



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday, 25 September 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 25 September 2018

Presiding Officers

ABSENCE OF THE SPEAKER

The Clerk announced the absence of the Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (The Hon. Thomas George) took the chair at 12:00.

The Deputy Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Announcements

BROADCASTING

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I inform the House that due to technical issues affecting the broadcast of proceedings there is at present no internal broadcast or live webcast. Facilities are investigating and are working hard, I assure members. I will keep the House updated on the progress to rectify the problem.

Visitors

VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery members of the Australian Air League of Victoria.

[Notices of motions given.]

Private Members' Statements

CAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOL SCIENCE EXPO

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:13): Today I speak about Camden Public School, which has an outstanding principal in Jason Hawker. Recently I had the pleasure of attending the school's science expo day. An expo like this gives our primary students an insight into how science can be fun. The students were assisted by volunteer scientists Dr Deidre Tronson and Mrs Jo O'Brien, and teacher librarian Mr Colin Mountfort. The aim of the expo day was to give "superior scientists" in years 5 and 6 the opportunity to showcase their skills. Over several years Camden Public School has held similar science projects with great success. The program, known as the STEM Professionals in Schools, is administered by the CSIRO. The students prepare demonstrations to show the school community—including younger students, classmates and adults—what most of us think of as a complex subject; yet when explained it can be quite simple.

The maturity of the students and their presentation impressed everyone. The emphasis of the program was "Science equals thinking" and each student is encouraged to explain the fundamental science behind their simple demonstrations. With assistance, the students were encouraged to think and act critically and creatively. The students demonstrated an outstanding level of scientific understanding based on evidence and reason. A wide variety of demonstrations were chosen, including electronic circuits of various kinds, static electricity, fibre optics, and forces explained by Newton's laws.

Colourful displays relying on density, surface tension and/or capillary action showed their effect and other students explained the science behind phenomena such as bouncing eggs. The bouncing eggs involved dropping an egg in vinegar and adding some food colouring. That was an easy one: They showed me that it bounced on the floor. Happy days. I went home to show my 10-year-old son: egg, vinegar, food colouring. I think they forgot to tell me to hard-boil the egg first—anyway, living and learning. Demonstrations also included playdough, Oobleck slime, colour-changing dyes and wave motion. I was impressed with the complexity of the demonstrations, but at the same time the students explained science in a simplistic way.

The object of the day was to introduce science in a fun way and to encourage an interest in science. I congratulate all the students who took part in the demonstrations. Their enthusiasm and ability to demonstrate science in a fun way is to be commended. I hope they continue to have a love of science. Congratulations to the students: Cristian Azzopardi, Lucy Marriott, Kasey Pullman, Arianna King, Joshua Held, Emma Evans, Jacob Wright, Grace Bray, Ava Henderson, Abby Donnelly, Ellie Turkington, Grace Turkington, Andreo Panetta,

Jonah Abra, Adelaide Ayling—the granddaughter of Minister Pru Goward, and a very proud grandmother she is—Autumn Krecichwost, Ava Ryan, Julian Smith, Sophie Eagles and Joshua Davison.

Congratulations to principal Jason Hawke, who does an outstanding job. We are lucky to have him as the head of Camden Public School. I also acknowledge the teachers and volunteer scientists who held the science expo and did such a wonderful job, as well as each and every teacher at the school. Camden Public School is one of the oldest public schools within my electorate. It does an outstanding job and a major reason is the teaching staff at the school. I thank the teachers and staff, one and all. The nurturing and loving learning environment that these young adults enjoy is a direct result of their input. I thank them for their wonderful efforts. To each and every one at Camden Public School, I say keep up the great work. I look forward to next year's science expo.

DOONSIDE RAILWAY STATION TRANSPORT ACCESS PROGRAM

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (12:18): I bring to the attention of the House a very important Blacktown issue: the installation of a Transport Access Program at Doonside Railway Station. I have raised this issue in the Chamber on a number of occasions, but it seems that the transport Minister or his staff ignore parliamentary statements by members. Doonside station was constructed circa 1882, with an upgrade undertaken in the early 1900s. A rebuild in 1955 saw the installation of four buildings, including toilets, plus the existing ramps and staircases. Since then, the only changes to the station have been the 1990s demolition of two buildings containing waiting rooms and toilets, and last year's repainting and arrival of the Opal card. The station is characterised by two long, steep ramps from street level to the upper concourse and steep staircases to the two platforms. Therefore, it is extremely difficult for anyone with a pram or with luggage to use the station and it is impossible for any person in a wheelchair to access a train. Last week, when speaking on the Cardiff station motion, the member for Oatley, and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Infrastructure, said in this House:

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.

The member for Oatley went on to discuss the importance of bike sheds at local stations. I bring to his attention that the Government's first priority must be that people of all abilities are able to access their station. One can understand the frustration of Doonside residents, who know that in 2014 the then transport Minister and now Premier had Doonside station independently assessed as the station twelfth most in need of an accessibility program, yet this budget has 11 station upgrades and nothing for Doonside. Some 173 stations across the network have been upgraded but not Doonside. Statistics show that as many as 22,000 people per week use Doonside station, yet a station like Hawkesbury River, which I am informed has fewer than 1,000 users per week, is on this year's list for an upgrade. In fact, most of the upgrades announced in the budget are for stations that have fewer commuters or less social accessibility issues than Doonside. The community is angry and wants answers as to why Doonside is being overlooked.

The railway line cuts the Doonside community in half. The public school is located on the south side, whilst the north side has the community centre, the senior citizens centre, medical centres and the local shopping centre. Our seniors with mobility issues find it difficult to traverse the ramp from the south side to the north side to access vital community support services. The seniors centre runs exercise programs, computer classes, bowls matches, cards and bingo. They are important community building activities but the rail line makes it impossible for those on the southern side to attend. According to 2016 census data, 16.4 per cent of the Doonside population is over 60 years of age. They need not only convenient access to the railway station but also the ability to move freely from one side of the suburb to the other. Mark Hartley, whose family has lived in the area since the 1980s, said:

Now that I have to use a walking stick, I find it very difficult at Doonside station. It makes the community very angry that the lift is still not on the list. Every year we wait and it's not on the list.

Twenty-one-year-old Bradley Seymour uses an electric wheelchair. He said:

If I need to get a train I have to take a bus from Doonside to Blacktown. This adds more time and stress to the journey every day.

In 2010-11 the State Labor Government undertook designing for lifts and easy access at Doonside station. Under three Premiers and for eight long years this Government has rejected Doonside each and every year. The population is growing, with the new suburb of Bungarribee near completion. This is a significant issue for the local community. We need the transport Minister to act now and declare when the lifts will be built. I thank Leader of the Opposition Luke Foley for his commitment that if a Labor government is formed after the election it will fund the Doonside lifts and easy access program in 2019. It is time for the Liberal Government to match that commitment. I call on the Government to support the Doonside station upgrade.

TAMWORTH ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (12:23): The safety of bike riders and pedestrians will be boosted following the recent announcement of the construction of two shared pathways along Goonoo Goonoo Road and Forest Road in the Tamworth electorate. The Forest Road project funding includes \$345,000 for the construction of a 910-metre long and 2.5-metre wide concrete shared path from the intersection of Monterey Street to the Tamworth Mountain Bike Club. The pathway will provide a key link to the Tamworth Mountain Bike Club and will greatly improve the safety of pedestrians and bike riders accessing that wonderful facility.

The Tamworth Mountain Bike Park is the only public mountain bike reserve in the region and was developed by the Tamworth Mountain Bike Club. That was achieved with assistance of funding from the State Government, which I have been fortunate to be able to access and hand over. Currently, cyclists must ride along extremely busy Forest Road to reach the park from Tamworth. I look forward to seeing the bike park completed because it will allow safe access by members of the mountain bike club from the outskirts of Tamworth.

Another shared pathway will provide a vital connection for cyclists and pedestrians between Calala Lane and Greg Norman Drive at a cost of \$900,000. The Goonoo Goonoo Road project, which is most welcome, involves the construction of a 1,450-metre long, 2.5-metre wide concrete shared path along the highway. The highway has heavy traffic and it has been a cause of concern for many pedestrians as well as cyclists when they travel along this section of road. The road is one of the busiest in Tamworth and having a shared pathway will be a real boost for cyclists and pedestrians. It will also connect shared paths along Jack Smyth Drive to the Tamworth Sports Dome and complete the path network in that area to the Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence. The centre will have facilities for cycling, indoor and outdoor hockey, basketball, netball, athletics and equestrian activities.

I am a big believer in ensuring that people are safe and in providing the infrastructure that allows people to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. We must ensure that kids get off the couch and their phones, stop playing on PlayStations and Xboxes and enjoy the great outdoors. If we can provide facilities that allow them to do that, it will help them to live a healthier lifestyle and ultimately to reduce obesity. If we can teach kids early about how to live a healthy lifestyle, including good eating options and participating in sport, that will set them up for life. I am pleased to draw the attention of the House to the \$17.2 million Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence, which is now under construction. Room has been allowed for further expansion works, including a proposed aquatic centre.

This Government wants to ensure that it provides those sporting facilities and that it keeps people safe while promoting healthy lifestyles across the Tamworth electorate. One person doing an incredible amount of work to achieve that is the President of the Tamworth Cycle Club, Min McDonald. Min recently held the first ever Tamworth Cycling Festival, which was a great success. Many young people got on a bike for the first time and participated in not only social rides around the city but also competitions. We must continue to provide facilities and opportunities for young people to take part in these activities and to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (12:28): I acknowledge the fantastic work being done by the member for Tamworth. As the Minister for Sport, I encourage people to live a healthy and active lifestyle, as does my department. We also understand the importance of active transport. This Government is committed to providing more opportunities for active transport so that people can get outside, walk around and experience the fantastic outdoor activities available in the electorate of Tamworth, including cycling. I also acknowledge the local member's strong advocacy for the Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence. I know firsthand that the Tamworth community is passionate about sport and the development of this centre in a fantastic partnership with local sporting organisations, and led by the member for Tamworth, will ensure that more young people have the opportunity to excel at sport closer to home.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (12:29): Many people in my electorate of Davidson want clearer responsibility and better allocation of resources between State and Federal governments when it comes to health and education. Indeed, I spoke of the need to address such government matters in my first speech in this place as the member for Davidson. In 1901 six self-governing British colonies decided to unite and form the Commonwealth of Australia. Much has changed since then. The Federation model undoubtedly needs to be updated to reflect the increasingly diverse character of the States in the twenty-first century.

As part of an ambitious agenda for our future we need to reform the functional and financial responsibilities of different levels of government, especially where duplication occurs between State and Federal governments. Education is a classic example of how the current Federation model is suboptimal. The latest

disagreement between the Federal Government and New South Wales education Minister Rob Stokes over the \$4.6 billion extra funding package for Catholic and independent schools follows another recent stoush that Minister Stokes had with former Federal education Minister Simon Birmingham over the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy testing. These ongoing disagreements highlight tensions generated by having two levels of government jointly controlling the education space. This needs to change.

The New South Wales Government's responsibility for delivering the best education outcomes for New South Wales children is inhibited by funding arrangements with the Federal Government and its associated influence. There has long been public debate over who funds which schools and by how much. The New South Wales Government is under increasing pressure to fund more public school buildings, addressing immigration pressures, demographic changes, and a shift of students from the private to the public school system. Both State and Commonwealth governments allocate varying funding amounts to independent and government schools based on various factors. Government schools currently receive most of their public funding from State or Territory governments with supplementary funding from the Commonwealth, while private schools receive the majority of their funding from the Commonwealth Government with supplementary funding from State and Territory governments.

The inefficiency of a two-tiered bureaucracy continues to rob funds from vital frontline services. How can we simplify the complicated funding model, cut duplication and increase transparency, while reducing blame shifting and cost shifting? One level of government should be responsible for funding one portfolio area. The Commonwealth Government should leave school education funding to the States, with an equivalent offset to reduce State funding and increase Federal funding for public hospitals. It makes sense for the Commonwealth Government to fund—but not necessarily deliver—health ahead of education, given it already oversees Medicare, private health insurance rebates, pharmaceutical benefits and aged care.

This reform would reduce duplication, increase efficiency and transparency, reduce the scope for arguments between different levels of government and be far simpler for people to understand. Most importantly, it would deliver better public outcomes. As the leading Australian State, New South Wales needs to replace bureaucracy and duplication with more trust and autonomy in decision-making processes to promote our modern economy. We should develop a more dynamic federalism that strongly positions us in a constantly changing global world. Let us reinvigorate the Federation and develop better intergovernmental arrangements in the interests of all, including those in my electorate of Davidson.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I welcome Mr Arthur Porter, guest of the member for Macquarie Fields and husband of local community champion the late Mrs Laurie Porter. Welcome to the Parliament.

Private Members' Statements

TRIBUTE TO LAURIE PORTER

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (12:34): I extend a warm welcome to Arthur Porter to the Chamber today. One of the great privileges of being a member of Parliament is the people one meets—genuine, community-minded individuals who work hard, give generously and make valuable contributions to their local areas. Minto's Laurie Porter was one such person. A community stalwart, a tireless and passionate campaigner for local heritage and a dedicated champion of Minto, Laurie was a fighter to the end. Sadly, Laurie's life ended too soon and she passed away at the age of 64 on 23 August after battling breast cancer. But Laurie's legacy lives on in the preservation of heritage in Minto and the wider Campbelltown area.

Laurie spent years campaigning to save the historic St James Anglican Church from demolition. Her efforts were rewarded when the site was officially added to the local heritage register. This was no mean feat. The preservation of St James Anglican Church was the result of Laurie's tenacity, her steadfast commitment to preserving local heritage and her gritty, yet quiet, determination. It was a victory not only for the church and local heritage but also for ordinary folk who go to extraordinary lengths to stand up for their beliefs and their community. In achieving that victory, humble and unassuming Laurie Porter became a local hero. But Laurie was always a champion for Minto. Having lived in the suburb for more than 35 years, Laurie dedicated time and energy to many local causes and was a proud supporter of Minto Public School, which both her sons attended. Laurie was heavily involved in the school's 150th anniversary celebrations in 2017, and she wrote a book detailing the history of Minto Public School and the suburb itself.

I had the pleasure of knowing Laurie for many years but our paths crossed again over the ongoing fight to save the highly selective Hurlstone Agricultural High School at Glenfield, which one of Laurie's sons had attended. It was a school with a list of distinguished alumni, a fully functioning farm and a proud 90-year history at Glenfield. The school copped a dud deal when, in late 2015, the State Liberal Government announced it would sell off the Hurlstone Farm to developers, despite previous reassurances to my community that it would not sell a metre of the school's land. The Government's betrayal was the catalyst for my Hands Off Hurlstone campaign. Laurie knew—as I did—that the Liberal Government's decision regarding Hurlstone was nothing more than a greedy land grab. The fight to save Hurlstone was a fight we shared. Laurie would spend hours meticulously poring over documents at the local library to take up the fight. Once a fighter, always a fighter—that was my dear friend, Laurie Porter.

Laurie also fought for the preservation of the historic Campbellfield House—also called Redfern's Cottage—and she created a pamphlet commemorating the 200th anniversary of Dr William Redfern's land grant in Minto. Besides championing local causes, Laurie was a talented artist. Laurie's renowned pencil sketches highlighted her passion for local historic buildings. A keen crochet fan, Laurie had pieces featured and awarded at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Laurie was extremely proud of her in-laws' long history in Minto. The Porters have called the suburb home since 1897. But Laurie's own place in the history of Minto was being created as her battles continued. I had the honour of presenting Laurie with a New South Wales Community Service Award in late August, acknowledging her contributions to the local community. Laurie often shunned the limelight, preferring to shine the light on others or the causes she championed.

I was very humbled to be a pall bearer at Laurie's funeral. It was an honour to pay my respects to a wonderful, kind and courageous woman who did so much for our local community. Laurie is survived by her husband, Arthur, children, Ian and Andrew, and daughter-in-law, Kathryn. My thoughts and prayers are with Laurie's family and friends at this time whom I know miss her terribly. One of my fondest memories of Laurie is of her walking along Pembroke Road in Minto, as she often did, on her way to the shops. She would be wearing her favourite denim dress with a cardigan or jacket and a hat protecting her from the sun, and she would be carrying a tote bag. It is an image I will carry with me each time I drive along Pembroke Road, Minto, on my way to and from the electorate office.

I will always remember Laurie's passion for our local heritage, her dedication to Minto and her enduring fighting spirit. It is these qualities that will inspire me every day, as the local member of Parliament, to stand up for our community and fight for our fair share, just as Laurie did throughout her life. I know Laurie will be watching on. Rest in peace, my dear friend.

CAMDEN HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (12:39): Today I recognise the amazing achievement of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics [STEM] team at Camden Haven High School on being selected to compete in this year's New South Wales Open RoboCupJunior championships, held on 20 and 21 August 2018 at the University of New South Wales. Fifteen year 11 students from the STEM class tested their abilities to compete against some of the State's best and brightest and to defend their 2017 title in standard league soccer at the State RoboCupJunior championships. Unfortunately, this year our talented STEM team were pipped at the post in the finals by Northern Beaches Christian School. However, they did not go home empty handed; they secured second and third place in open league soccer.

I recognise the students who worked so hard to achieve these outstanding results: Anke Beukes, Jasmine O'Brien, Tiana Moore, Shae Bradford, Elizabeth Legge, Ebony Nicholas, Aashraya Phuyal, Jordan Thorne, Alicia Cooper, Bryden Turnbull, Caitlin Facey, Hayley Mobbs and Douglas Falco. Each student proudly represented their school at the State level and worked diligently to come home with the second ranking in New South Wales. This year Camden Haven High School was acknowledged for being the only public school in the State to compete at the 2018 championships, which is a testament to the quality of education and variety of courses on offer at the school and a credit to principal Margaret Hutchinson and her dedicated staff.

The RoboCupJunior Australia competition was first introduced in the year 2000 in Melbourne and immediately received acclaim, with the event being called "the educational game of the new millennium". Since then the championship has launched itself internationally, with the RoboCupJunior competitions bursting into 30 countries around the world and being played locally in every State of Australia. The annual university-run RoboCup World Finals is the largest league competition and this year it was played internationally in Montreal. The idea behind RoboCupJunior Australia was not only to create a true cooperative spirit among all primary and secondary students as well as undergraduates with a desire to advance their knowledge of engineering and information technology but also for it to be encompassed broadly across the school curriculum.

Students who participate in the RoboCupJunior competition enhance their social development skills in teamwork, sportsmanship, cooperation and organisational skills. They are taught the art of designing an artificial intelligence robot by combining a wide range of technologies and integrating them through problem solving and examination. The ultimate goal for RoboCup enthusiasts is to create humanoid robot soccer players to compete against humans in a world championship. By taking a fresh look at robots as an educational and entertaining medium, it is hoped that RoboCupJunior Australia will contribute to the development of twenty-first century society.

I take this opportunity to highlight the generous community sponsors that enabled our gifted students to compete at this year's RoboCupJunior Australia competition: Bennetts Steel, Midcoast Eggs, First National Real Estate North Haven, Rotary Club of Laurieton, Mid Coast Fasteners and Abstract Plastics. Their support is immensely appreciated by the students, parents and staff at Camden Haven High School. Elizabeth Legge and Ebony Nicholas from the STEM class also attended the Engineers Australia Experience It Conference at the University of Sydney, where they took part in interactive and hands-on workshops as well as team-based activities that explored the unique and diverse applications of engineering. I commend Camden Haven High School for its educational focus on STEM subjects for students to invest in the fun science and technology robotics learning experience.

BALMAIN ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (12:43): Today I bring to the attention of the House an issue that impacts almost every family in my electorate of Balmain: education. Local schools in my electorate are bursting thanks to years of underfunding in education and the failure of both Labor and Liberal governments to effectively predict the boom in enrolments. Five Ministers in 15 years—Labor's Carmel Tebbutt, John Della Bosca and Verity Firth and the Coalition's Adrian Piccoli and Rob Stokes—have each been unable to adequately plan for the increase in population, and we are now playing catch-up. This negligence has left our education system overloaded, with 180 schools over capacity and 37 per cent at capacity. In fact, in the past four years enrolments have surged almost 40 per cent in my electorate.

I am a proud product of public education; my mother is a teacher in the public education system and my sisters are teachers. That history and the role played by my family has affirmed my commitment to free quality public education as central to a fair and prosperous society. That means tackling overcrowding and delivering better funding for schools—not short-term shortcuts like demountables. There is some good news in my electorate: Relief is on its way. I welcome the new 14-storey Inner Sydney High School, which will accommodate 1,200 students. The tender process for the main works contractor has been finalised and work on the site at Chalmers Street and Cleveland Street has begun. The position of foundation principal was recently advertised. Once the appointment is made, I look forward to discussing the catchment with the principal and ensuring the best result for our existing schools and local students.

I look forward also to the opening of the new Ultimo Public School, which is currently under construction in my electorate. While I admit the school's design may not be perfect, I am glad to have worked with the community to help deliver this important school, which will take up to 800 students. While these two new schools are welcome—though well overdue—developments, the fact remains that they are a stopgap measure in a system that has failed for many years to predict the expansive growth that is underway in public school education. This is due not only to population growth but also to increased intensity of development, which brings more and more students into our fine public school system. Failure to predict and plan means that schools scramble to find seats for students at the start of the school year.

This year the Department of Education received 336 orders for demountables. Our public schools should not be a jumble of temporary buildings cobbled together over playgrounds. We need more classrooms in our public schools and we also need better spaces for our children to learn, to play and to grow. After parents and educators, a child's environment is their third teacher. The effort and thought that goes into creating beautiful spaces for children is a reflection of the belief espoused by successive governments in this Chamber—that our children deserve the best. We need to see that realised in our communities. Children are active learners. Their aesthetic senses need to be nurtured and their learning and play spaces need to be stimulating in order to facilitate experience and growth.

New South Wales should not be scrambling to find a place for every student by dropping demountables onto every square inch of available land at a school. We should be aspiring to make our public schools into stimulating spaces that are light and airy, inspire young people and are built on well thought through and consulted strategic objectives and plans. Sadly, this is not happening in New South Wales. Every year my office receives applications from local schools not for projects that seek to inspire or facilitate experience and growth in students, but for many of the most basic infrastructure and facilities. As a local member, I have helped local schools ranging from Kegworth Public School to Annandale North Public School to secure \$596,947 in infrastructure funding for

needs such as a toilet block at Forest Lodge Public School and playgrounds at Glebe Public School. Just last week I launched the opening of a new public entrance at Leichhardt Public School.

If this Government does truly believe children deserve the very best, I encourage it to begin investing in the type of education system that breathes life and ideas into our schools. It is important that we plan for the future, effectively build our strategic plans around predictions for growth and make sure the funding is available so that we have the best schools possible. I conclude by thanking all the teachers and staff at our schools for their incredible work and acknowledging the inspiring role of our school parents groups. I remain absolutely committed to making the education of our children a priority for this Parliament and for my community.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL MANTON

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (12:47): Today I pay respect to a much loved gentleman, a man loved by his family, friends, acquaintances and teammates. What springs to mind when I drop names like Tim Cahill, Lucas Neill, Johnny Warren and Harry Kewell? What if I throw in a couple of Marks, like Bosnich and Bresciano? For the Aussie-raised in this Chamber, the answer is probably soccer. For those with a mix of European, it is probably football. Whether it is called soccer or football, if I add the name Paul Manton, we have the most passionate, boastful footy fan I ever met. Sadly, Paul Manton has turned in his earthly boots and transferred to that always immaculate playing field in heaven.

Paul had many great times both on and off the football pitch. He was last picked as president of the mighty All Saints Hunters Hill Football Club—yes, the same club that a couple of young Roberts boys turn out with. Paul's wife, Lee, described her husband as pursuing three great loves: his family, his friends and his soccer. There it is—soccer, not football. This great Christian man of strong faith and beliefs played the game at all levels: on the field, as coach and as club executive. He often combined the joint roles of player and coach, and he was pretty good in both positions. It was aggressive melanoma that stopped Paul Manton, but he put up a gutsy five-month fight trying to kick it out of his system.

Paul's history with All Saints spanned over 30 years. It started in 1985, when he founded Strathfield Uniting Church Football Club with some friends and played in the Churches Football Association across Sydney. The club's name was changed to the Wanderers when none of the players still lived in Strathfield and the home field changed to Monash. In 1998 Paul merged the Wanderers with North Side Football Club. "Enemies on the field, great friends off the field" was the mantra Paul lived by throughout his career. Next came a move to join Gladesville Hornsby Football Association, facilitated by a merger with the Junior All Saints Church Football Club. And so the club we love and support today, All Saints Hunters Hill Football Club was formed—the friendly club.

Paul was a born leader. He was always captain or coach, or both, of the teams he played in. He even managed to snare several grand final wins during his career. It was not all scuffed footie boots and grass-stained footie shorts. Paul Manton was secretary for many years before becoming president of his club. Needless to say, he was inducted as a life member of All Saints Hunters Hill Football Club. This larrikin was the complete clubbie. Equally, he was the much-loved husband of Lee and adored father of Josh, Will and Luca. He was the beloved son of David and Frances and brother of Kathryn, Ellen, Rodney and John.

It is an understatement to say that he was respected at clubs across the region and by all in our community. Today there are countless folk who, as young tackers, pulled on their boots, pulled up their socks and played the best they could for Mr Manton. I wager that right now he is likely to be organising or officiating at a game between the older heavenly 11 up against the newly arrived heavenly 11. Paul Manton came, he put in and he left a mark. Paul Manton did his mates, colleagues, teams and family proud. He is a true example to all in this House of a man for others. Paul, may you rest in peace.

TRIBUTE TO DR HENRY NGAI, OAM

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I welcome the visitors in the gallery.

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (12:51): I pay tribute to Dr Henry Kei Shing Ngai, OAM, founder and managing director of ABC Tissue, who recently passed away. Henry was a successful businessman, an extraordinary philanthropist and a great friend of the Chinese Australian community including a great many people in my electorate of Auburn. Henry was born in Jieyang in Guangdong Province, China. He spent his early years in Cambodia and moved with his family to Hong Kong when he was 15. Starting his own business selling converted tissue products in 1973, Henry began looking for opportunities to grow his business abroad. In 1985 Henry migrated to Sydney with his wife and young family, and started up what was to become one of Australia's largest tissue manufacturing companies, ABC Tissue.

Henry led the restructuring of ABC Tissue a decade ago to create divisions focusing on charitable causes. He enjoyed helping people and his focus was on the most vulnerable in our community. Under Henry, ABC Tissue donated \$2 million to St Vincent's Hospital to go towards acquiring Australia's first magnetic resonance imaging [MRI] guided ultrasound equipment used in the treatment of patients with tremor, Parkinson's disease and dystonia. Henry also made generous donations to the Australian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, World Vision, Father Chris Riley's Youth Off The Streets, the Exodus Foundation, Fairfield Hospital and The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Henry also extended his philanthropic work overseas. ABC Tissue Vision Express started in 2010 and provides free treatments in Cambodia, Vietnam and China for patients with cataracts and pterygium. In 2012 ABC Tissue Hearing Express was created to provide hearing aids to Fiji, Samoa, Cambodia, Vietnam and China for people with impaired hearing. He funded almost 90,000 cataract surgeries, and more than 712,00 hearing aids have been provided to hearing-impaired people.

Watching Syrian refugees flee their war-torn country, Henry could not allow himself simply to sit back and do nothing. He donated 100,000 winter jackets to Syrian refugees in Germany. He donated 100,000 winter jackets to people in China in need. Henry donated a total of \$2.4 million in winter jackets alone. Both locally and internationally, Henry has donated more than 325,000 pairs of reading glasses, 6,000 sleeping bags, 1,200 wheelchairs and 650 tonnes of rice. He has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to flood and bushfire appeals in Australia, as well as to appeals following natural disasters in the People's Republic of China and in Haiti.

Henry was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours List for his service to business and to the community. Henry was named Champion of Champions at the twenty-fifth Annual Ethnic Business Awards in 2013 and Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year in 2017. He has been widely recognised by embassies, consulates and the countless organisations that he has supported. Over the years, millions of people have benefited from Henry's generosity. Henry donated \$40 million to philanthropic causes in his lifetime.

Henry's story is not only one of generosity but also a classic Australian migrant success story. Henry passed away on 4 August and is survived by Jenny, his wife of 54 years, their son, Sunny Ngai, and two daughters and eight grandchildren. I know that ABC Tissue will continue to prosper under the leadership of Sunny and that the company will continue Henry's great legacy of serving others. I wish the Ngai family well and pay my final respect to Dr Henry Kei Shing Ngai, OAM. May he rest in peace.

ESSEX HOUSE, KILLARA

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (12:56): The area occupied by my electorate is often referred to as "the leafy North Shore". It is a very apt description, and Ku-ring-gai residents understandably treasure their tree-lined streets and bushland surrounds. As much as we love our trees, they are nonetheless capable of causing dangerous problems for those who live near them. During wild storms branches often break off and can cause damage to houses and motor vehicles, a regrettable fact of life in Ku-ring-gai. Also unwelcome is the damage caused by tree roots, which can be substantial. In the case of a tree on the nature strip outside a 28-apartment complex, roots are actually blocking driveway access for two dozen mostly elderly residents. The blue gum's roots have lifted the road, the footpath and, most disturbingly, the private concrete driveway belonging to the unit block, known as Essex House in Killara.

It is impossible to enter or leave the premises without the underside of the vehicle hitting the pavement, which, in some cases, precludes any access. A number of residents claim that they are now trapped in their homes because they cannot go out as much as they would like. Meanwhile, their friends and many services, including Meals on Wheels, have decided to stop coming to the block because of the inevitable costly damage that would result from a visit, causing some residents to abandon the building and their independent living. The now steep driveway also presents a slip hazard, particularly when it is wet. For those vehicles that can still access the premises, exiting is dangerous because cars must now stay on the far right of the driveway to exit, which necessitates a turn into fast oncoming traffic. There is no ease of access for emergency vehicles, removalists or delivery vans.

The offending tree is on Ku-ring-gai Council land, and for six years the residents of Essex House have been complaining without success to Ku-ring-gai Council. The residents have offered to plant three or more blue gum trees on the property, away from the driveway, if they are allowed to remove the offending tree, but the council will not give consent to that course of action. Council has offered to pay half the cost of shaving the driveway down, but the residents believe that will be just a short-term fix, rendering the driveway more susceptible to cracking and to further lifting as the tree continues to grow.

The residents of Essex House are not alone in experiencing frustration in dealing with local government in respect of damage caused by trees on council land. Three years ago roots from a tree in Annandale entered a property and caused damage at the side of the entrance to the house, which resulted in a stand-off with the former Leichhardt Municipal Council. Last year a woman in Victoria applied to her local council for \$25,000 in compensation after her driveway and drainpipes had been damaged by tree roots.

The concern here is that councils are putting trees before residents. In the case of Essex House, the ageing residents believe Ku-ring-gai Council is prioritising the blue gum over issues of personal safety, property damage and ease of egress and ingress, which is making them prisoners in their own homes. They cannot and should not have to pay large amounts of money in litigation against their own local council to get a resolution. This stand-off has caused great harm. Several residents are too scared to drive out, not least because the slope in the driveway prevents them from having a clear view of the passing cars. They are also understandably reluctant to ask friends to enter the property to pick them up out of concern that their cars will be damaged.

The result is that they will face ongoing isolation until such time as the situation is addressed adequately. The strata committee has been proactive in suggesting engineering solutions but they have all been rejected by the council, apart from the offer to shave the driveway in exchange for a full legal release in favour of the council. It is not acceptable in circumstances such as these for councils simply to stop all direct contact with residents, refer the matter to their insurers and allow a legal process to take its protracted course when it concerns an issue that was identified six years ago, poses a serious ongoing and worsening threat to safety, and hinders the provision of emergency services.

Moreover, those who are affected by the danger and the continuation of the unsatisfactory status quo are elderly often fragile people who have neither the resources nor the energy to engage in costly litigation or even seek professional advice for a problem that is not of their making and for which reasonable remedies have been proposed. This is a time when they should be enjoying comfortable independent lives, not going into battle against an insensitive and well-resourced local council. We all want to keep Ku-ring-gai leafy but not at the expense of the safety and wellbeing of our citizens. That is too high a price for the preservation of a tree.

I call on those leading Ku-ring-gai Council to be compassionate and show urgent leadership to resolve this sorry situation impacting upon vulnerable citizens. This impasse has been going on for far too long. I recently met with residents from the building. They expressed to me firsthand the considerable angst and lack of amenity that this issue has caused to their lives. I call on Ku-ring-gai Council to resolve this issue.

MIDDLETON GRANGE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:01): The community of Middleton Grange, west of Liverpool in my electorate of Mulgoa, has long sought a small commercial town centre to accommodate this small but growing community. The land for such a development and community facility has been set aside and preserved. Previously a development application was submitted for a 176-unit apartment building with 5,000 square metres of retail space. This proposed development was supported and welcomed by the community. Unfortunately, the private developer has now lodged a proposal to increase the development potential of the site to support approximately 900 dwellings—more than five times the original amount—20,000 square metres of retail development and 2,500 square metres of commercial development. It will also allow buildings of up to 12 storeys in the small community of Middleton Grange.

Last week I was at Thomas Hassall Anglican College talking with the community about the proposed development and everyone I spoke to was wholeheartedly opposed to the second proposal. Many residents, including the Parkbridge Estate Residents group, have told me that they do not want this apartment building in their community. At the town meeting held last week to discuss this development many members of the community expressed their anger over the confusing reports they have received from the developer, the Mantra Group. In 2016 the chief executive, Rene Licata, stated:

We believed we could achieve a mixture of retail with restaurants, bars, childcare, medical and aged care along with open spaces, connectivity between park lands and sporting fields with track and walkways. We wanted to create a town centre that belongs to the community and becomes their backyard.

However, two years on the Mantra group has completely changed its tune. This new proposal does not belong to the community or within it. Everyone in the community wanted the town centre that was initially proposed and promised with a respectable 176 units. At the town meeting last week Parkbridge Estate Residents group spokesperson Selwyn Williams stated: The committee don't have anything against a shopping centre. The issue is the escalation and size to what the place was originally zoned for. There's no traffic impact study, no environmental impact study and only two ways to get in and out of Middleton Grange. Middleton Grange is still developing and growing. The people of Middleton Grange want the town centre, but not a 12-storey apartment

complex in the middle of a small community. I have been to Middleton Grange on countless occasions since 2014, while doorknocking, conducting mobile offices and attending school presentation days at both Thomas Hassall Anglican College and Middleton Grange Public School, as well at events at the schools, including year 6 six graduation ceremonies, the openings of new buildings, fun fairs et cetera. Throughout the past four years I have experienced the close-knit community of Middleton Grange—the residents' love of community, their love of their families, and their pride in their homes and schools.

However, over this time I have also noticed a significant lack of basic infrastructure to support the growing community. Many roads within the community still remain without curbs and guttering, and are not resurfaced adequately. In an area that has incredible connectivity from the M4 motorway to Cowpasture Road, it can at times feel like I am driving back into the country, all the while driving alongside new, beautiful two-storey homes. Basic facilities within the community are not being provided, yet there is a developer that wants to massively oversubscribe with buildings and people. It will overwhelm the small community. It will be completely out of context in Middleton Grange and with what the area looks and feels like.

I want to stand up for my community on this matter. Liverpool City Council is now calling on the community to offer feedback on the proposal. As the local member, I will make a submission to make it clear that this community does not want this monstrous development to go ahead. Middleton Grange was never designed for a development of this size. I urge every member of the Middleton Grange community to make their voices heard on this matter. Submissions close on 26 October. I urge everyone in the community to have their say about this proposed development.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:06): Today I speak about the lack of sufficient support services available to the people of Charlestown who are suffering from acute and non-acute eating disorders. I note that this is an issue that Temporary Speaker Sonia Hornery has raised in this Chamber as well. In the eight long years the Liberals and The Nationals have been in government, they have neglected to implement adequate prevention and early intervention programs to support people suffering from non-acute eating disorders. In addition, people who have had the misfortune of developing acute eating disorders have not had access to adequate inpatient and outpatient services. This is something that must be addressed immediately.

The Liberal-Nationals Government is quite happy to spend billions of dollars on Sydney stadiums, but meanwhile our health system languishes. Eating disorders are debilitating physical and mental illnesses that leave sufferers driven mad by obsessive thoughts. Sufferers are often exhausted and become unable to concentrate on their studies or work, and some suffer from severe nausea as a side effect of their medication. Eating disorders affect approximately 9 per cent of the Australian population and, tragically, suicide rates for people with an eating disorder diagnosis are the highest of any mental health disorder. These are illnesses that can affect anyone, regardless of culture, age, gender identity, socioeconomic background or geographical location. Males represent approximately 20 per cent of people living with eating disorders, but my constituents report that places in programs seem to be more suitable for female sufferers.

This issue was brought to my attention by the parents of a young man in my electorate who has been suffering from anorexia nervosa for three years. In that time frame he lost 53 kilograms and suffered organ failure. Anorexia nervosa is a long-term, life-threatening illness with a high death rate. The earlier treatment begins, the greater the chance of success. Unfortunately, the support services available in my electorate to people suffering from this illness are minimal. This man's family were fortunate enough to have private health insurance, so he was able to attend private clinics in Sydney from 2015 to 2017. His family reported that these inpatient programs were good, but group therapy sessions were cancelled regularly due to staff being absent. This highlights the high staff turnover in these services, which creates further instability in the lives of sufferers. Nevertheless, in 2017 this man was finally able to enter the Hunter New England Health's Eating Disorder Day Program in my neighbouring electorate of Newcastle.

The waiting list for this program is very long and enrolment is offered on a one-time only basis due to the long waiting list. The 12-week program runs for four days a week with a week's break in the middle. In that time, and with the assistance of these services, he was able to gain some weight. After the 12-week program was over, this man was left with limited outpatient services. His family found out the hard way that trying to access ongoing support is very difficult in our region. Their son was committed to seeing a psychiatrist and psychologist but was unable to see them often enough due to the number of clients each has and the need for them to have frequent breaks as a result of the nature of their work. Outpatient support was, and still is, inadequate across the board. Group therapy sessions were often cancelled—again as a result of staffing issues—and few patients attended. Much of each day was spent with individual check-ins and group sessions without qualified clinicians, which many clients found daunting due to the stressful and exhausting nature of their illness. My constituents told me that one psychiatrist even stated that the program was not worth attending.

This story highlights that my constituents need effective, long-term, regular access to clinics, and effective support services that provide suitable management strategies for people living with eating disorders. I note the Minister for Mental Health, in response to a question on notice that I submitted earlier this year about services for non-acute eating disorder sufferers, stated generally that the Hunter New England Local Health District is implementing its Eating Disorders Service Plan 2016-2021. But it is nearly the end of 2018 and constituents are still crying out for help. Sadly, it seems that top cover private health insurance for medical and hospital is essential for people who suffer from eating disorders in my electorate, and some private health insurance has limits on inpatient time. The following issues still stand: clinicians are unwilling to diagnose eating disorders in their very early stages; not enough beds are available, particularly in regional areas; and consistent outpatient services are almost non-existent for people who cannot afford it. We need a thorough, stable and publically funded service in the Hunter region to provide adequate ongoing treatment to people living with eating disorders.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I agree with the member for Charlestown. I call the member for Mulgoa.

Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:11): I thank the member for Charlestown for raising this important matter in the House. The Government takes mental health seriously and is working hard to address it. I am happy to take on board the specific concerns the member has raised in this place and look into the particular instances of her constituent on her behalf. I reassure the House that through the funding of designated eating disorder coordinators at every local health district this Government is doing all it can to support all hospitals across the 15 local health districts and specialty health networks to embed the treatment of eating disorders as part of their core business. We are also working hard to provide resources to families. Last year I was pleased to be in the Hunter to launch the Navigating Their Way to Health and Navigating Your Way to Health resources to provide support. I look forward to investigating the case on behalf of the member for Charlestown.

Community Recognition Statements

WOODCROFT COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (13:13): The fourteenth annual Woodcroft Community Festival was held last weekend. I congratulate the founder of the festival, Lucas Cayan, as well as the organising committee—Fe Watmore, Christine Gittoes, Meldy Esteban, Louise Kinloch, Max Encomienda, Avi Prasad, Aurora Gabon, Jade Cadelina, Anil Roychoudhry—and Blacktown City Council staff, particularly Scott Ronan, for all their hard work. The festival consisted of many stalls. On stage there were performances by local dance groups and a martial arts display by Full Force. The festival also held fun competitions, including Little Miss Woodcroft, a dog show and a pizza-eating competition. The Blacktown State Emergency Service and Plumpton Rural Fire Service were present, providing valuable support and advice on how to protect your home from fires and dealing with emergencies. They also put on a car rescue display on the Woodcroft lakes.

DANCE INDUSTRIE

Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:14): A St Clair dance company, Dance Industrie, is set for an adventure of a lifetime when 19 students perform on board the Royal Caribbean International's *Ovation of the Seas* cruise ship in January next year. Dance Industrie is the first-ever dance school to perform on board the *Ovation of the Seas* cruise ship since it was launched in 2016. These special 19 students will perform two shows for the guests, whilst taking part in workshops with professional choreographers and dancers on the ship.

Over the past year Dance Industrie has worked tirelessly to raise funds to make this adventure possible. Through trivia nights, raffles, Mother's Day stalls, bake sales, carnivals, pie drives, jelly bean guessing competitions and more, Dance Industrie already has raised an astonishing \$15,000 towards the trip. I was very pleased to be able to support Dance Industrie, and I encourage more of the St Clair community to get behind Dance Industrie and help these young students to make this dream a reality. To find out how to support them, visit the Dance Industrie Facebook page. I congratulate Dance Industrie on all their hard work.

WESTFIELD SPORTS HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAMS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:15): I commend and congratulate the girls and boys football teams from Westfield Sports High School, who have once again triumphed as the undisputed champions in the recent Bill Turner Cup. The girls recently defeated Holy Spirit Bellambi 3-0 in the under 15 football final, cementing Westfield Sports High School as the most dominant side in the tournament's history. The girls side has held the Bill Turner Trophy for a record 12 times now, while finishing twice as runners-up. The team's coach, Leah Blayney, has attributed their team success to their passion for the game and eagerness to learn and train hard.

When you couple hard work with talented individuals, the results clearly speak for themselves. I also congratulate Olivia De La Harpe, Darcy Malone, Madeline Malone and Anna Norton, who have all been selected for the Football Federation of Australia national team camps in recognition of their tremendous efforts on and off the field. Well done to all the boys and girls from Westfield Sports High School's football teams: You have had an amazing tournament and you have made your local community proud.

QUEENSLIFF NETBALL CLUB

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:16): I wish to update the House on the success of one of the wonderful teams of the Queenscliff Netball Club. The team comprises Alexa Connors, Ally Barnett, Blair McDowell, Cheryl Horne, Claire Richards, Corrine Smith, Jenni Apps, Joanne Belford, Krystal Harris—Alsop, Kylie Kneller and Simone Haigh, and the team won its grand final on 23 August. The ladies trained hard all year. Their success is a fantastic outcome and wonderful recognition of their effort. The Queenscliff Netball Club and the northern beaches are a powerhouse of netball. I look forward to welcoming His Excellency the Hon. David Hurley, Governor of New South Wales, to the Sir John Fisher Netball Courts, North Curl Curl, to open the National Netball Carnival on Thursday 4 October. This is the inaugural championships being held in New South Wales. I congratulate all the girls of the Queenscliff Netball Club.

HAMILTON HAWKS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (13:17): I congratulate the mighty Hamilton Hawks on their historic fourth straight premiership victory, this time over Maitland. The Hamilton Hawks' hard work, tenacity and team spirit were on display on Saturday afternoon as the team showed the crowd why they are the undisputed champions of rugby in Newcastle. I was on site to watch the victory. I congratulate the coach, Scott Coleman, on his outstanding record as the Hawks' coach, delivering seven premierships in the past 10 years—what a legend! Well done to Tom Coupe on receiving the John Hipwell Medal for the player of the match. I also acknowledge the stand-out effort from fly half, Dane Sherratt, for his try in the sixth minute and for his field goal in the thirty-second minute. On behalf of all Novocastrians, I congratulate the Hamilton Hawks on becoming premiership champions four years in a row and wish them all the best for next season.

TWEED COAST RAIDERS

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (13:18): I congratulate the Tweed Coast Raiders on defeating Ballina and taking home their first rugby league grand final win. Head coach Brent Kite was faced with a sea of green from supporters who attended the game in Ballina on Sunday 9 September. Leading 6-4 at half-time, the Raiders continued their blitzing of Ballina, taking home the win 24-4. I am fairly certain that the celebrations in Cabarita have gone on all this week. I congratulate the team, staff and supporters on a great win.

MAITLAND BLIND AND LOW VISION LAWN BOWLERS CLUB

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (13:18): I recognise the Maitland Blind and Low Vision Lawn Bowlers club. Congregating each month at East Maitland Bowling Club, this extraordinary group is made up of players who live with low vision or blindness. Founded in 2014, this year the club celebrates its fourth anniversary, guided and supported by accredited coach Sam Hawke, who volunteers his time to train the members. The club has also formed a relationship with Maitland Vision Loss Support, which organises matches in Soldiers Point and Charlestown. It is too easy for those with disabilities of all kinds—visual or otherwise—to feel neglected and alone in our communities. The Maitland Blind and Low Vision Lawn Bowlers club represents another inspiring effort to bring together residents who might otherwise be isolated. It provides them with meaningful activity, recreation and emotional support. I congratulate the club on four years of friendship and great times. I hope it continues to thrive and welcome new members for many years to come.

SETTLERS INN AUSTRALIAN HOTELS ASSOCIATION AWARD

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:19): I congratulate Port Macquarie licensee Alistair Flower and his staff from the Settlers Inn on taking out this year's 2018 Australian Hotels Association [AHA] National Award for Outstanding Community Service and Achievement on 17 September 2018. This year's AHA award ceremony was held at the Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort on the Gold Coast and attracted 500 VIPs and industry guests to celebrate the national awards for excellence in the hospitality and accommodation industry. Proudly accepting the award for community service and achievement was licensee Alistair Flower from the Settlers Inn. I thank him for his establishment's hospitality and tremendous support to our locally based community organisations and charitable projects in our region.

During the evening 42 awards were presented, selected from 5,000 members nationwide, to acknowledge the hotel industry's dynamic and innovative approach, which has placed Australia on the map internationally for quality standards in the hospitality sector. Once again, I congratulate Alistair and his dedicated employees from

the Settlers Inn on winning this year's community service and achievement award and on their outstanding support for and commitment to the Port Macquarie-Hastings region.

LAKE MACQUARIE RUNNING FESTIVAL

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:20): I congratulate the winners of the thirty-fourth Lake Macquarie Running Festival held in Warners Bay on 26 August. About 1,400 runners from Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, interstate and even overseas took to the course in picture-perfect running conditions. Vlad Shatrov, a distance runner from my electorate, claimed his fifth half marathon title at the festival. Vlad streaked ahead early at the event and took out the title with an impressive time of 72 minutes. Another Charlestown local, Ben Toomey, won the 10.5-kilometre run in an incredible 35 minutes. I congratulate the event organisers on not only holding a successful community sporting event but also donating proceeds to the John Hunter Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. As a runner myself, I greatly appreciated the efforts put into this event and, although I was not able to participate this year, I look forward to taking part next year.

MCAULEY CATHOLIC COLLEGE OPEN BOYS HOCKEY TEAM

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:21): I offer my congratulations to the McAuley Catholic College Open Boys hockey team, which recently celebrated its third straight win at the Combined Catholic Colleges State Championships. The team had only a one-game break between its semifinal win and the final, and coach Harrison Smith was expecting a tough game against its Sydney opposition. It was a very close match and the game went into extra time. After every five minutes of extra time, each team had to drop off two players. Four fewer players on the field for each team opened the game up and that suited the McAuley players, who were able to score the winning goal. The open girls team was unlucky to lose its semifinal match and finished third in the State, which is still a fantastic achievement. I congratulate all the players and support staff involved.

TOP BLOKES FOUNDATION

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:22): I offer thanks for inspiring young people on the peninsula to turn into top blokes and congratulate all the young fellas who graduated at the Top Blokes graduation at Brisbane Water Secondary College Umina Junior Campus last week. The young guys appreciate the time and effort the Top Blokes program provides in their lives. It was great to see each of them come out the front to receive their certificate and say a few words about the key impacts that the Top Blokes project had on them. The importance of the program for young men in our community hit home in the week after the Defqon dance party as the graduates were confident about their knowledge of the risks associated with drug taking. The Top Blokes Foundation is on a mission to improve young men's mental health and reduce their antisocial and risk-taking behaviours. The young graduates spent hours together in a safe space and can now speak with dignity and confidence about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. They are role models in their school and future leaders in society. I congratulate Top Blokes on turning lives around.

THE SCOTS COLLEGE PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:23): I inform the House that last Friday I had the great pleasure of attending The Scots College year 6 public speaking competition, where I was a judge. I congratulate coordinator Andrew Bromhead, emcee Archie Taylor and speakers Jack Gray-Spencer, Will Howard, Joshua Skelin, Edward Scarf, Max Wilson, Lachlan Jones, Ethan Cox, Hamish Hammerton, the overall winner Deuchar Taylor, and Christian Conway. I also congratulate Jack Walker, Christian Kamahl, Max Sanderson, Max Seopono, Thomas Peters, Max Morphy, Lachlan George, Oscar Levy, Tennyson Crowe and Harry Steigrad, who introduced the speakers, and year 4 Roar and Rumble winner Samuel Fanco-Romero. It was a great morning, and I congratulate each speaker.

WILKINS PUBLIC SCHOOL FETE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:24): I acknowledge the extraordinary Wilkins Fair Day and celebrate the achievements of the outstanding staff, students, parents and carers at Wilkins Public School in Marrickville. The fair was a testament to the hardworking, committed and creative school community at Wilkins. It featured flower stalls, carnival rides, a handmade woodworking stall, food from around the world, a dragon puppet workshop, live performances throughout the day and—in true inner west style—a Zen room with tai chi, Pilates and sound healing. There was also a great line-up including dunking the Inner West mayor in the tank, which was an absolute highlight.

I acknowledge the exceptional work of the Wilkins Public School P&C, including its wonderful president, Amanda Brown, and fair coordinator Veronica Mayson. I also acknowledge Ms Sheila Bollard, the Wilkins school principal. Their hard work and visionary planning made this much more than just another

fundraising fair; it was a showcase of everything people love about the Wilkins school community. I congratulate everyone involved.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN BOYD

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (13:25): John Boyd commenced working for the Albury & Border Rescue Squad, an affiliate of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, as a rescue operator in 1976. He became committed to the rescue squad, holding the positions of deputy president, president and captain. John was actively involved in all operations of the squad including road crash rescue, underwater diving and supporting other emergency services in the region. He was also head of the State diving subcommittee and was regional coordinator and member of the Volunteer Rescue Association Murray State Executive. To quote Albury captain, Paul Marshall, "John was a man with strong hands who was also willing to hold those hands out to help people." John died on 5 September 2018 but his legacy and memory will live on with the Albury & Border Rescue Squad. Vale, John Boyd.

FRIENDS WITH DIGNITY SUPPORT GROUP

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:26): Friends with Dignity is a national not-for-profit organisation that supports women, men and children escaping domestic violence to rebuild their lives with purpose, dignity and hope. I am delighted that a group of wonderful women have stepped up to run Friends with Dignity in Port Stephens, and I was pleased to be able to briefly attend their recent fundraising high tea at the stunning Nigronis restaurant at Nelson Bay. The fundraiser was a sell-out success, with all money raised going towards supporting survivors of domestic violence.

The group's current work in progress is the furnishing of three units established by the Port Stephens Women's Crisis and Support Group—a terrific collaborative effort. Friends with Dignity succeeds when communities respond to the call for assistance. I thank local businesses Pizazz, Home Body and the Lingerie Shop for donating prizes and the Nelson Bay Golf Club, Horizons Golf Club, the VIEW Club, Nelson Bay Rotary Club and the Nelson Bay Bridge Club for their support of the event. Special thanks to the local Friends with Dignity team: Barbara Stevens, Jo Winchcombe, Joan Leis, Sue Dunkley, Kathy Yeo, Nikki Markham, Sally Dunwell and Cheryl Brayshaw.

KIAMA HIGH SCHOOL RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (13:27): On Wednesday 15 August Kiama High School played St Edwards College, East Gosford, for the under 13s Rugby League Country Cup at Apex Park in Dubbo. I am extremely proud and excited to announce that they were triumphant—coming out 16-8 winners. Special mention must go to Hayden Buchanan, Caleb Hall and Baily Marks and man of the match Jasper Scobie. It was a great win for Kiama, under the guidance of coach Liam Anderberg. The boys were able to dig deep and their perseverance paid off against Gosford, being the first time we have seen a school win the Country Cup in successive years. The team consisted of: Jasper Scobie, Tyrell Taione, Caleb Hall, Cooper Davies, Cooper Collinge, Jarrod Tiyce, Marley Mathews, Bailey Marks, Dylan Adams, Lachlan Weir, Tommy Knox, Hayden Buchanan, Cooper Harrison, Tynan Roberts, James Davis, Isaac Laughton and Noah Jennings. Once again, congratulations to all involved as each and every one of them played a pivotal role in the tournament. I look forward to seeing further successes from each of them in the future.

FATHER DINESH MACWAN SILVER JUBILEE

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:28): It was a pleasure to attend a mass and community lunch at Christ the King church to celebrate the silver jubilee of Father Dinesh Macwan, who has served 25 years as a priest. Father was born in India and more than six years ago arrived in Australia to serve at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and then later at St Brendan's. In the past five to six years he has served at Christ the King. He is much loved by the congregation, and I am honoured to have Father Macwan serving as a priest in the electorate of Bankstown. Thank you, Father Macwan, for your tireless commitment, dedication and service at Christ the King church. It was a wonderful celebration last Sunday. Hundreds of members of the church attended for both the mass and the lunch. Thank you for the kind invitation. I acknowledge that councillor Rachelle Harika and her family, who are long-term parishioners, also attended. Happy anniversary.

AUSTRALIAN SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITORS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:29): Today I am proud to congratulate a number of young Hornsby swimmers who have represented New South Wales at the Australia Swimming Championships in Hobart. Jensen Goodchild from Berowra Public School, Joseph Kim from Thornleigh West Public School, James Burt from Mount Colah Public School and Ian Kim from Hornsby North Public School all travelled to Hobart to swim for New South Wales. Jensen Goodchild, who was recently named

NSW Primary Schools Sports Association swimming team captain, finished third in the 200 metres individual medley. Joseph Kim received gold medals for the 50 metres butterfly, 100 metres backstroke and 4 x 50 metres freestyle relay; silver medals for the 50 metres freestyle, 50 metres backstroke and the 4 x 50 metres medley relay; and one bronze medal for the 100 metres breaststroke.

James Burt finished fourth in the 50 metres butterfly and fifth in the 50 metres backstroke. He took home a silver medal in the 4 x 50 metres medley relay and a bronze medal for the 4 x 50 metres freestyle relay. Ian Kim was part of the New South Wales relay team that won a bronze medal. Additionally, Ian also competed in the junior breaststroke event and finished in fifth place. Jensen, Joseph, James and Ian have done Hornsby proud. I am sure this will not be the last we hear of these amazing swimmers as they continue to smash records in the pool.

GREENACRE PUBLIC SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER MEJDA ELKAN

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (13:30): Thirty years is an admirable amount of time to dedicate to a passion. It demonstrates commitment, devotion and a real love for the work you do. Ms Mejda Eldan has dedicated more than 30 years to the local community as a school community liaison officer. Ms Eldan has worked to bring students, teachers, parents and the wider community together. Community liaison officers are common in schools now, but 30 years ago Ms Eldan was a trailblazer and an important link between schools, families and the community. Ms Eldan has inspired many parents to pursue further education and open doors of opportunity. The power of education is limitless, and I pay tribute to the great contribution Ms Eldan has made to so many families. Encouraging an individual to pursue further education and empowering them with the tools to build their future is an invaluable gift, and I appreciate the dedication Ms Eldan has exhibited in doing so. I commend the great work of Ms Eldan during her time at Greenacre Public School and look forward to the contributions she will no doubt continue to make into the future. I take this opportunity to thank everybody who helps their local school.

TRIBUTE TO LINDSAY ROSE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:31): It was with great sadness that I heard of the passing of Lindsay Rose. Lindsay was a longstanding member of the Middle Harbour Yacht Club for more than 40 years, many of those years spent sailing and racing his boat, *Ruff 'n' Tumble*. Lindsay volunteered a great deal of his time to the club, leading a team of volunteers maintaining and upgrading the clubhouse, and in recent years he joined the membership committee. I extend my sincere condolences to Lindsay's children, Ash and Trudy, along with the rest of his family, friends and fellow members of the Middle Harbour Yacht Club. Rest in peace, Lindsay Rose.

PATRICIAN BROTHERS' COLLEGE FAIRFIELD RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:32): Today I commend and congratulate Patrician Brothers' College Fairfield's rugby league team, who recently defeated country champions Mount Ridley College of Craigieburn, Victoria, 32-26 to bring home the NRL Schoolboy Trophy. This victory was hard fought and tested the boys' mental and physical fortitude. Patrician Brothers' College was trailing Mount Ridley College 12-0 in the first five minutes, before mounting a comeback and locking the scores at 18-18 at the halfway mark. Well done to Dietrich Roache, who performed a game-saving tackle that halted Mount Ridley's last hurrah in the final minutes of the game. I make special mention of each member of the championship rugby league squad for their tremendous efforts throughout the tournament: Captain Sione Taufui, Jordan D'Amico, Jackson Macroyannis, Joseph Afu, Jalen Wong, Lopeti Senituli, Christian Papa, Dietrich Roache, Paul Waqa, John Doh, Kody Duncan, Edmond Phares, Harley Sanchez, George Po, Arthur Tuakalau, Nicholas Fasavalu, Daniel Oshana, Klinton Le and Emerton Vea. Congratulations, boys.

WEST WYALONG LIONS CLUB PRESIDENT RON COOPER

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:33): The Lions are a pillar of volunteer life in country communities, and Ron Cooper is a stand-out among his peers. Recently I was inducted into the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club but I could only dream of being as impressive as this dedicated long-time member. The outgoing West Wyalong president was awarded a District Governor's Appreciation Award Medal in Bathurst as part of the District 201N4 Changeover dinner. It is believed Mr Cooper is the first West Wyalong Lion ever to receive the honour. Of the 51 Lions Clubs in the district covering cities west of the mountains, Ron is the only person ever to receive a club award. Well done, Ron, and thank you for your continued service.

MAITLAND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (13:34): Today I recognise the work of Maitland Community Care Services and Meals on Wheels, which are celebrating 30 years and 50 years respectively of caring for vulnerable members of the Maitland electorate. Maitland Community Care provides transport services, domestic

assistance, home maintenance and nursing care, and keeps older members of society active through its social support programs and activity groups, which run every day throughout the week.

Much like Maitland Community Care, Meals on Wheels is an organisation based on the compassionate nature of its volunteers. It is more than a meal, as it offers company for people when they are lonely and allows a level of independence for the elderly—meaning they can stay in the comfort of their homes for longer. However, perhaps the most important role of the service is its ability to monitor customers in an unobtrusive manner, which can be vital to their long-term physical and mental health. I congratulate those services on their wonderful work and look forward to celebrating many more milestones with them in the years to come.

SWIMMER OLIVER NEKIC

BIGGEST LOSER BRETT SMITH

Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:35): Although he has only been swimming competitively for 18 months, Glenmore Park student Oliver Nekic has shown he is a future star of the pool. Recently Oliver competed in the Catholic Schools Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival, representing his school St Mary Mackillop Primary School. At the carnival he finished first place in seven events—a spectacular result that saw Oliver break three zone records and be named Junior Boys Age Champion. Last year Oliver was selected to represent his school in the 50 metres freestyle event at the New South Wales State Championships and the Catholic Schools New South Wales State Swimming Championships. I thank Oliver's parents, Josip and Rachel, for their unwavering support of him and I congratulate Oliver on his exceptional achievements.

Another Glenmore Park resident, Brett Smith, was crowned the 2017 Biggest Loser, with an incredible weight loss of 21.6 kilograms. Since he retired from professional boxing, *The Biggest Loser* has reconnected Brett to the love of health, training and fitness. He has his sights set on helping others and becoming a qualified personal trainer to achieve that. Brett has started Southpaw Athletic, where he helps people change their lives for the better. Through his determination and drive, Brett has contributed to a healthy community feel in his home town of Glenmore Park.

PENINSULA GIRLS' NIGHT IN

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:36): I congratulate the amazing women who put together the Peninsula's ninth Girls' Night In to raise money for women's cancers. The fabulous, fun event was a sellout, with loads of glitter, stretch lycra, psychedelic swirls, glitter balls, crocheted mandalas and even rollerskates streaming into Ettalong Diggers for a night of fun and laughter. Most of us had a close connection with cancer—mums and sisters, colleagues and friends, all eager to share stories of love and hopes for better futures. We talked and laughed, clinked glasses and consumed, and learned that our food and alcohol consumption increases our risk of cancer and that cancer is not necessarily related to family history. It was a tough reality to learn that the coast has a higher percentage of cancer than the rest of New South Wales, and reassuring to spread the word about the importance of regular mammograms as a good form of early detection. We pocketed our knowledge with a view to changing our lifestyles and spreading the word, and then danced the night away to FABBA. Once all the bills were paid, the evening raised a whopping \$30,125 for the Cancer Council. I thank all involved.

BANORA POINT PRIMARY SCHOOL STATE TENNIS CHAMPIONS

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (13:37): I congratulate the four Banora Point primary students who are the State tennis champions. The final, played in Parramatta last week, really came down to the wire, with the young quartet holding on to defeat Milton Public School five sets to three. With the final level at three sets apiece, the quartet—Alannah, Amali, Juan and Bohdi—held their ground to win the mixed doubles and bring home the trophy. These year 5 and year 6 students have a great tennis future in front of them. I congratulate them all and their tennis coach, Paul Shacklock.

KARUAH PUBLIC SCHOOL FETE

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:38): On the weekend Karuah Public School held a magnificent school fete. These things do not happen without an amazing team and the hard work of parents and citizens [P&C] association members. I thank Olivia Hurstfield for driving the initiative on behalf of the P&C, and her team, including Amanda Willis, April and Pete Lillie, Stephanie Callaghan, Willa Kennedy, Jasmine Everingham, Donna Blundell, Leah Leonard, Kim Reynolds, Michelle and Kyle King, Elizabeth Dawes, Leanna Dimerson, Veronica Hartman and Bec Watt. I also pay tribute to principal Julie Hubbard and her amazing teaching and support staff, who all stepped up on the day. It was a true community event and there were groups from everywhere, including The Smith Family, Tea Gardens Lions Club, Karuah fire brigade, Dance N Dazzle Studio and Riding for the Disabled. Everyone contributed in their own way to make it a special day, particularly

sponsors Albert Johnson Pty Ltd sawmill, Karuah Returned and Services League, Newcastle Permanent and Hunter Quarries.

MS SYDNEY TO THE GONG

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:39): I congratulate fantastic cyclists in my electorate Greg Trotter, Sally Moriarty, Martin Brown and Eileen Gainsford on preparing to ride a mammoth 82 kilometres from Sydney to Wollongong to raise money for multiple sclerosis [MS]. On 4 November our inspiring bike riders from Port Macquarie will take to the pavement with 10,000 fellow participants to compete in the 2018 MS Sydney to the Gong journey to raise funds to help in the search for a cure. The MS Sydney to the Gong ride is aiming to raise \$100,000 for ongoing research to treat the debilitating disease that attacks the central nervous system.

For 37 years the tremendous charitable event has taken riders on a journey through the Royal National Park to see ocean views at Stanwell Tops and on a stunning ride over the Sea Cliff Bridge before concluding in Wollongong. To date, the Gong ride has raised an astounding \$573,000 for research. MS Research Australia is the largest not-for-profit organisation dedicated to funding, coordinating and advocating for MS research in Australia. Again, I extend my best wishes and congratulations to our sensational cyclists who are taking up the 82-kilometre challenge to raise vital funds for a worthy cause.

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (13:40): Across the State year 12 students are enjoying their last week of school and bringing an end to their 13 years of formal education. Many members have children who are sitting for the Higher School Certificate this year, which I will talk about closer to the exams. Today I pay tribute to all teachers who have supported their students to get to this point. I know the amount of time they give up on the weekends and during the holidays to support them. Over the years I have visited Wiley Park Girls High School, Beverly Hills Girls High School, Punchbowl Boys' High School, St Charbel's College and Holy Spirit Catholic College in my electorate. I wish those schools and their students all the very best. We do not only want our children to have the best education in literacy and numeracy; we all want our children to finish school as the best people they can be and to have all the skills they need to carry them in life. I have a daughter in year 12, so I will see the pranks firsthand this year. I cannot believe she still thinks cling wrap is funny. I said to her this morning, "Sweetheart, that is just so 1997."

BULAHDELAH CENTRAL SCHOOL

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:41): Last weekend I had the pleasure of visiting Bulahdelah Central School to celebrate its sesquicentenary marking 150 years of public education in the area. Bulahdelah is a family-orientated school community and it was heart warming to see the family generations in the school photographs on display. Records show that 30 pupils—accounting for one-third of the total population of the district—were enrolled at the one-teacher school when it opened in 1868. Today more than 400 students from kindergarten to year 12 fill the classrooms with dozens of amazing teachers under the guidance of principal Deb Gilbert. It was great to catch up with former student 96-year-old Jack Ireland. I pass on a special thanks to the organising committee for a job well done.

ONE PENNY RED AND VERNON'S BAR, SUMMER HILL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:42): My electorate of Summer Hill is home to some of the best restaurants and bars that New South Wales has to offer. That fact was recently recognised at the 2018 Restaurant and Catering Awards for Excellence, with One Penny Red in Summer Hill awarded best Sydney Metropolitan Contemporary Australian Restaurant – Informal and Vernon's Bar awarded best Sydney Metropolitan Small Bar. Named after the Penny Red, which was a British postage stamp issued in 1841, One Penny Red is housed in the historic old Summer Hill post office along with Vernon's Bar. Situated on Moonbie Street, they are perfect places to enjoy delicious food or amazing cocktails while admiring the rich history and heritage buildings that Summer Hill boasts. One Penny Red and Vernon's Bar are also shining examples of how local businesses can contribute to creating a more sustainable future. They made an incredible effort to restore their historic building and they source local organic food to champion sustainability. I encourage everyone to pop in to those award-winning establishments.

THE RIVER DECK, ALBURY

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (13:43): The River Deck, situated in parkland on the banks of the Murray River in Albury, has won best New South Wales Regional Breakfast Restaurant and Best New South Wales Restaurant Caterer at the 2018 Restaurant and Catering Savour Awards for Excellence held at Sydney's Luna Park. The awards recognise exceptional service and culinary talent across Australia and the River Deck cafe

certainly excels in those categories. I congratulate Alex Smit and all of the staff at The River Deck on such a prestigious achievement and on making the cafe a most popular tourism and special events destination in Albury.

MOUNT LEWIS BOWLING CLUB

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (13:43): On 13 September it was my great pleasure to pop down to the Mount Lewis Bowling Club to partake in a game of lawn bowls against students from Holy Spirit Catholic College. They absolutely thrashed me; lawn bowls is much more difficult than it looks. I am happy that I have been able to secure some funding for the club to buy equipment to encourage more young people to get involved in bowls. I think it is really important that the club serves the community at large. Volunteers run a series of programs and lessons for kids to be able to play lawn bowls during their school sports periods. It is the hope and the intention that more young people will get involved in lawn bowls and also that there will be an interschool competition. I look forward to that. I thank the Mount Lewis Bowling Club for its community efforts. People often understate the value of clubs to the community. This community club is constantly working with its local schools, and I appreciate that. I must train a little harder next time.

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE MCINTOSH

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (13:44): Bruce McIntosh, OAM, was a former Shoalhaven shire president and a local dairy farmer who sadly passed away recently. I had the honour of attending his memorial service at St Luke's Anglican Church yesterday. Mr McIntosh was a man of great influence and leaves behind a glowing legacy in the Shoalhaven area. Bruce served on Shoalhaven City Council for many years and was a loyal servant to his family and his community. In 1980 he received a Medal of the Order of Australia on Australia Day in recognition of his considerable community service. He was also the brainchild behind the Riverside Animal Park at Nowra, which opened in 1972 and which is now known as the Shoalhaven Zoo. It has provided a source of family friendly education and entertainment over the past 46 years. Bruce is survived by his wife, Nora, and their six children: Jan, Lindy, Sally, Kathy, Sue and their son, Rob, who manages Woodside Park, a dairy farm at Berry. I send my deepest condolences to Bruce's family. He was an extraordinary credit to his family and his community and he will be deeply missed by a very grateful community.

AUSTRALIAN TREFOIL GUILD ADVISER BARBARA FAIRBAIRN

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:45): Today I pay tribute to a special community member, Barbara Fairbairn from Pennant Hills. Barbara first joined the Girl Guides in 1954, and 64 years later she is still working hard for the organisation she loves. Barbara is now serving as Australian Trefoil Guild adviser and is the most senior member of the organisation. The Trefoil Guild is for guides who are aged 18 years and more and who still want to be part of the organisation. In that role she is extremely busy ensuring that meetings are run efficiently, events are spectacular and the organisation runs smoothly, all of which she does extremely well. There are currently 1,900 Trefoil Guild Guides across Australia who are able to enjoy membership thanks to Barbara and her team. The team members are now busy getting ready for the Sydney 2018 Girl Guides Jamboree, and I wish them all the best for that big event later this month. Earlier this year I was pleased to award Barbara a Hornsby Seniors Award for her services to our community. Today I thank her again for her incredible dedication and service.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR CABRAMATTA

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: On behalf of all members, I welcome back to the House the member for Cabramatta, Nick Lalich.

Announcements

MEMBER FOR EPPING

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I announce that at 3.10 this morning Lydia Jane Tudehope was born, the fourth grandchild of the member for Epping.

Visitors

VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome the former Minister for Health and member for North Shore, Jillian Skinner. I acknowledge Heidi and Charlie Morrison, guests of the Hon. Anthony Roberts, Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State. I welcome David Veness from Parkinson's NSW,

guest of the member for Bathurst. I also extend a very warm welcome to Neil and Jennifer, parents of Bryce O'Connor, who works in the Office of the Attorney General and who previously worked in the Speaker's office. They are guests of the Minister for Police and Minister for Emergency Services, the member for Dubbo. Welcome to the students and teacher from Holy Trinity School Inverell, guests of the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills, the member for Northern Tablelands. I also welcome members of the Kincumber Rotary Club, guests of the member for Terrigal.

I acknowledge in the gallery members of the Epping RSL Sub-Branch: Peter Seaz, Deirdre Curdie and John Curdie, OAM, Merril and John Prestidge, Denis Fitzgerald, AM, and Barbara and David Taylor, guests of the member for Epping. I acknowledge the students and their teachers who are taking part in the Riverstone Junior Youth Leadership Assembly. They come from Hambledon Public School, John Palmer Public School, Mary Immaculate Primary School, Norwest Christian College, Parklea Public School, Quakers Hill East Public School, Riverbank Public School, Schofields Public School, St John's Primary School, St John XXIII Catholic Learning Community and St Joseph's Primary School. They are all guests of the member for Riverstone. I also acknowledge Annie Holder, Brian Yates and Jenny Abourizk, guests of the member for Wyong. I welcome everyone to the Chamber, including those whom I did not name.

Presiding Officers

ABSENCE OF THE SPEAKER

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wish to advise the House that due to a sudden family emergency the Speaker has sought a week's leave from the Parliament. Madam Speaker's husband was admitted to hospital yesterday after suffering an acute heart attack. Our thoughts are with her and we wish Ossie a speedy recovery.

Announcements

TRIBUTE TO JOE CACCIOLA

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I advise members of the sad news of the passing of Joe Cacciola. Many members would have known Joe, who, since 2004, was a ministerial driver with the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Transport Service unit. Joe was a true gentleman and always reliable. If there was a shortcut down the backstreets, it was guaranteed that Joe would know it. He passed away early on Monday morning at the Chris O'Brien Life House, Camperdown, surrounded by his loved ones. He is remembered by his wife, Carmel, daughter Iolanda, son Antonin and brother Gaetano. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and colleagues during this difficult time.

Commemorations

CENTENARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (14:26): Constructed in 1917, the Hindenburg Line was a series of trenches designed to allow the Germans to withdraw to a shorter, more heavily fortified and easily defended position. In the summer of 1918, with newly arrived divisions of American infantry bolstering the strength of the Allies, breaking the line became the key to ending the war. Lieutenant General Monash planned an assault on the line at the Bellicourt Tunnel, where the canal between the Somme and Scheldt rivers passed underground for nearly six kilometres. Monash directed the numerically superior 27th and 30th United States divisions to attack over the top of the tunnel and establish a breach. His plan was for the 3rd and 5th Australian divisions to then pass through and attack the German trenches that lay beyond. The manoeuvre was to be supported by more than 90 tanks.

When the attack was launched a century ago this week, the inexperienced Americans advanced without properly securing the territory they crossed. Soon the Australian troops following behind came under heavy fire. With fog descending on the battlefield, dozens of tanks destroyed by mines and uncertainty about the whereabouts of advanced troops preventing the use of heavy artillery, the battle descended into pockets of fierce combat, often hand to hand. The Americans suffered the worst casualties sustained in any single day during their involvement in the war. One soldier later described "a sort of inferno of smoke and shell bursts". The intense fighting lasted four days and nights before the Hindenburg Line was finally breached. More than 20,000 Allied troops, including 2,500 Australians, were killed or wounded in the fighting over the canal. Lest we forget.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions accorded priority]

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

*Question Time***LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTION**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:27): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Given that a week before the last election the Treasurer told the *Hawkesbury Gazette*, "If elected as member for Hawkesbury I intend to move into the electorate ... I believe it is important to understand first-hand the needs of constituents," how can his colleagues and the people of New South Wales believe a single thing he says?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will wait until the House comes to order.

Mr Luke Foley: Stand there so we can all laugh at you.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:29): I welcome the interest of the Leader of the Opposition and I challenge him to move into his electorate, as I will do at the next election.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Otherwise, I challenge him to challenge the member for Drummoyne at the upcoming 2019 election.

Mr Luke Foley: Unlike you, mate, I can handle the commute.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The unruly behaviour of Opposition members will not be accepted.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It is seventeen kilometres from Auburn to Drummoyne, the Minister for Health informs me. There is no doubt that it has not been a great few days for the Government. But that does not compare to the 16 years of Labor Government, which was an absolute disaster for the people of New South Wales.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will resume his seat. Members will come to order.

[Interruption from gallery]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with Standing Order 260 I direct the attendants to remove from the public gallery the two people who are interjecting.

Mr Luke Foley: It's his branch members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Prospect to order for the first time. I will not tolerate unruly behaviour this afternoon. I apologise to the people in the public gallery, except for the two who were just removed, for the behaviour of members. The Opposition has asked a question and does not want to listen to the answer. The member for Kogarah can shake his head as much as he likes.

Mr Chris Minns: I don't know them.

Mr Brad Hazzard: You were clapping and encouraging them. You don't clap people when they do that. You guys are grubs.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health will come to order. I remind the member for Keira that he is already on two calls to order. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Although I have only 18 seconds to go I will say that, whilst those opposite continue to be more interested in politics, this side of the House is a government that is committed to delivering for the people of this great State.

HEALTH SERVICES

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:34): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government delivering better health care for the people of New South Wales?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:34): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her question; I know how much she values the world-class health services and system offered in New South Wales, as do all members on this side of the Chamber. I welcome and acknowledge the former Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, who is in the public gallery, and the wonderful work that she did in turning around the health system that we inherited just seven or eight years ago. Part of this Government's ongoing legacy is having built or upgraded 78 hospitals throughout the State. I also welcome back the member for Cabramatta. It was great to

see him in the community of Cabramatta on Sunday, and I thank him for being gracious when I sent him a note wishing him well.

It is with a wonderful sense of pride that I state this Government has built a strong budget and a strong economy, which means that we can invest in our health services. As many members would know, the Health budget accounts for about a third of our day-to-day costs—\$1 in \$3 spent by the New South Wales Government every year goes to our health services. We are proud that since we have been in government we have built or upgraded 78 hospitals across the State, with 48 of these hospitals in rural and regional New South Wales. This year alone we are investing more than \$2.3 billion in our hospitals—Nepean, Westmead, Blacktown, Campbelltown, Liverpool, St George, Sutherland, Tweed, Wagga Wagga, Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Goulburn, and the list goes on.

We know that it is not just the bricks and mortar of hospitals that matter when we are building health services and new hospitals; what goes inside these health services and hospitals is what matters most. In particular, we appreciate and respect the hardworking frontline workers who make the health system tick over every day. I know that one of the great pleasures for the Minister for Health and for me—although he visits hospitals much more often than I do—is talking not just to patients but to the hardworking frontline staff who day in and day out provide health services. This year alone we will add 1,370 frontline health workers, and since we have been in government we have added nearly 10,000 nurses, doctors and midwives to the public health system. We are also focusing on paramedics. Just a few months ago, it was pleasing to announce an additional 700 paramedics over four years, plus 50 call centre staff to take emergency calls when members of the public are in distress and require vital health services.

As the Minister for Health announced just yesterday, this Government will ensure that the approximately three million people who enter our emergency departments every year get the best service available, not just the best medical attention in terms of clinical services but also the best level of customer services. Sometimes, depending on a patient's condition, people have to wait a bit longer than anticipated to receive medical attention. I am pleased that yesterday the Government announced a new patient experience trial that will reduce the stress experienced in emergency departments, not just by those seeking medical attention but often by the carers who have accompanied the person. This is the next level in raising our standards by making sure that every part of our health system is the best it can be. Where would we be without having wonderful health services? Sometimes people have complex conditions when they present at the emergency department, and we know that these people must be kept informed every step of the process about how their needs are being met and that they will get access to the service they need in as timely a manner as possible.

The trial will commence in November and it will be based in Blacktown, Lismore, Liverpool and Nepean hospitals. Based on the feedback we get from people in the emergency departments—not just patients and carers but also staff—we will be able to assess whether the trial of a one-stop-shop, frequent patient service information system becomes a permanent fixture at the trial sites and we expand the system to other hospitals. We know that it takes hard work to build up the budget and make big investments in health. I do not often hark back to what those opposite did not do when they were in government but, for the record, we have opened or upgraded 78 new health facilities while the Labor Party closed more than 2,000 beds when in government. [*Extension of time*]

When the member for Holsworthy asked me this question, I should have acknowledged that, having two young children, she would know the excellent service that paediatric emergency cases can expect: They go straight through. The trial that we announced this week focuses on the patient experience for all types of ailments, especially for those who may have to wait a little longer for health services. As I said, the record of those opposite when they were in government is not one that they are particularly proud of. They interject when I say this because the truth hurts. They closed 2,000 beds and 37 maternity units across the State, including at Ballina, Cessnock, Coolah, Cowra, Crookwell, West Wyalong, Wellington, Hay and Yass. They need to answer the question from those communities as to why they closed those maternity units.

I say to all the hardworking men and women of New South Wales that we take seriously our obligation to deliver world-best health services, not just by building new hospitals and employing extra frontline staff but also by making the experience as good as possible. We know that in times of crisis people rely on our health system. I take this opportunity to thank all our frontline health workers for making this system the best in the world.

WESTERN SYDNEY JOBS

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:41): My question is directed to the Premier. Yesterday at the commencement of the State's single largest jobs-generating project in Western Sydney the Premier decided to stand up the Prime Minister. Does that not reveal the Government is more focused on its internal civil war than it is on the serious issues facing the people of New South Wales?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:41): I welcome a question on the new Sydney airport in Western Sydney and I welcome the fact—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Government asked a question, the Premier answered it and everyone could hear the answer. When the Opposition asks a question, members cannot hear the answer because of the interjections from Opposition members. When the Opposition has an opportunity to ask a question, I ask Opposition members to listen to the answer in silence.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This question is about the second airport in Western Sydney. Members on this side of the Chamber are excited about this project. I commend the Minister for Western Sydney for being at the gathering for the commencement of the project. Because of his City Deal, notwithstanding the pressure that Sussex Street put on the local mayors—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We are proud of the fact that not only are we building the roads and the rail links around that airport but also we are building the aerotropolis, a new airport city that will see an extra 200,000 jobs in Western Sydney. We are the party of the workers. We support people getting jobs. We support Western Sydney infrastructure. Those opposite ignored Western Sydney for 16 long years.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. If this is such an important project for the Premier, why was she not there yesterday standing beside the Prime Minister?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: Tell us where you were yesterday.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Where were those opposite for 16 years on Western Sydney infrastructure? We are proud of the fact that over the next four years Western Sydney will receive about \$25 billion in infrastructure. Every single project that we invest in Western Sydney those opposite oppose. Back in May we were very pleased to host the aerotropolis conference, where businesses from around Australia and the world—some of the best brands in the world and local brands—came together because they are excited to be part of the future of jobs for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Not only that, last week when I addressed a big gathering of Western Sydney businesses, I was able to announce to them that for the first time in Australia four different universities will be co-located in one location to ensure that the best place—

[Interruption]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Why do you not care about Western Sydney?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order refers to Standing Order 74. The Premier is being deliberately quarrelsome.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Swansea might see it that way, but there is no point of order.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Premier, was it just too far for you to travel?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I notice that none of the Western Sydney members actually got up, because they know how much we are doing for their communities, which their own Government did not do. We are providing the jobs, the infrastructure, the schools and the hospitals. Labor let Western Sydney down; we are building Western Sydney like never before.

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

STATE ECONOMY

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (14:46): My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations. Will the Treasurer update the House on the Government's strong management of the New South Wales economy, and are there any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:46): I thank the member for his question. It gives me a great opportunity to remind the House that New South Wales remains the strongest and most prosperous State in the country. The most recent national accounts confirmed that New South Wales continues to grow above trend. State final demand to June was at 3.5 per cent—higher than the Australian growth rate and above the Reserve Bank of Australia forecasts. Unemployment remains the lowest in the nation, at 4.7 per cent, and has been that way now for a record consecutive 39 months. Moody's has again confirmed our triple-A credit rating. We have budget surpluses as far as the eye can see and negative net debt for the third year in a row.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: On every single front New South Wales leads the way. Let us not forget what happens when Labor is in charge of the show. Under 16 years of hard Labor there were projected deficits of \$4 billion, projected debt of \$19 billion and an infrastructure backlog of \$30 billion. CommSec said that under Labor New South Wales was the worst-performing economy, bringing up the rear—the lowest jobs growth of any mainland State. The unemployment rate was above the national average for 62 of the 68 consecutive months. Labor did nothing and invested very little in our great State. That is what life looks like under Labor.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Londonderry to order for the third time. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the third time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Labor closed 2,000 hospital beds and left plenty of deficits, I say to the member for Maroubra. Labor closed 37 maternity wards and it closed 90 schools.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am sure Labor did not want to do that, but that is what happens when you do not manage money well. These are the facts. There are the real impacts of Labor's policies on our great State. In our last budget we invested three times the amount Labor invested in schools, hospitals and transport in its last term. While the net worth of the State continues to grow by a quarter of a trillion dollars, in Labor's last term—it was against hospitals—it invested \$2.5 billion in hospitals; we invested \$8 billion. We are delivering 40 new and upgraded hospitals across the State. When it comes to education, we are building 170 new and upgraded schools, increasing investment in schools by approximately 50 per cent compared with Labor. Our investment in transport has tripled from \$15.7 billion to more than \$50 billion. We are building the WestConnex, the NorthConnex and the F6, and upgrading regional roads across New South Wales. We have delivered 30,000 new weekly bus services, ferry services and light rail services. That is the difference between us and them.

[Interruption from the gallery]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with Standing Order 260 the visitors in the gallery will be removed. The Clerk will stop the clock until we get this sorted out. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: They are great supporters of the Windsor Bridge and we will soon be delivering that project—another infrastructure project—on time and on budget. What we do know on this side of the House is that you cannot build the schools, you cannot build the roads and you cannot build the rail and the hospitals if you do not run a strong budget, if you do not have your finances in order and you do not run a strong economy. What I can say is that, as we have seen, things never change under Labor. We are already seeing its fiscal incompetence emerge from Opposition. I think I am on the shadow Treasurer's mailing list, but I am not getting his economic updates. Are they still going out?

Mr Ryan Park: Yes.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: They are still going out. How many points at the moment? Five?

Mr Ryan Park: One.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: He has got one. *[Extension of time]*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I start the clock, it has been indicated to me that members in this place have been filming what has been going on in the gallery. I hope that is not correct.

Mr Luke Foley: Ray!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If you want me to name them I will. I ask any member who has been filming to delete the footage from their phone. We will know if it has continued. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I have the shadow Treasurer's press release from Sunday 26 August, which states, "NSW Labor to end corporate waste, saving over \$800 million from Liberals' waste and mismanagement." He goes through and he has a range of measures. One of them is to reduce the Treasurer's Advance. I could spend the entire question time going through this, but for those who do not know, the Treasurer's Advance is a fund that is set aside to be spent in the most urgent of circumstances. Apparently, the shadow Treasurer is going to overhaul this entire fund to find savings.

Can I inform the House of how much has been spent from the Treasurer's Advance over the past two years? Nothing! The shadow Treasurer's brand-new savings plan is to find savings where there is no spending. We all know why Labor wants to get its hands on the Treasurer's Advance. We know what Labor did with it when Labor was in office—abused it, spent it and wasted it on covering up the budget black holes. A government cannot build the schools and hospitals if it does not run the finances of the State. That is why under a Liberal-Nationals Government we will always have the best schools, the best hospitals, and the best road and rail that a good government can provide.

Visitors

VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery this afternoon Ms Emma McBride, the member for Dobell.

Question Time

LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTION

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:55): My question is directed to the Treasurer and member for Hawkesbury. Will he explain why it is okay for him to try to change jobs to avoid a daily commute to work and avail himself of an opportunity that is not available to thousands of commuters who are stuck in Sydney's traffic congestion each and every day?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:55): I thank the member for Keira for his question. If he wants to talk about commuting, there is a reason why: The previous Labor Government left behind a \$30 billion infrastructure backlog. If he cares about commuting, he should support the WestConnex project that will ensure the families of Western Sydney can get home to their families faster. It was the previous Labor Government that called the M2 the road to nowhere. But for the Liberals and The Nationals, every single day the people of north-west Sydney would be cramped in traffic along Epping Road as they travelled home.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock has been called to order on at least three occasions, and he knows that. I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Cessnock from the Chamber under Standing Order 249. The member may return to the Chamber on the next sitting day.

[The member for Cessnock left the Chamber at 14.57 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question is about the Treasurer's entitlement attitude. The Treasurer thinks he can change electorates because of congestion. He has not answered the question. Let him answer the question.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: When it comes to changing electorates, the Opposition should have someone else take the point of order, given that the member for Strathfield was previously the member for Newcastle. The Labor Opposition is opposed to the Sydney Metro Southwest.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Labor Opposition has opposed every single infrastructure project that this State Government is delivering. The previous Labor Government left this State a basket case, whereas the current Government has turned the State around. The Liberal-Nationals Government is investing where it matters. Over the next four years the Government will spend \$87.2 billion on infrastructure, which will build more schools, more hospitals, and more road and rail so that families can get home faster. People never would have been able to do that under a Labor Party that opposed every single transport improvement.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. If the Treasurer will not explain why he is changing electorates because of congestion, he should apologise for his entitlement attitude.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is being relevant to the question he was asked. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Labor not only opposed every single infrastructure project but also opposed the financing of every single infrastructure project. Labor members talk about selling the State, but that is completely not true.

Mr Jihad Dib: You have sold the State—\$50 billion worth.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Then why has the net worth of this State continued to grow under the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government? The member for Keira is a man who does not understand asset recycling.

Mr Ryan Park: Mr Deputy Speaker—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Is that how the member for Keira takes a point of order?

Mr Ryan Park: I said, "Mr Deputy Speaker". How else would you like me to take a point of order?

Mr John Barilaro: Actually, you wait for the call. That is what you do. You wait for the call, you dickhead. You know the rules.

Mr Ryan Park: Put your jeans on, mate. Put your jeans on.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Labor members want to talk about transport. We know that for 16 years Labor promised transport that the Labor Government could never ever deliver. What have we seen under the current Government: \$3 billion reserved for the Sydney Metro West and money going towards that; \$4.3 billion for the Sydney Metro West; \$1.9 billion for the Bankstown to Chatswood railway, which Labor opposed; \$1.8 billion for WestConnex, which is a project Labor opposed and a transaction that Labor tried to jeopardise for the people of this State; and \$1.5 billion for the Pacific Highway upgrade.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I have taken three points of order, but the Treasurer still has not explained to this House his sense of entitlement.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will not be taking another point of order. She will resume her seat. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the second time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We all know what life would be like under Labor because we saw it for 16 years. We all know about the infrastructure that was never delivered. The New South Wales Government is getting on with delivering for the people of New South Wales.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister for Corrections to order for the first time.

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (15:01): I address my question to the Attorney General. Will he advise the House what the New South Wales Government is doing to address loopholes in New South Wales law that were revealed through the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse?

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (15:01): I thank the member for Kiama for that question. The member for Kiama is one of the most outspoken people in this Chamber on child sexual abuse and a champion for those throughout New South Wales who have suffered abuse. I doubt there is a member in this Chamber who was not shocked and distressed by the revelations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse—by both the incredible individual stories that we heard coming out of the royal commission and the sheer, staggering scale of the problem right across Australia.

Over five years the royal commission was contacted by approximately 17,000 people within its terms of reference. It held more than 8,000 private sessions, 57 public hearings, and uncovered evidence of child sexual abuse in 3,500 institutions right across Australia. The revelations are staggering. In my childhood, I naively never could have imagined what was occurring on that scale right across this country. We were made aware not only of the harrowing stories of those who had been abused but also of the abject failure of numerous institutions right across the country to protect those whose lives and whose protection was entrusted to them.

On 23 June this year the Government released its formal response to the recommendations of the royal commission. The Government indicated that it accepted the overwhelming majority of those recommendations, with work to do on a handful of others. Right across the Government, this Government is determined to keep

children safe, to bring institutions to account, and to provide justice and support to survivors. Many of the royal commission's recommendations are within the Justice cluster. Those recommendations can be divided into three broad categories: criminal justice reforms that this Government has enacted, the National Redress Scheme and the general civil liability response.

In the criminal justice area the Government has had the most comprehensive response of any Government in Australia to the recommendations of the royal commission. A couple of months ago, this Government legislated those responses. Three major elements of that response came into force on 31 August. Those three major elements are: a new failure to report offence in section 316A of the Crimes Act, obliging those who have reason to suspect that they have information relevant to child abuse—not just sexual abuse—to report it to police; a new failure to protect obligation on those organisations that have responsibility for the care and protection of children; and changes to sentencing principles.

Instead of the old sentencing principles where, if someone is sentenced today for an offence that occurred decades ago, you apply the sentencing standards that applied at the time of the offence, courts are now required to apply sentencing standards that apply at the time of the sentence, which are in line with community standards—of which the member for Kiama would be well aware—are much tougher and take into account the lifelong trauma that we now know victims or survivors of child sexual abuse suffer.

Other criminal law reforms we have implemented include requiring courts not to take into account the offenders' good character when sentencing for historic offences when it was that reputation that facilitated the offending, and introducing a new offence of grooming an adult to access a child, and strengthening the grooming offences that apply to grooming of children. We were one of the first two States to announce that we were signing up to the National Redress Scheme and we were the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate for that signing up. We have announced in the budget \$250 million spending for New South Wales Government institutions to participate in the National Redress Scheme, which started on 1 July.

Before the major and final tranche of civil litigation reforms that were introduced in the Parliament this week, we adopted a model litigant approach as a government to respond to child abuse claims and we removed limitation periods of actions that relate to death or personal injury from child abuse. This week we will introduce a package of reforms to finish our response—our major tranche of responses—to the royal commission's "Redress and Civil Litigation Report". These reforms will close loopholes in New South Wales law that have enabled institutions to evade liability and prevented child abuse survivors from accessing justice. There are three key reforms.

The first is that we will legislate to prevent institutions relying on the so-called "Ellis defence". This defence is named after John Ellis, who was sexually abused at the hands of an assistant priest in the 1970s. He brought a claim against the Archbishop of Sydney and the trustees of the Roman Catholic Church Trust for the Archdiocese of Sydney. In 2007 the New South Wales Court of Appeal held that the trustees of the church were too remote to be held liable for the abuse of Mr Ellis. This reform will ensure that that artificial legal barrier is removed and institutions will not be able to escape liability in the way that liability to Mr Ellis was escaped. Courts will be able to appoint trustees to be sued if institutions fail to nominate an entity as a proper defendant. If there is no suitable proper defendant, there will be access to the assets of an associated trust. [*Extension of time*]

We are fixing two other loopholes. We are prospectively creating a new duty of care on an organisation that accesses care, supervision or responsibility in relation to children; an obligation to take reasonable precautions to prevent child abuse; and if the plaintiff establishes that child abuse has happened, then the onus will be on the institution to show that it took reasonable precautions. We are also prospectively codifying the vicarious liability of institutions for child abuse perpetrated by employees and extending it so that they will be liable not only for the child abuse of employees but also for those who are akin to employees, such as volunteers and ministers of religion. We have worked shoulder to shoulder with survivors and other stakeholders to deliver these reforms. We want to do everything we can as a government, as a Parliament—all of us—to make sure that the sorts of abuse, the level of abuse, the degree of abuse and the kinds of abuse that have so shocked us and have been revealed by the royal commission, will never happen again.

LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTION

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:08): My question is directed to the Premier. The last Liberal member for Hawkesbury abandoned the electorate. The current member for Hawkesbury is abandoning the electorate. Why do the Liberals have such contempt for the people of the Hawkesbury?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:08): I acknowledge—

Mr Andrew Fraser: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am happy to answer the question.

Mr Andrew Fraser: The question is out of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Every member is entitled to take a point of order and the member for Coffs Harbour is the Assistant Speaker.

Mr Andrew Fraser: According to the standing orders governing question time, any question that contains imputations, argument et cetera is out of order. I suggest that question is out of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Assistant Speaker is very close to correct, but the Premier is more than happy to accept the question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for Coffs Harbour, as the Father of the House, for knowing the rules as good as anyone.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I should have acknowledged that too. My apologies.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Colleagues, can I say this: I was asked this question by the member for the Blue Mountains. It is very curious because last week, or the week before, the Labor Party announced its opposition to our policy to raise the Warragamba Dam wall to protect the residents of the Hawkesbury electorate. Where does the member for Blue Mountains stand on that issue? The Labor Party said that it was okay for people's lives and properties in the Hawkesbury to be threatened. That is their position. They cannot turn around—

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

Mr Stuart Ayres: You asked a question about the Hawkesbury and now you want to run away from it.

Mr Jihad Dib: I am not running anywhere. My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about the Hawkesbury—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Where is Warragamba?

Mr Jihad Dib: —not necessarily about a particular electorate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whereabouts is it?

Mr Jihad Dib: It was not about a particular electorate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Western Sydney will come to order. Order! I call the member for Lakemba to order for the first time. Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Any member who is one or two calls to order is now deemed to be on three calls to order, including the member for Newcastle.

[Interruption]

I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on three calls to order. I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Port Stephens from the Chamber under Standing Order 249.

[The member for Port Stephens left the Chamber at 15:12 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Labor Party had the chance to stand up for the people of the Hawkesbury and support the proposal. Instead, they hid behind their inner-city Greens preferences rather than helping the people of the Hawkesbury. By raising the Warragamba Dam wall—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The truth hurts. When it comes to the issues that affect the Hawkesbury, they would rather support the inner-city Greens than the people of the Hawkesbury. We are introducing legislation to ensure that the lives and property of the Hawkesbury are protected for time immemorial. That is a demonstration of which side of the House—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: That is just one demonstration of why the people of the Hawkesbury—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: When it comes to the crunch, when an issue is affecting Greater Western Sydney, those opposite choose the inner west over Western Sydney every time.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:13): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering infrastructure for all of New South Wales and how that infrastructure delivery compares with that of previous governments?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:13): I thank the member for the Upper Hunter for his question. He is a fantastic member who wants to see revitalisation of the Hunter. The jewel in the crown of the Hunter is the revitalisation of Newcastle. It is tremendous to know that the light rail construction work will be completed this weekend, inside 12 months. Those on the other side of the House are obviously not interested in infrastructure, but they might be interested in what I have to say in a minute. Three thousand dwellings and \$2 billion of private sector investment have been delivered in Newcastle. We have seen an incredible transformation of that city, which the member for Newcastle would be aware of. There is no doubt that we are a government for all. One can hardly describe Newcastle as blue ribbon heartland, and there we are delivering for Labor seats just as much as we deliver for all seats across this great State.

Our infrastructure program now stands at \$87.2 billion over the next four years. We have delivered more than \$110 billion since coming to office. We have rebuilt hospitals, schools and roads, we are rebuilding public transport and we will continue to rebuild. The next election will be fought on infrastructure. There is no doubt about that because the people of New South Wales know, particularly where I hail from in country New South Wales, what Labor did to the country when it was in office—16 years when nothing was delivered, no jobs in infrastructure, no construction workers out there putting money in their pockets and food on the table. There was absolutely nothing from those opposite when it came to infrastructure.

What that says to me is that the community senses—and I have seen some polling—that those opposite, because of their lack of support for infrastructure, are nowhere near ready for government. I asked myself: "Why are they not ready for government?" And I thought: "I will go through their infrastructure credentials." As part of that I thought I would go through a list of every Labor member of Parliament [MP] and see what they were doing at the end of the last Labor Government. What that told me about those opposite is that 20 of the 40-odd Labor MPs were either Labor Ministers, Labor Parliamentary Secretaries, Labor staffers or Labor headquarters staff in the last Government. Twenty of those opposite were intimately involved with the most corrupt, stinking, incompetent Labor Government that this State has ever seen.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I direct the member for Maitland to remove herself from the Chamber for a period of one hour.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Maitland left the Chamber at 15:18.]

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I say this about the member for Maitland: When I had a car accident I got a very nice card from Kristina Keneally and I said, "Thank you." Twenty members opposite were either Labor MPs, Labor Ministers, Labor Parliamentary Secretaries, staffers or head office staff in the last Labor Government. There are their infrastructure credentials. Let us run through their positions when Labor was in office: Labor headquarters, Labor headquarters, Labor Minister, Labor staffer, Labor Minister, Labor Minister, Labor staffer, Labor staffer—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: There are two issues here. One is Standing Order 129, because the question was about transport, and I am interested in that. The second issue is the Minister is using props. Mr Deputy Speaker, as you and I well know, they are not allowed in the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: All I have seen from where I sit is a blank sheet of paper, but I presume it is a prop. I can only see the back of it.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: This one was a Labor Parliamentary Secretary—and she has "Dial A Dump" written on hers.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The list continues: Labor staffer, Labor Minister, Labor Parliamentary Secretary. Are members starting to get the theme? It is the same old Labor. *[Extension of time]*

I am going to continue: Labor MP, Labor MP, Labor MP. The infrastructure credentials of those opposite are based on those of the last Labor Government. They are lukewarm Labor.

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

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: You forgot "Sydney Young Liberal shoehorned into Bega", mate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Anyway: Labor, Labor, Labor. Of those 20 Labor people involved, guess where 15 of them are? On his front bench. Those are the credentials that they bring to the next election in terms of infrastructure: the last Labor Government. They did nothing in government, they have done nothing in opposition and now they want to be re-elected to do nothing again. The reality is the Leader of the Opposition is out there like a rat with a gold tooth telling everyone that he will rebuild New South Wales. Guess what? We are rebuilding it. What is he going to do? He is going to cancel projects. There will be 50,000 jobs gone if the Leader of the Opposition is re-elected. Try telling that to the families of Western Sydney who are working on the construction sites right across the State.

Here he is. He is going to cancel—wait for it—Southwest Metro. He is going to cancel WestConnex. He is going to cancel the northern beaches tunnel. He is going to cancel west harbour. And he has no ability to build Metro West because he does not know how to build infrastructure. Because all he is is a Labor hack, a union boss who offers nothing to the people of New South Wales except cheap politics, no policy. Quite frankly, he is a disgrace to this place. The reality is that this side of the House will continue to deliver the infrastructure and services needed by the people of New South Wales need. Those opposite can play in the gutter as much as they like. We have a fantastic Premier who will continue to lead New South Wales and remain number one. Can I table the posters of the Labor members?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTION

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (15:22): My question is directed to the Treasurer. How does it feel to be rolled by Ray Williams?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask that the member reword the question.

WESTERN SYDNEY HEALTH CARE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:24): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. How is the New South Wales Government ensuring the growing population in Western Sydney receives the best health care from the moment they step into our hospitals?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (15:24): I thank the member for Seven Hills for his question and I acknowledge his interest in the area of supporting patients in our hospitals. I also thank the member for Riverstone, Kevin Conolly, who was with me yesterday morning at Blacktown Hospital. I indicate to the members who were there with me yesterday that the trial that we announced, to which the Premier briefly referred earlier, will be spread across four hospitals, not just Blacktown, Liverpool, Nepean and Lismore, and it will ensure that patients who come into our hospitals—and in a moment I will refer to the state of those hospitals across Western Sydney—are getting a really good patient experience. There is no question that we have fabulous doctors and nurses in our hospitals across New South Wales. Yesterday we were with Dr Raza Ali, the nurse unit manager, Camille, and another nurse, Helen. Each of them were very excited to think the New South Wales Government was looking at how it can improve patient experience.

Anybody who has ever been in an emergency department, whether as a patient, family member or friend, knows that it can be a very challenging place to be. Indeed, it can be very challenging for the doctors and nurses. What if we could have somebody who can effectively greet people at the door, take them in and talk to them about how the process will occur, but also give them guidance as the night or day is progressing? For example, if there has been a major car accident and somebody is sitting in the emergency department wondering, "Why have I not been seen yet?" the patient experience manager could well be their opportunity to find out. They could let them know what is happening and settle them down. Yesterday Dr Raza Ali and Camille, the nurse unit manager, were telling all three of us that they thought this was a fantastic opportunity for them as well, because it would allow them to focus on the patients who are truly there for emergencies. That is generally who we get in there, although I would say to the broader community that if it is not an emergency they should not try to go to the emergency room.

We will do this as a trial for six months and see how it goes. I thank the Service NSW staff, and particularly the Treasurer and finance Minister, for their role in supporting us in the trial. Of course, Service NSW is a concept that was developed under the Liberal-Nationals Government. Most of us who have been into a Service NSW office will know that it is vastly different from the old days when people went to do their registration. We have had staff from Service NSW sitting in emergency departments, looking to see how they work and making

recommendations on change. It will be a whole different picture. We are looking to ensure that there is wi-fi available, basic food and drink, and a general sense of "We are there for you" from the moment one walks through the door. I hope that it will make a difference for patients and staff.

Jillian Skinner was a very fine health Minister and I am proud to have taken over from her. Three weeks ago she and I were at the NELUNE Foundation dinner. I acknowledge that partnership in health is about the community and the Government. Nelune Rajapakse, OAM, and Anna Guillan, AM, have been raising money to support particularly those people who cannot afford their own support if they are undergoing cancer treatment. The foundation organises transport in the regions. It makes sure that people who live in the regions have transport to get to and from their medical treatments. It was amazing. I thank both of them for their example of how two individuals joining and partnering with so many in the community can make such a difference. I understand that those two ladies and their foundation raised a little more than \$1.8 million on just one night three weeks ago. They acknowledged the work of Jillian Skinner in supporting research and the foundations in New South Wales. I again thank Jillian. [*Extension of time*]

I acknowledge the two members who were with me on Monday morning. I was also at Mount Druitt Hospital on Sunday morning. The Mount Druitt team are fantastic, and I acknowledge the local member and his support for that team as well. He has spoken to me on a number of occasions about what he would like in that hospital. On Sunday we were able to announce that the 3 Tesla magnetic resonance imaging scanners at Mount Druitt—supported and paid for by the taxpayers of New South Wales but facilitated by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government—finally have MRI licences. What a great day that is for the people of Mount Druitt and the broader area, because it means that they can now get their MRI scans for free. I make it clear that the New South Wales Government will continue to discuss with the Federal Government getting a lot more MRI licences. We believe there should be MRI licences available within a reasonable distance right across the State, and indeed right across the regions. That is absolutely one of our highest priorities.

On Sunday morning doctors at Mount Druitt were pointing out the advantages of the better examinations that are available through both the 1.5 Tesla and the 3 Tesla MRI scanners, although Mount Druitt is the beneficiary of a 3 Tesla scanner—the most powerful MRI scanner. There is no effect of ionising radiation as there is with computerised axial tomography [CAT] scans. CAT scans are valuable—I do not want to put people off them—but in many cases it is more appropriate to have an MRI. The New South Wales Government believes Western Sydney is the beating heart of Sydney. We want to help not only Western Sydney but also the regions right across New South Wales. We will continue to deliver in every area, whether it is infrastructure, the 8,000 new nurses we have employed since we came to government, or myriad other staff—a total of 16,000 medical staff—that we have employed since we came to government.

LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTION

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (15:32): My question is directed to the Treasurer. How does the Treasurer respond to community concerns that his conduct over the past few days has been selfish and a betrayal of the community that he claims to represent?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (15:32): I thank the member for her question and say this: I and this Government are completely committed to the betterment of every single electorate across the State of New South Wales. Every electorate is better off under a Liberal-Nationals Government than they ever would be under a Labor Government. That is why, whether it is a tripling in the amount of infrastructure when it comes to transport, when it comes to schools or when it comes to hospitals, we on this side of the House will always deliver more than those opposite ever can.

Committees

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Chair

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 25 September 2018 Felicity Lesley Wilson was elected Chair of the Legislation Review Committee.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 61/56

Ms FELICITY WILSON: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled "Legislation Review Digest No. 61/56", dated 25 September 2018.

I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding "Legislation Review Digest No. 60/56", dated 18 September 2018.

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

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That the business of the House be interrupted on Wednesday 26 September 2018 at 12 noon to permit the presentation of an inaugural speech by the member for Wagga Wagga.

Motion agreed to.*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Brisbane Water Channel

Petition requesting the funding of a long-term dredging solution for Brisbane Water Channel, received from **Ms Liesl Tesch**.

Woy Woy Public Wharf

Petition requesting that the Woy Woy public wharf be rebuilt to modern operational standards, received from **Ms Liesl Tesch**.

*Motions Accorded Priority***SYDNEY GATEWAY PROJECT****Consideration**

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (15:36): My motion should be accord priority because Sydney Gateway is the next piece of Sydney's motorway network. Sydney Gateway starts at the WestConnex interchange at St Peters and connects the domestic and international airports. It will also move the rail link closer to Port Botany. It is with great delight that this Government is able, because of its strong financial position, to invest \$2.5 billion in completing this important project. It is wonderful to note that the project will be completed by 2023. The people of Penrith and Parramatta will certainly benefit from the Sydney Gateway project. It will link Penrith and Parramatta and the route will have no traffic lights. There will be many benefits, especially for the people of Western Sydney. There will also be no tolls on this piece of road infrastructure. It will decrease bottlenecks, congestion points and choked roads and it will decrease the time motorists spend in traffic between Western Sydney, Kingsford Smith Airport and Port Botany.

This Government is catering for the growth of not only Western Sydney but also the entire length of the Sydney Gateway. This motion should be accorded priority because of some of the great statistics it will deliver. Many people go to the airport, and it will not surprise our learned Deputy Speaker that in 2017 more than 43 million people flew into and out of Kingsford Smith Airport. This project will certainly cater for them. In fact, 150,000 people go to the airport every day and 31,000 people work there. Sydney Gateway will cater not only for them but also for people throughout New South Wales.

The freight being moved into and out of Port Botany will double by 2036, and Sydney Gateway will go some way to alleviating the resulting growth in demand. One additional freight train can take 50 trucks off our road network. The people of Parramatta welcome the Sydney Gateway project, which will ease traffic from Parramatta to the domestic airport. It will save people 40 minutes when travelling to and from Parramatta and the airport, and people travelling from Campbelltown to the domestic airport will save 22 minutes. My motion should be accorded priority for these fantastic reasons and because the Sydney Gateway will improve the welfare of the entire State. I ask members to accord my motion priority.

LIBERAL PARTY PRESELECTION**Consideration**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:42): My motion deserves priority because in public life our true character is revealed, and the true character of the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party has certainly been revealed

in recent days. This bloke has been preening himself and strutting around since he entered this place. However, we have now learnt that he is simply a fop and a dandy. He is like a character in the pages of *The Wizard of Oz*: He has the heart of the Tin Man, the brains of the Scarecrow and the courage of the cowardly Lion. Who would have thought? We are discussing the Hawkesbury-Nepean floodplain this week, but we did not know when members opposite talked about planned evacuation that the member for Hawkesbury would be leaving. There are no evacuation routes for his constituents, but there sure is for their member of Parliament. This man of the people is the Treasurer who refuses to sit in traffic even though he has a chauffeur and a big white car. We have Captain Commuter over there.

Here we have the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, the Treasurer and the Minister for Industrial Relations. As the Minister for Industrial Relations, he released the Government's policy on flexible working in government. Who would have thought when he announced policies encouraging people to work from home that he would be the first to avail himself of them? We have had this rooster strutting around for the past 7½ years and he is now the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party. What about the Premier's role in this? She did not have the gumption to do what she promised her colleagues she would do and tell the member for Castle Hill that the jig was up. After the Wagga Wagga by-election she said that people are sick of politicians talking about themselves. She said, "I think what we need to change is the way politicians interact with each other." She did not send a memo about that to members opposite, did she? She said that the public is sick of the sniping. Really? What a failure of leadership by the Premier. What are we saddled with?

Mr Ray Williams: You!

Mr LUKE FOLEY: You had better believe it, buddy. What a result for Liberal Party renewal and for the people of New South Wales: four more years of Ray Williams, eight more years of Damien Tudehope and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party exposed as a fraud, a fop and a dandy. [*Time expired.*]

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

The House divided.

Ayes50

Noes35

Majority.....15

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A.W.
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
McGirr, Dr J
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S

Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S

NOES

Lalich, Mr N
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Zangari, Mr G

Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
Hancock, Mrs S

Cotsis, Ms S
Hoenig, Mr R

Motion agreed to.**SYDNEY GATEWAY PROJECT****Priority****Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (15:48):** I move:

That this House supports the Government's development of the Sydney Gateway.

I commend the New South Wales Government on delivering vital infrastructure for the people of New South Wales. This is another example of delivering a piece of much-needed infrastructure to connect WestConnex with the international and domestic airports. I know that the Deputy Speaker is very excited about it. It is great to see that he is very enthusiastic. He knows that the project will slash travel times and fix the bottlenecks and congestions on Sydney roads. Nothing could be better than having the people of Parramatta being able to travel from Parramatta to the airport without having to stop at a single set of traffic lights. We welcome that. And the news only gets better: There is no toll for the Sydney Gateway. This is important, because having no toll on that piece of infrastructure was made possible only by the strong financial position of this Government. The Berejiklian Government is delivering in spades with respect to this important piece of the puzzle.

This Government will not condemn the people who live in Western Sydney to sitting in traffic for hours and hours every day—time that could be better spent with their families, playing sport and enjoying other leisure pursuits. The Sydney Gateway Project, along with the new M4 and M4-M5 link, will cut up to 40 minutes from the travel time between Parramatta and Sydney Airport. Drivers will be able to travel from Parramatta to the domestic airport without having to stop at a single set of traffic lights. That is right: not a single set of traffic lights! People who live in Western Sydney need cars. Almost all the people who live in Western Sydney rely upon their cars. Sometimes those in the eastern suburbs do not understand that the distances are great in Western Sydney and that public transport can always be improved, so people in Western Sydney often need cars.

Ms Trish Doyle: You said it, Geoff.

Dr GEOFF LEE: Absolutely. That is why in Western Sydney—Parramatta is an exemplar—the Government is delivering public transport. It is great to see that from Parramatta to the city there is a service every three minutes during peak hour, and the people of my electorate are looking forward to the Sydney Metro West, which will provide a sub 20-minute service from Parramatta to the city. We are also looking forward to the start of the construction of the Parramatta light rail. Billions of dollars are being invested in public transport in Western Sydney. Mine is like any other electorate: We are very proud of our future pipeline of infrastructure, of some \$87 billion over the next four years.

But I digress. I would like to talk about the Sydney Gateway, because projects like WestConnex will reduce congestion, help to futureproof Western Sydney and may deliver the significant economic benefits that this State deserves. A quick drive confirms that the Government has already widened the M4 from Parramatta to Concord. The widening of the M4 between Parramatta and Homebush will bypass 28 sets of traffic lights on Parramatta Road. I hear those opposite objecting to WestConnex. They should be ashamed. Condemning the people of Western Sydney to sit in traffic along Parramatta Road—sometimes for an hour at a time—is absolutely appalling. That is why we have to deliver the WestConnex project.

Mr Mark Coure: They created the mess; we are fixing it.

Dr GEOFF LEE: I agree with the interjection of the good member for Oatley. Labor created the mess. Labor sold off the corridor at the end of the M4.

Mr Mark Coure: We are fixing it.

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

Dr GEOFF LEE: We are fixing that issue, and that is why WestConnex is important. I have digressed again. I come back to the substantive motion with respect to the great benefits of this Government's delivery of the Sydney Gateway. As I said, the widening of the M4 between Parramatta and Homebush bypasses 28 sets of traffic lights. Motorists can already see the big pylons that have been driven into the ground and cranes lifting bridge beams. Motorists can also see the tunnel entrances. I have been to those tunnels. It is a very impressive engineering site, and we look forward to the opening. This motion deserves to be supported because the Sydney Gateway is an important piece of the puzzle for access from WestConnex to the international and domestic airports. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:53): I thought the mob opposite was having a bad enough week without moving this motion. All this Government can do is move a motion that exposes its cost blowouts, its failures and its mismanagement—nothing could say more about a government. Talk about trying to put a silk hat on a bush pig! The Government is an absolute joke. Let us go through it: The waste and mismanagement of this Government has no boundaries. This is no better displayed than by the gateway. The first cost estimate was \$800 million, but it then blew out to \$1.8 billion. Now it has blown out to more than triple the original cost, to \$2.6 billion, and the Government has not even turned a sod. Then the gateway was changed to end six kilometres from its destination where it was meant to provide a solution.

Government members are kidding themselves. Their track record in managing infrastructure is such that Squizzy Taylor's record for good behaviour is better than the Government's ability to manage a project. No matter where we turn there are issues regarding those opposite. There are light rail cost blowouts. There is WestConnex. Now the Government will punish the people of Western Sydney, south-west Sydney and Campbelltown by extending the M5 toll for a further 40 years and putting another toll on the M4 to pay for its mistakes. It is an absolute outrage for the member for Parramatta to move a motion congratulating himself and this Government but, ultimately, it is a great opportunity for us on this side of the House to expose the failures, mismanagement and wrong priorities of those opposite.

The fact is that the Sydney Gateway was originally part of WestConnex, but the Government was so embarrassed by WestConnex's endless cost blowouts that it thought nobody would notice if it took it out of the total cost calculations for that project. But the Government is exposed, yet again. Just like the Treasurer trying to knock off his mate in another seat, the member for Parramatta has come into this place and tried to move something that everyone sees through. Only two weeks ago, we saw the Government reveal its half-baked plans for the gateway, which will stop six kilometres short of Port Botany, its destination. That will put more trucks onto roads and they will be more congested.

The gateway will now end at O'Riordan Street in Mascot, meaning tens of thousands of cars and trucks will be dumped onto the narrow suburban streets of that precinct. The Sydney Gateway was the basis of the Government's original justification for building WestConnex, and now it lies in tatters. For the member for Parramatta to move a motion congratulating the Government is nothing short of absurd. In contrast, the member for Strathfield and the Leader of the Opposition have announced an extensive set of policies to improve public transport access to Sydney Airport and the surrounding areas.

Mr John Sidoti: Why didn't you do it?

Mr GREG WARREN: I note the member for Drummoyne's interjection—let me take you through it, son. We will drop the access fee to just \$5 at airport train stations, axe the station access fee altogether for the 30,000 people who work at the airport and increase bus services from southern Sydney to the airport. The total cost for WestConnex is in the vicinity of \$20 billion—more than double the original predicted cost. This mob just cannot add up. The Treasurer could not even do the numbers in his own branch, let alone add up a budget. It is absolutely remarkable that the Government would even try to convince the people of New South Wales, given its flawed track record.

It is a tale of failures, a tale of mismanagement and a tale of blowouts, all at the cost of the people of south-west Sydney and Western Sydney. Labor has committed to implementing cashback on the M4 toll—a toll that the Government has put back on—and guaranteeing the continuation of the M5 South West, whereas the mob opposite, the incompetents of this State, is reaching into drivers' pockets at every chance it gets. The people of New South Wales are paying for WestConnex twice. They are paying for the Government's failures and, make no mistake, we will make the Government pay in March next year.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that a number of them have already been called to order three times. I also remind members that this Chamber has microphones, and there is no point in shouting across the table.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (15:59): It gives me great pleasure to commend this motion to the House. Over the next four years the New South Wales Government has committed \$87.2 billion towards new and improved infrastructure. The Sydney Gateway is yet another example of great infrastructure—a New South Wales initiative to expand and improve the existing road and freight network to Sydney Airport and Port Botany to cater for significant anticipated growth over the next 20 years. It is an important piece of the puzzle in the New South Wales and Sydney motorway network. It forms part of the New South Wales Government's vision to provide new motorway access and improved port connections, linking our international gateways to key commercial centres right across Sydney. With a commitment of \$87.2 billion over the next four years, this is a government that delivers infrastructure.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I remind members of Standing Order 52.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: This is a government that delivers light rail, metro, on-demand buses, ferry wharves and improved ferry wharf infrastructure. Over the past seven years, this Government has delivered funding for 64 hospital renovations that are currently taking place.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time. The member for Strathfield might like to stay quiet.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The Government is delivering on all of its promises for schools. It has some 172 new schools and major projects. Over the next four years it will spend more than \$6 billion on school infrastructure alone. It is spending \$747 million on maintenance alone. That is three times the rate under the previous Labor Government. Those opposite closed 90 schools.

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

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: This Government is delivering on some 4,500 road projects right across this great State. Everybody knows what will happen if those opposite get into government. We have seen it all before. The reality is the Leader of the Opposition is shovel shy. Those opposite will not deliver infrastructure in any shape or form. They have a proven track record in ruining this State and it will take decades to repair. Those opposite will never get close to government. They do not deserve to be in government. They have proven it time and again. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (16:02): I am happy to speak in debate on this motion. Here we go again: Another dodgy road announcement, another dodgy costing, another monumental dodgy stuff-up from this Government. All it is doing is building roads to satisfy government Ponzi schemes. An F6 that goes west? A road to the port that stops six kilometres short, dumping trucks all over Mascot? How is that a solution or a gateway? It is a gateway to nowhere. That is what we will have.

The cost of this road has tripled from the \$800 million that it was initially estimated—well, guesstimated—to be. This lot is always guesstimating. The cost is up around \$2.3 billion now, yet those opposite are praising themselves today with this monumental announcement. The toll traps and roads are designed to satisfy these Ponzi schemes. The Government has no idea how it will get to the ports. It does not know where the trucks will go. We already have an enormous nightmare, a shemozzle at Mascot—where the Government will be dumping all those trucks. Yet the member for Parramatta is praising it and saying how fantastic it is.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There is something important we need to consider: Unlike the F6, the M4 widening, WestConnex, and every other toll trap the Government is building, there is a special deal with the Sydney Airport Corporation to keep tolls off the Sydney Gateway. The Government's only cabinet-in-confidence document states that the single largest beneficiary of this project will be the Sydney Airport Corporation. Guess who represents the Sydney Airport Corporation? It is Michael Photios, whose client has negotiated a special deal.

The New South Wales Government will hand over \$170 million of taxpayers' money to compensate Sydney Airport Corporation for building a road from which it will be the single largest beneficiary. Did the member for Parramatta know that before he tried to sell this dud deal? Did the member for Drummoyne know that? This is just another Keynesian spending spree from this Government. The project involves reconstructing Airport Drive, Qantas Drive and Joyce Drive, but the works will not be completed until 2023 at the earliest. Between now and then the local road network will be in chaos. The objective of the gateway was to send trucks to port, but this project will not do that. This Government is failing, failing, failing as it always does.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (16:05): By leave: I express my profound disappointment in the motion before the House, because the only winner from this project is Transurban Group, the company that bought the WestConnex project and the formerly publicly owned traffic corridors. Transurban is a business that over the last three years generated \$6 billion in revenue and paid not one cent in company tax. That organisation will benefit from this project at the cost of the taxpayers of New South Wales. Vast quantities of public funds have been invested in WestConnex, and that is incredible to behold.

I draw to the attention of members an article by Chris Standen, a transport analyst at the University of Sydney, in the *Conversation*. He describes the pure folly this Government is entering into with more than \$6 billion of State and Federal government support for WestConnex. In his article he says that \$1.5 billion has been expended on property acquisitions, lawyers, consultants and planning. Publicly owned motorways have been wrapped up into this project and now there are more projects to facilitate the failing WestConnex. The original reason for the existence of WestConnex was to take pressure off the road network leading to the airport and ensure that the people of Western Sydney can easily get to the airport. The Government dumped that proposal because it knew that the cost-benefit ratio for WestConnex could not justify the huge cost of the project. The Government dumped the gateway and now the taxpayers are expected to support the \$2.6 billion bill.

We know that almost \$23 billion is being invested in WestConnex in cash, public assets and enabling works including the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link. All those projects are designed to pump more traffic into the failing WestConnex project. According to Chris Standen's analysis, \$23 billion will be invested in WestConnex. For what? To recoup \$4 billion. The Government's claim that there is any economic merit in the project is completely trashed. The people of Western Sydney will be fleeced and the taxpayers of this State have been fleeced, and that is why we are calling on Labor and the Government to oppose the project. We can foresee more and more funds being invested in enabling works to make the WestConnex project work.

The Greens think that instead we should be investing in world-class public transport. Let us get the people of Western Sydney out of their cars and onto world's best public transport. Let us not lock generations into a future of private car dependence. Let us make sure that our planning system works to encourage a compact city. It is incredibly important that we realise that we are heading in the wrong direction. We should not be having more toll traps fleecing the people of Western Sydney and destroying the quality of life and public open space of the inner west. This motion should not be supported.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (16:08): In reply: I thank members for their passionate contributions to the debate on my motion. It is good that the member for Balmain is sticking up for his constituents by expressing his concern about the WestConnex project. All good members should stick up for their constituents, but I remind the member for Balmain that the people of Western Sydney have to own cars because of a lack of geographic proximity and that some 220,000 people use the M4 every day. WestConnex is an important part of the roads network because it saves time, reduces congestion and increases efficiency especially for the people of Western Sydney, and I will always stand up for our roads network. I commend the member for Balmain for stating that we have to give people transport options, including roads, public transport and trains together with pedestrian paths and cycleways.

There are two sides to every debate, and this debate is no different. It is just like *A Tale of Two Cities* where the bad side is represented by those opposite and the good side is represented by those on this side of the Chamber. I commend the member for Drummoyne, who added sanity to argument when he welcomed the Government's \$87.2 billion spending on infrastructure delivery over the next four years. I will mention some of our infrastructure projects: the Metro project, the light rail, upgrades to ferry wharves, on-demand buses and the billions of dollars being spent on schools, with 172 schools to be upgraded or built. Members on this side of the House do the hard work to ensure that infrastructure projects are built. I remind the Opposition that the Government is delivering some 4,500 road projects at the moment.

The member for Campbelltown and the member for Rockdale—members of the Opposition, on the dark side of the Chamber—also made passionate contributions to this debate. In their rebuttal of the member for Drummoyne's argument in favour of this motion, they peddled the myth, the lies and the mistruths. It is very sad that they do not acknowledge the \$110 billion worth of infrastructure projects that this Government has delivered over the past seven years. Members on this side of the Chamber are proud of our record. Those opposite do not talk about the cancellations of projects when they were in government. They do not want to talk about the fact that they will cancel projects if they return to government, including the moving of the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta.

Why do those opposite want to turn their backs on the people of Western Sydney? Why are they pandering to their mates in the eastern suburbs? Why are they not standing up to their leader and caring for the people of Western Sydney? Members on this side of the House care about the people of Western Sydney, and we are proud to deliver the Sydney Gateway. I commend the motion to the House.

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

The House divided.

Ayes47
Noes34
Majority.....13

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A.W.
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Aplin, Mr G
Brookes, Mr G
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
George, Mr T
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Kean, Mr M
McGirr, Dr J
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Foley, Mr L
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G

Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Watson, Ms A (teller)

PAIRS

Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G

Cotsis, Ms S
Hoenig, Mr R

Motion agreed to.

Bills

COMMUNITY GAMING BILL 2018

First Reading

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

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a future day.

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER AMENDMENT BILL 2018**Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from 19 September 2018.**

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:18): I speak on behalf of the Opposition in debate on the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018. I say from the outset that I will be moving amendments to the bill at the consideration in detail stage. I am very aware of the important role that the Parliamentary Budget Office plays. It is a role that I support and believe in and that everyone in the Chamber should believe in. Members have had the opportunity to listen to many inaugural speeches over the past eight years—or longer for people such as Mr Assistant Speaker. A common thread in all those speeches is the desire to make a difference, to bring about change, to improve local communities and to be actively engaged in the reform process of the government of the day.

We come to this place because we want to bring about change. That does not mean that we will always or should always agree. In fact, I concur strongly with a Federal speaker who recently said, "We come here with different views and different perspectives on things. It would be a shot across democracy if we were all to sit here and agree all of the time." A Parliamentary Budget Office is so critical because it provides a real opportunity for every member of Parliament—not only the Executive government—to bring about the positive changes that they talk about in their inaugural speeches. A member might want a policy proposal or a particular reform agenda reviewed or a piece of infrastructure or policy idea analysed.

The great privilege of being in this place comes with a great responsibility to make a difference—to walk the walk, not just talk the talk. Parliamentary budget officers and their associated staff provide all of us with that opportunity. It is why Leader of the Opposition Luke Foley and I have announced that if elected in March next year, Labor will put a full-time Parliamentary Budget Office in place that will be available to all members to rigorously test, prosecute, analyse and evaluate their policy proposals, initiatives and ideas. Like most of us, I came to this place to pursue ideas, to bring about change and to engage in policy debate and discussion. In order to that properly, proposals have to be well thought out, well developed, tested, prosecuted, given feedback on, reviewed and critiqued. Most importantly, they have to be proven to be affordable.

When we aspire to be part of a government, our policies do not have to only be things that people cheer about. It is more important that they are things that can bring about positive change in a realistic way because we have made sure that the State and communities can afford them and that there are no unintended consequences. Recently Daniel Andrews and Tim Pallas of the Victorian Government implemented a full-time Parliamentary Budget Office. The Victorian Parliament and Government is much smaller than ours but they understand the benefits of having an independent, fully fledged, fully operational, properly staffed and round-the-clock Parliamentary Budget Office.

If we are to extend the ideas in our inaugural speeches to action in our day-to-day lives and our policy desires in this place we need the appropriate mechanisms. A Parliamentary Budget Office provides an important mechanism to do exactly that. The Parliamentary Budget Office is a fully operational office in the Federal Parliament. My colleague Chris Bowen and members of the Labor Opposition in Canberra can put forward proposals to be critiqued, reviewed and—most importantly for me who aspires to be the Treasurer of New South Wales—costed in an accurate and timely manner. That is important, and this Parliament and this House deserve the same service. If elected in March, Labor will bring about that change.

I take fiscal responsibility extremely seriously. Labor has established a shadow Expenditure Review Committee. All proposals are reviewed, costed and analysed, and feedback is provided. When the Parliamentary Budget Office tables the operational plan this week, Labor will be ready to go with the first round of policies for costing. Labor has costings and policies ready to go, but Labor members want to be part of the democratic process. We will be utilising the skills and expertise of the Parliamentary Budget Office to ensure that our policies are accurate, to receive with feedback, to consider changing our policies if necessary, and, most importantly, to provide the public with the confidence that a future Labor government will not only understand and respect fiscal discipline but also make it part of everything a Labor government does.

A Labor government cannot bring about a fairer New South Wales without making sure that it is fiscally responsible and that its allocation of money is fair. The bill is important legislation that has been introduced as a result of a review after the last State election. I have already met with the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and staff of the Leader of the Opposition's office also have met with him. We will be actively engaging with him and his team over the coming days, weeks and months. Parliamentary terms do not go for six months; they go for four years. My Labor colleagues, two of whom are present in the Chamber, have been strong and vocal in developing

and presenting policy proposals for the shadow Cabinet to review. The State needs that process in place all the time and that is what Labor will do in government.

It is ironic that the Opposition is proposing to do this in government because, if Labor is elected and has this process in place, it will benefit the future Coalition opposition and the crossbench, who rely on the Parliamentary Budget Office far more than a government that has the machinery of government and the bureaucracy to provide feedback, analysis and advice. But Labor will do it because the Leader of the Opposition, the entire shadow Cabinet, all my caucus colleagues and I believe that good policy is what all members of this Parliament came here for. Good policy development is what we spoke about in the very first speeches that we delivered in this place. I believe in it because I want to ensure that every person who has the privilege of being elected by the men and women of their community is given the opportunity in this House to be true parliamentarians. To be a true parliamentarian is to put forward policy and infrastructure ideas and proposals and to have them reviewed, tested and evaluated by someone who is independent of their political party.

Labor believes in that. That is why we will ensure that we have a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office in place. Parliaments are not about what happens six months before an election. The shenanigans of the past week highlight that the community has had enough of politicians worrying about themselves. What communities expect men and women of this House to do is to worry about the people in our electorates. To do that we need to put forward policies and proposals that will benefit the communities that we are fortunate to represent.

As Labor will support most of this bill, I will turn now to some of the key amendments that I will propose. I have sent the amendments to the crossbench today, and I hope the Government considers them in good faith. They are intended to make sure that all of us have access to a reliable, efficient, transparent and—just as importantly—a confidential Parliamentary Budget Office and staff. My proposed amendments are simple but go to the heart of efficiency and transparency.

The first amendment is intended to change the length of time within which a government agency has to respond to requests. The bill currently provides for 10 days. Labor proposes to reduce that to five days if the request is made before the commencement of the caretaker period. That is important because we all know that the time between now and election day goes very quickly. We all know that when any individual in this House announces a policy the community expects that the policy is costed, accurate and, most importantly, that it can be delivered. There is no reason at all that a response needs to take 10 days. Many of the proposals should not take anywhere near five days to be costed.

I can say that with a degree of accuracy because I worked in the public sector, as members of the Government so graciously and frequently remind the House. I know that many proposals, ideas and suggestions already have nominal costings. For example, a government of the day knows how much, on average, a new police station costs. A government knows how much it costs to employ a teacher, a nurse, a police officer or a Department of Family and Community Services worker. A government knows how much, on average—I emphasise "on average"—a new hospital or a new primary school or secondary school costs. It is information that a government has readily available. Having worked in large infrastructure agencies, I know that many costings and proposals have been analysed before a government chooses to pursue a particular option or costing. Therefore, a government may have considered, reviewed, put on the backburner or perhaps dismissed many ideas of the alternative government—all of which may have been reasonable views of a particular proposal. I highlight that the information is available within the agency.

The second proposal is also very simple. The Labor Opposition proposes that the length of time within which a government agency responds to a request be changed from six to five business days if the request is made on or after the commencement of the caretaker period. We are after transparency and efficiency. During the caretaker period much of the day-to-day operations of government tend to be not at the same pace, shall we say, as at other times. There is no reason why the bureaucracy cannot produce this information in the time that I am proposing. Our third amendment relates to whether or not a government holds any information. In this case, we are simply requiring the Government to respond to the Opposition and members of the crossbench in two business days if it does not hold any of the information requested. That is not a particularly difficult ask. What we are asking for and what the people of New South Wales expect is that the policies of members on all sides are appropriately costed in a timely and efficient manner.

Our final proposal is one that seems at odds with the independence of the Parliamentary Budget Office. We believe it is not necessary that the Parliamentary Budget Office provides copies of material to the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet to enable the department to prepare material for an incoming government. I speak on behalf of that incoming government and say that if we are given the privilege and honour of being elected as the next government, we are happy to wait an extra day or two should that material need to be developed by the bureaucracy. There is a slight problem with much of this—and, again, it comes from my well-known and widely recognised experience in the public sector. I know that these documents already exist.

Mr John Sidoti: Was that a merit-based appointment?

Mr RYAN PARK: It was a merit-based appointment. I know that this material is already being developed and put together. It is already occurring. I am sure that an alternative government—which we would be honoured to be in 2019—will know what its policies are when it attends those discussions. I am sure that the good member for Wollongong knows about every one of the policies relating to his electorate, and he will be one of the first individuals to make sure that every Minister knows them. I have a sneaking suspicion that after four years the member for Macquarie Fields and the member for Granville may know about the policies relating to their electorates and communities. I know that is difficult for those on the other side to comprehend, because they operate on a spoonfeeding model. Someone at the ministerial office picks up the phone and says, "Say this", and the member says, "Tick." I understand that; it perhaps served me well as a chief of staff.

Member on this side are very competent. I say again to the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet that we will have those materials ready. I can give the House an assurance that all shadow Cabinet Ministers, if they are so fortunate as to be given the honour and privilege of being elected to the Cabinet, will have a range of materials ready for the office to examine on day one. I would not want a situation—and I am sure this is not the case—where the Parliamentary Budget Office and its independence would be questioned if material were to make its way into the public arena during the election campaign. The Parliamentary Budget Officer and his team are highly regarded people of great integrity. But the moment we transfer information from our office to a government department, we no longer have the ability to control it. There is no need for that section of the bill.

We know as a shadow Cabinet that the mountain to climb to get to government is enormous. We know that we are the absolute underdog in the race to be elected in March 2019. Having said that, we also know that if the privilege is bestowed upon us, we will have material ready to go for review. We are happy to receive on day two or three or further down the track any other material that the good women and men of the New South Wales public sector are willing to provide us. None of these amendments would be necessary if there were a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office in place. It is a tragedy that the Liberal Party that talks so much about fiscal discipline does not deliver it. One would think that a party that talks about small government and the need to be efficient would also understand that it needs to make sure its proposals are appropriately costed and thought through.

I would have thought there may be a member on the other side who would occasionally be interested in policy. It would be unusual, but I thought there may be one or two who may actually enjoy it. We have a little group over here; we are the nerds and we are proud of ourselves. We read a lot, talk a lot, argue a lot, write a lot and argue even more—not about seats but about other stuff. Every now and again we would be happy to engage with those opposite in a bit of genuine policy debate. But it is hard to do so when their Treasurer spends a week obsessed with moving from one safe electorate to another safe electorate.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The member will return to the leave of the bill.

Mr RYAN PARK: These amendments are important but they would not be necessary if we had a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office in place. I will have an office allocated if I am elected as the Treasurer next year.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Oh, god!

Mr RYAN PARK: Just worry about your electorates. I acknowledge the interjection. I do not think the member for North Shore would think something like that is frightening. I say to the member for North Shore—

Ms Felicity Wilson: Are you going to scrap the northern beaches tunnel?

Mr RYAN PARK: Absolutely. I will be scrapping that. Don't worry about that. That goes on day one. I think the member for North Shore has a lot more things to worry about.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The member will return to the leave of the bill. Government members will cease interjecting.

Mr RYAN PARK: This is an important bill that could be made better, a parliamentary process that should be made better and my colleagues and I will make it better. It will not be for our benefit if we are fortunate enough to be on the other side of the House; it will be for the benefit of the Coalition and the crossbench, whoever they are, because all of us in this place will have a process and a resource to use to analyse, put forward ideas and review proposals in a way that the communities we represent expect us to. I would have thought that the big lesson the Coalition would take from the last week is that, surprisingly, communities do not like politicians talking about themselves. They like politicians who are prepared to make their communities better, whether it is through improving legislation, policy proposals, infrastructure, initiatives or programs.

Often these things come at a cost. Cost is an important factor to determine whether or not something can or should proceed. Having a permanent Parliamentary Budget Officer in place would allow that to occur and would allow everyone in this place to live up to the ideals that many of us talked about in our first and most important speech—ideas about bringing about change and improving the community in which we live and ensuring that we are an active and relevant participant in the policies and reforms being discussed in the Parliament. The Opposition amendments enhance this legislation. What would truly enhance it is if we had a continuous, permanent Parliamentary Budget Office in place throughout the parliamentary term for everyone—most importantly the community—to benefit from.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (16:48): I support the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018. New South Wales was the first Australian jurisdiction to establish a Parliamentary Budget Officer [PBO] position. The first Parliamentary Budget Officer was in place for the 2011 general election. The Parliamentary Budget Officer for the 2015 general election stated in his post-election report the overall message that the 2014-15 Parliamentary Budget Office processes were very successful and enhanced New South Wales reputation for transparency and good governance. He also made a number of recommendations for amendments to the Act to improve the operation of the processes, which the bill seeks to implement.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer identified that there was no guidance in the Act on the starting point from which the Parliamentary Budget Officer should calculate the impact of government and opposition policies on the budget estimates. He noted that using the half-yearly review could be misleading, as governments make decisions that affect the forward estimates in the period between the publication of the half-yearly review and the start of the caretaker period. To address this, the Parliamentary Budget Officer recommended that the Act be amended to require Treasury to publish at the start of the caretaker period a list of all government decisions affecting forward estimates taken since the half-yearly review, and new totals for the budget aggregates. The bill implements this recommendation and requires New South Wales Treasury to publish a pre-election budget update that will form the firm starting point to that the Parliamentary Budget Officer identified would improve the process.

The bill also implements another of the Parliamentary Budget Officer's recommendations by strengthening confidentiality obligations and applying the non-disclosure provisions to the staff of government agencies as well as the head of a government agency. In addition to this, the bill shortens the time in which the agencies have to respond to information requests from the Parliamentary Budget Officer during the caretaker period from 10 business days to six business days. This amendment was recommended by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and ensures that he or she will have quick access to agency information during the critical pre-election period. These amendments, together with other amendments recommended by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and implemented by this bill, will ensure that New South Wales continues to have a high quality, independent, impartial and effective process for the costing of election policies. This enhances transparency and accountability, and helps to ensure that fiscally responsible policies are presented to the electorate.

The Public Accounts Committee [PAC]—of which I am the Chair—submitted a report containing recommendations on the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report in 2015. Thus, I fully support the bill being debated today. The Parliamentary Budget Officer submitted 13 recommendations, which were all broadly supported. In the PAC report I acknowledged the work of the PBO in providing informed advice and costings of election policies to major parties. To support the role of the Parliamentary Budget Officer we have legislated for the Treasury Secretary to publish a pre-election budget update at the start of the caretaker period prior to the election when this Parliament rises for the final time. This provides an excellent opportunity for the New South Wales public to see exactly what a fantastic budget position this State is in and give context to the costing advice provided by the PBO. Thanks to the hard work of Premier Berejiklian and the Treasurer, our strong economic position will be demonstrated in a pre-election update allowing the PBO to effectively cost future investments that a re-elected State Liberal government will deliver.

I note the member for Keira's contribution and his request for a full-time Parliamentary Budget Officer. This was discussed by the PAC post the 2015 election and was not supported by the committee. After listening to the most recent contribution of the member for Keira, I think it is probably an occupational health and safety issue and we would have to consider Mr Bartos' mental health if he had to listen to the member for Keira for four long years. The amendments to the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act will ensure that the findings of the Public Accounts Committee are delivered. The committee supported this report. I acknowledge the current Parliamentary Budget Officer, Mr Stephen Bartos, who has returned to the role for the 2019 election. He did a sterling job in 2015 and we all look forward to working with him in the coming months.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:54): I am pleased to contribute to debate on the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018, which establishes an independent Parliamentary Budget Officer under the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2010. Some of my comments will broadly reflect those of the member for Keira.

Unlike members opposite, who have their speaking notes handed to them on Post-it notes from the Minister—some of them find those difficult to read—the member for Keira and I independently arrived at the same thing. While there is a spoonfeeding, Post-it note handed down from the Minister approach opposite, on this side we actually have thought about these things and we have had some experience with them. We reflect that experience in what we bring to the Chamber.

This bill reflects the recommendations contained in the 2015 post-election report of the Parliamentary Budget Officer and an endorsement of those recommendations by the Public Accounts Committee, which published its report in October 2015. I note that the Government has also broadly endorsed 12 of the 13 recommendations made by the former Parliamentary Budget Officer and, as mentioned by the Treasurer in his second reading speech last week, one other recommendation was supported but with an amendment. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, it should be recalled, was introduced by the former Labor Government prior to the 2011 election. The Public Accounts Committee report indicates:

NSW was the first Australian jurisdiction to introduce a Parliamentary Budget Officer ...

Similar arrangements now exist across State and Territory jurisdictions throughout Australia and at the Commonwealth level. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Budget Office is a permanent, independent institution. I am sure that the member for Balmain, who is in the Chamber at the moment, will reflect on what use The Greens make of the Parliamentary Budget Office in Canberra as a permanent, independent institution. It produces policy costings, budget analysis, information papers and other important research. Since 2013, when it was established, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Budget Office has published 13 reports addressing trends affecting the sustainability of Commonwealth taxation, projections of government spending, estimates of the structural balances in the Commonwealth budget, national fiscal trends, and trends on specific government programs such as the Medicare Benefits Schedule and Disability Support Pension.

Those reports are sometimes very uncomfortable reading from the viewpoint of the government of the day, and perhaps it is that point on which members opposite, including the Treasurer, reflected when effectively neutering and shortening the life of our current Parliamentary Budget Officer. But they are important to the ongoing debate on the priorities of government, and the economic agenda and budget strategy. When the former Labor Government in New South Wales introduced the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2010, it was to be a permanent fixture. That will return if Labor is elected to form government in March next year. After its election in March 2011 the O'Farrell Government downgraded the Parliamentary Budget Office from a permanent institution to a temporary agency only to be used just prior to an election.

But unlike the O'Farrell, Baird and now Berejiklian governments, the Opposition is not afraid of a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office scrutinising, examining, assessing and shining a light on State finances and expenditure. That is why Labor is proposing something that is quite novel and unusual in political terms: a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office that will provide permanent assistance and advice to the Opposition and minor parties of the day—so members opposite will get good use of it if things go the right way next year—including Independent members of Parliament. Some may argue that establishing a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office will only provide a political advantage to our political opponents, especially in the costings of policy proposals.

Mr Andrew Fraser: Point of order: When he started his speech, the member for Wollongong made reference to notes supplied and read. I point out that there have been rulings from the Chair over many years from many eminent Labor Speakers saying that members may refer to notes, but not read them.

Mr Ryan Park: You're going to pull that one out?

Mr Andrew Fraser: Well, I can. The point I am making is that if the member opposite wishes to make those comments about the Government, he may like to take note of them himself under decisions from the Chair.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour in his position as father of the House for informing us of those details. The member for Wollongong has the call.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I appreciate the comments made by the member for Coffs Harbour. If the notes were in a bigger font, perhaps he could have seen them from the other side of the table and noticed that I am not sticking to them. I have not been sticking to them the whole way through.

Mr John Sidoti: Yes you have.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I have not been sticking to them at all.

Mr John Sidoti: The whole time.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: It is interesting how much this debate and our amendments seem to needle Government members this afternoon. It is strange that they would be so upset about transparency in costings. I do not know what they have to hide. We certainly have nothing to hide. We will certainly provide our material. I certainly will provide, through the shadow Treasurer, every single element of Labor's Illawarra Jobs Action Plan to be costed—broadly \$225 million for the Wollongong electorate. Those opposite would not know about spending money down there. But I will stop reflecting on how our call for a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office is upsetting Government members and go back to the content of the bill.

The reason we have this office is that for a period of time elections used to get into permanent debates on the veracity of where the money was coming from and who did the costings. Governments and oppositions used to farm out their costings to large accounting firms and then often there would be an argument over the credibility of the accounting firms that were used. In 2011 the then State Labor Government established a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office that took away that element of the debate. Unfortunately, it was neutered first thing. In 2011 it was removed and we are back to this last-minute approach in which debate is not really informed by anyone. This is a disappointment and a reflection on the way this Government operates. It is as though it does not want to have its ideas held up to scrutiny. It does not want to have the debate. It does not want to have a full competition of ideas. It would rather get us into a position where we argue over where ideas come from, who might have costed them and where the costings might have come from, when instead it just could have kept the permanent Parliamentary Budget Office that Labor put in place prior to the 2011 election.

It is interesting that those opposite should say that in light of recent events because the one clear message coming from the electorate at the moment is that people expect that commitments made at an election should be honoured. A lack of trust by the electorate in politicians, our democratic institutions, the media and business is one of the greatest challenges we all face and we must all work to address. As the shadow Treasurer outlined, the Opposition has proposed a number of amendments to the bill. Those amendments, while seemingly technical in nature, go to the very heart of the way the Parliamentary Budget Officer will function in the course of the next six months in the lead-up to the election.

It is not unreasonable for the Opposition to seek amendments reducing the period of time from 10 to five business days for requests made before the caretaker period and to change the length of time that an agency or department has to respond to requests from six to five days if the request is made on or after the commencement of the caretaker period. Those are reasonable time frames. As we heard from the shadow Treasurer and as I have experienced, when oppositions put up ideas, funnily enough governments have very similar ideas costed by their departments. The departments generally know what is going on because our skilled, capable and professional public servants are not dills. They know what is going on, they read the media, they look at what is happening and they do their work. So it is not unreasonable for that to be reduced to five days.

It is also not unreasonable to require any government agency to respond in two business days if it does not hold the information that is being asked for. Instead of having to wait 10 days for a response from a department or agency that it does not hold particular information, it is not unreasonable to expect that it could answer in two days, particularly given that we generally know and government agencies, departments and the skilled public servants in them know exactly what information they hold. The last election demonstrated the value in the role of the analysis of the Parliamentary Budget Officer in New South Wales. While its current limited tenure is unfortunate, perhaps in future—certainly if a Labor government is elected next March—the Parliamentary Budget Officer will be re-established as a permanent, independent agency providing valuable analysis, scrutiny and advice on the economic and fiscal challenges facing New South Wales. For that reason, I commend the Opposition's amendments to the House.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:04): Mindful of the aims of the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018 to further improve transparency and accountability, I commend the Treasurer for bringing the bill to the House. I note that it implements the recommendations of the Parliamentary Budget Officer on the 2015 State general election and of the Public Accounts Committee. It ensures that the legislation behind this important part of the New South Wales electoral system remains up to date, fit for purpose and effective. Established by the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2010, the Parliamentary Budget Officer's role is to prepare and to publish election policy costings at the request of the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition in the period preceding a New South Wales general election.

Appointed by the Presiding Officers, Stephen Bartos is reprising the role of Parliamentary Budget Officer for approximately nine months from 3 September 2018 until 28 June 2019. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is resourced with a Parliamentary Budget Office that assists in providing the public with high quality, impartial election costing processes. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is an independent officer of the Parliament and is separate from the Executive Government. Therefore, we do not tell a Parliamentary Budget Officer what to do. Section 15 of the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2010 provides that the Public Accounts Committee may

monitor and review the operations of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I was Chair of the Public Accounts Committee from 2011 to 2015 when the Parliamentary Budget Officer position was first established.

Mr Ryan Park: A good Chair.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: I thank the member for Kiera for that interjection. I also acknowledge the fine contribution to that committee by other members across the Chamber, including the ongoing contribution of my successor the member for Coogee, who made a fine contribution to this debate. New South Wales was the first Australian jurisdiction to establish a public, independent source of information on the costs of election policies. I note the Parliamentary Budget Officer's success in the 2015 general election period when both the Government and the Opposition used the office to cost their proposed policies thus enabling further policy refinement in light of what were accurate estimates of budget impacts.

Confidentiality was maintained by both the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the government agencies that were contacted by the office for information relating to costing inquiries. I note the aspersions cast by the shadow Treasurer. What he suggested was not the reality; confidentiality was respected on the last occasion and there is no reason that it should not be respected in the future. That bodes well for the Parliamentary Budget Officer's future in potentially matching the achievements of equivalent international bodies such as the prominent United States Congressional Budget Office.

Under the Act, the Parliamentary Budget Officer is required to give the Public Accounts Committee an approved copy of its operational plan as well as the post-election report that may include recommendations for future general elections. Indeed, Mr Bartos' 2015 post-election report made 13 recommendations regarding operational arrangements and the Parliamentary Budget Officer's activities. The Government's response to the report broadly endorsed 12 of the 13 recommendations, and endorsed the remaining one with a slight amendment. Seven of the 13 recommendations involve amendments to the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act and six recommendations involve operational changes.

I acknowledge that the shadow Treasurer suggested various amendments in his contribution. It is not my role to respond to them, but I imagine the Minister may do so in reply. However, if there are genuine suggestions for reform they should be put through the same process that these 13 recommendations went through. That is, they should be the subject of input by the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer and further comment, or the Public Accounts Committee should have the ability to discuss them. That is the proper process. We are now seeing the culmination of that proper process with a series of recommendations that have come to this House. I acknowledge that there might be room for discussion on some of the recommendations, although I would outright reject some of them. However, if members opposite are serious, they should go through the proper process. They obviously want a permanent Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Mr Ryan Park: Yes.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: That was discussed at some length.

Mr Ryan Park: And you supported it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Order! I remind the member for Keira that he is on three calls to order.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: It was the subject of considerable discussion on a previous occasion. I challenge the Opposition to identify the policies it has been waiting 3½ years to have costed. I have not heard much from members opposite.

Mr Paul Scully: We have hundreds of them.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: I have heard about some recycled policies that were probably costed three years ago. Members opposite could draw on those costings and perhaps index them. However, there are very few, in fact there is an absolute scarcity, of policies from Opposition members other than to do nothing; that is, to scale back the things the Government has promised. I will give them a little hint: It costs nothing to do nothing—

Mr John Sidoti: It does cost something.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: —in financial terms and in a direct sense. I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Drummoyne because the cost is to the public.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Please do not.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: The cost is the opportunity cost to the public, and the lost productivity and potential that would otherwise occur if we had the brakes put on the record infrastructure spend, the record generation of employment and the record improvement in quality services that we have seen under this

Government. Members opposite can do nothing, but I challenge the next speaker from the Opposition—I understand it might be the member for Macquarie Fields—to give me the list of policies that it has released over the past three years that it is waiting to have costed. We have heard so little from them over the past three years. In fact, I cannot recall even three policies the Opposition has released over the past three years.

The enacting of the various recommendations in the Parliamentary Budget Officer's 2015 post-election report is important. The Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018 seeks to empower the Parliamentary Budget Officer to continue the work in providing thorough, independent and reliable information on election policy costings. Indeed, the amendments include provisions requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to publicly release a pre-election budget update statement on or as soon as reasonably practicable after the commencement of the caretaker period, allowing an election costing request to be withdrawn at any time before the election policy costing is publicly released by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and extending the period within which parliamentary leaders must notify the Parliamentary Budget Officer of their final list of policies for inclusion in the budget impact statement.

The amendments also require the head of a government agency to respond to the Parliamentary Budget Officer within six business days or such other period as is agreed between the head of the agency and the Parliamentary Budget Officer if the Parliamentary Budget Officer makes a request for information during the caretaker period to extend non-disclosure confidentiality provisions to the staff of government agencies, to allow the Parliamentary Budget Officer to provide copies of election policy costing requests and responses to the secretary or a Department of Premier and Cabinet staff member subject to strict confidentiality provisions limiting any disclosures to an incoming government in respect of its own election policies, to require the Parliamentary Budget Officer to provide a draft operational plan to the Presiding Officers within one month of appointment, and to revise the matters to be included in budget impact statements prepared by the Parliamentary Budget Officer for costed election policies and extend those matters to include budgetary impacts on other government sectors. These changes to the Act are likely to improve the PBO's efficacy and efficiency. The combination of impartiality and expertise is the key to the contribution that the Parliamentary Budget Officer makes to good government in New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

The process provides the citizens of New South Wales with information that they can use and rely on to make informed choices as they head to the ballot box. It also helps to foster trust in our political process. We agree, across the Chamber, that those are good things and that we ought to encourage them, but in Australia and overseas there has been, unfortunately, a growing erosion of trust in politicians and politics. The shadow Treasurer touched on that. I recently spoke at an Australasian Study of Parliament Group conference on the theme of trust and political behaviour. The updated paper is being published in the next *Australasian Parliamentary Review* journal, and I encourage people to read it. Certainly the PBO assists development and maintenance of trust in political processes. It provides vital information to help voters to make informed decisions about who they want to elect to represent them. I certainly believe that the PBO aids the good governance of New South Wales, and that the bill improves that framework. I commend the Treasurer, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (17:15): I make a contribution to debate on the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018. I support the amendments that will be moved by my colleague the member for Keira and shadow Treasurer—the next New South Wales Treasurer on 23 March. Fiscal reform has been around for quite some time, particularly for independent fiscal institutions. Other jurisdictions have had non-partisan, independent fiscal bodies to support their parliaments or respective democratic institutions so that they can make better policies. Our friends in the United States have had the Congressional Budget Office since 1974. Our good friends in Canada have had a Parliamentary Budget Officer since 2008. The United Kingdom calls it the Office of Budget Responsibility, which has been in place since 2010. Even our friends in Sweden have the Swedish Fiscal Policy Council, which was established in 2007. Our southern neighbours the Victorians have had a Parliamentary Budget Office since 2017 and the Federal Government has had a Parliamentary Budget Office since 2012.

All of those institutions are permanent, non-partisan, fully staffed and well budgeted to support each and every member—I repeat, those offices support each and every member—to have their ideas costed and to understand the economic and fiscal impacts. It assesses not only the cost of the establishment of their ideas or policies but also the potential ongoing costs. As we all know some ideas have not only an establishment cost—a capital expense—but also recurring costs. Surely having a Parliamentary Budget Office can only be beneficial for our communities as it contributes to our civic and democratic debate because all members have access to resources that allow them to have their ideas assessed—particularly ideas that are pertinent to their local communities.

Fiscal reform is not a temporary measure. A permanent Parliamentary Budget Officer [PBO] is in the best interests of our Parliament, of every parliamentarian and of the people they represent. Policy ideas do not just come about two, three or six months out from an election. Good ideas take time and require wide consultation.

Good ideas require a wide range of skills. Nobody in this Chamber has every set of skills required. We all come from different backgrounds and we have different sets of personal circumstances and qualifications. Surely, having a much better, level playing field for all members will enable us to have greater contestability of ideas in this Chamber. Such contestability is the central part of the much bigger picture which a permanent PBO can achieve.

To have fairness in that contestability we need all members to have access to resources. It is all fine and dandy if you are a member of the elected Government because the bureaucracy is there to serve it—and so it should—but for Opposition members or Independent members the resources are not available. Opposition and Independent members want to make a contribution. They want to be able to put before the Parliament ideas that are fully costed—ideas that have been assessed independently and in a non-partisan way—and test those ideas in the Chamber. That is the broad point that needs to be made, and has been made by my colleagues the member for Keira and the member for Wollongong.

Fiscal reform is a permanent process. A result of having a Parliamentary Budget Officer is that the behaviour of members in this Chamber changes because we can come here with ideas that are fully financed, fully fledged and fully thought through. That can only be a good thing, because members can go out to our communities, and tell them of the ideas that we have. We may make real differences as we contest those ideas. That will have a flow-on effect on the depth of civic debate about finances. Therefore there will be fewer accusations or people timewasting by saying, "How much will that cost?" Members will know because it has been costed by a permanent Parliamentary Budget Officer who should be part of Australia's largest economy, that of New South Wales.

Our southern neighbours the Victorians have a permanent body but New South Wales does not. I find that hard to fathom because it is a sensible reform for the people of New South Wales. We should have a permanent Parliamentary Budget Officer and the amendments put forward by the member for Keira will also take into account the timeliness during a caretaker government and immediately before. Reducing the number of days allows more policy costings to be done in a shorter time frame and will improve the level of contestability. At the moment, without a permanent PBO in New South Wales, there is an imbalance in the power and influence in the way that members can contribute their ideas in debates.

Independent fiscal institutions have been around for a long time. New South Wales must come into the fold in having an institution that can play a role in our policymaking process. Every member has something to contribute. Every member has valuable ideas. Members need these ideas to be costed, tested and fully financed so that they can understand their full impact. Government resources are always very scarce, as we all know. Our budgets are always being stretched but an independent institution will allow us to understand the financial impact of our ideas and allow us to prioritise them.

If New South Wales is to move forward with its fiscal reforms it surely must have a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office—an office that is fully staffed and resourced. It will help Opposition and Independent members, our Parliament and our people. That is the big picture that we need to look at. Public distrust of parliamentary institutions is increasing and this is one way—albeit a small way—for us to engage in a much more detailed and specific debate about our policies and ideas. Parliament is about the contest of ideas—ideas that come with economic and financial consequences. I hope the Government will support the amendments that have been outlined by my colleague the shadow Treasurer and agree with Labor's ideas about a more permanent independent fiscal institution because, frankly, we are way behind the eight ball and have been for far too long. This State needs to get moving.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (17:24): I note the worthy contributions to the debate on the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018 by members from both sides of the House who ran through the history of the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office [PBO]. They talked about the intention of the office and its challenges. I refer those who are interested in the history of the office to previous contributions reported in *Hansard*. I will speak on the general premise of the Parliamentary Budget Office. In large part I agree with the comments made by Opposition members in relation to the need for the establishment of a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office.

I note that the member for Keira will move a number of amendments to the bill. I find a number of the proposed amendments somewhat wanting. I do not understand the value of some of them—for example, reducing the length of time a government agency has to respond to a request lodged with the PBO from 10 days to five days. I believe this would be risky because responses on complex issues may subsequently be found wanting because the legislation placed an artificial constraint on the PBO's ability to provide the requested information. However, I do not find it difficult to support the proposed amendment to change the length of time a government agency has to respond to a request for information from six business days to five business days, although this seems to be a fairly modest achievement, if it can be called that.

I support the intention that the government agency be required to respond in two business days if it does not hold the requested information. That would allow the PBO to move on quickly and in a realistic time frame. However, removing the proposed section that allows the Parliamentary Budget Officer to provide copies of material to the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet to enable the preparation of material for an incoming government does not make sense to me. This would be at a time when the incoming government wants to formulate its ideas and its program for taking office. I suspect that the Government will not support the amendments of the member for Keira, although it is a shame that some of the amendments will not be supported, particularly after the wonderful theatrics during the member for Keira's contribution to this debate. Those theatrics were some of the best I have seen, and I congratulate the member on them.

I generally support other aspects of the bill, although there could be further improvements to the process. However, I will focus my comments on the premise that the Parliamentary Budget Office is a resource that can only be accessed by Government and Opposition members, as touched on by the member for Macquarie Fields. I believe Independents, most significantly, and minor parties are an integral and important part of the political process in New South Wales—and I note the member for Balmain is in the Chamber. In my view Independents and members of minor parties certainly have a reason to access the office so they can get credible figures to prosecute their case for policy changes, whether for infrastructure, for the provision of health services, for palliative care, for additional nurses, for additional police officers, for a new police station or for whatever resource their constituents require. They should be able to access that information for their local constituents and they should have the right to participate in the debate for a statewide budget. They do not have that opportunity.

I think it is a shame that an Independent member does not have this opportunity. I have been in this place for nearly 12 years and I have noticed that Independents and members of minor parties are placed at the end of the line when they seek to make a contribution to a debate or they wish to attend a parliamentary function. It is made very clear that they are considered to be lesser members because they are not members of one of the big teams of politicians. I will not accept that. I believe that I and the member from Balmain, the member for Sydney, the member for Newtown, the member for Ballina, the member for Orange and the member for Wagga Wagga are every bit as significant as other members of this Chamber. I believe the Constitution of New South Wales does not reflect the might of a party and does not take a winner-takes-all approach.

New South Wales is not only the oldest Parliament in Australia but also the wealthiest Parliament, apart from the Commonwealth Parliament. New South Wales is probably the wealthiest State or Territory Parliament, and in my view we should step up and take responsibility to provide opportunities for each and every member of this Parliament to get its policies costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office. Returning to the detail of the legislation before us, I believe that the bill is an improvement on the current Act. I appreciate that the majority of the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee report concerning the Parliamentary Budget Office have been adopted in this legislation.

I note that we are moving ahead on this legislation, but we are moving ahead in minor ways when we are denying a significant portion of Parliament from participating in the PBO process. As the member for Lake Macquarie, I say to the Treasurer that I would like to participate in the process. I do not want to unnecessarily burden the PBO or the Government, but if I am touting a particular policy for my area my constituents have every right to know that I have properly considered the costs of the policy. Of course, participation should be open to every member of the House, be they from a large or a minor party. The legislation before us will improve the current Act and I appreciate that. I know not everything is perfect, and I have raised some matters with the Treasurer. Perhaps we will have an opportunity in the future to advance the PBO and engage a full-time Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:32): I contribute to the debate on the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2018 and I note that in general The Greens are supportive of the bill. It is important that we parties, candidates and movements involved in politics put forward commitments, promises and challenges in a way that reflects the true costs for the Treasury and the taxpayers of New South Wales. In the period I have been involved with The Greens we have always tried to properly cost our programs and policies. However, we have been hamstrung because in this State we have no capacity to have our budget proposals costed.

Previous contributors to this debate have spoken of the Federal Parliamentary Budget Office [PBO]. I note that The Greens have used that office quite extensively—in fact, in the lead-up to the last Federal election we were the only party that had every single one of our proposals costed by the PBO in a fully costed alternative budget that we took to the election. We found that to be a worthwhile exercise. It is frustrating when people throw a barb and say to us, "You guys have crazy policies and it is going to cost X." We would love to cost our policies but we do not have the opportunity to do so.

It is very hollow of people to attack us and talk about the fiscal responsibility of our budget or to say that the costings that we have applied are inappropriate, because we do the best we can to include the fiscal impacts

of our promises and our commitments. That is important because in our democracy there is so much cynicism, negativity and criticism piled upon politicians and members of particular parties—governments, oppositions, The Greens and crossbenchers. We want to build a robust sense amongst ourselves that we have confidence in an independent body to address the costing of our proposals and to extend that into the community so the community knows that if the Treasurer comes forward with a policy the costings can be confidently relied upon, obviously within a range of parameters. The community should know that the Treasurer is putting forward numbers that are in line with reality. The shadow Treasurer, the member for Keira, should also know that.

There are some issues around the resourcing of the role. If there were 30 Independents in a Parliament and every five minutes every one of them was applying for budget costings it would be onerous. The Greens are very happy to have an arrangement that recognises the level of resources that the role and office have to ensure that it is managed effectively. As the member for Lake Macquarie said, we are always at the end of the queue, whether it is with regard to time with the Parliamentary Counsel's Office—it is always: "The Government has important bills and the Opposition has important bills; you will have to wait"—or anything else. In every area, not to mention debates, we are always the last to participate and often find it the most difficult to get access to resources. We are not asking to have the same amount of time allocated to The Greens, who, admittedly, have only eight members in this Parliament, but we should be able to at least put forward some costings. That would be optimal. I understand members in the other place are looking at drafting some amendments to allow that, which would be useful.

The second issue is about limiting how we understand impacts of budgets. We only have a small amount of time, but members know that The Greens are very interested in understanding more than only the fiscal impacts; we are also interested in understanding the ecological impacts and the impacts on the community, with social impact assessments and so on. One of the shortcomings of this proposal is that while we are able to identify budget impacts and a whole range of impositions as outlined in the bill, the process does not allow us to look at the ecological impact or social impact and does not provide us with a holistic understanding of particular approaches we can take. This is a developing process in the accounting industry. We have talked about the triple bottom line, an approach that was developed more than two decades ago to try to grapple with understanding how decisions of government, business and not-for-profit organisations impact not only on the budget bottom line but also on the ecology and our community.

Many decisions that we might make might have a great return on investment but they might also have a very significant impact on members of the community. We believe that we need to understand not only the economy but also the environment and broader social issues. One of the issues I raise, which The Greens always try to inject into these discussions, is that whenever we look at fiscal impacts and fiscal responsibility we also need to be asking, "How can we develop a broader set of measures and indicators—some people call them wellness indicators—to look at the full mosaic of impacts that take place when governments introduce policy?" While of course the role needs to be resourced to deal with fiscal impacts, it should be broader in what it understands.

This is a big challenge. The Greens incorporated this process into the Wellbeing Indicators Bill 2018. The bill proposes that we move away from the current indicators the State uses and the purely financial measures we use to look at performance and use a range of other measures. The Government has also looked at this with the Premier's Priorities. The Premier's Priorities do not focus on the net debt of the State nor on particular financial or revenue positions but instead look at broader measures. We think those measures are important and should be incorporated into the way we measure the performance of our State. It should be more than just our financial performance.

It is clear that the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill provides some positive steps forward. We have looked at the proposed amendments that will be moved by the Opposition and we do not oppose them. They could provide some additional merit. We will consider the amendments during the consideration in detail stage and will see if anything else comes of them. We will listen to the Government's position. We are always open minded on these matters. In conclusion, it is important in our view that there be a threshold of a certain number of members of The Greens and other minor parties who can access this very important measure.

I want the party I represent to be able to put forward arguments in the public sphere that are built on the same terms so we can talk about the financial impact as well as the ecological and social impact. Our policies have great merit and it would be beneficial to the debate within the State and to democracy if we had the opportunity to address that and engage in that. We need to make sure we look at more than only the financial impact; we need to address the ecological issues, which I often talk about, and other issues in our society. I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the debate and I look forward to some of these issues being taken up in the future.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations)
(17:40): In reply: I thank the following members for their contribution to this debate: the member for Keira, the

member for Coogee, the member for Wollongong, the member for Davidson, the member for Macquarie Fields, the member for Lake Macquarie and the member for Balmain. New South Wales was the first Australian jurisdiction to establish a Parliamentary Budget Officer. The first Parliamentary Budget Officer was in place for the 2011 general election. The Parliamentary Budget Officer for the 2015 general election stated in his post-election report that the overall message was that the 2014-15 Parliamentary Budget Officer processes were very successful and enhanced the reputation of New South Wales for transparency and good governance. However, some amendments were suggested for further improvement.

In April 2016 the Government broadly endorsed 12 out of the 13 recommendations made in the Parliamentary Budget Office report. The Government committed to drafting amendments to the Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2010 to address legislative changes recommended by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the Public Accounts Committee. These amendments will ensure that New South Wales continues to have a high quality independent, impartial and effective process for the costing of election policies. This enhances transparency and accountability and helps ensure that fiscally responsible policies are presented to the electorate. I understand that the Opposition will be moving amendments; the Government will not be supporting any of those amendments. I thank everyone who has worked on this legislation, including the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the Public Accounts Committee, Treasury and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requestion by Mr Ryan Park.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedule 1 be agreed to.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (17:42): By leave: I move Opposition amendments Nos 1 to 4 on sheet C2018-107A in globo:

No. 1 Response times for information requests

Page 3, Schedule 1 [4], line 19. Omit "10". Insert "5".

No. 2 Response times for information requests

Page 3, Schedule 1 [4], line 21. Omit "6". Insert "5".

No. 3 Response times for information requests

Page 3, Schedule 1 [4]. Insert after line 22:

(c) 2 business days, if none of the information requested is held by the Government agency, or

No. 4 Provision of copies of information to Department of Premier and Cabinet

Page 3, Schedule 1 [5] (proposed section 16 (3A)), lines 25-29. Omit all words on those lines.

During the debate I spoke extensively about why these amendments are important. I again stress that these are small but important changes for those of us who are not in government and do not have the luxury of bureaucracies to test, evaluate, analyse and—most importantly for me as the shadow Treasurer—cost policy proposals and ideas. I am not asking the public sector to take on a huge amount of burden or change; I am simply asking that things be turned around as quickly and efficiently as possible to ensure that the community of New South Wales is presented with policies in a timely manner that are independently costed, analysed and subjected to the rigour and review that all of us—particularly those of us who are interested in fiscal responsibility—would expect from each of the proposals.

The Labor Opposition does not see the need for the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet to have this information available. Yet I reiterate that, if the good folk of New South Wales decide to elect a Foley Labor government in March, Labor will be ready to go with material. If we are elected, we certainly will welcome input at that time from the good men and women of the public sector but we do not need the Department of Premier and Cabinet to have that information prior to the election of an incoming government, no matter what political party is elected.

I have a great deal of respect and confidence in the integrity and professionalism of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I believe he did an outstanding job at the last State election. He would be someone Labor would

look to appoint full time, if Labor is elected to govern. But once information from anyone in this Parliament leaves the Parliamentary Budget Office, control of that information is no longer available. That is why the Labor Opposition has specifically asked that that part of the bill be removed.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (17:46): The Government opposes the amendments that have been foreshadowed and moved by the shadow Treasurer, and I will briefly discuss them. In amendment No. 1 the request is that the response time within which action from the head of a government agency has to be taken be changed from 10 days to six days. The shadow Treasurer has suggested that, if a request is made for information from the head of an agency before caretaker mode, the head of an agency should have to respond within six days rather than 10.

Mr Greg Piper: No, five days.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Five days is the next one. The suggested change potentially compromises the work of the Parliamentary Budget Office [PBO]. If the head of an agency can respond before 10 days, they will. This is a maximum that has been set. It is possible that the request for information relates to a complex costing matter. Appropriate time should be given for the agency to be in a position to provide the best possible information. Importantly, I believe this will ensure the integrity of the process.

Amendment No. 2 is in a similar vein to the first amendment, changing from six days to five in caretaker mode. It is a similar amendment and the Government advances a similar argument against that amendment. The Government opposes that time frame being changed. Amendment No. 3 relates to a response time within 48 hours, and that has been agreed by the Government through its response to the Public Accounts Committee report. This was not recommended to be done by way of a legislative change. There is no need to codify this. This will happen in practice with agreement from the agencies.

Amendment No. 4, which is the final proposed amendment to the bill, is that information not be provided in confidence to the Department of Premier and Cabinet. This is a sensible amendment that will help the Department of Premier and Cabinet—the highest agency in the Government—prepare incoming government materials. There is nothing to suggest that the information will be treated in anything but in the strictest confidence. I also note that, in the Government's opposing of the amendments, the crossbench has provided some suggestions that I believe will be debated further in the Legislative Council.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that Opposition amendments Nos 1 to 4 on sheet C2018-107A be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes31
Noes49
Majority.....18

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
Parker, Mr J
Tesch, Ms L
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Donato, Mr P
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R
Smith, Ms T.F.
Watson, Ms A (teller)

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A.W.
George, Mr T

Aplin, Mr G
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gibbons, Ms M

Ayres, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Goward, Ms P

NOES

Grant, Mr T
 Gulaptis, Mr C
 Johnsen, Mr M
 Marshall, Mr A
 O'Dea, Mr J
 Perrottet, Mr D
 Provest, Mr G
 Sidoti, Mr J
 Taylor, Mr M
 Ward, Mr G
 Wilson, Ms F

Greenwich, Mr A
 Henskens, Mr A
 Kean, Mr M
 McGirr, Dr J
 Patterson, Mr C (teller)
 Petinos, Ms E
 Roberts, Mr A
 Speakman, Mr M
 Tudehope, Mr D
 Williams, Mr R

Griffin, Mr J
 Humphries, Mr K
 Lee, Dr G
 Notley-Smith, Mr B
 Pavey, Mrs M
 Piper, Mr G
 Rowell, Mr J
 Stokes, Mr R
 Upton, Ms G
 Williams, Mrs L

PAIRS

Cotsis, Ms S
 Dib, Mr J
 Foley, Mr L
 Hoenig, Mr R
 Mihailuk, Ms T

Barilaro, Mr J
 Berejiklian, Ms G
 Hancock, Mrs S
 Hazzard, Mr B
 Toole, Mr P

Amendments negatived.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that clauses 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): The question is that schedule 1 be agreed to.

Schedule 1 agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

**CRIMINAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CONSORTING AND RESTRICTED PREMISES) BILL
 2018**

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 19 September.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:57): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Consorting and Restricted Premises) Bill 2018. The Opposition does not oppose the bill. The objects of the bill are to amend both the Crimes Act and the Restricted Premises Act in response to reports by the Ombudsman. This legislation has been carefully expressed to be in response to the reports, not to adopting the recommendations in them, because the provisions of this bill are in some respects at variance with the reports. The first is by the Ombudsman relating to the consorting provisions of the Crimes Act. The report was tabled in June 2016. The second was the report by the Ombudsman relating to some of the police powers and offences under the Restricted Premises Act. It was tabled in this place in November 2016.

Two years after the reports were tabled, legislation has at length appeared. The end product suggests the gestation period was taken up by various bureaucratic struggles over the provisions in the bill. That certainly seems to be the case with the consorting provisions: the provisions of this bill provide for a number of things. Offences committed outside the jurisdiction can make someone a convicted offender for the purpose of the principal Act in relation to consorting; any person under the age of 14 years is excluded from the offence of consorting; a clearer statutory form of the consorting warning is provided, although lack of strict compliance does not invalidate the warning; an official warning expires two years after it is given or, for someone under 18 years, six months after it is given; and the defence of reasonable consorting is extended to consorting that occurs while complying with an order by the State Parole Authority or complying with a case plan, direction or recommendation by Corrective Services NSW or providing transitional, crisis or emergency accommodation or a welfare service.

The defence of reasonable consorting between family members now takes into account the Indigenous kinship system of an Aboriginal defendant's culture. There is also a requirement that the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC] reviews the amendments made by this bill within three years of commencement. The LECC is to report to the Attorney General and the Minister for Police as to the outcome of the review. Consorting laws in this State have had a long, chequered and contested history. They were introduced in the 1920s ostensibly in response to the razor gang phenomenon, primarily in east Sydney. They grew from the vagrancy legislation which simply targeted the poor. They fell into disuse and were certainly an element in police corruption, as recognised by the Wood royal commission. That situation arose from the very wide discretion allowed to individual police.

This Parliament amended the law relating to consorting by the Crimes Amendment (Consorting and Organised Crime) Bill 2012. That commenced on 9 April 2012. It was subject to a High Court challenge that was instituted in 2012 and finalised in 2014. That 2012 Act provided for a review of the operation of the provisions, and the Ombudsman's report to which this bill responds was the result of that review. The original review was to be two years after commencement but that was extended to three because it was assumed the High Court proceedings would have reduced the use of the provisions. The Ombudsman's review covered the period 9 April 2012 to 8 April 2015.

Consorting as an offence does not sit easily within the usual range of our criminal laws. It does not punish someone for a criminal act but is aimed at, theoretically, stopping people committing criminal acts in the future. It does so by targeting what could be ordinary regular innocent relationships which, on any rational view in other circumstances, should not be subject to intervention by the criminal law. The wide discretion involved and consequent potential for and, in previous times, the actual occurrence of corruption means that care should be exercised in designing and implementing such laws. This law can criminalise otherwise innocent behaviour and tries to control future conduct without demonstrating someone is involved in criminal behaviour. A majority of Australian jurisdictions I know have consorting laws.

Item [3] of schedule 1 to the bill amends section 93X (3) of the Crimes Act relating to a warning to be given. It is said to more closely mirror the elements of the offence. It seems to seek to respond to recommendation 2 of the Ombudsman's report. It does not seem to completely correlate with the Ombudsman's recommendation which, in turn, was the same as the NSW Police Force submission to the Ombudsman's review. If the Ombudsman and the police agree, it's curious that the Government does not.

The proposed section 93X (4) also arises from the Ombudsman's report. An official warning ceases to have any effect six months after the warning is given to someone under 18, or, in other cases, two years after the warning is made. This issue arose as a practical one because the 2012 legislation made consorting an indictable offence when previously it had been a summary one, with a set period in which prosecutions had to commence. There is no such limit on indictable matters. The police sensibly dealt with this as a matter of policy by deciding that criminal proceedings for consorting should not commence unless the occasions of consorting occurred within a six-month period unless in exceptional circumstances. Most other jurisdictions in Australia, I note, also contain time limits. Recommendation 9 of the Ombudsman's report was that the Attorney propose for consideration by Parliament an amendment to the consorting laws to include a statutory time limit. I think proposed section 93X (4) does that effectively.

The Ombudsman made a number of recommendations concerning defences to a charge of consorting. It is worth noting that the principal Act places an onus on the defendant to establish a defence—reversing the onus in a way usually frowned upon in our legal system. The Ombudsman records the view of submissions to his inquiry that the existing defences are not extensive enough and exclude a range of circumstances that should be included, such as consorting in the course of sporting activities, religious activities or between neighbours.

Recommendation 12 proposes amendments to section 93Y of the principal Act to provide additional defences. Items [4] and [5] of schedule 1 to the bill seem to do precisely that. Recommendation 13 proposes a definition of family members that includes kinship relations between Aboriginal people. That is contained in the proposed addition to section 93Y in the definition of family. Another amendment to section 93Y seems to deal with Ombudsman recommendation 14 that would allow consorting as part of attending a health service that includes therapeutic rehabilitation drug and alcohol services. I seek the Attorney's confirmation in reply that Ombudsman's recommendation 14 has indeed been implemented in the bill.

Preventing people seeking drug rehabilitation services because other people there might have committed criminal offences would seem genuinely bizarre. Item [1] of schedule 1 includes an indictable offence, and thus brings within the consorting regime an offence committed in another jurisdiction that would be an indictable offence if committed in this jurisdiction. That does not seem to have come from the Ombudsman's report but I do not see any reason that it is objectionable in principle. Schedule 1 [7] provides a review provision, with the review

to be carried out by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission. This is also consistent with a recommendation in the Ombudsman's report.

The final provision in the bill dealing with consorting is the proposed addition to 93X(1) in schedule 1 [2]. This would exclude from the consorting regime anyone under the age of 14 years. There is currently no age restriction in the principal Act, so this is a new restriction and a removal of one group previously included theoretically in the consorting regime. However, it is a troubling proposition. The Ombudsman's recommendation is an exclusion for everyone under 18 years, rather than the Government's proposal of under 14. Even more interestingly, New South Wales police adopted as policy that consorting charges should not be brought against those under 16 years of age unless in exceptional circumstances. The Government's legislative proposal is not only less restrictive than that of the Ombudsman, but also less restrictive than that of the police.

It also goes to the core issue of what the consorting laws are intended for. They were explicitly introduced to be utilised against serious and organised crime. That was very explicitly what then Premier O'Farrell said, as did other speakers supporting the Government position. In the debate and in public discussions that was unequivocally the Parliament's intention. It was contained in the title of the 2012 bill. It was restated in the Attorney General's second reading speech introducing the bill before the House. So what on earth is going on that people as young as 15 are supposed to be subject to consorting warnings and charges? This reflects the fact that a significant use of consorting powers by the police has had nothing at all to do with organised or serious crime. I quote from page 30 of the Ombudsman's report:

General duties police attached to LACs were responsible for issuing 4,401 official warnings during the review period, amounting to approximately half the total number of warnings issued by police. These warnings were issued to 2,268 different people on 1,538 separate occasions. Overall, 2,601 different people were subject to use of the consorting law by general duties police officers, amounting to 79% of all people subject to use of the consorting law by all police.

I add that the use varied dramatically between different zones and local area commands, suggesting significant elements within the LACs did not see the need to use the consorting powers at all. It is clear that much of this had nothing at all to do with serious or organised crime. It is in stark contrast to the gang squad, who used the powers in what seems to me to have been exactly the way the Parliament intended. They also used it differently to general duties officers in ways set out at pages 32 to 34 of the Ombudsman's report. If the powers are being used other than for serious and organised crime, it can perhaps then be understood why children have somehow got caught up in the use of consorting laws.

The Ombudsman advises that during the review period 201 children and young people between 13 and 17 years of age were subject to the use of the consorting law. Forty-one were aged between 13 and 15 years and nearly 60 per cent of them were Aboriginal. Quite remarkably, though, 79 per cent of these warnings to children and young people were illegal. This was almost exclusively done by general duties police. Only seven of the 201 were targeted by specialist squads. The Ombudsman quotes evidence from a regional director at Juvenile Justice that it is unlikely the use of the consorting powers will in fact reduce juvenile offending. The extraordinarily high error rate suggests something has gone badly wrong here. Of 133 children and young people in the consorting data whose associates or friends were warned about consorting with them, 105 were incorrectly identified by police as "convicted offenders". I quote the Ombudsman at page 80:

It appears that police are issuing consorting warnings in relation to children and young people who are known to them through repeated police contact and that these mistakes have arisen from a lack of understanding by police officers of the restrictions on the Children's Court's ability to record convictions.

The Ombudsman notes that there is evidence that these mistakes by police continue. However, the Ombudsman does quote at page 81 the submission from the police that concedes that the issue has some impact on the usefulness of consorting powers in relation to those under 18 years of age—that is, there are only very limited cases where consorting powers can be legally used against young people. The police submission at page 82 of the Ombudsman's report went on to say, by way of compromise, that the consorting powers should be available against persons 16 years or over who commit a serious indictable offence. Once again, the police posit an age limit of 16. The Government's proposal is 14. I quote from the Ombudsman at page 83:

There is agreement among all the submissions that the consorting law should be amended to exclude its application to children aged 15 years and under. However, we are of the view that the consorting law should not be used in relation to any children and young people, that is, anyone who is not yet 18 years old.

The reality, of course, is that children can only very rarely be lawfully caught by the consorting regime, as conceded by the police. All of which I think means that the Government's position is a bit of a muddle. There is an Ombudsman's report saying that very rarely can this be legitimately used against children or young people, then there is a piece of government legislation that says we will put an age limit of 14 on it when the Ombudsman says 18 and the police say 16. It is a complete muddle. I turn now to schedule 2 to the bill, which deals with amendments to the Restricted Premises Act. This Act originated as the Disorderly Houses Act. While consorting

laws dated from the 1920s and the razor gangs, the Restricted Premises Act originates with the Second World War and considerations of national security.

In July 2013 the Labor Leader of the Opposition John Robertson introduced a private member's bill in this place. This was the Firearms Amendment (Prohibition Orders) Bill 2013 to deal with people subject to a firearms prohibition order. Shortly after that and in response, the then Premier introduced the Firearms and Criminal Groups Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. Apart from having provisions that were similar to John Robertson's private member's bill, it also contained provisions amending the Restricted Premises Act. These provisions expanded the existing search powers in the Act to enable police to search for weapons and explosives as well as to search—as they presently could—for drugs, alcohol and related items. The amendments also created a new category of "reputed criminal declarations" and two new indictable offences that could be committed by owners and occupiers of declared premises of failing to prevent a reputed criminal from managing, attending or controlling the premises.

That legislation was required to be reviewed by the Ombudsman for the two-year period 1 November 2013 to 31 October 2015. Schedule 2 to this bill seems to largely consist of provisions adopting the report's recommendations. That is interesting because the police seem to have gone to some trouble to fail to provide all the information that the Ombudsman requested which the Ombudsman thought was relevant to the review. The expressed aim of the Government's legislation, apart from neutering the Robertson bill, was to "make it easier for police to get premises declared on the grounds they were routinely used by serious criminals, such as gang clubhouses", according to then Premier O'Farrell. It is thus slightly ironic that during the review period no declaration was made under the Act. There was one application made concerning premises at Leppington but it was withdrawn when the use was altered. That meant no use of additional powers to search premises. The Attorney General's second reading speech is, of course, completely innocent of any reference to the fact that these new powers introduced with such fanfare have never been used.

However, there were seven occasions when police did obtain warrants under section 13. Police can apply for a warrant under this section before applying for a declaration if they have reasonable grounds to believe that proscribed activities are taking place at a particular location. Material gathered is meant to be used in preparing an application under the Act. Section 13 search warrants were executed during the review period on premises at Girraween, Boolaroo, Newcastle, Woy Woy, Leppington, Warwick Farm and Burwood. The section 13 searches seem to have led to the closure of motorcycle gang clubhouses. Despite Parliament's apparent expectation, declarations were not sought—nor in fact needed. All seven locations were gang clubhouses. Many other clubhouses were not raided. This is apparently "consequence-based policing"—the police do not target clubhouses generally but only in response to particular reasons.

The exercise of the section 13 search warrants has given rise to recommendations by the Ombudsman which are adopted in the bill. Recommendation 2 is contained in proposed section 13AA, as is recommendation 3. While executing a section 13 warrant the police may give a reasonable direction to a person on the premises to minimise risk to any person there and it is an offence not to comply. Granted the situation involved in such instances, these provisions make perfect sense—60-odd people present at the Rebels clubhouse at Leppington when a warrant was executed is a situation where the need for such powers being clarified is entirely logical.

Proposed section 13AB implements recommendation 4 of the review, giving police power to search any person on the premises whom they reasonably suspect of having in their possession something mentioned in the warrant. Recommendation 5 is replicated in proposed section 13AC, a power of the police to demand a name and address of anyone present during a section 13 search. Proposed section 10 is amended by schedule 2 [4] in accordance with recommendation 9 so that police must notify the occupier of premises searched under section 10 of the search if they were not present. This seems a useful clarification of these provisions, although I note there was no use of the additional section 10 powers during the review period.

Schedule 2 items [1], [2] and [3] make amendments to section 4 of the principal Act to allow for the rescission of a declaration on the application of the owner or occupier of premises. The changes introduced by schedule 2 seem comparatively non-controversial and largely in line with the recommendations of the Ombudsman's report. As I indicated, the Opposition does not oppose the bill, despite what seems to be the complete muddle the Government has made in relation to the consorting law and children and young people.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (18:13): I make a contribution in support of the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Consorting and Restricted Premises) Bill 2018. The bill amends the consorting laws in the Crimes Act 1900 as well as the Restricted Premises Act 1943. I will speak briefly on the amendments to the consorting law. New South Wales has some of the strongest consorting laws in the country and they have been used effectively by the NSW Police Force. It behoves everyone in this place to ensure that our fine men and women in blue who keep our communities safe 24/7 have all the appropriate tools they need. I am sure the majority of members in this House would agree. I compliment the Attorney General on introducing this bill through the Justice

cluster. Key people involved in the bill include Bryce O'Connor from the Attorney General's office, who has been a key architect; Mary Keane, policy director in the Attorney General's office; and Daniel Spackman from the Department of Justice. They have all contributed under the umbrella of the Attorney General, who has a fine knowledge of this bill.

The amendments to the consorting law are being introduced to address concerns raised by the Ombudsman following a review of the operation of the consorting law. The amendments will introduce further safeguards and oversight while ensuring the New South Wales police can continue to use consorting laws to great effect. The bill amends the Act to exclude children under the age of 14 from the operation of the consorting law. This is in response to a concern raised by the Ombudsman about the potential disproportionate impact of the consorting law on young people. The New South Wales Government believes that consorting laws provide an effective means of deterring young people from serious criminal activities and may draw them towards a range of diversionary programs that can be beneficial in preventing further serious offending. That is why children aged 14 and above will continue to be subject to the consorting law.

At this point, it is relevant to say that last week the Committee on Law and Safety, of which I am Chair, tabled its report on diversionary programs within Juvenile Justice and I will be speaking to that report in the House on Thursday afternoon. The bill before the House amends the Crimes Act to provide that a warning issued to a person under the age of 18 expires six months from the date of issue. For people aged 18 and above, a warning will expire two years after it is issued. The lower expiry time for people under the age of 18 recognises the effectiveness of warnings to deter young people from consorting with convicted offenders while recognising concerns about the impact of the consorting law on young people.

Another concern raised by the Ombudsman was the potential disproportionate impact of the consorting law on vulnerable people, including Indigenous people. The consorting law contains a number of defences to a charge of consorting whereby the court must disregard consorting in certain circumstances if it was reasonable in the circumstances. This includes consorting with family members. The bill clarifies that in relation to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders the defence of consorting with family members includes the extended family or kin of the defendant according to the Indigenous kinship of the defendant's culture.

The bill amends the Act to include additional situations as defences to consorting. These are consorting that occurs during the provision of a welfare service; consorting that occurs in the course of complying with a Parole Authority order or direction from staff of Corrective Services NSW; and consorting that occurs in the course of providing transitional, crisis or emergency accommodation. These amendments recognise that offenders may have legitimate health and social needs that may inadvertently be captured by the consorting offences. The burden will be on the defendant to prove these defences.

The bill clarifies that for the purposes of the consorting law a reference to a "convicted offender" includes a person convicted of an offence in another jurisdiction that would be an indictable offence if it were committed in New South Wales. This will allow consorting warnings to be issued in relation to offenders from other jurisdictions in recognition of the cross-jurisdictional nature of criminal activity. This is extremely important in my electorate of Tweed, which abuts Queensland's Gold Coast. Criminals do not recognise the border when offending but will use it to their advantage. The Government has taken many steps through our NSW Cross Border Commissioner, Mr James McTavish, and now New South Wales recognises apprehended violence orders issued in Queensland and vice versa. I believe the same applies on the Victorian border.

The bill adds a review requirement to the Act, requiring the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, or LECC, to review the operation of the amended consorting law within three years of commencement. The LECC will provide a report to the Attorney General and the Minister for Police as soon as is practicable after completion of the review. In conclusion, the Government recognises the importance of the consorting law as a tool to disrupt and deter organised criminal activity. The consorting law is a useful tool to deter and divert young people from participating in criminal networks. These amendments balance valid concerns raised by the Ombudsman with the need to ensure that police can continue to use the consorting law effectively.

Particularly in the regions—although metropolitan areas are not immune—we have seen a significant rise in the use of illicit drugs. Probably the main one at the moment is ice. Over the past five years, the purity of ice has gone from about 30 per cent to about 80 per cent, which makes it highly addictive. It is obviously cheaper to manufacture than other drugs. We have seen the negative effects of ice in our wider community. We have seen young people commit horrendous crimes with no regard for their wellbeing. We have seen a steady rise in domestic violence and violence on our streets. It is an insidious drug and is one of the main tools used by organised crime or criminal activity. I am not talking about users; there are some very good programs available. I am talking about the people who push it and who make money from it—not on the street but often hidden behind doors and who are controlled by bikies or other organised crime groups.

As each month goes by, large amounts of cash are being seized at our borders and on our streets. When I am out on the street with our local police, it is at times quite overwhelming to see the devastation, particularly the breakdown of family units, as a result of criminals prostituting our youth for their own benefit and with no regard for their wellbeing. More needs to be done to combat this epidemic. We are in good hands with our Attorney General and our police Minister. As each new challenge arises, we outfit our enforcement agencies with the correct tools. We are assisting addicts to undertake rehabilitation.

A number of non-government organisations that work in my area are getting significant results. It is a hard road; it takes around 12 months to get off ice. There is a lot of self-doubt and a lot of commitment. Recently the Vibe Church took 12 ex-prisoners through a detox program for 12 months. All of them have now reunited with their families and are trying to help ice addicts and other convicted criminals get off ice. There is goodwill in our community but the evil ones are the people who push the drugs for their own advantage. This valuable piece of amending legislation will give New South Wales police more power and, from what I have heard on the street, they welcome this with open arms. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:23): On behalf of The Greens, I speak in debate on the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Consorting and Restricted Premises) Bill 2018. The bill makes amendments to the 2012 consorting laws to implement changes recommended by the Ombudsman as part of the review of the consorting powers. The Ombudsman raised concerns about the disproportionate impact on young and vulnerable people, including Aboriginal people. The changes will exclude children under 14 from the operation of the scheme and will mean that consorting warnings to children under 18 will expire after six months. For those over 18, the warnings expire after two years. The bill extends defences to consorting to recognise Aboriginal kinship structures as properly exempt from the laws. The Greens support these changes to the scheme but note the ongoing problems with consorting laws in general. Laws that criminalise association, rather than actual criminal activity, will always lead to unjust outcomes. We must respect people's right to freedom of association. Consorting laws criminalise the idea of association rather than the criminal activity that has taken place, and that is cause for serious concern.

When the consorting laws were first presented to the Parliament, The Greens, and particularly my colleague in the other place Mr David Shoebridge, raised many of the concerns raised by the Ombudsman in his review. The problems with the scheme were entirely predictable and entirely preventable. I give credit to the Attorney General, who is seeking to remove the most odious parts of the scheme. However, the simple fact is that the entire scheme should be repealed. The Greens are committed to having these laws repealed because it is unacceptable to criminalise acts of association when we should be criminalising only criminal activity.

The Ombudsman's review found that police issued more than 9,000 warnings and laid 46 charges for the offence of consorting. While some of these related to so-called bikie gangs, many were in response to minor and nuisance offending. The Ombudsman's report says it "details the use of the consorting law in relation to disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including Aboriginal people, people experiencing homelessness, and children and young people". It further states, "In addition, this review found an exceptionally high police error rate when issuing consorting warnings to children and young people."

It is telling that the 34 submissions received by the Ombudsman as part of the review overwhelmingly called for the laws to be repealed. The laws in question impact on Australia's commitments under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and on vulnerable people, particularly Aboriginal young people. They have a particular impact on convicted offenders and can block attempts to rehabilitate people and reintegrate them into the community. The policy decision taken by the NSW Police Force not to limit use of the new consorting law to organised crime and/or criminal gangs had significant ramifications in our community.

It is claimed that this use of consorting on broader issues serves a deterrent function. If that is the case, The Greens urge the Government to provide and to table the evidence in support of that claim. The scheme has been in operation for a number of years and it should therefore be possible to demonstrate that those issued with warnings under this scheme are less likely to engage in offending. The Government has already admitted that it does not have that evidence, but we are still debating this legislation. The concerns raised by the Ombudsman primarily relate to the use of the consorting powers other than in relation to bikie gangs and organised crime. The logical response by any government serious about making smart laws would be to limit the use of consorting laws to those offenders. That was certainly the stated intention of the laws when they were introduced to Parliament.

It is concerning that nearly 60 per cent of the children and young people subject to the consorting laws were Aboriginal. We must reflect on that. As another member involved in an inquiry looking at diversionary programs in the juvenile justice system said, it was clear that the overwhelming number of Aboriginal young people who find themselves caught up in the criminal justice system are there as a result of failures in other areas of their lives. That is, they have been unable to access safe, secure and affordable housing and they have been unable to get the educational and other support they need because the State has not assisted them. That is a significant concern. A significantly higher proportion of Aboriginal people are mentioned in the overall

consorting data, and the highest proportion of Aboriginal people is in the youngest category. That is unacceptable. I look forward to speaking on the report on those diversionary programs later this week in this place.

The consorting laws operate much like the Suspect Targeting Management Plan [STMP]. That plan is used by the NSW Police Force to target people it believes may be suspect or who may do something wrong in the future. One can be put on the STMP and be watched, visited, followed and stopped by the NSW Police Force without having done anything wrong. In fact, those subject to the plan have not yet done anything wrong. I do not know about other members, but I would feel slightly uncomfortable being put on a secret watch list. No statistics are reported by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research and no details are provided. The inquiry was informed that many Aboriginal people were on the list.

We know that consorting laws curtail freedom of association and communication between people. As the review demonstrated, they often do so when the link to bikie gangs or serious crime of any kind is completely absent. The Greens support the bill insofar as it addresses some of the worst excesses of the scheme. However, I make it clear that The Greens do not support consorting laws that seek to criminalise acts of association when people interact with each other. We should be criminalising only criminal activity and we should stand up for the rights of people to exercise their freedom of association because that is crucial to a fair and just system. It allows people to exercise their human rights.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:30): I support the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Consorting and Restricted Premises) Bill 2018. I thank the shadow Attorney General for his contribution to this debate and note that the Opposition does not oppose this legislation. I also acknowledge the contributions of my colleague the member for Tweed and of the member for Newtown. Unlike the member for Newtown, I do not have any concerns about the NSW Police Force having a watch list if it believes it is necessary. The Government is committed to tackling organised crime and, thanks largely to its efforts, New South Wales has the strongest organised crime laws in the country. This bill introduces amendments that further strengthen the ability of the fantastic men and women of the NSW Police Force to fight organised crime, including outlaw motorcycle gangs, which are a scourge. Since becoming a member of this place I have learnt about the activities of that 1 per cent and the blight they are on our society.

I note the increased NSW Police Force powers to manage restricted premises. In 2013 the New South Wales Government amended the Restricted Premises Act to enhance police powers to search declared premises without a warrant. The amendments in this bill complement the 2013 amendments by enhancing police powers when executing a search warrant under the Act. Police officers will be given express powers to give directions to people found on the premises, to search anyone found on the premises, and to compel a person found on the premises to state their name and address. They are extremely reasonable requests. New offences are also being introduced to ensure compliance with these new powers. It will be an offence for a person to fail to comply with a direction given by a police officer during a search. That offence will be punishable by up to 12 months imprisonment and a \$5,500 fine. It will also be an offence for a person to fail to provide their name and address when asked, or to provide false or misleading information. Those offences will be punishable by a fine of \$1,100.

Law and order is a key issue in the electorate of Terrigal. I compliment the great Brisbane Waters Local Area Command and Tony Joyce, who is in charge of the region. His officers are doing a fantastic job. I had the privilege of spending a night with Tony's team while they were under the direction of Superintendent Daniel Sullivan. The work they do keeping our community safe, especially against organised crime, is exemplary. We have seen the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data demonstrating that the proactive policing happening in our community is delivering results. That might involve gathering intelligence, which appears to concern the member for Newtown, or targeting criminals before they commit a crime. That is a great way to deal with these issues.

The New South Wales Government takes a zero tolerance approach to organised crime and criminal behaviour that undermines community safety. These amendments will empower police to tackle organised crime swiftly and effectively. I would like to highlight the great work done on the Central Coast by the local area commands at Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Waters. I was able to spend an evening with the officers there to see how they work proactively and how they gather intelligence. It was an eye-opening experience. I would highly recommend that members of this place spend time, maybe an evening, with the men and women of the NSW Police Force.

New South Wales has some of the strongest anti-consorting laws in the country, which have been used very effectively by police to dismantle criminal networks and prevent criminal gang members from associating with one another. The consorting laws are also very effective at preventing criminals who may not be involved in organised crime from associating with one another, therefore limiting opportunities for further criminal offending. This comes back to proactive intelligence gathering. In response to recommendations made by the Ombudsman,

this bill will strengthen existing safeguards in the consorting law for young and vulnerable people, including Aboriginal people.

Children under the age of 14 will be excluded from the operation of the consorting law, and warnings issued to people under the age of 18 will expire after six months. In relation to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, the defence of consorting with family members will now include kinship relationships. New defences in relation to consorting—the provision of a welfare service or transitional, crisis or emergency accommodation and when complying with an order from the State Parole Authority—will be introduced. The amendments in this bill complement the suite of amendments the New South Wales Government has made to combat serious and organised crime.

This includes the introduction of Serious Crime Prevention Orders in 2016, which may contain such prohibitions, restrictions, requirements and other provisions as the court thinks appropriate to disrupt the person's involvement in serious crime-related activities; the introduction in 2016 of Public Safety Orders, which are issued by a senior police officer to prevent people from attending places or events where they are expected to engage in violence or present a serious threat to public safety or security; the strengthening, in 2013, of Firearms Prohibition Orders, which allow police to search, without warrant, premises or vehicles occupied by people who are the subject of a firearm prohibition order; the enhancement of criminal asset confiscation and forfeiture powers that do not need to rely on a conviction for asset confiscation and can target property that is not involved in the commission of an offence; and the modernisation of the consorting law in 2012, which withstood a constitutional challenge in 2014.

As I have said many times in this Chamber, I commend the work done by this Government, including the outstanding work by Attorney General Mark Speakman. The New South Wales Government is committed to combating organised crime through strengthening an already comprehensive legal framework to further improve its effectiveness. The new changes work with existing legislation to disrupt and deter organised criminal activity to keep the people of New South Wales safe. It would be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge the great work done by Mary Klein, policy director in the Office of the Attorney General, and David Spackman from the Department of Justice. I also commend Bryce O'Connor, who is in the gallery this evening. He is on the staff of the Attorney General. I acknowledge the tireless efforts and work that has gone into this legislation by the Attorney General and his staff.

Just a week and a half ago the Attorney General, accompanied by Mr O'Connor, visited the Central Coast, where he eloquently and succinctly put the Government's position on how to tackle organised crime and how it was working proactively to target this sort of behaviour. That speech was well received by the people of my electorate. This legislation is a credit to the Attorney General, the staff and all the people who prepared it. I congratulate Attorney General Speakman and commend the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Consorting and Restricted Premises) Bill 2018 to the House.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (18:38): I support the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Consorting and Restricted Premises) Bill 2018. The police do an important job for the people of New South Wales. The community expects the police to respond to crimes after they happen but also to do everything possible to prevent crime. The community expects police to use intelligence, local knowledge and the capacity to be present in places of risk in order to prevent crime rather than pick up the pieces after crimes occur. That is often very hard for them to do but the police have the tools to disrupt the planning of crimes—the consorting laws. These laws allow them to take steps to break up connections which might lead to criminal activity.

It is either naive or disingenuous of The Greens to oppose consorting laws outright because such laws provide an important protection for our community—that is, an opportunity for the police to do something before a crime is committed rather than wait until afterwards to try to find who committed it. In particular, this law will be used to disrupt the criminal activities of outlaw gangs. The police will try to prevent the kinds of associations that are linked to activities—activities that police are only too well aware of—that happen because people come together in gangs. For a person who has not yet committed a crime, the issuing of a consorting warning should be considered a last chance to turn away from that dangerous path that will only lead to bad news if the warning is not heeded. It can be a positive thing for a young vulnerable person to be issued such a warning and to be told in no uncertain terms the consequences of continuing to associate with such people. That is the general sense of the bill. I think it is important to back the police. We need to give them powers so that they can act on our behalf.

I will address the restricted premises amendments within this bill. The bill introduces important amendments to the Restricted Premises Act 1943 to enhance the ability of the NSW Police Force to combat organised crime by clarifying powers during the execution of search warrants under the Act and by introducing new offences. The bill amends the process for applying for a declaration under the Act to be rescinded and for the notification to occupiers of searches. These amendments are in response to recommendations made by the Ombudsman following a review of the Act.

The Ombudsman was required to review amendments made to the Act by the New South Wales Government in 2013 that enhanced police powers to combat organised crime. This is an appropriate pathway for the Government to follow. The Government introduced new legislation, gave police powers in respect of restricted premises and built in a process of review. The Ombudsman has completed that process of review, which has led to refinement of the legislation to ensure that it is achieving the objectives that were set for it and protecting the liberties of the public. This is entirely responsible and a responsible path for the Government to follow.

The bill amends the Restricted Premises Act to provide police executing a search warrant under the Act with a power to issue to any person found on the premises directions that are necessary to minimise the risk to the safety of any person. Failure to comply with a direction will be an offence punishable by up to 12 months imprisonment and a fine of up to \$5,500. The bill also amends the Act to provide police with an express power to search any person found on the premises if they are suspected of possessing an item mentioned in the warrant. This could include a weapon or drugs. Police will be given the power to compel any person found on the premises to provide their name and address. Failure to comply will be punishable by a fine of up to \$1,100, as will the provision of false or misleading information. These amendments enhance the capacity of the NSW Police Force to effectively and appropriately manage people during searches.

The bill amends the Restricted Premises Act to allow an owner or occupier of premises subject to a declaration under the Act to apply to the court to have that declaration rescinded. The owner or occupier must be able to prove to the court that the activities that led to the declaration being imposed have not occurred at the premises for at least 12 months and are unlikely to recur. If an application to rescind a declaration is refused, the owner or occupier will not be able to make another application for 12 months. This amendment balances the need to ensure illicit activities are prevented with the interests of owners and occupiers who are doing the right thing and have stopped whatever activity it was that led to the declaration from occurring.

The New South Wales Government recognises that powers to search premises and make reputed criminal declarations are crucial to the important work that the NSW Police Force is constantly managing. This bill seeks to enhance those powers to keep New South Wales safe. I finish as I began: By saying that it is important that we back our police. We should give them the capacity to do what we ask them to do—that is, not only to respond to crime after it happens, but also in appropriate and measured ways to give them powers to try to prevent crime before it occurs. This bill is an important such measure and I support it.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (18:44): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Liverpool, Tweed, Newtown, Terrigal and Riverstone for their contributions to this debate. I will now address some of the matters raised in debate, particularly by the member for Liverpool. He made some observations about the delay in the introduction of this bill following the tabling of the Ombudsman's report in 2016. I make it clear that as a government we do not want to rush an important reform like this; instead we prefer to take a considered approach.

The Government has carefully considered the Ombudsman's report. The Ombudsman's recommendations had to be considered in close consultation with the NSW Police Force because of the operational impact of any changes to the consorting law on law enforcement. The Ombudsman also released a number of other reports from other relevant reviews around the same time as the report on the review of the consorting law, including the report on the review of the Restricted Premises Act 1943 that is also part of this bill. For practical purposes, the reports were considered concurrently and that meant more time was required to carefully consider the recommendations from each report.

I also note the comments by the member for Liverpool regarding the official warning proposed in schedule 1 [3] to the bill. Strictly speaking, the warning proposed by the Ombudsman in recommendation 2 of the report is not accurate. That is because the offence of consorting requires a warning to be issued about consorting with two convicted offenders on two separate occasions. If those warnings have not been given then it is not an offence to consort with a particular person. The warning proposed in the bill was developed in consultation with the NSW Police Force and the NSW Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

I note also the comments by the member for Liverpool and the member for Newtown about the application of the consorting offence to children. The Ombudsman found in the period from 9 April 2012 to 8 April 2015, 325 warnings were issued to children and 251 warnings were issued about children. The Ombudsman concluded that 80 per cent of consorting warnings relating to children were mistakenly given as the subject child was not a convicted offender—children under 16 do not have convictions recorded. Those children were identified in Department of Family and Community Services records as having indicators of disadvantage.

The NSW Police Force has implemented several operational changes to respond to those issues, including modifying the computerised operational policing system [COPS] to ensure that officers are not able to electronically generate an indictment for a consorting charge without the minimum number of lawful warnings

being previously recorded; generating a statewide email to assist investigators to understand the factors to determine "convicted offender" status; developing a short and targeted training scenario for officers; publishing articles in relation to the issue; contacting each command and officer where an error had occurred; and, where possible, contacting individuals identified as having been issued invalid warnings to advise that the warning was not valid and deleting relevant COPS records.

I note also the comments by the member for Liverpool regarding the Government's choice to exclude children under the age of 14 from the consorting law. The Ombudsman raised some valid concerns around the potential impact of the consorting law on young people, in particular young Indigenous people. That is why the New South Wales Government is excluding children under the age of 14 from the operation of the consorting law; introducing a six-month expiry for consorting warnings issued to people under the age of 18; clarifying that the defence of consorting with family members includes Aboriginal kinship relationships; introducing new defences to consorting that relate to the provision of welfare services and emergency or transitional accommodation; and requiring the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, which is now responsible for the oversight of the NSW Police Force, to review further the consorting laws after three years of operation. This review will have a particular focus on the impact of the consorting law on young and vulnerable people, including Indigenous people.

The NSW Police Force is also making important changes to internal standard operating procedures, training manuals and other internal publications in response to the concerns raised by the Ombudsman. Preparatory work on implementing these changes has begun and will be finalised as soon as possible after the passage of the legislation. An important change to the computerised operational policing system in direct response to a concern raised by the Ombudsman about unlawful warnings being issued in relation to children who do not fall within the definition of "convicted offender" has already been made. Police cannot save a consorting warning issued about a child unless that child has been convicted of a serious offence in the District Court or Supreme Court. However, the Government believes the consorting law provide an effective means of deterring young people from serious criminal activity, including warning young people about consorting with convicted offenders who are suspected of recruiting young people for violent extremism or terror-related activities.

Excluding people under the age of 18 from the consorting law may also result in certain young people being more susceptible to exploitation by organised crime groups. Consorting warnings are also a useful diversionary tool for young people. They can provide a gateway for young people accessing and participating in diversionary programs, including the Youth on Track early intervention program. If successful, the deterrent and diversionary aspects of the consorting law can be beneficial to young people by preventing offending or preventing further or more serious offending. Why under 14 and not under 16? This is to be consistent with the age of criminal responsibility. I note the comments by the member for Newtown generally regarding consorting laws. New South Wales has one of the strongest consorting law suites in the country. It is used very effectively by the NSW Police Force to disrupt organised crime by ensuring convicted offenders cannot associate with one another.

Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory all have consorting laws of a similar nature to the New South Wales consorting law. A good example is the use of the consorting law to prevent members of outlaw motorcycle gangs from associating with one another, much to the dismay of those gang members. The Ombudsman found that during the review period the NSW Police Force issued 9,155 consorting warnings, 1,818 separate consorting interactions occurred and 46 consorting charges were laid on 42 people. Of those 46 consorting charges, 34 were brought by the gang squad in respect of alleged outlaw motorcycle gang members or associates. According to data from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 60 people have been convicted of consorting since the New South Wales Government modernised the consorting law in 2012. The consorting law is also very effective at deterring people from offending, or further offending, by stopping them from associating with criminals. This bill addresses the concerns identified by the Ombudsman about the operation of the consorting law while at the same time ensuring police can continue to use the consorting law to prevent criminal activity very effectively.

I note the comments by the member for Liverpool that the powers under the Restricted Premises Act have never been used. Well, in fact, they have been. Bikie clubhouses have been declared as restricted premises. The NSW Police Force has advised that section 10 of the Restricted Premises Act, which provides that the NSW Police Force may enter a declared premises without a warrant, has been exercised 14 times over the last year—from October 2017. So contrary to the member for Liverpool's suggestion, the NSW Police Force is putting these tough new powers, which were provided by the Parliament in 2013, to good use. New South Wales has the toughest organised crime laws in the country. The reforms in this bill will ensure that New South Wales continues to lead the nation in the fight against criminal groups and organised criminal activity. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

LOST IN BOOKS INITIATIVE

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:55): I recently had the great pleasure of celebrating the very first birthday of a fantastic place in Fairfield called Lost in Books. Lost in Books is a Think + DO Tank Foundation initiative that aims to provide culturally and linguistically diverse books, services and workshops to our incredibly culturally diverse community in Fairfield. Its primary purpose is to engage and empower individuals from all walks of life with the tools and knowledge they need to succeed to live a full and happy life. Lost in Books is proud to provide a safe space for socialising, learning, language exchange and skills transmission for women and children in Fairfield and provides a terrific local base for creative self-expression. After just one year in operation, Lost in Books has welcomed more than 3,000 locals through its doors, with more than 1,300 individuals participating in its free in-store creative programs.

Throughout this last year, it has provided products, services and support to more than 900 children, parents and carers through its wandering books school outreach initiative, which targets newly arrived students in the local community. I can attest to the tremendous efforts of the hardworking staff from Lost in Books and the impact they have had in such a short time. Presently, Lost in Books has more than 70 active volunteers. Combined, the volunteers speak over 60 languages and have contributed more than 800 hours of work throughout our local community. Lost in Books is an emerging publisher of literary works in many languages. It also hosts the annual In Other Words festival. This year's festival celebrated 62 artists and attracted more than 500 people to a program rich with music, poetry, workshops, talks and creativity. In February 2019, Lost in Books will play host once again to the second annual In Other Words festival of language and creativity. I encourage many people to go along and get involved in this wonderful celebration.

In one short year, Lost in Books has made numerous achievements and has garnered support from local councils, State Government project grants, Federal Government program support and private philanthropy. Not only does Lost in Books provide multilingual books to the community, but it also hosts a weekly English language lab which supports those in need with language and literacy classes to nurture development. On top of all the services and programs offered at Lost in Books, it is first and foremost building a strong community connection and providing local residents with a means to branch out and get engaged in a safe and welcoming space.

I congratulate and commend the work of Jane Stratton and her fantastic team at the Think + DO Tank Foundation for everything they have done with Lost in Books. This amazing initiative provides ongoing support and assistance to our culturally diverse community in Fairfield and helps to bridge the gap for so many in our area. As Lost in Books continues to flourish and evolve in step with the community's requirements, I wish everyone at Lost in Books all the very best for the future. Once again, I congratulate it on its first birthday. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting Lost in Books and seeing the new selection of books available—especially the new Italian book range, which I enjoyed browsing through while I was at the first birthday celebrations. Once again, on behalf of all members in this House, I say happy first birthday to Lost in Books Fairfield.

MIRANDA ELECTORATE SPORTING CLUBS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:59): A love of sport and active lifestyle are at the heart of our enviable culture in the shire, so today I highlight some of the wonderful sporting clubs in my electorate. Members know I love my netball, so I am proud that the Miranda electorate is home to the largest netball association in New South Wales. The Sutherland Shire Netball Association was established in 1960 and has achieved year on year success in producing players of representative level, ranging from junior, intermediate and senior competitors. Last month, the association held its first umpire development workshop.

Thanks to funding provided under the New South Wales Government's Local Sporting Grant program, 25 umpires received subsidised course fees to undertake the workshop and attain national badges. The amazing executive has been diligent in upskilling and investing in its coaches to meet the needs and expectations of parents and players. I acknowledge president Karen Salter, secretary Christine Magri, treasurer Margaret Burke, coaching coordinator Nerida Noble, umpires convenor Dianne Maclachlan, as well as Shirley Way, Kerry Phillips, Jenny Rees, Diane Marjoram and Maureen Finch. I thank the executive for its hard work and thank it for bringing this outstanding initiative to my attention.

Aquinas and Holy Family Colts Junior Rugby League Club is another distinguished sporting club in our local area. The club was initially founded in 1992 as a result of the overwhelming response from families at Holy Family Primary School to have their own football club. In 1993 the club began with eight teams, but has since grown significantly in the ensuing 13 seasons. Recently I visited its clubhouse to inspect the progress on the new multi-purpose training facility, which was supported with a Community Building Partnership grant of more than \$19,000. I commend the executive for its tireless efforts to successfully grow the club membership and in nurturing the talent of so many players. In particular, I acknowledge president Darren Elliott, secretary John Sweeting, treasurer Brett O'Farrell, and senior vice-presidents Shane Canavan and Andrew Matherson for their outstanding leadership and commitment.

Sutherland District Hockey Club was formed in 1965, and has become one of the largest hockey clubs in Sydney. Based at Hockey Park in Sylvania, the club's facilities include a wonderful clubhouse and a newly refurbished synthetic playing surface, with \$20,000 funding contributed via the Community Building Partnership program. I extend my congratulations to the senior women's team, which was recently awarded the Sydney East Hockey Association Major Club Award. The dedicated club executive championed the synthetic surface project and I commend the efforts of president Craig Turner, vice-president Peter Tait, secretary John Mulcair, treasurer Carol Janes, senior men's convenor Andrew Hoy, women's convenor Lee-Anne Callinan, junior convenor David Richardson, the relentless publicity and sponsorship officer Peter Krepp, buildings officer Frank Rowling, canteen supervisor John Cowan, equipment officer Garry Thomas and ground convenor Warwick Bardsley.

Another fantastic sporting club is Sports NSW's Community Club of the Year, Bonnet Bay Football Club. Formed in 1981, it has become an integral part of the fabric of the close-knit Bonnet Bay community. It is no mean feat to have 600 players based in a local community with a population of only 2,100 people. In particular, I acknowledge the hardworking executive, which has grown the club from strength to strength—president Peter Burgess, vice-president Brett White, junior vice-president Anthony McDonald, secretary Pat Huolohan, treasurer Ian Petrovski, and committee members Andrew Collins, Andrew Symes, Carla Richardson and Glenn Elms.

Finally, I refer to Sylvania Heights Football Club. The Sylvania Heights Youth Club, which is home to the club, celebrates its sixtieth anniversary this year and is a testament to the dedicated volunteers who contributed countless hours to make it the successful club that it is today. Recently I inspected its upgraded canteen facility, after the club received \$9,000 in Community Building Partnership funding. These funds went towards new benchtops, lighting, lockable cupboards and an island bench. Not only does the new canteen look great, but it is a great asset for the club and local community.

I thank the outstanding executive of the Sylvania Heights Football Club for bringing this project to my attention—president Trent Jordan, vice-presidents Brad Harrop and Jay Nataly, secretary Russ Strudwick, treasurer Todd Donaghy, registrars Fiona Booth and Lisa Bacon, club coach Wayne Bush, coaching director Mark Cupitt and referee mentor Phil Hodge. The electorate of Miranda is extremely fortunate to have so many active and engaged sporting clubs across so many sporting codes. I am proud of their many successes and look forward to celebrating their further achievements in the future.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (19:03): I endorse the remarks by the member for Miranda about the wonderful sporting organisations we have in the Sutherland Shire. We are blessed with countless volunteers who coach teams, manage teams, umpire events, work in administration and undertake the ground maintenance of all these sporting fields. In particular, I acknowledge the Sutherland Hockey Club, which has players and officials from across the shire, and the Sutherland Shire Netball Association, which was established in 1960. I have many fond and perhaps not so fond memories of watching my sister and my daughter play netball in association competitions down at Ballengarra. I thank all the association officials for all they have done over the years to promote netball throughout the shire.

POTTSVILLE AMBULANCE STATION

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (19:04): I bring to the attention of the House a great project that is happening in the Tweed. Members will remember that a part of the Government's election commitment was the provision of an ambulance station at Pottsville. I am pleased to announce that recently not only has the site been purchased at Pottsville, but last week we announced, with the Minister for Health—and I thank him for his hard work—that Hutchinson Builders has been awarded the construction contract for the first Pottsville NSW Ambulance Station. This is a significant milestone in the New South Wales Government's commitment to build a new ambulance station at Pottsville as part of the \$122 million Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration [RAIR] program. The New South Wales Government is investing in purpose-built, modern ambulance stations to support the clinical capability of our highly trained and highly respected paramedics.

The new purpose-built station at 1128 Pottsville Road has been designed with input from local paramedics and will enable them to better meet the current and future demand for mobile emergency medical care

in Pottsville and surrounds. The new ambulance station supports the New South Wales Government's \$582 million investment in better health services and the new Tweed Valley Hospital. The new station will ensure local paramedics have fit-for-purpose infrastructure to deliver a better working environment for paramedics, tailored to the needs of the local community. Once completed, the Pottsville station will include internal parking for up to four emergency ambulance vehicles, logistics and storage areas, relief accommodation, staff parking, and a delivery and loading bay. Works are expected to commence on the site before the end of October. This project is part of the biggest regional and rural transformation of Ambulance Service of NSW infrastructure in its history.

Pottsville is a tremendous area in the south of my electorate. Recently, I had a visit from a young mother whose 40-year-old husband suffered a severe heart attack and, unfortunately, passed away. She is a trained nurse and she was very excited that the growing area of Pottsville will have a state-of-the art ambulance facility with up to four paramedics. It is a total investment of approximately \$6 million and it will greatly enhance the capabilities of emergency medical aid for the area. The site of the ambulance station is adjacent to the M1, which, unfortunately, has been the scene of some pretty horrific accidents. The new station will feed into the proposed new Tweed Valley Hospital, in which the Government is investing \$534 million and demonstrates this Government's commitment to regional and rural areas.

It would be remiss of me not to mention Hutchinson Builders, the company that recently completed the Olympic-standard Hurley Surfing Australia High Performance Centre. During construction the company removed a shed that was on the site and has kindly donated it to the Tweed Coast Raiders at Cabarita and recently, through Stronger Regions, we have been able to supply the Raiders with \$50,000 for its club. I mentioned the Tweed Coast Raiders earlier in this place when they won the premiership. Two weeks ago they beat the Ballina Vikings 24 to four in a nailbiting contest, which was a great effort by the Vikings.

The paramedics in our region do an excellent job and I am sure every member here would praise their work. They have been given a state-of-the art facility but, importantly, they were allowed some input into the design. They are excited, and we will be onsite very shortly in the next few weeks to turn the first sod. It will be a great improvement to health facilities in the great area of Pottsville. Once again, I praise the Government for its foresight and its commitment to regional New South Wales.

SURF LIFE SAVING HUNTER BRANCH 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (19:08): Today I speak of the 100-year anniversary of the formation of the Hunter branch of Surf Life Saving. I pay tribute to the incredible contribution surf lifesavers have made to the community of Newcastle over the past century. They have saved countless lives in the surf and have gone beyond the beach to assist in times of emergencies, including during the infamous *Pasha Bulker* storm incident and the Maitland floods. This Saturday, 29 September, I will attend the Nobbys Beach annual raising of the flags ceremony, which this year will include a special tribute to the 100-year anniversary of the Hunter branch's formation and the end of World War I. The ceremony will also feature the last post played by Lisa Thomas, who is the great niece of William "Snowy" Carratt. Mr Carratt, who was a member of the Cooks Hill Surf Life Saving Club, was killed by machine gun fire in France in World War I while tending to the wounds of his mate.

There are now six surf life saving clubs in Newcastle alone, and all of our beaches are patrolled in summer by dedicated disciplined volunteers, who are committed to the safety of the local community. We are indeed a very lucky city. The first established surf life saving club in the Hunter was the Newcastle branch in 1908, which was quickly followed by Merewether, Stockton and Cooks Hill. During World War I, from 1914 we saw more than two-thirds of the fit, young surf lifesavers go to serve their country, just as they had served the community—men like Cooks Hill Surf Life Saving Club member Garnet Dart, who was featured in the *Newcastle Herald* this morning. His memorabilia, a bronze medallion and his war dog tags, were discussed when a historian was calling for more to be collated to mark the club's 100 years of service. Garnet Dart enjoyed community service so he signed up for the surf life saving club, but he went on to also register for a non-combatative role in the war. He wanted to preserve life just as he did when he was lifesaving at Cooks Hill. For this reason he was assigned to the Field Ambulance in the war doing jobs such as moving wounded men on stretchers as well as treating them.

When men like Garnet returned from the war, a lot of them were traumatised. Many of them sought escape through alcohol after suffering such psychological wounds in the war. The surf clubs provided a sanctuary for these injured men; they offered a source of mateship, community service, camaraderie and discipline. All of these new members created a need for more clubs, and in the early 1920s a fourth club opened up in the Newcastle branch, the Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club, and soon after that Dixon Park Surf Life Saving Club was also formed. These clubs have continued to survive and thrive in Newcastle over the past century and with the clubs active in competition, locals know that these volunteers will keep the beach safe from fatalities.

But their service also goes beyond the beach. One event that sticks in my mind as a great example of their continued community service on and off the beach was the *Pasha Bulker* incident during the storm of 2007—

the storm that forced the 40,000-tonne coal ship to become stranded on a sandbank off Nobbys Beach on the morning of 8 June after strong swells and wild winds caused the giant ship to break its moorings. The Nobbys surf lifesavers were some of the first on the scene—after all, the boat had pulled up right outside their clubhouse. They were the ones who called the Westpac Rescue Helicopter as a first response to get the men off the ship.

Last year, when commemorations for the 10-year anniversary were held, former police officer and Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club President Dave Edwards recounted that he was checking the club's windows to give them every possible chance to survive the growing storm when he first saw the recent arrival on the beach. Naturally, the lifesaving instincts kicked in and they converted the club into a command post for emergency services as authorities worked out how to get the 22 Filipino seamen off the ship. Another band of men formed an impromptu rescue team with their rubber ducky for those who were trapped in the floods that had overcome Hunter and King streets. Sadly, the rubber ducky did not survive the storm. This Saturday I will say thank you to the thousands of members who, over the years, have saved countless lives. I also say congratulations to Chief Executive Officer of Hunter Surf Life Saving, Rhonda Scruton, President Henry Scruton, and their great team for steering this fantastic organisation towards its milestone of 100 years. Congratulations and well done.

NURSE-TO-PATIENT RATIOS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (19:13): My private member's statement concerns nurses and, in particular, nurse-to-patient ratios. Last Tuesday I was proud to stand in solidarity with our nurses in support of improved nurse-to-patient ratios in our hospitals and nursing homes. I and many other members of The Greens signed the pledge supporting safe patient-nurse ratios in New South Wales hospitals. NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association member research shows that nurses and midwives remain solidly supportive of improved ratios.

An overwhelming 95 per cent of survey respondents considered the extension of ratios to be important to the nursing and midwifery professions. Similarly, 97 per cent considered the extension of ratios to be important to safe patient care and patient outcomes. Nearly 70 per cent of registered nurses who have experienced improved ratios, either directly or through other wards in their workplace, say they have had a positive impact on the workplace, with 94 per cent of RNs who had not yet experienced ratios considering them to be very important to them personally.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I interrupt the member for Ballina to remind her that members must refer to matters relating to their electorates in private members' statements.

Ms TAMARA SMITH: It is outrageous to be interrupted when I had mentioned the electorate of Ballina. The Greens support patient safety with mandatory nurse-patient ratios for all regional hospitals, in particular in my electorate. Regional patients deserve the same levels of care as those in the cities. Andrew Eadie, President of the Ballina branch of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association was recently quoted as saying:

In regional areas nurses can be responsible for five to ten acute patients, sometimes more. Having ratios will mean we can continue to guarantee quality of care. We are recommending that there is a ratio of three patients to one nurse in emergency; on wards four patients to one nurse during the day and seven patients to one nurse at night. Currently it is not uncommon to end up with one nurse to seven acute care patients in emergency.

The problem we are seeing is that with these workloads nurses are burning out, leaving the profession, retiring early or moving to Queensland where they have ratios.

The Greens have strongly backed the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association's campaign to achieve safe staffing levels for patients regardless of where they live or are treated. Former general practitioner and now Leader of The Australian Greens, Richard di Natale, recently visited Lismore Base Hospital where he met with nursing staff to support the campaign. The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association has long called for patient-nurse ratios that reflect the busy and demanding nature of nurses' work. I note in particular the incredible advocacy on this campaign of nurse and NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association member Heather Dunn.

In Ballina we urgently need better and more transparent nurse-to-patient ratios to help deliver safe care to patients regardless of whether they live in a regional area or a large city. Regional nursing staff should not be expected to work harder or put their patients' safety at risk just because they work outside of the Sydney metropolitan area. My Greens colleague in the other place and spokesperson for health, Dawn Walker, has said that part of our campaign are improved nurse staffing-to-patient ratios and skill mixes that ensure patient safety, better health outcomes, high recruitment retention, continued professional development and adequate training of staff. We know that the clinical evidence for lower nurse-to-patient ratios is strong: For every one patient added to a nurse's workload there is a 7 per cent increase in death following common surgical procedures. We should not forget babies in maternity facilities or the campaign to have registered nurses in all aged-care facilities on every shift.

I note today's announcement by the Minister for Health that Lismore Base Hospital will be part of a trial to improve patients' experience of the health care system. While no-one would argue against improving the care

and treatment of patients, let us be very clear that such a trial does not address the issues that the ratio campaign addresses. I give a shout-out to all of the nurses and midwives in the Ballina electorate who, day in and day out, make sacrifices for the betterment of their communities. I put on *Hansard* my absolute outrage at being interrupted by Temporary Speaker Aplin, who cut short the time for my contribution.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I remind the member for Ballina of the ruling by former Speaker Rozzoli. I am glad the member made reference to her electorate later in her contribution.

DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUBS

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (19:19): I speak about the local sporting clubs in my electorate and the funding that the New South Wales Government has provided to support them. There have been many major announcements that directly benefit the residents living in my electorate. I do not believe I will ever stop saying that for 49 years Labor held the electorate of Drummoyne and neglected it. Since 2011 and in just seven short years under the Liberals we have seen the greatest investment in the area. I start by acknowledging the Premier for her contribution to improving local community facilities in the Drummoyne electorate. Following collaboration with Concord Soccer Club and Inter Lions Soccer Club in my electorate, the New South Wales Government announced it would make a \$2.3 million contribution to the upgrade of Ron Routley Oval in Concord.

On completion, it will be the City of Canada Bay's first all-weather surface in the area. It will provide local teams with the opportunity to play sport on a synthetic surface, meaning games during the winter season can go ahead even after a full week of rain. As with many local playing fields, drainage has been an issue for Ron Routley Oval, but this funding will address those problems. This is a great outcome for the community. When State government works with local councils, the community is the beneficiary. It must be noted that in the Drummoyne electorate in particular, the State Government has contributed to many local sporting clubs. This is despite the fact that improvements to playing grounds have been traditionally a council responsibility as they are on council land. A good working relationship between levels of government and fair contributions from all levels of government mean projects are generally of a larger scope and really make a huge impact.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the local Australian Football League [AFL] clubs in the electorate. Recently, the State Government contributed \$200,000 in funding to St Luke's Oval, with the Federal Government already funding \$500,000 through local member Craig Laundy, towards improving the facilities at the oval. To date, there has not been a contribution from the City of Canada Bay. I urge the council to contribute funding towards this worthwhile project and to support the three AFL clubs in the area, being Drummoyne Power, Canada Bay Cannons and Concord Giants. AFL is one of the fastest-growing sports in our area and the facilities should match these statistics. The AFL clubs are seeking upgraded amenities for all players, which includes improvements to the sporting ground, new amenities and equipment including change rooms, particularly for the female players, storage, and meeting and event rooms for the community.

Another \$70,000 was committed in the last budget by the State Government towards the upgrade of the Goddard Park amenities in Concord, meaning the Concord-Burwood United Wolves and the rugby league players can also benefit from improved amenities. Earlier in the year, council opened the Campbell Park amenities block in Chiswick, which was another project that gained funding and support from all three levels of government. I was honoured to represent Premier Berejiklian at the opening of the new amenities for the Five Dock Falcons Baseball Club at Timbrell Park. It was heartening to see players and parents so proud of their new facilities. I am working and actively advocating to assist the Balmain Junior Touch Football Club, also at Timbrell Park, which is seeking some funding for its projects.

I understand that Sydney Cricket Club, in conjunction with Drummoyne Power and Drummoyne District Rugby Football Club, is also seeking to improve the facilities at Drummoyne Oval. The club intends to provide a sporting administrative hub for all sports in the inner west, an indoor multipurpose ancillary sporting facility and updated female friendly facilities, creating a legacy for women's sport in the region. At the time the Drummoyne Oval project was delivered the three levels of government in my electorate were represented by Labor members. But the best they could come up with was state-of-the-art lighting.

To the credit of the previous Labor Government, it spent a record amount of money and that should have covered the promised facilities; however, these facilities are still being awaited because the necessary funds were not made available. I will push for the club to receive the upgrades promised by the previous Labor Government. Many projects are well deserving of funds, and I am proud to say that I will continue to be a strong voice in advocating for local sporting clubs in my electorate. Sport is the very backbone of a tight-knit community. I would like to continue to see investment in local sport by all levels of government.

CENTRAL COAST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:24): I acknowledge a tireless, community-oriented member of the Central Coast community, Mr Bruce Judd, who has been a member of the Rotary Club of Woy Woy spanning a remarkable four decades from 1978 to 2018. During this time Bruce served as the president from 1984 to 1985 and was one of the driving forces in establishing a "canter committee", which went on to hold a half marathon event on the beautiful Woy Woy peninsula as one of its signature first motions. This half marathon event raised an astonishing \$4,000, which was happily donated to my previous place of work, Woy Woy High School, to enable it to rebuild the school hall after a devastating fire incident burned down the facility.

After realising the phenomenal success of the original half marathon event, Bruce and the Rotary Club of Woy Woy went on to hold consecutive fundraising marathons to which they would donate the fundraising efforts to needy charities and organisations across the Central Coast. Bruce's charity work did not finish there; it would become only one of many charitable efforts he would contribute to during his membership, and is an endearing quality of the essence of the man. Every year, without a doubt, you will be able to find Bruce selling programs at the Rotary Club of Woy Woy's annual fundraising event—Opera in the Arboretum—an event I look forward to attending, surrounded by the gorgeous natural setting of Pearl Beach and in very good company.

As well as his charity work, Bruce was able to run successful pharmacy businesses, with his first pharmacy opening in Woy Woy in the 1950s. Not long after that Bruce quickly gained respect from the Woy Woy community and became colloquially known as the "go to man" for advice and any medical assistance. Bruce has achieved and continues to achieve a great deal on behalf of the Central Coast community. I wish to celebrate and acknowledge these achievements in this House today. Great work, Bruce. We look forward to your contributions for many more years.

I thank the Central Coast Council for once again raising the Woy Woy underpass in council last night. Mayor Jane Smith moved that the council make representation to the State Government to secure funding for the development of a business case for the construction of a new railway underpass at Woy Woy to remove the Rawson Road level crossing. Mayor Smith said that Rawson Road in Woy Woy experiences high daily traffic volumes and has pedestrians and cyclists passing through the level crossing regularly. She went on to say that this road is the main arterial link to and from Woy Woy Road. The level crossing also provides an important east-west connection to adjoining suburbs on the west side of the railway line. The mayor also said that benefits of the program include removing significant risk to the rail corridor, improving emergency evacuation routes during natural disaster events, improving vehicle access to Woy Woy and southern beach areas, reducing commuter travel times, and reducing traffic congestion and delay.

The Liberal-Nationals Government promised this level crossing in 2011, and has used cost blowouts as an ongoing excuse to go no further. Instead, in our community we have since seen a death; numerous accidents, including yet another one last month; the New South Wales Berejiklian Government promising to close urban railway crossings because they are dangerous; the Federal local member spending money on how to speed up the train trip to Sydney—close the level crossing—and no further action on the underpass. In fact, all the people of the Central Coast have to show for the Woy Woy underpass promised by the Liberal-Nationals Government is an unused pedestrian underpass at Rawson Road that cost the taxpayers of New South Wales \$6 million. Alongside the people of the Gosford electorate are the people of the Terrigal electorate, who regularly complain to me about the level crossing as it is also a part of their commute to Sydney. I support the Central Coast Council in its call to secure funding for the development of a business case for the construction of a new railway underpass at Woy Woy to remove the Rawson Road level crossing.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:28
until Wednesday 26 September 2018 at 10:00.**