for their remarks.

This bill is designed to target only those tenants doing the wrong thing in public housing. It is designed to stamp out the wreckers and the rorters who give the vast majority of good, law-abiding public housing tenants a bad name. It is designed to ensure that public housing is provided only to those who are truly in need, and it is designed to reduce public housing property damage by encouraging a limited number of tenants to modify their behaviour, as tenancy bonds do in the private rental sector. It is also intended to create greater public confidence in the operation and purpose of the public housing system.

It is often said, and it has been said by many speakers in this debate, that one of the greatest responsibilities for a government is to care for its most vulnerable, and this Government is delivering on that responsibility through our Future Directions Strategy for Social Housing in NSW, which is building more supply, creating more opportunities for social housing tenants to engage in education and employment support, and creating a safer and better social housing experience for tenants. Through Communities Plus, we also now have the biggest and best social housing building program in the country that is creating 23,500 new and replacement social and affordable housing dwellings. That is a great result for our most vulnerable.

Through this legislation we are building on this progress by ensuring that the social housing system is fair and equitable for all—again, building public confidence in the public administration of this incredibly important asset. The risk bond scheme proposed under the bill has been developed in response to sector consultation that suggested that the proposed social housing bonds scheme in the former Future Directions unfairly targeted those who were unlikely to cause damage, such as elderly tenants. I very much shared that concern. I have certainly heard their concerns and the sector is aware of this modified proposal. Our approach ensures that only those who have caused significant damage in public housing will need to pay the bond.

The changes will help reinforce tenant responsibility and encourage behavioural change for the small minority of tenants who cause damage to their public housing property. Reducing tenant damage will also decrease the amount that the Department of Family and Community Services [FACS] has to unnecessarily spend on repairs that otherwise could be invested elsewhere in the social housing system. The administrative cost of the bond will be met through the FACS budget.

I will now respond to some of the criticisms, some of the misunderstandings and some of the misinformation that has been directed at the risk-based bond scheme both publicly and in the Chamber yesterday afternoon and this morning. I am pleased that the Opposition is supporting the bill. I observe that Opposition members were all over the place, with members talking at cross purposes. There was the invisible man, the member for The Entrance, contradicting the shadow Minister by appearing to oppose the legislation that the shadow Minister indicated Opposition support for.

The member for The Entrance made the astounding claim that the Government was treating social housing tenants differently from those in the private rental market. I beg to differ. Private tenants already pay a bond. Is the member for The Entrance suggesting that he would like to extend the private rental bond scheme to

all public housing tenants to ensure this consistency? In fact, our bond scheme has been designed so that only those causing significant damage will be charged a bond. I thought the member for The Entrance would have been delighted that most public housing tenants will be treated differently to private tenants by not having to pay a bond.

Secondly, I note that several members have suggested that the introduction of the bond scheme would create a barrier to a vulnerable person accessing public housing or that specialist homelessness services will have to use brokerage funds to pay the bond. This is simply not true. As stakeholders have already been advised, the bond will not be required to be paid upfront in full. Instead, the tenant can pay the bond by instalments of between 24 to 36 months—that is, up to three years. In addition, payments may be deferred in extenuating circumstances. All members of this House know how reasonable housing officers are when it comes to extenuating circumstances. The claims by the Opposition that brokerage funding might or will be used to establish a tenancy are misguided. I am pleased to correct that.

I note that there has been criticism that victims of domestic violence would be charged for damage caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence. This is once again incorrect and, as I said in my second reading speech, which was notably referenced by the member for Bankstown, victims of domestic violence will not be required to pay a bond where damage is caused by a perpetrator of domestic violence. Furthermore, I note the claims of the member for Newtown, who said that the bond scheme is "a recipe for further targeting and marginalising of vulnerable people in our community who are living in public housing". This is once again false Greens rhetoric. As I stated in my second reading speech, FACS currently applies enormous discretion when determining tenant damage to consider whether ill health or an inability to maintain the premises has contributed to the damage.

This is outlined in the published Tenant Repair Costs Policy, which is available to all members of this place. I believe nothing will satisfy The Greens, but it will address the concerns of the member for Heffron. Should this discretion be exercised, often it is, a tenant damage charge is not imposed, and accordingly a rental bond will not be required. We all know that the ultimate target of The Greens is the destruction of western democratic institutions, which includes features such as ministerial guidelines. I wish to reassure the Parliament that those guidelines, as referred to in my second reading speech in accordance with the tradition, absolutely reflect the intent of this legislation and the undertakings I have given this Parliament.

I also note that there were several suggestions that FACS will charge a bond where damage is caused by previous tenants. Members who have public housing residents in their electorates will know that section 29 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 requires that a condition report relating to the condition of residential premises must be completed by or on behalf of a landlord before or when a residential agreement is given to the tenant for signing.

I am advised that the Department of Family and Community Services complies with this provision and has recently automated its property condition reports that provide photographic evidence of the condition of the property before the tenant moves in. I again reassure the Parliament that is an unnecessary concern. Additionally, as I noted in my second reading speech, a rental bond will prospectively apply to existing tenants and will only apply where the tenant causes significant damage to their property after the amendments commence and the ministerial guidelines are approved and published. Tenants would also be required to pay a bond if they report damage that was caused before this time but remained unreported upon the commencement of the Act and publication of the ministerial guidelines.

I note, for the interest of the member for Ballina, that significant property damage is closely connected with antisocial behaviour. I also note that some speakers were concerned that tenants may be less likely to report issues of damage once the bond is imposed. In fact, the high threshold for damage will mean that tenants have an incentive to report minor damage immediately so that they do not exceed the \$500 threshold in any single instance. Additionally, there will also be a fair process in place whereby a bond can only be imposed if the tenant either agrees that they have caused the damage or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] provides an order stating that the tenant must pay for the damage. I also note that fair wear and tear is a well-known concept in the tenancy world and will not constitute damage of a type that will be subject to a rental bond. However, if a tenant has any disagreement they can always go to our independent Housing Appeals Committee or to the NCAT to dispute the charge.

Let me be very clear that the majority of tenants will not be affected by the imposition of a risk-based rental bond scheme. The facts are simple: If you do not cause significant damage to your public housing property you will not be charged a bond. The bill also creates fairness in the social housing system through the imposition of mandatory terminations for tenants convicted of rental rebate fraud under the Housing Act 2001 unless exceptional circumstances apply. When a tenant is convicted of rental rebate fraud it means they have obtained a benefit to which they were not entitled. This is not only unacceptable; it punishes those people on our waiting list

by preventing them from accessing public housing support and assistance at the earliest opportunity. I would have thought there was no person in this House who would think differently.

This is further exacerbated by the Department of Family and Community Services currently not having the power to seek an eviction based on a conviction for fraud. This has led to situations where convicted fraudsters are able to remain in public housing indefinitely whilst the department is forced to pursue termination by other means, which not only is time consuming but also does not quite guarantee eviction. The current system does not reflect the New South Wales community's expectation that a tenant who defrauds the system should lose their right to public housing—and lose it quickly.

The changes contained in this bill will mean that those seeking to defraud the system can no longer continue to take advantage of the privilege that has been provided to them and that another person who is waiting patiently for support can be given assistance instead. I note the concerns raised by members opposite that FACS would pursue minor cases of fraud. That is simply not the case, and history demonstrates this. I am advised that FACS only pursues serious and deliberate cases of fraud under the provisions of the Housing Act—the types of which, if I recall correctly, were acknowledged by the member for Bankstown.

In relation to claims that the tribunal does not have discretion, I note that the bill allows for the tenant to satisfy the tribunal that there are exceptional circumstances that would justify the order not being made. This would cover a wide range of circumstances, and seeking to define those exceptional circumstances in legislation would ultimately only disadvantage some tenants. Discretion is clearly better for tenants. Additionally, I note that tenants terminated under this provision will have been convicted of a criminal act by either the Local Court or District Court. Surely members who oppose this amendment, including the member for Newtown, would realise that by opposing it they are defending the rights of someone convicted of fraud over the rights of vulnerable people on our waiting list to be housed sooner. Shame on them! As I have previously observed, the large majority of tenants are law-abiding citizens who are doing the right thing and they will not be affected by these changes.

I note there has been broad support for the changes that give the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Services the power to investigate and prosecute fraud against private rental support provided by FACS. Again, those changes will send a strong message to people who are receiving a subsidy that, if they commit fraud, not only will FACS find them but also they will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Again, it also ensures that the public has confidence that the public housing system and the administration of public moneys are fair and equitable, and do not allow our most vulnerable members of society to be prevented from receiving housing assistance and support because someone else is able to take advantage of the system unfairly.

Finally, the bill enables authorised community housing providers, such as FACS, to terminate the tenancy of a registrable person under specified circumstances. Those measures are important in ensuring that community housing providers are able to act quickly to address safety issues, and it has been acknowledged they are supported by community housing providers. The bill is a fair and measured approach to ensuring that the system is not taken advantage of to the detriment of our most vulnerable. It is a fair and measured approach to ensuring that we continue to protect those in need whilst holding to account those who seek to do the wrong thing.

The provisions of the bill will apply only to those who set out to do the wrong thing and take advantage of the privilege that they have been given. I encourage all members who are genuine about supporting the vulnerable to support the bill. I encourage all members who believe in ensuring that public housing support is provided to those in need at the earliest opportunity to support the bill. I encourage all members to support the bill if they believe the vast majority of public housing tenants and applicants who do the right thing should not be disadvantaged by those who do not. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): The question is that this bill be now read a second time. A division has been called for. There being fewer than five members against the question, the question is resolved in the affirmative.

Noes, 4

Mr Greenwich
Ms Leong
Mr Parker
Ms T. Smith

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms PRU GOWARD: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

**ROAD TRANSPORT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (PENALTIES AND OTHER SANCTIONS)
BILL 2018**

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Melinda Pavey, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (12:11): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Penalties and Other Sanctions) Bill 2018. The main purpose of the bill is to amend road transport legislation in order to tackle drink- and drug-driving behaviour by strengthening penalties and sanctions and enhancing enforcement. One of the objectives is to ensure penalties, including licence suspension and fines, are consistently and swiftly applied to low level prescribed of concentration of alcohol, or PCA, and drug presence first offences through licence suspension, coupled with penalty notices. In addition, the bill expands the mandatory alcohol interlock program to include more offences and provides for the imposition of vehicle sanctions for certain repeat drink-driving offences. Lastly, the bill provides that drink-driving and drug-driving offenders may be required to complete an education course.

These reforms relate to the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Road Safety Act) 2018, which commenced on 1 July 2018 and introduced tougher penalties for driving under the influence offences, provided new police powers to deal with suspected drug-affected drivers and included cocaine in our roadside drug testing regime. These reforms have their origins in the New South Wales Government's Road Safety Plan 2021, released in February this year. The plan, as members will recall, features targeted and proven initiatives to address key trends, trauma risks and the types of crashes occurring on New South Wales roads, including drink- and drug-driving. The Road Safety Plan recognised the fact that we have made progress in saving lives on New South Wales roads through coordinated policies and programs that improve safety infrastructure, enhance enforcement, strengthen licensing and educate road users. However, while 201—with 307 lives lost—saw the lowest number of deaths since records began in 1923, increases in the road toll since 2015 show that there is no room for complacency.

The 0.05 blood alcohol limit has been in place for almost 38 years in New South Wales, and enforced through roadside breath testing for almost 36 years. Over this period, large-scale enforcement has been supported with public education campaigns, and we have seen community attitudes to drink-driving shift dramatically. Some groups of drivers, such as provisional drivers, are also subject to lower limits. In 1980, 389 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes in New South Wales, 30 per cent of the road toll. In 2017, preliminary data indicate that figure has dropped to 55, or around 14 per cent of the road toll. Initiatives to date have clearly had dramatic results, but 55 people still unnecessarily lost their lives last year. In addition, 81 deaths last year—or 21 per cent of the road toll—were from crashes involving a driver or rider with an illicit drug in his or her system. These deaths were largely preventable—it is about people taking personal responsibility when they get behind the wheel.

The statistics indicate that the message is not getting through to some drivers who continue to drink or take drugs and drive. Deterring drink- and drug-driving remains an important road safety priority. This bill introduces changes to how low range, novice range and special range PCA offences and drug presence penalties can be applied for first time offences, including a three-month licence suspension when police issue a penalty notice to an offender. Currently, when a driver's roadside breath test indicates a low, novice or special range PCA offence, he or she is arrested for the purposes of breath analysis. If a person then fails a breath analysis test, police issue a court attendance notice for a specified date in the future. Offenders retain their licences and are able to drive until their matter is determined by a court.

Over the three-year period ending June 2017, 56 per cent of low range drink-driving first offences resulted in a non-conviction order in court—typically a section 10. Similarly, 36 per cent of first offences for driving with the presence of an illicit drug resulted in non-conviction. This means that offenders who are proven to have committed an offence do not lose their licence. A review of national and international research by the Australian Institute of Criminology has concluded that licence sanctions need to be applied consistently as they are recognised as the key strategy, coupled with effective enforcement, to address drink driving. Importantly too, the current court process is lengthy and resource intensive. The time between arrest and a court determination for a low range PCA first offence is around 44 days. During this time, the offender retains their licence and can drive.

Research from the United States has shown immediate licence suspension to be a far more effective deterrent of drink-driving than suspensions that are applied later. Victorian research has also found a high rate of

drink-driving offending occurs between detection and the start of a licence sanction—highlighting the importance of taking action as soon as possible. A similar scenario surrounds the treatment of drug presence first offences, of which at least 6,500 are now dealt with by New South Wales courts each year and the number is growing as our testing enforcement increases.

Unlike PCA offences, where breath analysis devices can provide a conclusive alcohol breath reading at the roadside or police station, roadside drug tests are screening tests. If a test returns a positive reading for drug presence, a saliva sample is sent for further testing at a laboratory. If the result is confirmed—which it is in 97 per cent of cases—the driver is then issued a court attendance notice. The average time between the offence and the court appearance is around 54 days and again a driver can continue to drive during this period. The changes proposed in the bill provide for penalties which are both comparatively swift in delivery and consistent in application.

This bill establishes penalty notices for novice, special, low range PCA offences and driving with the presence of an illicit drug offence that are a first time offence. This will be available where a penalty notice for this type of offence has not already been issued and the person has not been convicted of the same or an equivalent offence in the previous five years. In the case of low, novice and special range PCA offences, police will issue penalty notices at the roadside or station, while in the case of drug presence offences a penalty notice will be issued if drug presence is confirmed by a laboratory. The penalty notice will be set at level 7, which is currently a fine of \$561. This is higher than but consistent with the average court fine. In 2017 the average fine issued by courts was \$482 for a low range PCA first offence and \$473 for a drug presence first offence. These amounts have remained consistent over time.

Those who may be sceptical about the merits of this proposal should look at the use of these measures across Australia. Several other jurisdictions in Australia, including Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, already deal with low-range PCA first offences with the issuing of penalty notices. Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory also issue penalty notices for drug presence first offences. Where an offence is dealt with by penalty notice, it will be coupled with action to take a driver off the road. The bill amends the Road Transport Act 2013 to enable police to issue an immediate licence suspension notice after a driver commits a novice, special or low-range drink-driving offence. This is in addition to the penalty notice issued.

The licence suspension applies for three months if the offender is issued a penalty notice or if the offender is required to attend court until the charge is heard and determined in court. This means that roadside licence suspension may apply for all PCA drink-driving offences in New South Wales, as it currently can for all middle- and high-range PCA offences. This significantly strengthens current penalties and takes drink-drivers off the road as soon as feasible after an offence. The bill also allows Roads and Maritime Services to apply a three-month licence sanction—usually a licence suspension—after an infringement for an "alcohol or other drug-related driving offence". This definition includes lower-range PCA and drug presence first offences.

This means that where a licence suspension for these offences cannot be imposed by police at the roadside in conjunction with a penalty notice—for example, drug presence first offences where the penalty notice is issued after laboratory results—the Roads and Maritime Services can subsequently suspend a driver licence or visiting driver privileges. This ensures that a driver always faces a three-month licence sanction and is similar to the current process where drivers detected speeding by over 30 kilometres per hour have their licence subsequently suspended by Roads and Maritime Services. A licence suspension of three months for these first-time offences is commensurate with the level of road safety risk and sanctions for other safety offences.

A three-month licence sanction currently applies for offences of speeding by more than 30 kilometres per hour but less than 45 kilometres per hour over the limit. Currently, an offender who is convicted of a lower-range PCA or drug presence offence receives an automatic six-month disqualification from driving, but this period can be reduced by the court to no less than three months. However, as highlighted earlier, many offenders do not have a conviction recorded and are not disqualified. To compare, I am advised that Victoria introduced a three-month licence cancellation period for low-range drink-drive offences on 30 April 2018. I would emphasise to members that despite the introduction of licence suspension coupled with penalty notices, police will retain the discretion to issue a court attendance notice if circumstances require it.

As in other States and Territories, the introduction of penalty notices for certain drink and drug drive offences should reduce the pressure on the New South Wales court system significantly and support enhanced enforcement. Drink and drug drive offences are among the most common matters dealt with in the NSW Local Court and drug presence offences will increase as mobile testing is expanded to 200,000 tests each year by the end of 2020. These reforms do not remove the choice of an offender to have their matter dealt with by a court if they are issued with a penalty notice. This option will be available. Importantly, too, an offender can appeal against the immediate licence suspension. I point out also that, in keeping with the Government's policy to toughen

sanctions for drink and drug driving, the bill doubles the current maximum court fines for lower-range drink and drug presence first offences.

Accordingly, for a lower-range PCA or drug presence first offence, the maximum penalty will increase from 10 penalty units, or \$1,100, to 20 penalty units, or \$2,200, which is equivalent to typical maximum court fines for New South Wales road rules offences. For a second or subsequent offence the maximum fine will increase from 20 penalty units, or \$2,200, to 30 penalty units, or \$3,300. I emphasise that these are the maximum fines that a court can impose. As is currently the case, the court will apply judgement by ordering the most appropriate penalty based on the circumstances of the case. However, this sends a clear message that any drink-driving or drug presence offence is considered at least as serious as other safety offences in the road rules.

Another important element in the bill is ensuring that a drink- or drug-driving offence dealt with by penalty notice will be considered a previous offence in the event of further offending. The purpose of this is to maintain the principle of applying higher penalties and additional sanctions for second or subsequent offences. This is important to deterring repeat offending and is an existing feature of road transport law. The bill provides that if a person is convicted of a further offence of the same or an equivalent type within five years of the date of committing a drink- or drug-driving offence that was dealt with by penalty notice, the further offence will be considered a second or subsequent offence. Second and subsequent offences must be dealt with by a court and carry not only higher possible fines but also longer periods of licence disqualification and involve alcohol interlock orders if the repeat offence is alcohol related.

For example, if a person committed a low-range PCA drink-driving offence that was dealt with by penalty notice and was then convicted in court of a second drink-driving offence within five years from when the penalty notice offence was committed, an alcohol interlock order, or exemption order, would be required. It is anticipated that the reforms to lower-range offences, including suspension and penalty notices for first offences will commence in May 2019. This will allow time for system changes to be implemented, as well as police, Revenue NSW and Roads and Maritime Services procedures to be updated and for communications to occur.

A second reform in this bill relates to the expansion of the Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program. Members will recall that this Government introduced the program in February 2015 for repeat and high-range drink-drive offenders. Except in limited circumstances, it is mandatory for a court to make an interlock order on conviction for an interlock offence. Offenders are required to complete an up-front disqualification period and a minimum period on the program which requires an interlock. An interlock is an electronic breath testing device linked to the ignition system of the car, motorcycle or heavy vehicle the offender drives and only permits the vehicle to start if the driver passes a breath test. An offender may obtain a licence without an interlock condition if he or she successfully completes the minimum period ordered by the court. A person who receives an interlock order and does not enter the interlock program is disqualified from holding a licence other than a learner or interlock licence for a period of five years from the date of his or her conviction. This is a current feature of the Act and is not being changed by these amendments.

Interlock programs are in place in all Australian jurisdictions and, while they may vary in scope, design and requirements, are designed to help drink-drivers separate drinking and driving. Since February 2015 over 6,900 interlock licences in New South Wales have been issued to offenders who were convicted of high-range or repeat drink-driving offences. The bill amends the Act to include middle-range PCA first offences as a mandatory interlock offence. Studies have found an increase in crash risk of around four times at the lower end of middle range up to 0.08 blood alcohol content [BAC] compared with unimpaired driving. At the high end, near 0.15 BAC, the crash risk rises steeply to around 12 times.

Moreover, there are a considerable number of middle-range first offenders—around 5,500 to 6,000 every year in New South Wales. While second and subsequent middle-range drink-driving offenders are already subject to mandatory interlock orders, the bill includes first offenders for the purposes of deterrence and behaviour change. The bill amends the Act to include an up-front disqualification period of a minimum of three months and up to a maximum of six months for a middle-range PCA first offence, combined with a minimum interlock participation period of 12 months. This means that offenders may return to driving earlier than if they were convicted of this offence and the automatic licence disqualification under the Act applied, but they can only do so on an interlock licence.

The second related amendment involves the inclusion within the Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program of driving under the influence [DUI] first offences where the offence involves alcohol and a motor vehicle. Inclusion of this offence in the program will mean that all drink-driving offences, with the exception of first offence low, special and novice range offences, require an interlock. The upfront disqualification and interlock periods proposed are equivalent to the periods which currently apply for a high-range prescribed concentration of alcohol [PCA] first offence. This is a minimum of six months, up to a maximum of nine months up-front disqualification, combined with a minimum interlock participation period of 24 months.

Periods for a repeat offence of this type, which are already part of the interlock program, will also increase to align with high-range repeat offences. This is a minimum of nine months, up to a maximum of 12 months up-front disqualification, combined with a minimum interlock participation period of 48 months. This change is consistent with the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Road Safety) Act 2018, which aligned penalties for driving under the influence to high-range PCA offences. It is expected that interlock orders will apply to offences committed from the end of the year. Turning to other measures to discourage drink- and drug-driving, the bill amends the Act to extend the vehicle sanctions regime to include certain drink-driving offences.

Currently, vehicle sanctions—such as numberplate confiscation, vehicle impoundment or forfeiture—apply to certain "sanctionable" offences, such as high-range speeding, racing, burnouts, police pursuits and repeated unauthorised driving. These are high-risk road safety offences. Sanctions are imposed on what the legislation defines as the offending operator—that is, a person who, at the time of an offence, was both the driver and the registered operator of the motor vehicle. Vehicle sanctions in New South Wales are usually applied for three months and involve numberplate confiscation, but cannot currently be applied for any drink-driving offences.

This bill amends the definition of "sanctionable offences" to include repeat middle- and high-range PCA offences and repeat refusal offences related to drink-driving. That means that the sanction may apply to an offender who is caught committing one of these higher risk types of drink-driving offences if the person was convicted of another drink-driving offence in the five years before the new offence. A person is charged with a relevant "refusal" type offence if he or she refuses, or fails to submit to, a breath analysis or provide a blood sample after a failed breath test. Such behaviour demands serious measures in response. People who drink and drive cannot be allowed to escape the consequences of their actions by refusing to comply with the directions of police officers or authorised sample takers.

Across Australian jurisdictions, the offences for which vehicle sanctions are applied vary, as does the length of the sanction and the method of application. Currently, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia all have vehicle sanctions available for certain drink-driving offences. Vehicle sanctions for the drink-driving offences that I have outlined will commence in New South Wales by the end of this year. Further, the New South Wales Government's Road Safety Plan 2021 acknowledges that education is an important component of the Safe System approach to improving road safety, along with other strategies such as enhanced enforcement and tougher penalties. For that reason, the bill provides that Roads and Maritime Services may require drink- and drug-driving offenders to complete an education course as prescribed by regulation. If the requirement is not met, Roads and Maritime Services may suspend a person's driver licence or refuse to issue one if an application is made.

Education courses for drink- and drug-driving offenders can reduce reoffending, especially when combined with other penalties. Currently, two key types of education program are operating in New South Wales. The first, the Traffic Offenders Intervention Program [TOIP], is a general program for traffic offenders regulated under the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. These are run by community organisations and reviews have found strong stakeholder support. In 2016, of the 16,300 people who attended a Traffic Offenders Intervention Program, more than 50 per cent had a PCA or drug presence offence. A more intensive course is offered via the Sober Driver Program, which is delivered mostly by Corrective Services NSW and funded by the Community Road Safety Fund. Targeted at repeat drink-driving offenders, it caters for 700 to 800 participants annually. Repeat evaluations over the 15 years of its existence have found that this program, which is based on adult learning principles, cut drink-drive reoffending among participants by around half.

The bill provides the legislative framework to enhance education requirements for offenders, but the provisions will only commence once an education strategy is developed by Transport for NSW in consultation with the departments of health and justice. The expansion of the education program is expected to include targeted offenders, different course types, and new delivery modes to deliver road safety outcomes. The program will also take into consideration how remote and regional delivery of the programs will be managed. Again, this measure will put New South Wales in closer step with other jurisdictions, such as Victoria and Queensland, which are revising behaviour change programs for drink and drug drivers with a view to introducing more effective measures. New offender education requirements in New South Wales are envisaged for introduction in 2019-20.

To further enhance drug-driving enforcement, the bill also includes an amendment to the definition of "drug" in the Act. The term "drug" currently encompasses a broad range of illegal and pharmaceutical drugs and alcohol. This definition is most relevant to the driving under the influence offence in section 112 of the Act, and when blood and urine are collected in mandatory testing after a fatal crash. If a police officer has a reasonable belief that drivers are under the influence of a drug or alcohol, based on their manner of driving or their condition or behaviour and they pass a roadside breath test, they can require the drivers to complete a sobriety assessment. If the drivers fail or refuse the assessment, the police officer can arrest them and require them to undergo blood or urine testing.

Under the Act, the samples can be analysed for a drug, within the current meaning. This includes the listed illegal or pharmaceutical drugs. Evidence of the drug and its concentration may support charging the driver with the offence of driving under the influence of a drug. The laboratory results and expert evidence as to the effect of a drug, alongside police observations of the driver's condition or behaviour at the roadside, can be used to support, in court, the charge of driving under the influence. The key challenge with the current definition of "drug" is that new pharmaceuticals—or substances that have no medicinal value—regularly enter the drug market. Drugs can only be added to the definition in the Road Transport Act 2013 by new legislation or regulation. If a substance is not a listed drug it affects the likelihood of a successful drug-driving prosecution, even if the substance is known to impair physical or mental abilities if misused and there are police observations that a person appeared affected when driving.

The bill amends the definition of "drug" to include, in addition to the current substances, any other substance that, when taken by an ordinary person, may deprive that person of, or may impair, his or her normal mental or physical faculties. This change means that if a driver is detected driving while under the influence of a new type of illegal or pharmaceutical substance and the prosecution can establish that a substance meets this description it will be considered a drug. This change does not create a new offence, but it improves our ability to prosecute and deter impaired driving in the context of a constantly changing drug market. As is currently the case in a driving under the influence charge, evidence will still be required to prove to the satisfaction of the court that the person charged was under the influence of the substance.

Other jurisdictions, including Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia, already have similar broader definitions in their road transport law. Importantly, this does not ban the use of medication and driving; it simply reinforces that if a driver is under the influence of any substance, we expect that person not to drive. People who follow medical advice and refrain from driving while affected by pharmaceutical drugs will not be impacted upon by this change to the legislation. In addition to amendments to road transport legislation to provide for additional sanctions and penalties for drink and drug driving, the bill also amends the Roads Act 1993 to introduce new penalties to protect the security of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and other major bridges and tunnels.

The Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House are icons in the harbour city's landscape. Unfortunately, both structures can attract trespassers who have a range of motivations for their actions. In the case of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, such acts can threaten community safety and cause serious interference with the transport network. While every effort has been made to ensure the security of the bridge against criminal acts and trespassing, there have been a number of incidents over recent years which have caused prolonged disruption.

Although the Sydney Opera House Trust Act has a substantial offence provision for trespassing at the Opera House with intent, there is nothing similar in our roads legislation. To provide greater deterrence, the bill creates an offence relating to actions that cause damage, disruption or obstruct vehicles and pedestrians using the Sydney Harbour Bridge. If a person causes or intends to cause damage to the structure or seriously disrupts traffic, including trains, using the bridge or tunnel, or commits any offence punishable by imprisonment or arising under the Summary Offences Act 1988, he or she will be liable to a maximum court penalty of 200 penalty units—currently \$22,000—and/or two years imprisonment. In future this provision can be extended by regulation to other major bridges or road tunnels, if warranted.

The amendments in this bill will make progress in tackling the problems of drink and drug driving in New South Wales by deploying effective measures such as immediate licence suspension, which have value in deterring reoffending. Similarly, the issuing of penalty notices for lower range prescribed concentration of alcohol [PCA] and drug presence for first offences will provide swift and more certain consequences. An added benefit of these initiatives will be the substantial reduction in matters automatically referred to the New South Wales Local Court, which will reduce pressure on court resources. Police attendance at court to provide evidence in these types of matters is also expected to be reduced, which will give time back to high visibility, on-road policing.

The expansion of the Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Program to additional offences will mirror similar initiatives in other States and Territories that have been shown to reduce repeat offending. Likewise, the inclusion of drink- and drug-drive offences to those sanctionable offences that warrant a vehicle sanction is a logical step. Again, removing access to a vehicle is a proven method for dealing with recidivist road safety offenders where other penalties and sanctions may fail. Lastly, the expansion and refinement of drug and alcohol education courses is another strategy to enhance road safety by promoting behaviour change. I highlight again the importance of this reform. Although we have made gains, 55 people lost their lives to drink driving in 2017 and another 81 died in crashes involving a driver with an illicit drug in their system. This reform is a key measure of the Government's Road Safety Plan 2021. It takes what we know from experience across Australia and internationally, and enhances our penalty framework with the goal of increasing deterrence and reducing trauma on our roads. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

**FAIR TRADING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CONSUMER GUARANTEE DIRECTIONS) BILL
2018****First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Matt Kean, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (12:42): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Consumer Guarantee Directions) Bill 2018 amends the Fair Trading Act 1987 to give the Commissioner for Fair Trading the power to make binding determinations in consumer disputes involving low-cost goods. The bill also amends the Fair Trading Act 1987 to enhance the power of Fair Trading investigators to enforce the law and protect consumers from unsafe and dangerous goods. In addition, amendments will be made to the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002 to expand the powers of entry by Fair Trading inspectors. Finally, amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011 and regulation aim to improve Fair Trading's ability to regulate the sector effectively. This bill delivers on the Government's commitment to put consumers first by providing Fair Trading with the tools it needs to be a more effective regulator, while giving businesses greater guidance on their obligations when doing business in New South Wales.

First, I will discuss the consumer guarantee direction power. The Commissioner for Fair Trading will be conferred the power to make a consumer guarantee direction in disputes between consumers and businesses about alleged breaches of the consumer guarantees under the Australian Consumer Law [ACL]. The commissioner's power to make directions will be focused on low-cost goods with a purchase price between \$25 and \$3,000. The commissioner will be able to direct a business to repair or replace the goods, or to refund their purchase price—key remedies that the ACL provides for breaches of consumer guarantees.

This bill is about "right touch" regulation, offering a fair, quick and cheap resolution option for small-value disputes where a direction is issued, as an alternative to the courts and tribunals. This new power is an important enhancement to NSW Fair Trading's existing complaints and dispute resolution service, and is designed to increase the number of successful outcomes reached by Fair Trading. Having said that, the preference of the Government is that consumers and businesses resolve their disputes as quickly and as painlessly as possible, ideally without Fair Trading's intervention.

In most cases, consumers and businesses can resolve a problem between them and reach a satisfactory outcome. The 2016 Australian Consumer Survey showed us that in 84 per cent of cases, consumers could resolve a dispute directly with a business. However, sometimes that does not happen. Sometimes the problem becomes a dispute. Consumer disputes still account for more than 20 per cent of the legal problems experienced by people in New South Wales. A large proportion of problems are experienced in the low-value goods range. For example, 19 per cent of consumers surveyed in the 2016 Australian Consumer Survey indicated that they had experienced problems with electrical goods, 13 per cent had issues with clothing and footwear, and a further 9 per cent had a problem with furniture; and 76 per cent of respondents experienced a problem within the first six months of purchasing their goods.

While many consumers can resolve concerns about these faulty products through a direct approach to the business, unfortunately in too many cases they cannot. In 2016-17 more than 45,000 people contacted Fair Trading about a problem. Of those, just over 19,000 were about retail purchases. The dedicated staff at Fair Trading do an excellent job helping people to work out their disagreements, providing education and support so that both parties can resolve the problem by agreement. Unfortunately, sometimes a resolution is not possible and the consumer will either give up or go to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. For many consumers the cost and inconvenience of going to the tribunal is greater than the price of the goods themselves. This means that consumers can be left out of pocket and unable to get what they are entitled to.

I am pleased to say that there will now be a new option. This directions power will be an alternative to consumers lodging an application in the tribunal where they would have to tell their story over again. It is also hoped that the commissioner's new power will persuade those businesses that currently choose to ignore the initial complaint to Fair Trading to engage meaningfully with the consumer through Fair Trading's complaints service. The commissioner will only use the directions power where satisfied that Fair Trading's complaints resolution procedures have failed to reach a mutually agreed outcome. The commissioner will then act as a fair, impartial umpire over the dispute, issuing a direction with a fair and reasonable outcome that lets the parties know where they stand. The commissioner will determine either that the business should repair, replace or refund the goods, or that no direction should be made. This will provide a simple, low-cost and timely resolution for those disputes

that are progressed through the full directions process in a way that is proportionate to the problem. These reforms will benefit consumers and businesses alike.

I now turn to the bill and will outline how the new power has been constructed and its key features. A number of key terms are defined in schedule 1 clause 6 to the bill, or in the Fair Trading Act 1987, which I will note. First, the bill refers to the "Secretary" being empowered to make a direction. This term will have the same meaning as "Secretary" in section 4 of the Fair Trading Act 1987, which is taken to mean the Commissioner for Fair Trading. Secondly, the bill refers to a "dispute" as a complaint made by a consumer about a supplier, as detailed in section 9 of the Fair Trading Act 1987, but only within the eligibility criteria outlined in the bill.

Thirdly, I refer to the consumer. This bill adopts the same definition of "consumer" in new schedule 3 as the ACL, which is also reflected in section 4 of the Fair Trading Act 1987. Paragraphs (2) and (3) of new section 1 define the eligibility criteria for a direction as an unresolved dispute about a consumer good sold in New South Wales that cost between \$25 and \$3,000. These amounts will apply in the initial phase of these reforms, but may be altered in future by way of regulation. The dispute must be about the failure of only certain consumer guarantees, being acceptable quality, fit for disclosed purpose, supply by description, or supply by demonstration model. Some goods are excluded because disputes about them become complex or because they are best dealt with by other existing specialist dispute resolution schemes.

Paragraph (3) of new section 1 lists these exclusions as motor vehicles, second-hand goods, solar batteries, any material where the Home Building Act will provide a warranty, and any matter that is already in a tribunal or court. New section 2 (2) restricts how old the good can be. The bill has set this timeframe at six months from the date of purchase. This is a reasonable time for the business and consumer to try to resolve an issue over a defective good. As I noted earlier, the Australian Consumer Survey results found that when respondents had a problem with a good 76 per cent experienced a problem within the first six months from purchase. Again, in the future this six-month period may be extended by regulation, following an assessment of this new power.

To enter the pathway for a consumer guarantees direction, the consumer must already have made a complaint to Fair Trading through its complaints handling process. New section 1 (2) (d) specifies that a direction can be made only where the complaint to Fair Trading remains unresolved. In practice, Fair Trading will first attempt to resolve the complaint before referring it to the commissioner for a potential direction. If the dispute cannot be resolved, the statutory eligibility criteria are met and if the commissioner thinks that the matter should be assessed for a direction the consumer will be contacted and given the option to apply for a direction.

New section 2 (1) has been drafted to allow the application to be made flexibly. It can be in writing or by verbal consent, without the need for consumers to retell their story. If a consumer decides to apply for a direction and the application is accepted Fair Trading will contact the business to let it know and explain the process. Once the application is accepted, new section 6 (3) (a) provides that the consumer and business will have the chance to provide further information in writing to Fair Trading. The process has been designed flexibly so that these small value claims can be resolved in a way that is fair, quick and cheap without the formality of court proceedings. This is why the rules of evidence will not apply, as per new section 6 (2).

New section 6 (1) confers on the commissioner the power to make a direction if she is satisfied that a relevant ACL consumer guarantee has been breached and based on an assessment of what is "fair and reasonable in all the circumstances". Requiring the commissioner to be satisfied that there has been a breach of a relevant ACL consumer guarantee ensures certainty for business. The fair and reasonable test is a commonly used statutory formulation. While the commissioner's directions will clarify what may be properly regarded as fair and reasonable in the circumstances over time it is expected that the commissioner could consider remedies that would be available under the ACL, case law, regulator guidelines, as well as industry standards and best practice.

It will not always be appropriate for the commissioner to accept an application or issue a direction. This could be because the business is now in administration or the matter is best dealt with by a tribunal because of its complexity or because a manufacturer has issued a recall on a good giving a consumer a new pathway to a remedy. This is why paragraphs (1) and (2) of new section 4 allow the commissioner to refuse to accept an application or to make a direction. When a direction is issued new section 3 (2) permits the commissioner to direct a business to repair, replace or refund the good. These are some of the remedies available to consumers under the ACL. For clarity and fairness new section 3 (3) provides that the secretary must let the parties know how long they have to fulfil the direction. The time frame needs to be reasonable for the consumer and the business and flexible enough to fit the different circumstances that may arise.

New section 3 (3) gives flexibility by allowing between 28 and 90 days in normal circumstances, and longer time frames if agreed by the parties. New section 5 requires a copy of the direction to be given to the business and the consumer at the same time. The direction will be accompanied with a statement of reasons so that the information and reasoning used by the commissioner to arrive at the conclusion is clear and everyone

understands why the outcome was reached. This is a key component in the educational aspect of this reform. It will also give the parties confidence that they have received a fair and independent adjudication of their dispute. Based on similar models, such as the West Australian Building Commissioner's dispute service and the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am confident that in the majority of matters where a direction is issued it will be the end of the matter. A consumer and business would have had their dispute resolved and received a final outcome. What a fantastic result.

For the small minority of matters, the bill sets out avenues for the review or enforcement of directions. For businesses and consumers who think that the commissioner missed something or did not get the decision right, there is a new pathway into the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. New section 10 allows a consumer or a business to ask the tribunal to redetermine their dispute. The process has been designed so that the tribunal can deal with the matter in a similar way to how consumer claims are dealt with under part 6A of the Fair Trading Act 1987 in the tribunal's Consumer and Commercial Division.

This retains the focus on resolving the dispute between the consumer and trader. It maintains predictability in the process. Also, the consumer has not lost any rights while the business now has a chance to ask the tribunal to look into the matter. If the application is determined by the tribunal, new section 11 provides that the outcome will be a dismissal of the application or making a new order. If a new order is made, the commissioner's direction ceases to have effect. For those consumers who receive a direction that is not challenged in the tribunal and is not complied with, new section 9 of the bill allows the consumer to register the direction with the Local Court as a judgement debt.

An important element of the bill is that new section 14 gives the commissioner the ability to publish directions. Publishing directions can educate the market about the requirements of the ACL. A major aim of this bill is to help educate businesses about their Australian Consumer Law obligations so that if faced with similar circumstances in the future, they will know and understand how to handle the dispute without the need of an independent adjudicator. Giving consumers and businesses more information about how the ACL applies in specific situations will pay dividends in improved understanding. This will empower consumers and businesses to negotiate fairly and effectively so that more problems are resolved in the future without the need for intervention by Fair Trading.

Consumers are not the only winners with this bill. For those smaller disputes considered for a direction, the bill gives businesses a valuable chance to resolve those disputes outside of formal action in the court system. Research from the Victorian Small Business Commissioner identified that the average cost incurred by a business to participate in a tribunal dispute is around \$5,000 and around 63 hours. This is time and money that could be better spent running a business. A report by the Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals Australia found that every dollar invested in a good complaint process by a business can have a return of investment of \$10 per dollar spent—a significant payback in market reputation and repeat business.

This new power will reduce time and effort costs for businesses, and make it easier for businesses and consumers alike to manage disputes about low-cost goods in a modern, efficient way. This supports the Government's priority to improve the ease of doing business in New South Wales. This directions power is a new approach in Australia to resolving consumer disputes. To test its potential, the new power is confined to more straightforward consumer disputes. This will give Fair Trading time to test and prove the concept, and to bed down procedures and processes. Its impact will be evaluated periodically, beginning after 12 months of operation. I now turn to the other components of the bill and outline their purpose. The bill creates a new subclause after the existing section 19 (3) (c) of the Fair Trading Act 1987 to allow Fair Trading investigators to seize, detain or remove consumers goods that are noncompliant with a safety standard, or subject to an interim or permanent ban, or subject to a recall, or reasonably suspected by the investigator to be or likely to become unsafe.

Currently, if a product is found to be unsafe or there is a reasonable belief it is unsafe, investigators must obtain a search warrant before seizing the goods. Recently, I issued a public warning about an imported cosmetic eyeliner that has dangerous levels of lead and may have caused three children to become sick. This product did not comply with the mandatory standard in the Australian Consumer Law. Even though traders selling the eyeliner could be fined significant amounts, seizing those eyeliners immediately without applying for a search warrant would have allowed Fair Trading investigators to take swifter action. The public reasonably expects that Fair Trading is able to take immediate action on dangerous goods. The current process for taking unsafe goods off shelves delays action and risks harming consumers. The Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2004, for example, already recognises the dangers posed by unsafe electrical goods and allows an investigator to seize dangerous goods.

The bill provides Fair Trading with consistency across the legislation it administers for the safety of consumer goods by providing the tools it needs to keep the community safe by protecting people from unsafe and dodgy products. The bill creates a new section 23D (1) to allow investigators to give embargo notices to traders

without needing to first obtain a search warrant if it is not practicable to seize and remove those consumer goods. If an investigator reasonably believes a product is unsafe and it is not practicable to seize the product, an embargo notice will be issued. This will compel the trader to stop selling the product until testing has confirmed whether the product is safe. The bill replaces section 66 (3) to amend the orders that a court may give when it has convicted someone of an offence.

When Fair Trading is pursuing an investigation or prosecution, there can be significant costs involved to protect the public. Fair Trading may need to pay scientific experts when investigating product safety. The bill provides Fair Trading with a right to have those costs reimbursed. If a person is convicted of an offence against the Fair Trading Act or the regulations under the Act, the convicting court may order the offender to reimburse my department for the costs reasonably incurred during the investigation of the offence. The bill creates a new section 20 (a1) to allow an investigator to review potentially unfair contract terms and to take action if needed. This amendment corrects a technical anomaly in that Fair Trading inspectors cannot currently investigate and determine whether a contract contains unfair terms.

I will now discuss the changes to the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002. Underquoting remains an ongoing concern in the residential real estate market. So far this year Fair Trading has conducted three compliance programs targeting underquoting. Fifty-seven of the 70 agents inspected were non-compliant with the existing requirements. The existing powers of entry under section 205 of the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002 are important tools for Fair Trading's compliance and enforcement activities. However, the current powers of entry have some limits. When it comes to dealing with underquoting, this is not the most effective course of action. The bill amends section 205 to expand the power of entry to before an auction is conducted. This will enable Fair Trading inspectors to attend open homes, either overtly or covertly, and to speak to agents about the property and price, listen to conversations between agents and buyers, and review marketing material. This will help detect underquoting activity before a property goes to auction, which in turn could save potential homebuyers unnecessary costs and the disappointment that comes at an auction due to misleading information.

Finally, I will discuss changes to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011. The amendments modify existing provisions in the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011 and aim to improve Fair Trading's ability to regulate the sector effectively. Section 9 (3) will be replaced with a new section to revise the pre-notification period for plumbing and drainage work. This will provide Fair Trading with enough time to access and review the information contained in the notice of work. This is important, as the notice contains key details about the site and informs Fair Trading whether the site requires a physical inspection or it is high risk. Many plumbers already provide the notice to work within this time frame. This reform aligns the law with industry practice, making it easier for industry to comply. The plumbing regulator relies on various documentation during the development of a plumbing and drainage site, including the certificate of compliance and the sewer service diagram. These documents help Fair Trading inspectors to assess the plumbing or drainage site properly to ensure that it is compliant with the law. The bill amends section 15 (1) of the Plumbing and Drainage Act and introduces new section 16 (4A) to modify the timing requirements for these documents to ensure they are provided to the plumbing regulator on the completion of work. These changes, while minor, will allow the regulator to more effectively assess the accuracy, compliance and safety of the plumbing and drainage work. Since becoming the State's plumbing regulator, Fair Trading has identified cases of ongoing issues with non-compliance with the Act. Some matters could be managed more effectively by Fair Trading by issuing a written direction to the plumber rather than a penalty.

The bill includes four new matters that can be issued as a direction to uncover parts of the plumbing and drainage work, disconnect any new plumbing and drainage work from non-compliant older work, and require plumbers to re-book an inspection or provide documentation in certain circumstances. The bill creates these new matters by adding a new section 14 (1) (g)-(j). Failure to comply with a direction can be a continuing offence but only if the plumber repeatedly fails comply within the required time. The proposals in this bill are aimed at enhancing Fair Trading's existing regulatory toolkit to futureproof its ability to take compliance and enforcement action and to be a more effective consumer protection regulator. These reforms will help Fair Trading to increase businesses' compliance with existing obligations while reducing consumer detriment in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2018-2019

Debate resumed from 7 August 2018.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:06): It is a pleasure to contribute to debate on the budget estimates and related papers for 2018-2019. I echo the sentiments of my colleagues about what this budget means for their communities. It is a great budget for communities right across New South Wales—particularly the community of Manly, I am delighted to say. This is a true Liberal-Nationals budget and, as the Treasurer remarked in his Budget Speech:

New South Wales today is not great by chance—but great by choice.

Strong financial management has created a virtuous cycle of growth and return—allowing us to make record investments where it matters.

This is the Coalition advantage.

The budget of 2018-19 delivers for today whilst building for tomorrow. It is the budget that delivers large-scale infrastructure projects—the schools, roads, rail and hospitals that our growing State needs—as well as providing the local investment we need, including more teachers, more nurses and more doctors and greater access to preschools, to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to thrive, whatever their postcode. I am delighted to report that Manly has been the recipient of much-needed funding and investment that only a Liberal-Nationals Government has been able to deliver for our part of the world.

I am particularly proud of the continued funding for the upgrade of Manly Vale Public School and further funding for the upgrade of Curl Curl North Public School, both of which will benefit from the New South Wales Government's Cooler Classrooms Program that will invest \$500,000 in funding—the largest expenditure of its kind in New South Wales' history. Whilst the State has invested \$25 billion in new hospital upgrades and clinical staff, we see that investment firsthand in our wonderful staff at Manly Hospital, the new \$50 million Brookvale Community Health Centre—which delivers 22 services, including child and youth mental health and a home for BreastScreen NSW—and, of course, the new Northern Beaches Hospital, which will provide world-class emergency and surgical health care that my constituents and those on the northern beaches and in the northern region so richly deserve.

Recently I toured the Northern Beaches Hospital, which will open on 31 October 2018, and it was a sight to behold. This fantastic building has a brilliant atrium five floors up—indeed, it does not even look like a hospital. It is a phenomenal building of which we can all be proud. The Minister for Health, the member for Wakehurst, should be incredibly proud of the Northern Beaches Hospital. I note that investing in these local projects, health infrastructure projects in particular, is matched by the ongoing spending on clinical and support staff provided for in this budget, which saw record amounts into frontline services, paramedics—you name it—across the board.

The 2018-19 budget is underpinned by the strong financial management and fiscal responsibility that the people of New South Wales have come to expect from a Coalition government. A \$3.9 billion surplus this year is followed by surpluses averaging \$1.6 billion over the next four years. The future of this State lies, in part, in its strong budgetary position. Without a strong budget the investment in world-class road infrastructure, including the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, would not be possible. I note that the Opposition, without having seen any plans or appreciating the value it will bring to hundreds of thousands of residents of the northern beaches, has said it will axe the project. The Opposition does not want to look at the merit of the project, but based on the politics of envy it will wants to axe it and deny the people of the northern beaches the road-based public transport that they deserve.

Rail infrastructure including the Sydney Metro, the 2,000 extra classrooms and the countless new and upgraded hospitals would simply not happen without this State being in its current fiscal position. While families and individuals navigate the challenges associated with the cost of living, this Government has responded. Real action to reduce electricity bills, reform of the green slip system and reductions in stamp duty for first home buyers all demonstrate action from a government that not only understands the issues facing everyday people in New South Wales but also listens to and implements real policy change. This is a budget for our children: Partnering the Active Kids rebate with the new Creative Kids voucher while extending support for early childhood education to three-year-olds shows a clear intent to ensure parents and families can give their kids the best opportunities, no matter where they live. I bring to the attention of the House the *NSW Economic Update Winter 2018*, authored by Chris Angus of the Parliamentary Research Service, which provides some useful context in which to view this budget. It states:

The *NSW 2018-19 Budget Statement* noted that the State's economic outperformance, which began in 2014-15, continued into 2017-18 with an expected 3% economic growth. The Budget Statement outlined factors leading to these positive results, while forecasting ongoing good performance in the coming two financial years ...

It goes on to say that, with respect to the drivers of this strong economic growth:

Public investment has also made an impressive contribution, reflecting the Government's asset recycling strategy with positive spillovers for business, investment and employment.

Looking forward, the update states:

Growth drivers are shifting from dwelling construction and household consumption, towards business investment and more broad-based strength in exports.

They are clear signals that the policy levers and activity of this Government are supporting and encouraging business activity and, therefore, building a more resilient and dynamic economy, one that is not reliant on property prices increasing forever. That will be good comfort for first home buyers and people looking to get into the property market across this State. Indeed, Manly has a fierce property market. It is pleasing to see that after years of neglect this State is getting the investment in public infrastructure that it deserves. This is the case because of the financially sensible yet politically brave decision to proceed with asset recycling. We hear time and again from those opposite about the evils of asset recycling, which they suggest is the selling off of public assets for no good and simply for the sake of it.

So that they get a bit more appreciation and understanding of what asset recycling is, I note comments from the *NSW Economic Update Winter 2018* that: Support for asset recycling has also been expressed by the Victorian Government and the World Economic Forum. Additionally, 2016 polling by Property NSW found that, if the benefits were properly explained, 61% of surveyed NSW residents supported asset recycling. The winter economic update demonstrates that a lot of the outcomes of the asset recycling program have filtered into the infrastructure boom that we are experiencing across New South Wales. Those opposite should reconsider their abject opposition to the program, because it is completely unfair and unwarranted. The benefits of asset recycling are felt across New South Wales. A long list of benefits from this budget have made their way to Manly. In education, a redevelopment of Manly Vale Public School is underway and is forecast for completion in early 2020.

Business interrupted.

Community Recognition Statements

WHEELCHAIR RACER LUKE BAILEY

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:15): I congratulate wheelchair racer Luke Bailey of Wingham, who is now ranked tenth in the world for the 100 metres after successfully competing in Switzerland on the Australian team. During his four days of participation at the Swiss championship, Luke managed top three places in every event he entered, which were decided on times. There were 10 countries represented at the championships, including Thailand, Japan, Brazil and many European countries. With the track season resuming in January, Luke has his sights set on the world championships, which will be held in Dubai in November next year, and has a dream of representing Australia at the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo. I congratulate Luke on his recent achievements and wish him all the very best in his endeavours as he heads for the world championships in Dubai.

AUSTRALIAN MEAT INDUSTRY COUNCIL COMPETITION WINNER BEDE JARRETT

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:16): Bede Jarrett of Jarrett's Quality Meats in Lambton, Wallsend, received the prestigious first place in three categories at the Newcastle final of the Australian Meat Industry Council's Sausage King and Best Butchers Burger Competition—try saying that fast! Bede received first place for his traditional Australian beef sausage for the fourth time in five years. He also came first in the gourmet/open class category for his jalapeno and tasty cheddar sausage and first in the best butcher's gourmet burger category for his lamb, honey, mint and rosemary recipe. The butchery also received two second places and a tied second place. I wish him all the best in all he does and hope all goes well in the State final.

PENNANT HILLS HIGH SCHOOL CANTEEN

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:17): I acknowledge two special ladies: Lyndall Chamberlain and Deb Murray. Together they have been running the Pennant Hills High School canteen for more than 25 years. They have seen numerous staff changes and four different principals, and they have served almost 30,000 students—that is a lot of pies and sausage rolls. They have supported countless parent volunteers in the canteen, ensuring all the volunteers have the best possible experience, and many of them have gone on to become lifelong friends.

Deb and Lyndall have not only worked tirelessly to provide lunches for the hungry students but also assisted after hours, running sausage sizzles at special events such as graduation ceremonies and presentation nights. It is this dedication to ensuring the success of every student at the high school that will make them greatly missed. Working with both the parents and citizens association and student body, they have seen the introduction of many new initiatives from both students and parents. They were always happy to make changes at the canteen and include students in all decisions. Deb and Lyndall have both decided to retire from their positions, and I thank

them for their amazing service to Pennant Hills High School and their remarkable dedication to the students and staff.

ALBERT'S CAFE, WYONG

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (13:18): There are certain places in all communities that bridge the past and the present and bring to life the character and history of where they are. Albert's Café, near Wyong Station in my electorate, is one of these places, boasting an amazing collection of Wyong history, including a seat from an old train long retired from the intercity fleet—the Newcastle Express. The café is well known by locals, and Catherine and Steve never fail to put a smile on the faces of their customers. I have a coffee at Albert's whenever I get the chance, and I learn something new about Wyong's history each time I am there. There is great food, great coffee and great company. It is no wonder Albert's Café is an institution in Wyong.

NORTH SHORE BEAR PIT PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:19): Last week some incredible young students took part in the North Shore Bear Pit Public Speaking Competition that I hosted in this place. Finalists Soraya Christian-Hare, Caroline Brown, Scarlett Owens, Ethan Choi, Allegra Shipley, Siofra McAweeney, Ava Marin, Henry Magill, Imogen Pride, Hamish Longstaff, Shamiso Munetsi, Arabella Keating, Oscar Deman and Isabella Methven each presented a speech on various topics including "What is better: paper or plastic", "What makes me a good friend" or "My secret life as a spy". The calibre of their speeches was truly impressive and gave our judges Chris Davitt from Mosman Toastmasters, *Mosman Daily* editor Brett Thomas and the Parliament's own Julie Langsworth a very hard task in deciding a winner and runner-up. I sincerely thank staff at Mosman Public School, St Marys Primary School, Mosman Preparatory School, Middle Harbour Public School, Loreto Kirribilli, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School, St Aloysius College and Queenwood School for Girls who each ran heats within their schools in the lead-up to the finals.

YOUTH OFF THE STREETS OUTREACH PROGRAM

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:20): Last week I had the pleasure of attending the Youth Off the Streets semitrailer launch at Belmore as part of its outreach program run by Father Chris Riley, AM. It was a delight to see Father Chris Riley, the staff, the social workers and in particular the many young people who attended. I acknowledge Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs for helping in the partnership. Canterbury-Bankstown Council has also been involved. The semitrailer will remain at Belmore until October and will provide young people with a wonderful place to meet and seek any support that they may need. I congratulate Father Chris Riley on his amazing efforts for young people across New South Wales, particularly in the Bankstown and Belmore areas.

KIAMA ELECTORATE YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR SARAH YOUNG

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (13:20): I am always incredibly proud and inspired by the selfless acts of others, especially in my electorate of Kiama, and when witnessing the impression or legacy such acts may leave in a local community. One example is Kiama's Young Citizen of the Year Sarah Young. This November Sarah is heading to Cambodia and spearheading a team of 20 volunteers providing aid and assistance to the residents of Battambang province. It will be her third trip to Cambodia and she will aim to work with various non-government organisations to target areas of neglect in an effort to improve education quality in the local community while supporting the development of the Future Sense Foundation. I urge anyone who is interested in the experience to contact Sarah through her Facebook event "Cambodia is calling YOU" and take up an opportunity of a lifetime. They can try something different, get out of their comfort zone and make an impact. I once again congratulate Sarah on her commitment and tireless effort within our community and further abroad. I wish her the very best for what I am sure will be a bright and promising future.

CAVES BEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (13:21): This year we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Caves Beach Public School and will be kicking off the party with an assembly at Swansea High School on Friday. One great thing about Caves Beach is the strength of the community, which has been built through a shared history over many years. Caves Beach is a close-knit community and Caves Beach Public School has necessarily played a crucial role in forging the relationships that make up the fabric of our community and bind us all together. Having grown up in the neighbouring suburb of Swansea Heads, I know how comforting it is to be surrounded by the familiar faces of people who have lived and worked in the community for most if not all of their lives. For the past 50 years the Caves Beach Public School's motto "Learning to live" has underpinned and guided the school's alumni, equipping them with the values they need to continue to build the caring and welcoming community that we live in. I congratulate Caves Beach Public School and look forward to celebrating its fiftieth birthday.

PRESTIGE BOXING, LITHGOW**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (13:22):**

I congratulate Roger Spence and his partner, Roxanne, on their recent investment in the Lithgow community by opening a brand new boxing gym known as Prestige Boxing to give men, women, boys and girls an opportunity to enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. They have some of the latest boxing equipment available and have already sent five fighters off to the State championships. They run a mums and bubs program so mums can be involved in boxing and also hold classes for young children. Once a fortnight Roger and Roxanne open their doors to give young men a place to meet and talk about mental health and share ideas. That is admirable. I thank them for their hospitality at the gym opening, which Olympic silver medallist Spike Cheney and Brett Young attended. I wish them all the best for the future of their adventure.

HABERFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT SAFETY

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:24): The students and families at Haberfield Public School have been living through the worst impacts of WestConnex construction. The school students are subject to construction noise, dust and vibration. Local streets around the school have been clogged with heavy construction, vehicles and drivers rat-running to avoid road closures. Most alarmingly of all is that air quality recordings at the school show dust levels at 406.4 micrograms per cubic metre—eight times higher than the national average target. The school has successfully campaigned to rule out tunnelling at the Muirs site on Parramatta Road, but parents and carers are deeply concerned that construction and parking at these locations will continue to put kids at risk for years to come. I am proud to support the tireless advocates at the school and surrounding community and I renew calls for the Minister for WestConnex and the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight to protect student safety by providing a crossing guard on the Bland Street pedestrian crossing outside the school and investigating the alarming recordings on air quality at the school and reporting back to parents and the community as a matter of urgency.

NSW JUNIOR SURFING TITLES CHAMPION ZACK MCMAHON

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:25): I offer my congratulations to Zack McMahon of Evans Head who earlier this year won the under-18 boys division of the NSW Junior Surfing Titles at Coffs Harbour. Zack McMahon has been riding the waves on a surfboard or testing the slopes of a skate park since he was three years old. He has worked very hard since that time competing in surfing. Whilst he was discouraged at times he persisted and he is now the New South Wales junior champion. Zack's parents, Brett and Julie McMahon, have been very supportive and are understandably very proud. Zack's ability to perform big aerial moves proved to be his advantage in overcoming his fellow competitors in the final. A natural footer, he came off the blocks early in the exchange, nailing two innovative rides in the opening five minutes of the heat. This was no doubt the clincher that gave him victory at Macauleys Beach. I wish Zack every success as he goes on to represent New South Wales at the Australian titles, which will be held in South Australia later this year.

BALLINA ELECTORATE BRAVERY AWARD RECIPIENTS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (13:26): I salute the courage of two of my constituents and residents of Byron Bay, Chris Hadwell and Jen McCallum, who have been recognised in the Australian Bravery Awards for their rescue of a woman from her burning home in Byron Bay. When Ms McCallum noticed her neighbour's house on fire, she alerted emergency services before running to the property and entering it on her hands and knees to search for occupants. She was driven back by flames and a gas explosion. When Mr Hadwell joined her at the property, they both re-entered the house to look for the woman owner.

Fighting against thick black smoke and with parts of the roof collapsing around them, they eventually located the barely conscious occupant and pulled her to safety. Similar selfless courage was shown by Ballina's Grant McOmish and Brian Mitchell of Cumbalum who went to the aid of a mate who was being attacked by a shark while surfing at Lighthouse Beach. Showing no concern for their own safety, the pair paddled out to the badly injured man, brought him back to the beach safely and worked to prevent bleeding and keep him conscious until help arrived. All four recipients are incredibly deserving of their bravery awards.

CHANNEL 4 CHANGE FOUNDER BRENDA NORMAN

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (13:27): This Education Week I recognise Brenda Norman, a physical education teacher at Deniliquin High School. Being a passionate supporter of mental health and a keen swimmer, Brenda established the charity Channel 4 Change. By swimming the English Channel, she hoped to raise awareness and \$40,000 for mental health support. Training was no easy feat. She tried to train in the Edward River but when the water got low she broke a rib on a submerged log. When the local pool was closed for winter recess, she drove an hour each way to Echuca to train before school, but the heated pool was not good practice for the cold English Channel. In a show of community support, Edward River Council filled the Deniliquin pool early so

she could train locally in cold water leading up to her swim. Last week Brenda swam 40 kilometres across the English Channel in 11 hours, 53 minutes, the fastest Australian female this season. She overcame sea sickness, mental hurdles, sunburn, currents and fatigue. So far, Channel 4 Change has raised \$55,000. I congratulate Brenda, her coach and her support crew and the community of Deniliquin on supporting this great project.

FAIRFIELD RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:28): On Saturday 21 July 2018 the Fairfield Relay for Life held its inaugural trivia night fundraiser, which was a tremendous success. The Fairfield Relay for Life team has a reputation for hosting incredibly fun events, and the trivia night was no exception. Trivia, raffles, dancing competitions and jokes—the Fairfield Relay team had it all going on the evening. I express my sincerest thanks to the organising committee members for all their hard work and congratulate them on a very successful inaugural trivia night. The work they do is truly invaluable in gaining support and spreading the good word for our local Relay for Life. We could not do it without them. I encourage all members to continue their ongoing support to not only the Fairfield Relay for Life but also their local Relay for Life teams as they continue to fight for a future that is free from cancer.

DONATE LIFE WEEK

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:29): I take this opportunity to recognise Kerrie Argent and Andrew Dunn for their advocacy in promoting Donate Life Week, which ran from 29 July to 5 August in support of people waiting for lifesaving transplant surgery. The Donate Life campaign is a national reform program aimed at encouraging Australians to register as donors and urging people to discuss this important decision with their families. Only one in three Australians have joined the Australian Organ Donor Register and 1,400 people are on waiting lists for transplant surgery.

It is because of these statistics that it is imperative we ensure our loved ones are notified of our wishes in the event that we are in a position to donate. Both Kerrie and Andrew have their own experiences that have driven them to campaign for people to join the Australian Organ Donor Register. Kerrie sadly lost her son 10 years ago and a nephew two years ago. Both men had signed up to be donors, and through their decisions they were able to save multiple lives. Andrew was a transplant recipient who was previously diagnosed with kidney disease. Thankfully, after six months waiting on the register his wife was approved as a living donor. I encourage anyone wanting to become a donor and to save lives to sign up to the Government's Service NSW website and to let their loved ones know of their intentions to donate.

TRIBUTE TO GRACIE WALLIS

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (13:30): Gracie Wallis may not have been able to speak but her voice has helped to shape disability policies in a way that will help thousands of people for years to come. While her legacy of helping shape the National Disability Insurance Scheme will live on, sadly we recently farewelled Gracie. Hundreds of people from all walks of life gathered on 11 July to the strains of Gracie's favourite songs, a performance from the Out of the Blue choice, to hear a poem written by friend Chantelle Jary that her sister, Sophie, helped recite and a video of her graduation from Para Meadows School last year.

Born with a hypoxic brain injury and cerebral palsy, Gracie passed away a week after her thirteenth birthday but, thanks to the generosity of many, her parents, Susan and Mark, and her sister, Sophie, have established an International Women's Day scholarship to be awarded to a local woman with a disability for "something special". Gracie inspired many as the face of the Bandaged Bear fundraising campaigns lobbying for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. She also provided personal inspiration for my wife, Alison, and I, who have benefited from knowing her and working with her and her mum, Susan.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:31): I thank Taree community and in particular John Laidlaw and Sandra Wilson of Pampoola, who have spearheaded a project to work with the Taree Quota Club, which has recently launched an appeal to raise funds for the wives and children of drought-affected farmers in the State's west. Funds will be collated and distributed as vouchers to be used at local stores in the towns. Donations are placed in an upside-down umbrella to signify the sign of distress. Taree Quota's representative, Debbie Steber, said that the local communities of Taree and Wingham have shown genuine care for the women and children on the land by donating cash and essential items such as toiletries, cleaning products, baby supplies and food. The items will be dispersed in Gunnedah, Coonabarabran and Walgett areas. I say a big "Thank you" to those contributing to the appeal and congratulate John Laidlaw, Sandra Wilson and the Taree Quota Club on their initiative to assist those struggling in the bush during this terrible drought period.

KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (13:32): The Kogarah Historical Society is an amazing community organisation doing great work to keep alive the rich history of the St George region. I have been impressed in recent years listening to stories ranging from boxing bouts on Railway Parade in Kogarah to the gentleman's club that was once located at Primrose House on the banks of Botany Bay. The society's recent history competition was a raging success, with local amateur historians contributing wonderful articles on issues ranging from St Raphael's Church to stories of the early Anzacs. I was privileged recently to give a speech to the society about Thomas Ley—the infamous former member for St George, the forerunner to the seat of Kogarah—about his murderous past. I acknowledge the committee of the Kogarah Historical Society: president Beverley Earnshaw, Vice President Pat Young, secretary Gill Whan—the mother of a former member of this House—and public officer Robert McGarn. I wish them all success for the future year.

WESTERN HARBOUR TUNNEL AND BEACHES LINK PROJECT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:33): I was pleased to join with my community to celebrate a milestone achievement for all North Shore residents with the release of the detailed design of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link project for further community consultation. I am excited to deliver on my election promise, with the project taking another important step forward. This tunnel will address the traffic gridlock and rat runs, and give local streets back to our community. I have already met with various members of our community, and I thank the member for North Sydney Trent Zimmerman, Mayor of North Sydney Jilly Gibson and her general manager, and the Mayor of Mosman Council Carolyn Corrigan and her general manager and planning director. I also thank some of our community clubs including Mosman Rowing Club and schools including Marist College, the Norths Club with Chief Executive Officer Luke Simmonds, and precinct representatives Bartholomew and Ian Grey. A lot of changes have been made based on the community feedback so far, and I really look forward to the contributions which will be made in the consultation process as it continues. This project has been promised over many decades, but only the Liberals and Nationals can deliver it.

WILLIAM EDWARD VAUGHAN 100TH BIRTHDAY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (13:34): On 1 August I joined the family and friends of Bill Vaughan to celebrate his 100th birthday. William Edward Vaughan was born on 1 August 1918 in Longreach and grew up in north Queensland before moving to Sydney. He trained as a clockmaker and watchmaker in Townsville before enlisting in the Australian Army in 1940 to fight in World War II. He served in the Middle East and Borneo. After the war Bill continued as a clockmaker and watchmaker and met his lovely wife, Thelma, at Auburn. They have been happily married for 72 years.

Initially they lived in Centennial Park and Stanmore. In 1950 they moved to Wentworthville, where they remained until moving to Cardinal Gilroy Village, Merrylands, more than 10 years ago. Bill has been an active member of the Parramatta RSL Sub-branch and the former Wentworthville RSL Sub-branch. He is a community-spirited man and he has never declined an opportunity to help people. Throughout his life he has also remained fit and healthy. Bill taught young people to play squash. He also ran and swam almost every day and enjoyed golf. It was lovely to join Bill, his family and friends to celebrate his amazing long, happy and healthy life. Happy 100th birthday Bill.

TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETICS COMPETITOR JACINTA WINDSOR

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (13:35): I offer my congratulations to Jacinta Windsor of Bathurst. Jacinta, who is 15-years-old, has just been on a trip to Canada as part of the Sports Travel Australia Track and Field Athletics Program where she picked up three gold medals—one in a 100 metre and two in 200 metre events. She was also part of the record breaking 4 x 100 metre relay team. The events were held at Kelowna and Vancouver. Jacinta competed not only with Australian athletes but also with international athletes. She also picked up a third in the triple jump and a fourth in the long jump. She received a silver medal in the triple jump and a bronze medal in the long jump. I wish Jacinta all the best for her future in athletics. I also congratulate her mum and dad on their support of their daughter and on allowing Jacinta to be given this wonderful opportunity.

MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA RECIPIENT DR KIM ALEXANDER OSTINGA

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (13:36): I acknowledge Dr Kim Alexander Ostinga on receiving the Order of Australia medal. Dr Ostinga is an orthopaedic surgeon who served as a conjoint clinical lecturer in orthopaedics at the University of Newcastle from 2010 to 2014. He is also the co-founder of the Hunter New England Bone Bank, which collects bones for transplant purposes. Dr Ostinga was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to medicine, particularly orthopaedics, and it is well deserved. His work has inspired many students and helped to improve many hundreds of lives. Dr Ostinga has also been a driving force

behind Friends of King Edward Park—a not-for-profit community group that has been integral in fighting for public space and public land to stay in the hands and control of the local community. Dr Ostinga makes a wonderful contribution to the great city of Newcastle. Congratulations and well done!

NSW COMMUNITY SPORTS AWARDS

Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:37): The annual NSW Community Sports Awards celebrate the extraordinary contributions made to community sport in New South Wales. These awards are given to the many volunteers who dedicate their time to ensure that players can take to the field each week. Without them, sport in our communities would not be possible. I congratulate Glenmore Park resident Matthew Beach who was awarded the Young Coach Award for his coaching of softball at Penrith. Matthew coached the NSW Metro Team in the Blacktown Junior International Challenge and they finished an impressive fourth against teams from Japan and New Zealand. He was assistant coach of the NSW Metro Team in the Australian under-15s and they finished third. Matthew coaches a number of successful Penrith junior representative club teams and the ladies over 35, while also giving his time freely at coaching clinics and camps. Well done Matthew!

THE SANCTUARY COMMUNITY CARER HELEN WOOD

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:38): Today I pay tribute to local hero Helen Wood of Redhead. I was recently contacted by Helen's son-in-law, John, who relayed several stories of Helen's selfless contribution to her community at The Sanctuary, Redhead. Helen is the prime carer for Reg, her husband of more than 60 years. Unfortunately, Reg is currently doing it tough with four cancers, emphysema and diabetes. Helen, who is 83 years old, not only cares for Reg but also for others at The Sanctuary. Not long ago a neighbour rang Helen quite distressed as she was unable to stop herself from bleeding. Helen, who is not without her own health issues, responded immediately. She was able to apply pressure and a bandage to her neighbour's leg. The ambulance was delayed but when it finally arrived the paramedics commended Helen for her first aid work, which ultimately saved her neighbour's life. I commend Helen for her remarkable emergency response and for her significant contribution to The Sanctuary community.

CLARENCE VALLEY VOLUNTEER ALBA LINKLATER

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:39): I offer my sincere congratulations and thanks to an amazing volunteer from the Clarence Valley, Alba Linklater, who has served as President of the Grafton United Hospital Auxiliary for the past 14 years and has decided to stand down from that role. During Alba's term as president, the auxiliary has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase necessary equipment for the Grafton Base Hospital. The United Hospital Auxiliary has provided patients with many of the things that the local area health district has not been able to provide. Alba also pushed for and then opened an op shop at the hospital, which she will continue to supervise. The people of the Grafton area owe Alba, her executive and members of the auxiliary a huge vote of thanks for the wonderful work they do in raising funds. I wish Alba a wonderful retirement from her role as president.

PIGGY PRINCE OF THE GROUNDS OF ALEXANDRIA KEVIN BACON

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (13:40): I pay tribute to Kevin Bacon, the Piggy Prince of the Grounds of Alexandria, who is retiring from his position as the porcine mascot of the cafe this month. After many years as a social media icon in Sydney's south, Kevin is hanging up his trotters and heading off to a farm in Minimbah, not to become sausages and bacon, but to enjoy a well-earned retirement. Kevin shot to international fame in 2013 when he was sensationally kidnapped and turned up abandoned in Victoria a few weeks later. Fortunately, he was returned safe and sound and has hogged the limelight ever since. The Grounds are celebrating his departure with the "Seven Weeks of Kevin", culminating on his last day on 19 August. Congratulations on your retirement, Kevin. I wish you all the proverbial happiness of a pig in mud.

BONNY HILLS COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:40): I congratulate the Country Women's Association [CWA] Bonny Hills on coordinating a fundraising stall in the lead-up to Father's Day, which will raise valuable funds for the Hastings Cancer Trust. This year our talented and creative women of the CWA will be out in force on 2 September to showcase their arts and craft work while offering that last-minute gift for children to purchase for dad on Father's Day. Held at the Lake Cathie shopping centre, the event this year will be named "Not Just Tea and Scones" and will offer a variety of handcrafted items and homemade cooking, with a major raffle to be drawn.

President of the CWA, Delma Robson, is excited her organisation is going from strength to strength, with a number of new members joining over the past year. The CWA Bonny Hills first commenced 16 years ago and

has supported the Hastings Cancer Trust with fundraising events, such as the CWA Awareness Week Morning Tea in 2017, which raised more than \$700 for the trust. The Hastings Cancer Trust is a not-for-profit organisation that provides a full spectrum of support services for patients and families coping with a cancer diagnosis. I am delighted the CWA Bonny Hills women are supportive of such an outstanding organisation that supports members in our community dealing with cancer.

CHEMIKA LABORATORY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:42): On 6 August 2018, I had the pleasure of undertaking a site visit to Chemika, an independently owned chemical analysis laboratory providing chemical testing services to manufacturers of human therapeutics, medical devices, complementary medicines, health and beauty, and veterinary and agricultural products, at Girraween, in the electorate of Prospect. Extensively equipped and staffed with 20 trained and qualified personnel, Chemika provides a comprehensive range of chemical testing, including the physical/chemistry testing of raw materials and finished products, and testing to evaluate product stability.

Chemika aims to promote the viability of the pharmaceutical and veterinary products industries in Australia and Oceania through the provision of world-class analytical services. Chemika works to deliver complete assurance to manufacturers and sponsors that the analytical work supports the integrity of their product and the safety of consumers. I congratulate Managing Director and Chief Chemist Dr Alan Doughty and his staff on their outstanding and leading analytical service to industry—another Western Sydney success story.

NEUTRAL BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:43): The community of North Shore has secured a big win in this year's State Budget, with the Berejiklian Government announcing planning money towards an upgrade for Neutral Bay Public School. Neutral Bay Public School is a wonderful learning environment with excellent teachers and kids, but with more and more families calling the lower North Shore home it is bursting at the seams. One of my first initiatives as a member of Parliament was to meet with the school communities across the electorate and to start lobbying the Minister for Education and the Treasurer to support our local needs for more classroom and playground space.

When Minister for Education Rob Stokes joined me at Neutral Bay Public School last year, along with the parents and staff, it was clear to him how necessary this upgrade is. Our community identified the need for an upgrade more than a decade ago, and since my election I am glad to have joined this fight. I am thrilled that we have gotten it across the line, but it took all of us working together to achieve this result. I am grateful to the entire school community, including the Principal of Neutral Bay Public School, David Shuster; School Council President, Kim Thompson; parent representatives Jess Keen, Rachel Partis and David Jackson; community representative, the Hon. Jillian Skinner; and all the staff representatives, for working on delivering this school upgrade.

MANGROVE MOUNTAIN PUBLIC HALL

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:44): I acknowledge and congratulate the long history of community building that was celebrated at the Mangrove Mountain Public Hall last weekend. The beautiful hall was built in 1927 as a result of community fundraising and is still proudly maintained and managed by local community members. I compliment all those involved. I acknowledge the contributions of Central Coast Leagues Club, Mangrove Mountain and Districts Community Group, NSW Community Building Partnerships, Bill Dennis, the local nursery, our volunteer builders, all the local children who put a coin in the bottle, as well as many more who came before.

It was lovely to be joined at the opening of the playground by the beautiful kids and grandkids of former member for Gosford Kathy Smith. Last week at the official opening community members reminisced with stories of the well-attended community dances in the hall back into the 60s. It is great to see that Mountain Districts Association Vice President Ryan Howard is continuing the spirit of community celebration at the Mangrove Mountain Public Hall with regular Blues on the Mountain gatherings bringing packed houses with people from all over to once again revel in the splendour of the Mangrove Mountain Public Hall. Thank you and congratulations to all involved.

BATHURST LIVING LEGENDS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (13:45): It gives me pleasure to talk about Bathurst's newest living legends. In 2015, to celebrate the bicentenary, 200 people were acknowledged as living legends of Bathurst. In 2018, another seven new legends have been named. Their names are now on the honour roll: Terisa Ashworth, CEO of the Bathurst Seymour Centre; Clifford Berry, co-founder of the Bathurst Country Music Club; Margaret Hargans, who founded the Bathurst Women's

Refuge in the 1980s; Ron Hollebone, an active soldier of the Salvation Army; Tony Lewis who has been heavily involved in local sport for more than 25 years; Brian Mowbray, an architect who oversaw major projects in the city; and, Ian Ramsay, an active member of community groups for 40 years. The living legends were announced on proclamation day, but only recently received their badges and a Greg Hyde print during a presentation by the Bathurst Mayor. It is important to acknowledge those important people who are living legends in our community who make a difference every day.

ROPES CROSSING PUBLIC SCHOOL TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (13:46): This afternoon I will happily talk about the wonderful celebration for the tenth birthday of Ropes Crossing Public School in the electorate of Londonderry. It is fitting to congratulate the school on its tenth birthday during Education Week. When Ropes Crossing Public School opened, stark statistics show there were three classes and 25 students. Since that time the new release area of Ropes Crossing has exploded and there are now 31 classes and 778 students with seven kindergarten classes. It is now well beyond capacity. It is a fabulous educational community. The school put on an extravaganza for its tenth birthday celebrations, even packing a time capsule representing what life is like in 2018. I am happy to represent Ropes Crossing and celebrate the tenth birthday of Ropes Crossing Public School.

NSW GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT ROBYN CHARLTON

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (13:47): I acknowledge one of Lake Macquarie's most tireless volunteers and environmental champions. I recently had the honour of presenting Robyn Charlton with a NSW Government Community Service Award to acknowledge the many years she has spent working on countless environmental and community projects. Robyn has attained a degree in environmental science and management, and is a passionate environmental advocate involved with a number of local groups including industry consultative committees. She is a founding member of the Friendship Committee and the Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance and other groups that promote inclusion and community spirit.

Among her many community projects is Pamper Care providing much needed and appreciated, but often overlooked, basics such as personal hygiene products for women, men and children who find themselves homeless or otherwise in need. Another project she initiated is a local bag swap station that encourages the use of reusable bags, and replaces plastic bags with environmentally friendly ones. I understand Robyn was pretty chuffed with her award, even though it barely seemed enough to recognise the amount of work she has done. Her family and friends are very proud of her efforts. I congratulate and thank Robyn for all her work in the Lake Macquarie community.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I will now leave the chair until 2.15 p.m.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to question time members of the Lugarno Evening VIEW Club, guests of the member for Oatley, and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Infrastructure. I have fond memories of the club. I went there some years ago as a guest of the member for Oatley. Do you remember me coming along? James was there. He was only a baby then and now he is four. We had a lovely evening. I welcome Andrew McCullough and Josh McLaren from the NSW State Emergency Service, Kiama Unit, guests of the member for Kiama, Parliamentary Secretary for Education, and the Illawarra and South Coast. I welcome members of the North Shore SEC, guests of the member for North Shore. I also welcome members of the Fusion Culture Group, guests of the member for Sydney. We hope you enjoy question time.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS

Mr LUKE FOLEY: I seek leave to move a motion to suspend standing and sessional orders to allow me to move forthwith that this House refers the former member for Wagga Wagga, Daryl Maguire, to the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC].

Leave not granted.

Members

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: On behalf of the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that today the Attorney General will continue to answer questions in the absence of the Minister for Counter Terrorism,

Minister for Corrections and Minister for Veteran Affairs, and will do so for the remainder of this week. [*During the giving of notices of motions*]

Notices

PRESENTATION

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health will come to order. The motion is in order. Members will cease interjecting.

Later,

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will come to order. Members who argue across the Chamber will be placed on calls to order.

Question Time

FORMER MEMBER FOR WAGGA WAGGA

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:25): My question is directed to the Premier. Daryl Maguire has been recorded saying, "I've got the Malaysians, the guys that are building Green Square ..." Given this statement, will the Premier support a referral to the Independent Commission Against Corruption for an investigation into this relationship between a Liberal member of Parliament and Green Square property developers?

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:26): As the Leader of the Opposition would be well aware, there is an investigation before the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC]—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting. The member for Maroubra will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Leader of the Opposition would also well know, given his own personal experience, that one does not require a motion from this place or the other place to refer a matter to ICAC. If he or anybody else—

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bankstown and the member for Strathfield.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If he or anybody else has any issues of concern, I urge them to take it to the—

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

[*Interruption*]

Order! Members will not use language that shows lack of respect for the Chair and the Parliament. I call the member for Keira to order for the third time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I refer my call to every member of this place: If they see or hear anything that is of concern, which they feel ICAC should investigate, refer it on the spot. Do not wait three or four weeks; do not use this place—

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time. The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Swansea will come to order. The member for Port Stephens will come to order. The member for Bankstown will come to order. This is not a debate. The member for Kogarah will not interject on me. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I presume from the Leader of the Opposition's question that he has new information. If he does, he is required to refer that to ICAC—and I urge him to refer it to ICAC today.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will come to order. I do not appreciate name-calling. If members call other people names, I will repeat what they have said and call them to order.

POLICE CITIZENS YOUTH CLUBS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (14:28): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government boosting the employment prospects of young people in New South Wales through investment in youth clubs?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:28): I thank the member for Cootamundra for her question. I know how much she cares—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Swansea will come to order. I have warned her a couple of times. I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I was virtually three seconds into my answer. What has the member for Swansea got against Police Citizens Youth Clubs [PCYCs], youth unemployment or jobs for young people?

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Swansea wilfully and persistently disobeys directions from the Chair, she will be removed from the Chamber. The member for Swansea will cease arguing with the Chair.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Why are you so angry today?

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Swansea to order for the second time. I call the member for Swansea to order for the third time. She will cease arguing with the Chair.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Why are you so angry today?

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn all members. They will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Earlier today I warned members of the Lugarno VIEW Club about what question time would be like and I think my expectations have been realised. I thank the member for Cootamundra for her important question. I know how much she values the work of PCYCs in her community and throughout rural and regional New South Wales, in particular, but of course across city areas as well. Today I was incredibly proud to stand side by side with the Minister for Police and to support our police commissioner in his proactive program called RISEUP, delivered through the PCYC network. The program not only puts young people on the right track but also provides them with direct links to employment.

In this year's budget I was pleased to provide a \$40 million boost to PCYCs across New South Wales. We know the important work they do and we appreciate that it is much better for everybody concerned to put a young person on the right track rather than have them end up in a Juvenile Justice detention centre or, worse, in prison. Today the police commissioner advised that this program has already started in a pilot phase. In the past couple of months alone, without trying too hard, it has managed to allocate about 60 people to jobs, training and skills, which I am thrilled about. That is before the program was officially launched today. The program is demonstrating real results in communities where vulnerable young people previously did not have that focus or mentorship.

This morning I was proud to meet Michael, Jacob and Kyla, each of whom were in what they describe as vulnerable situations regarding their personal circumstances. Each of them has now received training—one to be a plumber, the other a tyre expert in car repairs, and Kyla as an expert in hospitality. Those three young people demonstrated and explained to me how the PCYC program had made a difference in their lives, and how if they had not received that support and mentorship from police officers and other community workers they would not be on the path they are on today. It is wonderful to support such a program, which allows young people to get skills and a job, and job and family security rather than going down the wrong track.

I commend the police for taking this initiative because crime prevention is much better than having to lock up somebody. Every police officer will tell you that. Crime prevention is much better than having to determine how to deal with young people in our correctional facilities. That is something we do not want to see. We want to see the numbers of young people going into our correctional facilities reduced; we want to see more young people employed. I am incredibly proud that this State has the lowest youth unemployment in the nation, and those figures are continually going down. We also know about the pressures of social issues that impact on a young person's ability to get a job. If they do not go to school and they do not have the ability to get the skills to get a job, it obviously leaves them vulnerable. But this program picks up those individuals.

RISEUP is multi-pronged. It allows police to identify young, isolated people in their communities and refer them to this program through PCYC. It also allows schools and other community workers to refer people to the RISEUP program. I also take this opportunity to thank all the businesses and other organisations that have lent their support to this program: TAFE and many private small, medium and large businesses that put up their hands to say they want to be part of it. They have put up their hands at no cost to the taxpayers, the NSW Police Force or the Government. They are offering their services to provide skills, training and opportunities for these young people. I commend everybody involved in the RISEUP program. The New South Wales Government will continue to support the PCYCs in their infrastructure aims. In fact, in this year's budget the multimillion-dollar boost to PCYCs has meant that there will be a brand-new—*[Extension of time]*

There are five new regional clubs. Members representing those areas are especially pleased because of the positive impact PCYC has on their communities. The clubs at Albury, Bourke, Kempsey, Griffith and Moree will get major upgrades. I wish every member could have attended the event along with the Minister for Police and me. It was truly inspiring to see young people turn their lives around, see police lead the charge in the

prevention of crime and see these three young people in particular, who privately said to me that they were now role models and examples to other people going along the same paths. This cycle of virtuousness and this positive response to vulnerable young people are a huge step forward for us in working with the police, community and business to deliver this collaborative approach. If we can save or prevent one person from going to a juvenile justice centre or jail it is a good thing.

To hear from the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force and the Minister for Police that during the pilot phase, which was only a couple of months, 60 jobs were provided for people who otherwise would have been on the wrong track is an enormous achievement. I cannot wait to see what this program will do in the future. In fact, when the commissioner and I were asked about how many people we hoped would achieve a positive skills and jobs outcome from this program, we said that there was no cap—as many young people as we can reach. I urge every member of the House—it does not matter which political party they belong to—to get any vulnerable person they know into this program. It does not cost them anything and will provide them with an opportunity to have a productive life for themselves and their families.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery the former member for Strathfield, Charles Casuscelli.

Question Time

FORMER MEMBER FOR WAGGA WAGGA

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:36): My question is directed to the Premier. Daryl Maguire has been recorded saying, "... so once Country Garden says yes no whatever we can then move on because ... I've got half a dozen people ... that are always ... seeking stuff." Given this statement, will the Premier support Labor's resolution for a referral to the Independent Commission Against Corruption to identify the half-dozen developers that Maguire was secretly working for?

Mr Brad Hazzard: It's a quote from ICAC.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research to order for the first time.

Ms Kate Washington: Just send him out.

The SPEAKER: Order! I called the Minister to order. I do not eject the member for Port Stephens when she is called to order for the first time; I wait until the third time and only after she has been given 10 warnings. The member should refrain from telling me how to do my job.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:37): I repeat the answer I have given on previous occasions, which is that the member for Maroubra has just quoted what is on the record from an Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] investigation. It is on the public record and is currently a matter of investigation by ICAC.

Mr Michael Daley: No, it's not.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will cease interjecting. It is not an argument. The member asked a question and should listen to the answer.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I would not take advice from those opposite on such matters. Under this Government, ICAC has been given stronger powers and a greater budget. If any member of this place, including those opposite, has any new information or issue of concern, they should refer it, as is proper process.

Mr Anthony Roberts: They need self-referrals.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Indeed. Each of us is obligated to report anything we feel is of concern—that is our job as members of Parliament. If those opposite—

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will cease interjecting. This is not a debate.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Why does the member for Strathfield not ask me a question and then listen to the answer?

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The ICAC always has an important job to do in maintaining public integrity in the processes of public officials, whether they are in State or local government. It is an important job.

But if any of those opposite want to use Parliament to politicise the role of ICAC, that is wrong. If those opposite have anything to refer they can refer it any day of the week at any time of day and should do so.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (14:38): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. How is the New South Wales Government ensuring that there is a solid plan for the future of regional New South Wales?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will come to order. She has started interjecting before the Deputy Premier has even started answering the question.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:39): I thank the member for Tamworth for his question. He absolutely gets his region and community. The great city of Tamworth is growing at a rate that is the envy of many cities across Australia.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Tamworth city has experienced organic growth. We want to put in place a blueprint to turbocharge places such as Tamworth so they can grow for the future and the next generation. In regional New South Wales we know the impact of drought on businesses, industries and jobs. We know the impact on our community when businesses close. We often only look through the lens of jobs, but when young people and families leave regional New South Wales and head to the city to chase work it means a lack of investment in service delivery.

It could mean a teacher who no longer has a class being lost from a community. It could mean a downgrading of the services that a local hospital can deliver for a community. That is why a couple of weeks ago the Liberal-Nationals Government announced its 20-year vision for growth in regional New South Wales. We are very proud of that. Looking at our track record, after being elected in 2011 we had to take some tough but fair decisions. We had to perform surgery because of the debt and deficit we inherited after 16 years of Labor. In our first term we made those tough decisions.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will not interject.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: In our second term, through our asset recycling programs, we have made investments in metropolitan and regional New South Wales that have never been seen before.

Mr Stephen Kamper: You're flogging assets.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Members opposite talk about flogging the assets, but we are recycling assets and putting the proceeds back into enabling a pipeline of infrastructure worth \$87 billion over the next four years. If we look at the forward estimates, it will be worth more than \$200 billion with more than \$40 billion going to regional New South Wales. We are growing the net value of the economy. The net value of the State is up about 30 per cent. Members opposite have no credentials to understand the economics of growing jobs in regional New South Wales let alone understand the broader economy. We have made those tough decisions and delivered an infrastructure investment.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Our regional communities want even more investment. That is why every cent of the close to \$4.2 billion from the proceeds of the Snowy Hydro that will be coming to the Treasury coffers will go to regional New South Wales. That money will be spent on enabling generational, transformational infrastructure in line with the legacy left by the great Snowy scheme itself to make sure that we grow regional New South Wales for generations to come. We want generations to come to look back 30 or 40 years and say that it was the vision and blueprint with attached funding that the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government put in place in 2018 that has given them the regional New South Wales they know. The regional vision that the Premier and I launched in Bathurst a couple of weeks ago does exactly that. It identifies 10 existing and new industries in regional New South Wales that we believe will grow if supported. It will provide something like an additional 260,000 jobs in regional New South Wales over and above the expected growth for the next 20 years. Another 100,000 people will be living in regional New South Wales over and above the expected growth for the next 20 years. That is our investment.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Swansea that she is on three calls to order. If she wishes to have a private conversation she can do so outside the Chamber.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is clear that members opposite have no interest in regional New South Wales. Put on a by-election and they pretend to care about regional New South Wales. They will play politics in this place over regional New South Wales, but the only thing they ever see of regional New South Wales is when they fly over it to get to another metropolitan city. That is why they have no interest in the answer to the question by the member for Tamworth. *[Extension of time]*

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Swansea is on her last warning. She will stop giving me directions about what to do. Government members will cease their conversations.

[Interruption]

I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Swansea from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 until tomorrow for wilful and persistent arguing with the Chair.

[The member for Swansea left the Chamber at 14:44 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I thank the member for Tamworth for the request for further information. Unfortunately, we were interrupted by members opposite who do not care about regional New South Wales, especially the member for Swansea, who does not care about her region. I touched on the 10 industries that the Government has identified over the next 20 years which will see significant opportunities for growth and we are underpinning this by the seven principles to unlock their potential. It is important to identify the need for investment by government and the private sector, where the blockages and gaps are and where government can play a role.

Backed by the Snowy Hydro funds and the \$87 billion pipeline of infrastructure spend over the next four years, the Government has a vision that will set regional New South Wales ahead for decades to come. I foreshadow some great announcements off the back of the vision announcement. The release of the vision statement set the first step of a journey that the Government will continue to work on in the future. Over the weeks and months ahead, we will announce initiatives, programs and funding, part of which will be for Snowy Hydro, which will underpin the vision for regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will cease interjecting.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: One of the first announcements—and one which received an allocation in the budget—relates to the unlocking of precincts in regional New South Wales. First off the rank is what I call an inland port for Parkes. As members know, inland rail will change the way we move freight through New South Wales. The identification of Parkes as a special precinct will allow us to put in place a range of measures, initiatives and programs—attached to funding from the New South Wales Government—and will attract investment, changing the Parkes of today and into the future. Already many large companies have approached the Government wanting to move to Parkes and be part of its growth. That is just an example in the central west. This Government has a vision and a blueprint that will unlock the potential and encourage the growth of regional New South Wales and that will support our future generations over the next 20 years.

FORMER MEMBER FOR WAGGA WAGGA

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (14:46): I am glad the Deputy Premier is backing in what I did in Parkes two years ago. My question is directed towards the Premier. In light of media reports in 2013 of Daryl Maguire's relationship with the Wuai Group, the developers of the now defunct \$600 million Wagga Trade Centre, will the Premier investigate what involvement the former member for Wagga Wagga had with these development proposals?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:46): Unlike the Labor Party, this Government does not believe in internal investigations by independent, internal Liberal Party staffers who turn into barristers, who turn into independent investigators. Why would I investigate it when the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] is there? What a stupid question.

The SPEAKER: The House will come to order before I call the member for Drummoyne.

WESTERN SYDNEY WORKER PROTECTION

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (14:47): My question is addressed to the Treasurer in his capacity as the Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the Government showing leadership in standing up for the workers of Western Sydney? Is the Minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:48): I thank the member for Drummoyne who, I understand, has recently become the longest-serving Liberal member for Drummoyne in the electorate's history. Soon he will become the longest-serving member for Drummoyne. I am proud to be part of the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government, which puts people first. On this side of the House, we know that jobs security means family security, and that is at the heart of every decision that we make. That is why we work hard in creating an environment for businesses to grow and for individuals to succeed.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Campbelltown and the member for Blue Mountains will cease interjecting.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This Government lowers taxes and cuts regulations and we get government out of the way. The results, particularly in Western Sydney, are there to see.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: New South Wales leads the nation in jobs growth. In Western Sydney, since 2011 more than 200,000 jobs have been created.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: As I said yesterday, we have an unemployment rate in Western Sydney of 4.9 per cent, the lowest since records began.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: These results did not happen by accident. They occurred because the Government shows leadership in tackling and taking on tough reform. Government members are out there fighting for the rights and opportunities of the people of Western Sydney. That is in stark contrast to the members of the New South Wales Labor Party—a party that was created to stand up for the workers. But when the rights of workers conflict with the political ambitions of the modern New South Wales Labor Party, the workers lose every time. I read this morning in one of our great newspapers—the *Australian*, for example—that the worker who has claimed to have been bullied by Emma Husar said that she had raised these issues with Bill Shorten and the New South Wales Labor Party. What did the New South Wales Labor Party do to support those workers? It did absolutely nothing. It is a party that preaches about bullying but does not practise—

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock will state his point of order. I will stop the clock.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about jobs in Western Sydney. The Treasurer is now talking about the internal machinations of the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is being relevant to the second part of the question, as much as the member for Cessnock may not like to hear it. The member for Cessnock should listen to the question being asked.

Mr Clayton Barr: I did listen to the question.

The SPEAKER: Some members do not. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat. Members should listen to the questions that are asked before taking points of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Even the shadow Minister for Industrial Relations—the man who has been selected by the Labor Party to stand up for the workers in New South Wales—did not advise them about their rights in relation to the Fair Work Commission. Instead he provided legal advice to Emma Husar, so that she could bully workers within the confines of the law. It is not as if members of the Labor Party do not know about bullying. I looked at Labor's website which talks about Labor's positive plan to address bullying in the workplace. Those opposite know very well the consequences because the website lists them: post traumatic stress, depression, social withdrawal, reduced self-confidence.

The Labor Party's policy for the next election is to ensure that all investigations of bullying complaints are investigated independently. How is John Whelan independent? He has worked for Michael Costa, Bob Carr, Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. The Labor Party has a bullying policy for itself and a bullying policy for everyone else. The question that the New South Wales Labor Party has to answer is: How much hush money has it paid to John Whelan to make all their problems go away?

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will come to order. The Clerk will stop the clock. The Treasurer will resume his seat. The standing orders require Ministers to resume their seat when a point of order is taken. The member for Kogarah will come to order.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is in relation to Standing Order 73. The Treasurer's accusation is a personal reflection. It is inappropriate and he should withdraw it. It is an accusation that brings into question the credibility of an individual in this place. Quite frankly, it is nothing less than gutless to say it in here.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Personal reflections are made every day in this Chamber. The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Those opposite have glass jaws. They come into this place every day and level accusations. At the moment they cannot deal with the truth. This morning I also read my second favourite paper, the *Fairfield Advance*. The great journalist Eliza Barr said that there had been findings by a New South Wales Labor internal investigation that the minutes of a meeting of the south-west Sydney branch were falsified. Despite that, the member for Fairfield was cleared of any wrongdoing. [*Extension of time*]

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Treasurer wants to stand there and stick up for Daryl Maguire; he does not have the moral authority to come in here with this sort of junk.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member is debating at the microphone, and poorly at that. The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member would call it the Independent Labor Commission Against Corruption and have Eddie Obeid chair it.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: These independent Labor investigations are great.

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: You can bully staff, you can even kidnap children but do not worry you will be cleared.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: John Whelan is the Mr Fix-it of the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No matter the crime, you will not do the time. Who else was cleared by the independent investigation by John Whelan? None other than the member for Prospect.

Mr David Harris: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. I have drawn attention to Standing Order 73 in this place on many occasions. If those opposite want to attack people they should do so by way of substantive motion. Earlier today we moved a motion backing our claims but those opposite want to stand here when people do not have a right of reply—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wyong will resume his seat. I uphold the point of order. I warn the Treasurer not to make personal reflections against members, but it happens every day on both sides of the Chamber.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This is Labor's basic instinct: Close ranks, say nothing and they sacrifice the workers on the altar of their own political ambition. But there is someone on the other side of the House who is willing to stand up to Emma Husar, the one shining light—

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —the member for Londonderry or, as Alan Jones would say, "the hope of the side".

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Despite what they have been telling me—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I believe that she is genuine and honest—

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —and not that she wants to be the next member for Lindsay.

The SPEAKER: Order! Time is up.

Mr Luke Foley: Madam Speaker, I had the call and he went for 40 seconds. Tell us what you are doing for the 20 drivers Gabrielle Upton has been through.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition does not have the call.

Mr Luke Foley: What are you doing for those workers?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. If he wants to talk about drivers he should be very careful.

M9 CORRIDOR

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:57): My question is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. What steps has the Minister taken to assure the community that Country Garden Australia had no knowledge or information about the proposed corridor for the M9 prior to her—

Mr Brad Hazzard: Have you been drinking?

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the member's question. The Minister for Health will come to order. The Leader of the Opposition is not helping, nor is the member for Maroubra. I will wait until the House comes to order.

Ms JODI McKAY: My question is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. What steps has the Minister taken to assure the community that Country Garden Australia had no knowledge or information about the proposed corridor for the M9 prior to her announcement in March?

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (14:58): Those opposite can be assured that members on this side of the House act with the utmost integrity and decency at all times.

The SPEAKER: Order! If this behaviour continues members will be removed from the Chamber without any warnings or they will be placed on calls to order. There is too much noise in the Chamber.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: If the shadow Minister has any allegation or information relating to that issue, I hope she informs the Independent Commission Against Corruption and those who need to know. That is the appropriate way forward.

SPORTING EVENTS

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (14:59): My question is addressed to the Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport. What is the New South Wales Government doing to bring major sporting events to New South Wales?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will remain silent.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:59): I thank the member for Upper Hunter for his question. It is a fantastic day for the Hunter and Newcastle communities because today the New South Wales Government, together with Rugby Australia, made an announcement that we are bidding for the 2021 Women's Rugby World Cup. If we succeed it will be the first time the Women's Rugby World Cup will be played outside the Northern Hemisphere. The Government has been out there side by side with Rugby Australia saying that this is exactly the type of event we want to attract to showcase the best female athletes in Australia on the world stage. We want to invite the best female athletes from around the world to New South Wales to ensure that we can showcase the fantastic State that we have.

It is not only about bringing major events to Sydney but also about taking events out of Sydney into locations such as Newcastle and the Hunter Valley. It is a fantastic opportunity to showcase that city and all the work that the Government has been doing there improving the city and improving transport, and the wonderful nightlife that is happening. Rugby Australia is keen to ensure that we set up a fantastic athletes village and give people from right around the world a wonderful opportunity to come and enjoy some fabulous sport and see the world's best athletes, but primarily we are keen to ensure that we have an opportunity to showcase women's sport.

This is consistent with the Government's ambitious objective of having 10 World Cups in New South Wales over the next 10 years. We have identified a number of events we want to attract as well as the Women's

Rugby World Cup, such as the Rugby League Nines World Cup, which will be a fantastic event to have in the new Western Sydney Stadium at Parramatta—a stadium opposed by those opposite. We have already secured the Men's and Women's ICC T20 World Cup tournaments in 2020, with the opening event happening here. The women's tournament is such an important part of that cricket event that having it in Sydney is another great example of the Government ensuring that New South Wales is at the forefront when we are attracting major events. We are going after events such as the new Association of Tennis Professionals [ATP] World Team Cup, and the FIFA Women's World Cup, for which we will definitely partner with the Commonwealth.

We have already highlighted a strong interest in and will be bidding with Rugby Australia to host the Men's Rugby World Cup in 2027. We also want to go after the Netball World Cup again in 2027. This was the event that really kicked it off. When no other State around the country wanted to support netball, New South Wales put up its hand and hosted the entire Netball World Cup, which set netball on a trajectory straight up to the top of sport. These 10 World Cups in 10 years is about ensuring we are creating the events economy that new South Wales deserves. There are plenty of other events that we want to attract. When I picked up the newspaper today I was expecting to read about the major events that we are attracting to New South Wales. I did read about a major event in the *Sydney Morning Herald* today, but I did not have to go to the back page; all I had to do was look at the front page. There on the front page I read about the civil war in the Labor Party in Western Sydney.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister for Sport was asked a question about sport in Western Sydney. I do not see the relevance of where he is taking his answer now.

The SPEAKER: The point is taken.

Mr STUART AYRES: If there is one thing I have learnt in my time in this place, there is no better blood sport than a Labor Party civil war in Western Sydney.

The SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order. Civil war has nothing to do with sporting events, which is what the question was about.

Mr STUART AYRES: We have a Combat Sports Authority in New South Wales and I have to expand the reach of that authority to ensure that it covers all of the work that happens across the Australian Labor Party. We have just heard the Treasurer and the Minister for Industrial Relations talk about the fantastic efforts of the Australian Labor Party in looking after its workers.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order. The Minister is now flouting your ruling.

The SPEAKER: No, he is not. There is no point of order.

Mr STUART AYRES: There is one thing about this sport, you do not have to pay for a ticket, you just have to pick up the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The Labor Party has walked away from Western Sydney and is totally self-focused.

CYCLIST SAFETY

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:04): I direct a question to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Considering data released yesterday shows an increase of 50 per cent in cycling deaths in New South Wales and an 80 per cent increase nationally will the Minister inform the House what the Government is doing to protect cyclists rather than continue to see them simply as a source of revenue?

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will come to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (15:05): I thank the member for Balmain for his question, which gives me the opportunity to highlight the Government's commitment to safe cycling. It supports cycling across Sydney and New South Wales. The Government is providing financial support towards cycling safe areas, it is promoting the sport and supporting cycling representative groups. It is important and represents a worrying challenge. It saddens me that in 2013, 14 bicycle riders lost their lives on New South Wales roads, last year seven bicycle riders were killed and so far this year six cyclists have died, two more than the same time last year. After trending upwards from 2005, bicycle rider hospitalisations peaked in 2013 and have since experienced three consecutive annual decreases.

Although there have been improvements in the past we know that more needs to be done. It is a sport and an activity that is growing in popularity. I acknowledge the work and advocacy of the member for Vaucluse and the member for Coogee. In 2015 they lost their friend Nicholas Ruygrok, motivating the very real need to improve bicycle safety. I acknowledge the member for Coogee for his work towards changing the rules to allow children up to 16 years old to ride on cyclepaths. That has occurred in recent weeks in response to the need for safer cycling in our cities. It is a good change. Children up to the age of 16 do not have the fully developed

cognitive ability to ride on a busy roadway, they should be on a pathway. That is the situation in other States. I thank the member for his work, energy, petitions and the advocacy of other groups that encouraged the Government to make that change.

The work being done in relation to active pathways has received additional funding of \$600 million for dedicated road safety improvements and enhanced police enforcements. The Government wants infrastructure to improve and better respect by the road user towards cyclists. That is why, following the trial of the one-metre rule, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to the rule: If you are driving and do not give a cyclist that one metre of space you are breaking the law. The Amy Gillett Foundation influenced that change with its advocacy. This is a government that supports cycling and wants people to be as fit, active and healthy as possible.

Whether you are riding in my home town of Urunga on the new cycleway from the foreshore down to the surf club or a busy metropolitan city area, people must be able to ride safely and enjoy the activity. We are very measured and very concerned about the fatality rate this year. We will work with everybody to ensure that we have better outcomes. I thank the member for his question. We are genuinely committed to better cycling and better safety outcomes and we all have our part to play. We have to be good motorists and good cyclists. If we are all our best selves, we will do better in this space. That is something I know everybody in this Chamber shares a commitment to.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:09): My question is addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services. How is the New South Wales Government delivering for vulnerable people at risk of or experiencing homelessness in New South Wales, and is the Minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:10): I thank the member for Seven Hills for his question and note his commitment to improving the lives of the most vulnerable in his community, particularly during this week, Homelessness Week. The New South Wales Government is strongly committed to supporting people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. We are committed to prevention and continuous improvement in our service system, and we are committed to supporting those in crisis. We are focused on delivering services that make a difference on the ground, services that cater to the needs of clients. We are working to ensure that homelessness services and programs provide a range of services across New South Wales. We are determined to keep working hard to prevent homelessness and support those in crisis.

That is why this 2018-19 budget committed more than \$1 billion in homelessness services over the next four years. That includes \$61 million of new funding over four years to implement the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023. It is a strategy that sets the course for the next five years, developed with our most vulnerable front of mind. It is for our young people who need a helping hand on the road to independence, for older men and women who need support in older age, for women and children who may be leaving domestic violence and for rough sleepers who may have multiple and complex needs. I am particularly pleased that the budget committed \$3.8 million for assertive outreach to proactively support rough sleepers. My department's assertive outreach work is quite remarkable. It has helped more than 270 rough sleepers into stable housing since March last year. That is phenomenal work.

As part of our outreach, Family and Community Services [FACS] workers ride Sydney's late-night trains to house vulnerable people sleeping rough, because no-one needs to sleep on a train or on concrete. Last Thursday night on the 10.47 train from Central station to Newcastle I joined our outreach team at the start of that trip. That night FACS spoke to 28 rough sleepers around Central station and on trains, 18 of whom accepted accommodation. It is very difficult to work with such complex cases. There is almost always more work to do, and we will keep doing it. Last month I announced that the New South Wales Government would provide supported temporary accommodation to people experiencing homelessness across Sydney, south-eastern Sydney, northern Sydney, the Central Coast and Hunter New England. The supported temporary accommodation model offers short-term accommodation with wraparound services to help people into longer-term housing. It is about helping homeless people with complex needs by giving them more than just a roof over their heads for the night. It is by giving them the support they need, not just a motel. I am asked about alternative approaches. What was the response from the shadow Minister to my temporary accommodation announcement? I have her media release here, which I will read.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: Point of order: Why does the Minister not read out some of her views on Tony Abbott, and some of her recent actions against Tony Abbott?

The SPEAKER: The member for Bankstown will resume her seat. The Minister is being entirely relevant. If I ask the member to resume her seat again she will be ejected from the Chamber for refusing to take

directions from the Chair. The Minister is being relevant. There is no point of order. If the member continues she will be arguing with the Chair.

Ms PRU GOWARD: On 5 July the member for Bankstown came out of the blocks quickly, with the member for Wollongong in tow, criticising the Government for neglecting the Illawarra and prioritising a few selective postcodes with this new program.

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

Ms PRU GOWARD: She said the Illawarra was last on the New South Wales Government's priority list, so we are going to play class-war games.

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

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

Ms PRU GOWARD: There is only one problem, and that is that this program was already operational in the Illawarra, which I had announced in December last year. The question to ask is: What has the shadow Minister been doing all year? We know what she has been up to—she has been doing the numbers on Luke Foley. It is a pity she does not read about matters in her own portfolio. There is more. I have a second media release, which I will also read. *[Extension of time]*

Again, the member for Bankstown claimed that people seeking shelter in Sydney's north and eastern suburbs will be provided supported shelter while those in Sydney's west and south-west will be dumped at motels and in caravans parks, which is what Labor used to do. She said we had created a two-tiered system. In December last year, I also announced that this initiative would roll out in south-west Sydney. In March this year, I announced the opening of the expressions of interest process for Western Sydney's rollout.

Yet again we see why those opposite will never be fit to govern, although I must say that the member for Campbelltown was smart enough not to be involved in that press release. Sucked in, member for Wollongong! Labor never did have a plan for supporting our most vulnerable, or a plan for supporting our homeless, or a plan for supporting new supply, or a plan for delivering better services to tenants. It has taken this Government to effect real change to deliver the biggest and best social housing building program of any State or Territory across this country. This Government will keep delivering for our most vulnerable and putting Labor's dismal alternative approach to shame.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

The SPEAKER: I announce that the following petition signed by more than 10,000 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Shellharbour Electorate Correctional Facility

Petition opposing the construction of a correctional services facility at Kembla Grange/West Dapto and calling on the Government to cancel further plans to investigate its construction, received from **Ms Anna Watson**.

The SPEAKER: I set down discussion on the petition as an order of the day for a future day.

Business of the House

BUSINESS LAPSED

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 (3):

- (1) General Business Order of the Day (for Bills) No. 1 [Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Moratorium and Restrictions on Recovering Energy from Waste) Bill] and General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 2713 to 2731 and 2733 have lapsed.
- (2) General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 2734 to 2751 will lapse tomorrow.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Public Services

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

Pet Shops

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

Duck Hunting

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

Night-time Economy Mayor

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

Inner-city Ferry Services

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

Summer Hill Ambulance Station

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

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

Petition calling on the Government to recognise bisexual, gender diverse and intersex people in the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 and to address clauses in the Act that unfairly penalise gay, lesbian and transgender citizens, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Anti-discrimination Guidelines

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

Mental Health Services

Petition requesting increased mental health support for people with a mental illness who are tenants of Housing NSW and community housing, 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**.

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

Stormwater Drainage Legislation

Petition requesting that Parliament pass the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stormwater Drain Filters) Bill 2017, thereby ensuring that all existing drains lead to a waterway, received from **Ms Tamara Smith**.

Sydenham to Bankstown Rezoning Strategy

Petition calling on the Government to abandon the Sydenham to Bankstown rezoning strategy and undertake consultation with local communities and councils to deliver essential social infrastructure, received from **Ms Jo Haylen** and **Mr Jihad Dib**.

Griffith Youth Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Facility

Petition calling on the Government to establish a youth drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility in Griffith, received from **Mr Austin Evans**.

Globe Wilkins Preschool

Petition calling on the Government to stop the closure of the Globe Wilkins Preschool, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Business of the House

EDUCATION WEEK

Reordering

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:19): I move:

That the General Business Notice of Motion (General Notice) given by me this day [Education Week] have precedence on Thursday 9 August 2018.

This motion should be reordered as it is very important to acknowledge and talk about the significance of Education Week, particularly as Education Week 2018 runs this week from Monday 6 August to Friday 10 August. This year's theme is "Today's schools creating tomorrow's world". This year's theme celebrates how New South Wales public schools are equipping young people with the skills and capabilities they need to thrive in a rapidly changing and globalised world. There are several key messages to Education Week 2018.

The SPEAKER: Members will cease their conversations while the member is speaking. It is entirely disrespectful to all members.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: The key messages in Education Week include growth mindset—by developing a growth mindset our students will become lifelong learners, equipped with the resilience to embrace challenges, the aptitude to reach higher levels of achievement and the adaptability to master new skills; applied learning—by grounding education in real world learning opportunities our students are acquiring the capabilities needed to tackle and solve complex issues in the twenty-first century; evolution of the classroom—by creating future-focused learning spaces that integrate advanced technology and promote connection and collaboration, the classroom is expanding beyond the traditional four walls; strong relationships—by building these in our school communities we are ensuring that every student is known, valued and cared for; and system-wide commitment to innovation and excellence—by placing our students at the centre of all our decision-making, we are continually striving for improvement and innovation so that young people in our care learn in a world-class education system.

I know that the Minister for Education is a strong supporter of Education Week. I was fortunate enough to join him at Casula High School last Monday to take part in Education Week celebrations where all these key messages were on display. Students at the school gave us a very impressive presentation on the school's phenomenal wellbeing and welfare initiatives and about which all the students spoke very highly. Some of those initiatives included a breakfast club, mentoring initiatives, their transition program and the creation of a student success coordinator. We were also shown the school's excellence and engagement hub, which provides students with support from specialist teachers and tutoring. This great initiative provides support and assistance to students to ensure they get the most out of their education journey. Recognising and celebrating the students, teachers and staff at schools like Casula High School in Parliament is important, especially during Education Week. The public education system plays an integral role in our society and this House must express its thanks and appreciation for the work being done to educate the leaders, thinkers, builders and creators of the future.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (15:22): I urge the House to adopt my motion because The Nationals need help. They have run out of inspiration and verve. They need help from somewhere. They are not getting it from their leader and I am happy for the Labor Party to lend them a hand. I do not know this Wes Fang character. I do not think I have passed him in the corridors, but I have to say that I think I like him. The guy has got spunk, he has got verve and he shows the fighting spirit that the Country Party used to show—that spirit that has just died under the Deputy Premier.

Here we were, not a day after the revelations by the member for Wagga Wagga that he had done the wrong thing at the Independent Commission Against Corruption and here is old Wes, straight out of the block, saying, "We need that voice in government and you know the national party is the right party to win back that trust. The national party will definitely be running a candidate if there is a by-election. We need a voice in government and you know national parties are the ones to get it done." And his leader agreed with him for a full 24 hours before he had a chat with Premier Gladys Berejiklian, who had probably taken advice from Barry O'Farrell, and then all of a sudden old Barra was going to resign if there was a three-cornered contest. That is not the spirit. I know there are difficulties on the other side. I know that Niall Blair is mired in a scandal about water cheating out there in the bush with The Nationals—

Mr Brad Hazzard: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Does the Minister have a point of order?

Mr Brad Hazzard: I have two points of order. The first is that the member for Maroubra should refer to members by their appropriate title.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr Brad Hazzard: My second point of order is that the member for Maroubra has made a reference that is clearly an attack and is not contained within the motion. Any member who seeks to attack another member should so do by way of a specific motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Maroubra will confine his remarks to the leave of his motion.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Stick to dancing, Brad; you're better at that. We know of the difficulties on the other side with water cheating. We know that the Deputy Premier threatened to quit. We will not even go near the dispute between the member for Dubbo and the Deputy Premier. I ask The Nationals to have some verve and run in Wagga Wagga. Give the people of the bush a chance to have their say. We are running; Dan Hayes is our fantastic candidate in Wagga Wagga. I say to the people of Wagga Wagga, "Be conservative, give him a go for nine months, and if you don't like him you can kick him out". The Minister should just go do a moonwalk.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion standing in the name of the member for Holsworthy have precedence on Thursday 9 August 2018.

The House divided.

Ayes46
Noes35
Majority.....11

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Evans, Mr A.W.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Fraser, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

NOES

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G

Barr, Mr C
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J (teller)
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Washington, Ms K

NOES

Watson, Ms A (teller)

Zangari, Mr G

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
Evans, Mr L.J.
Provest, Mr G

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

Motion agreed to.*Motions Accorded Priority***POLICE CITIZENS YOUTH CLUBS****Consideration**

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (15:31): My motion should be accorded priority because we should signal clearly our intention to the community to take action to provide improved levels of support for young people to help them become strong citizens who are ready to find their place in society and who are well equipped by their home life, education and recreation to live fulfilled lives.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will come to order. The member for Albury will be heard in silence.

Mr GREG APLIN: Police Citizens Youth Clubs [PCYC]s are a recognised element in the process that I described. The clubs provide opportunities for young people in recreational and other developmental activities. Indeed, they support services to ensure that young people are diverted away from the criminal justice system. There is a successful PCYC in Albury—and, I am sure, in many other areas of the State. Recently I met PCYC NSW Chief Executive Officer Dominic Teakle and Albury PCYC manager Diane Ovens, and toured the Albury facility. It happened to be during the school holidays and a basketball activity was underway, which attracted the attention of the local television station. The reporter met Mr Teakle and interviewed him on the work undertaken across the State by Police Citizens Youth Clubs NSW.

I congratulate the Albury PCYC on winning an award for community service at the recent Albury-Wodonga Business Awards. Albury, along with Bourke, Kempsey, Griffith and Moree, will receive significant upgrades as part of the Government's latest four-year funding commitment. The new funding commitment doubles the Government's record investment in PCYC across the State since 2011, which, until the latest commitment, was more than \$40 million. As I said, infrastructure is most important but we also need the creative programs that bring modern facilities to life. That is where Rise Up fits in and why this becomes a matter of priority for our consideration today. The Rise Up program has the potential to be life changing for young people who are in danger of heading down the wrong path. I look forward to discussing Rise Up in more detail if my question is accorded priority.

This Government is working on the underlying social issues through a two-pronged approach incorporating both renewed and expanded infrastructure and new and innovative programming. PCYC becomes an efficient and effective vehicle for youth possibly most visibly in regional areas where the connection between the police force and its community is generally close. I urge members to give my motion priority.

FORMER MEMBER FOR WAGGA WAGGA**Consideration**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:35): My motion deserves priority because it is a serious one that seeks to refer a person who until late last Friday was a serving member of this House to the Independent Commission Against Corruption. The Premier has spent two days answering questions from the Labor Opposition referring to the conduct of the former member for Wagga Wagga. It is the Premier herself who said repeatedly yesterday that members should take their concerns to the commission. She said yesterday:

... there is an Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] investigation and the member should refer any issues of concern to that inquiry. That is the appropriate way to deal with these issues.

... there is a live inquiry, a current investigation ...

Mr Brad Hazzard: Spot on.

Mr LUKE FOLEY: The Minister for Health interjects. The problem is that I have the terms of reference for the current inquiry and they are limited to properties in the Canterbury council local area. How can all of the other matters be dealt with by that inquiry?

Mr Brad Hazzard: You are not trustworthy.

Mr LUKE FOLEY: The Minister for Health says that I am not trustworthy. The bloke who rips off the wills of lonely old grandmothers and helps himself to a million dollars says I am not trustworthy. The old graverobber from Wakehurst thinks where there's a will there's a way. No-one should let their granny anywhere near the Minister for Health because he will have them sign over their fortunes. There is nothing in the current remit of the Operation Dasha inquiry that would allow other matters to be looked at. A newspaper I never miss currently, the *Daily Advertiser* in Wagga, reported:

It was a decade ago when member for Wagga Daryl Maguire first started building relationships with the Chinese developers who were looking to expand their business to Australia.

That was in December 2012, so the bloke has been at it for at least 16 years. He said about the high-rise with Charlie, "... the Parramatta one actually interested my mate." The ICAC inquiry cannot look at what the former member was up to with Liberal councillors in Parramatta; it is looking at Canterbury matters. Daryl Maguire also said, "... once Country Garden says yes no whatever we can then move on because I—I've got half a dozen people that are always—they're always seeking stuff." Then Maguire said, and we can trust him on this, "I said to them look boys, you know, I'm not here forever". He was right about that.

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

The House divided.

Ayes44
Noes35
Majority.....9

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Fraser, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Aplin, Mr G
Brookes, Mr G
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Crouch, Mr A
Evans, Mr A.W.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Barr, Mr C
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J (teller)
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Washington, Ms K

PAIRS

Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G
Evans, Mr L.J.

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

Motion agreed to.**POLICE CITIZENS YOUTH CLUBS****Priority****Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (15:44):** I move:

That this House supports the Government's investments in PCYCs across the State to help increase youth employment opportunities and reduce crime.

We have real issues in regional areas combatting the pressures placed on young people by a number of threats: skipping education, poor employment history, drug abuse, isolation, the availability and timetabling of public transport, housing, homelessness and more.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members who wish to have private conversations will do so outside the Chamber.

Mr GREG APLIN: It is not that regional areas are worse hit than our capital cities. It is that the combination of pressures I referred to takes on a different complexion and complexity when we add things like the limited range of entertainment options, sometimes terrible internet connectivity, mobile phone black spots, the impact of distance, and access to mental health treatment. And let us not neglect to recognise the impact of the current drought on home life, home finances and the emotional toll a drought can take within rural farming communities. Today the Premier, the Police Commissioner Mick Fuller, APM, and the Minister for Police have launched a bold new mentoring program that will steer disengaged young people away from crime and into education, vocational training and employment.

The new program, known as RISEUP, has been developed personally by Commissioner Fuller and will run statewide in partnership with Police Citizens Youth Clubs [PCYCs] and leading businesses. The program will help to ensure that 15-to-18-year-olds remain on the right side of the law and have a bright working future. RISEUP brings together initiatives to help young people gain skills that will help them find employment. This is recognised as a real pathway for people to avoid being drawn into criminal activity. In this way the program also supports our Police Force, which is already doing tremendous work to reduce crime across our communities. This all goes hand in hand.

NSW Police and PCYC youth workers will help fund programs for improving literacy, numeracy and employment experience. These are all skills that can lead to a job and an income. PCYCs will be places of mentoring towards employment outcomes. Of course, they are already places of mentoring in so many ways: from physical strength and capability, via sport, martial arts and so on, to mental and emotional strength. For many, PCYCs are where young people first get the opportunity to engage in the leadership of others. There is no denying the value of the PCYC network, with the existence of around 65 clubs in New South Wales. Each is in a special position to facilitate meaningful relationships between local youth and police officers.

This Government has been taking the issue seriously. The New South Wales Liberals and Nationals have allocated record funding of nearly \$40 million to PCYCs in the 2018-19 State budget, which will help to build and upgrade a number of clubs. As an example, in June I was happy to announce funding of \$150,000 from the New South Wales Government to upgrade the Albury PCYC facility. This major upgrade to the club will make such a difference for the young people and the adult volunteers at the Keene Street premises in Albury. The facility will have enhanced multipurpose activity spaces, enabling a variety of sports to be played and increasing participation by the wider community. The current amenities at the club will be upgraded so that they are modern and inviting.

Other budgeted projects include \$6 million for Walgett. Following the 2011 State election, \$250,000 was provided to establish the club. This funding will allow it to provide appropriate facilities for the local community. Dubbo PCYC is to get \$4 million. The Dubbo PCYC facility will be completely replaced with a new regional sports centre that will cater to the young people and the wider central west community. Hawkesbury PCYC will receive \$13 million to build a new club with indoor sports courts, gymnastics, a fitness and wellness centre, and numerous multipurpose activity spaces. Ten million dollars is going to Wagga Wagga to transform its PCYC into

a multimillion dollar sports complex and community facility. Once completed, the facility will include four indoor courts to be used for various sports, plus numerous multipurpose activity spaces. Along with Albury's PCYC, upgrades will be made to Bourke, Kempsey, Griffith and Moree.

RISEUP is a new program in this evolving infrastructure environment. Employment is a focus, as it can help provide young people with a sense of achievement and pride in what they are doing and will become. Employment offers a sense of structure and order to daily life that, for one reason or another, might be missing from the home environment. Our PCYCs are a resource of statewide significance, and over many years I have been pleased to support the PCYC movement. I know how the PCYC and NSW Police Force Youth Command work closely together to counter the impact of juvenile offending.

The PCYC is in a unique position to facilitate meaningful relationships between local youth and police officers. I know and appreciate that the Minister for Police is bringing his firsthand experience to bear in helping to shape not only the PCYCs of New South Wales but also the future interaction between our youth and our police to make our communities stronger and more resilient. RISEUP will become an essential ingredient in helping young people to get ahead and I encourage the House to support this initiative.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:50): I speak on behalf of the New South Wales Labor Opposition to this motion accorded priority about the Police Citizens Youth Club [PCYC]. All members can attest to the important role that PCYCs play in New South Wales. They were established in 1937 and are now in 64 locations across the State. Indeed, one would be hard-pressed to find a member in this place who would not say they have the best PCYC around. Local PCYCs play a pivotal role in communities. They routinely run community campaigns and engage with at-risk youth to provide guidance and mentorship 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

PCYCs have come a long way since their inception in the late 1930s. They now offer hundreds of activities whilst providing a holistic approach to supporting youth across the State. I can personally attest to the tremendous efforts of the Fairfield-Cabramatta PCYC and the time, patience and dedication they have shown in helping at-risk youth in our local community. It is not a typical nine-to-five job. Staff and volunteers spend countless hours nurturing their relationships with local at-risk youth and provide them with much-needed guidance, support and mentorship.

Many regions across New South Wales have incredibly high youth unemployment rates and, to date, this Government has not made things any easier for them. The full weight of these shortfalls are subsequently placed on families, community and local support services to try to ensure that the next generation is kept engaged and not led astray. Unfortunately, recent reports show incredibly high youth unemployment rates in areas such as the Southern Highlands and the Shoalhaven regions of 28.9 per cent; in the Murray region, 21.5 per cent; in the Coffs Harbour-Grafton region, 19.8 per cent; in the Central Coast region, 18.6 per cent; and in the New England-North West region, including Armidale, Moree, Tamworth, 16.6 per cent. What has the Berejiklian Government done for youth across New South Wales? It has decimated TAFE, slashed funding and resources to government support services and buried its head in the sand.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 76. I do not see how the member's remarks are relevant to the function and operation of police citizens youth clubs.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have been listening to the debate. I am concerned about the member's comments in relation to TAFE. I draw the member back to the leave of the motion.

Mr GUY ZANGARI: I am trying to draw parallels for support services for youths. If they are to be supported, we also need education and employment support services. I am talking about a holistic approach.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion says, "to help increase youth employment opportunities and reduce crime."

Mr GUY ZANGARI: I am referring to what is going on at the moment. It is great to see the New South Wales Commissioner of Police, Mick Fuller, APM, standing up for what is right. Today he has announced new strategies and initiatives to connect disengaged youth to employment opportunities and support services throughout the State. The NSW Police Force and the PCYC do an outstanding job engaging with and mentoring youth throughout our State. Just imagine what they could do if this Government gave them the funding they truly required.

We know that police officers throughout New South Wales truly understand the importance of implementing preventative strategies that will ultimately reduce crime and benefit the local community. Commissioner Fuller's RISEUP program aims to do exactly that. Breaking through barriers and engaging with youth in the area can save generations of children from heading down the path of crime. In conjunction with the existing outreach services and mentorship offered through the PCYC, RISEUP will connect troubled youth with

employment opportunities in the area to provide them with an alternative path and the necessary skills to succeed in life. The New South Wales Labor Opposition has full faith in Commissioner Fuller and the dedicated men and women of the NSW Police Force, who will give their all to make this new program a tremendous success. On behalf of the New South Wales Labor Opposition, I commend Commissioner Fuller and everyone at PCYC NSW for delivering this new program, which will give at-risk youth an opportunity. *[Time expired.]*

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (15:55): I gladly support the motion moved by the member for Albury which reads as follows:

That this House supports the Government's investment in PCYCs across the State, to help increase youth employment opportunities and reduce crime.

I was lucky to be in Griffith on 8 June when Griffith PCYC was announced as part of a multimillion-dollar upgrade. This upgrade is designed to give local youth more sporting and recreational opportunities and a chance to engage with the community. Three million dollars has been allocated over four years to upgrade the facility as part of the 2018-19 State budget. This multimillion-dollar upgrade to the club will make such a difference to the young kids and teens in Griffith. Once the works are complete the Griffith PCYC will have a brand new multifunctional activity space enabling a variety of activities to be played including basketball, archery, futsal, netball and indoor cricket. The funding will also enable a dedicated space to be provided for local gymnastics enthusiasts to train, which is important. Currently, every day after they finish their gymnastics training they have to pack up all the gear because the space is then used for other activities. This upgrade will allow them to leave that gymnastics equipment in place, which means they can spend the maximum time on that equipment and not have to pack it up.

The PCYC does exceptional work engaging our young people and guiding them to make positive life decisions so that they avoid entering the juvenile justice system. I saw that happening at the Griffith PCYC and it reinforces something I saw many years ago when I spent time as a youth worker. It is not so much about the programs that are offered. The programs have to be engaging to bring the kids in and make them want to be involved, but it is about spending time with other people to get a different perspective on life. To borrow a phrase from the Men's Shed: Often the good discussions happen when one is shoulder to shoulder. That different perspective on life might not necessarily come from discussions they have about something but from the process of doing that activity, whether it be boxing, gymnastics or any of the other activities. The PCYC in Griffith does a fantastic job by providing a range of activities to attract children. I am thrilled that the Nationals-Liberal Government has invested in the young people of Griffith for future generations. I thank the Government for this investment. *[Time expired.]*

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:58): As all members have said during this debate, Police Citizens Youth Clubs [PCYC] play an important role. The PCYC was founded in 1937 and it has more than 60 clubs across New South Wales with around 85,000 members. I am proud to have a PCYC in my electorate. Blacktown PCYC supplies a fantastic mix of activities for everybody—a whole range of sporting, cultural and artistic programs and dance and music classes. The Blacktown PCYC has a proud 40-year history in the local area—of making a difference. It depends on the managers that one has. Joanne Tau—Jo Jo as most people know her—provides leadership at the local Police Citizens Youth Club [PCYC].

The various programs such as work for the dole and dance are run by the youth workers and activity officers. I was involved with the Blacktown PCYC 30 years ago when I was doing judo. It was not my home club but it became a hangout site for quite a few people. The Blacktown PCYC junior rugby league team had a massive win and it was named New South Wales Good Sports club of the year. It does not operate effectively without great police and community support. I acknowledge club president Dragoljub Drkljac and the volunteers who participate. I highlight the importance of the programs. I am glad that the State Government has realised the importance of the PCYC and that it has come up with the program. It could have used Blacktown PCYC as a case example.

Under the Howard Government 2,000 to 5,000 Sudanese refugees were dumped into Blacktown area with very little support. The PCYC, the police, SydWest Multicultural Services and the council formed a group called Com4unity that provided an outlet for the Sudanese kids to practice their dance. Recently, media outlets have been reporting problems with African youths in Victoria. They have used Blacktown as an example of a high population of African youths without community problems. That is because the community has worked together over the past 20 years. I thank former police Superintendent Mark Wright, the then Labor Mayor Alan Pendleton, various community leaders including Mr Ajok, and the Governor for working together. The New South Wales Government has finally woken up to the importance of the PCYC. *[Time expired.]*

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:01): In reply: I return to the announcement of today's program, RISEUP. We all recognise how this initiative has the potential to be, as the Minister put it, "a life-changing

opportunity for young people who are in danger of heading down the wrong path". Working with young people to develop their vocational skills and to find ways of connecting them with business will help build their self-esteem and confidence to take their lives in a positive direction. Recently I met with a former ice dealer, Dale Nicholls. Dale operated in my electorate a few years ago and has since worked his way through a period of detention and lengthy rehabilitation at the Calvary Riverina Drug and Alcohol Centre. Issues of his weight, self-esteem and employment options figured in his story. We all know how these pressures build and can twist a person's family values and send him or her down the wrong path to trouble. RISEUP will be the kind of program that will appeal to those in a similar situation to the younger Dale, helping them to escape the trajectory that they are on.

Employers are being encouraged by the NSW Police Force to join and participate in the RISEUP program. The RISEUP program links with businesses so that young people receive real-life on-the-job training in the workforce and includes workshops on relationship building, nutrition, leadership and assistance to tackle the underlying causes of crime. Business and organisations that have joined the RISEUP initiative to provide practical support to young people include Allianz, TAFE, Snowy Hydro, Hungry Jacks and the Commonwealth Bank. The initiative will operate statewide in partnership with PCYC NSW supported by a cornerstone funding grant from the Macquarie Group Foundation. I strongly urge business leaders to read up on the RISEUP program, to become informed and to get involved. This will be a rewarding experience all round. Details and further information can be found at www.riseup.org.au.

I thank the members representing the electorates of Fairfield, Murray and Blacktown for contributing to the debate, for detailing the fine work of their local PCYCs and for describing how the resources are being boosted and the infrastructure improved by the Government. The member for Fairfield spoke of the PCYCs in Fairfield and Cabramatta and his faith in the RISEUP program. The member for Murray talked about the PCYC upgrade at Griffith and reflected on his own time as a youth worker, while the member for Blacktown talked about the wide range of activities available at the Blacktown PCYC. His commendation of management of the PCYCs is echoed by all members. He talked about his personal experience as a youth and it is good to see that it did have an influence on him. Today I called on this House to support the New South Wales Government's investment in PCYCs across the State to help increase youth employment opportunities and reduce crime. As the speakers have clearly shown, this is an initiative worthy of our time and enthusiasm.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bills

PAINTBALL BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Matt Kean, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (16:06): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to establish a new regulatory framework for paintball markers and activities that secure the safety and security of players and the community, while also reducing red tape for businesses and providing them with enhanced levels of customer service. Paintball is an extremely popular recreational activity for individuals, corporate organisations, families and social groups throughout New South Wales. Tens of thousands of paintball games are played in our State each year by thousands of people. The New South Wales Government recognises that the current regulation of paintball imposes unnecessary regulatory burdens on the industry, stifling its growth and prosperity. This bill delivers on the New South Wales Government's commitment to make it easier to start and do business in New South Wales and to deliver better government services.

The Paintball Bill 2018 will remove the regulation of paintball markers and paintball activities from the Firearms Act 1996. This bill establishes a separate system of permits and requirements for the regulation of paintball markers and paintball venues to be administered by the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation through NSW Fair Trading. The Paintball Bill 2018 appropriately reclassifies paintball markers by removing their classification as "prohibited firearms", which currently sees them categorised and controlled in the same way as lethal weapons such as cannons and machine-guns. Paintball markers are non-penetrative, non-lethal weapons used in low-risk recreational activities. This reclassification of paintball markers under the Paintball Bill 2018 is appropriate and proportionate to the risks they pose. However, this bill prescribes rigorous safety standards

relating to the issuing of paintball marker permits. Paintball venues, individuals seeking to possess a paintball marker and interstate participants wishing to bring their own markers into New South Wales will need to meet these standards in order to be issued with a permit.

Another key function of this bill is that it will deliver a more modern and streamlined permit system, which will save time and money for venue operators and marker owners, replacing the current slow, paper-based application system. In deciding to modernise the regulation of this industry, the Government reviewed crime statistics, hospital data, work health and safety statistics, and complaints data from NSW Fair Trading. All of these data sets demonstrated that the industry is a low-risk industry with high levels of operator maturity in New South Wales. The paintball industry is operating to high standards in New South Wales with very few safety issues, despite the tens of thousands of games enjoyed by the community each year.

The current regulatory system for paintball markers, which are non-lethal objects used for recreational activities, administers paintball markers alongside dangerous lethal firearms. The current regulatory settings are overly prescriptive, out of date and disproportionate to the risks involved with paintball markers when compared to real weapons. A Paintball Act is the most appropriate way to introduce those reforms because it establishes a clear and safe regulatory system specific to the unique profile of the paintball industry. The bill provides for sensible and proportionate regulation of paintball markers and authorised paintball venues.

I now turn to the substance of the Paintball Bill. Part 1 defines a number of key terms, including what objects are classified as a paintball marker, excluding any markers that have been modified to propel something other than a paintball. It defines the meaning of equivalent authorisation in New South Wales to mean a permit to purchase or possess paintball markers issued by other Australian jurisdictions, which will allow appropriately authorised interstate players and licensed donors to continue to bring their own marker into New South Wales for paintball competitions and other related activities at authorised venues.

Part 2 outlines the statutory offences and penalties for certain breaches. It promotes community safety as a paramount consideration within the regulatory scheme by creating two key offences. First, using a paintball marker other than at an authorised venue will be punishable by up to 24 months imprisonment or \$55,000, or both. Secondly, possessing a paintball marker without a permit other than at an authorised venue will be punishable by up to 12 months imprisonment or \$22,000, or both. A number of other similar offences are created in this part, including purchasing or obtaining a paintball marker without a permit, operating a paintball venue without a permit, supplying paintball markers without proper authorisation and disposing of paintball markers without proper authorisation. Those statutory offences are not intended to and do not replace the offences in the Crimes Act 1900, which will still apply to paintball markers if they are used as offensive weapons. Having criminal penalties prescribed is a significant deterrent and provides the community with confidence that any improper or unauthorised use of a paintball marker will be dealt with seriously.

Part 3 establishes the power of the NSW Fair Trading office to issue permits for paintball markers. It establishes the requirements of the three different permits created by the bill—namely, paintball venue permits, paintball marker permits and international paintball competitor permits. This part includes the grounds for amending, suspending, cancelling or refusing a permit. This part sets out strict requirements that apply to permit applicants under a fit and proper person test. Clause 14 provides that the regulator may form an opinion that a person is not suitable to hold a permit in a range of circumstances including if he or she has been convicted of a relevant offence in the previous 10 years, or had an equivalent authorisation suspended or cancelled under the law of an Australian jurisdiction, or in the case of a paintball venue permit, a close associate of the person who would not be a fit and proper person to hold a permit exercises a significant influence over the person or the operation and management of the person's business.

A relevant offence is defined in part 3 division 3 of the bill to include an offence against any of the following Acts—the Paintball Act 2018, once enacted; the Firearms Act 1996; the Crimes Act 1900, but only in respect of an offence involving a firearm or offensive weapon or instrument or an offence prescribed by the paintball regulations; the Weapons Prohibition Act 1988; or any other Act or provision of an Act prescribed by the paintball regulations. In the context of determining whether a person is fit and proper to hold a permit, it is also important to note that clause 79 (2) in part 8 of the bill also provides that the regulations may specify circumstances in which a person is not a fit and proper person. Importantly, this part also provides for permits to be suspended, amended or cancelled when a person has been charged with an offence under this legislation or a related offence under the Crimes Act 1900.

Part 4 outlines the conditions of all permits, including specific requirements for storage and transport as well as provision for the maintenance, repair and disposal of paintball markers. This part also provides specific conditions for paintball venue permit holders relating to paintball game areas, minimum age of participants, insurance arrangements, training of staff, and ensuring the supervision and use of paintball markers. Clause 38 of the bill reduces the minimum age from 16 years to 12 years and over, provided that all players under the age of

18 have prior written consent from a parent or guardian. Reducing the age to 12 years will bring New South Wales in line with other States and Territories and international jurisdictions that allow persons aged 12 years and over to participate in paintball games. Those jurisdictions include Western Australia, South Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Clause 39 of the bill provides that if young people under 18 years of age are permitted to enter a venue's paintball game area, then that venue must have a public liability insurance policy which covers those young people. Part 4 also imposes a number of important community safety protections in the form of statutory conditions relating to the storage and transport of paintball markers, the designation of paintball game areas, requirements to provide protective clothing or equipment, and the supervision of paintball markers. Part 5 provides powers for NSW Fair Trading to take disciplinary action against permit holders for contraventions of the Act, the regulations or breaches of permit conditions, wilfully misleading or obstructing authorised officers, and engaging in improper or unethical conduct.

To support these powers, this part also outlines conditions around show cause notices, the disciplinary actions that may be taken by the regulator and the review of decisions by the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Part 6 details the powers of authorised officers including their appointment, scope of authority, identification, information gathering powers and rights of entry. It is important to note that an authorised officer is defined in clause 3 of the bill to include a police officer. This will ensure that, should a police officer be the first responder to an incident, they will be able to take appropriate investigation and enforcement action in relation to any potential breaches of the provisions of the bill, including the offence provisions.

Part 7 provides for the registration of paintball marker serial numbers, as well as requirements for authorised suppliers to provide information regarding the supply or disposal of paintball markers. Clause 65 of the bill provides that access to the register is to be provided to the Commissioner of Police to assist in any related compliance, investigation or enforcement activity. Part 8 contains other miscellaneous provisions surrounding extending venue permit authorisation to certain employees, information-sharing arrangements with relevant agencies, disclosure of criminal intelligence material, disposal of surrendered or seized paintball markers, how notices and other documents are to be served, personal liability exemption for the secretary or an authorised officer when acting in good faith under this Act, issuing of penalty notices, nature of proceedings for offences, admissibility of evidence certified by the secretary, delegation of authority by the secretary, exemptions to the Act, the ability to make regulations and periodic review of the Act after two years.

Schedule 1 contains the savings, transitional and other provisions. Existing paintball permits which have an equivalent permit type under this bill will be automatically recognised following the commencement of the bill. Schedule 2 provides for consequential amendments to other Acts and legislative instruments, including to the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013, the Crimes Act 1900, the Firearms Act 1996, the Firearms Regulation 2017 and the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002. Of particular note, the Crimes Act 1900 will be amended so that any provision of the Crimes Act which makes reference to a firearm is taken to include a paintball marker. This will ensure that if a paintball marker is used in the commission of a crime under the Crimes Act, appropriate criminal sanctions will apply.

This bill delivers on the Government's commitment to make it easier to do business in New South Wales and to deliver better government services. It will benefit consumers, businesses, players and the paintball industry. By moving the regulation of paintball markers and activities to the Department of Finance Services and Innovation, the bulk of the administrative burden will be removed from the police, ensuring their resources and expertise are appropriately directed at solving crimes and regulating lethal weapons. Consumers and participants in paintball will benefit from this bill, particularly as it allows for the opportunity for more people to play, by reducing the mandated age to 12 years and over. This provides parents with another option for their kids to get outside and exercise and socialise in a low-risk and safe environment.

The paintball industry has operated, and continues to operate, to high standards in New South Wales with very few safety, consumer or criminal law issues. These reforms assist the industry to continue to provide high quality, safe services relating to paintball activities. Operators and individuals will need to obtain only one permit, regardless of the number of markers they need to purchase, which will mean less red tape and a reduction in fees and charges. Paintball is a fun, safe and physically engaging activity for families, children's birthday parties, corporate team building and charitable fundraising events. These reforms are well overdue. It has been more than 20 years since the last major regulatory reform relating to paintball.

These reforms are necessary for the paintball industry to be able to grow and compete on a more even playing field with other recreational activities offered across New South Wales that until now have been subject to significantly less regulatory obligations. In conclusion, this bill will provide a single government touchpoint for paintball players and operators, leverage existing funding, infrastructure and staffing and maintain community

safety and confidence. This bill delivers on the Government's commitment to make it easier to start and do business in New South Wales and to deliver better government services. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Matter of Public Importance

EDUCATION WEEK

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:20): This week we celebrate Education Week 2018. This year's theme—Today's schools creating tomorrow's world—celebrates how our education system is working to provide students with what they need to succeed in our twenty-first century society. Indeed, to kick off Education Week the Premier and Minister for Education demonstrated the Government's commitment to equipping young people for the future by announcing a \$23 million package of digital learning resources. This will be available for every single public school student from term four of this year, which is especially great news for the Central Coast community and the 15 public schools in my electorate of Terrigal. As the Premier said, we live in an increasingly digital age. It is absolutely imperative that students need new knowledge and skills to succeed in their studies, both for today and the future.

That is why this program will provide schools with access to robotics, 3D printing, coding, film-making, virtual and augmented reality systems—all crucial parts of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] subjects. Indeed it is very timely that Education Week 2018 is centred on how "today's schools" are "creating tomorrow's world". Right across New South Wales, in every public school in the State, the State Liberal Government is investing to support students to develop skills for the future. One of the best ways we can invest is by improving school learning environments: providing more resources and better facilities for students and teachers. That is why it is this Government that has invested a record \$6 billion over the next four years to deliver more than 170 new and upgraded schools.

That commitment represents the largest investment in schools by any State Government in history. On the Central Coast, it is this Government that will build an entire new school at Warnervale. It is this Government that is building 10 new classrooms and core facilities at Terrigal Public School, and 15 new classrooms and core facilities at Wamberal Public School. In May, the Minister for Education, the Hon. Rob Stokes, joined me at Terrigal Public School for a sod-turning ceremony, to celebrate the project reaching this milestone. The Minister and I were joined by the school Principal, Michael Burgess, and school leaders James, Rio, Ella and Jessie. Given the expected population growth of 75,000 people calling the Central Coast home between now and 2036, this infrastructure investment is crucial to ensuring local educational facilities are future-proofed for increased student numbers in the years to come.

These 25 brand-new teaching spaces will replace all demountables with permanent classrooms. I remind the House, including the member for Gosford, that those opposite talked about education for 16 years but delivered nothing. It is this Government that is delivering, with 170 school projects across New South Wales. Nothing better demonstrates Labor's inaction than the \$1 billion backlog of school maintenance that it left behind. In stark contrast, this Government's record school maintenance investment is having a real and positive impact on schools. This Government is committed to ensuring that schools are in the best possible condition, which is why this Liberal Government has invested \$747 million—almost three quarters of a billion dollars—over four years. Having spoken to all the principals in my electorate many times about the state of their school facilities, it is clear that the maintenance investment of this Government is having a significant and positive impact.

In the spirit of Education Week, I take this opportunity to recognise each hardworking principal of the 21 schools in my electorate: Ross Hallaways from Avoca Beach Public School, Annette Parrey from Brisbania Public School, Toni Skinner from Chertsey Public School, Ben Thomas from Copacabana Public School, Simone Champion from Empire Bay Public School, Greg Francis from Erina Heights Public School, Vanessa Gordon from Holgate Public School, Trish Peters from Kincumber Public School, Deborah Callender from Pretty Beach Public School, Michael Burgess from Terrigal Public School, Paul Miller from Wamberal Public School, Judy Boland from Woodport Public School, Karen Nicol from Erina High School, Janine Debenham from Kincumber High School, Tania Turik from Terrigal High School, Tony Kent from Central Coast Adventist School, Bill Lowe from Central Coast Grammar School, Debra Walls from Green Point Christian College, Craig McNee from Holy Cross Catholic Primary School Kincumber, Robert Peers from Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School Terrigal and Alison Graeve from Coast Christian School.

Our fantastic public schools are very ably supported by the region directors, Karen Jones and Lisa Muir, whom I thank for their commitment and leadership in our region. To conclude, I acknowledge the commitment of all school staff on the Central Coast, who work every day to equip local students with the skills they need to succeed into the future.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:25): We should be celebrating Education Week and those who make our education system the fantastic system it is. Education Week is celebrated on an annual basis from 6 August to 10 August. The theme for Education Week 2018 is, "Today's schools creating tomorrow's world." We are here this afternoon not to score political points but to celebrate how New South Wales public schools are equipping young people with the capabilities and skills they will need into the future and to consider how our students, parents, communities, teachers and other school staff can best thrive.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not forget the grandparents.

Ms TRISH DOYLE: We cannot forget the grandparents, school communities, friends, and parents and citizens associations. The messages from Education Week this year are about developing a growth mindset; applying learning in the real world; the evolution of the classroom, especially as we move into the next century; integrating technology; building strong relationships—many schools are part of a community hub—creating schools where every student and family feels cared for and loved; ensuring a system-wide commitment to excellence and innovation; and placing students at the centre of our efforts. I commend everyone who works in the education system, especially within the public school system, this week and every week.

I just told a colleague about something lovely that happened to me just before the school holidays. A former student of mine saw me in the supermarket and raced towards me shouting, "Ms Doyle, Ms Doyle". He threw his arms around my knees and asked when I was coming back to school because he missed me. I said to him, "I have a new job now, mate." He looked at me and said, "Could you at least turn up at recess and play handball one day." So I did. I turned up and met my old kindergarten class, who are now in year 4, and we played a game of handball at recess. It was fantastic. It was also great to see my old colleagues again.

It gives me enormous pleasure to pay tribute to those colleagues, who, day in and day out, spend many long hours before school, during all their breaks, after school and in school holidays ensuring that excellent student learning happens in their classrooms. Students, teachers, school communities and all school systems deserve recognition. It would be remiss of me not to note the comments that my former colleagues make when they run into me about teacher workloads and the stress they feel. It is important for me to give voice to some of the stories of my colleagues—the people who work at the coalface. One teacher said, "The personal rewards are few nowadays and the cost is great...I have never been more stressed in my life."

Constant testing of our students and constant collection and reporting of data has become cumbersome and tiresome. It often does not give parents the useful information the system tells us it should; it just taxes our teachers. For example, to write reports teachers devote a minimum of 72 hours of their own time twice a year outside the core business of teaching in the classroom. The exorbitant workload of teachers must be acknowledged. It is diminishing the quality of teaching because there are just not enough hours in the day to achieve all that has to be done. In Education Week 2018 I pay tribute to all teachers for their professionalism and thank them for their time and dedication.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:30): Like the member for Blue Mountains, I am also a former public school teacher and so it gives me great pleasure to discuss Education Week. I thank the member for Terrigal for raising it as a matter of public importance. Our public schools do an incredible job and the teachers work extremely hard. Education Week is a great opportunity for us to acknowledge the great work of our teachers in our public schools and to celebrate the way they nurture our students.

Before I talk about some of the things that are happening in my local schools, I note that the member for Terrigal highlighted this Government's record investment in public schools. I want to talk about Lake Cathie Public School, which former Minister Adrian Piccoli opened in 2015, and its fantastic principal, Jock Garven. My community lobbied for that school for more than two decades and for 16 years the Labor Government ignored our pleas. That saddens me. I only wish Labor members could see how amazing the school is and the central role it plays in the growing local community. The school has some fabulous teachers. It is disappointing that Labor did not see the real need for that school in our community.

Lake Cathie Public School is part of the Hastings Valley Community of Schools and participated in the ceremony of excellence that was held last night at the Glass House to celebrate Education Week. Staff and students from schools in the Port Macquarie-Hastings and Camden Haven attended the event, with students receiving awards for significant achievement in categories including maths, English, creative arts, sport and leadership. Tomorrow Lake Cathie Public School is holding an open day. Parents and families are invited to come along and be entertained by performing arts groups including three dance groups, the school band and the choir. There will also be a visual arts display in the hall and a formal assembly hosted by the school leaders and featuring a special address from Jock Garven.

Port Macquarie Public School has a fantastic principal in Brett Thurgate. I am always pleased to be invited to events at the school, which is just up the road from my office. Recently I was pleased to attend its NAIDOC Week assembly. I commend Christine Wild from North Haven Public School and look forward to attending the open day on Friday. Principal Grant Timmins at Laurieton Public School is doing a fantastic job, like all our principals across the electorate.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:33): By leave: As Parliamentary Secretary for Education it is a privilege to speak about Education Week. Every week should be Education Week. This year Education Week was launched in Parramatta and simulcast in Kiama. The speeches and performances in Parramatta were seen in Kiama and we reciprocated with our own performances and speeches. It was wonderful to hear from the Minister for Education and the Premier and to see the outstanding job the students did to facilitate proceedings on the day.

Ms Trish Doyle: I hope you weren't making jokes like you did earlier.

Mr GARETH WARD: I am pleased to see the member for Blue Mountains in the Chamber with all my colleagues, because I know that they support our schools. We are very proud to have great and inspirational teachers in our schools. I am the product of a public education and feel very strongly about it because of how it was for people like me, who went through school with a disability. I remember having to go down to the library to enlarge my notes because the teachers simply did not have the resources. I spent time outside of the classroom when I should have been learning, having to increase the font size of textbooks because the technology of today simply did not exist.

One thing that does exist today for students with disabilities like me is additional support, which never existed before. I acknowledge in the Chamber the bipartisan support for the resource allocation model which gives the support to every student. Not every student will finish their course with the same job, house or car, but every student in this State deserves the same shot at a strong public education. No matter their background, origins or ethnicity, everyone deserves the same shot at a good public education. When I look around my community, I am in awe of and inspired by great educators, such as Bob Willetts at Berry Public School, who has inspired the KidsMatter program, instilling in his school community the values of respect of education and learning.

Ian Morris, the principal of Bomaderry High School—my old high school—has been able to institute the Youth Aware of Mental Health program, recognising that mental health is important. Catherine Glover at Kiama High School has done the same thing, working with Rotary to ensure that students can work with experts in the mental health field to better diagnose and understand mental health. Schools like Dapto High School are teaching sustainability and the principal, Mr FitzSimons, has done a fantastic job, as has Joy Fullagar with the library programs at Gerringong Public School. At Bomaderry Public School Indigenous attendance has increased due to the programs run by Dionne Hanbidge. I am inspired by our educators and congratulate them. May we all celebrate Education Week this week and every other week.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:36): By leave: Along with members on both sides of the House, I welcome this important motion during Education Week. I spent 23 years in the education sector, 18 of those as a school principal, from the smallest schools in the western Riverina, from the one at Merriwagga—which had 26 students from kindergarten to year six—to Kariang Public School, which had just under 1,000 students. I was privileged to work with great teachers, great families and, most of all, great students. I did get the odd challenging one, but that is life.

During Education Week, it is important to recognise the fantastic job that our teachers do, not only between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. but also outside of school hours. The community needs to understand that a teacher's day does not begin with the start of class and does not finish with the end of class. Teachers go on excursions, and they do preparation in the mornings, afternoons and evenings, on the weekends and during school holiday periods. My wife is currently assistant principal at a primary school in the Swansea electorate. I am constantly reminded of how hard teachers work in preparing for the young people each day.

Like the member for Blue Mountains, I see high levels of stress in teachers because all teachers take on not an occupation but a vocation, and it becomes a large part of their life. They really care about the young people that they work with. They care about their colleagues, and they work as hard as they can to support each other. One of my greatest privileges as a principal was helping students find their way. I often worked with students who had behaviour issues or disabilities. The other day I met a young fellow, Bart, who was at North Lakes Public School. Bart is extremely autistic. He is now a young adult of 23 or 24 years of age. The member for Gosford was with me; she knows Bart as well. She heard him call out, "Mr Harris! Mr Harris!" He came over to have a chat about stuff that happened almost 20 years ago. There is no better feeling than to have those kinds of experiences. I support this motion. I support teachers in the work they do and I support our whole education community.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:40): By leave: I thank the member for Terrigal for raising this matter of public importance, because I love Education Week. It gives us an opportunity to showcase the work of our schools—the students, parents, staff, teachers and all the volunteers in our education system who make it so rich—and the investment in the future of children across New South Wales. In my own community, Education Week is a bonanza of fun and festive activities. I kicked off Monday morning at Middle Harbour Public School with Principal Sally Hogan and Deputy Principal Carole Jaye at a gala event. There were junior and senior bands, the choir and the Whipper Skippers. There was a wonderful book fair where I purchased a book to donate to the school. The book is called *Welcome to our World* and explores our multiculturalism and diversity.

I will be joining North Sydney Demonstration School tomorrow morning, looking at its book donations and open classrooms for its open day. I would like to thank principal Myra Wearne for opening up the doors of the school again. I note that the Parliamentary Secretary, who is with us in the Chamber, has joined me in visiting North Sydney Demonstration School before. It is a wonderful school. We are hoping to get some more investment into that school in the future. On Friday I will be joining Mosman High School. Mosman High School is known for its art and music and also for its focus on technology. We will be exploring with principal Susan Wyatt some of the teaching and learning programs that the high school has. This wonderful high school caters significantly to our growing community, particularly to the increasing demands on our public school system. I know that the Minister is aware that we are seeking some additional investments so that we can get the biggest capacity possible and the best facilities for our students and our teachers.

Today, Mosman Public School has had an open day. Cammeraygal High School is running a mental health forum. It is something that it has been doing over the last couple of months. I was grateful to get some funding for five noticeboards across school to support their mental health initiatives. I also note that Neutral Bay Public School, on the street where my office is, is another one of our excellent local schools participating this week. All at the school are very happy because of the Government's recent commitment and announcement to invest in a major upgrade for it.

There are wonderful activities taking place at all of these schools this week. It is great for us to be able to participate in festive activities but the most important element is that we get to recognise and acknowledge the work of our teachers, our staff, the volunteers and the parents who give so much to our schools and who create such rich learning and social environments for the next generation. I think it is true that this year's theme—Today's Schools Creating Tomorrow's World—has been enacted in the schools in my electorate of North Shore and across the State. I thank the member for Terrigal again for raising this matter of public importance.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:43): By leave: I contribute to this debate on behalf of The Greens and I congratulate the member for Terrigal for raising this important matter of public interest. It is a time to reflect on the achievements and the impact of public education in our society. Recently, the Public Education Foundation released a series of videos featuring prominent Australians Michael Kirby, Larissa Behrendt and Craig Reucassel, whose public education played a role in their personal success—and there are so many others. Their stories are indicative of the millions of lives improved by public education over the years.

At the heart of the success of public education is the fact that it is an education system that accepts all children from all families from all walks of life and strives to provide them with the same high-quality education no matter their circumstances. Public school teachers do more than educate individual children. They accept children from a range of diverse backgrounds and create communities, but they do more than this. Our teachers strengthen the social, economic and cultural fabric of our nation every day in every public school—indeed, in every school in the State. I take this opportunity to congratulate the teachers in my electorate of Ballina on their tireless work. I congratulate also all the parents and school communities that help to make the schools in my electorate so successful.

It is incredibly disappointing that 83 per cent of students with a disability who attend a public school have had their Federal funding cut. The original Gonski review found that a minimum schooling resource standard [SRS] was needed to lift the achievement of all students, with additional funding targeted to areas of need. However, the Federal Government has committed to providing 80 per cent of the SRS to already advantaged private schools, while only providing 20 per cent for the education of public school students. The campaigns in support of public education will continue to ensure that all students have access to the highest quality education regardless of their needs or background. Indeed, the solution remains the same as that summed up by Sir Henry Parkes, the founder of public education, in 1957. We need to do everything in our power and speak up on behalf of public education and the important role it plays in the lives of millions of children across Australia.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:45): In reply: I thank the members who represent the electorates of Blue Mountains, Port Macquarie, Kiama, Wyong, North Shore and Ballina for their contributions to this matter of public importance. I am both the proud grandson and son of teachers, so I understand firsthand the sacrifice and commitment that teachers make. A decade after her retirement, my mother still receives phone calls from

former students wanting to catch up. Teachers create an important bond with their students. Indeed, they are an integral part of a young person's development and they have an amazing impact on their students' futures.

I again highlight the great work that is done by our parents and citizens associations [P & C] and parents and friends' associations [P & F]. In conjunction with the great principals and headmasters in both the public and private sectors, those associations provide tremendous support. I am proud that all of the P& Cs in my electorate have received hundreds of thousands of dollars through Community Building Partnership grants, and that money has been well spent in our schools in addition to their regular funding.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the leaders in the schools in my electorate: Ross Hallaways, Avoca Beach Public School; Annette Parrey, Brisbania Public School; Toni Skinner, Chertsey Public School—we love Principal Skinner of Springfield Elementary School—Ben Thomas, Copacabana Public School; Simone Champion, Empire Bay Public School; Greg Francis, Erina Heights Public School; Vanessa Gordon, Holgate Public School; Trish Peters, Kincumber Public School; Deborah Callender, Pretty Beach Public School—probably the prettiest school on the Central Coast—Michael Burgess, Terrigal Public School; Paul Miller, Wamberal Public School; and Judy Boland, Woodport Public School. This year the school is celebrating its 125th birthday and I have volunteered to go into their dunking tank, so they will make some real money that day. The high school leaders are: Karen Nicol, Erina High School; Janine Debenham, Kincumber High School; and Tania Turik, Terrigal High School.

They all do a wonderful job in leading a fantastic team of teachers and they have with them Karen Jones and Lisa Muir, who are also great leaders. The Central Coast is well looked after in both the public and private education systems. Finally, the fantastic work our teachers are doing right across New South Wales reflects the theme of Education Week 2018: "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world."

Private Members' Statements

GREATER SYDNEY URBAN PLANNING

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (16:48): Over the winter recess I have witnessed an unprecedented revolt by the people of Kogarah against the planning policies of this Government. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "planning" as the control of urban development by a government authority. In Sydney today nothing could be further from the truth. There is virtually no control on the pace, nature, design or location of the buildings we are subjecting our citizens to. We are instead being hit with an avalanche of many ugly, poorly built developments that are substantially detracting from the beauty of our city. The bottom line is that when it comes to planning in Sydney we are getting it badly wrong.

Last week we saw a perverse situation where Chris Johnson, Chief Executive Officer of the Urban Taskforce, wrote an op-ed saying that we should have no more nimbys and instead have more yimbys, or "yes in my backyard". He was saying to Sydney that not only do we have to take these monstrosities but that we should be happy about it. In other words, "Shut up and take your medicine." In my view, a nimby is someone who objects to the construction of a new pool or a second storey on a neighbour's property—in other words, a nuisance. But when the community objects to a twenty-storey tower being constructed in the heart of their suburb they are not being "difficult" or "petty" because they are right when they say it will change that community forever. It is this sentiment and the thousands of development applications littering Sydney like a pockmarked face that is undermining community support for planning, urban design and immigration.

I have previously spoken about a development in Kogarah where an applicant which already had approval for 330 units asked for a rezoning to increase its allocation to 556 units and, at the flick of a pen, made an estimated \$60 million profit—all thanks to the New South Wales Government. This development is 150 metres from the fourth biggest school in the State. In return for this largesse, the developer returned \$1 million in a voluntary planning agreement and gave \$100,000 to the local school. What good is that going to do, given the gigantic negative externalities everyone else has to suffer as a result of the development?

Last week I visited Kogarah Public School, which is being faced with unprecedented high-rise around the school due to a massive increase in density in Kogarah north. This school will be in permanent shadow. We hear all this rubbish about the success of the Independent Hearing and Assessment Panels [IHAPs], but these panels are approving nearly everything that lands in front of them. The joint regional planning panels are worse. The skyline of my community does not look sleek, new or inviting, with ordered beautiful buildings; rather it is a hodgepodge of different sizes and shapes jammed into the block wherever and however they can fit—like a giant game of Tetris. The complete lack of uniformity and design principles mean that from a distance these buildings look like a face full of smashed teeth. There should be a verdict on IHAPs because they are not working; they are simply too friendly to developers.

Section 96 variations are completely undermining community support for density. There are stories too numerous to mention of developers promising a park, a pool or some form of civic amenity to go along with their proposed plans, only to apply for a variation and scuttling those plans after the umpire has made his decision. The cynic in me believes that it is a time-tested process: launch the plan, throw in a park to shut the locals up, get approval for the high-rise and then kill the park later on. We need to end the practice of major developers who have already been granted generous construction terms coming back for more.

We also must make it clear that if Sydney is going to have this level of density it must be shared evenly across all areas. There should be a recognition that developers and those who have their land rezoned, delivering them a windfall gain, will have to dip into their share in order to fund and support infrastructure for those in the immediate area. Most importantly, they should provide new open spaces. There is an opportunity for the Parliament, the Government and the Opposition, to pause this madness and instead imagine how beautiful, accommodating and pleasurable our city and suburbs could be. It will require policy changes on density, design, scale and community recreation areas, but it must be done or Sydney is done for. The planning Minister is in the process of ruining the Emerald City. The House does not have to take my word for it; listen to the Government's backflips on the Minister's own policies. Time is running out. We owe it to future generations to build developments with infrastructure. We only get one shot at it.

PRESCHOOL FUNDING

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (16:53): The New South Wales Government is the first State to provide access for all children to attend two years of preschool, saving families as much as \$800 a year and providing a strong start to early education. A subsidy was approved in the recent budget to extend preschool options to include three year olds. Data from the Australian Early Development Census shows that children who have attended preschool are significantly less likely to be developmentally vulnerable when starting school. The Government is also spending \$42 million on capital works to deliver almost 5,000 extra community preschool places in areas where the population is booming.

Last Friday I was privileged to visit two preschools in Ryde and I was really impressed. We are lucky to have such wonderful and dedicated people assisting our preschoolers. The programs they are offering are extensive and interesting for children to grow through their surroundings. Clovel Preschool, situated next to Ryde Hospital, recently started a community garden. I was assisted by Ryan, Layla and Evanna to plant an olive tree. The children told me about the vegetables and herbs they were growing, how they were going to cook with them and how they needed sun and water to grow. I also visited the Meadowbank Multipurpose Learning Centre next to Meadowbank Primary School, and spoke with Ed and Gretha Reed about potential changes when the school moves to the Meadowbank Education Precinct.

I assured Gretha and Ed that when the school moves to the new location the site will be kept as open space. Community consultation will confirm what that space looks like. The hall, for example, could stay as a community venue and other space be opened up for recreational play or an area for team sports such as soccer. I made a commitment to Gretha and Ed that I would liaise on their behalf with the education department to see what options will be available for parents regarding preschool and out of school hours [OOSH] care as it is essential that these services continue to exist to support the community and the education precinct. It is essential for that education precinct to be supported by appropriate preschool and OOSH facilities.

I assure each and every one of my residents that no blade of grass will be given to developers in relation to the current Meadowbank Primary School site and no blade of grass will be given to developers in relation to the current Marsden High School site. Unlike what occurred under previous Labor administrations, neither of those areas will be sold to developers. They will be returned to people in the form of open space or much-needed recreational facilities. I am proud that the Government's sports grants are being utilised in our community. The North Ryde Dockers AFL club applied for and received funds to fit out its first under-18s girls team from this grants program. At the weekend I attended the pre-game session for the under-18s girls team and was impressed to see how focused and enthusiastic it was.

This club has gone from strength to strength under the presidency of Doug Whiteford and vice president Darren Deigan. The team is coached by Garry Furey and managed by Nicole Dang. Both coach and manager spoke of the dedication of the team, how much the girls enjoyed the game and how much the grant meant to the team. The under-18s girls captain spoke of the cohesiveness of the team and how training and game days were well attended. The girls ran onto the field through a Dockers under-15s boys guard of honour, which was impressive, and they scored the first goal in the first 60 seconds of the game, which they ultimately won. The girls would be embarrassed if I repeated the score, but to say it was a landslide would be an understatement. They are finals bound and are looking forward to it. I cheer them on from the sidelines and wish them every success.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (16:58): Tonight I inform the Parliament of the dire conditions in rural and regional New South Wales because of the drought. Today the entire State was declared to be in drought after a drier than expected period during June and July. We are in unprecedented and uncharted waters. Many had not expected this drought to go on for so long, and the forecast is not good for the next few months. We are helping farmers right across regional New South Wales in any way that we possibly can. We encourage farmers who seek support and assistance to visit the DroughtHub website where they will find details about emergency drought relief packages and a raft of information about transport, animal welfare, finance, management information, wellbeing, skills and training, the latest New South Wales drought maps, and more. We must continue to communicate to our farmers that the information, support and assistance are there. We have been looking after stock. We also need seriously to consider the welfare, wellbeing and resilience of farmers and to ensure they are looked after.

I applaud the efforts of the volunteers and representatives of 22 government agencies who attended the Attunga Hall Drought Forum on 7 August. A packed hall listened to Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack, who gave an update on the Federal Government's drought aid. I gave an update on the New South Wales Government's \$1 billion drought package. We must continue to inform farmers of the latest \$500 million worth of drought packages, which includes \$190 million for drought transport subsidies and approximately \$100 million for cutting the costs of farming fees and charges by waiving Local Land Services rates, fixed water charges in rural and regional areas, class one agricultural vehicle registration costs, and other initiatives. In addition, \$150 million has been allocated to bolster the Farm Innovation Fund infrastructure program. Funding is also available for counselling and mental health—I urge farmers who believe that they need assistance to reach out—critical services in regional communities, including transporting water, drought-related road upgrades and repairs, animal welfare and stock disposal.

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority is available for those who need assistance; the number is 1800 678 593. We encourage our farmers not to self-assess. If they think they are eligible for support or assistance they should go to the DroughtHub website and look through the frequently asked questions and the information that is available to support primary producers. This is all about people. We need to look after our people. At the end of this drought—and it will break—those farmers who are still on their land will be able to go back to doing what they do best. We are now thinking about funding for restocking and replanting in the next three, four, five or six months. We need to think about the next steps. We will continue to look after our farmers and support them but we are also looking at other options in the coming months. We need to continue to pray for rain. The rain will fall; it is only a matter of time. We want to ensure that those on the land are supported. Farmers should contact the Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593 and seek valuable support and assistance during this difficult time.

PATANGA ROAD, FRENCHS FOREST

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (17:03): I draw attention to a public meeting I am arranging on Monday 20 August between 6.30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. That public meeting will be held at the Frenchs Forest Anglican Church Hall at 67 Bantry Bay Road, Frenchs Forest. At that meeting will be representatives from the Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]. The purpose of that meeting will be to have a presentation from the Roads and Maritime Services staff about changes that have occurred to the road topography in the vicinity of Patanga Road adjacent to the Skyline shops at Frenchs Forest.

The electorate of Wakehurst has been the beneficiary of a new hospital, the Northern Beaches Hospital. In terms of construction and fit-out, it is as close to being completed as it possibly can be. It is currently being commissioned. Part of the roadworks that were required around the hospital start from the immediate vicinity of the hospital along Warringah Road and continue toward the Skyline shops, particularly the intersection of Patanga Road and Frenchs Road West. A small group of shops at that intersection services the local community. I regularly call in for a coffee and buy other products from the various shops. There is one Chinese restaurant, a cake shop that also serves marvellous coffee, a newsagent, a fish and chip shop, a supermarket, a Subway and a pharmacy. Local residents are able to buy products from those shops if they do not want to go to the bigger shopping centres, which are further away.

The RMS has encountered a number of issues through its contractors Ferrovial and York. On behalf of residents, I have spoken on the phone to them constantly over the past couple of years. I have considered talking to them about issues to do with the whole road network in that area to be almost a full-time job. This issue is specifically about the residents wanting access to those shops. It is a mutual need. Although the RMS has designed the intersection to improve safety, it presents practical problems in terms of usage. For example, Patanga Road has no access heading north to south, which means that residents cannot access Frenchs Forest Road East or Frenchs Forest Road West in the mornings, which is a major issue. The parking that is immediately outside the

shops is also problematic. We understand the constraints of a complex intersection. However, the direction of three parking spaces in front of the shops that are designed to be used by people with disabilities are facing opposite to what most logical residents would say is a necessity. They should be facing the direction of the traffic rather than the reverse direction.

The main point is that there are issues and we must be able to have a full exchange between the residents and the engineers who have designed the road to see what changes may be practical. When government agencies complete their work they are not too keen to make changes. On behalf of my local residents, I consider it is necessary to have this interchange of ideas. If there are to be changes, then I will be pushing hard, as I always have in my 28 years at State Parliament, to make sure that the changes work for local residents. I ask residents who live in the vicinity of Patanga Road and those who use the Skyline shops to be aware of the public meeting to be held on Monday 20 August at the local church hall. I do not want anyone to be inconvenienced, so please register your attendance by emailing my electorate office at wakehurst@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (17:08): People with disability in my electorate of Port Stephens and across the State are being hurt, rejected and neglected by Premier Berejiklian and her entire Government. The Premier and her misleading Minister Ray Williams simply refuse to acknowledge the serious difficulties people with disability, their parents, carers, advocates and service providers are experiencing in this Government's rush to completely privatise the disability sector in New South Wales. While ever the Government ignores the reality of what it has done, it has no chance of fixing the worsening problems.

In the Hunter the experience of the Stockton, Tomaree and Kanangra disability centres has been truly shocking. Here is a situation where vulnerable people with complex and profound disabilities are being transferred from the place they have called home for years—a situation that requires the utmost care and caution. Instead, when some of these residents were moved into their new home, inexcusably, the same level of resourcing, staffing and expertise did not move with them. There is no way to sugar-coat what happened next: some of them died. It is suspected that they died of dehydration, but this Government has desperately tried to dismiss concerns that I and others raised by saying that they were palliative patients in any event, as if this excuses the cruel and neglectful actions that took place.

This is the same concern that has been raised with me recently by parents of children who live at the Summer Hill centre, a specialist medical model disability group home offering similar supports and services to the Hunter large residential centres. The Summer Hill centre is about to be privatised against the express wishes of the parents. They are deeply concerned that the new provider will be forced to reduce its level of care because the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] does not fund medical supports. The families are rightly fearful that they might find themselves facing the same tragic circumstances that we have seen in the Hunter and in my electorate. Indeed, many of the residents at the Summer Hill centre are also regarded as palliative because that is the level of care they require. It should never be used as a defence for neglect.

No-one should be treated so poorly, especially by their own government. People with profound disability should never be neglected by the State and then have their death excused because their level of complex care was classified as "palliative". But none of these issues would have arisen if the Government had actually listened to those who know best—the people with disabilities, their families, their carers and their advocates. In reality, the Government has always seen the introduction of the NDIS as an excuse to wash its hands of all responsibility for people with disability. There is no other State or Territory to have entirely ceased the provision of disability services. Because the NDIS has its limits, massive gaps have opened up in New South Wales and existing disability service providers can no longer deliver some of the essential services that people need because they will not be paid for them. That is business. People need to be paid for the work they do to stay afloat. While I know many service providers are trying to fill the gaps themselves, there is only so much work they can do without being paid.

Previously, State services could catch people before they fell. Those services no longer exist. The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care no longer exists. The Minister is officially the Minister for No Disability Services. Instead of providing safety net services as New South Wales Labor has committed to do, this Government sticks its head in the sand and pretends there is not a problem. Recently I met with the Flowers family. Kym Flowers is a 34-year-old woman with cerebral palsy who is going into her fifth month of living in Sutherland Hospital. Kym does not actually need to be in hospital—she could have been discharged months ago—but her increased medical needs mean that her group home cannot take her back. The NDIS will not cover the extra costs of Kym's medical care so for months she has been living in a hospital because she has nowhere else to turn.

Of course, a public hospital can little afford to have a bed lost in these circumstances so Kym was offered a bed in an aged care facility instead. She is 34-years-old. I thank Maryanne Stuart, Labor's candidate for the

electorate of Heathcote, for introducing me to Kym and her family. Kym is awesome, but she wants somewhere she can call home; she does not want to live in a nursing home, nor should she have to. The Minister cannot claim to be surprised by these facts. The families at Stockton, Tomaree and Kanangra, along with the parents at the Summer Hill centre and the Flowers family, have been raising their deep concerns with the Minister for Disability Services for years, but their pleas have been ignored. I urge the Minister to suspend the privatisation of the Summer Hill centre and then adopt Labor's policy, as the Government has done with all our other policies, and put in place safety net services for people with disabilities so they always have somewhere to turn. [*Time expired.*]

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (17:14): That expose from the member for Port Stephens contained a shocking litany of lies and half-truths that mislead vulnerable people. I remind the member for Port Stephens that the Federal Labor Government, with bipartisan support, introduced the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It is about empowering individuals. This Labor member of Parliament, the member for Port Stephens, who came late to the task, thinks that telling porkies is the way to deal with vulnerable people. The Summer Hill centre is following the process that has been set out by both sides of politics. Our Government is very supportive of people with disabilities. It has been attempting to do all it can for people to stay out of our hospitals and get the support they need. The member for Port Stephens has a history of lying and she is lying again in this Chamber.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms Kate Washington: The Minister has just used unparliamentary language and I want to take a point of order.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: What is the unparliamentary language?

Ms Kate Washington: The Minister said I have lied in this place and that is unparliamentary language.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Port Stephens ought to read the book about unparliamentary language. There is no debate to be had. There is no point of order to be taken.

Ms Kate Washington: We can lie in this place now? Are you saying that we can use the word "lies" in this place to describe—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Does the member for Port Stephens want to leave the Chamber? There is no point of order.

KOOLOONBUNG CREEK NATURE RESERVE FLYING FOX MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:15): On 26 July I was pleased to welcome the Hon. Gabrielle Upton, MP, the Minister for the Environment, to the Port Macquarie electorate for a range of meetings and site inspections. One such occasion was to speak with concerned local residents regarding the flying fox colony at the Kooloonbung Nature Reserve in Port Macquarie. Since I was elected in 2011, one of the main issues of concern to residents living next to the Kooloonbung Nature Reserve is the flying fox habitation that encompasses the park and Wrights Creek Bridge, which is located in the heart of Port Macquarie.

I was pleased that Minister Upton visited and provided some assurance to local residents that financial support will be available to Port Macquarie-Hastings Council to manage the flying fox colony at the Kooloonbung Nature Reserve. The Minister confirmed that funding and programs are obtainable for council, but the first step is for it to devise a plan of management, so the Government can determine the financial support required to resolve this major issue for locals living near Wrights Creek Bridge.

In 2014 residents from Port Macquarie decided enough was enough when it comes to the increasing population of flying foxes in the town, with locals highlighting frustrations with noise, smell and environmental destruction of Kooloonbung Creek and the expansion of the colony. Locals took a stand and proactively developed a petition and distributed it all over town. Hundreds of signature forms were presented to my office, reflecting the distress and concern of many people because of council's apparent lack of action to address the growing flying fox problem. In 2016 the Government announced funding for flying fox camp management actions. At the time I wrote to Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and notified it of the three funding streams available to minimise the impacts of the flying fox colony on the local community.

The New South Wales Government then further extended the program by a year to ensure all councils in the State had every opportunity to apply for financial support. Unfortunately, council—under the previous mayor—failed to demonstrate leadership to address the serious concerns raised by his constituency, as council had resigned to the fact in February 2013 that, on the basis of a feasibility assessment conducted in 2012, a position

was reached to go no further with the concept. Today constituents in Port Macquarie are still as proactive and motivated to resolve the complex issues related to the flying fox camp located in the heart of town.

I commend tenacious campaigners Rose Attenborough, Gay Woods and Joan Collis for actively lobbying council and encouraging community participation to remind councillors that there are real people affected by the decision they make on behalf of their constituency. I thank the new mayor of Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Peta Pinson, for attending a meeting with Minister Upton and I on 24 July and for pledging council's support in devising a plan to move forward in tackling this ongoing issue. Mayor Pinson has confirmed a report will be compiled for the next council meeting later this month to establish a plan of management for the flying fox colony in Kooloonbung Nature Reserve. I commend Mayor Pinson's active commitment to pursue strategies that address the concerns of residents, particularly in regard to the noticeable expansion of the roosting colony within the reserve.

I assure the electorate that I will continue to lobby the New South Wales Government for funding to support the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council when a plan of management is developed and strategies and actions are identified to address the flying fox colony, which roosts in Kooloonbung Creek Nature Reserve. I encourage residents to continue to urge their local council representatives to ensure an action or strategy is formulated as a matter of urgency to address their concerns about the flying foxes in the reserve. In closing, I thank the volunteers, the Friends of Kooloonbung, for their ongoing work to preserve the park through litter collections, facility upgrades, weeding, bush regeneration and, importantly, community education.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

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) (17:19): Today I speak on an issue affecting all of us in the Goulburn electorate, from Robertson right through to Boorowa: the worsening drought. With 100 per cent of our State now officially in drought or drought affected, farmers have an unprecedented need for our support, and for longer than only today. The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has committed more than \$1 billion in assistance to our local farmers. This funding includes transport subsidies, interest-free loans, support for mental health services, a new kangaroo management strategy, a reduction in farming fees and charges, the waiving of agricultural vehicle registration costs, as well as other farm innovation initiatives.

The most recent measures were warmly welcomed by the local branch of the NSW Farmers Association. David Banham and Margaret Cameron met with me to listen to the Premier's announcement and discuss the impact it would have on my constituents. I meet and talk with local farmers frequently and I know this support is welcomed. My husband and I are also modest farmers, so we know how desperate farmers feel and how grim those parched paddocks look in the winter sun. We know the flow-on effects are starting to bite—stock feed businesses are slowing down, there is less work for farm contractors and businesses in rural towns are starting to show concern. It is important that we consider the risks if this unprecedented drought continues into spring and summer 2018. Weather projections suggest rain is not due for some time.

We need to understand that a continuation of this drought into the next growing season could well mean the loss of the State's breeding herds and flocks. By now, all farmers down my way have left is their breeders. But a dry spring means even they will have to go. That would be a disaster for Australia's food industry, its exports, domestic consumers, farmers and all of us. Recovering the breeding herds takes years; it can only begin when the rains come again. One of Australia's top three export earners would be decimated—watch the Aussie dollar drop. There is no doubt that the economic and social consequences for all of us are grave indeed. Agriculture is one of our State's biggest wealth generators. It keeps regional New South Wales alive and city dwellers—rich and poor—will feel the pinch.

If there is no spring rain the solution will not be more fodder transport subsidies because there will be neither the fodder to transport nor the stock to feed. Mental health supports and the waiving of fees and charges will not mean much to farmers who walk off their land. The answer is secure and reliable water for stock and crop production. I visited a local Tarago farmer last week, Ian McLennan, and met with other farmers, including James Reynolds and Riley Martin. They are all concerned about water, in particular on-farm water storage. They are good farmers and have managed their water allocations well. They have pumped water to paddock troughs and for fodder production. Their stock looked reasonable—even good—for now, but they too fear the spring, when their water stores may run out.

On a dry and cold Sunday morning, they made the case to me for a more realistic policy that would enable them to dam their ephemeral creeks—not the permanent streams that feed into the Wollondilly and Mulwaree rivers, but the creeks that may only flow once a year for a few days with water that then runs out to sea. They argue that accessing this water would give them a chance to grow more fodder for themselves and others and

support more stock through future times as bad as these. I support an urgent review of the on-farm water storage policy, but acknowledge it will not save us in six weeks' time if the spring rains fail. With an unprecedented drought comes the need for unprecedented thinking. Whilst we pride ourselves on our care for the environment, we must begin to investigate whether to immediately access environmental water flows for fodder crop production in the Southern Tablelands to keep breeding herds alive. The issue requires urgent consideration. To wait until the end of October to act will be too late for all of us.

I am pleased to say my constituents have magnificently risen to the occasion. Last Friday, the local Goulburn Bunnings conducted a sausage sizzle fundraiser, with all funds raised to go to local farmers in need. I am pleased to say that the event had huge support. I am told that at one point the entire car park was full of people wanting to give. The local store raised \$6,500 for local farmers—a tremendous effort, and a lot of sausages! I thank Bunnings. I also thank the Moss Vale Country Women's Association, which is holding a fundraiser. I thank everyone who is digging deep. The people of New South Wales clearly want to support their farmers and want the farming sector to survive. I believe they will also support a temporary change in water policy so that New South Wales farmers can have a real future. All the wonderful fundraising, the community appeals, the great spirit and the generous donations coming from around New South Wales, including Sydney, will mean nothing if we have nothing left.

NAIDOC WEEK

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:25): Wowee, NAIDOC Week was strong this year. The vibrant shirts from various organisations adorned with "Because of her, we can!" sang the message loud and clear across Gosford Showground at this year's celebration. There was a wonderful coming together of family and friends, mobs from near and far, who now call the beautiful Central Coast home. I am pretty proud to say that we had the fourth highest number of Aboriginal people from all locations across the State joining in a celebration of love, humanity and cultural joy. Respect, dignity and celebrations were in order as the Central Coast came together in honour of this year's theme: Because of her, we can!

Thanks to Yerin Aboriginal Health Services as the main sponsor, we enjoyed a smoking ceremony, powerful dances and the sharing of important stories from a number of local groups. We saw the work of artists and health checks were performed. There were mums and bubs sharing groups, a Transport for NSW display, job opportunities and information about family wellbeing connections. There was loads of great stuff, including handmade jewellery with traditionally painted fabric designs and lots more helpful information. It was beautiful to see our elders sitting and yarning in the glorious sunshine, surrounded by family members and friends coming and going.

It was great to see young Chelsea Trindall all grown up and living her dream as a florist. Chelsea studied Aboriginal studies as part of her Higher School Certificate at Brisbane Water Secondary College and completed an incredible painting for her major project. At the NAIDOC celebration day she sold gorgeous bouquets of combined natives and exotics and exquisite wreaths decorated with emu feathers. The NAIDOC day is a day of greetings and hugs and being loved. Following that came the Darkinjung Local Area Land Council NAIDOC Ball at which Aboriginal aunty and board member Robyn Sutherland spoke these powerful words:

Let me say I hear you. I hear your women's voice. You are here, you are not silent. You are not invisible. Our voices are rising loud and clear.

Robyn then invited all the women in the room to stand as she said:

We must all be unshakeable in our resolve to be everything we are and have been. We cannot bend for this world. Let the world bend for us. Only together, shoulder to shoulder, will we raise the next generation into being.

We then sat as Aunty Robyn continued:

I would like to pay homage to the trailblazers who paved the way for the rest of us women in the beginning. We should not take for granted the incredible fight that many, many of us Aboriginal women fought for to help build our tight-knit community into what it is today. Sadly some of those women who paved the way who are no longer with us ...

Aboriginal women on the coast banded together when Robyn was only 21 and her baby Jacinta was in a pram. She was heading back to Coonabarabran and stopped in at Jenny McKewan's house for a cuppa, sharing her story of not having a place to live on the coast. Thirty minutes later a house was found. The then six-month-old Jacinta is now mum to Robyn's six grandkids. These incredible Aboriginal women started with nothing but families, pride and one another, identifying community needs and working to build organisations and services that have continued to grow and support Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families across the coast. They started a medical centre and a home care service for elders. They organised rallies, marched in the street and cared for children under the ever-lingering fear of removal.

These women suffered from overt and constant discrimination and did not crumble. Together they challenged the status quo and changed this nation, this State and our community forever. This year's NAIDOC theme, Because of her, we can!, was celebrated across the coast with dignity and absolute respect for the incredible Aboriginal women in our community. Aboriginal women are such an important overarching, inclusive, understanding, caring, positive and unifying force across the Central Coast. These women fought the fight, walked the walk and talked the talk to succeed. They have made our community what it is today. I thank them all for what they have done and continue to do and for the direction in which they will lead our community in the future. We are so strong on the coast because of them. Because of them, we can!

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

HAY HEALTH AND FITNESS CENTRE

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (17:29): As a lot of members have said over the past week or so, drought is impacting across our State. This certainly is the case in my electorate, which highlights one of the battles of this drought: the diverse nature of what we are dealing with. Everything from the dryland cropping country in the east of my electorate to the irrigation areas on the Murray River and the Murrumbidgee River is affected, with the Murray River facing a zero per cent allocation and the Murrumbidgee River, a 6 per cent allocation—scarcily, one of the best in the State. From there out to the west of my electorate are the very large pastoral areas and all have been affected by the drought. It is the breadth of this drought that is causing the problems.

A couple based at Mossgiel told me that for the first time in the two generations that they have been on their farm they have not been able to get agistment for their stock. Such is the widespread nature of the drought. Last Sunday I drove 250 kilometres north-west of Hay to meet a group of young farming couples, across the dirt roads that they live with every day. Those young couples are affected by the drought like many others, but they face another dilemma in that they have just bought into the farms. It is lousy timing. They shared with me their difficulties.

We cannot make it rain; we can pray for rain and try to help in that way. The Government has provided assistance, but, as my electorate shows, it must be variable to meet the different situations that exist across the entire State. Along with the specific drought assistance that the State and Federal governments have released in the past couple of days—the last stages of drought assistance have been coming for a while—we need to also ensure that we meet the needs of isolated communities. On 22 March this year I had the great privilege of visiting the Hay Services Club to announce ClubGRANTS funding for the construction of the Hay Health and Fitness Centre. This is a fantastic demonstration of a small community working together to achieve great things.

Hay is a small town, which most people who have travelled from Sydney to Adelaide will have come across. It is in the middle of the Hay Plains—one of the flattest parts of the world. Sitting on the Murrumbidgee River, it has a population of just more than 2,400. Hay currently has a small space for the gym, which is not air-conditioned—and in Hay that can be a big issue. So residents formed a subcommittee, comprising services club board members and interested members of the sporting and allied health and fitness communities, to pursue the dream of a bigger health and fitness centre. On 22 March I was coming back from doing some stuff further out west when I let them know, with only about an hour's notice, that I would be calling in.

When I got there I was amazed to see that nine people representing all the groups had flocked to the club to meet me for the announcement. They were excited—jumping out of their skins. They are really passionate about the project. The new centre will be purpose built and more than six times bigger than the space available now. It will include an area for fitness classes, equipment, disabled access, amenities, 24-hour access, air-conditioning and a space for shared use by local health and fitness professionals. It will address some of the current barriers that residents face with the remoteness, socio-economic disadvantage and lack of facilities and services. It is a great credit to the Hay community and its determination and vision to achieve great things.

That was on 22 March. I was back there a couple weeks ago for the Hay annual general meeting of the National Party. While I was having a meeting in the Hay Services Club, four or five people showed up and dragged me out the back of the club. And there was this magnificent shed that will house the new gym. It is massive, at 45 metres by 15 metres. They were rapt and excited to see the project being delivered. The plumbing was done and the concrete floor was about to go in the next day. It highlights how putting money into communities such as this can produce such great results. The people are resourceful, donating their time and energy to make things happen. You get a huge bang for your buck. The Hay community is be congratulated on this wonderful facility.

MANLY ELECTORATE RESPITE SERVICES

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:34): I wish to update the House on a wonderful outcome for people who are in need of support and assistance, the vulnerable and the voiceless in my community. For some years,

three beautiful properties located within the North Head Sanctuary have been used as respite accommodation for full-time carers. Full-time carers are some of the hardest working but often overlooked people in our community. The respite services were usually run by Katherine Owen on behalf of her employer. Recently the organisation advised that these services were no longer able to continue providing the respite carer services. At this point these three properties, owned by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, would ordinarily have been put onto the rental market. With views of Sydney Harbour, big backyards and a location in the beautiful sanctuary bushland of North Head, they would have commanded a hefty weekly rental. If that had happened they would probably have gone forever from providing a community service.

Katherine Owen approached me and brought with her a number of carers who had benefited from the respite services in the past. I am grateful to Katherine and the carers for sharing their stories—often quite emotional stories—with me, and for offering insights into how important these properties and respite were for them and for the people they cared for. Without their insights I would not have had a full appreciation of the need to ensure that these properties remain for community use. Following that meeting with Katherine, and some subsequent meetings with local community organisations and charities such as Community Northern Beaches and the Northern Beaches Women's shelter, I approached Minister for Disability Services Ray Williams. Mr Williams assisted me in securing some funding that will cover the costs associated with the three properties, whilst a plan for long-term community use is developed by local charity and not-for-profit organisations. The plan will include Katherine Owen and the carers that I mentioned previously.

With Community Northern Beaches, carers and other community services, we can work over the next three months to develop a business case and long-term model for the future use of these properties to ensure that they stay in the community's hands. I place on the record my gratitude to the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, in particular its Chief Executive Officer Mary Darwell and her team members Maree Doherty and Stephen Alborough. They are wonderful partners and have supported of this initiative at every step. Finally, I thank the people who made this happen and who have given me an opportunity to ensure that these wonderful properties remain for community use in one form or another: the carers. They are led by Katherine Owen and I specifically thank Sue, Lotti, Carmel and Joy. Thank you so much for sharing your stories with me: It allowed me to gain an understanding the importance of these properties. The future of those properties at North Head is bright. It is community based, and it is something we can all be proud of.

KU-RING-GAI ROAD SAFETY

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (17:37): There are many reasons why I am very privileged and proud to be the member for Ku-ring-gai. Every Ku-ring-gai resident values highly the abundance of trees and open spaces and realises that they should never be taken for granted. I have spoken previously in this place about the special quality of the people who live in the Ku-ring-gai electorate, including those who work in its magnificent schools. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, based on four key criteria, including education and occupation, income and assets, as well as access to social resources, Ku-ring-gai has been identified as the "most advantaged" area in Australia. Not only that but the health of Ku-ring-gai residents annually rates among the best in the country and it is invariably among the safest, low-crime communities in New South Wales.

We can never be complacent as a community about all of those measures in which Ku-ring-gai leads our nation. In one other important respect Ku-ring-gai ranks equally with all other electorates. I am talking about the incidence of motor vehicle accidents. In that regard, there is an level of concern equivalent to that of all other electorates for road safety. Road accidents can and do happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time. The latest data show that 42.5 per cent of fatal crashes in New South Wales in the past 12 months involved excessive speed. This is despite the fact that the then Minister for Roads launched the advertising campaign Towards Zero in May 2016 to highlight the human element of the road toll to help reduce the number of crashes and fatalities.

The New South Wales Government has been active in funding road upgrade projects, including a \$391.6 million productivity package with the Federal Government for the M1, and it has continually promoted road safety, including the introduction of stiffer penalties for those who break the rules. The Government has also more than doubled the Roads budget since 2011 to improve critical infrastructure across the State's road network. In Ku-ring-gai, the Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] is doing many excellent things. The RMS has extended clearways between Wahroonga and Pymble, including on Saturdays to help families travel to weekend sport, it is about to introduce new traffic light technology to maximise the movement of traffic and it has also just commenced implementing a \$30 million program to eliminate bottlenecks called "pinch points" on the Pacific Highway between Pymble and Wahroonga where the highway shifts from three to two lanes and back again.

The \$30 million Pinch Point Program aims to reduce congestion on one of Sydney's busiest thoroughfares. It also has the objective of making the road safer by reducing the need for drivers to change lanes and of decreasing the level of risk-taking behaviour that the frustration of congestion can cause. The Government has set maximum speed limits for heavy vehicles, invested proactively in heavy vehicle infrastructure, such as

vehicle monitoring systems, and has introduced the Heavy Vehicle Register, which ensures that all heavy vehicles involved in incidents that are structurally unsafe are not re-registered and remain off the road. New South Wales now has the most comprehensive heavy vehicle safety and compliance system in the country.

Despite the extensive efforts of both the Government and the police to change behaviour, speeding is still killing people, motorists are still flouting the law and drivers are making bad choices on the road. What can be done? Perhaps the ultimate answer is to reduce, or even eliminate, the human element to driving. I am proud to be part of a progressive government that wants to use technology to improve people's everyday lives. On 8 August 2017, as part of the Government's Future Transport Strategy, the New South Wales Parliament passed the Transport Legislation Amendment (Automated Vehicle Trials and Innovation) Bill 2017. That legislation permits applications to trial highly or fully automated vehicles for a specified period of time. The goal is to have fully connected and automated vehicles—that is, self-driving cars that do not require any human monitoring—readily available and on the road as soon as possible.

Pursuant to the legislation, a trial of autonomous minibuses is taking place at Sydney Olympic Park and the Government will be trialling automated vehicles across the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Hills M2 Motorway, the Westlink M7, the M5, the Eastern Distributor, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Harbour Tunnel. Automated vehicle technology is advancing quickly and car manufacturers Audi and Ford are planning to launch their first self-driving vehicles in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Their imminent arrival raises many issues, including how decision-making for crash avoidance will be prioritised; data ownership and security; civil and/or criminal liability; and insurance, including how the reallocation of risk will be made.

These issues will take some time to resolve but they do seem easier to address than the growing road toll. As they would effectively eliminate speeding and reckless, drunk- and drug-driving, automated vehicles surely provide an excellent opportunity to lower the number of fatalities and injuries suffered by the occupants of motor vehicles. I look forward to the day when I can say that no road fatalities occurred in Ku-ring-gai and that no resident of Ku-ring-gai died in a motor vehicle accident. We could not be more "advantaged" than that.

OUR LADY OF LEBANON CO-CATHEDRAL FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:42): Today I recognise the fortieth anniversary of the consecration and opening of Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Harris Park. Our Lady of Lebanon is the largest Maronite Catholic Parish in Australia and it serves the large Maronite community in my electorate of Granville. In the last 40 years the local Maronite population has tripled from 10,000 to 30,000 people. Five masses are held every Sunday and mass is held every day throughout the week at Our Lady of Lebanon. St Maroun was a fourth century Syriac Christian hermit monk in the Taurus Mountains whose followers, after his death, founded a religious Christian movement. St Maroun led a life of prayer, meditation, labour and chastity, inspiring many. St John Chrysostom wrote to St Maroun and asked him to pray for him during his time in exile:

... we are bound to you by love and interior disposition, and see you here before us as if you were actually present. For such are the eyes of love; their vision is neither interrupted by distance nor dimmed by time... we address ourselves to your honour and assure you that we hold you constantly in our minds and carry you about in our souls wherever we may be ... please pray for us.

On 23 February 2011 Pope Benedict XVI unveiled a statue of St Maroun on the outer wall of St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. I can think of no better quote than that which is on the inscription on the statue:

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

Fifty years ago, on 12 January 1968, Monsignor Peter Amin Ziade returned from Lebanon with the intention of building a church with a presbytery, school and hall for the Maronite community around Parramatta. Priests Father Michal Boumelhem, Father Youseff Touma, Father Antoun Shalhoub and Father Nakhle Akiki assisted Archbishop Ignace Abdo Khalifé and Monsignor Ziade in the establishment of the church. Construction of the church began in 1970 and, on 22 March 1970, Monsignor Ziade and Cardinal Gilroy blessed and laid the foundation stone. It was Palm Sunday and more than 10,000 Maronites gathered at the church site to welcome Cardinal Gilroy. Only 2½ years later, on 10 December 1972, the hall and school were blessed and were officially opened.

Forty years ago this week, on 6 August 1978, the church was officially opened and blessed by Archbishop Abdo Khalifé. Our Lady of Lebanon's seven-metre tall, blue-and-white statue was raised at 11.20 a.m. on 28 April 1976. However, it was replaced with the current five-metre tall bronze statue in 1980. It is reminiscent of the beautiful shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon in Harissa, near Beirut, which I visited along with Opposition leader Luke Foley and the Labor delegation that visited Lebanon in 2016. The shrine to Our Lady at Harissa is one of the most important shrines in the world honouring Mary, Mother of Jesus, and is renowned for a 15-tonne, 8.5-metre high bronze statue of the Virgin Mary stretching her hands towards Beirut.

On 17 April 2013, Pope Francis announced the appointment of Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay as the Fourth Maronite Bishop of Australia. Shortly after, on 11 October 2014, the status of Our Lady of Lebanon Church was elevated to a co-cathedral in the presence of Bishop Tarabay and Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Apostolic Nuncio to Australia. I am looking forward to celebrating Holy Week 2018 this week and the celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Lebanon with the congregation and community of the parish. I have attended Feast Day masses and the parish barbecues every year for many years and I enjoy catching up with friends and seeing the close-knit community maintain their traditional values while being incredibly successful in Australia. They have made a massive contribution to our nation and especially to the Granville and Parramatta area.

I first visited Lebanon in 2001 and, as I mentioned before, I was delighted to visit Lebanon again in 2016. As always, I bumped into numerous people from Merrylands and Granville who were there visiting family and friends. This time I was delighted to meet His Beatitude Moran Mor-Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, Maronite Patriarch of Antioch. I was also privileged to visit St Charbel's House and to hear more about his inspirational life. St Charbel was born in 1828 in Bekaa Kafra and continues to be an inspiration to many Maronites in Lebanon, in Australia and around the world.

Our Lady of Lebanon has many actively involved young people, and the congregation continues to grow, with additional masses held nearby. Mass is held at Our Lady of Lebanon's Mass Centre at Guildford's St Patrick's Church. In addition, Father Sam Wehbe's congregation at St John the Worker Church at Auburn has become St Raymond's Maronite Church to enable further Maronite masses in the area. Today, the Dean at Our Lady of Lebanon, Father Tony Sarkis, along with Assistant Parish Priests Father Yuhanna Azize, Father Pierre Khoury, Father John-Paul Bassil, Father Paul Joubair, Father Bernard Assi and Father Youwakim Noujaim, support the needs of the Maronite community. I thank Bishop Tarabay, Father Sarkis and committee members for their invitation to attend the ball in May 2018 in celebration of this important milestone. On this very special occasion the congregation has a lot to celebrate and I wish them many, many more years of success.

HILLS DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (17:47): Today I pay tribute to the Hills District Netball Association, which this year celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. With a strong group of dedicated volunteers and hundreds of registered players, Hills, as it is more affectionately known, is one of the great sporting groups in New South Wales. Every Friday night and Saturday morning hundreds of players descend on Pennant Hills netball courts to be part of a game they love. Hills is made up of 20 clubs, covering an area from North Ryde to Berowra. Girls can start playing from the age of five, and many play right through to their senior years. I feel as though I grew up on the sidelines at Hills netball watching my sister play junior netball in the competition.

It was Mr Edgar Dill, headmaster of Beecroft Primary School, who in 1958 saw the need for a Saturday morning sport for girls in the area. Supported by the local Rotary club, teams from schools between Cheltenham and Normanhurst started a competition. Originally the competition included teams from Beecroft Sports Club and from Cheltenham, Castle Hill, Hornsby and Asquith high schools. It grew in popularity and by 1966 it included teams from Pennant Hills and Thornleigh sports clubs and from Mount St Benedict and Pennant Hills high schools. In 1968 the Hills District Netball Association was born, although back then it was called women's basket ball. Run by President Mrs Margaret Waterman, the committee had the task of building the organisation from the ground up, something this dedicated group of volunteers did not shy away from.

The biggest issue at the time was the location of courts as they were forced to play on 20 courts spread across multiple locations. The committee lobbied Hornsby Council and 14 courts were included in the construction of Pennant Hills Sports Centre. Hills has forged an impressive path over the years. In 1975 it was the first to broadcast a game live on television, commentated by Barbara Wood and Jeanette Love—an impressive thumbs up to the local competition. Lights were installed on 14 of the courts in 1979, enabling the association to run night competitions. This is continued today, with the under 8 and under 9 competitions held on a Friday night.

In 1989 the construction of the administrative building saw the Hills District committee have a home. Hills has seen the rise of many representative players, most notably Catherine Cox who played more than 100 games for Australia. She first started at 11 years old at Hills District and I know there are many young girls who aspire to follow in her esteemed footsteps. In 2001 they officially opened the all-weather indoor court. It was here that I recently attended the official fiftieth birthday brunch. This brought together the dedicated Hills committee members past and present who have served the association for the last 50 years.

I will make mention of the life members who have given so much to netball and the community: Edna Wardrop, Marie Bowrey, the great Lyn Burgess, Ruth Binns, Anne Coulton, Bev Mann, Lisette Smith, Vicki Davis, a great lady and a great friend, and Lesley Milner. They have gone above and beyond for the organisation. I thank each of these remarkable ladies for their dedicated service not only to netball but also to the broader

community. The current committee is headed by president Jennie Thompson, who has done a remarkable job running the association and organising the fiftieth birthday celebrations. The committee includes vice president Ruth Bowman, treasurer Tracy McClenaghan, secretary Doug MacColl, and senior registrar the great Clare Ashpole, assisted by her sister Sally Knight.

Clare has been part of Thornleigh netball for close to 40 years. Last year I was pleased to award her and her husband, Roy, the Hornsby Community Service Award in recognition of their remarkable service to the community. Also on the committee is junior registrar Phillip Wheeler, senior umpire convenor Lisette Smith, junior umpire convenor Lisa Robertson, and night competition co-coordinator Fran Macdonald. I thank them for their service and for ensuring that everyone has a great time when they play at Hills netball. At the recent fiftieth birthday celebrations I was pleased to assist in presenting the volunteer long service awards to Lesley Milner and Lyn Burgess, who still remain heavily involved with the association. Edna Wardrop was on hand to cut the cake. Edna is the oldest surviving president for Hills.

I take this opportunity to thank every volunteer who has put in time and effort to ensure the success of this great association. I was pleased to do my bit to assist with sports grants in 2016 and 2017. This enabled the association to upgrade and resurface a number of its courts. It is important to the Hills that everyone gets a chance to be a part of the wonderful game of netball. The All Star Team is open to participants aged over eight years old who have an intellectual disability. They play on the indoor court on Friday nights and have a whole heap of fun.

Hills recently had some success at the 2018 State Age Championships. This is a competition between associations from all over the State. The Hills under 13 representative squad finished runners-up, losing just three out of 16 games. The team came seventh last year and coach Kim Hoskings and assistant coaches Gen Seed and Brooke Nichol were extremely proud of this recent result. Congratulations to Hills District Netball Association on 50 years of bringing netball to our community and providing a wonderful place for young people to grow and develop.

TRIBUTE TO MAUREEN PATCH

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (17:53): I bring to the attention of the House the incredible life of Mrs Maureen Patch, who, sadly, recently passed away. I will reflect on the extraordinary contribution she made to her country and her community. Maureen was born in 1941 in Mullumbimby and grew up in Coffs Harbour before packing up and moving to Sydney in 1969. Maureen was described as brave, tough and capable. She was ready for anything. A young midwife at Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital, the then Maureen Healy did not have far to travel to the Victoria Barracks in Paddington when she decided to enlist to nurse diggers in the Vietnam War. Maureen described her desire to enlist as a mix of wanting adventure and a different challenge and a need to help those in trouble.

As with the many Australians who have served overseas, Maureen was made of strong stuff and she was driven by a sense of duty. While Maureen had not always wanted to join the army she knew it would be a unique style of nursing that she would not experience anywhere else. Maureen enlisted and threw herself into her work, giving vital and often lifesaving support to the troops, while supporting other nurses. While in the army Maureen was one of 43 Australian Army nursing sisters who served alongside many other civilian nurses in South Vietnam tending to the wounded at civilian hospitals. The recognition and respect that Maureen had for her fellow serving nurses was second to none. By 1973 Maureen had met and married her husband, Daryl, and after three years in the army—one of which was served in Vietnam—Maureen retired from army nursing to support her husband and her growing family. Fifteen years later Maureen made the decision to return to nursing and she worked in civilian hospitals until her retirement in 2000.

Maureen Patch's incredible service was recognised in 2000 when she received the Chief of Army's Commendation for her service to nursing and the army. At the time, Maureen was one of only two civilians to earn such an award. Following her retirement Maureen did not stop caring for diggers or her community and became heavily involved in her local RSL Club in Queanbeyan. Her contribution to our local RSL will be forever remembered and appreciated. Maureen touched the hearts of many people in the Monaro and our community is a better place because of her. In 2011 Maureen's incredible role in the Vietnam War was officially recognised again when she led Wollongong's Anzac Day formalities. Maureen was the first woman to do this and she was incredibly proud of her role. Maureen used this opportunity to again advocate for the recognition of the role nurses played in the Vietnam War.

In Queanbeyan Maureen became a driving force behind the Mud Hat Day Club. The club is a way for elderly veterans to get together regularly. Maureen was passionate about caring for the elderly veterans in her community and was committed to regularly getting them out of their homes for enjoyable lunches or excursions. Maureen was dearly loved by her husband, Daryl, her daughters, Elizabeth and Noema, her son, Mathew, and

daughter-in-law Janelle, as well as grandson, William, and granddaughter, Alice. Maureen will be greatly missed by the broader Queanbeyan community and in particular all the connections and friends she made within the local RSL community. Sadly, Maureen Patch passed away on 15 May. She was surrounded by her loving family. Maureen would not have liked me to make a fuss but I am glad I have taken the time today to officially remember and recognise the extraordinary sacrifice she made for her country and the incredible impact she has made on our community.

EDUCATION WEEK

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (17:57): Parramatta is home to many outstanding public schools and Education Week is a time to recognise and celebrate the important contribution made by our dedicated and committed staff, teachers, students and school communities. This week I joined Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Minister for Education Rob Stokes at the new O'Connell Street Public School for the launch of Education Week, which was streamed live from Kiama Public School. What better place to launch the 2018 Education Week with its theme "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world" than the new O'Connell Street Public School. This newly refurbished school won the National Trust Heritage Award for Adaptive Re-use, combining our heritage and a state-of-the-art education facility. Currently home to Parramatta Public School, the students are thriving under the strong leadership of Principal Gail Charlier. I commend the school leaders, Srinidhi Srinivasan and Suman Katna Ravibabu, who were the co-emcees of this event.

A great example of collaboration in our public schools is the Ginko Writing Project. This project brings together students from Carlingford West Public School, Cumberland High School and James Ruse Agricultural High School. Ginko is a Japanese term used to describe a walk in nature to inspire poetry and creative writing. Renowned Australian author Dr Bernard Cohen was on hand to support students complete their works. I commend Jude Edwards from Cumberland High School for all her efforts, and principals Andrew Williamson, Mechel Pikoulas and Megan Connors. I also congratulate all of the Ginko Writing Project finalists. From Carlingford West Public School I commend Alexandra Kulesha, Grace Sung, Grant Cai, Halema Khan, Iris Wang, Olivia Kim, Sin Ying Li, Sophia Cheng, Zachary Ho, Zoya Sajid, Anagha Renduchintala and Shanuli Liyanage.

From Cumberland High School I congratulate Cooper Hall, Daniel Kim, Hannah Smedley, Jessica Choi, Sansita Verma. From James Ruse Agricultural High School I congratulate Jeffrey Wang, Oscar Dong, Sanbo Peng, Sayuni Wijayatunga, Selina Ma and Thomas Loo. In addition, I commend the students of Cumberland High School who have qualified in two of the six finalist teams in the Sydney Metro Challenge. I congratulate Ms Czislowksi and our two year 10 engineering teams, Team DDDAN—Danial Amin Rahmanlou, Dev Chopra, Dylan Lay and Alex Warnecke; and Team ARI—Adwithya Puri, Ronald Leung and Isaac Wu. I understand their submissions were outstanding. Both teams have qualified as two of the six finalist teams and will be presenting their innovations to a panel of judges in front of a live audience at the Sydney International Convention Centre on Thursday 9 August. Well done and best of luck to all the year 10 Metro Challenge teams.

As part of Education Week this week I was honoured to attend the Dundas Public School and experience inspiring performances from their junior and senior choirs and the school band. I was privileged to present the Wattle awards to many students in recognition of their outstanding achievements and success. From grades 1 and 2, I recognise Ashwin and Aurora from Green class, Raymond from Amber class, and Chloe from Scarlet class. From grades 3 and 4, I recognise Charlotte and Jeffrey from Magenta class, Jeremy and Chloe from Sapphire class, Zoe and Edward from Violet class, and Charlotte and Yena from Blue class. Finally, from grades 5 and 6, I recognise Isabella, Sanjith and Esther from Steel class, Shane from Turquoise class, Harry from Aqua class, and Ahrah from Indigo class. I also recognise acting principal Kristy Frame, who has done a wonderful job nurturing a cohesive school community, supported by dedicated and committed staff. Good schools have great leaders, enthusiastic staff and school communities.

Whilst I cannot recognise everyone today, I thank local principals Shannan Judge from Ermington West Public School, Kim Gould from Oatlands Public School, Angela Sparks from Parramatta East Public School, Kathryn Methven from Parramatta North Public School, Tony D'Amore from Rosehill Public School, John Carters from Rydalmere East Public School, Bek Zadow from Rydalmere Public School, Alan McGowen from Telopea Public School, David MacSporran from Yates Avenue Public School, Clare Kristensen from Melrose Park Public School, Lauretta Claus from Arthur Phillip High School, Gail Cluff from Macarthur Girls High School, and Dominique Splatt from Parramatta High School. Education Week is a time to recognise the many achievements and successes of our schools as they equip our children with skills for jobs of the future. It is also a time to reflect on the successes of many people who work hard to make our public schools outstanding places of excellence and learning.

MAMRE ROAD UPGRADE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (18:02): This evening I talk about the urgent and desperate need for an upgrade of Mamre Road, which extends through several electorates in Greater Western Sydney, including my electorate of Londonderry and the electorate of Mulgoa. Many of my constituents who live around St Mary's use Mamre Road to travel south, particularly for education. At several points this road is nothing short of a death trap. Local councillors on the Penrith Council, in particular my hardworking colleague Councillor Todd Carney, has been calling on the State and Federal governments to urgently upgrade this road. Bad accidents constantly occur around the St Clair area, which falls just outside my electorate of Londonderry. Todd Carney has made many representations to me about the importance of this upgrade. Constituents travelling south on Mamre Road have experienced firsthand the need for this upgrade. Recently I joined the shadow Minister for Roads Jodi McKay and Councillor Carney on site at St Clair to call on both levels of government to seriously consider this upgrade. State and Federal Ministers, in particular, must find a way to fix the death trap around St Clair.

It is very disappointing for the local community that apparently the only thing the local member, who is a Cabinet Minister, can do about this is to launch a petition against the Federal Government. There seems to be a pattern where Ministers launch petitions against their own government or their Liberal colleagues at the Federal level calling for some sort of an upgrade. I hope they are serious and not just engaging in politicking. The community and Councillor Carney seek a commitment to upgrade the road. One would think that if the local member is a Minister in the State Cabinet some money could be made available for this project.

The local community has made representations to me to urge the local member to lobby for that funding and to say, "Minister Pavey, we really need Mamre Road fixed." It is a little disingenuous to launch petitions against their own colleagues when they have the power to make it happen. What is the point in having a Government member if they cannot actually give commitments that will benefit their local communities? I will continue to join with my Labor colleagues on Penrith City Council to lobby for this upgrade for all the residents who live along Mamre Road. I have spoken many times in this Chamber about the exponential growth in Western Sydney. This is yet another disgraceful example of a lack of investment in infrastructure. The Government will wear it as an albatross around its neck because people are dying on Mamre Road. The Government continues to approve new housing developments, yet all the local member does is petition the Federal Government.

I call on the member for Mulgoa to lobby for money to fund the upgrade for the benefit of her constituents. I will continue to do all in my power to support the advocacy of Penrith City Council to get this upgrade done for the residents along that corridor—from St Marys all the way down past Kemps Creek. Mamre Road must be fixed. We cannot lose another life. I call on the Minister for Roads, the Premier and the member for Mulgoa to put the residents of Western Sydney first and fix this dangerous road once and for all.

DIGITAL SECURITY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:07): As our personal and professional lives become increasingly connected to the digital sphere, people should be confident in the privacy and security of their data. With this assurance, the public can use innovative technologies to enhance their lifestyles while industry further refines and invests in these technologies. These are issues of vital importance to many people in my electorate of Davidson. Both the public and private sectors should have strong codes of practice and excellent cybersecurity standards in place to protect them from internal and external threats. The potential public fallout from a sensitive data breach is huge.

In July the Singaporean Government faced a significant cyber attack on SingHealth, with hackers accessing and copying the personal information of 1.5 million people, including the Prime Minister, and outpatient medical data files of 160,000 people. In 2014 the United Kingdom Government's care.data digital health record scheme was quickly shut down after it was revealed that personal health data could be sold to insurance or pharmaceutical companies. Our Federal Government's new opt-out model of My Health Record has also raised serious concerns from various privacy and cybersecurity experts, including the Federal Acting Privacy Commissioner. Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt has listened to these concerns, recently amending the legislation so that police and government agencies will now require a court order or warrant to access data.

People who cancel their My Health Record will have their records promptly deleted, replacing the previous policy of keeping records for 30 years after the person's death for maintenance, audit or other lawful purposes. The opt-out period is also likely to be extended to November 2018. The New South Wales Government Digital Government Strategy aims to open up government data while continuing to protect confidential information. This goal will drive data-informed decision-making by government, industry, the research sector and the wider community, including those in my electorate of Davidson.

The Digital Government Strategy recommends the use of ethical hacker services to expose vulnerabilities and annual cyber event simulations to test response capacity. I also note the New South Wales Government Chief Information Security Officer, Dr Maria Milosavljevic, coordinates efforts to increase the ability of New South Wales to respond to and recover from whole-of-government threats and attacks. The Economist Intelligence Unit's Technological Readiness Ranking 2018-2022, ranked Australia equal first alongside Singapore and Sweden. Australia is second in the world in providing government services and information through the internet according to the 2018 UN E-Government Development Index. However, there appears to be a real gap between Australia's technological readiness and its ability to defend itself from cyber threats and attacks.

The March 2018 New South Wales Audit Office report, "Detecting and responding to cyber security incidents", which audited the New South Wales public sector on cyber incident monitoring, and internal and industry-wide communication, found limited sharing of information on incidents across agencies, and poor detection and response practices within agencies. According to the Audit Office Internal Controls and Governance audit, of 39 large agencies tabled in New South Wales Parliament in December 2017, 25 per cent of large agencies provided no training in cybersecurity awareness and have not identified staff most at risk of cyberattack.

The implementation of the New South Wales Digital Government Strategy will largely address these issues, but significant resource allocation is needed to continue pursuing optimal strategies. The 2018-19 budget has allocated \$20 million over four years to fund a new central whole-of-government cybersecurity function to better coordinate and improve existing activities across New South Wales government agencies. The New South Wales Government is also assisting local small businesses, including in Davidson, to increase their cybersecurity knowledge through a new \$30 million Skills for Business initiative. Staff can undertake free TAFE NSW qualification in subjects including cybersecurity, and digital and financial literacy.

Perceiving cybersecurity threats as business risks and not merely technical risks helps both the public and private sectors avoid the easy option of shifting blame to external information technology service providers. Organisations should take responsibility for data security and privacy by formulating holistic plans and procedures that anticipate and respond to security incidents. As government increasingly digitises government services, it will be an ongoing challenge to ensure that businesses and government agencies in New South Wales are properly guarded from cyber threats and attacks through strong cybersecurity protections and procedures.

KEMBLA GRANGE PRISON PROPOSAL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:12): Just over 24 hours ago when I was outside this House with the Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Minister for Corrections, I heard a life-changing announcement for my community. The Leader of the Opposition has officially pledged that if elected, a Labor Government will not build a prison in Kemplar Grange or in West Dapto. We will cancel the ridiculous plans for our community put forward by those opposite. A Labor Government will not build a prison in Dapto's backyard. For those in this who cannot grasp the importance of that announcement I will refresh their minds.

In April 2018 those opposite first announced that they were investigating a site in Kemplar Grange for the construction of a correctional facility. The site that this Government thoughtlessly chose just happens to be smack-bang in the middle of one of the fastest-growing residential areas in New South Wales. In the next 20 years West Dapto will be the home of more than 55,000 new residents. The site being proposed by those opposite sits directly across the road from a new housing development, a housing development where families like Ami and Stephen Beck, Britton Amon Bryant, Jessica and Alen Meza, Mary Marciano and Sonia Hussein will be building their dream homes. Thankfully those people have come together to form the Residents Against Dapto Jail committee.

The group formed shortly after the prison proposal was first announced. To their credit, members of the group have since been organising local residents, contacting local officials and government employees, and collecting signatures for their petition. They have given up an incredible amount of their time and energy, and it has paid off. With the help of the rest of the members of the Residents Against Dapto Jail group and the local community, they have collected more than 14,000 signatures for a petition, which I was honoured to table for a discussion in this House yesterday. Shamefully, despite the Government first announcing its prison proposal more than 120 days ago, my community has been kept completely in the dark. We still do not have any details about what the proposal is all about.

The faceless Minister for Corrections has been avoiding my community like a plague. It is time to admit that the proposal is hopeless. It has gone on long enough. Sadly, the members of the Residents Against Dapto Jail group have also had to endure being openly mocked, ridiculed and intimidated by the Government's own representative to the region of the Illawarra, the member for Kiama. From day one, the member for Kiama has refused to listen to the community and has greeted them with blatant contempt and disrespect. The mistreatment and bullying the group and its members has had to suffer at the hands of the Government throughout this process

is completely unacceptable. I want everybody in the community to know that Labor is listening and knows that West Dapto is one of the fastest growing residential areas in the State.

It is an inappropriate site for a prison. The site was ill thought out and thoughtlessly declared by the member for Kiama. It will cross the West Dapto Catholic Cemetery, which is situated on a floodplain and bushfire-prone land. A report has shown that the construction of a prison on the site would result in overall job losses, rather than job creation, the opposite of what the member for Kiama tells us. In the eyes of the community, the communication from the Government is not only inappropriate, but also an out and out lie. [*Time expired.*]

I seek a brief extension—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): There is no provision for extensions of time to private members' statements.

Ms ANNA WATSON: I am asking you to put it to—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): No, there are no provisions for extensions of time under the standing orders. I remind the member to observe the requirement that mobile phones be turned to silent when in the Chamber. As an atonement, I suggest that she give a substantial donation to the drought relief fundraiser, which is being held next week.

TRIBUTE TO COLIN SULLIVAN

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (18:17): I inform the House of the passing of an icon of Casino and the Richmond Valley. Colin "Col" Joseph Sullivan passed away in Casino on 29 June 2018. He was widely respected throughout the Richmond Valley and more broadly throughout the Northern Rivers. He was a friend of mine and many other people he touched across the region. One of his great friends was the member for Lismore and Deputy Speaker, Thomas George, who delivered the eulogy at Col's funeral. He has given me a copy so it can be recorded in *Hansard*. It states:

Colin Joseph Sullivan was born on the 18th July 1940, the second son of Percy William and Freda Mary Sullivan. Col had 5 siblings, Noel, Gwen, Patricia, Jimmy and Kevin. He was raised on a dairy farm at Stratheden and attended his primary school years at Stratheden Public School, either by walking, riding a bike or riding a horse every day the 4 kilometre and back. Col was good at most sports and at age 11 was selected to represent running in Sydney and came second in the state for his age. At age 12 he attended boarding school at Woodlawn in Lismore, representing the school in running, cricket and tennis. Upon leaving school he returned to the family farm, with a passion to become a builder, but a job was hard to find, so he settled into farm life. He became interested in pig farming and at 18 years of age was showing pigs at North Coast shows. One highlight he had was being invited to judge pigs at the Sydney Royal Easter show.

Col always had an interest in sport, playing tennis at Stratheden every Sunday and playing cricket, having been chosen to represent Casino in both these fields. At 18 he was selected in a New South Wales cricket team to play in a Brisbane competition, with a fond memory of scoring 76 not out at the Brisbane Gabba, only to be washed out by a severe storm. He thinks he was possibly robbed of a century. He was then selected to play for St George in Sydney but did not want to leave country life. At 21 he purchased a dairy farm at Bentley. Then 6 years after he married Dorothy Orr after meeting at a dance in Lismore. They lived at the Bentley farm till 1971. Having had 2 daughters, Gail and Janelle, they then sold Bentley and bought the family farm at Stratheden, as Col's father had suddenly passed away 4 years prior to this.

Col had 2 highlights in 1974: a son Geoffrey was born and his local government career had started as he was elected onto Tomki shire, making history as the fourth generation of the Sullivan family to hold this position. From there, Tomki shire amalgamated to Richmond River Shire Council, which then became part of Richmond Valley Council. Col was elected mayor in 1982-83, 1994-2000 and again in 2008-2012.

During his 42 years in local government, he held many positions both State and Federal. These positions were on:

- Shires Association of NSW
- Boundaries Commission of NSW
- Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils
- Northern Rivers Regional Development Board
- Northern Rivers Area Consultant committee
- Northern Rivers Electricity
- Richmond Valley Council Committees
- Rous Water Council
- Far North Coast Weeds

Highlights of his local government years he has said were:

- Opening of local bridges that were previously opened by his grandfather. His uncle presented him with scissors to cut the ribbon that his grandfather had previously used

- The development of the Casino Motorhome Village
- Casino's CBD beautification
- Casino's New Community Centre
- Australia Day Citizen of the Year

Col only ever missed 1 council meeting in his 42 years, and that's because he was in hospital. Col was proudly awarded an OAM for services to local government and community in 2004. During these years Col was also busy serving the community being a member of Casino Show Society since 1962 and president for 9 years. In 1981 he joined Casino Beef Week committee and became president in 1988 for a period of 10 years. He has always remained involved with beef week, when only 6 weeks ago he was cooking on the BBQs for the breakfast with the butchers, an event he loved and wouldn't miss. He has life membership to both Casino Beef Week and Casino Show Society. He has served on various P&C committees and local hall committees and was a member of Stratheden Tennis club for over 20 years.

After previously playing music around local halls, in 1973 Col joined a local band "The Masqueraders", being a very keen and talented drummer. They played at many local district halls in the Casino and Kyogle area for a number of years. Many a Dyraaba Hall New Year's Eve dance was enjoyed by all. Col and Dorothy formed many friendships during their time dedicating to the community, as Dorothy was always there doing her contribution. As we can see, a lot of these friends are present today. His children have fond memories of attending all these events during their childhoods. Col, Dorothy and children moved from Stratheden farm to Woodview in 1979, after Col took up building. A proud moment when his son Geoff joined the building industry at age 16 after leaving school. From Woodview they moved to Spring Grove, busy with his building and council commitments, they enjoyed their time living there.

In 2007 Col retired from building, enjoying a quieter lifestyle they moved into Casino. In 2016 Col retired from local government after 42 years' service. They moved to their current address and he enjoyed renovating the home inside and out with the help from family and friends. His kids thought he was mad doing the work but knew what he was like and no one was going to stop him. His life consisted of building something at all times, so it was fitting to him. He never sat still always having the next project happening. He even climbed on the roof at age 76 to pressure clean and climbed up ladders to paint when Dorothy wasn't home. His reason was "the neighbours were watching if anything happened". Dorothy was not impressed. He enjoyed his involvement with the Casino Village Men's Shed and recently the Drill Hall, developing more friendships there.

We should also mention his favourite watering hole, 'The Charcoal'. Many Friday night yarns were had with great mates. Hours before Col passed away this is where he was, happily having beers followed by a beloved scotch. The family are consoled knowing he went out doing what he loved. We now know that he will be up there enjoying a scotch with his parents, two sisters and his mates that have passed before him. Also we are sure it won't be long before he joins a committee and they elect him president up there. We, as a family take comfort in knowing Col has led a very fulfilling life with lots of friends and connections that he made along the way. We are a very proud family of all his achievements both public and personal. Cheers Col. Till we meet again.

WYONG TOWN CENTRE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:24): It is no wonder that Usain Bolt just signed to train with the Central Coast Mariners. One trip to the increasingly bustling new scene in the Wyong town centre would be enough to make anyone want to come to the Central Coast. For many years, the Wyong town centre played second fiddle to Tuggerah, as the previously bustling little town increasingly became a drive-through suburb. That was the fate of so many old town centres across the State as big shopping centres became the more convenient location for families to spend their money.

For many years, Wyong survived only because of the public service and council staff who worked in the town centre. Not a lot of people came to visit, and for a while there was not a long list of reasons they would. But in the past few years a wave of confidence has come into our little town. From large investment in the Wyong Race Club and Function Centre to the newly refurbished Gallery Precinct and Chapman Building, Wyong has gone from strength to strength as more small businesses take the risk and put their confidence in Wyong. One example is the new management at the Royal Hotel. Frank and Marney have been running the hotel for a little over a year and have refurbished the whole top floor, reviving the venue with new inn-style accommodation. In addition, a new series of sold-out shows has been a great success.

Another example is Glee Coffee Roasters in the refurbished Chapman Building on Hely Street. Having been there for several years, it has been a great anchor for the growth of Wyong and is one of the earliest examples of its urban renewal. It takes a lot of faith and a willingness to take a big risk to be among the first people to invest in starting or expanding a small business in an area like Wyong. I am immensely proud to be part of a community that has been so willing to do that. A recent large investment has revived a whole precinct and brought in several new businesses that are the talk of the town.

The Gallery Precinct, which Matt Lusted has supported, is a recently revitalised part of the town centre that boasts the already much-loved Duck Duck Moose cafe—one of my new spots to hang out—and Sirone's Pizza By The Metre as new additions. Even the council has invested in revitalising Wyong. The new Art House on the corner of Margaret Street and Anzac Avenue is a great asset to the town and is very popular with locals who can now come to Wyong and see a show. The Wyong Musical Theatre Company and the Options Theatre Company, along with Wyong Drama Group, have put on great shows at the Art House including the Options

disability production of *Grease*—one of my favourites—and the Wyong Musical Theatre Company's recent rendition of *Rock of Ages*. I also saw Wyong Drama Group's *Nonsense*, which was a very funny play.

Council and local businesses have invested in Wyong. They have put their confidence and money into our town, but there is something missing. Despite the current and previous New South Wales governments spending more than \$27 million on planning, the early stages of the Wyong town centre project have failed to begin. The Pacific Highway through Wyong is the worst bottleneck on the Central Coast, and the NRMA recognises it as such. The State Government needs to widen the road as it has planned and to incorporate the upgrades to Wyong train station that will open up the town centre and prepare Wyong for the future. The State Government is holding back a wave of private investment in Wyong. If it will not invest in our town, then how can it expect businesses to continue to do so?

I am immensely proud of how far Wyong has come in the past few years. I hope the State Government is able to see that and will put its promised money on the table and invest in Wyong to ease congestion, improve transport access and open up our town centre. Every business along the highway is asking when the work is going to start. It has been in the planning stages for well over a decade. We were told that the tender documents were signed in 2016 and ready to go out, but the project continues to be held up. I want the Government to get behind the small businesses and people who have put their hands in their pockets to make Wyong a thriving metropolis again.

I want the Government to fix the road so that people are not trapped, like they are every day of the week, in traffic jams stretching between one and five kilometres. You have to see it to believe it. In the mornings and afternoons people are trapped and unable to get where they need to go. They avoid Wyong because it is not an easy place to park in or drive to. Let us support those businesses in being successful by fixing the Pacific Highway at Wyong.

ORANGE PALLIATIVE CARE FACILITY

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (18:29): I will put on the record some facts surrounding my community's quest for a dedicated palliative care facility. A dedicated inpatient palliative care facility has been absent from the health services in Orange since the closure of the Orange Base Hospital in 2011, when services commenced at the Orange Health Service, where the planned palliative care space was relocated. The disappearance of the dedicated palliative care facility from Orange's health services sparked a movement to see the service reinstated. There was a groundswell of support for the return of a dedicated specialist palliative care facility staffed by specialist staff. Orange Push for Palliative commenced a petition, which sought 10,000 signatures from the community to have the issue debated in this place. Shortly after being elected to represent the people of Orange, I met with members of Orange Push for Palliative, who sought my support.

From that moment onwards, I supported their mission to have a dedicated palliative care facility for Orange reinstated. I have been steadfast in pursuing this matter on behalf of my community. I have lobbied relentlessly for a dedicated palliative care facility, and will continue to do so until the service is finally delivered. I submitted several representations to the Minister for Health. I have held meetings with the Chief Executive of the Western NSW Local Health District and the General Manager of the Orange Health Service. I conferred with medical practitioners, nurses and health industry representatives from a variety of government and non-government organisations. Through local media, I brought this issue to the forefront in my community. Following a short yet productive media campaign, Orange Push for Palliative cultivated the remaining signatures for its petition.

I tabled the petition and—perhaps by coincidence—the Government announced a series of palliative care roundtable discussions across the State, including in Orange. In the absence of an invitation, I requested to attend the Orange roundtable discussions to convey the needs of my community for a dedicated palliative care facility. Orange Push for Palliative's petition was debated in this place; however, contributions to that debate by the Minister for Health and the Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health failed to demonstrate support for the dedicated palliative care facility, which more than half the adult population of Orange had called for. I have met continued resistance from the Government throughout my advocacy on this and other issues. However, I am charged with the responsibility of representing the Orange electorate, and I have on each occasion applied measurable force in return, on behalf of my constituents, whenever appropriate.

In addition to the litany of representations I have made and meetings I have held, I have submitted to the health Minister seven written questions specific to palliative care, and I have spoken in this place about palliative care on five separate occasions. I am determined to advance this issue so I formed a palliative care working group, composed of 23 individuals representing various stakeholder groups and those who support the facility. Through the initiative and effort of the Orange Palliative Working Group, which I chair, the opportunity presented for a public-private palliative care model to be housed and operated at the Dudley Private Hospital in Orange. On offer

was a dedicated four-bed palliative care facility that would also allow credentialed general practitioners to care for their patients. Finally, this was a realistic solution presented in the absence of action by the Government up to that point in time.

Following several meetings with Ramsay Health, I co-hosted a meeting with former Chief Executive Officer of the Dudley Private Hospital, Prue Buist, for the general practitioners of Orange. The meeting yielded unique support from general practitioners from each practice in Orange. Twenty-one respected local general practitioners expressed their support for the public-private model proposed by Ramsay Health—a model that has proven to work effectively for the community of Wagga Wagga at the Calvary Hospital. Shortly after, the health Minister visited Orange, where he was approached by passionate members of the Orange Push for Palliative team seeking his support for the proposed public-private concept at the Dudley hospital. The health Minister gave an undertaking to respond within a calendar month, which, disappointingly, he failed to do.

I believe the Minister knows this proposal is realistic, has great merit and would deliver the dedicated palliative care facility that the people of Orange have long been demanding. In the absence of his promised response, I requested to meet with the Minister for Health. That meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. Shortly after making this appointment, I became aware of the Minister's media release announcing support for the initiative and inviting expressions of interest for a 12-month trial. It required persistent effort by the passionate members of the Palliative Care Working Group, but finally the Minister for Health and his Government appear to have relented, and are now demonstrating support for what we have been calling for repeatedly over the past two years.

I have been accused by some of making this issue political. My response is that if the Government had listened to the 10,000 people of Orange who signed that petition—people whom I represent in this place—then this issue would not have required a political response. My responsibility, first and foremost, is to the people of my electorate, and I will do what it takes for them to be heard and to get what they deserve. I make no apology for that.

SEVEN HILLS ELECTORATE RETIREMENT VILLAGES

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:34): The electorate of Seven Hills offers many programs for seniors and has some fantastic retirement villages. Tonight I will inform the House of some of the recent visits by Ministers from the Federal and State governments to my electorate and of how many community organisations help our local seniors. Recently it was my pleasure to host Premier Gladys Berejiklian at a seniors' afternoon tea with Winston Hills locals at The Willows Retirement Village. The Winston Heights Public School band played for the Premier and the gathered seniors on that occasion. Their professionalism was outstanding and I commend them to the House.

The Minister for Ageing, the Hon. Tanya Davies, MP, and I hosted an event for tech savvy seniors at the Max Webber Library, Blacktown, where representatives from Telstra and Transport for NSW lead training modules on the "Introduction to transport apps (NSW)". It was great to see the many local seniors at the event become familiar with the digital products, which they can use to benefit their daily lives. Recently the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, the Hon. Matt Kean, MP, held a Fair Trading seminar at the Adventist Retirement Village, Kings Langley. This highly publicised event, which focused on seniors and their Fair Trading rights, was well attended and very successful.

A few months ago the Federal Minister for Small and Family Business, the Workplace and Deregulation, the Hon. Craig Laundy, MP, the Federal Minister for Revenue and Financial Services, the Hon. Kelly O'Dwyer, MP, and the State Minister for Finance, Services and Property, the Hon. Victor Dominello, MP, attended the launch of the Easy to do Business program of Service NSW at the Anglicare Woodberry Village, Winston Hills. For quite some time the Ministers talked to the seniors and answered questions ranging from what was happening in the small business space to questions on superannuation and property.

A few weeks ago I spoke with a group of seniors at the Constitution Hill Retirement Village, Northmead, about the New South Wales Government's cost of living measures. In particular, I spoke about the \$8.8 million increase in the budget to support seniors with everyday living costs, elder abuse services and digital connection. The New South Wales Government is also expanding the Liveable Communities Grants Program to ensure that organisations can further deliver innovative approaches in engaging with the elderly. Many of them were happy to know that this Government has also increased funding by \$1 million to expand the New South Wales Seniors Card program and the successful Tech Savvy Seniors program.

On the whole those visits to seniors in the various retirement villages across my electorate were very well received. Other organisations in Seven Hills also offer activities for local seniors, such as Karabi Community and Development Services—for example, it offers tai chi, knitting and crochet classes, English classes, computer classes, a lunch club and popular Friday bus trips to sightseeing venues and/or shopping centres. The Karabi

centres in my electorate also offer other activities, including craft interests and living skills programs. They do an incredible job. I commend the dedication of the Karabi Community Development Services staff in supporting the Seven Hills community. In conclusion, the large group of active and engaged seniors in my electorate of Seven Hills contribute to its vibrancy and I commend them to the House.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (18:39): A conversation is not only a simple act but also can be powerful enough to help save a life. When we talk with others about issues that affect us we realise that we are not alone, our individual struggles are shared by many, there are people who care and, more importantly, there are people who can help. Since being elected I have been committed to facilitating more opportunities to converse about mental health. Increasing our conversations about mental health can break down stigma, raise greater awareness, inspire action to boost resourcing and improve mental health services for those affected, in addition to their families and carers. Conversations about mental health need to become normalised everyday conversations, similar to how we discuss heart disease, asthma, diabetes and other health ailments. Why? Because mental health matters.

I was pleased to help continue the important conversation on mental health at my second Mental Health Matters forum. The focus of this year's forum, held in June, was body image and eating disorders, highlighting this often complex and deadly mental illness. More than 70 people braved a cold evening to hear from a range of informative speakers, including one brave woman, Diane McClaughlin, who shared her own lived experience with an eating disorder. The evening was also an opportunity to connect with a range of local health service providers, to ask questions and to share information. The success of the evening followed on from my inaugural Mental Health Matters forum in 2017 on young people and anxiety—a catalyst for more opportunities to raise awareness of mental health.

I was proud to facilitate my latest forum in partnership with local mental health advocate Sandra McDonald, One Door Mental Health, Beautiful Minds, headspace Campbelltown, South West Sydney Local Health District and the Butterfly Foundation for Eating Disorders. This collaborative approach highlights the complexity of eating disorders and the importance of health practitioners working together and taking an individualised approach to treatment and recovery. More than one million Australians live with an eating disorder, with concerns over body image ranked in the top three for young people. Anorexia has the highest death rate of all psychiatric illness. Yet people with eating disorders can make a full recovery if they get proper treatment.

Eating disorders are complex mental health illnesses that require a collaborative approach amongst all those who care, and high support. Research suggests that as many as 97 per cent of people with an eating disorder have at least one other psychiatric diagnosis, the most common being depression and anxiety including obsessive compulsive disorder and social anxiety disorder. Earlier this year, the Butterfly Foundation highlighted the crippling cost of eating disorders. A staggering one in three people goes into debt to treat their eating disorder. Affordability and accessibility are barriers to seeking treatment. That must change to help those in need.

The impact of negative or unrealistic body image on a person's wellbeing cannot be overlooked, especially the increased access to various marketing channels. Promoting positive body image is a vital prevention initiative against eating disorders, and such programs must be made a priority. It is important to remember that everyone's experience of an eating disorder is different. The Butterfly Foundation recently ran an online campaign asking people to share their experience of eating disorders. Here is what some of them had to say:

My eating disorder has nothing to do with wanting to be thin.

Just because we might look a normal weight doesn't mean we don't have an eating disorder.

I am at war with myself every day.

Regardless of your weight, you are worthy of help.

Pause for a moment and consider that 4 per cent of the Australian population is experiencing an eating disorder and that the estimated socio-economic cost of eating disorders in Australia is \$67.7 billion. We must act now to provide more services to improve access and treatment options and early intervention programs and to promote more naturally realistic positive body images. Greater awareness of mental health in our community will help to dispel some of the myths that exist about eating disorders. Greater awareness leads not only to a more accepting community but also improves prevention and early identification, and it encourages people to seek help. That is why the conversation around mental health must continue in our local communities and across the country. The more voices are heard the more doors will open and the more lives we can save. Together, let us continue the conversation, because mental health matters.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:43): As of today, 100 per cent of New South Wales is suffering the effects of drought. Today I acknowledge the tireless, smart and adaptable farmers across the Cootamundra electorate. New South Wales has experienced the driest lead-in to winter and spring since 1982 and the forecasts point to a dry run to the end of the year. Across the Cootamundra electorate, comparatively we are faring well. The majority of the electorate is drought affected rather than in drought. This is not in any way to belittle the challenges faced by many farming families and enterprises. In the central west and around West Wyalong, many farmers are handfeeding if not de-stocking and in the Riverina, while it is a lot greener, we have missed out on a winter crop for the first time in decades. As this drought has grown in intensity, I have met with primary producers from Nangus right up to Kikoira.

Conditions and the feedback of those on the land have varied. Some have been able to leverage the support of the Farm Innovation Fund and the boom in prices to prepare for these conditions. One local farmer used this loan to modernise and air-condition his shearing sheds, which now attract seasonal shearing contractors like bees to honey thanks to improved working conditions. This is the kind of preparedness the Liberal-Nationals Government loves to see and aims to facilitate. While on-farm approaches to this drought vary, a common thread is the exceptional level of preparedness, professionalism and innovation among my electorate's primary producers.

However, some, through cruel twists of circumstance, often no fault of their own, are struggling. Times are incredibly tough. There is no denying these conditions are serious and they are unprecedented. We cannot make it rain but we will stand by our farmers. Last week the New South Wales Government announced a \$500 million NSW Drought Emergency Relief Package to help farmers manage the effects of the current drought. This drought is an ever-evolving beast and this Government has always said its support would evolve with the conditions. I thank primary industries Minister Niall Blair and his team for their hard work in ensuring our response is the right one, that is, flexible, applicable to the whole of the State and, importantly, responsive to what we are hearing from farmers on the ground.

This drought relief package responds to the compounding effects of drought and the impact on people, business and communities—the fodder and water shortage, dwindling domestic water supplies, mental health issues, animal welfare and the costs associated with farming that mount regardless of the season. It builds on the existing NSW Government Drought Strategy, taking the overall drought response to \$1.1 billion. I take this opportunity today to acknowledge the groundswell of community support statewide but particularly at a local level for our farming communities. The Christian Women's Association, Vinnies, the media and dedicated charities have, from a point of compassion, reached out with a helping hand. Over the weekend, I was double slime dunked at Burcher, past West Wyalong, to raise money along with my electorate's news journalists, councillors and local legends for the Bust the Dust Community fun day in Burcher. The day raised almost \$6,000 for much-loved local charities Riverina Bluebell and Country Hope.

Our farmers deserve all the help they can get and it is humbling to see so many locals taking action and donating to this extremely worthy cause. This support, whether financial or simply the hand of friendship, is priceless. My colleagues and I are constantly out on the road talking to farmers about how we can help. I have travelled in excess of 70,000 kilometres doing just that, with no plans of stopping any time soon. We know this is far from over. We are facing a dry season ahead and the message remains the same. If we need to do more, we will do more. The incredibly difficult situation we find ourselves in is over and above politics. I am proud of the resilience of Cootamundra's farmers, and I am proud to be part of a government that listens to our primary producers and responds to their needs in a sustainable, targeted and effective way.

SOUTH COAST TRAIN SERVICES

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (18:48): This evening I am delighted to have my colleague and friend, the member for Wollongong, in the House as I talk about the issue of overcrowding on the South Coast train line. It is an issue on which the member for Wollongong and I have been campaigning for a long time. It is an issue that continues to be of significant concern to the people within the community I represent. The electorate of Keira is in the northern suburbs of the Illawarra and feeds a large portion of the labour market into the City of Sydney. Every day tens of thousands of people travel the 80-odd kilometres up the hill. The big problem they continue to face is that the public transport service is simply not good enough.

People travelling on trains are sitting in toilet areas and in the middle of the vestibules. Elderly people are standing for long periods of time. The member for Wollongong and I speak to these people every day and we are frustrated because the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure refuses to have the courtesy to spend an hour and a half to walk in their shoes. This commute does not take 20 or 30 minutes, which is the commute for many in the Sydney metropolitan area. For most people in my electorate it takes in excess of 80 minutes, and for many

of them it is at the end of a long day that has started in the early hours of the morning. Their employment requires them to work a long way from home.

These commuters are not asking for a lot, but when elderly people travelling on the 3.24 p.m. train from Central station have to get there at 3.00 p.m. or 3.10 p.m. just to secure a seat there is a problem with our public transport system. Tonight I again ask and invite the Minister to get on the train and experience firsthand the concerns of the men and women who travel on this service every day, the people who have to stand for sustained periods—not for 20, 30, 40 or 50 minutes but for well in excess of an hour. In this way, he will see for himself firsthand what they are going through. The Minister needs to prioritise available carriages so that additional carriages are allocated to this rail line. The member for Wollongong and I will not stop campaigning on this issue. We will continue to reflect the great concerns of those who are forced to commute every day from our communities.

These people are not asking for a luxury service or a taxi service. They are just asking for the right to have a seat on a service that will take many of them about an hour and a half to get from Central station to a suburb within our electorates. I have written to the Minister about this issue well in excess of a thousand times over the past seven years. This issue needs to be addressed before the additional carriages come on line. People within the Sydney Basin may have to stand for 15 or 20 minutes—yes, they may—but if that means providing people who have to stand for an hour and a half with a seat then that is fair. That is what parliaments are about and that is what the department's allocation of resources is meant to address. Tonight I again invite the Minister to get on the 3.24 p.m. train from Central station and take the time to experience firsthand the difficulties the men and women of the Illawarra community face every day on a service that is simply not good enough.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:53): I have campaigned to double the number of train services and I certainly support securing additional carriages for the 3.24 p.m. service from Central station. Unfortunately, when the current train configurations were purchased by the former Labor Government, they were purchased as four-carriage train sets. An extra two carriages cannot just be added on. I ask the Opposition to reconsider its position on the South West Metro and what that does to Sydenham junction. This issue is not only about train carriages but also about the management of the network. What is pathetic about the member for Wollongong is that Labor had no foresight to purchase train carriages that could be better configured. The Opposition knows that we have invested more than \$1 billion in new train carriages. Opposition members are calling for more train carriages because they are know they are coming and they had nothing to do with it.

DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUBS

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (18:55): I take this opportunity to highlight some milestones for local sport in the Drummoyne electorate. Over the past few weeks, two sports clubs have celebrated significant anniversaries. The Briars Sports Club will commemorate 100 years and the Drummoyne Power will celebrate its twentieth anniversary. It was a great privilege to attend the Briars' 100-year anniversary gala dinner last Saturday night with some 600 members of the community. I was joined by the Federal member for Reid, Minister Craig Laundy, the member for Strathfield, and mayors and councillors from Canada Bay council and Burwood council. It was a real treat to hear some of the local history, some of which I will share this evening.

The history of the Briars Sports club is a special story. Briars began with humble beginnings on 7 August 1918. Eleven young Burwood boys aged between nine to 13 years met in an Appian Way backyard chook pen at Bob Clark's place to start a club. After some discussion, they decided on the name Briars in recognition of their first president, Jack, because it was the name of Jack's house. In the early years, like most boys of the era, sport was everything to them. They organised and took part in athletics, swimming carnivals. They played cricket in Bob Clark's backyard and they played rugby in local paddocks in the area.

In 1922 the Briars played in their first competitive cricket competition. In 1923 they entered a local rugby competition. The club's original premises in George Street, Burwood, was leased in 1929. It was finally purchased in 1950 following the club's incorporation. It is worth noting that 157 members of the Briars club served in the armed forces during World War II. Sixteen of them paid the ultimate sacrifice and never returned home. In the post-war years the club's membership expanded as well as its activities and major sports. In 1946, hockey was introduced and, in 1956, squash was introduced. A few decades later, women's and junior sports were introduced.

The Briars' journey has not been smooth sailing. At times it has been difficult but the members have rallied together to ensure that their beloved club would prosper. In 2005 the Briars club amalgamated with Greenlees Park Bowling Club. Initially it became Briars@Greenlees but it is now called Briars Sports. Briars Sports can be found in Ian Parade opposite Massey Park Golf Course, of which I have been a proud member for more than 20 years. It is better known to the locals as Royal Massey Park. The combined club has seen a rapid expansion of sporting membership and the club premises is now located in my electorate in Concord.

Today the club boasts extensive licensed club facilities that cater for the whole family. It also offers amateur sporting opportunities in six major sports for men, women and youths from under eight to 88-plus years. The sports include lawn bowls, senior and junior netball, rugby, hockey, cricket and squash. There are more than 1,950 active sporting members. Approximately 750 of them are senior members and a staggering 1,200 are junior members. Local sports build a sense of friendship and camaraderie in our community, which was evident at the gala dinner on the weekend. I take this opportunity to congratulate Briars Sports Club on achieving a magnificent milestone of 100 sporting seasons and on its promotion of local support and active wellbeing in the area. I pay tribute to the current club chairman, Brett Howle, a local De La Salle boy, the executive board and its members.

Further, I acknowledge Drummoyne Power AFL Club, which will shortly celebrate its twentieth year. The growing success of the club is thanks to the volunteers and board members, who have passionately made the club what it is today. I am advised that more than 500 kids are enrolled and a record 105 girls are playing AFL this season. It is a fantastic achievement and it is reassuring to see the club grow with every premiership year. During my time in Parliament, with the rapid growth of junior AFL in the local community, I have been involved in seeking State Government funding for St Lukes Oval. I reiterate that I wish both clubs the best in the future. They both have a unique history of which they should be proud. These clubs would not be in the thriving position that they are today without the hard work and dedication of the volunteers, the club board and also its members. I express my gratitude in this Chamber to these volunteers.

KIAMA ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (19:00): The Kiama electorate is renowned for its stunning environment that is so special to locals. We know we live in the best part of the world and we are intent on keeping it that way. Since becoming the local member of Parliament I have fought hard against overdevelopment, opposed coal seam gas mining in water catchments, opposed inappropriate developments on the southern boundary of Gerringong and most recently ruled out inappropriate overdevelopment of Blowhole Point. But sometimes it is the little things that can make a big difference. I am fortunate to live in a community where people take protecting our environment seriously. Today I want to use the time of this House to acknowledge two ordinary blokes who have come up with a fantastic new initiative that I know will be embraced.

I know many members of this House love their coffee, and I certainly fit into that category, which is why I am really excited by this unique Kiama story. Last week Green Caffein launched its swap and go coffee cup business at Cantik coffee shop in north Kiama. More than 40 cafes are participating in the scheme that allows coffee customers to purchase their takeaway coffee in a Green Caffein cup, which can be later returned unwashed to any participating cafe. I have no doubt that the numbers of participating cafes will certainly rise and I acknowledge the fact they recently met with my friend and colleague the member for Wollongong.

Green Caffein's co-founders and chief executive officers, Martin Brooks and Damien Clarke, aim to save one million takeaway cups from landfill by December 2019. The local Kiama-based company was founded earlier this year and is currently participating in the University of Wollongong business incubator program, iAccelerate. As members of the House would be aware, I was pleased and proud to secure more than \$16 million from the New South Wales Government to help establish iAccelerate, which is the only business incubator and accelerator based in the Southern Hemisphere. Indeed, it is businesses like Green Caffein that prove this project was not a cost to government but an investment in the future of our community.

The way Green Caffein works is that coffee drinkers sign up to Green Caffein for a monthly subscription fee of \$4.99—the cost of a cup of coffee. The scheme is managed via a phone app that tracks the cup returns. Cafes can participate in the scheme free of charge; all they have to do is wash the cup. Green Caffein has received financial support from Kiama Municipal Council and hopes to work with Wollongong and Shellharbour councils and the University of Wollongong. More subscribers mean more cups and more cafes. This will lead to fewer cups going into landfill, which impact on our local environment. Every year an estimated 500 billion disposable cups are thrown away worldwide after a single use. That is one million cups every hour and the number is growing. More than 1.2 billion disposable coffee cups are used each year in Australia, 90 per cent of which end up in landfill or litter the streets.

Cups and lids are also finding their way into our oceans where they break down and form tiny pieces called microplastics. These are tragically ingested by millions of beautiful marine animals and cause millions to die every year. Paper coffee cups are lined with plastic known as liquid paperboard to make the cups waterproof. Although the paper outside will break down, the plastic inner lining will not. To recycle these cups they must be sent to a specialist recycling facility that is costly and has cost implications. Consequently only 8 per cent are recycled. This equates to 2.7 million coffee cups in Australia going to landfill each and every day. The Kiama community is highly environmentally conscious and is determined to reduce waste, where possible, reusing items rather than simply throwing them away. Indeed, the participation of Kiama High School in the ABC's *War on*

Waste is an example of how deeply our community is involved in sustainable living and sensible environmental practice.

I was told by Damien and Martin that their wonderful message will be backed up by a strong social media campaign for swap and go coffee, congratulatory messages from the app for milestones reached as the number of disposable cups saved from landfill grows, and the kudos of drinking coffee from a recognisable cup that demonstrates strong environmental credentials. Cafes can participate in the scheme free of charge and receive a monthly data analytics report on their customers' purchasing patterns. But this scheme has positive benefits for local councils, too, as the scheme will directly reduce street litter.

Nearly a quarter of the litter in our great State comes from disposable coffee cups and food containers. We can and we must do better. This initiative will increase community pride and benefit tourism communities like mine. Waste collection and landfill charges will also be reduced and the local area will reduce its carbon footprint. I am absolutely thrilled with this initiative. I congratulate both Damien and Martin, and all their supporters on it. When I was last with them I was reminded of how important it is to do the big things as well as the little things. We do not inherit this planet from our parents: we borrow it from our children. This is a great Kiama initiative and I congratulate its founders.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (19:05): I commend the member for Kiama for a great private member's statement and for his wonderful work on the South Coast on the war on waste. I am glad that the member for Kiama is not only lean but also green. He has brought an important and great initiative to the attention of this House. Re-using as many items as we possibly can as often as we can goes a long way. Many small footsteps make one big footstep. I congratulate the member for Kiama on this great initiative, which I hope many other members will adopt in their communities.

The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:07 until

Thursday 8 August 2018 at 10:00.