



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 20 September 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 20 September 2018

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Documents

ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 35 of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, I table the report of the Advocate for Children and Young People for the year ended 30 June 2018. I order that the report be printed.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 142 of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016, I table the following reports of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission:

- (1) "Operation Baltra", dated September 2018.
- (2) "Operation Tambora", dated September 2018.

I order that the reports be printed.

[Notices of motions given.]

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Newcastle has had his say.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Those opposite had their say as well.

The SPEAKER: The member will leave the Chamber before he is removed.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: I ask for a bit of equality.

The SPEAKER: When the member gives a notice of a motion such as that he gets what he deserves.

Bills

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (REVIEW) 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) (10:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Review) Bill 2018, which will implement a comprehensive package of reforms to ensure that tenants can make a house their home and will increase protections for the most vulnerable tenants. The bill provides greater protections for victims of domestic violence and improves the ability of tenants to make a rented property into a home by introducing minimum standards for properties and making it easier for tenants to obtain repairs. It gives security to tenants by restricting rent increases for periodic leases to once every 12 months and includes set fees for breaking a fixed-term lease and introduces easier and more robust dispute resolution processes. These commonsense reforms strike a balance between the interests of tenants and the interests of landlords. Tenants are entitled to suitable housing in reasonable repair and

they have reasonable rights to enjoy their homes and landlords have a right to ensure that their investment is protected and can generate reasonable returns.

Currently around one-third of New South Wales householders rent their homes. In the past renters were primarily young people who rented for only a short time. However, people now are renting for longer and families and older people are making up a larger portion of tenants. The reforms in the bill acknowledge the increasing importance of modern and relevant residential tenancies laws and the need to ensure that an increasing number of tenants are able to live in properly maintained premises and that they can make the premises into a genuine home. The bill arose out of the statutory review of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010, which was completed in 2016 following an extensive public consultation process. After further consideration and consultation with key stakeholder groups over the past 12 months, a number of additional reforms have been included in the bill which I am confident will improve the operation of the Act.

The specific reforms in the bill will strengthen protection for victims of domestic violence, allowing them to immediately leave a rental property to escape violence without being penalised. Domestic violence is a scourge on our communities and the New South Wales Government is serious about taking action on this issue. Currently section 100 (1) (d) of the Residential Tenancies Act provides that a tenant may terminate a tenancy with 14 days notice on the basis that a current or former co-tenant or occupant is prohibited by a final apprehended violence order from accessing the premises. Women and domestic violence advocates argue that most victims of domestic violence never obtain a final apprehended violence order. The process of obtaining such an order can take many months and many women are fearful of seeking an order as this typically causes the violence to escalate. It is also difficult to obtain an order excluding a perpetrator from premises if the person has no other housing to go to.

The bill expands the types of evidence of domestic violence that a victim can provide to include a provisional interim or final domestic violence order, a certificate of conviction for a domestic violence offence, a family law injunction or a declaration by a medical practitioner that a tenant is a victim of domestic violence. A declaration by a medical practitioner has been included in response to concerns that many victims of domestic violence will not contact police or engage with the justice system and so will not be able to obtain any form of domestic violence order, family law injunction or conviction certificate. This is particularly true for disadvantaged women, Aboriginal women and new immigrants who may have a distrust of police or fear that the perpetrator may be imprisoned and their families and communities broken up.

Medical practitioners are a trusted profession within the community and the option of a declaration from a medical practitioner provides victims with another avenue to leave a rented home and find safety as soon as possible. The declaration will be a standard form prescribed by the regulations. It will be an offence for a tenant to provide a false or misleading declaration or for the medical practitioner to make a false or misleading declaration. Importantly, the reforms allow the victim to terminate their tenancy immediately rather than being liable for another 14 days of rent. When escaping violence and urgently seeking new housing for themselves and their children, not being liable to pay double rent can make the difference between staying and being able to leave and find a safe home.

A perpetrator of domestic violence should be solely liable for any damage to a rental property caused by their conduct. Under section 54, victims of domestic violence will not be held liable for any damage caused to the rental property by the perpetrator during the commission of a domestic violence offence. Other co-tenants who are not the perpetrator will also be exempted from liability for any damage. To further protect victims of domestic violence and ensure that their ability to rent another property is not negatively affected, new section 213A will prohibit landlords and agents from listing a tenant on a tenancy database if they terminated their tenancy by means of a domestic violence termination notice. This protection is vital to enable victims to find new housing. The immediate departure of a tenant in circumstances of domestic violence may leave remaining co-tenants in a difficult situation, including being financially unable to continue the tenancy.

New section 105E will enable a remaining co-tenant to apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to end their tenancy if another co-tenant leaves after giving a domestic violence termination notice. This ensures that remaining co-tenants can also leave if they can no longer afford to stay in the property. Remaining co-tenants will be protected from undue financial burden by new section 105D, which provides a period of two weeks during which co-tenants will be responsible only for their share of the rent and will not be required to cover the departing tenant's share. This will provide co-tenants with the opportunity to consider their options and advertise for a new tenant or apply to the tribunal to end the tenancy. To ensure the new domestic violence provisions are working effectively, section 105I will require the provisions to be subject to review after three years. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate these reforms and ensure they are working as intended or identify any improvements that can be made.

I now turn to some of the other key reforms in this bill. At a minimum, a tenant should be able to live in a rental property that is safe and secure and does not endanger their health. The bill introduces basic minimum

standards that all residential rental properties in New South Wales will be required to meet. This reform will provide greater certainty to both tenants and landlords by clarifying seven essential features a rental property must have as part of being fit for habitation. All rental properties must have adequate ventilation; have adequate natural light or artificial lighting in every room, other than those used only for storage or a garage; be supplied with electricity or gas and have adequate outlets for lighting, heating and appliances; have adequate plumbing and drainage; be connected to a water supply service or infrastructure that can supply hot and cold water for drinking, ablution and cleaning activities; contain bathroom facilities, including toilet and washing facilities that allow privacy for the user; and be structurally sound.

In order to meet the definition of "structurally sound", the floors, ceilings, walls and supporting structures, including foundations, doors, windows, roof, stairs, balconies, balustrades and railings, of a residential rental property must be in a reasonable state of repair and not be liable to collapse because they are rotted or defective; in the case of the roof, ceilings and windows not allow water penetration into the premises; and in the case of the floors, ceilings, walls and supporting structures not be subject to significant dampness. For the vast majority of landlords who maintain their properties, the introduction of these basic minimum standards will not have a practical impact. For landlords with properties that have fallen into disrepair or which lack basic, working amenities, these reforms will provide an opportunity to carry out the necessary repairs to ensure tenants are not living in substandard conditions. The Government will consult with stakeholders about the commencement of the new standards to ensure landlords have the necessary time to make any repairs or modifications.

In 2017-18 NSW Fair Trading received close to 3,000 tenancy complaints. Around 40 per cent of those tenancy complaints related to repairs and maintenance of a rental property. Under new sections 65A, 65B, 65C and 65D, a faster, more efficient dispute resolution service will be available to tenants and landlords to deal with repairs, maintenance and damage-related disputes that arise during the tenancy. Under the new provisions, tenants and landlords will be able to request Fair Trading investigate and assess claims relating to damage or repairs to the rental property. Tenants will be able to apply to the secretary to investigate whether the landlord has breached their general obligation under section 63 of the Act to provide and maintain the residential premises in a reasonable state of repair. Landlords will be able to apply to the secretary to investigate whether a tenant has intentionally or negligently caused or permitted damage to the premises and without reasonable excuse failed to repair it. Both the tenant and landlord will have an opportunity to respond to any claims by the other party and provide any evidence they may have about the issue.

If the secretary is satisfied that the landlord has breached their obligation or the tenant has caused damage and failed to repair it, the secretary may issue a rectification order. The rectification order will set out the steps that will need to be taken by either the tenant or landlord in order to ensure that the repairs specified in the order are carried out, rectified or completed by a required date. If a tenant or landlord does not agree with the rectification order, they can apply for an internal review of the decision by the secretary to make such an order or make an application to the tribunal to have the matter heard. If either party makes an application to the tribunal about the matter that gave rise to the rectification order at any time during the process, the Fair Trading investigation into the dispute will immediately cease. If a rectification order has already been issued, the rectification order will be suspended and any tribunal decision will determine the outcome of the dispute. The bill allows for the regulations to provide for guidelines relating to reasonable times within which repairs and maintenance should be carried out and the tribunal is to take these into account in relation to repair orders.

The bill contains specific provisions in relation to the repair and maintenance of smoke alarms. These provisions arose out of a recommendation from the Coroner's inquest into the death of Miata Jibba. The fire which caused Miata's death occurred in a rental property that did not have a functioning smoke alarm. Tenants need to be assured that necessary repairs and maintenance of smoke alarms will be addressed urgently to help ensure they are working when they are most needed. The bill clarifies that landlords are obliged to carry out repairs to and maintenance of smoke alarms and includes regulation-making powers so that further detail relating to the timing of repairs, reimbursement and any types of repairs that the tenant can carry out can be prescribed following further consultation. With more tenants renting for longer periods, it is important that tenants are able to make the rented premises into a genuine home. While a tenant needs the landlord's consent to make alterations to a property, the bill will allow regulations to prescribe minor alterations about which it would be unreasonable for the landlord to withhold consent. The regulations may also provide that in some circumstances the landlord's consent may be conditional on the alteration only being carried out by a qualified person.

I will now briefly outline some of the other provisions in the bill. Under the current Act, rent increases during fixed term agreements of two years or more are limited to once every 12 months. New section 41 (1A) will provide the same certainty for tenants on periodic leases by limiting rent increases to once every 12 months. For a fixed term agreement of less than two years, section 41 (1B) will remove duplication by removing the 60-day notice of rent increase where the date of increase has already been written into the residential tenancy agreement. The bill introduces information disclosure provisions to ensure there is clarity and transparency between tenants

and landlords before the residential tenancy agreement is signed. Under amendments to section 26, where the rented premises are within a strata scheme, landlords or their agents will be required to give the tenant a copy of the strata by-laws. If a strata renewal committee for the strata scheme has been established under the Strata Schemes Development Act 2015, this fact will also need to be disclosed to the tenant.

New sections 98A and 103A allow the tenant to terminate a tenancy if the landlord's information disclosure obligations are not complied with. New section 100 (1) (b1) will enable a tenant to terminate a tenancy if the premises have been listed on the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation register or were listed on the register prior to the tenancy agreement being entered into. To make landlords more aware of their responsibilities and to help reduce disputes over routine repairs and maintenance, new section 31A introduces an obligation for landlords to acknowledge that they have read and understood the contents of a prescribed information statement which sets out their rights and obligations under the legislation. The bill includes minor changes to modernise and clarify provisions relating to the provision of condition reports and rent receipts and the separate metering of premises. Amendments to section 29 allow for only one copy of the condition report to be given to the tenant if it is given electronically and for the tenant to provide the completed report to the landlord within seven days of taking possession of the premises rather than within the current seven days of receiving the report. Amendments to section 36 allow rent receipts to be provided electronically.

In relation to metering, an amended definition of "separate metering" will ensure that tenants are separately charged for utilities only where the amount used by the tenant can be accurately measured. If a property is not separately metered, landlords can factor utility costs into the rent. The bill will also clarify rights and responsibilities in circumstances where a landlord wishes to take photos or videos of the interior of a property for the purposes of advertising it for sale or rent. The landlord will be able to access the premises once in the 28-day period before beginning to market the property or the termination of the agreement if the tenant is given reasonable notice and a reasonable opportunity to move their possessions. Under new section 55A, landlords and agents will be prohibited from publishing photographs or visual recordings of the interior of the rental property in which a tenant's possessions are visible without the written consent of the tenant.

Although new section 55A (2) provides that a tenant must not unreasonably withhold consent, new section 55A (3) ensures that it will not be considered unreasonable for a tenant to withhold consent if they have been or are in circumstances of domestic violence. This will help to ensure the safety and security of victims who have left a violent relationship and are concerned about being identified or located through photos or videos of their possessions. The bill makes a number of amendments to provisions governing the termination of tenancy agreements. A minor amendment will treat terminations by a landlord on the basis of failure to pay utility charges in the same way as terminations on the basis of failure to pay rent. Amendments to provisions governing a tenant's liability when terminating a fixed term tenancy agreement before the end of the fixed term introduce more certainty and fairness into the calculation of the amount owing. Under the current provisions, a tenant can be required to either pay a four- or six-week break fee or compensate the landlord for the costs involved in the early termination. It is not clear whether the landlord or tenant chooses the method that applies, and calculating the compensation owed to the landlord can be difficult and lead to disputes. In amendments to section 107, the bill introduces a new mandatory break lease formula for leases of up to three years. The formula uses a sliding scale whereby the break fee amount payable to the landlord reduces in line with the reduction in proportion of the fixed term that is left to run.

In other amendments to termination provisions, the bill provides that in the case of ongoing tenancies that are provided in return for or as part as the remuneration for a person's employment the notice period for termination is either the period agreed to in the tenancy agreement or 28 days, whichever is the longer. This is a reduction in the 90-day notice period that usually applies to termination of periodic agreements and recognises that, particularly in the case of workers who live and work on a farm, the employer will be unable to replace an employee until the premises they have occupied are vacant and available for the new employee to move into.

The final amendment I will mention will broaden the purposes for which money in the Rental Bond Interest Account can be used to include general consumer protection purposes. This will provide flexibility in relation to the use of these funds. In closing, I thank the many individuals and organisations that joined the New South Wales Government to help develop this important legislation at various stages of the reform process. I am confident that the reforms contained in this bill will improve the operation of tenancy laws in New South Wales to the benefit of landlords, tenants and the community as a whole. I commend this bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

*Budget***BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2018-2019****Debate resumed from 16 August 2018.**

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (10:31): I make a contribution to this take-note debate to address the recent State budget announcements and its many benefits for the people of my electorate. At the outset I acknowledge Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and his team for their hard work on this outstanding State budget. The 2018-19 State budget is one of fiscal responsibility and discipline. On the back of our economic track record, we were able to invest in the families and communities of this State. This Government does not just talk about surpluses and it certainly does not promise them without intending to deliver the desired outcomes. Last year's budget surplus stands at \$3.9 billion, with surpluses averaging \$1.6 billion projected for each year over the next four years. This strong economic foundation will enable us to give back to local communities and enable them to be confident in their financial investments.

We can say with assurance that we will continue to deliver surpluses because we know what a good Liberal-Nationals budget looks like. Life under crippling budget deficits is the result of poor economic management and leads to avoidable stress, which members will recall happened under Labor. However, in the present economic climate we know, and the voters know, that only a Liberal-Nationals Government can follow through with its priorities to deliver for the people of New South Wales. And we are making it happen. When the Treasurer handed down this budget on 19 June 2018 he mentioned that social outcomes and strong financial management are two sides of the same coin, and we cannot have one without the other. That is why we will again be seeing record capital investment over the next four years: \$87.2 billion will be spent on infrastructure—the largest spend in this nation; and \$8 billion will be spent on health infrastructure, with new facilities, upgrades and redevelopments. That is excellent news for the residents of my electorate.

I take this opportunity to inform the House about some of the numerous wins in this budget for my local community. In the area of health the Government aims to provide world-class health care to the people of New South Wales. This budget invests in frontline services, neonatal care and mental health treatment in the city and the bush. What excites me the most are the benefits that this record \$8 billion investment will have for the people of the St George area. Once in January and twice in June this year I visited St George Hospital to tour the birthing and delivery suite. I was escorted by Professor Chapman, Doctor Henry and Associate Professor Karantanis.

We discussed the need for the expansion and relocation of the birthing unit. My most recent visit was with the Premier to announce the eagerly awaited funding injection to make the project a reality and to offer a solution to the current hurdles faced by hospital staff. The current delivery suite was opened in 1992 and it has not been upgraded or refurbished in more than 25 years. In the delivery suite there are only six delivery rooms, which service more than 2,500 births per year. It is also the tertiary referral centre for high-risk pregnancies for Sutherland Hospital and often accepts transfers from the Illawarra region.

The problem is that the population surrounding the St George Hospital, both in the St George area and the Sutherland shire, has now outgrown the number of available delivery rooms. Consequently, the delivery suite has to sometimes divert its patients to other hospitals. That is not acceptable. It has led to much discontent amongst women who come to the delivery suite only to get turned away to another hospital. Additionally, women sometimes need induction of labour if they have serious conditions affecting the health of their babies. Such women may have their induction unexpectedly delayed by up to 24 hours because of a sudden overload at the delivery suite. That is not good enough but this budget will be able to remedy that.

In addition to this, the new acute services building has led to a relocation of the operating theatres. This has resulted in further distancing and isolation of the delivery suite from surgical intervention in the case of emergency caesarean sections. Women have to be trolleyed vast distances through corridors in public access halls and up lifts to finally get to the operating theatre lobby. The extra minutes required to race to theatre could have dire consequences for mothers and their babies. However, there is a simple solution, and only a Liberal-Nationals Government can deliver it. We have listened to the needs of the community and allocated the funding in the 2018-2019 State budget.

It was announced just a few weeks ago that the New South Wales Government has committed \$11.5 million to expand and upgrade the birthing suite and refurbish the existing operating theatres at St George Hospital. This funding has provided solutions to all the obstacles that the facility, medical staff and expectant mothers are facing. The upgrade will involve relocating the delivery suite to the site of the old intensive care unit, which is currently located next to the operating theatres. This will permit a 30 per cent expansion of services for women in labour. The medical professionals at St George Hospital see this as a long-term solution and a great win

for the local community. The new delivery unit will be built to include eight state-of-the-art birthing units and two assessment rooms. I commend my side of the Chamber for addressing the need for such an urgent upgrade, which will assist the mothers of southern Sydney with more immediate and safer services.

I am advised that at the recent medical staff council meeting there was overwhelming support by the medical staff of all departments for the facility's expansion and relocation. The feedback I have received since the funding was announced has been communicated with heartfelt gratitude. Since being elected in 2011 this Government has invested more than \$353 million in the redevelopment of St George Hospital. This redevelopment has included a new emergency department, a nine-storey acute services building with more nurses and beds, making the completion of stage 2; 108 car spaces added to the Grey Street car park; \$1.5 million for upgrades to the cancer care centre; a brand-new ambulance superstation at Kogarah with modern, purpose-built facilities; and more than \$145,000 to refurbish the St George Hospital hydrotherapy pool.

This Government has a track record of investing in local hospitals after 16 years of Labor's neglect. I want to ensure that St George Hospital continues to exceed health facility standards and that it meets the demands of the local population. We have done so much already but there is always more to do. I am thrilled that this Government has secured funding for stage 2.5 of my local hospital's redevelopment to be able to expand and relocate the birthing unit to a more appropriate location with the state-of-the-art facilities and equipment that it deserves. With planning in full swing, the redevelopment of the birthing unit is expected to be completed by next year. I acknowledge and thank everyone in the community who has voiced their concerns and shared their personal experiences with the delivery unit at St George Hospital. Together with the expertise of the medical staff, the community support and the budget funding, I am proud to be delivering the much-needed upgrade to the birthing unit at St George Hospital.

It is clear that our Government values families and we hold firmly to the belief that every couple should have the best possible start to parenthood. That is why, in addition to the upgrade of the St George Hospital, local families in my electorate and across New South Wales will also benefit from the new New South Wales Baby Bundle. This statewide optional pack of practical items is available to support new parents and, of course, their newborn. It is the little things that make the experience of new parenthood—and I was there only a couple of years ago—so special.

It is the small details that are often overlooked that make this journey less stressful and allow families to spend more time together. The Baby Bundle of essential everyday items—a baby-safe sleeping bag; nappies, which you need a lot of; wipes, which you need tons of; a blanket; and educational material for parents—is a gift in a time of joy but also of sudden change. With the majority of this year's budget expenditure being invested in health, I am pleased that there has been such a focus on supporting new parents. This Government ensures that future generations are equipped with opportunities and the best possible start to life.

I now turn to the area of education. One of the most crucial tools of a child's development and socialisation is education. The education cluster delivers and regulates education services including childhood education, the care sector and the primary and secondary school sector. In 2018-2019, the education cluster will spend over \$17.3 billion across this network of services. This includes a record \$6 billion over four years to deliver more than 170 new and upgraded schools. In addition to this, \$160 million will be spent in the next financial year on school maintenance.

Business interrupted.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I welcome visitors from the Young Women's Leadership Program to the gallery of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly.

Bills

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (SHORT-TERM RENTAL ACCOMMODATION) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Tamara Smith, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (10:43): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to bring before the House the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Short-term Rental Accommodation) Bill 2018. I welcome the students in the visitors gallery and hope they have a great day visiting the oldest Parliament in the country. This bill delivers on The Greens' commitment to ensuring that local communities have a say in issues and legislation that affect them. I note my colleague the member for Balmain is present in the House. He is a strong advocate, as is my colleague Ms Jenny Leong, the member for Newtown, standing up for communities, whether it is in the context of the compulsory acquisition of people's homes or about retaining public land for public use. The Greens have a proud record in standing up for communities that are not commodities. As the member for Ballina, I am dedicated to our local community and retaining the sense of connectivity amongst people in our towns and villages, the sense of community and connectivity with other communities in the northern rivers, and the sense of community and connectivity that is at the heart of the deep regional identity we have.

I have stood proudly with our community time and again to stand up for our way of life, to stand up for our share of the Sydney coffers, to stave off inappropriate development and to stand for development that serves our community and serves that end of connectivity and sustainable economic growth—not unlike my great-great-grandparents in the northern rivers, the cane farmers on the Hegarty side and the dairy farmers on the Hoffman side, who rallied with their community to get their sugar and dairy out of the region with the first North Coast rail line between Murwillumbah, Byron Bay and Lismore in 1894 and Grafton in 1905; and not unlike my great-grandparents Dave and Annie Hegarty, active members of the South Lismore Progress Society, who championed for the homeless and unemployed through the Great Depression.

I know my forebears would agree with me that we are a community, not a commodity. We are a place of natural wonder that attracts 2.2 million tourists a year and we benefit from the economic prosperity that this brings. But we are first and foremost a community of people living in a place of natural wonder, who work, live and play and raise our families and volunteer in our communities. I stand in this place today to say that we face a crisis in retaining that sense of community if the Liberal-Nationals Government does not allow local councils like Byron Shire Council to regulate holiday letting.

We have a uniqueness in Byron shire in particular that the Liberal-Nationals Government does not seem to grasp and that The Nationals on the North Coast may grasp but do not care about. That uniqueness is the ratio of tourist visitors to residents, let alone the ratio of tourist visitors to ratepayers. The member for Barwon may love to have the problem of too many tourists visiting Broken Hill. The member for Lakemba may love to see Airbnb burgeoning in the communities in his electorate. But in my electorate, for residents in towns like Byron Bay and Brunswick Heads, unfettered holiday letting is destroying our sense of identity and community and handing our towns and villages over to property investors and the big end of town.

This is a simple bill that proposes that councils be allowed to set the maximum number of days for short-term rental accommodation in their local government area without development consent, rather than the 180 to 365 days proposed by recent government legislation. Local councils are governed by democratically elected representatives of their community. Why not trust them to work with their own communities to establish what is right for that community? If holiday letting is welcome 365 days a year, then let the council decide that. If a council wants to limit that because of a loss of community, as is happening across the world, then it should be allowed to do that. This bill will give flexibility to those local government areas where short-term holiday accommodation is welcomed and encouraged by and for tourism, and to those areas like Byron Bay where unfettered holiday letting is killing community.

Other local government areas where this is a problem include the Blue Mountains, the Snowy River Shire Council, Bega Valley Shire Council, Cessnock City Council and the Shoalhaven and Gosford councils. In 2014 there was an inquiry in which my colleague the member for Balmain participated. None of its recommendations appear to have any relevance in this term of Government. Long-term secure rental accommodation is at a crisis point in so many communities in New South Wales. This has been exacerbated by unregulated short-term holiday letting. The more short-term holiday rental accommodation there is in a popular visitor destination, the fewer affordable, stable and long-term tenancies there are likely to be for residents. It is really not that surprising. Whilst most residents accept the impacts of living in a tourism town, including the pressures of crowding and increased traffic, it is unacceptable when their neighbourhoods are disrupted and they lose their amenity.

There are some crucial points about this controversial issue. Tourism and business zones are where commercial activities have been deemed appropriate, but residential zones are defined to provide areas for community to flourish. With the sharing economy, the Stayz economy, or whatever people want to call it, it is a conflation of traditional residential zones with commercial zones in towns and villages. Residential zones are about the establishment of a permanent community by creating neighbourhoods where people know who lives next door and along their street. For city folk that may not seem so relevant, but I can assure them that in my community people do not necessarily lock their doors. They know their neighbours and they take their bins in for

them when they see them left out. They talk over the fence about local issues or the weather and make a point of keeping up with each other's lives and children and what is going on.

Permanent residents are the lifeblood of our community. They provide social and cultural capital. They are the parents who serve on the parents and citizens association and coach the soccer teams. They form our volunteer base for the Rural Fire Service, Marine Rescue, Meals on Wheels, Surf Life Saving, State Emergency Service, school canteen, and the list goes on. Volunteers also provide many community services supporting our aged, homeless, young and other vulnerable groups. It is residents who have protected and preserved what is precious in communities such as Byron Bay. So many good folk before me have cared enough about the world and the beauty of the North Coast that they have conserved and protected what we all now love about towns like Byron Bay. It is what has made it the international icon that it is.

How crazily ironic is it that now unfettered tourism and a two-stroke accommodation economy being foisted on our community by this Government are destroying the amenity of locals and the very communities that built the place? The actual reason that people come to towns like Byron Bay is at stake. The position often put by sharing economy platforms and advocates is that it helps locals financially and provides a local perspective and experience for visitors. I am here to tell the House that this is not the case in the shire of Byron Bay in particular. Some properties advertise a room or two for letting within a house in Byron shire, which allows for the spirit of the sharing economy—the mum and dad doing something on the side. But the letting out of entire houses on a permanent basis creates real issues for the community.

According to AirDNA, an online Airbnb data analysis company, 76 per cent of the total 1,108 active rentals in the Byron Bay local government area—which is not a lot, by the way—are being let out as entire houses on Airbnb. That means 76 per cent of the rental stock is being let out as entire houses on Airbnb. Only 24 per cent are private rooms in houses. That is against the purpose of residential zoning, which is defined to protect residential amenity and encourage a sense of community and neighbourhood. Currently, 51 per cent of houses on the sharing platform are available to rent full-time, that is, they are available to rent on Airbnb more than six months of the year. That means those properties are not available for permanent residents either for home ownership or rental, which equates to approximately 5,000 people not being able to access housing in Byron shire.

We find ourselves in a perfect storm. The letting of entire houses is like having mini motels in residential areas. They are tourism establishments previously prohibited under planning laws and are a commercial use of a residential dwelling. One Airbnb host has earned an impressive \$3.7 million from 40 properties in Byron Bay, placing them as one of the top Airbnb earners in the country. This is also about shifting costs and real costs. Byron Shire Council collects funds to offset the costs of providing services for community and businesses. Residential rates are lower than commercial rates as residents are recognised as a great source of value beyond just revenue. Conversely, tourists are a source of value to business but are a cost to council and communities in terms of wear and tear on public facilities, roads, parks and waste services. All of those are council's responsibility and ratepayer costs. No wonder Airbnb tries hard to defend its right to operate. It is a lucrative multinational business with no costs or return of fees to local councils.

In contrast, bed and breakfasts, which also provide rooms to visitors, are required to submit a development application and neighbours have the right to make submissions about the development. They can have their say. Compliant accommodation providers also pay significant development contribution fees and they pay increased council rates for the operation of the commercial use. Those offset the inconvenience to communities through money for infrastructure and wear and tear on amenities. What do communities like ours get to offset the impact of 2.2 million visitors each year who contribute neither to the social capital nor the cost of maintaining our towns, particularly when there are no commercial rates and no developer contributions? That is what we are facing with unfettered holiday letting.

Then there is the true cost of living next to a holiday let. A dear friend of mine many years ago sold her property in Sydney and made the sea change after buying her dream home in Byron Bay. It is a humble home, not a multimillion dollar mansion or anything like that, but one she was certainly able to afford in Byron Bay. She is a local volunteer, she swims with the swimming club and she is an upstanding member of the community. She is living next door to a multimillion dollar holiday letting establishment that different people frequent sometimes every day, and there is certainly always a new mob next door each weekend. It would be no exaggeration to say that it has ruined her life. For two years she has basically done nothing except try to find someone who is responsible who will care and listen about her situation. She is facing the prospect of just selling and getting out. Since being elected I have heard that story over and over again. That is why Byron Shire Council asked this Government if it could please set a limit of 90 days. Those were the recommendations from the inquiry held in this Parliament. They were about creating precincts and allowing councils to have minimum days for holiday letting before compliance was required because the costs are so large.

It is not as though there are no big profiteers in all of this, but the profiteers are not people like my friend Donna. As I said, 75 per cent of the home share economy in Byron shire is whole houses. With the cost of buying houses in Byron Bay comparable to the eastern suburbs of Sydney, it is not mum-and-dad investors buying them. It is high-end property investors who may never visit the area except once a year as a tax rort, or who may never spend a penny in any local business, cafe or restaurant. In terms of social and financial capital, a permanent resident in the same property value adds exponentially to the broader community and financially over time.

Next comes the issue of unaffordable housing. Housing stress is a real thing for my city colleagues. Housing stress in Byron shire is outrageous. Statistically it is almost the same as Balmain. The impact of the Liberal-Nationals open slather approach to holiday letting reduces the availability of housing stock for sale or rent. It really is not rocket science. It decreases housing availability. Short-term letting is a short-term activity without any of the real costs of operating a business. It is an attractive investment, with some owners also taking advantage of negative gearing and capital gains tax exemptions. We have heard in the media lately that the Australian Taxation Office is looking at that very carefully.

Negative gearing and capital gains tax exemptions—which were introduced to incentivise property investment to increase rental stock, not tourism properties—are now being manipulated and abused for short-term profit by a few. The outcome and impacts are far from the intent of their introduction. As I said, the Australian Taxation Office is reviewing and auditing the so-called share economy to assess whether those who use tax incentives are compliant with Australian tax laws. The reality is that the permanent use of entire residential dwellings for Airbnb and other such platforms comes at a great cost to residents and to councils. This law is needed to ensure councils that are negatively impacted by the overuse of short-term rental accommodation can put in place limits on the number of days a residential property is allowed to be let on sharing platforms. What is the consequence if the Government and the Opposition support my bill? The sky will not fall. It is simply a handful of councils that are facing this perfect storm.

The bill could help to ensure the return of vibrant local communities and neighbourhoods in affected areas. My community cannot afford to be a test case for the next 12 months. We need real community consultation to be conducted before introducing changes or allowing unfettered disruption. It is not a good idea for the Government to allow unregulated short-term holiday letting, let property owners have open slather and then review it in 12 months because a lot can happen in 12 months—and we have a State election in just six months. In 2014 General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3 published its report on tourism in local communities, which acknowledged the role that short-term holiday letting plays in communities for good and for ill. Its response to concerns by areas affected by the issue was summarised as follows:

The Committee acknowledges that many communities rely on the practice of short term holiday letting to meet accommodation demands, provide a source of income for owners and provide economic support to towns. Indeed in many areas holiday rental is a vital part of the local economy and any restriction on holiday rental would seriously impact local business.

However, the Committee is cognizant of the fact that holiday letting in some areas has led to issues and disturbances caused by anti-social behaviour, resulting in significant distress for many residents.

This was back in 2014. The report continued:

We also note the concerns raised by some inquiry participants regarding the impact on communities from a lack of permanent residents and the unfair competition concerns raised by businesses.

Various suggestions have been made which aim to address these issues, such as establishing holiday letting precincts, requiring development approval, development of a statewide government policy or industry self-regulation.

It is a shame that our local councils are unable to explore the very recommendations of this place. The Liberal-Nationals Government's approach to holiday letting in 2018 has made a mockery of the 2014 inquiry. We see the experience overseas. Limiting the number of days that a property is able to be rented out on Airbnb or on any other sharing platform is not a new concept but we are always behind the times. The practice has been in place in various countries and cities overseas and it has worked to reduce the numbers of residences available on sharing platforms in housing stress areas. In New York state it is against the law to rent out an entire apartment for less than a month at a time, and under new city laws Airbnb will be required to hand over the names, addresses and other information about hosts to a special enforcement office that will monitor adherence to State laws.

Business interrupted.

Committees

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

Reference

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: By leave: I move:

That:

- (1) Clause (2) (a) of the resolution of 28 May 2015 appointing the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters be amended to read as follows:
 - "(a) The following electoral laws:
 - (i) Electoral Act 2017 (Other than Part 3);
 - (ii) Electoral Funding Act 2018; and
 - (iii) those provisions of the Constitution Act 1902 that relate to the procedures for, and conduct of, elections for members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council (other than sections 27, 28 and 28A)."
- (2) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council of the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council to pass a similar resolution.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): In accordance with section 142 of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016, I table the report of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled "Operation Corwen", dated September 2018. I order that the report be printed.

Bills

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

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 21 June 2018.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (11:04): The Government does not support the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018 introduced by the member for Balmain on 21 June 2018. I make five key points. First, the Government strongly opposes and condemns misconduct by public officials in office. Nothing excuses a public official acting in a way that constitutes a breach of the duties of their office. Public officials occupy positions of public trust. All powers held in respect of a public office are derived from, belong to and may only be exercised for and on behalf of the people. We hold our positions and the authority that these confer not for our own benefit but for the benefit of the public whom, ultimately, we serve.

That is why the Government is committed to empowering the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] by providing record funding so that it can investigate, expose and prevent corruption in New South Wales. The New South Wales Government has also implemented all 35 of the bipartisan parliamentary committee recommendations to reform the ICAC—reforms consistent with the independent 2015 review of the ICAC's jurisdiction and powers. We have expanded the ICAC's jurisdiction so that it can now investigate any alleged breach of electoral and campaign financing laws. Our reforms also preserved the actions of operations Spicer and Credo, ensuring that any possible breaches that were already under investigation by the ICAC can continue and be finalised.

My second point is that the existing New South Wales common law offence carries a maximum penalty that is at large. That is effectively a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. One of the reasons for this is that there are no isolated victims of crime arising from corruption, since harm is done to the community as a whole. The principles that are of particular relevance for offences of wilful misconduct in public office were summarised by His Honour Justice Robert Beech-Jones in *R v Obeid (No. 12)* [2016] NSWSC 1815 at [83]-[86]. They are:

- (a) The duties of Ministers are onerous and departures are to be dealt with strictly [paragraph 83];
- (b) The real damage is not measured by material loss to the State or gain to the offender; the real harm is the damage to the institutions of government and public confidence in them [paragraph 84];
- (c) General deterrence and denunciation are to be given more weight than other sentencing considerations for offences of this nature [paragraph 85]; and
- (d) Prior good character is of less weight for offences of this nature [paragraph 86]. In 2017 former Labor Minister Ian Macdonald was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment after being found guilty of two counts of wilful misconduct in public office arising from corruptly issuing a mining licence in the course of his office as Minister for Mineral Resources. In her remarks, which lasted for more than three hours, the sentencing judge said that Macdonald had been "devious",

engaging in a "desperate attempt to justify the unjustifiable" and "sought to cloak his misconduct" with a "misplaced sense of entitlement".

The sentencing judge, Her Honour Justice Christine Adamson, said:

The verdicts indicated that the jury was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt of the following matters:

Mr Macdonald was a public official who acted in the course of or in connection with his public office as Minister of Mineral Resources when he granted consent to Doyles Creek Mining Pty Ltd (Doyles Creek Mining) on 21 August 2008 to apply for an exploration licence and when he granted the Exploration Licence No. 7270 (the Licence) on 15 December 2008. When he granted the consent and the licence, Mr Macdonald was substantially motivated by the desire to confer a benefit on Mr Maitland and Doyles Creek Mining and was not motivated to any significant degree by the object of furthering the public interest. He knew either that he was obliged not to use his position in that way or that it was possible that he was not to use his position in that way, but chose to do so anyway. He granted consent and the licence without reasonable cause or justification. His conduct in granting consent and granting the licence to Doyles Creek Mining was serious and merited criminal punishment having regard to his responsibilities as a Minister and the nature and extent of his departure from the public objects which those responsibilities served.

The verdicts indicated that the jury was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that Mr Maitland intentionally encouraged and assisted Mr Macdonald to commit the two principal offences, knowing that Mr Macdonald was wilfully misconducting himself in public office and intending that Mr Macdonald do so.

The verdicts also indicated that the jury was satisfied that, on the basis of what Mr Maitland knew at the time of Mr Macdonald's wrongdoing, Mr Macdonald's conduct merited criminal punishment.

In her sentencing remarks Justice Adamson also made the following observations:

The offence of wilful misconduct in public office is a common law offence as the Parliament of NSW has not, to date, chosen to include it in the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) or any other statute.

One consequence of its being a common law offence is that there is no maximum penalty, either for the principal offence or the offence of accessory before the fact.

MacDonald's head sentence for the existing common law offence is three years longer than would be possible for a single offence under the bill introduced by the member for Balmain, which has a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment. In this respect, the member's bill would dilute existing penalties and weaken corruption law in New South Wales. My third point is that in his second reading speech the member of Balmain does not appear to have identified any gap in the current law. If a stakeholder were to identify a gap within the existing offence framework, the Government would look to address that gap. However, in the absence of a consultation process, it is not clear that the member's bill would do anything other than restrict the scope of the existing offences—which are broad—and water down penalties. Judgments in Australia's highest courts reflect the efficacy of New South Wales' existing common law offence. Public officials who abuse and misuse their power are being sentenced and their convictions upheld.

Courts are applying and upholding New South Wales' prosecutions. We have seen the successful prosecutions of union official John Maitland, Ian Macdonald and, of course, Eddie Obeid. How can we forget the successful prosecution of Mr Obeid for misusing his position as an elected member of Parliament to attempt to influence Government policy for his family's own financial gain? In September 2017 the New South Wales Court of Criminal Appeal dismissed an appeal by Mr Obeid, emphasising that it was inconceivable that a politician of 16 years standing, who had been a Minister in a Labor Government for four years, did not know that his duty was to serve the public interest and not his own, or his family's, pecuniary interests. This March the High Court dismissed Mr Obeid's application for special leave to appeal his prosecution. In 2019 Messrs Obeid and Macdonald will face court again on unrelated charges of conspiring to engage in wilful misconduct.

My fourth point is that there has apparently been an absence of consultation with key stakeholders. The bill has not been the subject of a public consultation process and I am unaware of any other consultation undertaken in developing this bill. The Government seeks to consult closely with key stakeholders on options for reform. This ensures that, where we do codify common law offences, it is done after drawing on the knowledge of experts in the field. Stakeholders that should be consulted on a bill such as this include the NSW Police Force, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the New South Wales Bar Association and the Law Society of New South Wales. Consultation of that kind would examine in depth how to codify an offence appropriately, to ensure that it would not inadvertently narrow or weaken the offence.

My fifth and final point is that the bill appears to lack consideration of key elements that would probably have been picked up had there been a thorough consultation process with legal stakeholders. The offence of misconduct in public office is a wideranging common law offence covering a wide range of behaviour from minor acts by petty officials to substantial breaches of the public trust vested by Parliament in a Minister of the Crown. It includes conduct such as nepotism, favouritism, wilful neglect of duty and use of information gained in public office for private benefit. It is important that any codification process does not unduly narrow the scope of this existing common law offence. The bill fails to include key elements that a thorough consultation process would

have considered. In suggesting a finite list of offences, the bill fails to consider matters such as: reckless indifference offences, aggravated offences, the accounting of profits, compensation to the State or to any innocent third party for any benefits gained, the interaction of the codified offences with existing common law offences, and the unwinding of any agreements obtained by official misconduct. The bill addresses only some elements of the offence of misconduct in public office in isolation.

To conclude, the Government is intent upon ensuring that those who abuse and misuse their power are brought to justice, with strong penalties for corruption. Codification of the longstanding and wide-reaching common law offence of misconduct in public office is a complex matter that requires considerable care and consultation. The worst outcome would be to narrow the existing common law offence and to limit the existing penalties available. The bill, no doubt noble in aim, has not had the benefit of considered consultation with key stakeholders who would be implementing the offence. It does not reflect the scope and depth of work required to codify a common law offence. As a result, the bill has the effect of watering down the existing penalties available under the common law offence. It does not serve the best interests of our community and the Government therefore does not support the bill.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I welcome our guests to the Legislative Assembly public gallery this morning. I hope you enjoy your day in the New South Wales Parliament.

Bills

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

Second Reading Debate

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (11:16): I lead for Labor in debate on the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018. The Labor Opposition will vote for the bill on the second reading. If the bill were to succeed on the second reading, we would move amendments to increase the penalties referred to in the bill. The object of the bill is to prohibit various forms of misconduct in or in relation to public office. They include current and former public officials misusing information obtained in an official capacity, public officials engaging in official conduct or exercising influence for dishonest purposes, public officials acting in matters in which they have a pecuniary interest, the bribing of public officials, public officials accepting bribes, conspiring to dishonestly influence a public official, conspiring to dishonestly obtain a benefit from a public authority, and conspiring to dishonestly cause a loss or risk of loss to a public authority.

As the member for Balmain pointed out in his second reading speech, it is true that there have been many law-and-order frenzies in the past three decades in this State and many additions to the statute books. Funnily enough, none of them seem to have dealt with misconduct in public office. There is one obvious criticism of the bill—that is, it replicates existing provisions. For that reason, section 223 says no-one can be convicted of both an offence under existing part 4A and under the offences in the bill. That may well be right, but that has not stopped us introducing a lot of other criminal offences for the past three decades. It is an extraordinary inconsistency in the arguments against the bill and ignores the fact that this bill came out of a call from the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] for changes to the law. That call by ICAC was supported at the time by David Ipp and Inspector Levine, and supported more or less by the New South Wales Bar Association and NSW Young Lawyers. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions said that it was useful to codify the law.

My next point is that the penalties set out in the bill are inadequate. The remedy is to move amendments to the penalty provisions, not to vote against the bill. As has been pointed out, the current misconduct in public office offence is at large. But when the courts consider what penalty would be appropriate they go to corresponding provisions that may already exist in the criminal law, which is why a figure of seven years is often referred to. Many of the provisions in the Crimes Act that deal with offences of dishonesty have a maximum penalty of seven years. I suspect that is why seven years found its way into the bill. If that is the case then, at best, you are not increasing the penalties at all.

Other jurisdictions have a range of maximum penalties from between 10 to 15 years. It would seem to me something in that range is far more appropriate than seven. Once again, the solution is not to vote against the bill but to move amendments. If Labor were to be elected in March next year we would introduce legislation that increases the penalty beyond seven years and reference it to the Law Reform Commission to look at other aspects affecting the bill. In particular, I would like to know what its view might be on the other submissions from the ICAC that were not picked up in this bill such as the reverse onus of proof provision under section 249B.

Certainly we would want to look at whether there was anything arising out of the directions to the jury in the prosecutions that have been brought and whether that leads to other things that are not in this bill. That is not a criticism of the member who introduced this bill; I think it is useful to have this debate and move it forward. The ICAC made its submissions in 2014 and the Government has not brought forward any legislation in this field. It seems to me we should not be critical of the member who introduced this bill for doing that. I will make a couple of brief comments in response to the Government's position. The Government seems to be saying that it opposes corruption but at the same time does not want to actually do anything about it.

The Government's claim of providing funding to the ICAC is interesting as it cut funding and restored it only after a public outcry. As to the 35 recommendations that were implemented, that is fine. But the Government ignored the one issue over which there was vigorous disagreement: the execution of the then ICAC commissioner because she had the temerity to inquire into the activities of its political party. I have two other problems with the Government's position. The Government says that there has been no consultation by the member for Balmain. That is probably technically correct, but this bill came out of an ICAC submission that was part of a committee inquiry. Insofar as there is a claim there are no gaps, we must remember that the ICAC requested this legislation and seemed to think there is a gap. Maybe it knows more about it than other people in this building.

In addition, the criticism that this bill weakens the current existing offences is nonsense. The bill codifies a number of instances. As I understand the bill, it does not revoke the existing common law offence. That is still sitting there. You are not weakening it because you are not taking that offence away. The Government is desperately trying to find reasons not to support a bill that is entirely logical. As I indicated, the Opposition will support the bill on the second reading.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (11:22): I speak in the debate about the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018. I will explain some of the reasons the Government opposes the bill. In doing so, I do not question the honourable and good intentions of the member for Balmain in bringing forward this bill. The member for Balmain said that this bill is intended to be an anti-corruption measure, and none of us wants corrupt government. It is regrettable that in recent times New South Wales members of Parliament have been found corrupt by the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] in the performance of their duties. They include Eddie Obeid, Ian Macdonald, Tony Kelly, Joe Tripodi, Angela D'Amore and Karyn Paluzzano. They were members of the former New South Wales Labor Government prior to 2011.

No New South Wales Liberal Party member of Parliament has lawfully ever been found to be corrupt by the ICAC. The wrongful finding against a good and honourable man, Nick Greiner, was contrary to law and rightly overturned by the New South Wales Court of Appeal. Rex Jackson, who was a Minister in the Wran Labor Government before the Coalition established the ICAC, and had the nickname of "Buckets", was found with \$100,000 in cash in the boot of his car and convicted of conspiring in the release of prisoners. He was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. Ian Macdonald, a former Labor Minister in the Carr, Iemma, Rees and Keneally governments, was convicted on two counts of wilful misconduct in public office and was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

Eddie Obeid, a former Labor Minister in the Carr Government, was convicted of wilful misconduct in public office and was sentenced to five years imprisonment. Mr Obeid is awaiting trial on offences similar to those of Mr Macdonald and it is reasonable to conclude that if found guilty of those offences he will be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of nearly 10 years or more. Corruption is a blight on the body politic and is contrary to the good and right intentions of the overwhelming majority of members of Parliament who work hard to serve their communities. But there are serious defects with this bill that cut across the good intentions of the member for Balmain in bringing it forward. Rather than going harder on corruption, this bill, if passed, would go softer on corruption—which I am sure is an unintended consequence and not appreciated properly by the member for Balmain.

For example, under the current common law offence of misconduct in public office there is no limit on the sentence that can be imposed upon persons found guilty of that offence. If passed, this bill would put a cap on a maximum term of imprisonment for the statutory offences set out in the bill under new sections 217 to 222 proposed to be inserted in the Crimes Act. This Government will simply not agree to The Greens' attempt to go soft on corruption in this bill. If this bill were passed, everybody convicted of the current common law offence of misconduct in public office—including the likes of Rex Jackson, Ian Macdonald and Eddie Obeid—would receive lighter sentences if found guilty.

The bill misunderstands the basic principles of the law of sentencing. Sentencing principles require a judge to look at all factors using a process of instinctive synthesis, as explained by the High Court in *Markarian v The Queen* (2005) 228 CLR 357. Sentencing principles require a judge, after taking into account the maximum sentence as applying to the worst case, to put that offence in the range of penalties from no penalty up to the

maximum. Because this bill sets the worst case at seven years imprisonment, it does not just put a cap on the maximum sentence but actually slides all penalties within a range from the maximum to the minimum.

Even if, as the member for Liverpool suggested, the maximum is set at 10 years it will still have the effect of reducing the sentences in all misconduct in public office offences between a 10-year maximum to zero, depending on where they fall in a range of worst, medium or low criminality. A 10-year maximum still does not solve the problem that this bill, even with a 10-year maximum, would go lighter on corruption and criminal convictions for corruption than is currently the case under the common law, where there is no capped maximum sentence.

I fear that this and other shortcomings in the bill arise because of a lack of consultation. The Government values the opinions of its stakeholders. By genuinely engaging with experts and thought leaders, we continually ensure that our legislation meets standards of best practice. It appears that The Greens have not followed that path of good policymaking, which requires a deft hand and a commitment to thorough consultation. Instead, this bill demonstrates that The Greens have taken a different approach. It shows that The Greens approach legislation as an opportunity to radically bulldoze through the status quo without regard for the consequences.

Let us take this bill as an example. The bill seeks to codify a common law offence. Codification is a complex issue requiring an expert touch to ensure that gaps are not created. The Government has been advised that important legal stakeholders, including the NSW Police Force, Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, New South Wales Bar Association and the Law Society of New South Wales, were not consulted on the drafting of this bill. As a result, the bill has failed to consider several important aspects of corruption law, including reckless indifference offences; aggravated offences; the accounting of profits; compensation to the State or to any innocent third party for any benefits gained; the interaction of the codified offences with existing common law offences; and the unwinding of any agreements obtained by official misconduct.

Critically, the bill would also result in a reduction of the maximum penalty for corruption, which proper consultation with legal stakeholders would have revealed. The alternative—that The Greens have been informed that the bill would weaken corruption law, but want to proceed regardless—is even more concerning. I have always found the member for Balmain to be a person of integrity who is reasonable to deal with. What I fear is that the member for Balmain might have been set up to introduce this bill as part of some of the toxic factional battles within The Greens. I feel that the communist left of The Greens, led by Mr David Shoebridge, who is a former barrister and no doubt has given advice to the member for Balmain about the bill, has tried to set him up.

As the Australian Labor Party [ALP] has been the sole party with members found by the ICAC to be corrupt and convicted of criminal misconduct in public office, I hope that its members could not possibly bring themselves to support this bill. No reasonable member of Parliament [MP] could support this bill. I hope that the ALP will not support this bill as a means of trying to help their mate Eddie Obeid in his forthcoming criminal trial. If passed, the bill would allow a lighter sentence if Mr Obeid were found guilty of the offences he currently faces. I call on all Labor MPs to not pass a bill that would go softer on corruption. It really would be the last straw if they tried to help Eddie Obeid, after having elevated him to the highest levels of government of this State, including as a Minister of the Crown, this one little time with the problems he created with his corrupt and criminal activities.

All MPs should vote against this bill. They should not allow this bill to go softer on corruption. No case has been made out to codify what is already a desirably flexible common law position under the current law. The bill should not be supported. I encourage Luke Foley and the Labor Party to not help their mate, to not allow this Parliament to go softer on corruption and to stand up to keep the flexibility and the maximum unlimited and uncapped sentence on corrupt behaviour in this State as part of the law of New South Wales so that their rhetoric—which is they say they do not support corruption—is actually backed up by their actions.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (11:32): I speak on the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018, which was introduced into this place by the member for Balmain. I start by saying I do not doubt the bona fides of the member for Balmain in introducing the bill. He has been instrumental in and a force for legislation and parliamentary inquiries relating to corruption. It has been a particular concern of his to ensure that corrupt conduct is exposed to the light of public scrutiny and has, in fact, advocated in many respects quite significantly for changes to the law to protect whistleblowers in this State who wish to make disclosures to the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] and the like.

However, having said all that and accepted the bona fides of the member for Balmain in introducing the legislation, I have to say that, in my view, to codify or to seek to codify the offence of misconduct in public office without a very serious appraisal of its impact would be misconceived. There have been a number of high-profile cases relating to misconduct in public office. And I must say, coincidentally, they generally relate to members of the Australian Labor Party [ALP]. How that arises, I do not know—whether there is a course of conduct that we

ought to be concerned about is a matter worthy of some thought—but those cases relating to misconduct in public office by politicians are best exemplified by the behaviour of certain people such as the example given by the member for Ku-ring-gai relating to Mr Obeid and his attachment to mining licences, which is well known in this place.

What has not been highlighted is potentially his behaviour relating to the extension of the lease. The question arises as to whether the behaviour in trying to influence other public officials in the granting of a lease at Circular Quay, where he potentially had an interest, is behaviour that would be covered by the common law offence of misconduct in public office. But under this bill it is not so clear. In fact, the great benefit of the common law offence is that it relies on the general consensus of public expectation of elected public officials—those persons who occupy public office—and the extent to which public trust is placed in them. The common law offence is a particularly valuable approach to ensuring that the law expands in a way that currently reflects public sentiment in respect of what we would expect of public officials.

Significantly, the other high-profile cases that relate to offences in public office by politicians relate to the behaviour of Mr Ian Macdonald. Again, as was highlighted by the Attorney General and by the member for Ku-ring-gai, the manner in which the common law offence is interpreted and the manner in which there is no maximum penalty attached to the common law offence allows the court to impose upon politicians a higher standard than perhaps it would impose upon someone else. Therefore, the penalty it can impose reflects the public approbation for the way in which the public would expect those offences to be dealt with. In fact, it was well put by the sentencing judge in relation to Rex Jackson—another of those Labor politicians who fell foul of misconduct in public office. Members may recall that Mr Jackson was the Minister for Corrective Services of New South Wales in 1987, and he was sentenced to a period of imprisonment of seven years and six months. He had conspired corruptly to receive money in exchange for early release of prisoners on administrative licence. In that case, His Honour Mr Justice Roden made this observation:

The true measure of his criminality, however, is not to be found solely in how much or little he gained, or in how much or how little society may have suffered through the early releases of prisoners he procured. Its true measure lies in the undermining of the institutions and the principles on which we depend. That is hard to codify, I have to say, because on appeal the Court of Appeal had this to say: We live, and are fortunate to live, in a democracy in which members of Parliament decide the laws under which we shall live and cabinet ministers hold positions of great power in regard to the execution of those laws. A cabinet minister is under an onerous responsibility to hold his office and discharge his function without fear or favour to anyone, for if he does not and is led into corruption the very institution of democracy itself is assailed and at the very height of the apex. This is important because attempted codification under the bill introduced by the member for Balmain does not deal with the level of aggravation that potentially is attached to the activities of a cabinet minister that would attach to the activities of either a correctional officer or, alternatively, a police officer.

They then go on to say:

The fact that Jackson was not the instigator of the scheme, was addicted to gambling and had previously been of good character counted for little.

Mr Justice Lee said this:

... the good character of a person holding high office who commits a crime relating to the performance of his office cannot form a basis for the same mitigation of sentence as in the case of an ordinary citizen committing crime, for the public is entitled to expect that those who are placed in high office will necessarily be persons whose character makes them fit to hold that office.

The problem with the codification of the offence does not deal with this notation of aggravation, which the common law offence is entitled to rely on. There is a very erudite article by David Lusty entitled "Revival of the common law offence of misconduct in public office", and he concluded that article by saying this:

A few decades ago the offence was somewhat ill-defined but this is no longer the case. Its specific elements are now sufficiently certain and stringent to where the criticism is based on asserted vagueness. This has not prevented calls for it be abolished and replaced by one or more statutory offences, but, in this author's opinion, it would be a mistake to do so.

It goes so far back as 1976:

In 1976, a Royal Commission chaired by Lord Salmon concluded that the common law offence of misconduct in public office 'should be retained in its present form' and specifically recommended against codification, stating 'We doubt whether the task could be satisfactorily performed'. A similar opinion was more recently expressed by Sir Anthony Mason NPJ:

[Extension of time]

Sir Anthony Mason made this observation:

The common law offence of misconduct in public office is necessarily cast in general terms—

And that is the point I have been making—

because it is designed to cover many forms of misconduct on the part of public officers. An alternative way of dealing with misconduct by public officers would be to enact a statute formulating specific offences for particular categories of misconduct in public office—

That is what the member for Balmain has attempted to do—

The adoption of that course would involve a loss of flexibility and run the risk that the net would fail to catch some forms of serious misconduct. To suggest that the offence requires further definition would be to pursue a degree of definition which is unattainable, having regard to the wide range of acts and omissions which are capable of amounting to misconduct by a public officer in or relating to his office. The offence serves an important purpose in providing a criminal sanction against misconduct by public officers.

He then goes on to express that in other jurisdictions, even where it has been codified, there is a move back towards adopting the common law principles relating to misconduct in public office. While the bona fides of the member for Balmain are not in any way in question, I would suggest that the attempt to codify this offence would deprive the current common law position of the flexibility it has. Let me give an example: Recently a correctional officer engaged in sexual conduct, or intimate conduct, with a prisoner in a New South Wales jail. Is that conduct caught by the bill introduced by the member for Balmain? On my reading of the bill it would not be caught. However, that particular correctional officer, as I understand it, has, in fact, been charged with misconduct in public office.

It is that flexibility and opportunity that is at the heart of retaining the common law offence and relying upon judges to expand the notion of what constitutes a public officer, what constitutes the notion of public trust, so as to ensure that those ever-expanding obligations reflect the community expectations of people who occupy positions of trust in the community, and that effectively has been done. While I am on that point, I will use this as an opportunity to identify the importance that this Government places on the ICAC. We have strengthened the ICAC through amendments that have been made to the ICAC Act to ensure that serious corrupt conduct is effectively dealt with in this State.

We have properly funded the ICAC to an extent that our opponents never even dreamed about. Over the next four years we will fund the ICAC to an extent of \$106 million to ensure that it can adequately deal with and expose corruption in New South Wales. No other jurisdiction has the commitment to weeding out corruption that the New South Wales Government has—a government led by the conservative Coalition. Never before has it been so strong as it is today and, in fact, strengthened by amendments to the ICAC Act, which properly protects persons who are appearing before ICAC to ensure that they are given a fair hearing when they become persons of interest.

I also use this opportunity to acknowledge the great work done by the commissioner of the ICAC, Peter Hall, who, in fact, is an exemplary commissioner not only for the manner in which he conducts investigations but also for the direction in which he is taking the ICAC. Mr Hall is a person who recognises the extent to which there has been technological change. He is leading a proactive approach to ensure that corruption is dealt with in public institutions. It is not the reactive approach of waiting for complaints, but actually engaging with public institutions for the purposes of ensuring that their processes are properly identified and used for ensuring that they quickly identify corrupt practices within those organisations. We are lucky to have Mr Hall. We are lucky to have Mr McClintock. Unfortunately, in these circumstances, I oppose the bill.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (11:47): I oppose the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018 in its current form, which was introduced by the member for Balmain, who is in the Chamber. A number of Government members, including the Attorney General, the member for Ku-ring-gai and the member for Epping have contributed to this debate. There is absolutely no doubt that those members have eloquently expressed concerns about the nature of this bill. One thing they have clearly put is the view on this side of this House that there is absolutely no tolerance by this Government for any form of misconduct in public office. They have also outlined steps taken in various areas and organisations to strengthen the enforcement of laws relating to corruption and misconduct in public office. At the end of his speech the member for Epping was referring to how the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] has been strengthened and resourced by this Government so that it has all the abilities to attack this insidious crime of corruption and misconduct in public office in this State of ours.

But there has been other legislation before the House during the past few years of this Government concerning things like the Law Enforcement Commission, the NSW Ombudsman and other organisations that assist in cracking down in this type of area. As I said earlier, such misconduct in public office is one of the most sinister forms of misconduct in our State because it strikes not only at the heart of democracy, at the heart of justice, but it also strikes at the heart of trust of the community. There is nothing worse for a member of our community who trusts someone and votes them into civic office than to find out a short time later, or, in some cases a number of years later that they have had that trust taken from; it has been misused. It has been used for the advantage of oneself.

Indeed, it is one of the most insidious and despicable acts that someone who holds an office can engage in. Talking of integrity, there is absolutely no doubt that the member for Balmain introduced this bill with the best of intent. As the member for Epping said, the member for Balmain has certainly engaged in his time in this House in assisting in and improving the integrity of the role of public officials. On numerous occasions he has spoken

up about assisting those who come forward to provide evidence about corruption and misconduct. A number of times he has spoken about the ways and means that legislation, and practice and procedure in this State can be improved to improve the overall integrity of governance across this State. I commend him for those acts.

However, as was raised by the previous speaker, while this bill certainly is introduced with good intent, unfortunately, its content and the method of introducing it does not allow it to be supported by this side of the House. One thing that requires good legislation is good consultation and good conversations with all the stakeholders involved. This bill does not have that. There is a lack of consultation across the legal fraternity. There is a lack of consultation across corruption-fighting bodies across the State. There is a lack of consultation with other jurisdictions that have attempted to amend this type of legislation and, importantly, there is a lack of consultation with the broader community. The objects of the bill, as the member put forward, which I will canvass, include:

... to prohibit the following misconduct in or in relation to public office:

- (a) current and former public officials misusing information obtained in an official capacity,
- (b) public officials engaging in official conduct, or exercising influence, for dishonest purposes,
- (c) public officials acting in matters in which they have a pecuniary interest,
- (d) the bribing of public officials,
- (e) public officials accepting bribes,
- (f) conspiring to dishonestly influence a public official,
- (g) conspiring to dishonestly obtain a benefit from a public authority, and
- (h) conspiring to dishonestly cause a loss or risk of loss to a public authority.

I note that a number of those objects are certainly what we call "long-term" common law offences, particularly in the areas of conspiracy and bribery, and have been in the criminal sphere for many a century—they go to the heart of good governance and democracy. In his second reading speech the member for Balmain quite rightly made some very important comments and I will reinforce them. He said:

Corruption clouds good judgement and it diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity in our democracy. It erodes public confidence in government and has the potential to steer our State off the path to prosperity.

That is precisely why it is important that such a clinical and necessary examination of this type of crime must be made. However, the bill provides an opportunity to reflect on a less seemly period in this building's history—and that, of course, was under the former Labor Government. In 2017 former Labor Minister Ian Macdonald was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for the common law offence of wilful misconduct in public office. He commenced with the Labor Party in 1972 and held a range of portfolios in the Carr, Iemma, Rees and Keneally ministries between 2003 and 2010. Unfortunately for the people of New South Wales, Ian Macdonald engaged in corrupt conduct while serving as a Minister, particularly as the Minister for Mineral Resources. When Macdonald was sentenced last year the sentencing judge, Justice Christine Adamson, said:

... granting ... the licence to Doyles Creek Mining was serious and merit[ed] criminal punishment having regard to his responsibilities as a Minister and the nature and extent of his departure from the public objectives for which those responsibilities serve[d].

In the same judgement Justice Adamson expressly noted that the offence of wilful misconduct in public office is a common law offence because:

... the Parliament of NSW has not, to date, chosen to include it in the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) or any other statute.

Justice Adamson did not pass comment on whether or not codification is desirable. However, she did note that because of that lack she was not limited by the maximum penalty because corruption is a common law offence. As a result, Ian Macdonald was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, which, of course, is three years longer than would be possible under a single offence in the bill introduced by the member for Balmain. In fact, it could be said that we should be thankful that the member for Balmain's bill was not, in fact, the law at the time—it has resulted in the offender receiving a greater, a more accurate sentence, to reflect the criminality of his offences. In summary, I reiterate that the member for Balmain introduced this bill with the utmost of best intentions. However, due to its content and the manner in which it was introduced, I cannot support it.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:57): In reply: I am delighted to speak very briefly in reply. I would like this matter to be resolved today and go to a division, so I have just a few short minutes. I thank the Attorney General and the members for the electorates of Cronulla, Liverpool, Ku-ring-gai, Epping and Seven Hills for their contributions. I am absolutely delighted that this House is talking about this issue. As members know, the introduction of bills by anyone in Opposition or on crossbench are very rarely supported by the Government, but what they do is inject debate into this House, the community and the wider public about matters.

There seem to be two major objections to the Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018. One is an argument against codification—we should not codify because common law is satisfactory and common law serves the purpose. The second claimed deficiencies in the bill. I introduced this bill on behalf of The Greens because it is clear, as proposed by the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] in 2014, that these matters should be codified. The support for this codification was significant, broad and deep in the community, around ICAC and the legal profession. There was an understanding that it was worthwhile doing for the key reason I identified in my second reading speech: This is consistent with the notion that the criminal law should be accessible and comprehensible, and that members of the public (and in this particular case, public officials) are informed of the seriousness with which society regards breaches of public duty and are able regulate their conduct accordingly. There is a whole range of arguments about codification as opposed to common law. I will leave that until another time, but I and The Greens believe that it is important to codify. Secondly, I refer to concerns that were raised about deficiencies in the bill. On the issue of consultation, the capacity of crossbench members to consult is limited when compared to the Government, for example. The level of support that this legislation has had in the wider community we believe required us to bring the bill before the House. The Greens are always supportive of as much consultation as possible and we will continue to do so to progress the legislation in the future.

Another issue that was raised was in relation to the penalties. The reason for the inclusion of the penalties in the bill is clear, as they relate to existing penalties and provisions. However, The Greens will support the Labor amendments—particularly following the matter being resolved in Mr MacDonald's case—if it means that the bill gets to the stage where the House can vote on it. I suspect we will not. If the bill reaches the consideration stage we will support the increases, even though the reason behind the original penalties in the bill is clear and obvious. I put on record that I am pleased that the debate did not descend to an attack on Labor or Coalition members who were found to have evaded electoral laws. The purpose of the bill was not to put the boot into members who have been found guilty of misconduct or corruption.

I trust that the introduction of this bill is the beginning of a debate on how we codify these matters, how we address matters of corruption and how we respond to issues raised by the community. The community says, "Members have been found guilty of corruption by the ICAC but why are these people not being prosecuted?" I am absolutely delighted that we have had this debate. The Greens are committed to progressing this matter. I acknowledge the Labor member for Liverpool who said that this should be referred to allow for a more detailed discussion, debate and interrogation. I trust that a future Labor government will pursue the matter with a view to satisfying the requests of the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

I conclude by thanking all members who contributed to the debate and commend them for the approach they took to it. This debate and discussion needs to be continued in a positive manner for the integrity of the Parliament and for the confidence of the community in our Parliament and in us as lawmakers. Members of Parliament must be above reproach and we must make sure that the laws we create reflect the importance that the community places on anti-corruption issues. I commend the bill to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes47
Majority.....11

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
McDermott, Dr H
Mehan, Mr D
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Leong, Ms J
McGirr, Dr J
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lynch, Mr P
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L (teller)
Watson, Ms A (teller)

NOES

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

PAIRS

Cotsis, Ms S	Barilaro, Mr J
Kamper, Mr S	Berejiklian, Ms G
Lalich, Mr N	George, Mr T
Zangari, Mr G	Rowell, Mr J

Motion negatived.*Motions***NSW SUSTAINING LANDCARE WEEK**

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (12:12): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes NSW Sustaining Landcare Week took place from 17 August to 2 September 2018, and acknowledges events and activities held throughout this period.
- (2) Commends the achievements of the Landcare community in regional and metropolitan New South Wales.
- (3) Supports these hardworking volunteers through the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Landcare.

I am the proud chair of the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Landcare. I welcome Landcare NSW chief executive officer Adrian Zammit and International Environmental Weed Foundation founder and executive director Bev Debrincat to the gallery. I thank them very much for joining us today. Landcare NSW is the peak body for Landcare in this State and a community-based organisation that focuses on managing and protecting our natural resources. Its members are creating more productive and sustainable farms, conserving our environment and building more cohesive and resilient communities. The iconic institution has transformed the landscape by enabling farmers, landowners and conservationists to work together at a local level on local issues.

Landcare NSW was established in 2007 after a group of volunteers recognised a need for a unified voice to represent the State's dedicated community of land carers. After months of consultation and planning an inaugural meeting was held in Sydney, which was followed by the first muster in Tamworth in October 2007. Since then, every two years land carers from across the State gather at musters to harness ideas and discuss issues. With the support of the New South Wales Government and Local Land Services [LLS], Landcare NSW is building its capability and capacity to better support the 60,000-strong volunteer Landcare community. In 2015 the New South Wales Government cemented its commitment to Landcare NSW by developing and funding a new Landcare policy that is being implemented through a partnership between Landcare NSW and Local Land Services.

This Government saw the value that Landcare provides and in 2015, at the initiative of Minister for Police, Troy Grant, who was the patron of Landcare at the time, it committed \$15 million to Landcare NSW to provide for Landcare across the State. The initiative included the development of a sustainable funding source that is partly being used to support volunteers into the future and to help set up the four-year New South Wales

Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative, which creates a network of locally based coordinators and a centralised support team to increase the effectiveness of Landcare networks. Currently, 34 host Landcare organisations are engaged and 72 local Landcare coordinators are doing a magnificent job on the ground and achieving real outcomes. The proof of Landcare's success is in the pudding. Some 63 per cent of Landcare groups have reported increased participation, 86 per cent have reported increased capacity to address social, agricultural and environmental issues, and 92 per cent have reported better interactions with Local Land Services.

The importance of the community Landcare movement is highlighted by the impact of the drought on farmers and rural communities, which is presently at the forefront in New South Wales. Our primary producers are core to our productivity and growth, and organisations such as Landcare support our farmers and regional communities. For example, in response to the ongoing drought LLS teamed up with Landcare to roll out a series of free drought workshops focusing on the health and wellbeing of our farming women. That is just one example of the work Landcare is doing to support our regional communities outside of delivering environmental outcomes. There is a real social benefit to it.

Many members of the House are part of the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Landcare. We have all stood together at Landcare events at Parliament House to acknowledge the fantastic work of program coordinators across the State. The Parliamentary Friends of Landcare group was set up in 2015 as an outcome of the Sustaining Landcare campaign prior to the State election. The group is bipartisan in its support for Landcare, as we will hear from members today, and provides an avenue for us to connect with and offer support to Landcare at the State level and a local level in suburbs, regional towns and farming communities. The Parliamentary Friends of Landcare continues a longstanding tradition of support for Landcare with all political parties represented and has been a strong advocate for the NSW Sustaining Landcare Week. The NSW Sustaining Landcare Week continues across the State and again this year it was strongly supported by the Parliamentary Friends of Landcare.

Running for 16 days from 17 August to 2 September, Sustaining Landcare Week aimed to raise community awareness of the vital work undertaken by Landcare across New South Wales. It is not easy to start a community organisation from scratch that has such an impact on local communities. It is therefore only appropriate to have a week to celebrate the important work that the people do. The week gave land carers and members of the public an opportunity to come together to share their experiences and knowledge. More than 30 events were held, with hundreds of people who are dedicated to supporting the Landcare movement in attendance.

Landcare groups across the State showcased their work at a range of events from Penrith to North Sydney, from Nowra to the North Coast, and from Bendemeer to Broken Hill. Generating understanding of the work of Landcare and other community organisations is critical to maintaining ongoing support for those groups and their dedicated volunteers. There was an opportunity to engage in my electorate of Tamworth. I know many members also attended events in their electorates to support and promote Landcare and the work it does. Landcare has always been about more than just planting trees. It is about sustainable and productive agriculture, environmental conservation, restoration and social capital. Other Landcare NSW initiatives that are taking place across my electorate include the fantastic Office of Environment and Heritage Blinky Drinkers program for koalas. [*Time expired.*]

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (12:19): I am pleased to speak to this motion. I have been a member of the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Landcare for some three years. I pay tribute to the chair, the member for Tamworth, for running such a good, strong, bipartisan group; he has done a terrific job. I pay tribute also to Adrian and Bev, who are in the gallery, and to Rob Dulhunty, who I believe is finishing up after 10 strong years as Landcare NSW chair and who also has done a terrific job. Speaking from a bipartisan point of view, I commend the Government for the \$15 million it has put towards the Landcare networks.

Newcastle has a very active and dedicated network of Landcare groups and volunteers. Locally, Landcare works to preserve and protect the biodiversity of our natural environment and to foster community awareness and participation in sustainable natural resource management for Newcastle. City of Newcastle Landcare and the Hunter Region Landcare Network have formed an alliance to help support Landcare volunteers and groups in natural resource management activities such as bush regeneration, dune rehabilitation, seed collection and plant propagation. They have done a magnificent job along the Merewether Beach to Bar Beach strip in particular. Griff Foley has led a wonderful band of local community Landcare workers who have made what was a fairly denuded dune system into a beautiful place.

Volunteers of the City of Newcastle Landcare work within the framework of the Landcare ethic, that is, the ecological restoration and sustainable management of the land and water resources in the Hunter region and to pass on a healthier natural environment to future generations. The City of Newcastle Landcare volunteers receive free training and guidance from council officers, resources such as tools and plants, mulch and signage, and safety gear and insurance cover whilst working on council land. Each year there is a barbecue and awards

event to celebrate their volunteering and achievements. I have been out on the hills working with one of our groups and I have to say that they do a great job. The electorate of Newcastle has a number of devoted Landcare groups who work in the following locations: Arcadia Park, Charlotte Street Reserve, Dixon Park Beach, Merewether foreshore, Morgan Street Reserve, Myambalah Crescent, Nesca Parade, Nobbys Horseshoe Beach, Obelisk Hill, Stockton and Trig Shepherds Hill. I thank all of those Landcare groups and volunteers for the outstanding work they do for the community and the environment.

More broadly, the Hunter Region Landcare Network cares for a diverse region that includes natural parks and forests, wetlands, coastal land and seascapes. The Hunter is a rich farming and husbandry area with a wide variety of crops and livestock which contribute to the State and national economy. The Hunter Region Landcare Network acts as a voice for more than 300 Landcare groups in the catchment and it is involved in the promotion, support and funding of Landcare activities in cooperation with the Hunter Local Land Services and various councils. It is critical that we provide these organisations with the funding they need to get on with the job of protecting and preserving our environment. I place on record my thanks to the team at the Hunter Regional Landcare Network for the work they do, in particular Stacy Mail, the Lower and Mid Hunter Local Landcare Coordinator; Nicholas Alexander, the Upper Hunter Local Landcare Coordinator; Leslie Pearson, president; Chris Wokes, treasurer; committee members Jenny Castles, Carmel Brown, Chris Jackson and Lyn Morris; Stephen Thatcher, public officer; and John Hughson, network adviser. I again commend the motion and say what a great job Landcare does in New South Wales.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (12:24): I support the motion of the member for Tamworth to acknowledge NSW Sustaining Landcare Week and the hard work of all the volunteers involved in the continuing success of this great organisation. I too acknowledge Bev and Adrian in the gallery today. The Cootamundra electorate is represented by LachLandcare, Mid Lachlan Landcare and Murrumbidgee Landcare with three local Landcare coordinators based in Young, Temora and Cootamundra. From 17 August to 2 September Landcare groups all across the State showcased the work they carry out day in, day out, the ultimate reward for which is seeing our precious environment and agricultural landscapes thriving and existing in harmony.

It has been wonderful to experience a growth in the Landcare movement across the electorate. On 30 August it was my pleasure to address the Women in Agriculture Forum in West Wyalong, hosted by LachLandcare. This was a truly inspirational workshop field day about diversification in small business and farming enterprises and sustainable lifestyles. Forty women from across the region attended and were inspired by the tenacious stories of innovation and resilience. Annie Jacobs' Wallendbeen cattle farm now doubles as a homestay, for example, and Helen West has branched out on her Lake Cowal property with olive oil production. I thank Anne Duncan, General Manager of LachLandcare, Brittany Turner, the tireless Local Landcare Coordinator for Bland-Temora, and speakers and attendees for supporting this fantastic event.

On National Tree Day on 27 July it was a joy to officially open the new amenities block and storeroom at the Hillview Park Community Garden and Landcare Nursery in Temora. Well done to Clair Golder for leading the charge on this community project. I hope the eucalyptus macrocarpa I planted on the day is going strong. On the same day in Narrandera the local Landcare group was supported by Life Skills students from the high school, who planted more than 700 trees. It is wonderful to see our volunteer Landcare groups engaging our youth and future generations in the vital work they do in caring for the environment. Of course, as well as sustaining and supporting flora across the Cootamundra electorate, our Landcare groups are tireless advocates for our native fauna. In Young, under the leadership of district coordinator Mikla Lewis, Landcare has been working to provide habitat for up to 15 species of microbat. To date they have installed 140 microbat roosting boxes at various locations across Young. Planting days at Chance Gully and Burrandong Creek have provided future habitat, and a plant giveaway donated 1,000 trees and shrubs to the Young community.

I was thrilled recently to announce a \$400,000 grant to a group comprising five Landcare groups, including LachLandcare and Mid Lachlan Landcare, for the conservation of superb parrot habitat through the Saving our Species program. These groups are out on the ground, propping up the habitats of these breathtaking birds so that the next generation can enjoy them. In Cootamundra we have seen Landcare supporting farmers in the drought and providing information about feeding in dry times as well as encouraging farmers to look after themselves through diet, exercise and mindfulness as part of the recent Calmer Farmer workshops that were carried out in partnership with Active Farmers. I know that many members of this House are members of the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Landcare. The group is bipartisan in its support for Landcare and has been a strong advocate for NSW Sustaining Landcare Week. Once again I thank the chair of the group, the member for Tamworth, for bringing this important motion to the House.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (12:28): I too acknowledge the member for Tamworth and thank him for bringing this important matter of Landcare in New South Wales to the attention of the House. I also acknowledge Bev and Adrian from Landcare NSW as representatives of a magnificent organisation. I first became

involved in the political process for only one reason: to address the decline in the natural environment where I lived. The area around Lake Macquarie was suffering greatly and we needed to take action locally. I cannot think of a better organisation to deal with issues locally while at the same time dealing with the broader problem of the degradation of our natural environment, including the impact and damage to rural production.

When I first became involved in the environmental movement, there were a lot of well-intentioned people and well-intentioned programs. The first program I was involved with was called LEAP, the Landcare Environmental Action Program. I was a director of Hunter LEAP. They were very well-intentioned but, as with many good thoughts, they do not necessarily progress to achieve their goals. To see the substantial growth of Landcare and to see how effective it has been is something to behold. It has been my opinion through my role with Lake Macquarie City Council over many years—and there are still more than 200 Landcare groups throughout Lake Macquarie—that Landcare has been the most effective mobilisation of volunteers in New South Wales and, indeed, Australia.

Amazing practical experience and energy is being brought by locals to pay attention to and repair the local environment. An amazing level of expertise has also been developed. People who have taken their qualifications to a very high standard have improved our understanding of how to deal with the degradation that has occurred across New South Wales. There are other electorates that fit within the Lake Macquarie local government area under the umbrella of Lake Macquarie Landcare—for example, Wallsend, Charlestown, Swansea and Cessnock, to a degree. We have all benefited, as have our communities.

There are too many people in my area for me to name, but I do want to talk about John Hughson, who was mentioned by the member for Newcastle, because John Hughson was there from the beginning. He is one of the great inspirations for other people to get involved. It is about people being able to share information, lending support and bringing together like-minded people. In New South Wales we are getting much more for our environment from Landcare than any government or any other group would be able to or has been able to provide. Once again, I thank the member for Tamworth.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:32): I contribute to debate on this motion moved by the member for Tamworth, and I thank him for doing so. Even as a representative of an urban area, the community of North Shore, I believe the role of Landcare cannot be underestimated. In my area we have some significant activity and engagement, particularly through North Sydney Bushcare programs. I support this motion on NSW Sustaining Landcare Week. Landcare is an iconic institution which has transformed the landscape of our State, enabling farmers, landowners and conservationists to work together at a local level on local issues. There are tens of thousands of individuals who are working to protect, restore and improve the natural environment through their involvement in Landcare, Bushcare and other care groups.

In North Sydney we have an active Bushcare program of approximately 150 volunteers working in 12 groups around local reserves. These volunteers are rehabilitating publicly owned natural bushland. North Shore also offers a number of Adventure Landcare events. These activities that have environmental aims and objectives involve kayaking, bushwalking, boating or abseiling to beautiful and often infrequently visited places. Last year Landcare NSW and Parliamentary Friends of Landcare held an event in North Sydney at the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability, which was a huge success. I joined them there to do some tree planting. That event was about something that is fundamental to North Sydney Bushcare: bringing country and city Landcare groups together. The Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability has been transformed from what was an industrial zone into a green space that showcases sustainable environmental practices. The purpose of the event was to celebrate this remarkable city-country partnership.

Since 2000 one of the landmark elements of my local Bushcare group in North Sydney is the Building Bridges to Boorowa program, through which more than 60,000 trees have been planted in Boorowa. Each year volunteers from North Sydney make the trip to the farming community of Boorowa, near Young. The work they have done with this tree-planting initiative restores critical habitats and builds strong bonds between city and country communities. When the kids from Boorowa joined us last year at the coal loader it was the first reciprocal visit from them. On board the coach were 50 schoolchildren, teachers, farmers and Landcare members. They came to thank the North Sydney volunteers, to cement their partnership and to help revegetate this special part of Sydney that is the coal loader. Parliamentary Friends of Landcare were there, including Katrina Hodgkinson, to celebrate this bipartisan tradition that has existed since the Landcare movement started nearly 30 years ago.

The Boorowa tree-planting activity that happens each year is a habitat restoration effort between North Sydney Council, the Boorowa Community Landcare Group and Hilltops Council, formerly Boorowa Council. Each year we have around 40 Bushcare volunteers go to Boorowa for a day and a half to two days. Substantial preparation work is undertaken by the local landholders, often six months in advance. Our most recent annual trip to Boorowa took place on 7 September, with 31 volunteers. I spoke to some locals on their return from that trip and they enjoyed it once again. This year was a great success. They provided habitat for local wildlife, including

the superb parrot, and 4,695 trees were planted. I look forward to the exciting twentieth anniversary of the Building Bridges to Boorowa program in 2019. I again thank the member for Tamworth for raising this. Both in the country and the city, the protection of our environment and our Landcare is crucial.

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (12:37): I speak to the motion of the member for Tamworth in relation to Landcare Week and the great work of Landcare throughout New South Wales. I too welcome and acknowledge Adrian and Bev who are present in the gallery today, as well as all the other Landcare coordinators and volunteers throughout the State who are no doubt watching these proceedings and have a vested interest in this matter. In the electorate of Orange we have three Landcare groups and coordinators, who do a fantastic job: Marg Applebee is the coordinator of the Central West Lachlan Landcare, which looks after the Parkes and Forbes shires; Tracey Potts is the chief executive officer of Little River Landcare, which looks after Yeoval and Cumnock; and Dr Marita Sydes is a coordinator of Central Tablelands Landcare, which looks after Orange, Bathurst, Molong and Blayney.

It is estimated that between these groups there are approximately 3,500 volunteers in varying capacities, whether in committee roles, participating in local projects or as landholders. As well as undertaking projects with landholders promoting improved land management and stock management on properties within the Orange electorate, these groups play a huge role in educating students within the local schools, running and participating in community events, and focusing on participation and environmental education. Since the commencement of the Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative [LLCI] an estimated 10,000 people have been engaged through Landcare activities in the Orange electorate alone. That is a fantastic effort. Coordinators have also distributed more than 350 media releases and 500 newsletters, and sourced grants and funding for community projects, totalling g into millions of dollars for the region.

Sustaining Landcare Week was recently held and I attended an event called Eco Day organised and hosted by the Central West Lachlan Landcare group and run by coordinator Marg Applebee. It targeted stage 3, or year 5 to year 6 students, from various local schools within the Forbes Shire Council and Parkes Shire Council areas. More than 70 students attended. I spent the day with them at the Forbes saleyards and they had a magnificent day. There were various activities including creating worm farms, learning about weeds and recycled water, a walk through the livestock exchange with the local stock and station agent, soil workshops, insect workshops, environmental art, recycling and there was also a snake man to entertain the children and adults.

The hope is to expand the day to make it available to more students and to encourage and involve more students in 2019. The event was held with the assistance of Forbes Shire and Parkes Shire councils and the Central West Lachlan Landcare group. It has been held annually for three years. I acknowledge Councillor Bill Jayet from Parkes Shire Council and Councillor Jeff Nicholson from Forbes Shire Council who attended the event. Both the Forbes and Parkes Shire councils have thrown their considerable financial support behind the Central West Lachlan Landcare group with the provision of a vehicle and by paying for running costs. The group will require additional funding. This is an investment not only in the environment but also in the future. By involving young students we are engaging with those people who are the future for Landcare and land management in our State. I thank the member for Tamworth and the volunteers, staff and coordinators who all do a fantastic job. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (12:41): By leave: It is with great pleasure that I make a contribution to debate on the motion of my neighbour and friend the member for Tamworth. I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Adrian and Bev from Landcare NSW and I welcome them. I acknowledge that Landcare plays a significant role in the community of the Upper Hunter. Landcare is an iconic and community-based institution which has transformed the landscape, enabling farmers, landowners and conservationists to work together.

Recently in my electorate of Upper Hunter there was an opportunity to engage with local Landcare as part of NSW Sustaining Landcare Week. On Sunday 19 August the Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare group held a community social evening in conjunction with their annual general meeting. A recent study commissioned by Landcare NSW shows that Landcare contributes \$500 million per annum in economic value, and that is considered a conservative estimate. Since 2015 Landcare has had strong support from the New South Wales Government and this has made a difference to Landcare on the ground. With the backing of the Government, Landcare NSW and the Local Land Services [LLS], Landcare has been able to achieve a number of outcomes. I congratulate the New South Wales Government and Landcare on their efforts in this partnership.

Martindale Creek Catchment has a serious problem with green cestrum, a weed that causes environmental damage and, if eaten, stock death. With the support of the Muswellbrook Shire Council, the Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare group has successfully undertaken stage one of a community-wide program to help farmers control green cestrum. It is being funded by the Muswellbrook Shire Council. The results of stage one of the green cestrum program were presented to the community in conjunction with the Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare

group annual general meeting, after which there was a damper and video night. We were joined by representatives from the project partners, Muswellbrook Shire Council and Hunter LLS. There were representatives from their support systems and partnerships across the Landcare community, government departments, non-government organisations, members and local residents. It was a successful evening enjoyed by all.

Some details of the project include that it was managed by the Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare; it covered 33 properties plus sections of the Wollemi National Park and more than 16 kilometres of creek; 80 hectares of riparian zone was treated; it used 282 hours of contract team; 15 five-litre containers of chemical were supplied to 15 other farmers, plus in-kind from Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare; there were more than 165 hours of project management and an estimated 450 hours of farmers spraying with free chemical; and it utilised at least \$19,500 worth of time from the Martindale Creek Catchment Landcare. I am sure members will agree that is a magnificent effort. It is making a significant positive impact on eradicating the green cestrum. In late August Murrurundi Landcare-Pages River Warriors launched a new outdoor learning area on the banks of the Pages River to be shared by local schools. Murrurundi Landcare-Pages River Warriors received \$5,000 from the Hunter LLS to construct a classroom. I congratulate everyone involved.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (12:45): By leave: I congratulate the member for Tamworth on moving such a worthwhile motion. Landcare Week runs from 17 August to 2 September. I acknowledge that the Landcare NSW chief executive officer Adrian Zammit is present in the gallery. Mr Zammit has experience with delivering healthy land and water to South-East Queensland and brings that enormous knowledge to Landcare NSW. I will speak about the 62 groups in the Richmond Landcare network in Ballina Shire and the many groups within the Brunswick Valley Landcare network. The aim and the purpose of all of those volunteers is to conserve and restore our natural resources from forest to foreshore.

In particular, I give a shout-out to Big Scrub Landcare. I have spoken about them having received first place in 2017 for ecological restoration practices at the highly regarded Society of Ecological Restoration Australasia Awards for excellence. That award recognised that they planted more than 1.3 million trees and oversaw 35 projects worth more than \$5 million on both private and public land. Big Scrub Landcare was started in 1992 by a small group of people who were passionate about the local rainforest. Today it has a membership of more than 400. For many years I have attended the Big Scrub Rainforest Day at Rocky Creek Dam to celebrate more than three decades of rainforest restoration. It is the largest annual environmental and community event in Australia.

The Big Scrub subtropical rainforest and Gondwana ecology is truly one of the most beautiful treasures of our region. This Saturday there is a very special Big Scrub Landcare event. Big Scrub Landcare President Dr Tony Parkes and representatives from the Australasian Association of Bush Regenerators, the Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia and Big Scrub Landcare are gathering together in Alstonville to present a framed commemorative photo to Stan Dudgeon, the grandson of Ambrose Crawford, one of the founders of Alstonville. It is in recognition of Ambrose's role in instigating and leading the conservation and regeneration of the Lumley Park rainforest remnant.

Other dignitaries will be in attendance, including councillors from Ballina Shire Council. The Lumley Park project is likely to be the oldest twentieth century ecological restoration project in Australia, if not the world, having started in 1935. In 1934 Ambrose Crawford worked to achieve the formal conservation of part of Lumley Park as a preserve for native trees. Commencing in October 1935, he led a small group of fellow citizens to remove weed and replant rainforest species, making it the earliest ecological restoration project in Australia. Ambrose continued his regeneration work at Lumley Park until 1979, when he was 99 years of age.

The award will cite three contemporary organisations: the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators, the Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia and Big Scrub Landcare. Big Scrub Landcare President Dr Tony Parkes praised Ambrose's vision as being ahead of its time. It was not until the 1970s that rainforest restoration of both private and public land in Big Scrub started to become an accepted activity for landholders. I am proud of the history of my electorate. I congratulate every volunteer for Landcare across the State.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (12:49): By leave: I support my colleague the member for Tamworth and the motion he has moved in praising and acknowledging the wonderful work that Landcare does in our communities and urban and rural environments across our State. It is a terrific organisation that leverages the expertise, knowledge and passion of people who are determined to preserve or restore our natural habitat. It also leverages the expertise of farmers in rural settings and the experience of people in urban settings to restore creek lands, farmlands and our native animals habitat. My electorate of the Northern Tablelands is blessed with a number of Landcare organisations. For many years the Southern New England Landcare group has been working closely with the Armidale Urban Rivercare Group as well as the Armidale Tree Group on projects to restore the natural environment around Dumaresq Creek or what we know as the Armidale creek lands.

Recently the Prickly Problems Project was unveiled in the creek lands, which is the culmination of nearly three years work by a team of 90 volunteers who have been working for weekends here and there as well as weekdays. They were fed and watered by members of the Armidale Dumaresq Lions Club to keep them going. I acknowledge Bruce Whan, a longstanding member of the Armidale Rivercare Group, and Sara Schmude from the Southern New England Landcare, and all members of the Armidale Dumaresq Lions Club who have combined to harness the expertise and passion of the 90 volunteers to restore what I think is one of the most special, tranquil and picturesque locations in the city of Armidale. It is wonderful to have the area opened up. It not only improves the health of the creek lands and the river system but also makes it an area of which the community can be proud and which locals and visitors alike can enjoy. Before the intervention by the group the creek lands were a mess. It was a disgrace because it became an unofficial dumping ground. Nasties such as discarded shopping trolleys, plastic bottles, plastic bags and all sorts of junk and rubbish were destroying the environment.

I also acknowledge the Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee, known as GLENRAC, for the work it does in hosting the local Landcare coordinator and working with farmers to restore habitat, particularly native trees and to restore koala and other habitats. I acknowledge Kylie Falconer and Jennie Coldham, who does a terrific job. They are supported by a magnificent committee headed by John Bavea. Wherever we look around this State, Landcare groups work together with community organisations, eking out every last bit of value of Government grants and other support they receive at Federal and State level, preserving our local habitats, waterways and farming properties so that the next generation can benefit from the very best of our natural habitats and biodiversity. Well done.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:53): By leave: I take the opportunity of the debate on Landcare Week to mention and acknowledge the Palm Grove Ourimbah Creek Landcare Incorporated group, which cares for a parcel of land between the M1 motorway at Ourimbah and Ourimbah Creek. The history of that area is interesting and reflects the development of the area. The care that this group provides to the area is a great contribution to our local community. In 1834 Sarah Mathew, the diarist wife of surveyor Felton Mathew, described the deep shade and rainforests along Ourimbah Creek on a horseback journey from Wyoming to Wyong with an Aboriginal guide.

Between 1898 and 1928, the land was subdivided for farming. Military photographs from 1940 show fields in the area being developed for pasture and citrus orchards for the local citrus industry. In 1975 the land along the creek was purchased by Wyong council for a weir and pumping station to supply town water, and vegetation was reserved to protect the water supply. In the 1990s the flood plain was resumed by what was then the Department of Main Roads for freeway construction. In 2000 the Landcare group was licensed to manage the council land along the creek and the adjoining Roads and Maritime Services private land. More recently, in 2017 the licence was extended so that the Landcare group now manages the shoulder land of the M1 motorway.

The Palm Grove Ourimbah Creek Landcare group cares for this area. One important consequence of its work is water purification. The regeneration of plants in the area filters water that runs off the freeway before it goes into Ourimbah Creek, which is used for the town water supply. The area also helps with flood mitigation. A number of areas form lakes during flood periods and proper vegetation helps filter the water before floodwater flows into Tuggerah Lake. The site is also used for education purposes with a number of tours being conducted by volunteers of the group.

I mention some of those volunteers, of which there have been many over the years. The main volunteers of the group are the conservation officer, Brian Patterson; public officer, Ian Playford; chair, Ray Galway; and secretary, Robyn Nutley. Other volunteers who participate on a regular basis are Eileen Patterson, Kay Voller, Al Wagenaer, Jon Pike, Roger Hansford, Henry Wagenaer, Tony Voller, who is also the treasurer, and Maryanne Millington. I acknowledge those volunteers who care for the area. They are passionate about the area and get together each week. They provide a fantastic service for the Central Coast community and the environment at large.

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (12:57): By leave: I congratulate all those involved in Landcare not only in my electorate but also across the State. I acknowledge the visitors in the gallery today and their great work. The Coffs Harbour electorate has a number of Landcare groups. I will raise some of the problems they face, which also can be found across the State. When the Minister for Education, who is present at the table, was the Minister for Planning, I showed him some of those issues. When we have storms in the riparian zone, noxious weeds such as camphor laurel are blown into creeks and onto the banks of creeks.

The Landcare people who do such a great job are restricted as to how they can remove those trees, which eventually wash down the streams, lodge against banks and create erosion in times of high water. They also take out bridges in the area. A huge cost is then placed on local and State governments to repair and replace the damaged bridges. The regulations in place state that tractors cannot be taken into the riparian zone. Trees cannot

be removed, even if they are plantation trees from the creeks. At the end of the day, those trees do more harm to the environment and the great work of the Landcare group is negated because of this Government regulation.

I have taken a number of Ministers to Bucket Creek, out near where I live. Flooded gums criss-cross the area purely because of the storm that happened some years ago and the inability of any government department—be it Forestry or a Landcare group—to remove them. The member for Clarence and I visited Glenreagh, which is in his electorate, where camphor laurels were poisoned by Landcare. They eventually fell over and went into the creek and travelled downstream. The then Mayor of Clarence Valley, Richie Williamson, and I saw where they took out a bridge, which cost Clarence Valley Council more than \$1 million to replace, purely because of restrictions placed on these fantastic volunteers.

Garry Due, Chairman of the Coffs Harbour Branch, NSW Farmers Association, spends countless hours with a group of volunteers including farmers, cleaning out lantana, camphor laurel trees and other noxious weeds to improve the riparian zone to ensure that the Orara River and other creeks and rivers around the Orara Valley are maintained to reduce erosion. I implore the Ministers responsible for the Office of Environment and Heritage, the Environment Protection Authority and other groups who have an interest in this matter to look at the regulations that surround the riparian zones—especially in coastal areas that get heavy storms, high winds and volumes of water—and ensure that they support the Landcare groups that do such a fantastic job. They fix years of damage to riparian zones and restore them. I commend the member for Tamworth for bringing this motion before the House. I am sure all members of this House support the motion as well as Landcare.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (13:01): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Newcastle, Cootamundra, Lake Macquarie, North Shore, Orange, Upper Hunter, Ballina, Northern Tablelands, The Entrance and Coffs Harbour for their contributions to this debate. I also thank Mr Temporary Speaker, the member for Albury, for his contribution. The member for Albury has been a great supporter of Landcare as Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Landcare.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): Thank you. I congratulate the member for Tamworth on the motion.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I also thank the member for Wallsend for her patience to allow members to make a contribution to this debate to clearly demonstrate the importance of Landcare across New South Wales. It has been enlightening to hear about the projects that are being undertaken right across this great State of ours. I also thank the outgoing Chair of Landcare, Rob Dulhunty, for his dedicated services over the past 10 years. He has been at the forefront of driving change in Landcare. There is a groundswell of support for those changes right across the State—I can feel it. I congratulate Rob Dulhunty and the chief executive officer, Adrian Zammit. We welcome the new chair of NSW Landcare, Stephanie Cameron, from Tamworth, who has a passion for the organisation. I know she will carry on its great work and will introduce new initiatives and push the boundaries for Landcare.

Landcare has had strong support from the New South Wales Government since 2015, which has made a real difference to it on the ground. I know that funding will be a challenge into the future. Adrian Zammit is actively looking at every option available. He is knocking on doors right across the spectrum—whether it be the Federal, State or local governments, the corporate sector and the philanthropic sector—to obtain sustainable funding for Landcare into the future. I cannot think of a better time to get on board and support Landcare, just like the members who have contributed to this debate have advocated for Landcare.

With the backing of the New South Wales Government, Landcare NSW and NSW Local Landcare Services have been able to achieve outcomes that otherwise might not have happened. I congratulate both the New South Wales Government and Landcare NSW on their efforts and this partnership. We are all confident that Landcare is as strong an organisation today as it has been for many decades. I commend Landcare, which is a professional and credible organisation doing important work. I thank its staff, volunteers and the local Landcare coordinators who are making it happen. Without them, a lot of its projects would not be able to progress and the volunteers would not have the support and impetus to keep going. I thank Landcare NSW for its work. I look forward to seeing what its team will achieve well into the future. I also thank the support of Clementine Julian and the office of the Hon. Rick Colless—he has been an absolute stalwart for Landcare. We look forward to continuing that partnership well into the future. I thank members of the House for their support.

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

Motion agreed to.

CARDIFF RAILWAY STATION PARKING

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (13:05): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that Cardiff Railway Station is one of the most heavily used stations in the Newcastle area.
- (2) Considers that there is inadequate commuter parking at and around the station.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Transport to address and improve parking issues at Cardiff Railway Station as a matter of urgency.

Dozens of commuters were slapped with parking fines during April when inspectors descended upon Cardiff railway station. Resident complaints prompted Lake Macquarie City Council to conduct a compliance exercise, and parking inspectors issued fines to drivers parked on land in Mary Street in the vicinity of Cardiff railway station. Commuters have routinely been forced to make use of non-parking areas around the station in order to catch trains to Sydney because of the utter lack of parking. In 2014, soon after the upgrade to Cardiff station, a Belmont resident commented in the *Newcastle Herald*:

Thank God they put the elevator at the station—they want you to go there but where the ... hell do you park?

The then member for Charlestown, Andrew Cornwell, shot down suggestions that a new car park facility be built near the station to help address this issue. But four years later the problem has persisted, causing headaches for local residents and for commuters who want to utilise the station. I do not say that the council did the wrong thing by conducting the compliance exercise, especially as it was in response to complaints from residents. However, council also did the right thing in deciding to waive the fees later, especially because there was no signage at the Mary Street land designating it as a non-parking area and the ongoing parking crush that happens around the station every day. A resident who contacted my office said: I get that people heading to Sydney need somewhere to park but the situation as it stands is putting too much pressure on those who live around the station. I understand that. Cardiff station is one of Newcastle's busiest transport hubs, with hundreds of thousands of people using the station every year. For residents of Wallsend and Newcastle's western suburbs Cardiff station is the vital key point of connection with Sydney. One constituent told me:

I work in Sydney frequently. I used to be able to catch the bus to Cardiff Station. This gave me enough time to get the train and arrive in Sydney before nine—now, with changes to the local bus routes and time tables, I have no option but to drive to the station. Even before the sun comes up, there are hardly any parks around the station.

Indeed, many people travelling to metropolitan areas from the western suburbs for work, appointments and leisure pursuits rely on Cardiff station. Commuters must park on surrounding residential streets, clogging the roads and potentially leading to an increase in local crime rates compared to the State average. According to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research the rate of motor vehicle theft in the Cardiff area was 210 per cent higher than the State average from July 2017 to June 2018. The rate of steal from motor vehicle in the area was 178 per cent higher than the State average over the same period. Another constituents said:

If I come back from Sydney late, it's often a risky proposition walking to my car from Cardiff station. Cardiff is a great place, but the streets around the station are dark and more than a little scary for a woman walking alone.

We need a safe, secure car parking area close to the station. This Government has maintained the former member for Charlestown's utter lack of interest in the issue, steadfastly refusing to engage with Lake Macquarie City Council on the Glendale transport interchange. A new station at Glendale would massively reduce the pressure on Cardiff, and a modern station could be built with suitable transport linkages and parking facilities. As usual, though, this Government thinks that Newcastle ends in Hamilton. I call on the Minister for Transport to listen to the needs of Cardiff residents and Cardiff commuters. I ask this Government to take the transport needs of the western suburbs seriously. We are a rapidly growing community and we have enormous economic potential, but this potential is being untapped due to this Government's neglect. I want the Government to pay attention to our Wallsend constituents, please.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (13:12): It is an honour and a privilege to speak on the member for Wallsend's motion on parking at Cardiff railway station. In the last 7½ years this Government has delivered a number of station upgrades, including accessibility upgrades, car parking upgrades and improvements to public transport interchanges not only across Sydney but also across New South Wales. In the electorate of Oatley I am the expert when it comes to upgrades to stations and commuter car parks. Oatley station has been upgraded. Narwee station has been upgraded. The commuter car park at Oatley has been upgraded from 18 spots to 100. Funding is in the budget for the upgrade of the station at Beverly Hills, and the plans have recently gone on public exhibition. In downtown Riverwood we are mounting a campaign and putting pressure on the Premier and the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure for an upgrade to the station there.

This Government is committed to delivering safe, modern and accessible public transport across the State, not just in Sydney. Since 2011 more than 450 projects have been completed or are underway across the State, including accessibility upgrades, more car parking spaces, improvements to transport interchanges and facilities such as Opal-activated bike sheds. To date we have made 173 of the 300 stations on the suburban and intercity networks accessible, meaning that more than 90 per cent of customer trips across the network are

accessible. I understand that the member for Wallsend is concerned about accessibility at Cardiff station and I am sure that she has raised her concerns with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure.

A further \$882 million will be invested in the Transport Access Program [TAP] over the forward estimates, on top of the \$1.2 billion already invested since 2011 to fund accessibility upgrades at stations, ferry wharves and transport interchanges. This means the total investment in the program is set to exceed \$2 billion. At present, 174 of the 307 stations on the suburban and intercity networks are accessible, which covers around 90 per cent of all customer journeys. On the Metro network itself more than 4,000 car parking spaces are planned or underway as part of the Sydney Metro North West project, including at Bella Vista, Cherrybrook, Kellyville and Showground. On the South West Rail Link, which opened in 2015, 1,205 spaces were provided at Leppington and Edmondson Park stations. On the TAP we have delivered approximately 6,000 new spaces since coming to government. The stations include Killara, Kiama, Hornsby, Holsworthy, Padstow, Revesby, Penrith, Blacktown, Dubbo, Engadine, Fairfield, Richmond, Rockdale, Woy Woy, Yass, Thirroul and Springwood. We have completed our commitment to hand back around 1,200 staff parking spaces to commuters since coming to government.

Newcastle will soon have a world-class integrated public transport system, futureproofed—I love the word—active transport networks and more efficient traffic networks that support buses, taxis, commercial vehicles and private vehicle movements. The Newcastle City Centre Parking Strategy sets out a series of principles and opportunities for parking in the Newcastle city centre. These findings broadly align with findings of previous studies performed by or for Newcastle City Council. We are taking upgrading public transport very seriously after 16 long, hard, stressful years when those opposite were in government and nothing happened.

Members opposite did very little in respect of train station upgrades and railway line upgrades. They had 10 transport plans, but they did not implement one of them—in fact, we remember the 2003 State election when the then Labor Minister for Transport, Carl Scully, announced no public transport strategy. We are getting on with the job of upgrading train stations, rebuilding train stations and ensuring that commuters have a place to park legally, so they are not forced to park in local streets. That is why we have campaigned very strongly for a train station at Beverly Hills. We are getting on with the job of delivering on that and on delivering upgrades across the State. Government members are getting on with the job of ensuring that we have the best public transport system in the world.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (13:18): I begin my contribution to the debate on the member for Wallsend's motion on Cardiff railway station parking by acknowledging that she is a passionate member. I endorse her comments and her strong and passionate representation on behalf of the people of Wallsend, including for parking at the Cardiff train station. Unfortunately, inadequate commuter car parking is an issue that is rife throughout the network, despite what the member for Oatley said on this matter. Inadequate car parking is particularly problematic in my electorate of Campbelltown. The state of commuter car parking in Campbelltown can only be described as disgraceful. Finding a car space at Campbelltown train station is practically impossible—in fact, this State Government had a better chance of winning the recent by-election in Wagga Wagga than commuters have of getting a car parking spot at Campbelltown by 7.00 a.m.

Development in surrounding areas, particularly in Camden, has placed a great deal of pressure on substandard infrastructure such as rail. Every day hundreds of residents in Oran Park and Gregory Hills jump in their cars and head west, bound for Campbelltown train station. Many leave before the sun rises so that they can secure one of the limited commuter car parking spaces. The increase in demand from new residents in the Macarthur region has far outweighed the supply of car parking spaces. Indeed, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, and the Premier, are all responsible for the mess.

This Government has failed in its duty to make sure infrastructure is in place to accommodate the new residents in our region. It is not good enough to pass the buck, which we all too often hear. I was delighted to hear the member for Oatley refer to the 16 years of Labor Government but that means nothing to people out in the suburbs. They want plans for tomorrow to take us into the future. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the word "plan" as "a detailed proposal for doing or achieving something". If it was the plan of this Government to dump thousands of residents into a small area without adequate services, then my congratulations on a job well done. That is precisely what it is doing. However, I can assure the Government that there will be no pats on the back from me, the residents of Campbelltown or the residents of the wider Macarthur. It beggars belief that this Government seeks to take credit on the broader scale, rather than to acknowledge the seriousness of this issue.

The lack of commuter car parking spaces is not the only problem we face in our region. We also have consistently late trains, non-air-conditioned carriages and the removal of direct services to Parramatta. Every decision made by this Government regarding the T8 service has been detrimental to the commuters of Campbelltown. But the root of everything that is wrong with this Liberal-Nationals State Government was when the Premier, in her then capacity as Minister for Transport, promised to build an extra 450 commuter car spaces

at Campbelltown station. Not one sod has been turned and not even one commuter car space is planned to be delivered.

That failure by this Government proves that it cannot be trusted. Before an election it will say one thing and then it will do something completely different after the election. In this instance, the Government has done nothing. My Labor colleague and member for Macquarie Fields, Anoulack Chanthivong, has also been vocal about this issue, but the silence of our other neighbouring members has been deafening. I commend Dr Mike Freeland, the Federal member for Macarthur, for being a strong advocate. My message to the Government is simple: Deliver the car park that was promised prior to the 2015 State election.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:22): I speak to the motion of the member for Wallsend. I hope that when the member thanks all members for their contributions to this debate, which is her normal practice, she will note that the member for Campbelltown did not comment on the Cardiff railway station. The member for Campbelltown focused only on his electorate. Transport for NSW plays a key role in enabling accessibility and social inclusion. Commuter car parking [CCP] is an important component of developing and delivering integrated transport networks. I note that the Minister for Disability Services is in the Chamber. He is also a fierce advocate for accessibility and social inclusion at train stations right across New South Wales. Public transport interchanges are the gateway to the public transport network. This is where customers join or transfer between modes on the transport system, including combinations of rail, bus, car, taxi, ferry, light rail, bicycle and walking.

Transport interchanges encompass infrastructure facilities to provide shelter and amenity in a secure comfortable environment whilst waiting, they also provide journey information and allow for safe, quick and easy customer access to the transport network. CCP is an important component of transport interchanges. Transport interchanges are also a key focal point within town centres and neighbourhoods. The development of an interchange and any associated CCP needs to be complementary to the land use in the catchment area and integrate with the local landform. It needs to acknowledge heritage and be sympathetic to the surrounding urban domain. CCP development to date has been undertaken as part of the Transport Access Program, which has funded station upgrades, interchange improvements, ferry wharf upgrades and commuter car parks across New South Wales.

This program has principally focused on the 580 major interchanges in the transport network, including all rail stations, all major ferry wharves, all bus T-way stops and major bus stops along "trunk" bus corridors. Decisions about this program have been informed by a prioritisation process that considers the level of demand, the role of the interchange and the local demographics or users of the interchange. CCP planning has been guided by the 2012 NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan. This document has provided the framework for planning an integrated transport system and set out the overall priorities to guide where funds are invested.

Relevant to CCP, the vision for transport interchanges set out in the 2012 master plan include the development within the walking and cycling catchments of local centres to improve access to local services and public transport that link to major centres, with seamless interchange opportunities; outer suburbs to be supported by enhanced road connections and interchange improvements that make it easier to use public transport; and in regional New South Wales to provide CCP facilities or links from motorways to train stations and bus interchanges to allow people in regional areas to link car trips to public transport services as part of their journey. The New South Wales Government committed to reviewing the Long Term Transport Master Plan after five years; Future Transport is the result of that review. It will replace the 2012 plan and be the new approach to planning transport and engaging with customers. This 40-year strategy will focus on customer needs as well as the technological, economic and social changes ahead, and will ultimately guide CCP provisions in New South Wales.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:26): I support the member for Wallsend's motion regarding the inadequacy of the car parking at the heavily used Cardiff railway station and urging the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to fix this inadequacy as a matter of urgency. I commend the member for Wallsend for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. This problem with car parking at Cardiff station has been a long-standing issue for which I have seen no resolution in my time as mayor of Lake Macquarie and as the member for Charlestown. The people of Charlestown use Cardiff station because it is the closest train station for them to catch a limited-stop service on the Newcastle and Central Coast line to Sydney.

There is no denying that Cardiff railway station is one of the most heavily used stations in the region and that in recent years it has seen significant growth in the number of commuters who use it. Indeed, figures show that more 300,000 commuters per year use the station. Unfortunately, appropriate planning was not put in place to provide for the growth in the number of commuters. Cardiff station has a very limited scope for expanded car parking due to the adjoining residential houses and challenging topography of the area, which also restricts accessibility. I note that the member for Wallsend has fought for many years for increased accessibility and a longer platform at the station. Unfortunately, the upgrades were short-sighted and planning for increased car spaces did not follow.

The New South Wales Government lists a commuter car park as a facility on its website for Cardiff station. However, upon arrival commuters are often disappointed to find that there are no unused car spaces between 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. That is very misleading. The station is surrounded by houses and residents are sick of the parking congestion. Limited parking is also an issue for the elderly or less able bodied, who are unable to walk long distances to get to the train station. Indeed, car parking spaces are so limited that commuters are parking illegally and risking fines on a daily basis. Lake Macquarie City Council recently transferred its landholding in the immediate area of Cardiff station to Transport for NSW, which included part of the car park, for \$1 to maximise the use of available land for car parking purposes. Minor access and car park improvements were undertaken as a result of that transfer, but the car spaces are full and the streets are lined with cars. We need a long-term solution.

The Minister repeatedly says that he wants people to utilise public transport in this State but does little to encourage them. Given that there is such limited space for more car spaces around this station, it is time to start looking at other alternatives such as the development of a multistorey car park or investing in the development of a new train station and facilities to allow commuters to transfer easily between modes of transport. For many years it has been the position of Lake Macquarie City Council that the best long-term solution is the development of the Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange, which would include the provision of a new train station. The New South Wales Government's Hunter Regional Plan 2036 also identifies the Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange as a high-priority infrastructure project because of its "potential to unlock growth and improve the connectivity and viability of major centres throughout the Hunter region", yet the project was tragically denied funding yet again in the 2018-2019 budget.

Business interrupted.

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

Announcements

DEAN SHACHAR

The SPEAKER: Today is the last day for Dean Shachar, who works for Ms Pru Goward, the Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Thank you for your commitment to the Parliament, your professionalism and your good-natured approach to everything you do. Good luck for your future.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to Mr Barry Smith, soon to be the former Hunters Hill Council general manager as he is retiring next Wednesday after 22 years of service, who is a guest of the Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister for State, and the member for Lane Cove. I welcome the students and teacher from Thomas Hassall Anglican College, guests of the Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, Minister for Ageing, and the member for Mulgoa. I also welcome a special guest to the Chamber, Kirstin Alexander, a guest of the member for Tweed. I acknowledge Honor Gullifer who is being mentored by the member for Port Macquarie as part of the Sydney University's Faculty of Health Science Leadership Mentoring Program, a guest of the member for Port Macquarie.

I also acknowledge Hana Flanderova, Consul General of the Czech Republic, a guest of the Parliamentary Secretary for Education and the Illawarra and South Coast, and the member for Kiama. It is nice to see you again, Hana. I also acknowledge and welcome to the gallery members of the Probus Club of Neutral Bay, guests of the member for North Shore. I also welcome Jamie Wedgwood, who is a work experience student from Sydney Secondary College, Leichhardt, and is based in the office of the member for Balmain this week, a guest of the member for Balmain. I welcome Richard Whan and Neroli Jager from Suffolk Park, guests of the Hon. Ben Franklin, MLC. I also welcome students and teachers from Georges River College Hurstville Boys Campus, guests of the member for Kogarah. We welcome you to the Chamber. I hope you enjoy question time.

Question Time

CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:20): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that Infrastructure Australia found that the CBD light rail would worsen congestion, not generate time savings for commuters and involve substantial disturbance costs, why did the Premier ignore those expert warnings and inflict this shambolic project on Sydney?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:20): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question because I would hardly be taking infrastructure advice from members opposite. Remember the CBD to Rozelle metro? Half a billion dollars and nothing to show for it. They promised the M4; they did not build it. They promised the M5 and fast rail to Wollongong, Bondi—you name it. They did nothing for 16 years. To the specific issue raised by the lazy Leader of the Opposition, I say this: Back in the day, early on, Infrastructure NSW wanted this Government to focus just on roads. It did not want to build the north-west rail line or the light rail. We said that the people of this State deserve good public transport. The people of this State deserve the north-west rail line. Those opposite promised that rail line 12 times and never built it. They promised light rail and never built it. I say to the people of New South Wales—

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. I will stop the clock shortly. The member for Maroubra will come to order. I call the member for Blue Mountains to order for the first time. I asked members to come to order and she ignored me.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The good people of this State will judge us by our record in building public transport and infrastructure.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will cease interjecting. Members who continue to interject will have an early exit from the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: For 16 years, they got cancelled projects, broken promises and billions wasted. That is their record. I remember when we first announced the north-west metro, they opposed it because they wanted double-deck, old-fashioned carriages; they did not want a metro. After promising it 12 times, they never delivered. When we embarked on the Inner West Light Rail they had promised that project for years in government; they never delivered it. We came to government and delivered the Inner West Light Rail. Then they told us that no-one would use it and now they are complaining that we need to put on more carriages. The member of Balmain stood up for that project from day one; he supported it because he knows how much his constituents want it. There is the north-west rail line, the south-west rail, the light rail project—which, I say to members opposite, the member for Maroubra want us to extend to his electorate. That is what he tells his local paper. The member for Newcastle said he did not want light rail; now he wants us to extend it. Crackers is in Newcastle now telling us he wants us to extend his light rail.

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

Ms Kate Washington: Two kilometres isn't enough, Gladys. Two kilometres does not make a light rail.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: There we go. The member for Port Stephens says she wants the light rail extended. Members opposite never supported it and now they want it extended.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time. She will cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Of course, as the great transport Minister would be able to tell us, transport patronage across the network has increased by 30 per cent.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If we had taken the advice back in the days of Infrastructure NSW there would not be a single new major public transport project. I am glad we stuck to our guns. I am glad we built the North West Rail Link and the South West Rail Link.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am glad we took the advice of experts. I say to the people of Sydney that I look forward to the day when I ride the first light rail vehicle down George Street because that project is going to change Sydney forever.

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the Premier. Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber. I have asked many members to cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I remind members opposite of their failed projects such as the Tcard. That worked well for them, did it not? They only wasted \$100 million on that. The greatest crime of all was when they said that they would build a metro to Western Sydney and the Federal Government gave them \$80 million for planning and they had to give the money back. They could not even plan that project. They had to give the

money back. I hope that every question time I get asked a question on infrastructure. Members opposite should ask me more.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will come to order or he will be removed from the Chamber. He is embarrassing himself.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government providing the best possible start for our children, and are there any related matters?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:26): I thank the member for Heathcote for his important question regarding early childhood education. I fondly recall our visit a few weeks ago to a preschool in Heathcote, where we talked about our policies. I wish all constituents with preschools in their communities a promising future. Just as members opposite failed on infrastructure, they also failed in early childhood education. Now in New South Wales every year we are spending double what they spent in their last year in government. That gives an indication of how much we are investing in early childhood education.

I am especially proud of our policy that makes us the first State in the nation to provide subsidies for three-year-olds to attend preschool. We are delivering on that through a \$42 million investment in infrastructure to allow preschools to expand and accept additional children. This week Minister for Early Childhood Education Sarah Mitchell and I visited a wonderful preschool in Ryde, which is represented by an outstanding member, to provide the first funding batch of \$6 million to contribute towards the 1,000 new places that we are delivering this year. Specifically, the first batch of funding will provide about 400 additional places. It means that preschools across the State will be able to accept additional children because we are providing incentives for parents to send their three-year-olds as well as their four-year-olds to early childhood education.

I know the good Minister for Education will appreciate that early childhood education is instrumental in starting a lifelong education journey for our young people. Evidence shows that children who have access to a good preschool have a better chance of attaining good concentration levels and good skills in the early part of their time at primary school. It was wonderful to announce the release of the first round of funding and to again demonstrate our commitment not just to the bricks and mortar of new preschool and school buildings but also to what happens within them.

I am pleased to say that to make that happen the Government will be investing nearly \$200 million over the next four years to subsidise the cost of three-year-olds at preschool, which is the single biggest investment in early childhood education in New South Wales. The \$200 million we are investing to provide subsidies for three-year-olds is the greatest contribution to early childhood education that any government has ever made in the history of this State. We are extremely proud of that. As well as being great for the educational outcomes and prospects of children and families, we know that every little bit we can do to help save cost-of-living dollars is also very welcome.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Maitland objects to this policy she should talk to the Premier after question time rather than interjecting and trying to debate it now.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I do not know why the member for Maitland does not support more preschool places.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Members opposite do not seem to care that the additional incentive to send three-year-olds to preschool will save families about \$825 a year. That is not too bad if—

[*Interruption*]

What is the member for Maroubra's problem? They promise a lot but they do not know how to deliver a strong budget. They cannot get the dollars together to make investments. I am thrilled to say that the young children who are starting preschool this year and next year will have a phenomenal chance of getting a job in the future. I am sure the Treasurer will have more to say later in question time about the job figures that came out today. Not only does New South Wales have the lowest youth unemployment rate in the nation—which is more than 3 per cent below the national average—but we are also creating more than triple the number of jobs for young people than is the rest of Australia. That is how a government provides a solid future. It invests in education and jobs. [*Extension of time*]

That is how we provide a strong future for this State and its people. We invest in education and create jobs. The rate at which we are doing it is unparalleled in our State's history. I also wanted to talk about the important role that preschools play—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: What about three-year-olds in the regions?

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Maitland that she is on two calls to order. If she has a problem with this policy she can talk to the Premier about it.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Last time I looked there were three-year-olds in the regions, for the benefit of the member for Maitland.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Last week I was pleased to visit a local preschool in the great electorate of Dubbo and to make an announcement. Because we know that preschools are the heartbeat of our communities, we are providing \$3 million through the preschool network to support our farming communities who are doing it tough. Preschools will now have the discretion to identify families who are doing it tough and provide them with subsidies during the drought. We know that some families do not put up their hand for help. We also know that, through the supportive environment they provide, preschools can help to identify those families who need help and deliver it by ensuring that three- and four-year-olds do not miss out on preschool because mum and dad have to work extra hours to put food on the table during the drought.

That is just one of the many examples of us demonstrating our compassion as a government and our ability to deliver where things are needed. It also shows that we appreciate the great sense of community that early childhood education services such as preschools offer. That is why we are so committed to investing in early childhood education into the future. It provides education, a sense of community and gives kids the best start in life possible.

CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:33): My question is directed to the Premier. I note the Premier's answer to the Leader of the Opposition earlier today that she has taken expert advice in relation to the light rail. In 2011 Infrastructure Australia wrote to the Premier and advised that traffic intersections all along the route would be worsened if the light rail were constructed. Will the Premier provide the House with the detailed traffic modelling that her Government has done showing that Infrastructure Australia was wrong?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:34): The question is wrong. It is Infrastructure NSW, dummy, not Infrastructure Australia. Infrastructure Australia is the national body.

Mr Michael Daley: It is an Infrastructure Australia 2013 brief. I can provide it to you.

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

Mr Michael Daley: Infrastructure Australia wrote to Les Wielinga—

The SPEAKER: The member for Maroubra does not have the right to enhance his question. The member will resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: —on 18 July 2013.

The SPEAKER: Order! I place the member for Maroubra on three calls to order. Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The alternative leader has a huge problem if he thinks Infrastructure Australia sits down and does traffic modelling for intersections. He does not even know what he is talking about.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I go to the broader question; it was exactly the same question that the Leader of the Opposition asked me.

Ms Jodi McKay: Because you are not answering it.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member needs to learn about transport, by the way.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will not be offensive to each other. It is not a good look.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I said in my answer to the previous question, the Infrastructure NSW advice to government in general was focused on roads. It did not focus on public transport.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Maroubra is skating on thin ice. He had no right to enhance his question when I directed him to resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I am referring specifically to an Infrastructure Australia document dated 13 July 2013. On page 3 it says, "Modelling undertaken in consideration of light rail options,"

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: You said 2011 in your question.

The SPEAKER: I think the member for Maroubra is a bit confused about all this.

Mr Michael Daley: Let's go to the videotape. I said Infrastructure Australia.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Maroubra asked me a question about a report from 2011. He is now quoting from a report of 2013. He stood up and asked me a question about 2011. He is now changing what he asked me. But I will return to the topic.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is being relevant to the question she was asked. There is no point of order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: While the member for Maroubra works out what he is asking me, I will talk about the great project we are building. I pay tribute to those people who at the time gave us advice on those intersections, because everybody was predicting "carmageddon" in Sydney. Everybody was saying that when we build the project all the traffic will stop. Some intersections have actually improved the traffic flow.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will come to order.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! I just ruled that the Premier is being relevant to the question she was asked.

Mr Clayton Barr: But I did not quite understand the term that the Premier just used. Could she repeat it and define it for me?

The SPEAKER: Is that a supplementary question?

Mr Clayton Barr: No. I am just confused.

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock will resume his seat or it becomes a supplementary question.

Mr Ryan Park: Carmageddon?

The SPEAKER: Has the member for Keira not heard that expression?

Mr Ryan Park: I prefer pictures.

The SPEAKER: I know you prefer little pictures rather than words.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I commend the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure because there has been an 11 per cent drop in people driving to the central business district. More people are catching public transport than ever before.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: What those opposite cannot handle is that we are building a better New South Wales, a better Sydney for the people of this State.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My question was very simple. Will the Premier release traffic modelling to the public?

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant to the question she was asked.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Maroubra, given he was the shadow Minister for Roads, should know that traffic modelling is always available in these issues.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Those opposite are offering the people of New South Wales no public transport projects, no road projects, no schools, no hospitals—they cannot afford them and, even if they could afford them, they could not build them.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They are saying to the people of New South Wales that there is not a single major project they support. Do they support WestConnex?

Government members: No.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The North West Rail Link?

Government members: No.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Newcastle Light Rail?

Government members: No.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Sydney light rail?

Government members: No.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Parramatta light rail?

Government members: No.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They support nothing.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is some aggression around the Chamber. The member for Port Stephens will come to order. I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. Some members continue to defy directions from the Chair to come to order. I place the member for Kogarah on three calls to order.

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (14:41): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business. What is the New South Wales Government's vision for regional New South Wales, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternatives to this plan?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will not discuss other members' attire.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:41): We know it is Thursday—it gets silly in this place. I apologise to the students in the gallery. I thank the member for Myall Lakes for his question and for the work he is doing in his community—especially with rolling out the Stronger Country Communities Fund, which is a significant fund that we are investing in regional communities. I noticed on the weekend that the member for Myall Lakes made a great announcement of \$605,000 from the Stronger Country Communities Fund to build a new six-bedroom women's shelter. That facility will be run and managed by the Great Lakes Women's Shelter group. That is a fantastic announcement. It is exactly the sort of investment we want to see from the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government—investment in regional communities.

I watched the media clips over and over again. The member for Myall Lakes stole the show on the weekend with such a phenomenal announcement. But they did not show some other stuff that was happening in the Myall Lakes electorate, such as the Country Labor conference. I am not sure whether many people heard about it, but there was a Country Labor conference at the weekend. It was a real shame that the member for Myall Lakes stole the show with such a significant announcement—

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: —because it was an opportunity for people to hear from the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party about Labor's vision for regional New South Wales. A number of months ago we announced a 20-year vision for regional New South Wales, one that has identified industries where we believe we will see future growth.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Blue Mountains wishes to have a private conversation she will do so outside the Chamber.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: We are underpinning that vision document with seven principles and guidelines on how to unlock that investment, that prosperity and that opportunity in regional New South Wales. As we have said before, we will be using the proceeds of the Snowy sale to underpin that investment—not in

small projects, but in generational, transformational projects. We have a strong vision—one that we can stand by because of our track record in delivering for the regions. I noticed at the weekend that Country Labor announced a vision—it went back to announcing \$4.2 billion from the Snowy sale. Members should look at the last two budget reply speeches by the Leader of the Opposition. If they did they would see that he has already committed those funds three times. On the weekend he committed those funds for the fourth time.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Maitland to order for the third time. I asked her to stop calling out.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: He has committed the Snowy fund this time. He is going to say he wants to invest it in making streets prettier, help people move to the bush—I commend that—to pour money into renewable energy and to create jobs. Let us break that down. On this side of the House we have a number of funds. We have the Infrastructure Fund, the Restart Fund, the Rebuild Fund, Resources for Regions, we are investing in hospitals and schools, we have the Climate Change Fund that we are going to invest in renewables and, of course, the Regional Attraction Fund that we are using to attract investment to the regions. The Opposition is pretending that it is new money; it is going to use the Snowy sale proceeds. We know what members opposite are really good at; they are good at shuffling money, pretending here, take from there. We have all these funds already. All they are going to do is replace the funds that we already have in place for the regions and swap over the Snowy funds.

The SPEAKER: This is the last warning for the member for Maitland.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: This is the old three-card trick and Labor cannot be trusted. I will tell the House why members opposite cannot be trusted. We know the deficit that we inherited in 2011 after 16 years of Labor.

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock should be careful. He should not call out.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: But more importantly, I will tell the House why they cannot be trusted. As I said, Country Labor held its conference on the weekend. We already know that Country Labor cannot manage its own finances—it is close to \$1.6 million in debt. It cannot even run the branch or the faction of the Labor Party called Country Labor. To my surprise, again, the chair of Country Labor is the candidate for the Labor Party for Monaro, Mr Bryce Wilson.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Keira that there is really no need to call out.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Mr Wilson's vision for Monaro will be how to bankrupt our seat and then the State, the same way he has bankrupted Country Labor. Normally we do not allow bankrupts to sit in this House.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: As I said, we do not normally allow bankrupts to sit in this House. But I am more than happy for Bryce Wilson to bankrupt Country Labor. The only slogan Labor has for regional New South Wales will be: insolvent, inept and incapable. I normally come to this House and we talk about the things that we are building. Today I was shocked to see that the shadow Minister for no water made an announcement in the middle of the drought that the Opposition does support the raising of the dam wall for Warragamba Dam. We can see what this is about. This is all about Greens votes again, and this is a typical—

The SPEAKER: Some members should cease calling out. Members will stop arguing and having discussions across the Chamber. The Clerk will stop the clock. None of these arguments should be occurring. Who are the member for Riverstone and the member for Kogarah arguing with? Stop shouting across the Chamber. Is the member for Keira being personal?

Mr Ryan Park: No.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Maitland that she has had her last warning. The Clerk has stopped the clock. I will wait for the House to come to order. Several members are on three calls to order and will be removed from the Chamber for the rest of the afternoon if they continue to interject. I know that does not worry some of them, but it may worry their electorates. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the second time. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the third time. I remind the member for Keira that he is on three calls to order. I just asked him to come to order. Next time the member for Bankstown and the member for Keira interject they will leave the Chamber together. The member for Bankstown can look after the member for Keira for the rest of the afternoon, because someone needs to.

[Extension of time]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The point about Warragamba Dam wall is that at a time when we know how valuable a resource water is—it is not just about lifting the dam wall—they are also talking about lowering

Warragamba Dam's full storage level. They want to get rid of the water that is in the dam. Do they not realise that when it is lowered to a certain level it will trigger the desalination plant? They will have to use energy to pump more water into the dam. That is their energy policy; that is the environmental policy of those opposite. These sorts of policies are kneejerk reactions. Watch this space: I think the Leader of the Opposition might have something to say about this because that is the shadow Minister for Water starting his campaign for leadership of the Labor Party.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I love some of the stuff that is in the Country Labor conference document. Normally we come to this place and have a bit of fun and make a joke, but this is the joke document of all time. I love this statement, "NSW Labor will provide a statewide system of roads coordinated with the Australia-wide system of roads, designed and constructed to meet the needs of drivers and the transportation of road freight." I think they are called highways. They want to build highways. I do not know if this document was produced in 2018 or 1818. I am not quite sure yet.

Is this a recycling of assets or policy? There were a couple of other interesting statements including, "that there be a major investment in social and community housing". Guess what? We are already doing that. It continues, "... conference urges NSW Parliamentary Labor Party to adopt a comprehensive early childhood education policy in the lead-up to the 2019 State election that includes at least 15 hours per week of mandatory early childhood education for four-year-olds". In this year's budget the Government also announced funding for early childhood education for three-year-olds. They think they are going to cut funding to early childhood education. The Cessnock branch was very busy, Cootamundra branch was busy—

The SPEAKER: I advise the member for Cessnock not to respond.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The one I love the most, the biggest issue they were really worried about, was making sure that Country Labor employed two Country Labor organisers to manage branch issues. That is their big issue. More to come. [*Time expired.*]

CBD LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Ms JODI MCKAY (Strathfield) (14:50): My question is directed to the Premier. Did her Government approve \$500 million of interim liquidity funding to ensure that the CBD light rail project did not collapse into insolvency, which would have resulted in workers walking off the job?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:51): I do not know where the member for Strathfield has been, but both the Minister for Transport and I were asked exactly this same question in estimates. The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure got a couple and I got a couple. The shadow Minister should do her homework and read *Hansard*. The answer is there. Why would she come into this place and ask me a question she has already asked in estimates of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and of me? Lazy, lazy Labor. They do not do their homework. They have run out of questions already. That is the third question and they do not have any more..

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Has the Premier completed her answer?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: No.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield takes a point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: I am happy to repeat the question.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield does not need to repeat the question. The member will resume her seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: No. The Premier is being absolutely relevant to the question she was asked.

Ms Jodi McKay: If the Premier answered that question during the budget estimates hearing, she should give the answer now in the House.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Strathfield has repeated the question. I am happy to repeat the answer—read *Hansard*. The member for Strathfield asked the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and she asked me and we provided detailed answers. Read—

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will cease interjecting.

Ms Trish Doyle: Stop shrieking.

The SPEAKER: That is the pot calling the kettle black.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Interesting.

The SPEAKER: Yes, it is. The member for Blue Mountains will stop shrieking.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I love it when members opposite lecture us on the treatment of women. I love getting lectures from them. But we digress. I say this in all seriousness: The shadow Minister for Transport has been in the role now for how long? Three and a half years. She obviously chose to ignore, not to read or not to watch the estimates hearing conducted by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and also the estimates hearing that I did. Either she is completely lazy and ignorant or they have run out of questions.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier has been asked a question—

The SPEAKER: The Premier answered the question.

Ms Kate Washington: She is answering it only by reference to something else when she could be answering the question right here.

The SPEAKER: The Premier answered the question.

Ms Kate Washington: She has had plenty of time to prepare an answer.

The SPEAKER: I do not need a lecture from the member for Port Stephens. The member will resume her seat. Next time she does that, she will be removed from the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Today's question time strategy demonstrates that Opposition members do not understand infrastructure, they do not know how to build projects, they cannot even be bothered to follow information that has already been publicly released. Every time we have embarked on a major public transport project they have opposed it. The people of Sydney will see the benefits of the light rail project when it opens. I cannot wait for it to open.

The SPEAKER: The member for Bankstown has had her last warning.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I cannot wait for it to open. Labor has opposed every project we have announced. I say to the people of Sydney: We are proud to provide public transport infrastructure. I leave the House with this, just to show how they do not stand for anything. I will read from an article in the *South Coast Courier* dated 2014:

South east politicians throw support behind light rail transport project in Randwick.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: "Support for the project came from the Federal member"—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume her seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. Hopefully, the member for Strathfield has another point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129 and to an insolvency payment made by the Government.

The SPEAKER: I do not know whether or not this will be relevant.

Ms Jodi McKay: It is not in regard to an article in the *South Coast Courier*.

The SPEAKER: I do not know. The member will resume her seat. I do not know what the Premier is about to read, whether or not it is relevant, until I hear it.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I suggest that the tactics committee opposite sharpen its approach. I suggest the shadow Minister for Transport actually do some homework and that the Leader of the Opposition do the right thing and admit he knows nothing about transport or infrastructure.

CTP SCHEME

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (14:56): I address my question to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property. How is the New South Wales Government stopping excessive profits by insurers under the CTP scheme and how does it compare with the approach of the Labor Government?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (14:56): That is a very good question from the member for Ku-ring-gai and I thank him for it. The member brought his legal skills to the fore when we were redesigning the scheme for the benefit of those injured on the roads and for the benefit of motorists. Because of his assistance we have a great scheme now. I know that he was concerned about insurer super profits. We were concerned about insurer super profits and even those opposite were concerned about them. They were very concerned about insurer super profits. And so they should be. In September 2016 the shadow Minister at the time said—

Mr John Sidoti: Who was it?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It was the member for Swansea. The shadow Minister at the time was very concerned; Labor was very concerned with super profits. They said, "We must address insurer super profits." Again in February 2017 the shadow Minister for Labor said—

Mr John Sidoti: Who was it?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It was the member for Swansea. Please stop interrupting. Labor said, "We must tackle insurer super profits." What did they say about super profits in March 2017? "We must ensure that we resolve the big problem of insurer super profits." Even last month they were on Channel 7 talking about insurer super profits and the big end of town. Let us compare the approach taken by the two sides of the House—our side and their side. What do insurer super profits look like under Labor, which said it was worried about them? Did Labor tackle them when it was in government for 16 years? I will give the House some facts: in 2000 the insurer profit was 32 per cent.

Ms Yasmin Catley: I was a school kid.

The SPEAKER: Were you? Lucky you. We do not need to know.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Thirty-two per cent is not a super profit, 32 per cent is a super-duper profit. That is unbelievable. That netted insurance companies \$478 million. What about 2001? Does anyone think it got better? In 2001 under Labor insurer super profits were 31 per cent, or \$409 million, thank you very much. In 2002, was it getting better? It was 29 per cent.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Is that super or super-duper?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No, that is just super because it was 29 per cent; that is still a lazy \$377 million for insurance companies. In 2003 it was super-duper, 32 per cent. It goes on and on. In fact, while the Labor Party was in government its broken CTP scheme netted insurers a total profit of \$3.847 billion. That is money that went to super profits.

The SPEAKER: Government members are not helping. The member for Cessnock should listen carefully. He is losing interest and losing focus.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: How much of that \$3.8 billion do members think the Labor Government clawed back for the motorists and those injured on the road? Was it \$2 billion, \$1.5 billion, \$1 billion? It was zero, zilch, nichego, nothing, nada, niente, not a cent.

Mr John Sidoti: Niente, niente.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It was niente, niente. As I have already indicated, it was either incompetence, laziness or focusing on themselves rather than focusing on the people of this great State. This Government has reformed the scheme to make sure that it can claw back the super profits. What have we seen as a result of the new scheme? We said that the premiums would be, on average, \$528. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: Some members are finding it hard to comprehend the more complicated aspects of the Minister's answer. They need to concentrate. I know it is hard, and particularly for the member for Rockdale.

Mr Stephen Kamper: No, it is not hard for me at all. I understand insurance.

The SPEAKER: Listen carefully. Just be very careful.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: The member for Rockdale understands.

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock is also finding it difficult, I know. I find it hard.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: The member for Rockdale would acknowledge that more than 30 per cent is super-duper. The Government has made sure it is looking look after motorists by introducing a claw-back mechanism so that the super profits the Labor Party presided over are at an end. Not only that, it has made sure that the premiums are returned to motorists. We have \$300 million that we have returned to the

motorists—75 per cent has already been returned—and we are seeing a reduction in premiums. We predicted an average premium of \$528, which is about \$150 less than what it would have been. It is actually \$518 and I think it might come down a little bit more. It is great news for the motorist. When we compare Labor to our side of the House, we can see that Labor looked after the big end of town and vested interests, but it did nothing about super profits.

The SPEAKER: You do not like that, do you?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: We looked after the motorist, we looked after those injured on the roads and we are making sure that we are looking after the best interests of the people of our State.

LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTIONS

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:03): I direct my question to the Treasurer. Will he confirm that he will nominate for preselection in the electorate held by his Cabinet colleague, Mr Williams? And is this not more evidence of disunity inside the Liberal Party?

The SPEAKER: I will allow the question, but it is stretching the standing orders. Government members are not helping the Treasurer answer the question.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (15:04): I would have thought this week, after their big third place in Wagga Wagga on the weekend, that members opposite would come in here and be pumped up. They have been flat as a tack all week, no energy, nothing.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer should not encourage them. Many of them are on three calls to order. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: While they are obsessed with me, the Government is obsessed with delivering for the people of New South Wales, and that is what it does every day of the week.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will calm down and come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Today we had a policy from the water boy.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown will cease interjecting.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This is the guy who was advising John Robertson on the solar bonus scheme. The first policy the water boy has come out with today has been to reduce water—in a drought.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: The Treasurer should refer to the member by his correct title.

The SPEAKER: Quite true. I uphold the point of order. I ask the Treasurer to refer to the member for Kogarah by his correct title.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We know the Leader of the Opposition will soon be running for Drummoyne. The water boy's first policy is to reduce water. They put—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: There are two issues. One is that the ruling about the member's name being used appropriately.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear him call the member for Kogarah "water boy".

Ms Jodi McKay: He used "WB" again.

The SPEAKER: I am sorry. There is so much noise on the Opposition side of the Chamber that I cannot always hear what the Treasurer is saying. What is the second point?

Ms Jodi McKay: First, he should not use "WB". Secondly, this question is related directly to the Castle Hill electorate.

The SPEAKER: Which is not generally in the public interest?

Ms Jodi McKay: It does not involve the member for Kogarah.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Here is the former member for Newcastle who ran as the member for Strathfield—a former Liberal member running as a Labor member. I apologise to the good member for Kogarah. It is his first policy since his great, great inaugural speech—for which he is still in trouble—when he went after the unions and actually showed some true leadership, which is lacking opposite. The reality is that the policy announced this morning is incredibly dangerous. The member for Londonderry knows it all too well.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: It is relevance under Standing Order 129. We on this side of the House want to know if the Minister for no disability services is also going to be the member for no electorate?

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member will resume her seat. If the member for Port Stephens does that again she will be removed from the Chamber. What a display!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The reality is they are putting the politics of Summer Hill and Newtown above the people of Western Sydney.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Bankstown that she had her last warning three warnings ago.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Today they have asked the Premier questions on Infrastructure Australia—

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Blue Mountains to remove herself from the Chamber for a period of two hours for continuing to scream and yell.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: And Reckless Ryan—I am coming to you, Ryan, so wake up.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Blue Mountains to remove herself from the Chamber or I will direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove her under Standing Order 249 rather than Standing Order 249A. Stop calling out.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Blue Mountains left the Chamber at 15:08.]

Has the Treasurer concluded his answer? It would be nice if he had.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No, but I will not be able to finish it.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. It should have been stopped a while ago.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: It relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. The question was specifically about his nomination and he has not gone anywhere near that in the 4½ —

The SPEAKER: I guess that is due to the nature of the question that he was asked. Is that in the public interest? Is it to do with his portfolio? No. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I cannot finish my answer in 14 seconds.

The SPEAKER: Sure you can. Have a go. Are you sure? That is enough shouting. The member for Keira will follow the member for Blue Mountains if he continues to interject.

JOBS AND GROWTH

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:09): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will he update the House on the creation of jobs in New South Wales and are there any alternative projects?

The SPEAKER: The member for Keira received his last warning three warnings ago. Next time I hear him he will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (15:09): I thank the great member for Holsworthy for her question. As she knows, there is no doubt that New South Wales is the jobs capital of the nation. I am pleased to inform the House that 44,000 new jobs were created across Australia last month. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, of those 44,000 new jobs, 43,200 jobs were created in New South Wales.—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. The member for Rockdale will be removed from the Chamber shortly if he does not come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That means that 98 per cent of employment growth in Australia in August happened right here in our great State. Unemployment in New South Wales fell by 0.2 percentage points to 4.7 per cent, which is a whole percentage point lower than the rest of the country. No State even comes close in terms of jobs growth, and for the thirty-ninth consecutive month we have had the lowest unemployment rate of any State. The New South Wales youth unemployment rate is the lowest of any State—at three percentage points lower. Of course, it is a good economic result that is also going to be good for women. Last month's results were particularly good for women. The female unemployment rate is 4.8 per cent, the lowest of any State. New South Wales added 16,000 female jobs in the past 12 months—that is more than the rest of the country combined. Since the Government's election in 2015, almost 60 per cent of the new jobs here have been taken up by our great women—a great result for the people of New South Wales.

Ms Jodi McKay: It's not happening in the Liberal Party.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We are the party of women. I was on Twitter the other day and saw the Deputy Premier talk about the Country Labor conference. Along with the four other people following the conference, I saw that the Leader of the Opposition has come out with his new policy. It is called Local Jobs First. It sounds good, but I thought: I have heard this before, Local Jobs First. It is the same name as the failed policy that Kristina Keneally took to the 2011 election, that John Robertson ran with after that, and that the Leader of the Opposition took to the 2015 election. The lazy Opposition leader has simply recycled the same policy from the past eight years, and he could not even be bothered to change the name.

The SPEAKER: I am sick of the sound of the member for Cessnock's voice. I will bring in some gaffer tape.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I did some further digging around the Leader of the Opposition's policies. He is on Twitter and he is tweeting out all these new policies. I realised that we have heard them all before. In July this year, we heard about "More vaccinations in pharmacies". Where is that from? It is from the 2015 election. In March this year we heard about the Elective Surgery Acceleration Plan. Where is that from? It is from the 2015 election. Earlier this year we heard about Labor's cool schools, which has been recycled from the 2015 election. There is the Local Libraries Plan, recycled from the 2015 election, and the Jobs and Population policy, recycled from the 2015 election. Even the Leader of the Opposition was recycled from the 2015 election. While we are focused on asset recycling, they are policy recycling. The people of New South Wales rejected them in 2015, and the policies rejected by the people of New South Wales make the Liberal Party and The Nationals the best. We are the party of jobs and growth. They are the party of copy and paste. I am happy to help them. I have Luke Foley's concession speech from 2015. I have just changed the date to 2019. He can take it now.

Mr John Barilaro: If he gets there.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: If he gets there. It could be the member for Maroubra. I am happy to pass it on.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: You could give Ray his concession speech now, Dom. How about that? Has he written you a concession speech, Ray? Put your hand up if you want to save Ray?

Opposition members: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Labor has a new policy, that is the blood money policy, which we know still has not been paid back. [*Extension of time*]

They would not pay for it themselves so they went and got a new policy, which has come through.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

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

Ms Jodi McKay: The question is about jobs. I ask that the Treasurer be directed to return to the question that was asked of him.

The SPEAKER: "And are there any alternative projects" was the rider to the question. The Treasurer is being relevant to the question he was asked.

Ms Jodi McKay: His answer is not about any alternative policy in regard to jobs.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. I note the member's point of order and I will listen further to the Treasurer's answer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It was the job of the Leader of the Opposition to come up with a policy on how to deal with the blood money, which he did with boss lady. What was the Opposition's plan? It was to get the taxpayers of New South Wales to pay the blood money.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I was being relevant, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I did not say you were not.

Ms Jodi McKay: I am going to say he is not.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I have ruled on that and I indicated that I would listen further to the Treasurer's answer. The Treasurer started to talk about jobs.

Ms Jodi McKay: It is a very tenuous link.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will not lecture me.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Tenuous works.

The SPEAKER: There will be no more points of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What do they think of the new policy? Anna Caldwell's article quoted one member of Parliament [MP] who said, "It is an absolute joke that MPs are footing the bill for the party stuff-up." Who was that? Who is looking down? The member for Summer Hill is looking down pretending she is not listening. Another MP said, "No-one can say anything. We have to support the party." Clearly that is the member for Liverpool—party before people, the loyal servant.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I said I would not take another point of order. Is it a different point of order? The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms Jodi McKay: It is Standing Order 129. This answer has absolutely nothing to do with the question.

The SPEAKER: That is the member's view.

Ms Jodi McKay: I understand that the Treasurer is allowed some leniency, but his answer is not relevant.

The SPEAKER: The question is about jobs and the answer is wideranging. The Treasurer is talking about the job of the Leader of the Opposition. It is difficult to rule that the answer is not relevant. The Treasurer is being generally relevant to the question he was asked.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: A great ruling.

The SPEAKER: My rulings always are, not that the Opposition would believe that.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We know who the last member is who leaked against his party. He said, "This would not go down well with the taxpayer." That was the member for Rockdale, the only true liberal on that side. The member for Rockdale is the only one who cares about the taxpayers of New South Wales. Members on this side of the House will continue to deliver for the people of New South Wales whilst Opposition members keep leaking on themselves.

STATE HERITAGE REGISTER

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:18): I direct my question to the Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage. Given community infrastructure like the great Dawn Fraser Baths in Balmain is under threat from rising sea levels and climate change, when will this Government provide adequate funding to ensure that this and other State Heritage items are protected into the future?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (15:18): I thank the member for Balmain for his question and for working collaboratively with the State Government on environment, local government and heritage matters. The Government does indeed value the Dawn Fraser Baths, which are listed on our State Heritage Register. The baths honour the fantastic Olympic achievements of Dawn Fraser, a former Independent member of this Chamber who, by the way, won her seat in this Chamber with a massive swing away from Labor in 1988. Good on her.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balmain is interested in the answer. There is too much noise in the Chamber. Members will cease interjecting.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: As I said, the Dawn Fraser Baths are listed on the State Heritage Register. The baths are owned by the Inner West Council, which has recently applied to the Office of Sport for funding for upgrades. I do not know whether the member for Balmain is aware of that. The application is currently being considered, I understand, by the Office of Sport, but that has not stopped the Labor mayor going on the airways, writing a paper, being misleading, ignoring the facts and asking for more money from the Office of Environment and Heritage. If the mayor wants money over and above that requested in the current application before the Office of Sport, I urge him to stop being lazy, pick up a pen, write an application and send it in.

Mr Michael Daley: It will just sit on your desk for a year.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will come to order. The member thinks it is funny to be nasty.

Mr Michael Daley: It is true.

The SPEAKER: The member does not know it is true. He just makes it up.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: In the meantime, I ask that the application be considered properly by the Office of Sport for an upgrade of the Dawn Fraser Baths, which are very important. I ask that the current funding application be considered, as it should. I reassure the member for Balmain that the Government will work with him to ensure that the Dawn Fraser Baths have a bright future.

WESTERN SYDNEY INFRASTRUCTURE AND JOBS

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (15:21): I address my question to the Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering for the people of Western Sydney through record infrastructure investment and jobs growth and are there any risks to this investment?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:21): I thank the member for Riverstone for his question. He is a passionate advocate for his electorate and knows firsthand the fantastic work that is being done by this Government in delivering infrastructure and creating jobs in his electorate, such as, opening the new police station and upgrades to Schofields Road and Richmond Road. He is seeing significant growth in his electorate that is generating jobs close to where people live. That is consistent with the approach this Government has taken, whether it is about creating the new M4 East tunnel, which has been so desperately needed by people across Western Sydney, or the duplication of the M5, which is also desperately needed. Both of those projects are under construction.

The Government is not stopping at the projects that Labor forgot for 16 years. We are also investing in the future with the western metro, which will increase the metro capacity between the central business district in Sydney and Parramatta. West of the M7 the Government is planning and will deliver the Western Parkland City with a strong focus on the delivery of the new airport and the aerotropolis precinct. A key feature is to make sure that we connect the T1 Western line with new jobs, infrastructure and the growth centre. This Government has committed to do a business case with the Commonwealth Government and co-fund the delivery of a railway line that links the Greater Penrith area near St Marys with the new Western Sydney Airport and our aerotropolis core near north Bringelly.

This project is being backed by bodies and organisations outside of government that want to invest. Already organisations like Northrop Grumman, a United States defence contractor, have said that they want to be located in this precinct. Just last week some of the strongest universities in New South Wales—the new alliance of the University of New South Wales, Western Sydney University, the University of Newcastle and the University of Wollongong—came together to back this precinct. They want to create a multi-university campus at this precinct because they know that the jobs that need to be created for future generations will be the product of strong education and research.

The Government is also investing in services across Western Sydney. Indeed, there is probably no better example of that than our investment in health: Westmead and The Children's hospitals will receive more than \$900 million; Blacktown Mount Druitt Hospital, more than \$700 million; Campbelltown Hospital, \$775 million; Liverpool Hospital, \$475 million; and in my own patch, Nepean Hospital. I went looking for Labor's policy position on Nepean Hospital. On a website under the heading "Labor commits funds to upgrade Nepean Hospital: First Health Election Commitment", it says, "NSW Labor today announced its first major health commitment for the 2019 State election." It says also that Labor is going to spend \$370 million to upgrade Nepean Hospital.

The New South Wales Government is spending \$1 billion. So Labor's policy position is to cut Nepean Hospital by more than \$600 million. Labor has had three years to figure out what it wants to do with Nepean Hospital and all it is going to do is to cut \$600 million from it. Those who understand the risk the Labor Party presents to the people of Western Sydney do not need to go any further than the announcement made earlier today that Labor will not support the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall or the legislation that allows us to do that. I will give the House some facts about the risks associated with this part of Sydney.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah will listen to the answer and remain silent.

Mr STUART AYRES: This is one of the most complex flood zones anywhere in Australia, let alone the world. If the largest recorded flood since European settlement happened today we would have to evacuate 90,000 people from their homes, 12,000 homes would be directly impacted, and it would cause more than \$5 billion worth of damage. In 1995 the former Government announced that it would install a spillway. It wanted to make sure that it protected the integrity of Warragamba Dam—largely because of those figures I have just quoted to the House—and that there would be limited impact on people. The problem is the spillway functions only when

the dam is full; that is to protect the integrity of the dam wall so that it does not break. But if the spillway has to be utilised, it will create a flood similar to a one-in-1,000-year flood event. [*Extension of time*]

To stop the dam wall from breaking, which would create a one-in-2,000-year flood event, the Government has proposed to increase the dam wall by 14 metres. There will be an impact on the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, but that impact in a one-in-100-year flood event will be 0.06 per cent of temporary inundation of the World Heritage area. That means 0.06 per cent versus 135,000 people and their properties and the public infrastructure.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Kogarah has concerns he can see the Minister later.

Mr STUART AYRES: This is the farcical position that Labor has taken today. The only time that area would be inundated would be in the event of a catastrophic flood. The only time the airspace behind that mitigation wall would ever need to be used would be when we were stopping the water from flooding people and their properties. There is simply no way anyone can deny that without an increase in the height of the dam wall a catastrophic flood would either require the use of the spillway or we would see a 1867-like flood again in Western Sydney.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Mr STUART AYRES: That would no doubt lead to loss of life, more than \$5 billion worth of infrastructure impact and more than 90,000 people would need to be evacuated.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah will cease calling out.

Mr STUART AYRES: I cannot understand why the member for Londonderry or any other member in Western Sydney would trade their soul and their people for Greens votes in the inner west. That is exactly what they are doing. There is no way one can ignore this impact.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery Cadet Sergeant Lachlan Elliott, son of the Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON LAW AND SAFETY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST: As Chair: I table the report of the Committee on Law and Safety entitled "The adequacy of youth diversionary programs in New South Wales", Report 2/56, dated September 2018.

I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

South Coast Rail Line

Petition calling on the Government to plan and fund the upgrade of the South Coast rail line, particularly between Kiama and Bomaderry, and to classify the project as an initiative in the Future Transport Strategy, received from **Ms Jodi McKay**.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I set down discussion on the petition as an order of the day for a future day.

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

Pet Shops

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

Inner-city Social Housing

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

Affordable Housing

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

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

Short-term Letting

Petition calling on the Government to give owners corporations the authority to control short-term letting in strata buildings, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Old South Head Road Clearway

Petition calling on the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight to instruct Roads and Maritime Services to halt work on proposed changes to the Old South Head Road clearway for 60 days to allow for the completion of a traffic survey and engagement with residents, received from **Ms Gabrielle Upton**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. Matt Kean—Short-term Letting—lodged 15 August 2018 (Mr Alex Greenwich)

Committees

COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Report: Support for Start-ups in Regional New South Wales

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:34): As Chair: The Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development's report on the inquiry into support for start-ups in regional New South Wales was tabled on 16 August 2018. The start-up sector is rapidly evolving. The Government has significantly invested in the growth of start-ups in Sydney, notably with the launch of the Sydney Startup Hub in February 2018. Sydney has produced a number of successful world-class start-ups and is a global centre of innovation. The question that this inquiry looked at was: How can the Government support innovation and the growth of start-ups in regional New South Wales?

Start-ups are an important part of the regional landscape and provide naturally innovative regional people an opportunity to deliver new solutions, to create local jobs and to inspire entrepreneurship. During our inquiry committee members spoke to stakeholders from across New South Wales and visited start-up hubs in Albury, Wagga Wagga and Coffs Harbour as well as the Sydney Startup Hub. The committee made eight recommendations and four findings, which aim to improve communication of current government programs and assist start-ups in regional areas. The committee found that the Government has a crucial role to play to support regional innovation ecosystem development and to assist regional start-ups and entrepreneurship.

The committee was concerned to hear during the inquiry that government start-up grant and loan application processes can be seen as overly complex and involve complicated eligibility criteria. I acknowledge that since the launch of this inquiry Jobs for NSW has responded to feedback and has already made changes to streamline the application process. The committee recommended that Jobs for NSW ensure that all start-up program information and criteria be clear, easy to understand and well publicised. We recommended that Jobs for NSW provide feedback to applicants who are not successful in their grant applications. Feedback on unsuccessful applications provides important advice on how to improve and to identify alternative funding options if necessary.

During our inquiry the committee saw the incredible work done to encourage start-up ecosystems by local innovation champions, entrepreneurs, regional universities and councils. We heard that regional start-ups can find it challenging to access funding and investment opportunities, which are often based in Sydney. To

address this, the committee recommended that the Government establish a program to support the development of local investment funds in regional areas throughout New South Wales. This program would aim to increase the availability of local private funding opportunities for regional start-ups.

The committee recognised that start-up competitions are useful ways to support innovative start-ups to test ideas, to receive prize funding, to network, to access mentorship and to receive publicity. We recommended that the Government support the development of start-up competitions within each regional State electorate. These competitions would encourage regional start-ups and highlight regional innovation. We also proposed a regional growth pathway competition to advance the development of promising New South Wales start-ups that are ready for the commercialisation of their product or service. It is essential that we work to keep promising start-ups, innovations and entrepreneurs within our State. It is important to encourage entrepreneurship as a viable career option and to foster innovation. The committee recommended that entrepreneurship be encouraged within the State's schools, particularly in our regions.

Support for start-ups is a relatively new area of government activity. The committee recommended that the Government coordinate its local innovation strategies with other levels of government. Our entrepreneurs have shown that rewards are possible from being bold and brave in business. We need to recognise and to support our start-up founders. The committee encourages the Government to continue to work towards making regional New South Wales a place where start-ups can thrive and bring growth and prosperity to the State. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions and all stakeholders who made contributions through submissions, site visits and public hearings. I also acknowledge the Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson, the former member of Cootamundra, who was the committee chair at the beginning of the inquiry. Importantly, I thank the committee staff for all the work that do to assist the committee to run and to report on its inquiries. I commend the report to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:38): As a member of the Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development, I too make a contribution to the take-note debate on the report and I endorse the words of the chair of the committee. It was a very good inquiry and it opened the eyes of committee members to not only the level of innovation in our community but also the level of support across the State, both from government and the private sector. I endorse the chair's words about the role of Jobs for NSW and acknowledge that it has taken on board suggestions in relation to streamlining its grant programs. Recommendation 2 that Jobs for NSW provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants is a particularly important recommendation. The committee learned that start-ups often go through the process of a trial and do not mind being called a failure because they then go back and do further work. Without that feedback, the process is not enhanced.

I thank all the venues and the people who appeared as witnesses when the committee visited Coffs Harbour, Albury, Wagga Wagga and Bathurst—which I did not get to—and the Sydney Startup Hub. It was enlightening to hear from the witnesses who imparted a great deal of personal knowledge and who were very frank. The committee members appreciated the evidence about their circumstances and the situations they faced in this industry. The committee found that defining a start-up is difficult because people work in different types of businesses. As I discussed with the member for Cessnock, it was interesting to hear that some witnesses want government to get out of the way and others thought there was a role for government. The committee had a discussion about how that would happen as well as an interesting discussion about whether the Government should be involved in promoting competitions.

In Albury, for example, the Hume Bank had run a competition for local people whereas in other areas organisations did not sponsor competitions. In our inquiry the committee looked at the need for a level playing field across the State and that whatever the postcode there should be the same level of support. I believe it was a useful inquiry and I hope the Government looks carefully at the recommendations. I thank Simon Johnston, Ben Foxe, Caroline Hopley and Abigail Turingan for their input and for making sure that all of our trips and hearings ran smoothly. I particularly thank the chair for his leadership; I was not a member of the committee when the Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson was chair. The inquiry was bipartisan and was a great learning experience for all committee members. I commend the report to the House.

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (15:42): I speak in support of the report of the Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development on the inquiry into support for start-ups in regional New South Wales. There is a level of disconnect between existing government support for regional start-ups and young entrepreneurs. Pathways are more difficult outside the capital cities. After many years of websites, apps, downloads, printed materials, programs and more, the fundamental question tackled by the committee was: How can the Government support innovation and the launch and growth of start-ups outside Sydney and across regional New South Wales? It is not settled science, but the committee through this inquiry was able to dig more deeply into the issues.

The committee made eight major recommendations. We recommended that Jobs for NSW provide feedback to applicants who are not successful in their grant applications and that the Government establish

a program to support development of local investment funds in regional areas throughout New South Wales. This suggested program is intended to lead to the growth of more private funding opportunities for regional start-ups within their local areas. As a committee we knew we had to go out into the field, as it were, and to speak to people in their regional settings. We visited Albury, Wagga Wagga and later Coffs Harbour to meet with individuals and educators. The Government works through established centres like regional universities and TAFE campuses as they already have spaces, connectivity and forms of academic support with mentor contacts in commerce and industry.

One point of resonance is that the idea of start-up hubs remains relevant. We heard how some individuals seek guidance in areas outside their field of expertise, such as marketing, product identification, public relations and so on. That is where a properly run hub comes into its own. Hubs may not be the answer to everything, and they can become drop-in centres if solid mentoring and support is not scripted into their very existence, yet they are a useful channel for government action. But, as the report notes, government needs to better publicise existing support and initiatives. The Business Enterprise Centre Business Connect was mentioned, while the opportunity to conduct webinars and tele-forums should not be dismissed.

It is not demeaning or dismissive of regional participants if a world or national leader is willing to share his or her knowledge and experience through this mode of communication. For example, the representative from AgThentic spoke from a practical viewpoint; the academics from a more parochial viewpoint. However, we should consider sponsoring regional tours by leaders in their various fields, ensuring that in the course of a year we have covered the whole geography of New South Wales. That means that relevant departments should look beyond just Newcastle, Wollongong, Wagga Wagga and Lismore, for instance.

Importantly, the report notes that regionally based competitions provide a doorway through which young entrepreneurs and the State Government can eyeball each other and see where and how to move forward with development and promotion. A chain of competitions, where one moves onward and upward, allows refinement to take place with feedback, mentoring and even funding opportunities involving bodies such as Jobs for NSW. I believe that targeted financial support through competitions and sponsorship of events is likely to contribute to desirable outcomes with prizes to assist winning start-ups in pitchfests.

As deputy chair of the committee, I thank my co-members, the chairperson and the committee staff for their enthusiasm and work on the inquiry. As the chairperson said, "It is essential that we work to keep promising start-ups, innovations and entrepreneurs within our State. Big ideas need to stay in regional New South Wales." I wholeheartedly endorse that viewpoint and, indeed, all recommendations contained in the report. I encourage members to read the report and to support its recommendations so that the best of the whole State can find its way to national and international markets, inspiring regional young entrepreneurs and developers to pursue their projects with passion and energy and not to be held back by living and working outside Sydney.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (15:46): I thank all of my committee colleagues for the bipartisan nature of our interesting journey that resulted in our report on support for start-ups in regional New South Wales. I also thank the committee staff because, as the good chair noted, different chairs and different committee members participated over the journey. When looking at start-ups we certainly get the sense that no matter what we do or how far we travel we are only scratching the surface. The member for Albury made a fantastic comment about something we had spoken of during our tours. That is, when we bring internationally renowned specialists to Sydney to engage with a Sydney start-up surely there should be an opportunity for us to insist that we extend that person's reach to our regional communities. As much as webinars and Skyping will be part of the future for all of us, there is no substitute for engaging with a person face to face.

I acknowledge the comments of the member for Upper Hunter and the member for Wyong, who were part of the committee. A lot of ideas have come out of this and some recommendations are in our report, but in no way, shape or form can the recommendations or the report be considered as the consummate answer to everything about start-ups. That is just not possible. It was fascinating to hear in the inquiry that some participants would welcome the intervention, support and assistance of government and others thought that by and large government should just get of the way. How can we produce a single committee report that deals with that diversity of opinion?

I thank all of the people who participated in the inquiry in all corners of the State for giving us their time, wisdom and energy. They are all incredibly driven people who are enthusiastic about their endeavours and are creative in finding solutions. We really were fortunate that they were willing to give up their time to talk to us and to engage with us. It was a terrific and wonderful journey. This is certainly not the type of report that we can set and forget. It is the type of report that we could literally revisit every 12 months and come up with a different outcome because it is such a dynamic space. Again, I thank the chair for making sure that we got through this one and got it finished after the former member for Cootamundra left the committee and her position as chair. It is good to put a full stop to the inquiry and make sure that the work of the committee staff and members is ultimately recognised through our recommendations.

Report noted.

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Debate called on and postponed.

COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN, THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION AND THE CRIME COMMISSION

Report: 2018 Review of the Annual Reports of Oversighted Bodies

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:51): As Chair: The Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission oversees a number of high-profile agencies that do important work. While the committee hears from all its oversight agencies, the annual review report focuses on matters that the committee wishes to draw to the attention of Parliament. The past year has been a year of change for some of the committee's oversight agencies, particularly the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC], which started operating only in July 2017. In that context, this year's annual review report makes a number of recommendations and findings relating to the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission.

The LECC replaced the Police Integrity Commission, the Police and Compliance Branch of the Ombudsman, and the Inspector of the Crime Commission. It embodies the single police oversight model envisioned by Mr Andrew Tink in his landmark review of police oversight in New South Wales. The committee's main recommendations relate to the funding of the LECC. The LECC has an important role in overseeing police action and in this way helps to maintain public confidence in police. To do its job properly, the LECC needs to be funded adequately. In his review, Mr Tink emphasised that the new oversight model should not result in short-term cost savings, and that the level of police oversight should be maintained.

The LECC looks different from its predecessors because it is now headed by a chief commissioner as well as two other commissioners: the Commissioner for Integrity, who investigates actual or suspected police misconduct, and the Commissioner for Oversight, who oversees police investigations of complaints. The LECC also has a chief executive officer. However, the committee heard that no additional funding has been provided for those positions, and so has recommended that such funding be provided. The committee has also recommended that the LECC receive funding to increase the number of staff in its critical incident team. Overseeing the investigation of critical incidents is a new function of the LECC. Critical incidents involve the serious injury or death of a person, thereby ensuring that the police investigation is thorough and impartial is especially important. Although Mr Tink said that the new critical incident function may require additional resources, the committee understands that no extra funding has been received.

The committee found that the team appears to be understaffed, with all of the five-person team being on call at least 25 per cent of the time and one of the team having been on call for 45 per cent of the time. In the committee's view, extra funding should enable the LECC to perform its critical incident function in a more sustainable manner. The LECC also requested that it be given some additional powers: the ability of the Commissioner for Oversight to undertake private examinations, and the ability to conduct joint investigations with the police. The committee agrees that the Commissioner for Oversight should be able to undertake private examinations. Currently, only the Chief Commissioner and the Commissioner for Integrity have the power to undertake such examinations.

This may be a waste of resources in circumstances where the Commissioner for Oversight is equally qualified to examine witnesses. Moreover, both the Ombudsman and the Police Integrity Commission had the power to undertake private examinations, so it makes sense that all commissioners of the LECC also have this power. However, the committee recommends that the Minister for Police first consult with relevant stakeholders before giving the LECC the power to undertake joint investigations with the police. While the committee can see the resourcing and operational benefits of joint investigations to both parties, potential risks are also involved. The risks and benefits need to be carefully assessed before any legislative change occurs.

This year's annual review report also discussed proposed changes to the leadership structure of the Crime Commission. The proposal is that the agency be led by a chief executive officer with investigative and management experience, rather than a commissioner with substantial legal experience. While the committee awaits the outcome of the statutory review, its view is that a modern law enforcement organisation with the significant powers of the Crime Commission needs senior leadership with an appropriate level of legal,

management and investigative experience. The committee notes that any changes to the leadership structure will require legislative amendment, which would provide an opportunity for the proposal to be carefully scrutinised.

The establishment of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the LECC have led to changes in the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. In light of these changes, the Ombudsman is reviewing its structure and processes to ensure it can continue to perform its functions effectively. The committee agrees that this is an opportune time to conduct this review. That concludes my remarks on the report. I thank all our oversight agencies for their work over the year and also for participating in this review. As always, I thank my fellow committee members for their assistance in this review, and the work of the committee more generally. I commend the report to the House.

Report noted.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC)

Report: Inquiry into the Management of Health Care Delivery in NSW

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Debate called on and postponed.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 60/56

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:57): As Chair: I thank the House for the opportunity to speak on the Legislation Review Committee's sixtieth digest of the Fifty-sixth Parliament. In this week's digest, tabled on 18 September 2018, the committee examined six bills introduced in the last parliamentary sitting week. The committee identified issues in five of the bills. I will now draw the Parliament's attention to some of the key issues raised in the digest. The Criminal Procedure Amendment (Pre-trial Disclosure) Bill 2018 amends the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to require evidence and other matters to be disclosed by the defence before the commencement of a criminal trial. Such evidence includes any expert reports the defence intends to rely on. The committee noted that the pre-trial disclosure requirements were introduced in the interests of reducing court delays and increased costs. However, the committee also noted the concerns raised that such requirements may potentially impact on an accused's right to silence. As such, the committee referred this issue to Parliament for it to consider whether the amendments unduly trespass on an accused's personal rights.

Another bill the committee examined was the RSL NSW Bill 2018. This bill follows the inquiry conducted under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 to investigate fundraising activities of RSL NSW following allegations of financial misconduct. The bill contains measures to assist RSL NSW reform and to support changes that RSL NSW is making internally. With regard to one provision in the bill, the committee noted that it permits RSL NSW to delegate the exercise of any of its functions to a director, an employee, a committee or any other person. With respect to "any other person", the bill does not provide any clarification or guidance on who that may involve. The committee noted this broad delegation power and referred to Parliament whether the delegation is an insufficiently defined administrative power.

The committee also examined the Strata Schemes Management Amendment (Building Defects Scheme) Bill 2018. This bill is designed to strengthen the operation of the building bond and inspections scheme. The committee made a number of comments in relation to the bill and I will speak briefly to a couple of them. Provisions within the bill provide authorised officers with a number of search and seizure powers that can be exercised for certain purposes under the bill. Notably, the bill appears to permit authorised officers to enter premises without a warrant.

The bill also provides for authorised officers to exercise a wide range of powers in respect of premises that they enter, including seizing records. The committee referred to the purposes of the bill and noted that the search and seizure powers may assist officers to enforce compliance with the scheme. However, the committee referred the issue to Parliament for it to consider whether the powers are reasonable in the circumstances. A second issue I wish to briefly remark on concerns a number of provisions in the bill which deferred matters to the regulations. Of particular note, the bill enables the regulations to create offences with significant financial penalties. The committee referred to Parliament the question of whether it is appropriate that offences with such penalties are contained in regulations.

The final bill I will comment on today is the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Amendment (Marine Plastics Reduction) Bill 2018. This bill provides for the phasing out of single-use plastics, polystyrene packaging, products containing plastic microbeads and other harmful plastic products. With respect to this bill, the committee commented on provisions which allow the regulations to create offences with uncapped penalties.

The committee noted that it generally prefers that offences that may have substantial penalties are set out in the principal Act so as to provide for an appropriate level of parliamentary scrutiny. That concludes my remarks on the sixtieth digest of the Parliament. I encourage everyone to read the full digest, which is available on the Parliament's website. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions. I commend the digest to the House.

Report noted.

Matter of Public Importance

FOOD SECURITY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:02): As a former tourism operator, I can say that there is no greater pleasure than stopping off somewhere like Ricardoe's Tomatoes and Strawberries at Port Macquarie or Berrylicious Strawberries at Thirlmere, the many cherry growers out at Young or even—and this was some years ago—the Koolkuna Berry Farm at Niangala, which has recently been sold. Picking the luscious fruit and berries off the vine with a "gobble and go" pass is one of the most grounding and relaxing activities, giving us a real sense of our connection with the food we consume. For those who live in the city and towns it is a good reminder that what we see in plastic packaging on supermarket shelves is grown from the earth, nurtured with precious water and enriched by the sun, under the careful hands of a farmer, before it makes its way to our morning breakfast bowl.

Therefore, with a heavy heart I raise this matter of public importance as the nation's strawberry industry and, indeed more generally, our fruit industry, is under a terrible threat from criminals who would strike at the heart of our food security. Over the past two weeks we have seen cases of people contaminating strawberries with needles, causing a major recall across the nation. As this week has unfolded, tragically the food contamination incidents have increased and expanded to include other lines of fruit such as apples and bananas. This issue has even affected my own electorate after a needle was found in a punnet of strawberries purchased late last week from a supermarket in Maitland. The *Maitland Mercury* reported that a young girl was cutting up the fruit at home last Saturday when she could not cut through one of the berries and alerted her father. Much to his horror, he spotted a metal pin and had the presence of mind to call police and make them aware of the discovery.

There have now been more than 100 reports of fruit tampering, including more than 20 incidents which are the subject of New South Wales police investigations. Tampering with food is to be viewed only with the utmost seriousness. I am pleased that the New South Wales Government has finally matched the actions of the Queensland Labor Government in offering \$100,000 reward to anyone who has information that leads to finding the culprit of these attacks. One of the most distressing images to appear on television news this week was that of the dumping of freshly picked strawberries in Queensland.

I remember the time a few years ago now when the banana industry faced similar challenges due to cyclones on the North Coast. It is incomprehensible to me that the issues facing our strawberry farmers and other fruit growers are caused by individuals, not a natural disaster. I am sure everyone's thoughts are with the nation's strawberry industry, which has already been struggling to get enough water in the midst of this drought to produce crops. It is the pickers whose employment is being affected and the small shops, grocers and cafes whose businesses are being impacted. As shadow Minister for Small Business, I am concerned about the impact on everyone from the farm gate through to the consumers. It is a devastating blow for everyone.

The strawberry industry in New South Wales is worth some \$6 million. It is the smallest industry in Australia amongst the States, but in New South Wales we stick together. We know that in regional areas, this kind of money is a huge boost to the local economies. This terrible criminal activity could not come at a worse time, with the industry about to reach its peak production time during the spring-summer period. According to forecasts from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, the value of our nation's horticultural exports will reach almost \$1.5 billion in this financial year. Demand from Asia is driving the increased exports, especially greater market access to China. The clean, green image of Australia and New South Wales has allowed our farmers such as fruit, nut and vegetable producers to gain more market share and to increase the return on their crops but we must act quickly to protect our reputation and the safety of those who consume our products.

There has already been an international reaction to this incident with Russia and the United Kingdom blocking Australian strawberry imports, while our fruit has been pulled from New Zealand supermarket shelves. Food security is already in the spotlight nationally because of the drought affecting vast areas of the nation and particularly this State. However, as a result of the strawberry tampering it will have to expand to include packaging and the supply chain. We can all help farmers right now by taking their advice to cut up strawberries before we consume them and, after two weeks of disruption, help producers back to profit by eating the fruits of their hard labour. Remember the tagline: "Cut 'em up, don't cut 'em out." I urge everyone to use this on their social media.

I also remind everyone that New South Wales police are asking anyone with any information about the deliberate contamination of Australian fruit to contact Crime Stoppers to ensure we stop these criminals in their tracks.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:07): I speak on today's matter of public importance supporting our strawberry farmers and I thank the member for Maitland for raising it. Coming from a rural electorate, it has been absolutely heartbreaking to see the effect this senseless and dangerous act of vandalism has had on New South Wales growers. Our first priority has to be public health and safety. Police are doing all they can to catch these idiotic culprits. The idea that someone would deliberately contaminate otherwise quality strawberries is beyond any of our comprehension. I am glad to see the New South Wales police are now joining the investigation. The NSW Police Force has matched the Queensland Police Service in offering a \$100,000 reward to anyone who has information that leads to finding the culprit who perpetrated this insane act. The attack on strawberry farmers has sadly sparked other stupid copycat attacks. This is disgraceful sabotage of an important sector that does not deserve to be at the centre of this scandal.

In the Cootamundra electorate we currently have beautiful cherry trees in blossom around Hilltops and in the west many of our various fruit and nut varieties are coming into season. For our growers and orchardists already suffering the effects of drought, this is truly the ultimate betrayal. To all our fruit growers in the Cootamundra electorate and all over the State I say thank you: Thank you for the tireless work you do, seven days a week, to feed our nation. I am incredibly sorry to see the literal fruits of your labour wasted because of this senseless act. I also thank our grocers and local fruit shops who have stood strong behind our growers and encouraged people to keep buying our Australian farmers' fruit. We know this scandal has had a very real impact on the industry. Northern New South Wales growers are already well into production and they are hurting. In other parts of the State such as Coffs Harbour, the Sydney Basin, the South Coast and Orange, strawberry growers are just into production. Now is the time to be supporting those producers. They do not want our charity; they want our business.

We can avoid the need for New South Wales producers to dump strawberries en masse by seeking out local strawberries and putting them in our shopping baskets. The Queensland Government has offered compensation. We need to encourage people to continue supporting our New South Wales growers, because that is the best way we can compensate them. When our primary industries sector is strong, our regional communities are strong and so is the State's economy. Our growers have spent months cultivating and harvesting this crop. Now individual consumers can determine whether that comes to nothing and is dumped in landfill or this high-quality, healthy, delicious produce is cut up and enjoyed. The message is clear—cut them up, don't cut them out.

Many in this Chamber will have seen videos on social media of tonnes of strawberries wasted, piled onto the ground. It is truly heartbreaking to behold. We do not want to see this happen in New South Wales and it will not happen if we get behind our growers. We all have a role to play. We can still safely consume strawberries by cutting them up. I ask members to encourage their constituents and communities to get behind our New South Wales farmers and buy a punnet. Do not let fear bring this industry to a halt. Please do not desert the industry. Help them in their time of need. This is not only an attack on our strawberry growers; this is also an attack on the primary industries sector across the country. Whether it is in farmers' markets, roadside stalls or independent fruit shops and supermarkets, do not ignore our strawberry producers. Let us empower everyone to fight back against this form of food vandalism by continuing to support strawberry producers. I thank the member for Maitland for bringing this matter to the attention of the House.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (16:11): Sometimes in this Chamber we urge people to return to certain places or certain industries because they have suffered a devastating natural phenomenon. We sometimes have floods and we need people to go back into those areas to ensure the community and the tourism industry thrives, survives and regains its place. We recently had some terrible fires at Tathra and we sent a similar message to people, asking that they visit and help out the local economy by making a contribution.

We probably all remember a terrible cyclone that hit the north a few years ago. The banana plantations were completely wiped out, decimated by a natural disaster. We all had the opportunity to pay \$12 or \$15 a kilogram for bananas at our local store. But the important thing was that that industry needed our support. Strangely, bizarrely and quite sadly and frustratingly, we need to support the future of our strawberry industry not because of natural phenomena but because of the actions of some individuals. Those individuals need to be identified and they need to explain to those of us who are shaking our heads and wondering what is going through their mind how their actions could possibly make sense.

Strawberries are undoubtedly one of the favourite items in the fridge at my place in terms of fresh fruit and vegetables. If my children were allowed to take a punnet a day to school and devour them endlessly, they would do that. Of course we can still buy strawberries today and we can eat them perfectly safely. The approach that we have taken is simply to cut them into quarters and make sure that they still go into the lunch box. With the

size of the strawberries these days, cutting them into quarters is almost a pre-eating requirement. But we do need to support the strawberry industry.

At times like this, no matter one's political background, we all say we must support these industries because of A, B and C. This is not a natural phenomenon. It is a strange and bizarre phenomenon of needles being inserted into strawberries. But strawberries are a wonderful phenomenon of nature and we need to support the industry. Get out there and buy a punnet, cut them into quarters and gobble them down. Giddy up. I thank the member for Maitland for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (16:14): By leave: I thank the member for Maitland for bringing forward this matter of public importance. It is indeed an important matter. The Tamworth electorate is experiencing the worst drought in decades. I propose that the strawberries that are being dumped by farmers in Queensland be sent inland to feed cattle. I am not a dietician, but I would like to explore that opportunity rather than waste perfectly good fruit. If that is a viable option, I am happy to coordinate transport to bring the fruit inland. I thank the member for Maitland for raising this issue and I encourage my fellow parliamentarians, who are bipartisan in their support of this cause, to keep supporting our farmers and the agricultural sector.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:15): In reply: I thank the contributors to this discussion: the member for Cootamundra, the member for Cessnock and the member for Tamworth. I know that many other members would have liked to contribute also. I call on everyone in New South Wales—New South Welshmen and New South Welshwomen—to join the growing wave of support for the nation's strawberry growers, which has been gathering momentum, especially over the past 24 hours. The Queensland strawberry industry is worth \$130 million, and its advice on how to help the nation's strawberry producers is, "Cut 'em up, don't cut 'em out." That is what we must do. Federal Labor leader Bill Shorten has urged all Australians to buy "a punnet for themselves and another for the nation".

I have been speaking to Country Labor candidates across the State in preparation for this discussion as many have sought to have the issue raised in the House. Country Labor candidate for Port Macquarie Peter Alley asked me to raise this issue in Parliament, and he will contact his local strawberry grower, Anthony Sarks of Ricardoes Tomatoes and Strawberries. As well as urging people to cut the fruit in half, Ricardoes Tomatoes and Strawberries have said that it has been, "simply overwhelmed with the community support for strawberry farmers right now". It is not appropriate to advertise in this place, but this is important: The company is having half-price strawberry picking all weekend in Port Macquarie.

I know that our Country Labor candidate for Coffs Harbour, Tony Judge, is meeting with local fruit growers about industry sustainability. Other Country Labor candidates on the North Coast and Mid North Coast, including Asren Pugh in Ballina, Janelle Saffin in Lismore, Craig Elliott in Tweed and Patrick Deegan in Page, will continue to speak with their local farmers and small businesses to ensure that we are doing all we can to assist our local food producers. I note the bipartisan support of the member for Tamworth and encourage him to include the Country Labor candidate in Tamworth, Steve Mears, in any planning. I will give the last word on this matter of public importance to Anthony Sarks, the owner of Ricardoes Tomatoes and Strawberries. He was quoted in the *Port Macquarie News*, and I thank journalist Laura Telford for covering this issue in such a positive way. It is important for regional small businesses to be heard in this place. I ask Government members to listen. Anthony Sarks said:

My concern is that people will stop buying local produce - and in this case strawberries - and farms will go out of business.

The real concern is that if produce farms close we will have to start importing products and that would be a bad thing for everyone. Australia has the best produce in the world. Why would we import it?

We are seeing it happen to the dairy industry already with costs going up but prices staying the same and generally farms can't cope.

I would hate for something like this to do the same thing to our farmer friends across the country.

I urge everyone, "Cut 'em up, don't cut 'em out."

Community Recognition Statements

LEICHHARDT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (16:19): I draw the attention of the House to the fantastic new school entrance and garden at Leichhardt Public School. Earlier this month I had the pleasure of attending the Leichhardt fete. I joined the principal, members of the parents and citizens association, parents and students at the school to open this remarkable new entrance. The project is a testament to the spirit of community collaboration that makes our area so fantastic. I happily facilitated the \$35,000 Community Building Partnership grant to make this project possible.

I commend everyone involved, including principal James Reid; Susan Kelly Thwaites; Jon Mayberry; Emma Wakeling; Leichhardt Public School staff Vicki Flaherty, Dan Smith and Ben Lucas; City of Sydney and ASPECT Design; builder Sam Voldjani; and the Ingarfield and Chapman families for the trees and arboreal advice—in particular, Chris Chapman. This new space allows the expanding cohort at Leichhardt Public School access to more playing fields and better access to new school buildings. It creates outdoor seating and a fantastic space on the corner of Marion and Norton streets. I thank and commend everyone involved for making this possible for the community. A last shout-out to Maddison and Linda for the jams and preserves.

PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR DIANE ROBERTSON

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (16:20): I pay tribute to Diane Robertson. Diane is the principal of a wonderful school in Hornsby, called Clarke Road School. The school offers educational programs for students with special learning needs from kindergarten to year 12. For a long time I have known this was a very special and dedicated principal, so it came as no surprise when she was awarded Government School Principal of the Year and Australian Principal of the Year at the Australian Education Awards in August.

Diane works 12-hour days and is always putting the needs of her staff and students above her own. With a career spanning more than 25 years, she comes from a long line of wonderful teachers. She first joined Clarke Road School seven years ago and is known for her supportive relationship with the 63 students who attend the school. It is not only staff and students who love their principal; the entire school community is proud of what she has achieved. She also manages to find time to serve as vice president of the NSW Primary Principals Association. Congratulations, Diane. I am glad that the rest of Australia gets to know what I have known for some time: You are one of the greatest principals and educators in Australia.

URUGUAYAN SOCIAL AND SPORTING CLUB

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:21): I acknowledge the Uruguayan Social and Sporting Club located at Hinchinbrook within the State electorate of Liverpool. An event was held at the club on Saturday 25 August to celebrate both Uruguayan Independence Day and the anniversary of the club. Those present at the event included Uruguayan Ambassador Dr Ricardo Varela and Consul General Conrado Silveira, Chilean Consul General Humberto Molina and El Salvadorian Honorary Consul Jose Vasquez Rivas. I also acknowledge the presence of Liverpool councillor Charishma Kaliyanda and Telmo Languiller from the Victorian Parliament. I congratulate club president Belky Secadas and the other board members for the work that they and the club do for this event and the important role the club plays for the Uruguayan community and Latin American community more generally. It is always a pleasure to attend Latin American Independence Day events celebrating decisions by people to cut the metropolitan imperial ties with the Northern Hemisphere and to establish an independent republic in the Southern Hemisphere. It is a great pity that 200 years later Australia has not managed to catch up.

CAMDEN SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL AND TOURNAMENT OF MINDS

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:22): Three teams from Camden South Public School recently competed at the regional Tournament of Minds [TOM] competition at Western Sydney University. Congratulations to all of them. I congratulate the science, technology, engineering and maths team, who came away with honours, and one of the arts teams who outperformed all teams from the Sydney South West region and became regional champions. The arts team then went to the next round and competed in the State championships at the University of New South Wales. Their determination to display the quality of young minds in the south-west of Sydney saw them crowned State champions—a massive achievement. The team will now compete in the finals in Darwin in October. The team will compete against other students from across Australia as well as other countries. Congratulations to all the students involved: Alana, Alice, Lily, Paige, Emma and Charlize. Thank you and congratulations to Mrs Burge, the schools TOM coordinator, and to all the parents for their support.

KENSINGTON SCOUTS LEADER CHRISTOPHER MAHER

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:23): I acknowledge the contribution of Christopher Maher, the long-serving Scout leader of the 3rd/4th Kensington Scout Group. Despite coming to the Scouts later in life and joining the association as an adult, Chris has still clocked up a remarkable 50 years of service to scouting, both here in Australia and for a number of years in London. As well as contributing his experience to both the district and South Metropolitan Region scouts, Chris has led his local Scout troop of 11- to 15-year-olds at Kensington Scout Hall for 25 years. Chris has seen 300 Scouts pass through that one troop in his time. Chris speaks glowingly of the diversity of his troop, with children of all cultural and economic backgrounds coming together to learn as equals. Chris takes pride in the fact that his Scouts all contribute to a more equal, diverse and just society. That is a vision we both share. The Parliament commends your service. Bravo, Chris.

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:24): The Australian Red Cross Country Zone 4 Conference 2018 was held in Forster last week. It was great to hear about its work. I acknowledge president Norma Watson; secretary Janet McMahon; Lillian Ellis from the Wingham Branch; Eleanor Harris, guest speaker; Lynne Ferguson from the Forster Tuncurry Branch; Lorraine Gibson from the Mount George Club; Charmain Williams from the Forster Branch; Ruth Moore, Patron of the Forster Tuncurry Branch; and Lyn McGinnis from the Taree Club. They do a fantastic job. Mayor David West was also present. Communities across Australia could not do what they do without the support of organisations and volunteers such as those found in the Australian Red Cross. I pay tribute to them and commend them for their work.

CAMP QUALITY 1,000 KS 4 KIDS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:25): The Camp Quality 1,000 Ks 4 Kids Newcastle is a 1,000 kilometre, 10-day cycling challenge to help raise money for kids impacted by cancer. Fifty riders and 20 support crew cover 1,000 kilometres in a 10-day bike riding adventure to help spread laughter and awareness to schoolchildren and local communities along the route. I congratulate my constituent Simon Hunt of Charlestown, who has just completed the 1,000 kilometre journey from Maleny in the Queensland Sunshine Coast Hinterland to Warners Bay in my electorate of Charlestown. Simon said he was inspired by the work of Camp Quality and wanted to support it by raising money in this year's 1,000 Ks 4 Kids. Simon raised an outstanding \$10,334.91. I thank Simon and Camp Quality for their selfless efforts in raising much-needed funds in the fight to find a cure for childhood cancer.

SCOUTS SYDNEY NORTH REGION ADULT RECOGNITION AWARDS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:26): Scouts Australia is currently celebrating its 100th year. I was pleased to attend the New South Wales branch's Sydney North Region Adult Recognition Awards presentation and afternoon tea. At the event a Distinguished Service Award was presented to Colleen Godsell, who is Group Chairman of 1st Mosman Scout Group. Meritorious Service Awards were presented to Susan Kitching, who is Group Adviser of 1st North Sydney Scout Group; and Elizabeth Wyse, who is Assistant Scout Leader of 1st Balmoral Scout Group. I always love recognising behind-the-scenes workers who give of their time and energy to make our community thrive. I am proud to support them. I extend my sincere congratulations to the award recipients. I was joined at the event by Mosman Mayor Carolyn Corrigan. I thank her and Scouts Australia for their continued support of our local community.

MAITLAND WINTER SPORTS WINNERS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:27): I congratulate all the winners in Maitland for their winter sports achievements. I particularly congratulate the Aberglasslyn Ants on winning their second consecutive Newcastle and Hunter Rugby A Grade Ladies League Tag Premiership. Aberglasslyn defeated the University of Newcastle 18 to 4. It was an especially memorable day for Ants player Jess Cassidy, who was named Player of the Year, Leading Try Scorer and Leading Point Scorer. Well done to Woodberry on winning the Newcastle and Hunter Rugby League's B Grade Minor and Major Premierships.

The Warriors beat the University of Newcastle 40 to 14 in the Grand Final. It capped off an amazing season for the Warriors, who were promoted from D grade after three rounds, which provided their coach, Noel Dent, with a fitting farewell as he concluded his illustrious coaching career. I congratulate the Maitland Saints under-14 youth girls team for making their inaugural grand final for their division in the Hunter Australian Football League competition. I congratulate the Lochinvar Rovers for their under-35 Minor Premiers, their under-12 girls Grand Final win and their all-age Saturday Minor and Major premiers. I wish them all the best for their upcoming celebrations as winning club of the year.

WATTLE GROVE PUBLIC SCHOOL PLAID SHIRT DAY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:28): I acknowledge Wattle Grove Public School for its Plaid Shirt Day to raise funds for drought-stricken farmers. Both staff and students embraced the stereotypical country attire for a day, with everyone donating a gold coin to Rural Aid's Buy a Bale initiative. The students had become aware of the drought through media coverage and class conversations. I am extremely proud to hear that it was the students' idea for the fundraiser to go ahead. It shows their empathetic nature. This fundraiser allowed the children of Wattle Grove Public School to become more aware of the problem in a creative way. The students wrote letters to farmers in rural New South Wales, showing how much they care. I am proud of the awareness that is being raised in our local schools and for their dedication in supporting our farmers.

GIRRAWEE HIGH SCHOOL BUY A BALE CAMPAIGN

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:28): I inform the House that Girraween High School is fundraising for the Buy a Bale campaign in support of our farmers affected by the drought. In the week of 3 September the school conducted lessons developed by the Students Representative Council and teachers on the impact of the drought. On Friday 7 September I was pleased to don my old Akubra and attend the school's Dress Like a Farmer mufti day. Cake stalls and a sausage sizzle helped to raise funds for this worthwhile cause. The school's fundraising goals were exceeded, with more than \$5,800 being raised. This has bought a semitrailer full of hay, which will be sent to our farmers in Western New South Wales. I congratulate principal Leigh Crangle, staff, teachers and especially students of Girraween High School on such a great achievement.

SEVEN HILLS DROUGHT FUNDRAISING

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:29): The drought has badly affected our State's farmers. I am proud that Western Sydney is lending its hand in charities and fundraising for those doing it tough in our regional areas. The Meadows Public School in Seven Hills raised \$371. Largely organised and run by year 6 students, the Farmers in Pyjamas mufti day raised money and the awareness of local students and families about drought and its effects. It was a great effort by committed students. The Seven Hills RSL is always fundraising for many causes. It was great to see the club participate in the Parma for a Farmer initiative. For the whole of September, \$1 raised from every parma sold went to the Buy a Bale fund to help our farmers feed their livestock. Winston Hills Bears Soccer Club also ran a fundraising day at Max Ruddock Reserve for the Buy a Bale initiative. It was a great day, with the proceeds from the sale of bacon-and-egg rolls and cakes going to farmers who are doing it tough. I congratulate all Seven Hills electorate residents on their efforts, and our best wishes go to our farmers.

Committees

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

Messages

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council agreeing to the request of the Legislative Assembly in its message dated 20 September 2018.

Petitions

SHELLHARBOUR ELECTORATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Discussion

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:31): It is an honour and a pleasure to stand in this House today on behalf of the Dapto community and to lead the discussion on this petition. I am delighted to say that this petition has already achieved what it set out to do: The Government has bowed to public pressure and will not be building a prison in Dapto's backyard. Today's discussion should act as a celebration of the countless hours and the collective efforts that contributed to this achievement. Now that this ridiculous proposal is finally off the table, today should be an opportunity to look towards Dapto's future.

Mr David Elliott: You were in favour of it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order!

Ms ANNA WATSON: I start by offering my sincere thanks and congratulations to the Residents Against the Dapto Jail Community Group. I note that the Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veteran Affairs continues to interject throughout this discussion. I ask that you call him to order, Mr Temporary Speaker. It was a mammoth achievement to collect 14,822 signatures in just eight weeks. That is unheard of. I am incredibly proud of my community today. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the committee members who were instrumental in this achievement—Amy and Stephen Beck, Britt and Eammon Bryant, Jess and Alen Meza, Mary Marciano, Sonia Huseyin and her husband, and Anthony Gore and Mrs Gore. I thank each of them and everyone who is in the public gallery who has travelled from West Dapto to listen to this petition discussion. The thousands of letters, emails and phone calls were worth it. It has been a pleasure to work alongside those people and I am delighted with the outcome. Indeed, to say I am delighted is an understatement—I cannot find words for it. It is amazing.

Clearly this petition is not only irrefutable evidence that my community will not accept a prison in this location but also a testament to the strength and passion of Dapto residents. Dapto has been blatantly ignored and schools, transport and roads in the area have been overlooked by this Government for far too long. Those opposite have shown time and again that Dapto is dead last in their priorities. The lesson we can learn from this petition is that the people of the Dapto community are willing to stand up and fight for what they believe in. If I were the

Government I would be very worried. Dapto certainly believes the future of its community should be bright. Now that this prison proposal is finally off the table they will be fighting for new schools, improved public transport links and better road infrastructure, which should not come as a surprise to anyone in this House. After all, West Dapto is still one of the fastest-growing residential areas in New South Wales. Eventually, an additional eight primary schools and two high schools will be needed and the Government still has not acquired any land on which to build them, even though I have called for it for seven years.

Dr Hugh McDermott: Seven years?

Ms ANNA WATSON: Seven years. Those opposite are also refusing to build the Yallah Interchange, thus blocking Dapto from ever having access to the Albion Park Rail bypass. And our community still struggles with overloaded trains, infrequent services and overflowing commuter car parks. While one fight is over for my community, others continue. We will not stop until Dapto finally gets everything it deserves. I remind this House that my community does not suffer from short-term memory loss. Just because the Government rightfully back-flipped on this ridiculous proposal it does not mean it will get any glory. The residents of Dapto know exactly who stood with them in this fight, and who stood against them. This prison should never have been proposed. The Government has put these families and first home buyers through hell and, while Dapto is now stronger than ever, it should never have been allowed to happen in the first place.

Sadly, throughout this campaign, members of the Residents Against Dapto Jail group have also had to endure name-calling, being blocked from social media sites and blatant intimidation from the member for Kiama. This was an unacceptable proposal made even worse by the behaviour and conduct of this individual, and it will not be forgotten any time soon. Everyone in this Chamber and everyone in my community has seen him for what he really is. His actions over the past five months are a stain on the Illawarra. Thankfully, in spite of these actions, we are still standing in this Chamber today celebrating yet another victory for the Shellharbour community. This win is the most recent in a long line of wins for my community. First, there was this Government's greyhound racing ban backflip. Next fell the council amalgamations proposal—backflip. Last year we won the fight to keep Shellharbour Hospital in public hands—backflip. The member for Kiama might need to see a chiropractor because of the number of backflips.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (16:36): It is a unique experience to be lectured by the member for Shellharbour given her reputation for bullying and the way that she has treated her staff.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! Opposition members will show other members respect.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I will commence by highlighting the hypocrisy of the member for Shellharbour, who made it very clear to us that she did not rule out support for a prison at Kembla Grange. She met with the spokesman on prisons, the member for Fairfield, near the proposed jail and said, "We are not completely opposed to a jail."

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: If she says that this was all her doing, she is misleading the House. When I originally discussed this matter with the member for Shellharbour she said, "I am not completely opposed to the jail." In 2016, as members know, this Government announced a once-in-a-generation investment into our prison system. Some 1,500 metres from my back door a significant jail expansion is occurring. Better Prisons is addressing the increase in the inmate population. But it is about more than that; it is about creating modern, fit-for-purpose facilities that support this Government's commitment to reducing reoffending.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I realise that there is a lot of emotion and passion on both sides of this discussion, but members with the call will be heard in silence. Members will show each another respect. The Clerk will restart the clock. The Minister has the call.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: We want to ensure that we have a safe environment for correctional officers, and that is why we looked at this expansion. To this end, we have reopened centres in Berrima and Unanderra. We have opened the Mary Wade Correctional Centre at Lidcombe to meet the need for maximum-security beds for women. We have opened the new minimum-security wing of the South Coast Correctional Centre at Nowra. We have opened two "rapid-build" prisons at Wellington and Cessnock, which not only has met our immediate capacity challenge but also is a pioneering and fresh approach to offender management. In Grafton, we are working with the private sector to deliver a new facility, as the member for Clarence knows, that will inject more than half a billion dollars into the local economy over the next 20 years. It will generate up to 1,100 jobs. We are continuing projects in Bathurst, Cessnock, Goulburn, Kempsey, Junee, Nowra and across Sydney.

Across the State the benefits of this program can already be seen: in bricks and mortar, in new jobs and in new local businesses opportunities. As we see these new facilities completed, we will see even more important benefits, such as safer communities, lower rates of reoffending and secure, rewarding, long-term jobs for correctional officers. Regional New South Wales has welcomed these investments. I acknowledge in the Chamber the member for Clarence, the member for Cootamundra and other members who have asked for and seen expansions of facilities in their electorates. This Government did its homework on the Kembla Grange site, which is why I discussed the proposal with the member for Shellharbour from day one. That is why we continued, with her blessing. When she wrote to me and said, "We want you to put it in Kiama instead", I thought it was strange. It is not good enough for the Shellharbour electorate but it is good enough for the Kiama electorate. The member for Kiama already has a jail in his electorate.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! The member for Shellharbour has had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: If the member for Shellharbour is so opposed to a jail, why would she force two on the member for Kiama and not have one in her electorate? She was originally in favour of the jail in her electorate, and any suggestion to the opposite effect is incorrect. We continue to spend time working with the council, landowners and the community. We have narrowed down parts of the site that were suitable for construction and we assessed how a prison in that location would work. I listened and read every piece of feedback that I received not only on social media but also in written correspondence. I had regular contact with the member for Shellharbour, and her accusation that the Government was not listening to her concerns is completely incorrect.

We conducted site investigations, like the one just concluded at Kembla Grange. That is an essential step for any infrastructure project, especially the construction of a new correctional centre. It is no secret that prisons are expensive. As I said before, the member for Shellharbour wrote to me stating that she wanted the proposed prison to be moved. Coincidentally, she suggested Meroo Meadow, where the member for Kiama lives. This Government is in favour of providing a first-class prison system and to do that—

Ms Anna Watson: Why don't you put one in Baulkham Hills?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I note the interjection. We have one in the Hills district. [*Time expired.*]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! Members will show each other respect. There is obviously a lot of emotion and passion around this issue but it would be unfair to the visitors in the public gallery if they cannot hear a proper, robust discussion.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:42): Unlike the Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veteran Affairs, I thank the people in the public gallery, residents of West Dapto, who for weeks and weeks sent correspondence to the Government and spoke with their local member stating that they did not want a prison in their backyards. If the Minister visited their community he would see that the proposed site is in a flood-prone area and it is near a heritage-listed Catholic cemetery. As well, the area is mooted as a site for massive school and residential developments to meet the population growth and expansion in the Illawarra.

I applaud the advocacy of the local member, the member for Shellharbour, who listened to her community, worked with them and brought their concerns to this Parliament. Through our democracy in this State we can discuss and debate matters of concern in a robust fashion. The people from West Dapto know how this Government manages prisons, which they wrote about in their correspondence. They know that this Government has been looking at holding a parliamentary inquiry into the operations of Parklea prison—a prison where officers took industrial action lasting 35 days, the longest industrial action for the department in the history of the State.

Mr David Elliott: Where?

Mr GUY ZANGARI: The Minister knows it. I am not saying it; they are saying it. They articulated that benchmarking is a problem and that it equates to job cuts. Add that to the number of increased inmate-on-inmate assaults, prisoner-on-officer assaults, escapes, the tsunami of contraband that is flowing into prisons under this Government and the sex scandals plaguing the system.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr GUY ZANGARI: *Orange is the New Black* seems like *Play School*. Have I included drones flying overhead, keys being lost, gates being left open and prison plans in the hands of prisoners under this Government? The people of West Dapto have spoken. I congratulate them on coming here today to support the cause and for standing behind their local member of Parliament, Anna Watson. [*Time expired.*]

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:45): I join with other members in congratulating and welcoming the people of West Dapto who are in the Chamber today. There is no doubt that the decision that was taken by the Premier, the Minister and the Government was in large part due to their advocacy. I join also with other members in acknowledging Ami and Stephen Beck and members of the No Dapto Jail Committee, which fought a very tough and dedicated fight. So many of the submissions I received, and had to sift through stony-faced, were convincing, well thought out and very passionate. There is no doubt that in no small part the decision that was taken by the Government was due to their hard work and advocacy in collecting petitions, mailboxing, talking to the community and, dare I say, their social media—perhaps I had better not comment on that. I thank also the advocacy of all members.

When this proposal was brought to my attention I said to the Minister—who will confirm this—that it should be made public straightaway. I do not believe that these things should be hidden from communities. As a result, I did something that does not often happen in this place, namely, I asked and spoke confidentially with the members of Parliament affected and we organised a briefing with staff of Corrective Services NSW. I thank the staff of Corrective Services NSW for their work. They spent time, as did the community, consulting on these proposals, and they listened to the community. They prepared the final report, which dealt with not only community consultation but also the site constraints and the costs associated with this proposal. As we all know, this site had been considered previously for a prison proposal. I can now confidently say that this site will never be considered again for a prison.

Unfortunately, prisons are required in our State, and there are areas where they can generate jobs and employment. I know that country members in this Chamber will agree with me and support that view. But prisons need to be in the right location. Indeed, that was the argument the members of the No Dapto Jail Committee adopted throughout this process. The committee highlighted issues such as the need for the West Dapto master plan. Some of the comments made, in particular by Ami Beck, were spot-on in relation to the need for a master plan in this community for future schools, roads, hospitals and the services that people need. Those rational and sensible arguments won the day.

I commend all of you for your work. I am pleased that you are here today to celebrate this community victory. There were many times when I listened to you and it was very hard to disagree. You have all done a phenomenal job and I commend you for your advocacy. I thank the Minister for listening. Some people have tried to characterise this decision as a backflip but governments cannot just do things to people; they have to consult and listen. That is what the Government did in this circumstance and that is why this decision has been made. I congratulate everyone involved.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

Membership

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That pursuant to section 68 of the Health Care Complaints Act 1993, James Henry Griffin be appointed to the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission in place of Mark Owen Taylor.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council informing it of the resolution.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Membership

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That pursuant to section 66 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, Austin William Evans be appointed to the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption in place of Mark Owen Taylor.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council informing it of the resolution.

Motion agreed to.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Membership**

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That Felicity Lesley Wilson be appointed to the Legislation Review Committee in place of James Henry Griffin, discharged.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council informing it of the resolution.

Motion agreed to.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**Membership**

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That Stephanie Anne Cooke be appointed to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters in place of Mark Owen Taylor, discharged.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council informing it of the resolution.

Motion agreed to.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE**Membership**

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

Pursuant to section 54 of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, Adam Sibery Crouch be appointed to the Public Accounts Committee in place of Mark Owen Taylor.

Motion agreed to.

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

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

Jai Travers Rowell be appointed to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics in place of Mark Owen Taylor, discharged.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**Membership**

James Henry Griffin be appointed to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Planning in place of Jai Travers Rowell, discharged.

Motion agreed to.

*Community Recognition Statements***AUSTRALIAN MALAYALEE ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION**

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:51): I was delighted to join the Australian Malayalee Islamic Association in Granville on 7 September to present its \$1,000 donation to Rural Aid Australia for drought relief. The Malayalee community across Sydney has rallied in support of friends and family in Kerala after the worst flooding in 100 years. That flooding saw the loss of hundreds of lives and left hundreds of thousands homeless as well as affecting agriculture and tourism for years to come. At the same time, the association raised funds for its adopted homeland of Australia, recognising the devastating impact of the current drought where 100 per cent of New South Wales is now drought declared. Some are saying that this is the worst drought in 100 years. The Malayalee community has a love for and affinity with both Kerala and Australia, as was demonstrated by their fundraising efforts. In particular I recognise and commend President Hashim Mohammed and the Australian Malayalee Islamic Association for their thoughtfulness and generosity.

GRAFTON RSL SUB-BRANCH

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:52): I offer my congratulations to the Grafton RSL Sub-Branch on recently celebrating its hundredth anniversary. The Grafton RSL Sub-Branch offers wonderful support to veterans and their families. In particular, I acknowledge the work of Brian Bultitude. He has been the President of the Grafton RSL Sub-Branch for the past 20 years. Congratulations to Brian and his executive for the great work they do in assisting our veterans.

COMMON ON WEST

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:52): Umina is a gorgeous seaside suburb. It is great for holidays and it is where the member for Wyong grew up. It is also home to a growing community of work-from-home businesses and entrepreneurs from across the southern end of the beautiful Central Coast who commute locally to work together at Common on West. Opened earlier this year, Common on West is the coolest and airiest premium, collaborative work space on the New South Wales Central Coast. Just an hour north of Sydney there is casual and permanent desk hire, office space rental, meeting room hire and access to contemporary breakout, networking and client meeting spaces.

Businesses use the Umina address to shock their Sydney clients. Great creativity happens outside the city, in flexible workspaces just metres from both Umina and Ocean Beach. The colours are funky and the fresh air blows off the ocean. Common on West has the perfect space for corporate functions, networking events, talks and seminars. We are lucky to have an incredibly vibrant business community on the Central Coast. I congratulate Common on West for creating a vibrant hub to unite and promote like-minded entrepreneurs and small business owners to support each other, to network and to continue to build and develop our beautiful corner of the world.

COST OF LIVING APPOINTMENT SERVICE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:54): On Monday the new Cost of Living appointment service was launched at Service NSW Erina in my electorate of Terrigal. Following the Treasurer's budget announcement that Service NSW will be transformed to "savings New South Wales", the new service provides local residents with face-to-face assistance in accessing the 40-plus New South Wales government rebates and savings. The average family will potentially save more than \$1,000 on energy bills, transport, health and more. I encourage everyone to put downward pressure on their cost of living by booking an appointment or going online to service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/cost-living. I am delighted that this Government is providing real and meaningful cost-of-living relief for people in my electorate of Terrigal. I thank Robyn and her fantastic team at Service NSW Erina for their service to our local community. I congratulate Coral on being customer number one to utilise the new service on Monday morning. Well done Service NSW!

1ST SWANSEA SCOUT GROUP

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:54): Earlier this year I informed the House that the 1st Swansea Scout Group had a Queen's Scout Award recipient for the first time in 25 years. I am pleased to report to the House that the 1st Swansea Scout Group now boasts its second Queen's Scout Award recipient, another lovely young woman. Last month I was thrilled to present Stella Fuller-Simpson with her award. A Queen's Scout is a Venturer Scout who, having been trained in Scoutcraft, places that training at the disposal of the community for public service. The award is one of the most prestigious of scouting awards because it demands a standard of excellence. Importantly, Stella had a great time reaching this incredible milestone. Her most memorable experience was gaining her outdoor badge—she hiked for three days through Hanging Rock in Victoria. Stella was accompanied by llamas which carried the camping equipment and tent, and she cared for and fed the llamas for the weekend. It certainly sounds like an amazing experience. I think Stella will prove to be an inspiration for future Swansea Scouts.

GYMEA WOMEN'S BOWLING CLUB

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (16:55): I congratulate GyMEA Women's Bowling Club on its successful annual charity day held on 6 August. It was an absolute pleasure to witness the collegiate atmosphere on the day. More than 140 members and guests were in attendance. GyMEA Bowls is one of the largest bowling clubs in the Sutherland shire and a treasured place where men and women gather to keep fit and socialise. Gwen Gray started the charity day more than 20 years ago when her granddaughter was diagnosed with cancer. Since then, the club has been instrumental in raising vital funds for Sydney Children's Hospital.

The gloomy weather did not dampen the spirits of the teams from Caringbah, Cronulla, Cronulla RSL, Engadine, Gerringong, Moorefields, South Cronulla, Sutherland and Taren Point clubs. I congratulate Engadine Bowling Club on taking out first place. I thank the GyMEA Women's Bowling Club for its outstanding effort in raising \$3,400 and acknowledge president Debbie Brooking, vice-presidents Di Formica and Lyn Reader,

secretary Barbara Sharkey and treasurer Sandra Davies, as well as committee members Violet Bouggas, Shirley Duncan, Glenys Lyden, Maree Johnsen, Margaret Organ, Sheila Eccleston, Evelyn Walsh and Jan Kennedy.

TOUKLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:56): Toukley Neighbourhood Centre Lakes Food Care is a social enterprise, self-funded and not-for-profit organisation. The food is sourced from Foodbank NSW and is also known as rescued food. The work of this enterprise is essential in providing a leg-up for struggling families and saving them from falling further into poverty. By not wasting food and allowing it to be given to charities such as this, we enable good people to make sure that others in our communities do not go hungry. In a country as wealthy as ours, no-one should have to go hungry. With the help of Foodbank, Lakes Food Care is able to make sure that families have food on the table. Without the hard work of volunteers and the Toukley Neighbourhood Centre, this enterprise simply could not function. It is essential that the Government does what it can to enable local communities and Foodbank to do what they do. I commend the work of the volunteers and the neighbourhood centre for the fantastic work they do for our community.

HILLSTON COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION BRANCH

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (16:57): I congratulate the Hillston branch of the Country Women's Association [CWA] on celebrating its ninety-fifth birthday recently. The CWA is an organisation that is dear to all our hearts and plays an integral part in life in the country. The Hillston branch has made an enormous contribution to life in Hillston. In keeping with the association's aim, these resourceful Hillston ladies have worked hard to bridge the gap between country and the city. They also look out for the welfare of country women and families. A big component of this is lobbying for social change and increased awareness of social issues.

The Hillston CWA has been a lobbyist and advocate for a number of issues over the years. That includes the need for more money for women's health, seatbelts on school buses, raising awareness about Q fever, more funding for child care and the need for more weather radars. Importantly, as with any of our community groups, the branch has provided its members an opportunity to socialise and make friends, something that is of paramount importance. At the recent meeting, two long-serving members were appointed branch patrons. I congratulate Mrs Thelma Mitchell and Mrs Betty Scanlon.

MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL AWARD CEREMONY

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:59): Last Thursday I was delighted to attend Malek Fahd Islamic School's year 12 presentation and awards ceremony, along with my colleague and member for Lakemba Jihad Dib. I had the pleasure of addressing the assembly and of handing out a number of awards to recognise the student's contributions to school life. I acknowledge the year 12 students and congratulate them on a great year. I wish them all the best for their exams and future endeavours. I also congratulate chairman Dr John Bennett and the entire board of Malek Fahd school. I pay tribute to principal Bruce Rixon, chair of the parents advisory committee Dr Fariha Dib, and the many staff and parents who attended as well. There were also a couple of thousand students in attendance at this wonderful event. This year is another amazing milestone for Malek Fahd: It is the thirtieth anniversary of the school. I congratulate past and present staff, students, teachers, parents and the entire community on reaching this wonderful milestone.

MARRAR SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:59): If Wagga Wagga is the city of good sports, tiny Marrar in the Cootamundra electorate must be the village of legends. After waiting 21 years to collect the Farrer Football League premiership flag last year, the Marrar Bombers doubled down on the weekend to win the 2018 title in a 56-44 victory against North Wagga Wagga. If that was not enough, in the club's centenary year it won all four grand finals that it contested and also the under-17s netball title. Marrar is a village of fewer than 600 people in the Coolamon Shire and evidently has an incredible local club. Congratulations to all players and to club president Terry Langtry on this phenomenal achievement, which undoubtedly will go down in the club's history.

FORTY-FIRST ANNUAL HOLROYD COMBINED CHURCHES COMMUNITY PRAYER DINNER

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:00): The forty-first annual Holroyd Combined Churches Community Prayer Dinner was held on Tuesday 28 August 2018 at Merrylands RSL Club. The event is a gathering that celebrates Christian traditions and faith. It commenced with the official welcome from Father Peter Blayney, who was also the master of ceremonies for the night. The prayer for Australia was given by Allan Ezzy, AM. Community prayers were given by Rae Goth from the Merrylands Baptist Church, the Hon. Paul Green, MLC, and Chris Hall from the Merrylands Baptist Church. My parliamentary colleague and member for Granville Julia Finn was also present on the night. Doug Bartlett, Ann Dennis and Daphne Terry led the hymn *Be Thou My Vision*. I was honoured to have the opportunity to address the guests and speak about my Catholic faith. The night

concluded with a presentation from Cumberland Council Mayor Councillor Greg Cummings, and benediction from Reverend Bob Dennis, President of Holroyd Christian Ministers Fellowship. I congratulate the organising committee of the Holroyd Combined Churches Community Prayer Dinner.

TRIBUTE TO RACHAEL JACKSON

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:01): Many people in my electorate of Davidson make a significant contribution to our local community, including Rachael Jackson who overcame a challenging upbringing and channels her incredible energy into practical compassion for others. As a single mum of three children, she advocates in the areas of domestic violence, disability access, mental illness and homelessness. Rachael is a member of the international Frenchs Forest Lions Club and has helped to organise its Christmas carols event. She has also been involved with many Northern Beaches Council issues and a local school P&C Association. She coordinates "News and Community with Rachael Jackson", a Facebook group with 3,400 members where locals can discuss community issues. I was pleased to acknowledge recently Rachael's extensive local involvement by presenting her with a New South Wales Government Community Service Award. I commend Rachael on her outstanding community service and note that she inspires many to have hope and to take action to positively change society despite difficult circumstances.

LIVERPOOL WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:02): I acknowledge the Liverpool Women's Health Centre, located on Bathurst Street in my electorate. The centre has done important and good work in the Liverpool area for more than 40 years. It held an open day on Wednesday 5 September. This occurred during Women's Health Week. The open day was planned to celebrate cultural diversity, as well as to introduce the newly refurbished ground floor and other improvements to the centre. A significant proportion of the funding for this work came from the Community Building Partnership program, with \$80,000 in ground floor renovations in 2016 and \$20,000 for disability access in 2017. Other funding programs have also been of great assistance to the centre. Many of Liverpool's diverse communities were included in the festivities of the open day, including Aboriginal and Mandaean groups, and Arabic, Spanish, Hindi and Urdu speaking groups. The centre is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation that operates a multidisciplinary, community-based health service for women. It offers a broad range of client-centred, evidence-based primary and preventative health care services and programs. The centre aims to improve the health and wellbeing of women, especially those suffering financial disadvantage.

SHOALHAVEN BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:03): On Friday 31 August I attended the 2018 Shoalhaven Business Awards with my friend and colleague Shelley Hancock. The event was organised by the Shoalhaven Business Chamber and I congratulate it on promoting and rewarding the significant achievements of our community members, businesses and organisations. First, I give my congratulations to all of the hardworking locals behind the scenes whose work often goes unnoticed and unrecognised. Each and every one of them is vital to the growth and prosperity of our local economy and I thank them for their continued support. All of the nominees are a credit to their professions and the community. Some of the 2018 Shoalhaven Business Award winners included: business leader Terry Rayner from ANZ South Coast and Southern Highlands; outstanding young employee Elise Gooda of Think Tank Business Services; young entrepreneur Bale Berry from Peak Fitness in Huskisson; excellence in small business My Travel Expert; excellence in business Nowra Farmers Market; start-up superstar Sonder Youth; and excellence in innovation Natalie Allan Consulting. I congratulate all of the nominees. They are a great credit to their organisations.

PARRAMATTA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:04): On Friday 14 September it was my pleasure to attend the Parramatta Teachers Association annual Public Education Awards and centenary dinner to celebrate the achievements of our local teachers. Parramatta Teachers Association life membership was awarded to Kathryn Bellach and Amanda Stables for their many years of service, commitment and dedication to public education. Guest speakers this year included: president of the NSW Teachers Federation Maurie Mulheron and author and media commentator Jane Caro. The dinner was also a fundraising event for Stewart House, the federation's chosen charity that provides care for children in need from all parts of New South Wales. I congratulate president Shay Laurent and secretary Nicole Martins from the Parramatta Teachers Association on a great event. I thank all members of the association for the care, love and support they give our kids.

HALLIDAYS POINT FOOTPATHS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:05): Last week I had the pleasure of announcing funding of more than \$270,000 to go towards the construction of footpaths and outdoor gym equipment at Hallidays Point. The new sections of footpath will better connect residential areas, retirement villages, beaches,

the ocean pool, the shopping centre and the caravan park before linking to Diamond Beach Road and the surf club. The Government supports walking and cycling as safe alternative transport modes for local communities, particularly for short trips. It was a pleasure to meet with Mallory Clarke from LJ Hooker, her offsider Molly and John Finney at Hallidays Point to see how the funding will be used from Diamond Beach Road to the caravan park, and from the Lions Park all the way along the foreshore to the surf club. I congratulate the community on its advocacy. It was great to be able to deliver the funds.

BANKSTOWN CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (17:06): I express my support for the Bankstown Children's Festival, which last Sunday celebrated its twentieth anniversary. I am delighted to see the amazing festival continue to go from strength to strength. I acknowledge Mr Thuat Nguyen, OAM, the entire committee and all of the volunteers for their amazing efforts over the years. Twenty years is an amazing milestone. There is no question that the festival is a permanent fixture on our community calendar. I acknowledge the many organisations and children's organisations that were in attendance, as well as our local language schools and dancing schools that also contributed throughout the day. There was the usual children's parade and, of course, many politicians and people from all walks of life came along. I congratulate the committee on another fantastic festival.

WINSTON HILLS BEARS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:07): In my electorate of Seven Hills we are lucky to have many outstanding sporting organisations. One such club is the Winston Hills Bears—a club I played soccer for when I was growing up. The Bears have had a terrific season of building success going into the third year of their five-year plan. The club intends to further expand its Mini Roos and Bear Cubs program for junior players. The Bears have a whopping 1,300 members who are helped every week by dedicated volunteer coaches and managers. Winston Hills Bears teams appeared in 12 grand finals, winning eight. The club won seven premierships and 21 teams competed in semifinals. I thank the committee for its tireless efforts in keeping the club running, particularly the executive committee, including president Rodney Carra, secretary Peter Barr, vice-president Bruce Goddard and treasurer Craig Radford. Well done to all players who proudly represented the Winston Hills Bears this year.

INGENIA VILLAGE, ETTALONG

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:08): Warm smiles and congratulations to all members of the Ingénia Village at Ettalong who joined in their community bake-off. I thank them ever so much for the invitation to enjoy their warm hospitality and try some tasty morsels. With pork and mushroom triangles that I have since baked at home, banana cake with caramel icing, chocolate-coated pears stewed in red wine with a deliciously sweet spiced roll, perfectly moist lemon cake, cupcakes and a zucchini slice, how on earth was I expected to judge a winner? The neatly cared for homes and the community centre decked out with love reflect the efforts of a caring organisation and a kind group of people living together at the base of Mount Ettalong. I congratulate Ingénia on providing affordable housing in the Gosford electorate and across New South Wales. I thank all residents.

TRIBUTE TO DONNA LAYTON

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:09): I draw the attention of the House to the great work being done by Donna Layton of Grafton in demonstrating how women can excel in a male-dominated workplace. Donna is the general manager of J. Notaris and Sons, a sawmilling business in Grafton. Earlier this year the company won the Excellence in Trade and Manufacturing Award at the Clarence Valley Business Excellence Awards. I attribute that largely to Donna's stewardship. Donna started with the sawmilling business in 1978 when owner Spiro Notaris recognised her as a talented TAFE student and offered her a job. She has since attained a Bachelor in Business and is now running the business. It has always been a family business, and Donna runs it that way. Of the 39 employees, five have been with the company for more than 40 years, nine have 20 years of experience and seven have more than 10 years with the company. This is testament to Donna's professionalism and love of the business. She is not only an asset to J. Notaris and Sons but also to the Clarence Valley.

LINKS TO EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:10): I acknowledge the Links to Early Learning Program conducted by Uniting for South West Sydney. The program was officially launched on 29 August at the Mercure Sydney Liverpool at Prestons. It aims to support families living in the Campbelltown, Bankstown, Fairfield and Liverpool areas who have difficulties in accessing quality early learning services for preschool-aged children. A pilot project commenced in December 2017 and it has already received more than 100 referrals. Most of the families are from a non-English-speaking background. Many have issues such as domestic violence, disability and health concerns, trauma and homelessness. There is also a significant component of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Still others are refugees or asylum seekers with little or no support networks. The program

involves home visits to provide information about available services, helping families with obtaining and completing documentation, translation and interpreting services, giving practical help and providing appropriate referrals. This is a critically important program given the importance of young children being involved in early learning. It helps to make sure every child is offered the best start.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK WINDEYER

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:11): I am privileged to be able occasionally to acknowledge outstanding local constituents in my electorate of Davidson with a New South Wales Government Community Service Award. Recently I had the pleasure of presenting such an award to Frank Windeyer of Roseville. Frank is a respected lawyer who has admirably contributed to various community organisations over many years. For more than five years, Frank has been the president of Easy Care Gardening, a community organisation that helps older people and eligible clients with a disability to maintain their gardens. Frank is a member and past president of the Lindfield Rotary Club. As a former member of the Army Reserve, he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and received the Reserve Forces Decoration for long service. Frank was also a leader in the Scout Association for nearly 30 years. I commend Frank on all of his past and continuing community contributions.

Documents

NEW SOUTH WALES CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I table an erratum to the report of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal for the year ended 30 June 2017, dated 17 September 2018. I order that the document be printed.

Private Members' Statements

GOSFORD TOWN CENTRE PLANNING

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:12): Since the last sitting of Parliament, the New South Wales Government has taken another step in the takeover of the planning and control of the future of the Gosford Town Centre. Today I draw the attention of the House to concerns expressed by the residents of Gosford, many of whom have spoken or written to me and a number of whom have travelled to Parliament this evening to express their concerns about the recently launched Development Control Plan. The Minister for Planning offered Gosford a very short consultation time frame in which to discuss the plan. One consultation meeting was held at short notice and when very few people were able to attend—that is, during work and school pick-up hours. Is the Minister really listening to the people?

The Berejiklian Government made the decision to amalgamate our councils to give a greater voice and capability to the Central Coast. What now? Local planning powers and the council's representative community voice are being ripped from us. Those powers and that voice are being given to people who do not live there and who have no connection to our community, its interests or its future. Our community says that denying local representation is a serious flaw in the Government's proposal. The Government is about to allow developers to launch into a high-rise compromise across the capital of the Central Coast with free-for-all floor space ratios, by abolishing existing planning restrictions in our town centre. This will impact on the height limitations that our community has fought for so long to have in place.

Our community is also concerned about the impact the proposed developments will have on our green spaces. The Berejiklian Government takeover of planning will allow the shadowing of our park by the initial high-rise development approval. Then what? Step by step, it will allow a greater percentage of shadow to be cast across our lovely city parks throughout the day. Compare this to international town centres in Europe and the Americas where they regard green town spaces as healthy and valued investments in community infrastructure and wellbeing. They are carefully managed to allow residents space outdoors, in the sunshine and as a physical and mental health break from the urban living and working environment, with adequate setbacks and protections in place to prevent park shadowing and infringement of tower developments overlapping the streetscapes. The cynic in me believes that it is a time-tested process: launch the plan, throw in a park to shut up the locals and get approval for the high-rise. But what happens in the future?

Our locals are also very concerned about the impact of a skyscraper in Gosford acting as a wind block for the communities down Narara valley and beyond who need the southerly breeze channelled through Gosford to relieve the summer heat that is part of our local microclimate. As for parking, ask the workers who have to park well outside the city centre, the commuters who arrive early to the station and sleep in their cars to get a parking space before the car park is full, and the workers who duck out of the office to re-park their car so they do not

have to walk to work from a distant suburb. Ask the shopkeepers in Gosford what has happened to their patronage as shoppers and Australian Tax Office workers are forced to compete for parking across our city.

Dear Berejiklian Government, any development in our city centre must have adequate parking provisions for residents, commercial tenants and visitors. Ask anyone on the coast, Gosford needs additional road development and public transport, as well as the extra sewerage works the council already has planned. The thought of taking the Central Coast Council contributions and putting them in the pockets of the rich Berejiklian Government is an absolute no-no for the people of the coast. Our new Central Coast Council needs every cent it can get to manage the massive newly amalgamated council area, the third biggest in the State.

We owe it to future generations to build developments with infrastructure. We get only one shot at it. We have seen Sydney development controls taken over by the New South Wales Government, and to what benefit? We see masses of high-rise crammed into areas with no new schools, no new parks and no new public transport. Under New South Wales planning provisions, in Sydney there is virtually no control on the pace, nature, design or location of the buildings we are subjecting our citizens to. We do not want that to happen on the Central Coast. Earlier this month, in the wreckage of the Wagga Wagga by-election, our Premier said she was listening to the people. How is overriding our local planning via ministerial special appointments listening to the people of the Central Coast?

SUPERMARKET GENERIC MILK PRICES

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (17:17): On 3 September I put out a call to Coles and Woolworths asking them to increase the price of their generic milk by 20¢ a litre. Today I welcomed an announcement by them that they are going to increase the price of milk by 10¢ a litre and pass it directly back to the farm gate.

Mr Stephen Bromhead: Coles is not.

Mr ANDREW FRASER: Coles is going to; it announced it this morning. If the member for Myall Lakes listened he might learn something. Since 1995 in relation to on farm costs—and these are just straight, fixed costs on farm—superannuation has increased 137 per cent, electricity 166 per cent, diesel 142 per cent, council rates 231 per cent; grain pellets 103 per cent, corn seed 247 per cent and soybean seed 138 per cent. Yet the return per litre on milk—and this is through the processes, not through the generic milk brands in Coles—is somewhere between 52¢ and 56¢ a litre. The return has increased by 56 per cent from 37¢ a litre. Anyone with half an ounce of a mathematical brain would know that with that type of increase they cannot survive. Having written to the general manager of Woolworths, I received a letter from Woolworths in which it outlined its excuse as follows: You will also appreciate the broader cost-of-living challenges that exist around any decision to increase the price of a staple product. Our customers can choose from a variety of drinking milk products in accordance with their budget ... Effectively, even though Woolworths has increased the price and has guaranteed that the increase will go back to the farm gate, the increase will be on generic milk and not on the milk that is sold by the processors, the dairy farmers. After I put the call out, Norco increased the return to the farm gate by 5¢ a litre. I welcome that decision but in reality that is because Norco is the only cooperative that has processors in New South Wales. Norco has brought forward the dividend payment that would have gone to the farmers, the cooperative owners, at the end of the year. As a result of bringing that forward and doing the budgets, 10 jobs in the processing plant were lost. Ten people were laid off last Friday.

The industry needs a summit. I have written to the Deputy Prime Minister and the Deputy Premier today asking them to call a summit, not just on milk but on all agricultural products. I want the retailers—Coles, Woolworths and Aldi—the farming community, including the dairy representatives, NSW Farmers and the National Farmers' Federation, to sit around a table with all the Ministers from every State to talk about the future of the industry. We need a reliable, sustainable, environmentally friendly and economically viable dairy and farming industry in this country.

When we look at a Coles, Woolworths or Aldi brochure we discover that the loss leaders are the perishable products: eggs, potatoes, tomatoes. The loss leaders will be Australian products that the retailers will sell out. Egg producers say that once a year the major retailers come to them and say, "October is the month"—or whatever month it is—"when we are going to sell cheap eggs." That means the farm gate price is going down. So egg producers run their budgets for 11 months at a reasonable price—and sometimes I wonder if it is a reasonable price—and for one month of the year they basically work for nothing. They may as well go on holiday. That is the way farm goods are retailed in this country. This afternoon I went down to the cafe and bought a litre of full cream milk.

Mr Paul Lynch: It is not cold.

Mr ANDREW FRASER: It is cold. The member for Liverpool is a communist; he likes those sorts of things. I also bought 600 millilitres of spring water. Basically spring water is taken out of the ground and is put in a plastic bottle; there are no processing costs whatsoever. The equivalent price for a litre of spring water is \$4.30. A litre of milk costs \$2.90 and yet the farmer has to feed the cows and supplement the feed. Given the drought at the moment, we urgently need a summit to look at all regional and rural produce—I know the member for Liverpool would support me in this call—to ensure that not only consumers get a fair price but farmers get a fair price too, before the farmers go out the back door.

GOULBURN ELECTORATE SMALL BUSINESSES

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) (17:22): I bring to the attention of the House the extraordinary contribution of small business to the Goulburn electorate, particularly in the Southern Highlands. I have spoken many times on business growth within the electorate but business in the highlands is going gangbusters. Of course, businesses would like even more tourism-related events to keep boosting the numbers but there is an underlying strength to the economy that enables 50,000 people to live there and many to work there as well. Last weekend I doorknocked many small businesses in the Moss Vale and Berrima townships to hear firsthand how these small businesses are faring. After leisurely walks through Berrima and Moss Vale retail streets, it was very clear to me that we have amazing local business owners and that hundreds of families are dependent on them and their staff.

Businesses change. Moss Vale—affectionately known down our way as Moss Vegas—has gone from being the quiet end of the highlands to having an innovative and creative vibe. For example, Birch is an amazing all black decor, fine dining restaurant. There is an array of new faces, business owners who have sought a change in lifestyle from the big cities and have brought their experiences and their style with them. It was good to see MV Hire's Roy and Susie Reynolds still going strong as a result of the building boom and Rob Bennett Jewellery offering an amazing array of beautiful jewellery. Laurelle and Colin Boland, who run Southern Highlands Funerals, are still on call 24 hours a day. It was also a great opportunity to drop in to some new shops and lust after their offerings.

Virginia Ransom Jewellery, That Beautiful Shop, Bowerbird On Argyle and Suzie Anderson Home are all new gets for us. It was the same in Berrima. Jan still runs the iconic Magpie Cafe and Carol Oldes still produces wonderful food at Mrs Oldbucks Pantry, but Diego is new to the General Store and Maryann Brophy is producing remarkable photographic works for sale. Underpinning the retail sector is a number of larger businesses, including Harper Collins, Warrigal Care and the Garvan Institute of Medical Research mouse breeding facility, the Mouse House, which has been gradually expanding its research services for 10 years. Our small engineering businesses continue to support the construction and mining sectors. For example, Peter Gillies at A&I Coatings has been a significant supplier to WestConnex.

Where would we be without the hard work of the Moss Vale and Rural Chamber of Commerce, under the driven leadership of Brigid Kennedy, in creating the Southern Highlands Food and Wine clusters—100 local businesses working together to promote local products and a unique experience? The wedding business is also huge in my part of the world. Montrose Berry Farm and the Southern Highlands Winery are just two beautiful places in the Southern Highlands to tie the knot. Fiona and Bruce Robertson and the three Italian families of Eddie, Darren and Emilio bring enormous value to the highlands and lots of jobs for locals. It means local businesses like the Robertson Sunrise Bakery and the Argyle Wine Merchant in Moss Vale have enjoyed an increase in tourists passing through the area.

Managing a small business is never easy. Small business owners risk their money every day and put their lives on the line. Their enormous hours and commitment to customers are what makes New South Wales a vibrant and diverse economy, which in turn calls on a range of diverse skills and backgrounds. Small businesses need to know that they do not stand alone. The Liberal-Nationals Government has set the tone for a strong business economy with unprecedented infrastructure development and investments in our regional areas, which all stimulate further business activity. Strong growth in our small businesses is a result of a strong economy and the winners are the rest of us—50,000 people in the Southern Highlands who, thanks to small business, can live and work in our beautiful and peaceful towns and villages. They do not need to commute to the city and the surf for work. Thanks to local small businesses we too can be part of the best kept secret in New South Wales, which is life in the regions.

LIVERPOOL CITY POLICE AREA COMMAND STAFFING

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:26): I inform the House of staffing issues surrounding the Liverpool police command, which is now formally known as the Liverpool City Police Area Command [PAC]. The PAC was formed by the amalgamation of the Liverpool and Green Valley local area commands in a process

called re-engineering. The process caused considerable concern to a number of police in the area that I represent. One of the bizarre aspects of the process is that the comparatively new Liverpool police station is not big enough for the command to fit within it. Granted that it was completed years later than it should have been by the Government, it strikes me as typical of the disinterest and mismanagement that characterises the Government's attitude to Liverpool.

Perversely, I am glad of this, because if the station was big enough all of the general duties police would have been sucked into the Liverpool central business district and Green Valley would have been closed. That was a real fear of staff when the re-engineering process was announced. The only reason it did not come to pass was that the new Liverpool station was not big enough. Green Valley was saved by the Government's incompetence. As to the current staffing at Liverpool, I have recently had discussions with representatives of the Liverpool City branch of the Police Association of New South Wales. It is conducting a campaign concerning the reduction of police positions at the Liverpool station. I happily support the campaign, as do the member for Macquarie Fields and the Labor candidate for Holsworthy, Charishma Kaliyanda. The campaign has been provoked by the recent removal of a sergeant's position at Liverpool. This followed the removal of two constable positions earlier this year.

The police association branch media release issued on 22 August sets out their position well: Liverpool City PAC is projected to grow by 100 thousand over the next 10 years. The majority of this growth has already started in the Western Sydney corridor centred around the new Badgerys Creek airport. Liverpool City PAC is consistently one of the busiest policing commands in the State. Liverpool police consistently deal with a high volume of serious and violent crime. This has been highlighted by two murders and numerous large drug seizures in the last three weeks. Our members are outraged by the madness of reducing frontline police when we are already stretched to meet calls for assistance from the public. This at a time when we should be getting more police instead of ripping safety from the public. Liverpool branch members will not cop this lying down. The command obviously includes the busy central business district [CBD], but its geographic scope is quite extensive. East-west it goes from Voyager Point in the east to Bents Basin at the foot of the Blue Mountains in the west. It includes the Badgerys Creek Airport site. Typical of this Government's approach to the airport it is happy to claim credit for the announcement, but it will not provide proper services, which is very clear on its position in relation to the provision of public transport to the airport. This Government will make us do with second best.

The police association believes that the lost sergeant's position is to go to country New South Wales. I do not purport to be an expert on levels of policing in rural and regional New South Wales, but I do know that they should not be staffed at the expense of Liverpool. One of the particularly bizarre issues is that the police area command [PAC] contains massive amounts of development. There will be dramatically increasing numbers of people and enterprises in this area. Reducing the number of police for this area simply does not make sense. There is of course the airport, but recently there have been suburbs built at Edmondson Park and Leppington with more on the way and Austral to come. Conspicuously absent from the re-engineering process, and indeed recent State budgets, are proposals for a new police station in south-west Sydney. That is what the real agenda should be, not reducing the present level of policing at Liverpool.

The loss of a sergeant is more serious than simply the loss of one person. Because of the role they fulfil, the absence of a sergeant can adversely impact a whole range of other officers. Consider this small example: an interpreter cannot be used without a sergeant's approval because of rules of delegation of expenditure. More than 50 per cent of the electorate I represent speaks a language other than English at home. Not surprisingly, there is quite a need for interpreters for police investigations at incidents in the Liverpool City Police Area Command. That is stymied by the lack of sergeants. That means removing a sergeant's position in Liverpool has more adverse consequences for our area than it does for many others.

There is already a massive gravitational pull by Liverpool CBD on the Liverpool police. They are sucked into the major shopping area, which is hardly surprising or unique. That has been and will be aggravated by the recent massive residential development boom in the Liverpool CBD—the consequence in part of a Liberal-controlled council, which resulted in developers getting everything they wanted without proper planning or proper control. That means the focus of the Liverpool police already will be on Liverpool CBD, not on suburbs outside of the CBD such as Green Valley, Hinchinbrook, Middleton Grange, Cecil Hills, Elizabeth Hills, Moorebank, Wattle Grove and Hammondville. Reducing staff in this context just aggravates and exacerbates this tendency. It means fewer police giving attention to the suburbs outside the CBD. That cannot be a benefit for Liverpool. It cannot be a sensible or a proper way in which to proceed. The Minister for Police should intervene and restore the positions to the Liverpool City PAC.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:31): As a former tradie, it is with great pride that today I share with the House the impact of this Government's investment in skills across the Cootamundra electorate.

There is no doubt that our modern society places great value on university-level education, but I am thrilled to be part of a government that recognises the great worth of our State's skilled workforce, and the potential for jobs, stability and rich, rewarding careers that vocational learning can offer. As we well know, for many country kids and adults looking to change paths, their journey into skills often starts at TAFE.

Since this House last sat, we have seen the opening of a new state-of-the-art connected learning centre [CLC] in Narrandera and the turning of the sod of the site of a CLC for Grenfell. The atmosphere in Narrandera on 31 August, when the doors to this phenomenal new facility slid open, was electric. We welcomed the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon. Adam Marshall, to Narrandera to officially open the \$4.76 million facility, which will transform education delivery in the region. Our next generation CLC will leverage TAFE NSW's unrivalled reach and expertise to deliver high-quality training, exceptional learning experiences and accessible support services to our students in Narrandera.

The Narrandera Connected Learning Centre has almost doubled the number of courses available to local students, with many more to come in the future. The new CLC will deliver courses that have high demand across the State through blended, facilitated and online learning, including drone essentials, a certificate IV in commercial cookery and a diploma in business administration—all being offered locally for the first time. The new facilities will benefit not only the local community but also the wider region by helping more people to get the skills they need to get the jobs of tomorrow. I studied for my diploma of floristry through TAFE. Living in Young, I travelled to Padstow in Sydney every Wednesday for almost two years to get that qualification. Knowing now that students in my electorate no longer have to travel vast distances to their local campus to access a range of learning and course options is tangible, wonderful progress.

In Grenfell, construction on a \$4 million facility will expand the options for students who currently are forced to travel to places like Cowra, Young and Orange. It is truly inspirational to see cutting-edge technology—mobile training units, simulations and virtual reality experiences—employed to effectively bridge geographical distance, offering a world of possibilities to locals in their own backyards. Living in the country does not have to be a disadvantage for our workforce in training. In fact, with affordable property, quality of life and a welcoming, warm sense of community, I hope to see students from our larger regional centres and even the city paying attention to what Narrandera and Grenfell have to offer as they consider where to live and study.

I am pleased to say that the Government's investment in TAFE does not stop at infrastructure. It also extends to our students. Apprentices undertaking their training in the Cootamundra electorate are benefiting from the New South Wales Government's fee-free apprenticeship package only two months after its launch. Since the program was announced on 1 July, 12 new apprentices have commenced training in West Wyalong. Across the State, fee-free apprenticeships will allow 100,000 apprentices throughout New South Wales to study and train for a fulfilling career while also addressing the State's skills shortages.

It is incredibly rewarding to see students from West Wyalong, arguably the most drought-affected rural pocket of the Cootamundra electorate, making the most of this wonderful opportunity. I congratulate all of those who have enrolled. I sincerely thank Deputy Premier John Barilaro and Assistant Minister for Skills, Adam Marshall, for the investment in employment that will benefit Cootamundra employers and budding tradies. It is an exciting time for old and young students in Cootamundra to further their skills and continue their personal education journeys. It is a privilege to be a part of a government that is working hard to facilitate learning and growth for our small country communities.

HEATHCOTE ELECTORATE POLICING

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (17:36): With the appointment of Police Commissioner Mick Fuller, APM, the transition of policing into the modern era has begun. The ethos of policing in the modern era is flexibility and fast responses to critical incidents and day-to-day policing. Gone are the days of police stations full of constables waiting for a call to respond to crime. These days our police are equipped with vehicles containing state-of-the-art reporting and analysis computers that are mobile and agile. This technology allows police to receive immediate radio and computer messaging while patrolling so they can respond to crime more quickly. That brings me to modern policing in my electorate of Heathcote. I fully support the NSW Police Force and the commissioner in their plans for policing in my electorate. Some Opposition members who purport to understand policing in New South Wales are either misinformed or mischief-making, running scare campaigns that do little more than alarm local residents.

The Sutherland and Miranda police stations have recently combined to form the Sutherland Shire Police Area Command. Again the Opposition would have us think that these decisions were made on a whim. However, those days are gone—they ceased in March 2011. We now plan and react appropriately to the needs of our police force. Labor keeps repeating in public forums that members of Parliament make operational decisions for the NSW Police Force, but this is uninformed propaganda. Politicians do not make policing decisions, police do—at

least under the Liberal-Nationals Government they do. The role of government is to resource the police so they can perform their duties. The creation of the Sutherland Shire Police Area Command has many advantages for my community. It means more police are on the streets because some administrative roles have been combined, allowing more officers to be rostered in key crime roles. The combination of resources not only permits high-visibility crews across the whole of the Sutherland shire but also greater flexibility to respond to key areas of crime.

Since 1997 Engadine police station has been closed for general duties. The recent call by the Labor spokesperson to reopen Engadine is mendacious. Anyone with a modicum of knowledge would understand that these decisions are made for strategic reasons and stories about crime rates soaring are just not true. Crime rates in the Heathcote electorate are dropping and according to the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research are well below the State averages. The Menai police station closure was announced this year due to severe water damage to the building and an increase in lease costs. The decision was made by police that the station would close and all services would be transferred to the Police Dog Unit, two minutes up the road. Helensburgh police station redevelopment was announced recently and the public consultation will be entered into soon. It is my hope that Helensburgh police station may host the highway patrol as well as general duties. Police numbers should be managed by the Wollongong police command, again taking into consideration reported crime incidence in the area.

Both commands in my electorate have welcomed new superintendents: Sutherland command has welcomed Superintendent Jason Box, and Wollongong has welcomed Superintendent Chris Craner—two very experienced police officers. I have the utmost confidence in their abilities to manage policing in my electorate. The recent budget announcements show that policing in New South Wales will receive an unprecedented \$3.9 billion, which has enabled NSW Police Force funding to implement an increase in policing numbers, if required. As a response to the unwarranted concerns of constituents surrounding police in their local area, I thought it was best to support the needs of the community for a public meeting with Sutherland shire police to allow concerned citizens the opportunity to hear firsthand what modern policing is all about. It was run by the police public relations unit from the Sutherland command. The police outlined the reasons behind the modern policing strategy and dispelled myths created by misinformation and Chinese whispers on social media. The meeting was held on 23 August 2018 in the Engadine community hall. I trust that all involved now understand the new way of policing and that in future they will feel confident knowing what the NSW Police is doing to maintain peace and order in my community.

DANIEL MERZA

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:41): Today I acknowledge the efforts of a remarkable young man who has drawn inspiration from difficult circumstances in his teenage years and is now teaching others to become resilient in their struggles in life. Mr Daniel Merza is a talented individual. He has studied hard during his school and university years and achieved much in his professional life. Daniel has decided to move from the accounting profession into being a life coach, motivational speaker and author. This is not an easy transition. However, when an individual is committed to a cause, so much can be achieved.

Daniel Merza has had his fair share of knocks early on in life. On hearing Daniel's story one can only feel inspired to help others whose lives are impacted by bullying. On 31 August Daniel officially launched his first book, *Get the Monkeys Off Your Back*, at Club Marconi. It was a night of inspiration with special guests speaking about positive topics to motivate individuals to be active participants in social change and to change their attitudes towards bullying. The evening's master of ceremonies was Mr Elvis Miletic, and guest speakers included Mr Anthony Chidiac and Ms Heather Miller.

The theme of the night was the inspiring tenacity, optimism and empowerment of individuals from all walks of life. The night would not have been possible without support from Daniel's parents, siblings, extended family, friends and supporters. So many people believed in Daniel's vision and wanted to get involved to help support the launch of his book. Thirteen local businesses donated their products and time in support of the official launch of the book. The variety of support included a photo booth, dessert boxes, disc jockeys, portrait artists and entertainment as so many different businesses wanted to pitch in and lend a hand to support such a fantastic person.

Special thanks must also go to the Freeman Catholic College year 12 music students who provided some truly wonderful entertainment throughout the night. Daniel Merza's book *Get the Monkeys Off Your Back* does an outstanding job at empowering the reader to identify the positives and negatives that impact on everyday life, while offering strategies to navigate through those dark times. When the chips are down, it is best to be prepared. Daniel's goal is to empower the reader to become the best version of themselves that they can be and to provide them with the skills they need to turn their life around and regain full control. Overcoming adversity is an incredible challenge for anybody, let alone for someone who does not yet believe in themselves.

This is where Daniel Merza found himself in the early years of his life, before he finally understood that the monkeys on his back were keeping him down and preventing him from succeeding in life. Daniel Merza is now challenging the status quo and doing all he can to assist young people and adults alike to identify and overcome the challenges in life and regain control, and to motivate individuals to be the best they can be. If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime. Thanks to Daniel many more people will be learning how to fish. This is the resilience creed that Daniel has drawn up:

Today I decide,

To step up and take control,
To take full responsibility,
To be the leader of my life.

Today I decide,

To believe not doubt.
I am capable and worthy,
I can do anything I put my mind to,
I have an unlimited potential,
I am like no other: one of a kind.

Today I decide,

To always embrace life's challenges,
For without them, I will not grow.
To always get back up and move forward,
To never ever give up.

Today I decide,

To get the monkeys off my back,
To live up to my full potential.
I have everything I need:
I have abundance around me,
I have the power within me.
With belief, everything is possible;
With drive, I am unstoppable;
With gratitude, I am unbreakable.

IT'S MY LIFE

I AM RESPONSIBLE

I AM RESPONSIBLE

I AM RESPONSIBLE

This I decide, today, and every day I rise.

That is Daniel Merza's resilience creed. Once again I congratulate Daniel Merza on this great achievement and commend his dedication towards empowering and supporting others to regain control and to achieve so much more out of life.

DAIRY INDUSTRY

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:45): I speak in relation to the dairy industry, which is particularly important to the Myall Lakes electorate. We have one of the highest concentrations of dairy farmers in the Manning Valley and we produce about 30 per cent of the fresh milk for the New South Wales fresh milk market. There are two parts to the issue regarding dairy farmers: first, the drought and what are we going to do for them now and, second, a future sustainable industry. As an example of the effects of the drought, a couple of weeks ago I was talking with one of my dairy farmers. In January this year he was paying about \$300 a tonne for grain to feed his cattle. A couple of weeks ago he paid \$591 a tonne for feed for the cattle. It takes one kilo of grain to produce one litre of milk. That is 59.1¢ for one kilo of grain, and they are paid 50¢ a litre of milk. They are behind 9.1¢ just for the grain. They then have the increase in electricity costs and other input costs such as fuel. They are in dire straits right across the industry.

I applaud the member for Coffs Harbour's call for a 10¢ a litre levy for milk. Woolworths has said that it will increase the milk price by 10¢ a litre and that it will go direct to the farmers. However, Coles 10¢ a litre levy will go to the National Farmers' Federation. It will then go into the drought pool and be distributed to farmers; therefore, it will not go directly to the farmers. This evening I had a phone call from one of my dairy farmers very concerned that consumers will think that Coles money will be going direct to the farmers. That is not the case. I also received a phone call from Dairy Connect, a body that represents dairy farmers, confirming that the Coles money is not going directly to the farmers. That is a great concern for them.

A couple of weeks ago I went to a meeting with Parmalat and Dairy Farmers. The message is this: \$1 a litre milk must stop. Coles and Woolworths, the biggest players in the game, are setting the market across the country. That is putting downward pressure on costs. The milk is \$1 a litre, there is then the processing costs, and the costs of the dairy farmer. At this stage farmers need 80¢ a litre. They are one of the industries where rather than the costs of a product being the determinant of the sale price to the consumer, it is being set by Coles and Woolworths, and they and the processors have to try to fit into this.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] said that \$1 a litre milk has no adverse effect on the market. That is absolutely wrong. Once again, the ACCC is wrong and should be brought to account. It is about time we had a good look at the ACCC and the amount of taxpayers' money that has been wasted on that organisation. It cannot do anything about petrol prices either. I again agree with the member for Coffs Harbour that there should be a summit of all stakeholders because this artificial setting of price needs to be lifted. For example, consumers could pay \$1.30 a litre. That 30¢ would go the farmer, which would put it at 80¢ a litre. The cost of producing a litre of milk now is well in excess of 60¢ a litre—it is probably closer to 70¢ a litre. Farmers have also got to make a living.

They are being told to apply for the Farmer Assist program to receive some sort of welfare when they have an absolutely fantastic product that all consumers want. I bet there is not a consumer in the world who would complain about paying \$1.30 for home brand milk. The processors cannot even say to Coles and Woolworths that they will not supply them. One of the most disgraceful things, and I have commented on it in this House before, is that Coles has said if it does not get supply from the producers and the processors it will bring in reconstituted milk from New Zealand. That is indicative of its care for producers and consumers—namely, that it will bring in reconstituted milk and let the dairy farmers in New Zealand and other places reap the benefits of our market. I call on Coles, Woolworths and producers such as Norco, Saputo, Parmalat and others to get together with the dairy farmers to work this out because \$1 a litre is killing the industry.

SYDNEY MARINE PARK

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:50): Tonight I speak on the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion assessment. In particular, stage 3 of the assessment proposes a new marine park proposal for the region, including additional or expanded sanctuaries and special purpose zones in my electorate of Manly—namely, at Cabbage Tree Bay, more commonly known as Shelly Beach, and North Harbour, including Spring Cove and Fairlight Beach. I place on record my deep gratitude to everyone in my community who has called, emailed or taken the time to meet with me to discuss the proposed marine park. When the NSW Marine Estate Management Authority put the proposal out for consultation the intent was to hear directly from the community, including commercial operators, recreational fishermen and the wider community who all have an interest and passion in protecting our oceans and waterways. The authority said this as to why a marine park is needed:

The new marine park will enhance the conservation of marine biodiversity in the bioregion. It will also help to maximise the environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits the NSW community derives from the marine estate in this region.

It is vitally important to look at how the marine park proposal links with the wider Marine Estate Management Strategy. The quote continues:

The marine park proposal is in addition to and complements the initiatives under the Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018-2028. The strategy addresses statewide priority and cumulative threats to the NSW marine estate identified in the NSW Marine Estate Threat and Risk Assessment through nine interlinked management initiatives.

...

The proposed marine park focuses on reducing risks at a local scale from some site-based threats. It is designed to complement the initiatives and management actions of the strategy.

The constituents and stakeholders I have met with, no matter their position, have been generous with their time and their insights. They all have a deep love for our marine environment and their passion should be noted in this House. Their points of view, whether communicated via phone call or email, letters, formal meetings in my electorate office or just a casual chat on the street, have helped inform my understanding of the concerns and various points of view on the marine park proposal.

Two things have become clear to me from my discussions with the variety of groups and people with whom I have met. The first is that everyone, no matter their position on the proposal, loves Manly, its beaches and bays, rock pools and reefs. Everyone wants to see the proposed areas available for the best use by locals and for these areas to flourish for future use. The second is that there is an opportunity for agreed amendments to be considered, certainly with respect to Manly, as part of the proposals that do not compromise environmental or recreational outcomes. Many of the proposed changes have been put forward by pragmatic and passionate locals who sit on different sides of this debate.

I again place on record my sincere thanks to people such as Aaron who lives around the corner from me and Bill Butler who came to see me. What I have heard is that there is a need for more courtesy moorings around Spring Cove to stop anchors destroying sea grass. I have also heard about the importance of access by boats and recreational fishers to the boat ramp at Little Manly. The message from all stakeholders has been loud and clear: The marine estate is vital to our community and it requires a variety of investments. This includes significant investments in addressing storm water runoff and sewage management, which requires collaboration across State and local governments.

The marine park discussion process is ongoing, and I encourage members of the community to continue to make submissions on the discussion paper until 27 September. I will continue to work closely with all stakeholders in the community to ensure that any future announcement or decision works for everyone. Talking about our key marine habitats, the Minister in the other place said, "In order to manage them and protect them for future generations, we need an approach that is accepted and sustainable for the people of New South Wales." In March this year I spoke in this place about the importance of protecting our marine environment. I conclude by reiterating a point I made then, and feel just as strongly about now. I said:

We should not vacate the debate on marine conservation, nor should we hide from the fact that these decisions take courage.

Working collaboratively, I believe we can reach a good outcome in Manly.

NORTHMEAD COMMUNITY

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:54): I speak today about the suburb of Northmead and some of its outstanding constituents in my electorate of Seven Hills. Northmead is located in the north-east of the electorate at the meeting of Darling Mills Creek and Toongabbie Creek, which combine to form the opening of the Parramatta River. Northmead is in the local government area of the City of Parramatta and has almost 11,500 residents. Northmead's original custodians are the Borramarree and Tuga clans of the Darug people. Old Government House was built, and still stands, in Parramatta. The adjacent land formed the meadows that were part of the Governor's domain. "Northmead" is so named because it was the northern meadow of the Governor's property. From that time, orchards and poultry farms were established by the Europeans, including Parramatta historical identities such as George Oakes, Nat Payten and William Fullagar.

We are lucky to have three outstanding schools in the suburb. Northmead Public School has 27 classes, consisting of almost 700 eager-to-learn students. I acknowledge the hard work of all the dedicated teachers and the parents and citizens [P&C] association in always ensuring the betterment of Northmead students. The school's motto is "Educating for Excellence" and the marvellous school achieves that with the assistance of the local community. Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School is an important part of the wider area as it provides a specialised education in the arts. It is great to have a local high school that specialises in fostering creativity, with an abundance of extracurricular options, and ensures intellectual inquiry across all subject areas offered. The school's motto is "Success through Diligence", and this is reflected in its highly conscientious pupils. It is also attributed to the amazing work of the school's many teachers. I thank the P&C association for its hard work within the local community.

The Hills School is incredible, with tremendous community spirit. It caters to students with moderate to severe challenges, including physical disabilities, autism spectrum disorder or sensory impairments. The Hills School is well equipped to look after the students, with modern, specialised technologies and state-of-the-art facilities. It includes a heated pool and inclusive, engaging playgrounds. The caring staff members and P&C association do an outstanding job educating and advocating for the school's kindergarten to year 12 student cohort. Northmead has quite the scenery on either side of the suburb. The City of Parramatta has many bushwalking options constructed from walkways—many dating back to the European settlers. All the bushwalks feature a vast array of native Australian flora and fauna, and each has a distinct local history.

When I speak to Northmead locals they often mention the bushwalking tracks as some of Northmead's defining features. Two of my favourite bushwalks are the Pemulwuy Loop and the Redbank Track, which cover Northmead and Winston Hills to Old Toongabbie—all within the Seven Hills electorate. Another track through Northmead is the Murri-Yanna Track, which extends from Excelsior Reserve at North Rocks to Northmead. Many other tracks go through the area. Northmead is very community oriented, and the local Anglican and Uniting churches play a great role within the area. Northmead Anglican Church has a tremendous ministry that is dedicated to kids and families. It is well led by minister Adrian Russell. Each Monday the church offers English as a second language classes, with morning tea for locals.

Northmead Uniting Church is a fantastic organisation. In addition to regular services, the church offers services to the Constitution Hill aged care facility. It holds outdoor services and caters for the Tamil and Korean communities. The church runs a tremendous men's shed, which I have attended a number of times. It is a great organisation run by great people. In conclusion, I also mention Northmead Bowling Club, its hardworking

directors and its committee. They have served the community since 1957. Over the years, the club has grown to include women's bowling, additional bowling greens, a clubhouse, sports bar and bistro. It is a popular venue with Northmead locals. The club also has a kids area and always offers a lot of entertainment. I highly recommend it to any of my constituents in Seven Hills or to people from the wider Sydney area. In closing, I reiterate it is a pleasure to represent the constituents of Northmead.

CENTRAL COAST MARINERS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:00): As we approach the beginning of the new A-League season, I am pleased to speak tonight about the Central Coast Mariners, who are based in Tuggerah in my electorate. Since 2012—when the Mariners won the A-League championship, became the first club in Hyundai A-League history to finish in the competition top two for three seasons in a row, and qualified for the last 16 of the 2013 Asian Football Confederation Champions League—there have been a few lean years. The good news is that owner Mike Charlesworth has opened his chequebook. He and chief executive officer Shaun Mielekamp have been putting together an exciting season for the Mariners.

As everyone around the world knows, one of their first announcements was that the Mariners had taken on Usain Bolt for a trial. While he is not up to A-League standard at this stage, they have given him four to 12 months to prove his fitness. Even though he has only played 20 minutes for the Mariners thus far, he drew 10,000 spectators at a trial match between Central Coast Select and the Mariners. The match was also broadcast live on Fox Sports and beamed around the world. Bringing Usain Bolt to the club was a stroke of genius. My nephew plays in the youth team, who are training with Usain Bolt at the moment. So it is not just about the impact he has in the media; those young kids are getting to train with him. Even if he does not quite make it, it will still be a great thing for the Central Coast and for the club.

The other good news is that several of our former greats, including Matt Simon and Michael McGlinchey, have returned to the club to bolster the ranks. Today it was announced that Ross McCormack, formerly of Melbourne City and also Aston Villa, has signed with the club on loan. Tommy Oar, a former Socceroo, has also signed with the club. We have some of the best National Premier League youth players, including Jordan Murray, who last year was the National Premier League New South Wales record scorer of the year, with 58 goals. He will be our proven goal scorer up front. Young Aiden O'Neill is on loan from Burnley. We also boast Cory Gameiro, Mario Shabow—who is an Australian Youth International—Matthew Millar and Kalifa Cissé. We have a range of players—almost a whole new team—at the Mariners.

Excitement is growing on the coast that after those few lean years we will return to our former glory, when we made all the semifinals. A lot of people may not know that in the first season of the A-League we were the grand final runners-up and the Pre-Season Challenge Cup champions. In 2006-2007 we were the Pre-Season Challenge Cup runners-up. In 2007 and 2008 we were the Premiers and the grand final runners-up. Given that the Mariners is the smallest club in the A-League—and one that battles a fair bit of the time to get the recognition it deserves—it has punched well above its weight. The key to all these changes is the signing of Mike Mulvey, former coach of the Brisbane Roar, who took that team to a championship. More recently he has been coaching in Thailand and in Malaysia. He has created a new buzz around the club. The club has also brought in sporting director Mike Phelan. Anybody who knows football knows of Mike Phelan: He is a former legend of the Manchester United coaching staff. He brings that coaching ability to the club and hopefully will be able to develop the younger players. The Mariners have always had a strong policy of developing young players.

At the recent World Cup, seven former Mariners played for the Socceroots. Some of the players who have graced the field at Central Coast Stadium in Gosford now play for the Socceroots. Several of them play for big clubs in Europe, including Tommy Rogic who plays at Celtic. The Mariners have a proud history. We have had a few lean years, but we hope that through the support of Mike Charlesworth, Shaun Mielekamp and his great team that work at the Mariners our former glory days will return. I think the team we have this year has a big chance of finishing in a semifinal position. I have my season ticket, as I have had since the beginning. We are looking forward to a great season.

FARRER FOOTBALL LEAGUE AND JOSH HANLON

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (18:05): As members know, the Murray electorate covers more than 100,000 square kilometres. One of its defining features is a love of football. Football is intrinsic to many of our small country towns and is the major focus of their social and sporting life. Where I come from we are lucky enough to have every code going. Rugby league is strong in some of our northern areas and there are fairly strong soccer and rugby union competitions, but by far Australian Rules tends to dominate my electorate, particularly along the Murray River in the southern parts. Teams across my broad electorate play in something in the order of 20 leagues. My home town of Coleambally plays in the Farrer League, which also covers the Cootamundra electorate. Earlier today the member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke, mentioned that Marrar won the four grand

finals in the Farrer League. The league also covers the Wagga Wagga electorate. I will tell the story of a player from Wagga that has touched the whole organisation.

Josh "Chooka" Hanlon is a footballer at the North Wagga Football and Netball Club and a third-year apprentice electrician. On the Queen's Birthday public holiday on Monday 11 June, just two days after being named best on ground for the first grade North Wagga Saints side, Josh drove himself to hospital after feeling unwell. On arrival at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital he was rushed into intensive care. Completely unknown to Josh, his vital organs were beginning to shut down because of the common bacteria strep A that had spread throughout his body. Normally the bacteria is completely harmless to people of Josh's fitness and age. He is only 20. But after being run down and catching pneumonia brought on by footy, coupled with a few nights away camping with mates to enjoy the long weekend, Josh's immune system was left weakened. When Josh drove himself to hospital that Monday he had no idea that he would be critically ill and in a coma for the next week.

After three days fighting for his life, while his vital organs were aided by machines to help his body fight back, he was as stable as anyone could hope for. Unfortunately, side effects of the treatment that was necessary to save Josh's life were blood clots in his right arm and both legs. As a result, Josh lost his right hand first and then lost both legs below the knee a week later. In true testament to Josh and the Hanlon family's unbelievably upbeat way of looking at things, Chooka worked really hard to recover and was supported by the whole league.

I mentioned the member for Cootamundra and the Farrer League grand final because last Saturday, after working very hard and unbeknownst to many people, Josh walked out and threw the coin for the match. He received a standing ovation and there were tears everywhere. It was a fantastic effort on his behalf and his family. It was also testament to the support people receive in the country. Our league is 200 kilometres wide, but everyone from every opposing team has worked hard to support Josh and his family. A fundraiser will be held on Saturday week, on the day of the AFL Grand Final. I invite everyone to come along and watch the game on the big screen. Many items will be auctioned and there will be raffles to support a young man who has faced unbelievable heartache, but who is tackling it with courage and pride while being supported by the wider community. Well done, Josh, and well done the country communities that have supported him.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I thank the member for Murray for that great tribute. I wish Josh all the best in his recovery.

GLEBE ISLAND

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:09): Glebe Island is part of The Bays Precinct, located under the Anzac Bridge within White Bay, Johnston's Bay and Rozelle Bay. It is largely undeveloped, retains a small active port and fronts thousands of homes only 200 metres across the water in Pyrmont. The future of Glebe Island has been the subject of more than a decade of extensive work with stakeholders and residents. Successive governments have promised a holistic vision for the precinct that sets the future direction of development and land use while protecting existing residential amenity.

The most recent publication for The Bays Precinct, "Transformation Plan: The Bays Precinct, Sydney", published in 2015, identifies Glebe Island as one of eight precinct destinations and one that provides opportunities for both port and innovation industries. More specific details have not been developed and no strategic vision has been set. However, major development projects are now being planned for this important foreshore location that would lock up the site with heavy industrial activities at a scale that has not existed in the region for decades and that is now inconsistent with Glebe Island's residential surrounds.

The NSW Ports Authority plans to build a multiuser storage and distribution facility for bulk construction materials delivered by ship at Glebe Island. Similarly, Hanson has proposed an aggregate handling and concrete batching plant with a shipping terminal. Both facilities would operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week with no restrictions on the number of ships or truck movements, no bans on ships running generators and leaving lights on at night, and no provisions to ensure respite for residents. Glebe Island and White Bay have also been earmarked as construction sites for the Western Harbour Tunnel and the beaches link. Concrete and steel tubes will be assembled onsite and heavily contaminated spoil dredged from the harbour will be stored and dried before being trucked off for disposal.

If these developments go ahead, massive cargo ships will be berthed over long periods adjacent to homes in Pyrmont. The sleep of local residents will be impacted by humming generators and noise from unloading, their air will be polluted by toxic emissions and contaminants, including sulphur and aggregate dust, and their darkness will be reduced from light spill. The projects will add thousands of new trucks to local roads every day, including trucks up to 19 metres long. Traffic in the region is already heavily congested with jams and queuing across intersections a regular occurrence. The existing road network will not cope and this will affect the region's amenity and the city's efficiency. Residents of Jackson's Landing already report amenity impacts from ships and cruises

berthed at Glebe Island and White Bay. Massive increased industrialisation of the port will seriously harm thousands of residents' quality of life.

Urban renewal policies established by successive State and local governments have dramatically changed the landscape of this region over past decades. The working harbour at Glebe Island has been significantly scaled back and the industrial purposes at Pyrmont have been replaced with residential communities. Pyrmont is now Australia's most densely populated neighbourhood and further development is planned, including on the current Sydney Fish Market site.

While there is general support for Glebe Island to retain some level of working harbour and recognition that the region will always have a working harbour presence, Glebe Island is now located within an environmentally sensitive area and any activities on the site will affect a large number of people. Glebe Island planning must respond to this residential context, not that of a bygone industrial era. It is difficult to see how Glebe Island and White Bay will be able to support an innovation tech hub, as identified in the 2015 transformation plan when heavy industrial noisy, polluting activities will overrun the area.

Local Pyrmont residents have made submissions, signed petitions and held two well-attended community meetings at which I spoke. They have initiated the Don't Waste Glebe Island campaign in support of the Government's promises to bring innovative industries to the site. Google's withdrawal from White Bay should not be used as an excuse to abandon a tech hub because demand for tech real estate close to the city is rapidly growing. Residents are also considering legal options against the multiuser facility, which is being inappropriately self-assessed and determined by the NSW Ports Authority, despite significant impacts on large numbers of people. Along with the community, I have called on the Minister for Planning to call in the project to ensure an independent assessment is undertaken by his department.

The piecemeal approach to planning at Glebe Island will not result in the best public outcome for the region. A master plan should be finalised before any development is approved. It is time for the Government to protect Pyrmont's residential amenity and to abandon plans to turn Glebe Island into a heavy industrial port and construction site. Strategic planning for the site must protect this important waterfront site and residential amenity in adjacent densely populated regions.

GRANVILLE ELECTORATE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (18:14): A few months ago the Premier claimed she and the Liberal Party "own" Granville. That kind of arrogance is one of the main reasons the Liberals lost the seat of Wagga Wagga after 61 years, with a massive 29 per cent swing. So what has this level of Liberal arrogance and hubris done for Granville in the last long eight years? Westmead Public School has 1,620 students, it is the largest in the State and it is growing by hundreds of students every year. The Government has announced a new school, but no funding and no site. The Government has reintroduced the loathsome M4 toll—on a road the residents of Western Sydney have already paid for, which was then privatised to lock the tolls in until 2060. That moved 42,000 cars a day off the M4 onto Parramatta Road and our local roads to avoid the M4 toll. It created a dangerous mess at the Church Street off-ramp, which was known as "crash alley". To fix that mess, instead of getting rid of the toll, barriers were put in to make it harder to get off the M4.

When she was transport Minister, the Premier cancelled 100 train services a week at Granville in 2013, including the 28-minute city express services. In 2017 this Government took Granville off the Western Line altogether during daytime services, blowing out peak-hour travel times to 43 minutes—a 50 per cent increase in travel times for train commuters from Granville station. In my first few weeks in Parliament I called on the Minister for Transport to review the train timetable and to reinstate the rail services at Wentworthville, Westmead, Granville and Guildford stations as a priority. Instead, the Government made it worse. Thanks, Minister Constance.

As well as cutting train services and choking our local streets and Parramatta Road with cars avoiding the M4 toll, the Government has forced 5,000 units on us as part of the Parramatta Road Revitalisation Strategy. Every time I am at Granville station, people come up to me and ask, "Whose fault is that?", pointing at the new units built just next to the train line. I let them know that the design, materials and colour palette are largely the developer's fault and that the council approved it, but the State Government decided the height and bulk it wanted and drove the redevelopment of the area. Council wanted taller, leaner, more elegant buildings, but the State Government decided that 26-storey bulky-looking towers constitutes a good design outcome.

The Government has shut Parramatta pool, which people from Westmead and dozens of local schools used, and the Government-appointed Cumberland Council administrator tried to shut Wentworthville and Guildford pools too until the community fought back. Granville South Public School had a roof that leaked so

badly the water came through the electrical wiring and the classrooms had to be evacuated. I succeeded in getting them a new roof, but until then the Government just ignored the problem and replaced the rotten carpet instead.

Like so many places in New South Wales, the Granville electorate has a 10-year wait for social housing, and this Government is selling off more homes than it is building. Our local hospital at Westmead, the State's biggest, is chronically understaffed, with maternity leave positions not backfilled and surgery shutdowns being extended—instead of from Christmas to New Year it is from Christmas to Australia Day, and instead of the Easter weekend, it is often from Easter to Anzac Day. In fact, the number of New South Wales patients waiting for elective surgery has reached an all-time high of almost 78,000. That is an increase from 66,000 in 2011.

The Government closed our motor registry at Merrylands and now sends everyone to Auburn. The Government also sold the historic Granville TAFE buildings on South Street and has destroyed TAFE across the State. Since 2011 the New South Wales Government has cut funding for education and training, sacked TAFE teachers and support staff, cut TAFE courses, slashed class contact times and drastically increased student fees. Over the past year alone 72,105 fewer people were enrolled in TAFE in New South Wales, even though the Government could see how dodgy private vocational education providers can be with examples such as Granville's Unique International College, where fewer than 1 per cent of students graduated and which has been in the news again this week. That college is just down the road from the great and beautiful TAFE buildings this Government emptied and sold off.

Power prices have gone through the roof since this Government pushed through privatisation and retail price deregulation, going up 20 per cent last year alone. The Liberals promised prices would go down, knowing full well that they would not. In suburbs like Granville, Guildford and Merrylands these huge increases have a massive impact on the cost of living. All that is on top of the stadium splurge. The Government is about to demolish Allianz Stadium just so the people of New South Wales cannot send the Government a message about its priorities next March.

According to a number of 2ME listeners from Granville, last week, in the aftermath of the Wagga Wagga by-election, the former member for Granville Tony Issa told 2ME—and it was in Arabic, so I am paraphrasing 2ME's translation—that the people of Wagga got it wrong and that they should not have thrown out the Liberal Party, which had served them so well for 61 years, just because of a corruption scandal. Wow. The voters never got it wrong. No wonder the people of Wagga Wagga booted out the Liberal Party. March 2019 cannot come soon enough, when the people of New South Wales will put schools and hospitals before stadiums and boot out the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:19): Let me say this: During the 16 years of Labor, Western Sydney—a bit like the St George region—was totally and utterly forgotten. The Government is rebuilding Westmead Hospital with just under \$1 billion. Western Sydney's unemployment rate has fallen to the lowest level—

Mr Stephen Kamper: You wouldn't have a clue.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): The member for Rockdale will come to order. If he wants to make a private member's statement I advise him to be quiet.

Mr MARK COURE: The member for Rockdale has never been to Western Sydney! Western Sydney's unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest level in 19 years. On this side of the House, as part of the Federal Government's plan, we are building an aerotropolis right through Western Sydney. The Government is building a new university, which will focus on science, technology, engineering and maths. Western Sydney is an economic powerhouse. Speaking about powerhouses, the Government is building a cultural powerhouse in Western Sydney. There is a lot of money going into Western Sydney.

BELMONT HOSPITAL NURSING STAFF

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:21): I bring to the House's attention the situation facing nursing staff at Belmont Hospital. The issues raised with me by the NSW Nurses and Midwives Association on behalf of its members at Belmont Hospital are very concerning, to say the least. In our community, Belmont Hospital has an outstanding reputation, which has been built up over 50 years of excellent care provided by the doctors and nurses who have worked there during that time. It celebrated its fiftieth birthday this year, and I congratulate staff for running such a wonderful institution in the electorate of Swansea.

For the Belmont community and surrounding suburbs, it is a source of comfort that, in an emergency, help is nearby. For many women, it is the hospital of choice in which to birth their babies. When I have had reason to go to Belmont Hospital—sadly just two Saturday nights ago I had to take my mother to the emergency

department—I have always been confident that my family would get the best possible care when we need it. Recently, that care came in spades.

But right now that excellent reputation is being jeopardised. The nurses at Belmont Hospital do an extraordinary job, but the fact is that they are overworked and under-resourced. Inadequate staffing levels at Belmont Hospital and the unreasonable workloads that nursing staff are forced to bear as a result have reached a critical point. The fact that they have felt the need to meet with their local member in order to have their concerns heard tells me that they are desperate. They care deeply about the quality of care they deliver to their patients, and they are acutely aware of the importance of the work they do.

I can honestly say that I have never seen such dedicated staff. Those nurses—the work that they do, the care that they take and the integrity that they have—are absolutely outstanding. That is why they are speaking out; this issue is too important to ignore. Patient care is potentially being compromised because, in the emergency department, one nurse is often required to care for up to seven patients, two of which may be in resuscitation beds. This is in comparison to other hospitals in the region such as the Mater hospital, John Hunter Hospital or Wyong Hospital, which have patient ratios of one nurse to three or four beds. Under the current nurse-to-patient ratios, as a level three emergency department, Belmont Hospital has no guarantee of additional staffing for the resuscitation beds until annual presentations reach 45,000—almost double the current numbers.

Of course, there are provisions in the relevant award that guarantee a minimum number of hours of staffing per patient per day, but no such guarantee for the emergency department exists. The reality of this is that nursing staff in the emergency department often end up caring for more patients than do the nurses on the wards. Needless to say, much of the time the patients in emergency require more acute care but nursing staff have less time to spend with them. Emergency nursing staff frequently struggle with one nurse per seven beds, as well as ambulance off-load trolleys and patients in the waiting room. I am told that the department was often so understaffed that nurses could not even do the required hourly observations. That is not good enough. The sickness level at Belmont Hospital is increasing, and that is not good enough either.

I am proud that the next Labor government has committed to fixing this problem. A Foley Labor Government will deliver more nurses at Belmont Hospital. That is great news. Our commitment to employ more nurses in B and C group hospitals will improve patient care. Research shows that higher nurse-to-patient ratios save lives, reduce errors and allow more time to be spent with each patient. I want to make sure that Belmont Hospital can continue to deliver the quality care that the community expects and that nurses want to provide for the next 50 years and beyond. We can sometimes forget that while nurses achieve incredible results, they are only human. I am proud to be part of the party that will deliver the resources Belmont Hospital needs to continue to provide patients at the hospital with the care they deserve.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:26): I thank the member for raising the issues about Belmont Hospital in the House tonight.

Ms Yasmin Catley: You have never been to Belmont.

Mr MARK COURE: I have, actually. I thank the staff, nurses and doctors at Belmont Hospital, who do an outstanding job. I am sure the issues concerning Belmont Hospital that were raised by the member have been raised with the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. I will check that. Nurses do a wonderful job in every hospital, as do doctors. I have seen the hard work performed by the nurses at St George Hospital during my many visits there not only as a member of Parliament but also as a visitor to see sick relatives. I thank all our nurses across the State for the long hours they put in. They do a wonderful job. Nurses are fantastic. I thank the member for Swansea for raising this issue.

MARINE PARK FISHING LOCKOUT ZONES

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (18:27): I raise the concerns of my local constituents and, as has become apparent, the concerns of many of those opposite about the Government's previously proposed marine park fishing lockout zones. Although I am glad to see that commonsense has prevailed and the Government has backflipped on its proposal to rip away the fishing rights of thousands upon thousands of recreational fishers, the fact that this outrageously over-the-top proposal progressed as far as it did shows how out of touch this Government is. I do not think there is any member in this place who does not appreciate the importance of our marine environment. The natural beauty of our bays, beaches and oceans is a major part of what makes this State such a fantastic place to live. But I simply cannot accept that the Government is justified in ripping away from the people of New South Wales access to this vital community amenity.

For generations fishing has been an accessible recreational pastime for rich and poor alike, something to be enjoyed with friends and family or even for a bit of solitary serenity. Whether out in a tinny or fishing from the rocks or a wharf, in my opinion there are few better ways to relax than casting a line or two and watching the

gentle motion of the water. In Botany Bay, where many of my constituents fish, this proposed lockout could not have come at a more insulting time. It defies belief that the Government would think it is acceptable to bring floating suburbs into the bay with their ridiculous cruise terminal proposal, which will involve an enormous amount of dredging, construction and ongoing damage to marine life in the bay, while at the same time worrying about the damage done by punters in tinnies. On that point I congratulate our champion environmentalist the Mayor of the Bayside Council, Bill Saravinovski, who this month moved a mayoral minute against this absurd proposal. Government members have been happy to sit by and ignore my local beaches being washed away, as I have previously spoken about in this place, but they are even happier to announce draconian changes to our State's recreational fishing regime, without any thought being given to those affected.

When I spoke to my constituents who were concerned about the impacts of these lockouts, I heard again and again their outrage at the sheer hypocrisy of this Government. The people of New South Wales know that the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government does not care about the environment. That has been amply demonstrated by the Government's land clearing and biodiversity laws, its appalling maladministration of the Murray-Darling river system and our State's water management, and the Deputy Premier's brumby bill. It is clear that members of this Government think the environment comes in dead last. Given that background, people rightly ask what the Government's motivation was to lock the majority of this State's recreational fishers out of their local fishing spots. The answer can only be that members of this Government are so out of touch that they do not realise how much enjoyment people get out of a bit of fishing every now and again. On that point, some forgiveness might be in order for the member for Vacluse, that type of commonsense feedback would not come from a branch meeting at the Catalina Restaurant, but the rest of the Government should have known better.

Thousands of local fishing stores across this State, which are mostly family businesses, cater to recreational fishing as well as all the other associated industries that support this activity. As with the greyhound ban, the Government has totally ignored the economic impact and the families that would have been destroyed if the fishing ban had come into effect. Maybe this time the Government has learnt its lesson that it cannot just trample over ordinary people without consequences. According to the Government's own plan, the impacts of recreational fishing had a fairly insignificant impact on the marine environments proposed to be protected. On the one hand, of the 32 listed threats to our central coastal bioregion, it is not until we reach numbers 18 and 19 in the report that recreational fishing is even considered. On the other hand, cruise ships come in at number four, and that is without even considering the size of the ships that are being proposed to dock at Yarra Bay.

If the Government had taken real steps to deal with the other issues that are having a serious impact on the health of our waterways, its heavy-handed approach might have been, if not tolerable, at least understandable. While it is all well and good that Minister Blair has stepped in to solve the Liberals' mess of a policy, this proposal should have never been announced in its current form. It never would have, if the Government had any understanding of or empathy for the people of New South Wales. I thought that the Government would have learned its lesson when Mike Baird left, but it appears that the Berejiklian nanny State is just as bad as that of Mike Baird.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:32): I thank the current member for Rockdale for his statement. I agree totally, the Government has changed direction and there will be no new fishing lockout zones along the New South Wales coast. The Government has scrapped them. That is a key element of the Government's marine strategy moving forward. My electorate of Oatley is bordered by the Georges River. Growing up in my electorate, I became very fond of the Georges River fishing areas. It is important to remember moving forward that there are no new fishing lockout zones anywhere in Sydney.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: It is outrageous.

Mr MARK COURE: It is outrageous. I voiced my concerns directly to both the Premier and to the Minister.

KIAMA ELECTORATE HEALTH AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:33): Today I raise two issues that are important to our community: public health and public transport. The time of this House always should be used for the purposes and causes that matter to our community. I am honoured to be the representative of our community and I always will ensure my contributions to debate in this Chamber are not about settling political scores but rather are contributions backed up by hard work and getting results. As a public transport user, I make it clear to the House that more carriages are required on the South Coast line.

The 323 and the 353 Sydney to Kiama services are but two examples of trains that are consistently full and overflowing. Whilst I appreciate that peak periods require transport authorities to do the greatest good for the greatest number, it is clear that public services from this region are becoming more popular for a variety of reasons.

It is not acceptable to read reports about passengers sitting on stairs. It is not acceptable to hear stories of people using toilets as seats due to the lack of space on our trains. I make a great effort to read emails and letters that come into my office, but I know from my own experience of giving up my seat on a stair for a woman who needed it that this situation is unacceptable, and it must change.

Members would be aware that in 2014 I took up the fight to increase the number of carriages on the 424 Kiama to Sydney service. I fought this campaign with letters, emails, speeches in this Chamber, petitions and a meeting with the then Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian, who heard the call. In just two weeks, more than 1,200 people have signed the most recent petition that I started for my local community. I was disappointed by comments made by the Opposition spokesman for the Illawarra, the member for Keira, who attacked our community petition. I say to the member for Keira: People are fed up with politicians attacking one another. People want results. I would have hoped that Labor members would join me to support the best outcome rather than to seek the best headline. I say to the Opposition: The more that members in this Chamber work together rather than settling political scores or seeking one-upmanship, the better off everyone across our State will be.

I make no apologies for standing up to any Minister in any government and at any level when it comes to achieving the best outcome for our community. My focus tonight is on the need for this situation to change and to find a solution. As one of the groups of members of Parliament that lobbies the Prime Minister for a budget allocation for new inner city carriages, I am proud that the New South Wales Government is investing more than \$1 billion in new train carriages. I repeat my advice to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure that this is an important matter for our community. We want a plan and an announcement that will allocate surplus carriages to the South Coast service to provide more seats, particularly on the 323 and 353 services, but other services are consistently reaching capacity. I make it clear to the Minister that our community expects an outcome and I look forward to a reply to our petition and the request I am making in this House today.

I also raise the issue of public hospitals. I am sure the member for Oatley will be interested in this. I commend the public hospitals in this State. Recently my mother was in St George Hospital, which is a great public institution. She received the best care for her operation. I commend all the staff in all of our public hospitals. There is a need for the Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital to be upgraded. Shelley Hancock, the member for South Coast, and I have met with the Minister for Health, the Premier and the Treasurer to seek the best possible outcome. Recently I held a forum in the Shoalhaven with doctors, health professionals, members of the board and the Minister for Health to press the case for a major upgrade of the Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital. The member for South Coast and I have secured some great investments—the new cancer care centre, upgrades to mental health services, aging services and the new emergency department. They have all made a difference. Indeed new car parking allocations, which I know are welcome, are on the way.

We will not stop fighting until this Government hears the call from our community for an improved hospital. We are members of the Government but we have an obligation first and foremost to our community. The member for South Coast and I stand united in doing what needs to be done to secure funds to improve this hospital for its patients and staff, and obtain the professional expertise that is required at the hospital so that our community can get the best quality health care it deserves. Every member of Parliament wants that, but my community deserves it and we will not stop fighting until we win.

SYDENHAM TO BANKSTOWN METRO

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (18:38): I again draw the attention of the House to the Sydenham to Bankstown metro. I thank the community members who took the time to lodge submissions on this issue, as well as local community and other interest groups such as Restore the Inner West Line, Save the T3 line, Hurlstone Park Association, Save Sully Action Group, Sydenham to Bankstown Alliance, Marrickville Residents' Association, the Battler, Keep Our Area Suburban, and Canterbury Racecourse Action Group. Many different organisations and levels of government made contributions, including Canterbury-Bankstown Council and other councils, some in support of and others opposed to the metro. More than 340 of the 400 submissions objected to the metro. There were 267 submissions from west of Bankstown, 43 from between Carramar and Yagoona, 89 from Berala and 49 from Regents Park.

There were 32 submissions in support of the Sydney metro and 340 objected to the metro. That should tell the Government that the vast majority of those who made a submission clearly oppose the metro. I will highlight some of the concerns in the submissions. Many of the issues raised were the design and operational features of the project, safety concerns, construction, traffic and noise, operational noise and traffic, visual impact, sustainability issues and biodiversity concerns. A number of submissions also outlined lack of justification for the metro and the significant community objection in this area. Specific comments were made by stakeholders, for example:

The NSW Government has given little thought to the needs of the local community at Bankstown ... the preferred project still falls short of community expectations in many areas ... the preferred project is substandard when compared to the stations being delivered as part of Sydney Metro North West project ... the preferred project has, on balance, more negative than positive impacts for local communities and the whole transport network in Sydney. The opposition to the metro is clear, yet the NSW Government is insistent that it will go ahead.

In October 2013 then transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian cut one of the main connections to the central business district for residents of Villawood, Chester Hill and Sefton. Commuter times have increased for these residents as there is only one direct line to the city, which operates less frequently than most other lines. I have mentioned many times in this House, and in my community, that the implementation of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest will result in commuters west of Bankstown, that is, residents of Georges Hall, Bass Hill, Yagoona, Chester Hill, Sefton and Birrong permanently losing direct access to the central business district city circle. They will forever have to change at Bankstown and Sydenham.

The Sydney metro has failed to address the concerns of commuters and residents. Instead, it continues to cite the supposed bottleneck created by the Bankstown line as the justification for the Government proceeding with the extension of the metro between Sydenham to Bankstown. Our line is currently well serviced by the T-3 line, to which I have referred many times, and converting to a metro line will only cause major disruption with no expansion to the rail network. It is important to note that what is on offer is simply adding a metro line on top of the current heavy rail, which will continue to divide the City of Bankstown. I said this yesterday in response to a new suggestion that perhaps Bankstown hospital would be part of the consideration for the central business district of Bankstown, which we know is a lie, given that the Government has allocated only \$25 million for Bankstown. We all know that a new hospital costs in the order of \$700 million or more.

The idea that we will have a metro that will continue to divide Bankstown will do nothing to improve the logistical nightmare we currently suffer in the Bankstown central business district. I know that this substandard, inferior shuttle service, which is what it will be, will forever permanently deny our commuters direct access to the central business district. I reiterate my opposition to this project and I hope that the Minister for Transport will not proceed with it. Clearly, if any consideration is given to the views of our community, it is abundantly clear that the vast majority of people in Bankstown utterly oppose the metro.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:44 until
Tuesday 25 September 2018 at 12:00.**