



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament  
First Session**

**Thursday, 15 November 2018**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Bills .....  | 1  |
| Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 .....         | 1  |
| National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Checks) Bill 2018 .....               | 1  |
| First Reading.....   | 1  |
| Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill 2018 .....       | 1  |
| Messages .....   | 1  |
| Documents .....  | 1  |
| Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption .....                   | 1  |
| Reports .....  | 1  |
| Notices .....  | 1  |
| Presentation.....  | 1  |
| Bills .....  | 1  |
| Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 .....         | 1  |
| National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Checks) Bill 2018 .....               | 1  |
| Second Reading Speech.....   | 1  |
| Second Reading Debate .....  | 2  |
| National Parks and Wildlife Legislation Amendment (Riverina) Bill 2018.....        | 5  |
| First Reading.....   | 5  |
| Second Reading Speech.....   | 5  |
| <i>Business of the House</i> .....   | 8  |
| Postponement of Business .....   | 8  |
| Bills .....  | 8  |
| Bills .....  | 8  |
| Justice Legislation Amendment (Walama Court) Bill 2018 .....                       | 8  |
| Second Reading Debate .....  | 8  |
| Motions .....  | 17 |
| Youth Programs and Support.....  | 17 |
| Visitors.....  | 20 |
| Visitors.....  | 20 |
| Motions .....  | 20 |
| Youth Programs and Support.....  | 20 |
| Members .....  | 21 |
| Valedictory Speech .....   | 21 |
| Motions .....  | 26 |
| Youth Programs and Support.....  | 26 |
| Wallsend Electorate Traffic Congestion .....                                       | 29 |
| Announcements.....   | 30 |
| Death of Jeremy Spinak, Former President of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies ..... | 30 |
| Visitors.....  | 30 |
| Visitors .....   | 30 |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Question Time.....  | 31 |
| Road Tolls.....   | 31 |
| Westconnex and Western Sydney.....  | 32 |
| Road Tolls.....   | 33 |
| Domestic Violence Law Reform .....  | 34 |
| Westconnex.....   | 36 |
| Stronger, Better Reform.....  | 36 |
| Stronger, Better Tourism and Major Events.....  | 39 |
| M4 Toll Cashback Program.....   | 40 |
| Orange Palliative Care Facility.....  | 41 |
| Regional Hospitals and Health Infrastructure.....   | 42 |
| Business of the House.....  | 44 |
| Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: ORDER OF BUSINESS .....                              | 44 |
| Announcements.....  | 45 |
| Valedictory Speeches.....   | 45 |
| Petitions.....  | 45 |
| Petitions Received.....   | 45 |
| Committees .....  | 46 |
| Committee on Children and Young People .....  | 46 |
| Report: Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales.....                                       | 46 |
| Committee on Environment and Planning.....  | 47 |
| Report: Land release and housing supply in New South Wales .....                                  | 47 |
| Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters .....   | 49 |
| Report: Inquiry into the Impact of expenditure caps for local government election campaigns ..... | 49 |
| Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission .....  | 50 |
| Report: Review of the Health Care Complaints Commission Annual Report 2016-17 .....               | 50 |
| Public Accounts Committee (PAC).....  | 51 |
| Report: Examination of Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports October 2016-May 2017 .....    | 51 |
| Staysafe (Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety).....   | 52 |
| Report: Review of Road Safety Issues for Future Inquiry.....                                      | 52 |
| Legislation Review Committee.....   | 53 |
| Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 64/56 .....   | 53 |
| Joint Committee on the Office of the Valuer General .....   | 54 |
| Report: Twelfth General Meeting with the Valuer General .....                                     | 54 |
| Committee on Children and Young People .....  | 55 |
| Report: Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales.....                                       | 55 |
| Petitions.....  | 56 |
| Kingscliff Locality Plan.....   | 56 |
| Discussion .....  | 56 |
| Matter of Public Importance .....   | 58 |
| Diwali Festival .....   | 58 |
| Community Recognition Statements .....  | 61 |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Young Citizen of the Year Nicholas Parsons .....                 | 61 |
| Tribute to Ann Symonds .....                                     | 61 |
| Winston Hills Little Athletics Centre .....                      | 62 |
| Golden Boot Award Recipient Isabelle Kelly .....                 | 62 |
| NSW Justices Association Hornsby Branch .....                    | 62 |
| Woy Woy Sustainable Living Festival .....                        | 62 |
| Wollondilly Electorate Queen's Birthday Honours Recipients ..... | 62 |
| Roughtober Sleepout .....  | 63 |
| Grandviews Women's Bowling Club .....                            | 63 |
| Tribute to the Bennetts Family .....                             | 63 |
| Indian Orthodox Church Father Thomas Varghese .....              | 63 |
| Charlestown Electorate Remembrance Day Services .....            | 63 |
| Mingara Athletics Track .....                                    | 64 |
| NSW Federation of Tamil Schools Cultural Event .....             | 64 |
| Centenary of Armistice Commemoration .....                       | 64 |
| Milton Ulladulla Family History Society .....                    | 64 |
| Tribute to Jeremy Spinak .....                                   | 64 |
| White Ribbon Walk .....  | 65 |
| World Teachers' Day Award Recipients .....                       | 65 |
| Madonna Di Loreto .....  | 65 |
| South-East NSW Lions District Convention .....                   | 65 |
| St Mary Queen of Heaven Fete .....                               | 65 |
| North Nowra Public School Memorial Garden .....                  | 66 |
| MacKillop Catholic College, Warnervale .....                     | 66 |
| Ku-Ring-Gai Historical Society Book Launch .....                 | 66 |
| St Vincent De Paul Society Toasty Talk .....                     | 66 |
| Myall Lakes Cultural Award Winner Luca Saunders .....            | 66 |
| White Ribbon Campaign .....                                      | 67 |
| Tribute to Murray Wilcox, AO .....                               | 67 |
| Bicol Communities League Twelfth Anniversary .....               | 67 |
| Darling Point Society .....                                      | 67 |
| Brisbane Water Secondary College .....                           | 67 |
| Berowra Netball Club .....                                       | 68 |
| Football NSW State Awards Night 2018 .....                       | 68 |
| Wollondilly Justice of the Peace .....                           | 68 |
| Mr John Fairley .....  | 68 |
| Tanner Kirschner .....   | 68 |
| Private Members' Statements .....                                | 68 |
| Sebastian Aguiar .....   | 68 |
| South Coast Road Upgrades .....                                  | 69 |
| Baryulgil Community .....  | 70 |
| Collaroy Surf Life Saving Club .....                             | 71 |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Tuggerah Railway Station Lifts .....                      | 72 |
| Myall Lakes Electorate Infrastructure .....               | 72 |
| Wollondilly Electorate .....                              | 73 |
| Ettalong Channel Dredging.....                            | 74 |
| Tribute to Kevin Ward .....                               | 75 |
| Pittwater Electorate Environment .....                    | 76 |
| Tribute to Dr Max Shaw .....                              | 77 |
| Sport.....  | 77 |
| Bankstown Electorate Remembrance Day Commemorations ..... | 78 |
| Miranda Electorate.....                                   | 79 |
| Remembrance Day Centenary .....                           | 80 |
| Remembrance Day Centenary .....                           | 80 |
| Berowra Musical Society .....                             | 81 |
| Centenary of Armistice .....                              | 82 |
| Hornsby Heights Football Club .....                       | 83 |
| Roseville RSL Sub-Branch .....                            | 84 |
| Centenary of Armistice Day .....                          | 85 |

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Thursday, 15 November 2018**

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

**The Speaker** read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

## *Bills*

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS (CARE AND PROTECTION) AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

**NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (WORKER CHECKS) BILL 2018**

### **First Reading**

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

**The SPEAKER:** I order that the second readings of the bills stand as orders of the day for a later hour.

**GOVERNMENT SECTOR FINANCE LEGISLATION (REPEAL AND AMENDMENT) BILL 2018**

### **Messages**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it does not insist on its amendments to the abovementioned bill.

## *Documents*

**INSPECTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

### **Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I table the report of the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled "Report concerning the non-disclosure of information relating to Mr Paul Gardner Brook by the Independent Commission Against Corruption during Operations Jasper and Credo (Special Report 19/01)", dated November 2018. I order that the report be printed.

*[Notices of motions given.]*

*[During giving of notices of motions]*

## *Notices*

### **PRESENTATION**

**The SPEAKER:** I inform the person in the public gallery that photographs of the Chamber are not permitted.

## *Bills*

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS (CARE AND PROTECTION) AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

**NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (WORKER CHECKS) BILL 2018**

### **Second Reading Speech**

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

That these bills be now read a second time.

The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Checks) Bill 2018 were introduced in the other place on 24 October 2018 and are in the same form. The second reading speech appears at pages 53 to 59 in the proof *Hansard* for that day. I commend the bills to the House.

### Second Reading Debate

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (10:14):** I lead for the Opposition in debate on the cognate bills, the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Checks) Bill 2018. I state from the outset that the Opposition will seek to have these bills separated. The New South Wales Opposition will not oppose the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Checks) Bill 2018 but it will oppose the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018.

After eight long years of neglecting the child protection system, the Berejiklian Government is now attempting to ram through draconian adoption and guardianship laws in the dying days of its government. This comes after recent data revealed that more than 92,000 children were reported last year as being at significant risk of harm, with 60,000 yet to receive a face-to-face assessment. Despite 12 months with no data available regarding the number of children at risk of significant harm in this State, some detail finally became available during a supplementary hearing. In that hearing we learned that more children have been reported as being at risk of significant harm but fewer children—from 31.2 per cent last year to 28 per cent this year—are receiving a face-to-face assessment.

In my mind, these draconian laws are a last-ditch attempt by the Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to cement a legacy for herself at the expense of vulnerable children in this State. The Minister just commended her bills to the House, yet she chose not to speak on them. The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 was introduced in the upper House in what seems like a political fix as every single amendment proposed by NSW Labor or The Greens was rejected and no other amendments were proposed by any other crossbench party or by the Government. This comes on the back of a discussion paper that was distributed to a select few stakeholders last year. As I understand it, that process investigated the sorts of changes that should be made to better support the child protection system in New South Wales.

Many stakeholders participated in the discussion in good faith and many believed there would be a draft exposure bill. That has not happened. We have not heard from the Minister, her department, the Executive, the Government or the Cabinet for close to 12 months. For 11 months following the initial discussion with stakeholders held in December of 2017 there was complete silence. Then, less than 40 hours after the nation apologised to the victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse, this Minister did a media drop and announced the outcomes of the discussion paper. She then announced that legislation would be introduced imminently. It says a lot about this Minister that she would do that when the people who had suffered those horrific experiences were still wiping away their tears after hearing the emotional apology, which received a mixed reaction from many of the victims and survivors.

The bill also comes on the back of it being very clear that the Department of Family and Community Services is still dealing with more than 800 claims concerning allegations of sexual and physical abuse of people, now adults, who were in care as children. The Minister is now attempting to ram through this legislation. The proposed changes to impose new guardianship and adoption orders were not discussed with stakeholders. For example, the proposed two-year maximum time frame for restoration fails to recognise the systemic barriers faced by vulnerable and marginalised families in this State.

These changes have been put forward without any real consideration of the impact on the wellbeing of the child and with no resources allocated to support these draconian changes. The Minister chose not to participate in the supplementary estimates hearing for this portfolio but when the Secretary of Family and Community Services [FACS] was asked whether additional resources would be made available to support these families to achieve these new time limits and to be able to demonstrate to the court that their children should be restored to them, he said as far as he knew no additional resources had been allocated.

Yesterday, outside Parliament House at 12.30 p.m., I joined in a rally of a broad range of organisations, including community groups, the union movement and Grandmothers Against Removals. That was our second rally; the first rally was held more than a week ago. We want the public and the media to understand that there is a growing chorus of opposition from the vast majority of organisations—I am not suggesting it is unanimous because one or two bodies are supportive of these changes—about the detrimental impact of this legislation now and for many years to come. I make it clear that NSW Labor does not want to see any child left languishing in care. It is unacceptable that there are 18,000 children in care.

For a long time the Opposition has been calling for reform in this space. Former Premier Mike Baird was concerned about the number of children in care and commissioned David Tune to prepare a report on the state of out-of-home care in New South Wales. In November 2016 the then Minister for Family and Community Services, Mr Brad Hazzard, made an initial extract of that report available. There was an expectation that the full report



would be made public soon afterwards. In January 2017 former Premier Mike Baird resigned and Gladys Berejiklian became the Premier. Despite former Premier Baird removing Minister Goward from the FACS portfolio, the new Premier chose to reinstate her to that position—to the shock of many stakeholders and the broader community.

In this place we often play politics but I note that in this sector Brad Hazzard is seen in a good light. I do not think there would be many who would have anything other than praise for Brad Hazzard when he was the Minister responsible for the FACS portfolio. However, the Tune report was not made public at the expected time. It took another 18 long months for the report to be made public, and that was only after threats and moves to censure Minister Harwin in the upper House. The Government then agreed, perhaps reluctantly, to provide the report as well as another two reports that the Opposition and the crossbenches had been calling for.

The Tune report shocked many, both in this place and more broadly. It painted a very stark picture of the state of out-of-home care in New South Wales. The report also contained very clear suggestions as to how to cope with the number of children in out-of-home care. The sector and the community have never had a real opportunity to examine the information, suggestions and recommendations contained in that report because of its late release. I hope in the future that opportunity will arise. David Tune is a very reputable public servant. Indeed, it is my understanding that he is the recipient of the Public Service Medal. He is well respected by people of all political persuasions. It is a travesty that a full review of his recommendations by this Government, and particularly this Minister, has yet to take place publicly and properly.

A discussion paper entitled "Shaping a Better Child Protection System" proposed a number of legislative amendments. A number of submissions were made, but I have not seen them. It is my understanding that they were not made public. I appreciate that the Government undertook a discussion paper. It is always important to review and seek the wise counsel of those at the coalface in child protection, both in the government and the non-government sectors. It is important to canvass their views. I am not in any way disparaging the Government for its initial discussion paper but it is important to make those views public. An expectation was formed that a draft exposure bill on such significant changes proposed in this legislation would be made available. Indeed, I find it difficult to comprehend that a draft exposure bill has not followed the discussion that was initiated in December 2017.

I also find it hard to believe that would have been a Cabinet decision rather than a decision of the Minister. Many stakeholders have raised concerns. The two rallies that have been held outside Parliament House indicate there is real concern about this legislation. The Government should have considered establishing a short-term inquiry. Indeed, last Monday it was proposed that a short inquiry on this bill be held, possibly this Friday or next Monday, but that was rejected. I would have thought these proposed changes would warrant an inquiry, albeit a short inquiry. Last night in the other place a motion was moved to refer the legislation to a standing committee, which would provide us with an opportunity to assess the potential impacts of the proposed changes. That motion was rejected. Sadly, this Government has rejected that opportunity.

Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 proposes changes to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. The changes outlined in schedule 1 [4] to the amendment bill alter the care Act to enable the secretary to ask the department or government-funded agencies to provide prioritised services to children and families assessed as being at risk of significant harm. Items [2], [5], [7] and [9] make consequential amendments and clarifications to the Act in relation to the amendments set out in schedule 1 [4]. Items [49] to [51] of schedule 1 also make ancillary amendments in relation to the provision of prioritised services to children or young persons identified as being at risk of significant harm.

Schedule 1 [8] inserts a definition of "children's services" into the Act, which outlines individuals who have mandatory reporting requirements if they believe a child is at risk of significant harm. The section states that "children's services" include an education and care service within the meaning of the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW and a State-regulated education and care service within the meaning of the Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Act 2011. Schedule 1 [12] amends the care Act to provide that the secretary must, on determining that a child or a young person is at risk of significant harm, offer alternative dispute resolution processes to the family of the child or young person prior to seeking care orders, subject to certain exceptions. Many of the stakeholders do not object to that. I think everybody would agree that offering alternative dispute resolution measures is necessary as long as the parties come to those alternative dispute resolution processes on an equal footing. That would be the critical element.

The exceptions set out that this does not apply in relation to the family of a child or young person if the secretary is of the opinion that their participation in an alternative dispute resolution process would not be appropriate due to exceptional circumstances or if the secretary becomes aware of criminal proceedings or a police investigation that may be compromised by alternative dispute resolution processes. Schedule 1, items [3], [6], [10], [11] and [17] make consequential amendments to the requirement to offer alternative dispute resolution

processes. Schedule 1 [13] amends the care Act to allow the Children's Court to make guardianship orders by consent without the need for a care application or a finding that a child needs care and protection. I will have much to say about that; what the Minister is suggesting is a true travesty.

The proposed changes also allow the court to make a guardianship order by consent without first finding that there is no realistic possibility of restoring the child to his or her parents or family. New section 38 (2B) (c) also attempts to provide safeguards for parents consenting to guardianship orders by requiring that, before making an order, the court must be satisfied that they have had independent legal advice regarding the effect of consenting to a guardianship arrangement. Schedule 1 [14] inserts new subsections to section 38 that state that the secretary may only seek a guardianship order by consent if satisfied that the guardian has undergone a suitability assessment and presented a care plan that meets the existing requirements.

Schedule 1 [15] inserts a section into the care Act that gives responsibility for a child whose guardian or carer has died to the secretary for 21 days or until the court makes an order allocating parental responsibility for the child. While the secretary has responsibility for the child he or she must investigate and assess the most appropriate care arrangements for the child. Schedules 1 [18] and [46] make consequential amendments to the Act that relate to the allocation of responsibility to the secretary in these circumstances. Schedule 1 [20] provides that once the court has approved a permanency plan that identifies restoration, guardianship or adoption as the preferred outcome for the child, it can only make an order giving full responsibility to the Minister for a maximum of 24 months. This is the arbitrary 24-month, or two-year, time frame that has caused considerable concern for the Opposition, The Greens and many stakeholders—I would say the vast majority of stakeholders—within the sector.

Even those who work quite closely with the Government are now conceding that the particularly arbitrary 24-month time frame is a serious concern. I remember former Minister Brad Hazzard also thinking about having a time frame. I remember him saying that there needed to be some sort of time frame in relation to family restoration. We all share that view. Nobody in this place wants children to be languishing in care. But it is of serious concern to have an arbitrary figure like 24 months when this Minister presides over one of the most dysfunctional child protection systems and when this Minister underspent \$100 million over the course of two years to make savings in the Family and Community Services budget.

The Minister was making efficiency savings on the back of the plight of thousands of vulnerable children and their families. She knew that the number of face-to-face assessments by caseworkers were dropping on her watch, yet she was still prepared to make those cuts to FACS. She also knew that the time frame of 24 months is completely unachievable for the vast majority of marginalised families who are required to be on the housing queue. We know that the waiting list for housing is five to 10 years. When those families are told that they need to have a stable home—a two-bedroom or three-bedroom house—what is the waiting time for that? It is 10 years in most parts of Sydney and regional New South Wales.

When a family member in regional New South Wales is told that they have to demonstrate that they have either dealt with their substance abuse or entered rehabilitation it can be very difficult to access the types of counselling services required. I can name dozens or more towns across New South Wales where they would be lucky to have one clinical mental health psychologist available even in a part-time position to deal with some of the pressures that some of our communities face. We know that there are long queues for those types of services in many parts of New South Wales. The Minister knows it all too well.

To put an arbitrary figure of 24 months in legislation is utterly outrageous. There is no way that the New South Wales Opposition can support this bill. We will not support this bill. Schedule 1 [21] amends the care Act to allow the Children's Court on its own motion to conduct reviews of the implementation of care plans. Schedule 1, items [23], [24], [26] and [27] amend the care Act to insert the phrase "within a reasonable period" in provision in relation to the possibility of restoration and the preparation of permanency plans. A reasonable period for those purposes is defined as "not exceeding 24 months".

Schedule 1 [28] allows the Children's Court to make contact orders of more than 12 months allowing a child subject to a guardianship arrangement to have contact with their parents or family for the duration of that guardianship order. Schedule 1, items [29], [30] and [32] amend section 90 of the care Act. The amendments restate the issues the court must currently consider as primary considerations when granting leave to make an order to change a care order and outline new matters that must be taken into account when considering an application for leave, including the child's view, the length of time the child has been in care, and the stability of the current placement. Schedule 1 [34] inserts in the Act that a party to care proceedings before the Children's Court may make an application to vary an interim care order. I will have more to say about that later in my speech.

Amendments proposed in schedule 1 [35] state that the name of any child or young person who is currently or has previously been in out-of-home care must not be published or broadcast in any form that may be

accessible by a person in New South Wales, with the exclusion of any inquest by the Coroner's Court. Schedule 1 [43] amends section 153 of the care Act from operation of other arrangements to operation of other supported out-of-home care arrangements and states that the secretary may provide support in respect of the residential care.

**Business interrupted.**

## **NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (RIVERINA) BILL 2018**

### **First Reading**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mr Austin Evans, read a first time and printed.**

### **Second Reading Speech**

**Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (10:43):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

On 20 May 2010 the National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Bill 2010 (No 2) was passed in the New South Wales Legislative Council. The hasty passage of that bill—it had been reintroduced in amended form and passed by the lower House fewer than 12 hours earlier—ended an almost 150-year timber industry in the Riverina red gum forest. The creation of the Riverina red gum parks in 2010 virtually shut down a local timber industry that had existed for nearly 150 years, contributed \$164 million per year to the local economy and was the source of 550 direct and indirect local jobs. The decision was announced by former Premier Nathan Rees on 3 December 2009. A few hours later, he was rolled by Kristina Keneally.

The rapid passage of the bill was to allow Labor to cancel forestry operations in the red gum forests before the New South Wales State election on 26 March 2011, thereby securing a preference deal with The Greens. On 1 July 2010 more than 100,000 hectares of forest were transferred to the national park estate. Forestry operations ceased, 550 jobs and the livelihoods of families who were dependent on those jobs were consigned to the scrap heap. The Institute of Australian Foresters denounced the decision at the time. The institute stated in a press release—which was largely ignored by the press—that the Government's claims were misleading. It said:

The NSW Government decision to effectively shut down the red gum timber industry may be seen as good for the environment by people in urban NSW, particularly those who are trying to be environmentally responsible.

The Institute of Foresters of Australia [IFA] is, however, extremely disappointed by this decision and believes the people of NSW are being seriously misled as to benefits that it will deliver. This decision transfers over 100,000 hectares of regrowth forest from State forest to national park and commits \$97 million taxpayer compensation to close a vibrant and sustainable industry that is producing around \$72 million per year in economic activity as well as committing millions of dollars each year for the administration of the new national parks. An estimated 550 workers will lose their jobs comprising 250 direct losses, including forest management, and 300 indirect losses.

It was all done to appease inner city and North Coast environmental activists—people who did not live in the area and many of whom had never visited the area. Make no mistake, it was a grubby deal done by Labor to save a few seats. The red gum decision clearly was a political one made by a Labor Government that knew it was going to lose the 2011 election in a landslide but was desperate to save a few seats. Labor hatched a deal with The Greens: In exchange for Labor taking 45 State forests from the community and handing them over to the national park estate it would receive The Greens' preferences. Those forests were locked up. Members from both sides have denied the deal, but it is fact. In 2010 eight Riverina locals signed statutory declarations saying that then environment Minister Frank Sartor had told a meeting of timber workers in Deniliquin the following:

I am going to give you a lesson in politics. The Greens hold 15 per cent of the vote. We need their vote to stay in power. They also want a significant national park and they want it in red gum. It is all about Green preferences.

The original bill that Labor introduced to Parliament proposed a five-year timber industry transition plan. The Greens went to war. The Greens member the Hon. Ian Cohen stated: The Government will desperately need Greens preferences at this election. My position is, only if they deserve it and have earned it. The river red gums are pivotal as far as I am concerned. We will not be giving over preferences automatically at this election. I will be recommending that we do not simply recommend preferences either way. Labor will come begging, but if they do not deliver on these forests in a sustainable way they can go to hell. Labor later withdrew the bill and replaced it with a new one that scrapped the transition arrangements and upped the blood money it would pay to timber workers who were about to lose their jobs overnight. It was a final gesture to The Greens. When speaking in debate on the second bill, Frank Sartor said that Labor had taken the unusual step to remake the bill because—and I quote from *Hansard* on 19 May 2010—"we recognised that we could go further and give the communities of the Riverina, the timber industry and the river red gum forests a better future". I will let that sink in.

This is why the Riverina feels so much anger, hurt and betrayal. It was the lowest of deals, made to save the skins of inner-city Labor members of Parliament who were part of the worst Government our State has ever known,

and they still lost in a landslide. There were numerous attempts by Labor to justify, through science, its decision to lock the land up and end forestry. Each attempt failed. No report has ever confirmed or even suggested that forestry operations were the cause of the decline in forest health. Every report confirmed it was a lack of water from drought, but not just any drought—the millennium drought, which is still believed to be the worst drought New South Wales has experienced in recorded history.

Scientists claimed the days of flood were over and the locking up was essential. In 2009 one scientist even bet a case of beer on it with a local forester. Guess what? The forester won. In 2010 the forest flooded. For more consecutive years nature mocked the pessimistic experts and their advisory panel. The trees recovered marvellously, but the townships that for so long had helped to manage and protect the forest did not. The 2009 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] report that Labor used to justify the decision said this, and it summarises the entirety of the report in one paragraph:

One of the controlling variables of the river red gum forests has been the frequency of large "landscape-restoration" floods. These are no longer experienced and are not likely to return. As a consequence, the NRC believes that these landscapes have undergone a regime shift and behave in a different way. Once the forests could sustain a forest industry, attract tourism, and harbour a range of animals and plants and still regenerate, despite a highly variable climate. Now the flooding regime has been fundamentally changed, which has altered floodplain processes and feedback loops to such an extent that the forest ecosystems and forestry industry are in decline.

The science was flawed, the justification tainted. Since the original report, the forest has flooded several times—despite the predictions—and the ecology of the forest has stabilised. Notably, the 2011 outcomes report on the funded commitments arising from the Government's river red gum decision states:

Significant natural and plant flooding of all red gum reserves continued throughout the reporting period. Construction materials purchased for reserved establishment works have been stockpiled awaiting favourable weather and access conditions.

How ironic. Work to establish the national park had to be delayed because of significant flooding that the NRC report said would never happen again. Flooding happened within a year. It means that we shut down an entire industry in my electorate for no reason. I say again that the environmental rationale was farcical. In 2011 former member for Murray-Darling John Williams said to the Senate:

You lock up country and you leave it, the grass grows, the fuel develops, lightning strikes and it burns and is destroyed. But people think this is conservation. I think it is a disgrace.

He also said:

... red gum cannot stand fire. If you burn the forests in the Pilliga of box and ironbark timbers, they will suck it back again, but once red gum is burned, it is destroyed.

That is a view borne out by experience of the land and it is also supported by hard science. A CSIRO publication states:

[Red gum] is very fire sensitive and even low intensity fires may cause cambial injury. Fire kills regeneration and even mature trees are susceptible if the fire is intense enough since ... lacks a lignotuber.

A lignotuber is a rounded woody growth at the root-stem junction that protects the stem against destruction by fire. The publication continues:

Fire will cause damage to the butt, lowering the value of the timber and predisposing the tree to fungal and insect attack.

The Greens and Labor contested that the red gums were threatened. Again, that was untrue. Red gums are invasive. In fact, they are the most prolific of all eucalypts and are not endangered. The Greens also argued that forestry would not continue under the Ramsar Convention. They were wrong again. It is important to note that the Ramsar wise-use principles include sustainable timber harvesting. That was even conceded in the NRC report into river red gum forests and wetlands in recommendation 11.1.2.4, which states:

There are still sound reasons to manage some river red gum forests for multiple uses and benefits such as conservation, timber production, tourism, and recreation values. Some of these forests are large and diverse enough to sustain conservation values, and be managed in ways that will maintain key ecological functions and also support a boutique timber industry.

Some ongoing logging of the Central Murray forests is possible even with Australia's obligations under the Ramsar Convention provided that logging is consistent with "wise use" as specified in the Convention and with sustainable harvesting and management of the forest.

Prior to the bill being passed, The Greens did an impressive job of convincing people that the red gums used for railway sleepers were originally habitats for endangered species, which allowed The Greens to attack the logging industry. The rhetoric may have fooled a few city folk, but the fact is that sleepers are cut from trees felled in essential thinning operations or from larger sawlogs that fail to meet the standards for top-quality timber. Trees that had many hollows used as nesting sites were never felled for sleepers or any other sawn timber purposes. The reason for that was pure common sense: Hollows in a tree mean there is not enough solid wood to be useful. In

addition, since the 1980s so-called habitat trees have been protected by forestry regulation and any law-abiding timber harvester would not partake in the destruction of habitat trees.

The Labor-Greens coalition claimed that the red gums were in dire straits and needed saving. Every report and every scientist acknowledged that the forests were in ill health because in 2010 when the forests were locked up New South Wales was in the final year of the 1996 to 2010 millennium drought, which is our worst on record. Its impact was particularly fierce in the Riverina, with the lowest inflows in the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers in history. It was neither forestry nor human involvement in the forests that harmed their health; it was drought. The decision was made by a Labor Government with zero understanding of the complex nature of those forests and what it takes to keep them healthy. The forests depend on flooding and rainfall inflows into the Murray system. In 2010 those forests were in poor health because of 15 years without major flooding. Too many trees competing with little soil moisture exacerbates the problem.

Prior to the preservation, the red gum forests had been an integral part of the Murray and Riverina community for 150 years. They were a place for recreation, ecological enjoyment and production. The families that worked in the industry were third-generation foresters. Their ancestors were amongst the first to settle in the region. Before I tell their stories let me first explain what the bill does and does not do. The bill will repeal the Murray Valley National Park and the Murray Valley Regional Park and restore the forests as State forests—24 in total. The bill is not an attack on national parks, as The Greens and Labor would have us all believe.

When Labor reserved those parks in 2010, it converted 45 State forests into nine national parks. The bill proposes to revoke only two of those. It could propose to revoke all nine, but it does not. While national parks are highly vested in preservation, State forests can be managed for many purposes—sustainable timber harvesting, recreation, grazing, wildlife, fishing and more. The revocation of the bill will allow the re-entry of human activity that will coexist with the native flora and fauna as it did for 150 years and thousands of years before that through Aboriginal participation.

Importantly, it will allow for the reinvigoration of the timber industry in the area and provide a significant economic boost to towns such as Deniliquin, Mathoura, Moama and Barham. This bill is of the utmost importance to my constituents in the Murray electorate. For eight years they have faced significant economic hardship. Hundreds of jobs have been lost and all that was offered to employees of the timber industry was a payment made under the Red Gum Structural Adjustment Package. I will tell members what they might have been eligible for: a special redundancy package of up to \$81,360, a training allowance of up to \$10,000 and a relocation allowance of up to \$20,000. The impact of Labor's decision is best expressed by Chris Crump—and I am glad to see Chris and his wife, Dawn, with us today in the gallery. Chris is a third-generation forester from Mathoura. He said:

For well over 100 years we had a viable timber industry but now out of 40 sleeper cutters, 20 firewood cutters and five sawmills, our mill and one at Koondrook are all that is left of an industry that less than ten years ago was worth \$86 million a year to the regional economy.

It was a professional, responsible industry that was an integral part of the community. This is best captured by Russell Douglas, a third-generation forester, who said:

These foresters took great pride in their profession, where they worked in the timber industry implementing log grading tables and finding out just how these flooded red gum trees and this unique basin operates. They were also citizens of the communities, part of the sporting clubs, their children attended the local schools, and in many cases they took on roles in the communities. In 1891, the then NSW Government began thinning the red gums along the Murray River. Forest ranger John Manton pioneered this operation which set the development of the red gum forest. For well over 150 years, this forest has been a source of revenue for the State of NSW and, at the same time, increasing the wealth and wellbeing of the workers, creating jobs and income for the whole timber industry and communities.

It is also important to understand that these forests were not part of the original landscape in the Riverina. In the words of Chris Crump:

These forests are not "old growth"—they are a product of white settlement.

My father, my grandfather, uncles and cousins all told me there had been no forests here when the pioneers arrived. They had no agenda. To them it was a simple fact that they had known all their lives. They had no reason to lie when they told me what they knew as early history.

We have a map obtained from the state archives offices in Sydney, drawn by a government surveyor in 1848. It does not show any trees in the area where the forest grows today, only sandhills and reed beds. This backs what our ancestors told us! The only forests marked on the map are box forests on the west side of the Gulpa Creek.

One thing that the Labor and Greens coalition promised in 2010 is that we would have increased visitation to the park and that income from tourism would increase. The community surrounding Deniliquin were told that for every job lost from the timber industry, they would have one replaced either in the park or from tourism. Local tourism figures actually show a fall of 30 per cent since the forests were locked up. It was recently reported that

for the Mathoura newsagency and hardware store, run by a gentleman named Kevin Laws for the past 18 years, income has dropped 40 per cent since the forests were closed to logging due to a lack of tourism.

I make a point about the politicisation of this issue in recent months. The river red gum and the people who relied on access to the timber have been used as a political football by The Greens, Labor and the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party. Members should not be mistaken: The activities undertaken by the latter party could be more damaging than those of members opposite, who locked up the forest and threw away the key in the first place. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party is nothing more than a wolf dressed in sheep's clothing. It says it stands with the Deniliquin community; however, once its members get to Macquarie Street their position is so watered down there is little left to offer that community. On 27 May 2015 in the other place notice was given by the Hon. Robert Brown to:

... bring in a bill for an Act to repeal the National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Act 2010 and to reverse the land transfers to the national park estate effected by that Act. (National Park Estate (Riverina Red Gum Reservations) Repeal Bill)

Let us compare that with his party's current position as outlined in the National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Tree Thinning Operations) Bill 2018, which only goes so far as to authorise the continuation of tree-thinning operations in the Murray Valley National Park—a practice that already occurs, with responsibility retained by the chief executive. This is an incredible backflip. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party's policy will put the future of the red gum industry directly in the hands of those who locked up the forest in the first place and who have lost the trust of the Deniliquin community.

Before concluding, I acknowledge those who have been part of this fight for the past eight years: Chris and Dawn Crump, who are with us today; David Joss, who has done a huge amount of research; Ben Danckert, who is also here today; Russell Douglas; Joan Douglas; Maree McCaskill; and David Landini. I introduce this bill to restore what was taken from the community, to right past wrongs, to restore lost jobs and a lost economy, and to breathe life back into a community that has struggled for eight years. The bill finally gives our community a voice on this issue. It is not about me; I have a job. It is a voice for those who lost their jobs and the families who lost their livelihoods and communities. The people of the Murray electorate are resilient but they can take only so much. As a responsible Government, we have an obligation to these people to help protect their livelihoods. Whatever happens from here, I will continue to fight this issue on behalf of my community. I will not give up. We will not give up. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Business of the House*

## **POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS**

### **Bills**

**Mr NICK LALICH:** On behalf of Mr Michael Daley: I postpone General Business Order of the Day (for Bills) No. 1 [Plastic Shopping Bags (Prohibition on Supply by Retailers) Bill].

*Bills*

## **JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (WALAMA COURT) BILL 2018**

### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 25 October 2018.**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (11:07):** The Government recognises the need for multifaceted initiatives to address Aboriginal incarceration rates and the causes of over-representation of Indigenous people in our justice system. For a variety of reasons, however, the Government does not support the Justice Legislation Amendment (Walama Court) Bill 2018. It is, of course, beyond doubt that Aboriginal offenders are over-represented in our criminal justice system, and that is a national tragedy. However, the Government has implemented and continues to implement various initiatives to address that over-representation. Broader social issues and systemic justice system issues contribute to it, and the Government is committed to addressing over-representation in the criminal justice system.

The bill, which intends to establish a Walama Court for the sentencing of Aboriginal accused persons, has almost no detail on important matters governing the court's operation. It seeks to establish the Walama Court as a separate division of the District Court, exercising the District Court's criminal jurisdiction. It also seeks to amend the District Court Act to give wide powers to the District Court Rules Committee and Chief Judge to create new procedures and practice notes for the Walama Court. The bill also seeks to amend the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 to confer jurisdiction on the Walama Court, instead of the State Parole Authority, to deal

with offenders on whom the court imposes intensive community correction orders and who fail to comply with those orders.

The bill misses key details that should be considered by Parliament and form part of legislation creating such a court. An external inter-agency working group has separately developed a proposal for the Walama Court, which the Government is still considering and to which the bill has no regard in relation to providing details. The bill in question deviates from some of the carefully considered elements of the working group's proposal. The Walama working group is chaired by Her Honour Judge Dina Yehia of the District Court. Other members include public defenders, representatives from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid NSW, Aboriginal Legal Service and Department of Justice. The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] and the University of New South Wales were also formerly involved.

May I explain the methodology currently being considered by the working group. The working group has carefully considered and developed a proposal for a blended Walama Court model utilising elements of the successful New South Wales Drug Court and County Koori Court in Victoria. The blended model involves 15 detailed steps incorporating the elements found, across several evaluations, to be central to the success of the Drug Court and Victorian Koori Court. These steps include steps one and two: eligibility and election criteria. To participate, the accused must be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and intend to plead guilty, or to appeal the severity of their sentence, in relation to any offence, excluding sexual offences but including a breach of an intensive correction order [ICO] and they must also elect to participate in the Walama Court program.

If these criteria are satisfied, a trial judge must refer the offender to the Walama Court ballot, which is conducted by a statistical model developed by BOCSAR and used to determine whether offenders are accepted. This ballot is necessary given an excess of those in the ballot over places within Walama Court programs, as envisaged by the working group. If an offender is accepted by the ballot, a screening process follows to determine the cultural background of the offender and, where relevant, the victim. This also assists in the selection of appropriate elders. A community corrections officer is also allocated to the offender at this point. These are steps three to five in the working group proposal.

Steps six to eight involve preparation for, and the carrying out of, a sentencing conversation involving the offender, the judge, elders, legal representatives, the victim and other correctional, police and court representatives—known as the full Walama Court. Agreed statements of fact would be tendered and victim impact statements are given in the form chosen by the victim in the normal way. Reports may be required by the Walama Court from victims, witnesses, experts and others, and witnesses may be required to be available at the sentencing conversation. The sentencing conversation may take place before or after submissions and, importantly, is to include the full Walama Court and wide community, elder, Corrections and victim interests.

Step nine involves the imposition of a sentence by the judge in accordance with the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 and common law principles but with regard to the opinions of the Indigenous elders on the full Walama Court and other source material concerning general and specific social disadvantage suffered by the offender. Steps 10 and 11 of the Walama working group proposal set out the alternative next steps to be taken depending on the custodial sentence imposed and program development that occurs if the custodial sentence is in a certain range. If the offender receives a sentence of full-time custody and the non-parole period is more than three years, the offender will serve that sentence. If the non-parole period imposed is three years or less, the offender attends a correctional unit on a similar model to the Drug Court unit for assessment of the offender's individual needs and suitability for a community-based sentence.

For example, cultural connection and understanding, drug and alcohol treatment, health, accommodation, education and other supports are assessed. The needs of the victim are also considered and a program is devised and discussed with the full Walama Court. Close judicial supervision is a key feature of all programs. Steps 13 to 15 involve program acceptance, commencement and monitoring. If the judge accepts the program, the custodial sentence is suspended and orders are made for the program to be put in place. All participants must abstain from illegal drugs and, if required, alcohol; and comply with other program requirements—for example, urinalysis, counselling and compliance with residential arrangements. Frequent reporting to the judge is required, although different levels of judicial supervision are involved at different points in the program, with higher supervision in the earlier stages.

Sanctions and incentives are underlying features of all Walama Court programs and, if a participant fails repeatedly to comply with the requirements of their program, the judge may cancel the program and commit the person to complete their term of imprisonment in custody. The bill omits virtually all this detail, which should be of great concern to the House. It does not contain important eligibility requirements, such as offender election to participate, or exclude certain categories of offences from being referred to, or dealt with by, the Walama Court. For example, it does not exclude sexual offences. The bill does not make clear, other than an apparent intention

for the court to employ intensive corrections orders, what alternative programs and community sentencing options might be imposed by the Walama Court.

May I compare the bill with the key elements of the working group proposal? The first is eligibility and election criteria. Under the working group proposal, in order to participate an accused must not only intend to plead guilty but also elect to participate. There are also exclusions from eligibility in relation to sexual offences. The bill, on the other hand, does not require an accused to show willingness to participate through election, nor does it contain any exclusions from eligibility for certain categories of offences. While the bill contemplates use of intensive correction orders—and those orders cannot be granted for serious sexual offenders—the bill does not exclude sexual offenders from being referred by a trial judge to the Walama Court. The bill does not rule out the Walama Court creating sentencing procedures and options other than ICOs, including programs of the type contemplated by the working group proposal, without excluding sexual offenders.

A sentencing conversation is a further step in the working group proposal where the accused, judge, community elders, legal representatives, victims and other correctional, police and court representatives—collectively, the full Walama Court—discuss the reasons for offending, the effect on victims and other matters relevant to sentencing. The bill is silent on this. Sentencing and program development are further key steps. Again, the bill spells out none of this. Although it contemplates imposition of ICOs—a form of custodial sentence of up to two years that the offender serves in the community—the bill contains no detail on development of an appropriate program, including wraparound services.

If the judge of the Walama Court accepts the program devised, the sentence is suspended and orders are made for the program to be put in place under the working group model. All participants in Walama Court programs must abstain from illegal drugs and, where required, alcohol. They must comply with other program requirements, such as urinalysis, counselling and residential arrangements, and report frequently to the judge. The bill contemplates the use of ICOs, which can include conditions similar to those imposed on programs under the Walama working group proposal.

Sanctions and incentives are underlying features of all programs under the working group proposal. Under that proposal, if a participant repeatedly fails to comply with the requirements of their program, the judge may cancel the program and commit the person to complete their term of imprisonment in custody. The bill does not include standard program conditions and options for dealing with non-compliance. The bill does not include key details for the operation of the Walama Court and leaves these matters to court practice notes and rules. The bill omits key requirements around eligibility, sentencing conversations with elders and victims, circumstances where a custodial sentence may be suspended, assessment for program suitability, standard program compliance requirements, judicial oversight and circumstances warranting program termination.

Given the potential impact on victims and the community, it is important that these and all essential elements for the success of the Walama Court are put before Parliament and considered properly before the court is legislated. These are matters that should not be left completely to court practice notes and rules. The Walama Court proposal as developed by the working group was conceived as a blended court model, using elements of the New South Wales Drug Court and the County Koori Court in Victoria. It draws on elements of both models, which are aimed at reducing reoffending, including judicial supervision, involvement of elders and support from wraparound health, drug treatment, accommodation and other service providers. The involvement of these stakeholders in sentencing, program design and other key points in the Walama Court process is critical to success, and yet the bill does not build in these critical success elements and stakeholders.

Some offences are simply not appropriate to be referred to the Walama Court. This is not addressed by the bill. For example, the working group's proposal excludes sexual offences from being referred to the Walama Court process. The bill does not exclude those offenders from being referred to the Walama Court by a trial judge or from potentially accessing community and non-custodial sentencing options other than ICOs. The bill could theoretically empower the Walama Court to allow offenders guilty of offences such as child sex offences and sexual assault to serve their sentences at home. Community safety and victim consultation is something the Government always considers when making laws around sentencing, but this does not appear to have been done in this bill.

The bill does not mention any sort of cap on the seriousness of an offence that would be accepted into the Walama Court. For example, the working group's proposal would only accept into the program offenders who have been sentenced to three years or less. While having no doubt that the underlying intent of this bill is a noble one, we recognise that community safety must be balanced at all times. The bill, without addressing any threshold for offenders, may allow an offender who is sentenced to any number of years for potentially a very serious crime to be dealt with out of prison. The bill leaves many important details for court practice notes and rules when they should be considered by Parliament.



Offences in the District Court are, by their very nature, often serious indictable offences. Any significant changes to sentencing procedures and options should be decided democratically in order to reflect community standards. Matters such as eligibility, caps on sentencing which should be eligible to participate and standard program conditions have the potential to impact victims and the community more broadly and are important to subject to extensive consultation and parliamentary consideration. The omission of so much of this important detail from the bill and from potential discussion in Parliament to ensure community interests are properly taken into account is a basis for opposing this bill. The bill is further problematic in that it does not build in health and wraparound support services essential to the success of the Drug Court model.

There does not appear to have been broad consultation on this particular bill. This is essential ahead of implementation of any significant legislative change. The Government concedes, of course, that the Walama working group has considered its own proposal very extensively and consulted broadly on that. None of this means that the Government is opposed to addressing the rates of Aboriginal over-representation—quite the contrary. It is difficult to think of any greater failure of our justice system than the unacceptable rate of Aboriginal overrepresentation. What it means is that if we are to make a real difference to Aboriginal incarceration rates in this State, we must focus on initiatives that are developed properly in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders and which incorporate factors shown to have the most impact in reducing Aboriginal reoffending.

Members would be familiar with the Youth Koori Court, a pilot program that has been operating one day a week at Parramatta Children's Court since February 2015. It is open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who plead guilty to a criminal charge or who have been found guilty of an offence at hearing. The court has the same powers as the Children's Court and involves the Aboriginal community in the court process. The aims of the Youth Koori Court include increasing confidence of the offender and their family in the criminal justice system in New South Wales; reducing risk factors impacting on recidivism of Aboriginal young people in New South Wales through developing individualised action and support plans with the young person, a Children's Magistrate, relevant support agencies and the young person's family; reducing the rate of non-appearances; reducing the rate of breaches of bail; and increasing compliance with court orders.

The Youth Koori Court seeks to achieve these aims by allowing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community involvement in the court process, and giving a greater understanding of and participation in the court process by the young person. It also seeks to achieve these aims by identifying relevant risk factors that may impact on the young person's continued involvement with the criminal justice system and monitoring appropriate therapeutic interventions to address these risk factors. To be eligible to participate in Youth Koori Court, young people must be descendants of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person and be accepted by the relevant community; be charged with an offence within the jurisdiction of the Children's Court that is to be determined summarily; at a minimum, be highly likely to be sentenced to an order that would involve Juvenile Justice supervision; plead guilty to the offence or be found guilty of the offence after hearing; be aged between 10 and 17 years at the time of the offence; and be willing to participate.

Key differences to the Walama working group proposal, apart from the obvious application to children, not adults, are that in the Youth Koori Court the types of offences that can be referred are less serious and can be determined summarily; it must be highly likely that the offender will be sentenced to an order involving juvenile justice supervision—that is, the Youth Koori Court is markedly different from the Walama proposal, which deals with more serious offences that would ordinarily involve a jail sentence; and in the Youth Koori Court there are also no exclusions for sexual offences. The objectives and procedures of the Youth Koori Court and Walama working group proposal are significantly similar in that both target over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system, both seek to enhance the confidence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the courts and address risk factors related to reoffending, and both involve Indigenous elders.

However, the Walama working group proposal also involves restorative justice by inviting victims to participate. The Walama working group proposal is expected to be much more intensive and more heavily supervised by the court and government agencies, and the process is expected to last longer compared with the Youth Koori Court program. Post-sentencing supervision for the duration of the sentence, similar to the Drug Court, is part of the Walama proposal, while deferred sentencing for up to six months is the alternative sentencing mechanism under the Youth Koori Court. These different levels and lengths of supervision stem from the fact that Walama participants are adults who have committed more serious offences that would otherwise result in a jail sentence. The differences in levels and lengths of supervision will obviously impact relative costs and are an important factor to bear in mind when comparing the two models or considering the Walama working group proposal.

I am pleased to report on the Western Sydney University small-scale process evaluation of the Youth Koori Court. It found that two-thirds of the young people through the program had achieved their education and employment goals in their action and support plans. Goals included securing a job, resuming schooling and taking up an apprenticeship. The evaluation found that, of the 10 young people who had some sort of accommodation issue at the time their action and support plan was developed, four had resolved their accommodation issue at the time of graduation and three were in the process of resolving their accommodation issues. Fifteen out of 19 young people in the sample reported having some issues with drugs or alcohol. By the time they graduated, 13 reported some progress and five young people reported having desisted completely with the drugs that had been associated with their offending. Of the 12 young people who had a health issue that needed addressing, five were recorded as having successfully taken action to address the issue by the time they graduated.

This evaluation suggests the types of underlying issues that lead to offending and reoffending in Aboriginal communities and also suggests the success that Aboriginal justice initiatives can have when carefully designed, detailed, consulted on and considered in terms of overall effectiveness and whether they are the most impactful option for reducing reoffending in Aboriginal incarceration. While the Government does not support the bill before the House, it continues to consider the working group proposal and to build on the initial success of the quite different Youth Koori Court by advancing preparations for the opening of a further Youth Koori Court at the Surry Hills Children's Court next year. This expansion to Surry Hills was announced as part of the 2018-2019 New South Wales budget. It includes \$2.7 million over three years to fund an additional 30 young people to participate each year.

The Government is focused on measures that will have the most impact on reducing reoffending and, therefore, incarceration. In assessing which options will have the most impact, comparative costs and benefits must be assessed and initiatives must only be selected if they include the detail and factors necessary to ensure success. The Government has implemented, and continues to implement, a range of other initiatives to address the disproportionate incarceration rate and over-representation of Aboriginal people in the justice system. It seeks to improve how the justice system deals with offenders by reforming sentencing, parole and unauthorised driving offences and penalties. These reforms are lasting changes to the justice system that will deliver results, including to our Indigenous communities, and would have a far greater effect on reducing Aboriginal over-representation than any pilot scheme of a Walama proposal.

We are investing almost \$95 million over three years as part of a package of reforms to community-based sentence legislation and parole legislation in New South Wales. We are also increasing capacity to deliver programs in custody, and increasing participation in education and vocational training. The majority of Aboriginal offenders enter the criminal justice system through three types of crime: first, violent offending and re-offending; secondly, justice order breaches such as breaching bail orders or apprehended domestic violence orders; and, thirdly, driver licence offending and reoffending. For this reason, we are working to target these offences and the underlying pressures that lead to them being committed to reduce Aboriginal over-representation. As the High Court observed in *Bugmy v The Queen* [2013] HCA 37, 249 CLR 571:

Aboriginal Australians as a group are subject to social and economic disadvantage measured across a range of indices ... The experience of growing up in an environment surrounded by alcohol abuse and violence may leave its mark on a person throughout life. Among other things, a background of that kind may compromise the person's capacity to mature and to learn from experience. ... the effects of profound childhood deprivation do not diminish with the passage of time ...

A whole-of-government approach across portfolios including Health, Education, and Family and Community Services is required. It is with this in mind that the Government introduced the Road Transport Amendment (Driver Licence Disqualification) Act 2017 to provide a path back to lawful driving for those serving lengthy driver disqualification periods. In 2016 Aboriginal people were three times more likely than the general population to have their licence suspended for fine defaults. Around 15 per cent of those sentenced and more than a third of those imprisoned for driver licence offences identify as Aboriginal.

These driver disqualification reforms will have a positive impact on the number of Aboriginal people coming before the justice system. The reforms are broadly those recommended in a 2013 report from the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety. The New South Wales Government accepted the bulk of the committee's recommendations in its response, which was tabled in June 2014. The reforms will address these issues by returning people to lawful and regulated driving, and making penalties for unauthorised driving fairer and more proportionate to other New South Wales penalties. The reforms will provide Aboriginal people with an incentive and opportunity to return to lawful and regulated driving. Disqualified drivers are now able to apply to the Local Court to have their remaining disqualification lifted after complying with their disqualification for a defined period—either two or four years, depending on the statutorily prescribed circumstances.

The reforms will achieve the following outcomes: first, they will make disqualification periods and maximum penalties for unauthorised driving more proportionate; secondly, they will make the community safer

by giving police more scope to apply swift and certain justice at the roadside rather than waiting for an offender to go to court; thirdly, they will contribute to achieving the State priority for reduced reoffending by introducing incentives for the rehabilitation of traffic offenders who comply with their disqualification period and do not pose a road safety risk; fourthly, they will reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system; fifthly, they will benefit rural and regional communities that have limited access to public transport and suffer from extended disqualification periods; and, sixthly, they will make the court system more efficient by reducing the volume of minor offences dealt with in the Local Court.

These reforms replace mandatory licence disqualification periods for unauthorised driving offences with automatic and minimum disqualification periods, giving the court flexibility to consider the circumstances of each case. The reforms recognise that lengthy disqualification periods do not deter unauthorised driving. Eligible disqualified drivers can now apply to the Local Court to have their remaining disqualification lifted after complying with their disqualification for a defined period.

The Habitual Traffic Offender Scheme has also been abolished and people can apply to the court to have their habitual traffic offender declaration quashed. With lengthy disqualifications lifted, it will be easier for people to find work and care for their families. These driver disqualification reforms affect the general community, but they are especially important in remote and regional locations where there are large Indigenous populations, where there is often poor public transport, and where the previous driver disqualification regime disproportionately impacted Aboriginal people both in terms of their level of incarceration and in social disadvantage due to not being able to drive to work or drive their family to schools, hospitals and so on.

It is too early to assess the impact of these reforms on Aboriginal offenders, but the Government expects that they will put downward pressure on Aboriginal incarceration. BOCSAR is closely monitoring data so we can report on trends when they are available. An initial BOCSAR analysis has given us some comfort by suggesting that this has had no impact on road safety, which is perhaps the most important consideration in any driver disqualification reform. Another aspect related to driver disqualification is birth certificates. Some sectors of the community, particularly Aboriginal people, can find it difficult to obtain a licence. Obstacles include limited access to cars and licensed drivers to supervise learners, and difficulties in obtaining identity documents such as birth certificates. If it is hard for people to get a birth certificate, there is a greater chance that they will drive unauthorised or without a licence. This is more prevalent in remote and Aboriginal communities.

Last year I announced an outreach program led by the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages to help disadvantaged communities, including Indigenous communities, to obtain free birth certificates. A birth certificate is vital to securing a job, housing, a Centrelink benefit or a driver licence. This is a pragmatic, practical non-criminal justice response to help people get birth certificates, get driver licences, not drive while disqualified and, in the case of Indigenous people, not be included in an over-represented Aboriginal prison population. In 2010 BOCSAR produced a report that suggested Indigenous recidivism could be reduced through the use of effective rehabilitation programs. The largest reductions in reoffending were those associated with intensive supervision coupled with treatment.

The sentencing reforms that commenced on 24 September, and were announced in May last year, introduced both of these elements and provide much greater opportunities to effectively address offending behaviour than the few schemes that were provided in custody. These criminal justice reforms will help to address the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system. These reforms will mean that community-based sentencing options will become more flexible and more tailored to the individual to address the risks and needs of each offender.

A range of conditions associated with intensive correction orders will be available to courts and, where it is not possible or appropriate to impose a condition on an offender, another condition will be available to enable courts to set an appropriate penalty. For example, previously intensive correction orders had a mandatory 32 hours per month community service work condition. The problem with that was in some regional areas of New South Wales limited work is available for offenders, which means under the old regime offenders could not meet this condition and would therefore be prevented from receiving the intensive correction order as a sentence. This had a particularly significant impact on Aboriginal people and other offenders in regional New South Wales.

The sentencing and parole reforms introduce a swift and certain framework of sanctions to enable Corrective Services NSW and the State Parole Authority to respond with appropriate actions to breaches of parole and intensive correction order conditions. Community Corrections officers will be able to deal proactively with lower-level breaches, including by directing offenders to engage in interventions to address offence-related issues, to comply with curfews, and to submit to drug and alcohol testing. This will enable problematic low-level behaviour to be dealt with quickly and effectively in the community, rather than to revoke the order and divert offenders back into the prison system. The reforms increase access to community-based sentences, in particular access to intensive correction orders for offenders sentenced for up to two years imprisonment. They do this, in

part, by removing mandatory work components of intensive correction orders, which previously have been a barrier to accessing intensive programs for those with particular vulnerabilities or high needs such as drug and alcohol issues.

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research proposed that removing barriers for the use of home detention and intensive correction orders would assist in expanding their use and reducing, or at least slowing, the growth rate of Indigenous imprisonment. The sentencing reforms will increase opportunities for offenders to be supervised in the community through the strengthening of intensive corrections orders and receive interventions that are proven to reduce reoffending. Home detention will be an available condition of an intensive correction order and will be available for a broader range of offences than the old, pre-September home detention order. Barriers that prevent offenders from accessing the intensive correction orders, such as the mandatory 32-hour-per-month work condition, have been removed by making work an optional condition and by giving courts a range of alternative conditions to impose where work is unavailable, or the offender is not suitable for work.

The problem with the previous intensive correction order regime was that while those sorts of orders were theoretically available to judicial officers, judges or magistrates, often as a practical matter they were unattractive as a sentencing option because the 32-hour-per-month mandatory work condition meant that the offender would not be subject to an intensive correction order because they were not suitable for work or the work was not available. That particularly impacted on Indigenous offenders who were commonly in remote and regional areas where work was not available, or they had mental health or substance abuse issues, which meant they were not suitable for that sort of order. The reforms that started in September are a very systemic and fundamental way of making non-custodial sentences meaningful and available in the case of Indigenous offenders. They are not only removing that work limit but also increasing the emphasis on effective behavioural intervention to change people's behaviour. All the research from overseas shows that in the case of lower-level offenders, the most effective way to stop reoffending is behavioural intervention.

Not only will these sentencing reforms increase community safety, which is our paramount concern, but also they will aim to reduce reoffending and by reducing reoffending, particularly by those who would otherwise be vulnerable in remote and regional areas, reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal people in our justice system. One aspect of that is the new Reintegration Home Detention scheme, which is part of the parole reform, which came into effect this year. It will allow low-risk offenders to live in the community under strict home detention conditions during the last six months of their non-parole periods where the State Parole Authority has determined that this is in the interests of community safety. This will create a transition between custody and parole to assist with reintegration into the community.

It is anticipated that the flexibility built into these sentencing reforms will enable more offenders, including Aboriginal offenders, to be assessed as suitable for a community-based sentence. In conjunction with improvements to supervision under reduced reoffending reforms, the sentencing reforms provide Community Corrections officers with better tools to respond to individual circumstances. The changes to supervisions in particular will mean better accessibility to interventions in regional and remote areas where Aboriginal representation is highest, but where services and programs are not always available. Having a new system of swift and escalating sanctions for breaches of intensive corrections order will put downward pressure on incarceration and Aboriginal over-representation in our prison system. It will mean that the availability of non-custodial sanctions to address breaches of intensive corrections orders before matters escalate to the stage where some kind of custodial penalty for a breach of an intensive corrections order is appropriate.

Again, research shows that having a swift and escalating set of sanctions is more likely to produce compliance with these sorts of orders than an all-or-nothing approach where either the breach is ignored or there is a very heavy response to the breach in the form of incarceration. Having this set of swift and escalating sanctions should reduce the rate of breach of intensive corrections orders, the rate of incarceration for breach of intensive corrections orders, and the rate of Aboriginal over-representation because of breaches of intensive corrections orders. As I said, the sentencing reforms are already targeted on increasing accessibility to intensive corrections orders.

It is not just about law reform and changing the mandatory conditions or the optional conditions for intensive correction orders but having the resources and wraparound services that make intensive correction orders an attractive option to a sentencing judge or magistrate, and making them an effective option to reduce reoffending. Some 200 extra Community Corrections officers will be involved in supervising those out in the community on community-based orders such as intensive correction orders. These tough but smart community-based sentencing reforms will increase the number of offenders who receive supervised programs, reduce reoffending and therefore put downward pressure on incarceration.

These benefits will apply to all offenders, but they will particularly benefit Aboriginal and other disadvantaged groups. As I said, in the past, many Aboriginal offenders faced barriers when accessing intensive correction orders because they could not fulfil work requirements because of location, mental health or cognitive impairment and substance abuse issues, so we have made the work condition optional rather than mandatory and have given courts a wider range of other conditions to tackle the causes of offending while still holding offenders accountable. We have recruited nearly 200 new Community Corrections staff to boost capacity to supervise offenders.

The Indigenous population is also over-represented in incarceration and other punishment for domestic violence crime. One of the Government's initiatives is trialling a program called What's your Plan? to reduce apprehended domestic violence order [ADVO] breaches among Aboriginal defendants. The pilot program is being offered across 46 local courts. Department of Justice Aboriginal Client and Community Support officers offer Aboriginal defendants a voluntary session at court to go through their apprehended domestic violence orders and help them make a plan to comply with their orders. This voluntary program helps defendants to understand their ADVOs and address any obstacles that prevent them from complying, and helps them take positive steps to change their behaviour.

Since October 2017, What's Your Plan? has helped more than 130 offenders and, so far, the Department of Justice is hearing good feedback from the people participating. But what is more important than anecdotal feedback is a robust statistical analysis to see whether this improves compliance with apprehended domestic violence orders. The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research is evaluating What's Your Plan? and the final evaluation is due in mid-2021. This program is designed not only to increase compliance with ADVOs and therefore protect domestic violence victims and survivors—which is the most important aim of the program—but also, relevantly, by increasing compliance with ADVOs it reduces the risk of incarceration of perpetrators or alleged perpetrators for breaches of their ADVOs—again, putting downward pressure on the prison population and downward pressure on Aboriginal over-representation in that population, given the over-representation of Aboriginal people involved in domestic violence issues.

Generally, the Government gives priority for reoffending programs to offenders who are assessed as posing a medium or high risk of offending. Indigenous offenders make up a disproportionate number of offenders in the medium- to high-risk categories and are therefore over-represented in participation rates for services and programs. As part of the New South Wales Government's strategy to reduce adult reoffending, Corrective Services NSW has established high-intensity program units with about 500 places. Three of these units will focus exclusively on the needs of women offenders at Dillwynia, Wellington and Mid North Coast correctional centres, which have a high proportion of female Aboriginal offenders.

Specialist staff recruited for the units will deliver rehabilitation services, programs and enhanced release planning to inmates serving short sentences who pose a moderate to high risk of offending. The units at Wellington and Mid North Coast correctional centres focus exclusively on the needs of Aboriginal offenders. Dillwynia Correctional Centre focuses on Aboriginal female offenders as well. As at July, there were 158 Aboriginal offenders currently in or preparing for treatment. The units for Aboriginal offenders include a cultural strengthening program and a greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills designed to better prepare and equip participants for programs that address the risks related to reoffending. If those risks are reduced, reoffending and incarceration are reduced. To support these programs, all services and program officers in the 10 units have received Aboriginal cultural awareness training as well as training in culturally appropriate methods to use with Aboriginal offenders.

The Yetta Dhinnakkal program at Brewarrina is a holistic program that provides predominately young adult Aboriginal men from north-western and western areas of New South Wales with life skills and pre-release opportunities, including in a culturally sensitive minimum security camp environment. The program includes general education, vocational training and employment, offence and behaviour change programs, cultural studies and sport. It recognises and restores the cultural links of inmates with their land and history through the protection and interpretation of Aboriginal sites on the property.

The Balund-a program at Tabulam is a residential diversionary program that provides criminogenic intervention and cultural connection, and employment-seeking assistance. The Gundi program at St Heliers Correctional Centre provides building and construction skills for pre-release employment. The Girrawaa program at the Bathurst Correctional Centre and the Nurra Warra Umer program at Goulburn Correctional Centre involve personal business skills development programs. The Clean Slate Without Prejudice program at Long Bay Correctional Complex is a community-based program for inmates working with the community and the local police.

The Bundian Way Project in Eden has engaged Aboriginal inmates with the Eden Local Aboriginal Lands Council to assist with the establishment and restoration of the Bundian Way, with a focus on cultural strengthening

and connection with Aboriginal communities. The Dubai Ganyah program, delivered in a partnership agreement with the Aboriginal Housing Office, MTC Australia and the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation, supports Aboriginal women exiting custody with medium-term housing. This includes mentoring, job-seeking and wraparound services to transition into stable, long-term accommodation.

The Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander incarceration has recognised the innovative work of New South Wales in decreasing the disproportionate impact that the fine enforcement system has on Aboriginal people. The inquiry praised New South Wales for a number of its existing initiatives, including recommending nationwide adoption of the New South Wales innovative model to decrease the disproportionate impact of the fine enforcement system on Aboriginal people, acknowledging the Work and Development Order Scheme as a meaningful and achievable way for vulnerable people to reduce fine debt and supporting the New South Wales statutory cautioning scheme as a good model to drive minor offenders away from fine enforcement systems.

The inquiry made a number of recommendations to strengthen frameworks, with a view to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system. Several New South Wales recent and current reforms align with these recommendations. The Bail Act 2013, in subsections 18 (1) (a) and (k), already requires bail authorities to consider a person's Aboriginality when assessing "acceptable risk". New South Wales is the only State in Australia that makes it a statutory requirement for police to contact an Aboriginal legal service as soon as possible after an Aboriginal person is detained in custody, known as the Custody Notification Service. The New South Wales Government is overhauling the Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Act 1990 to focus on improving outcomes for victims while maintaining the fair treatment of people with cognitive and mental health impairments.

The Government recognises that Aboriginal offenders continue to be dramatically over-represented in our criminal justice system. Addressing this over-representation cannot only be about what is happening in the justice sphere, although that is very important, but also what is happening at a whole-of-government level. Since coming to power, this Government has secured some key achievements in the Aboriginal Affairs space. The Government has negotiated the Local Decision Making Accord with Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly in July 2015 to improve government service delivery for Aboriginal communities in Far West New South Wales in the priority areas of housing, economic development, education and early childhood services. The Government has introduced a Stolen Generations Reparations package of \$74 million, including a Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme that provides ex gratia payments of \$75,000 to living Stolen Generations survivors who were removed from their families and committed to the care of the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Board or the Aborigines Welfare Board.

In December 2016 the Government introduced Growing the First Economy of NSW, a framework for Aboriginal economic prosperity. The framework is a set of commitments across government that strengthen a life journey approach to Aboriginal economic prosperity. In 2013 and in 2015 the Government introduced several tranches of changes to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act to build capacity and strengthen governance in local Aboriginal land councils. The changes facilitate participation in economic enterprises and provide the legislative basis for a negotiation and an agreement-making framework for the resolution of multiple land claims simultaneously. In 2016 that formed the foundation for the introduction of the Aboriginal Land Agreements model.

In June this year the Treasurer handed down the 2018-19 State budget, which allocates \$38.3 million in funding for specific Aboriginal initiatives. That is above the general funding of the Aboriginal population through health, education and other programs. The Government announced additional funding and programs to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including allocating \$33.1 million over four years to a new Aboriginal Social Housing Strategy. This strategy will implement programs designed to create positive change and a pathway to housing independence and will strengthen the Aboriginal community housing sector.

The most effective way to reduce Aboriginal over-representation is upstream of the justice system, together with initiatives within the justice system. Addressing chronic and systemic disadvantage in the areas of housing, health, education and employment is the most important thing to do for the Indigenous members of our community to reduce socio-economic disadvantage, which is a major risk factor in offending. Other initiatives include committing \$10 million over four years through a new social impact investment for innovative, community-led initiatives to improve Aboriginal employment outcomes, wealth creation and wellbeing.

A \$3.75 million grant will support the Clontarf Foundation in its work to improve education, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects for Aboriginal students. I have been privileged to observe the Clontarf Foundation program in action at Endeavour Sports High School, which has a relatively large Indigenous population. The Clontarf Foundation is doing great things at that school. The Government is investing \$2.8 million to establish the nation's first Aboriginal Languages Trust. It is a critical step in acknowledging the value and

importance of language to our First Peoples and to New South Wales. In May 2018 the Government also announced the Aboriginal Procurement Policy.

I spoke of how important upstream initiatives are and one of those is job opportunities. This policy targets 3 per cent of government goods and services contracts to Aboriginal-owned businesses and is anticipated to support the creation of an average of 1,000 Aboriginal jobs over the next three years. It permits government agencies to negotiate directly with Aboriginal businesses for contracts of up to \$250,000 and requires agencies to consider opportunities for Aboriginal participation on contracts greater than \$10 million. By 2021 the existing Aboriginal Participation in Construction Policy and the Aboriginal Procurement Policy will aim to support an estimated 3,000 full-time equivalent employment opportunities for Aboriginal people through Government procurement activities.

I will return to the justice system. Other Government initiatives include the Circle Sentencing Program, which is active in eight locations. The funding announced this year of \$2.7 million over three years will fund the expansion of the Youth Koori Court to Surry Hills; the adaption of Drug Court policies to allow two extra places in each ballot in each location for Aboriginal participants; multifaceted reforms to parole; and investment in reoffending programs that are of particular benefit to Aboriginal and other disadvantaged offenders. These initiatives demonstrate the Government's determination to drive down Aboriginal over-representation in the criminal justice system. A whole-of-government approach is being taken to support Aboriginal communities in a range of areas. It includes the Aboriginal Social Housing Strategy and initiatives to improve Aboriginal employment and education.

I have mentioned Circle Sentencing, which is an alternative sentencing court for adult Aboriginal defendants and is available in 11 local courts. I recently visited the Nowra Local Court, where it began. Circle Sentencing involves taking the sentencing process out of the traditional court setting and into the community. It is available at Armidale, Lismore, Kempsey, Nambucca, Walgett, Mount Druitt, Dubbo, Wellington, Bourke, Brewarrina and Nowra. The Safe Aboriginal Youth [SAY] Patrol Program is a community-based service that operates a safe transport and outreach service for young people who are on the streets late at night. SAY involves skilled workers who staff a bus, patrol the community at night and engage with young people. SAY funds services that are located at Taree, Kempsey, Bourke, Wilcannia, Newcastle, Dubbo, Nowra and Dareton.

At Dubbo there is an Aboriginal bail project trial to help reduce breaches of police and court bail conditions among Aboriginal defendants. The trial started in September 2017. In part, Aboriginal over-representation in the justice system reflects a growth in the remand population; many are incarcerated due to a breach of bail conditions. The bail project trial, which was developed by the Commissioner of Police, provides a more flexible scheme and will help an Aboriginal accused on bail to comply with their bail conditions. If they do not breach their bail conditions, they will not be incarcerated. It is another way to drive down Aboriginal over-representation in the justice system.

The Government is approaching the issue through initiatives upstream of the justice system. The Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment [OCHRE] program is the Government's plan for Aboriginal Affairs that aims to improve education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in New South Wales and to enhance service accountability to support these goals. In December 2015 the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales was commissioned to undertake a 10-year evaluation of the program. A 10-year evaluation is unprecedented in government. It is significant because it allows time to truly understand the impact of OCHRE and to build the evidence base we require. Ethical practice is the cornerstone of the evaluation and represents the Government's commitment to ensure that there is not a repetition of past practices where Aboriginal voices were silenced in research and evaluation.

#### **Business interrupted.**

#### *Motions*

#### **YOUTH PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT**

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:07):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the important contribution young people make to the community, fostering social cohesion and awareness.
- (2) Acknowledges the challenges and barriers young people can experience in society.
- (3) Commends the Government for its support for youth, particularly programs such as Youth Opportunities and Youth Frontiers.

This Government is investing millions of dollars in young people. This investment is vital and deserves recognition and support from all members of the House. We are making a difference, but we can and should do

more to acknowledge our young people across the State. As the member for Holsworthy and a member of this Government, I am proud to support the delivery of youth initiatives such as the Youth Frontiers program, the Youth Opportunities program and Youth Week. These initiatives are supporting young people not only to participate in their local communities but to become leaders of the future. I point out one program supported by this Government, the Savannah Pride Basketball program, which was established by coach Mayor Chagai. The program aims to inspire young people through sport and education.

This outstanding program is changing the lives of thousands of young men in Western Sydney. Four Savannah Pride alumni members are now professional basketball players in Australia, the United States of America and Europe. Sixteen-year-old South Sudanese Australian twins, Paul and Sila Tako, are heading to the same high school in North Carolina on a two-year scholarship. Paul and Sila were born in Egypt and came to Australia with their families as refugees. This is just one story of young people taking the opportunity to be active contributors to society. In 2017-18 the number of young people who participated in these initiatives is estimated to be more than 107,000.

The Youth Frontiers program aims to establish and support quality mentoring relationships that in turn increase opportunities for young people's active and meaningful participation in their communities. From 2018 to 2020 the Government is investing more than \$6.5 million in the Youth Frontiers program, which is open to young people aged 12 to 16 years and aims to broaden opportunities for them to engage in their communities. The Youth Opportunities program is a wonderful example of an initiative where youth-led and youth-driven initiatives can be supported. This program provides grants of between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Since 2012, a total of 212 projects—valued at a total of \$10.4 million—have been supported. But there is more to do. Over the next two years a further \$3 million has been committed to the Youth Opportunities program so that more youth-led and youth-driven projects can be supported across New South Wales.

I draw the attention of the House to Youth Week, which is a remarkable example of the power of investing in youth participation. Each year the Government provides grants to local councils to run youth-led activities and events during Youth Week. In 2018 more than 3,000 young people across the State were involved in planning and organising local activities and events such as forums, art exhibits, sporting competitions, festivals and concerts and more than 81,000 young people attended over 774 events across New South Wales. Youth Week 2019 will run from 10 to 18 April.

I encourage all local councils to support young people in the delivery of youth-led and youth-driven activities. The Parliament will try not to hold an inquiry into the Advocate for Children and Young People during Youth Week next year. For the past three years inquiries have been held during Youth Week. Andrew Johnson is very busy at that time of year. I publicly apologise to him and hope that he will not have to appear before an inquiry during Youth Week again. Youth Week activities not only provide activities for young people but also provide vital opportunities for young people to participate and have their voices heard.

I put to the House that we must continue to enable the participation of young people in society and in government. We need to hear their voices and ideas and engage them in generating change. The 12-person Youth Advisory Council, composed of people aged 12 to 24 years, helps advise the New South Wales Government so it can hear directly about the issues affecting youth. The council gives them a seat at the table. This Government is committed to sustained investment in youth development and participation. We will continue to work in collaboration with young people to hear their voices and invest in the creative solutions that young people require.

Another program the Liberal-Nationals Government is proud of is the Community, in Partnership, taking Action program—known simply as the COMPACT program. The \$9.2 million, four-year COMPACT program supports an alliance of community partners who all share a commitment to Australia's peaceful and harmonious way of life. This groundbreaking program was designed after an extensive process of community consultation and expert analysis of international best practice. Since 2016, the COMPACT program has been supporting 14 community projects involving more than 30 partner organisations to deliver youth engagement projects over two to four years. COMPACT alliance partners include grassroots community organisations and peak non-government organisations such as the Red Cross, the National Rugby League, police citizens youth clubs, Youth Off The Streets, Sydney Youth Connect, and more.

Globally, more than 1.8 billion people are aged between 10 and 24 years old. They are considered the largest group of young people in history, and young people in New South Wales are part of that generational resource. I highlight two local organisations that go above and beyond in assisting youth: the Street University in Liverpool and the CAPAvate youth program run by Living Grace Christian Church in Moorebank. The Street University is a youth development project, created by the Ted Noffs Foundation, which provides various community-based services and interactive spaces for people aged between 12 and 25 years. Its aim is to help youth realise their dreams, harness their potential and create positive outcomes for their lives and their community.



Additionally, the CAPAvate program in Moorebank offers free or subsidised music lessons in guitar, keyboard and percussion, filmmaking, dance and digital storytelling. Such programs not only promote cultural pursuits but also allow young people to develop social networks and positive communities. This amazing program promotes creative skills that could lead to diverse career pathways and create a new generation of young artists. Connected to each other like never before, we as a society have the potential now and in the future to achieve our goals. We recognise that young people want to contribute, and are already contributing, to the resilience of their communities, proposing innovative solutions, driving social progress and inspiring change. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (12:14):** I commend the member for Holsworthy for bringing this matter to the attention of the House for debate. When we look at the demographics of our society, I believe young people and youth require leadership support to lay the foundation that will enable them to prosper in their families, in their communities and in the broader society. I believe also that our elderly need the appropriate level of support. I often think about those two demographics. There is also my demographic of middle-aged, married male with children. I am going all right, but many youth issues continue to evolve.

When we reflect on the issues that we confronted when we were young, we recognise that they were very different from those confronting young people today, such as social media and substance abuse. We hear stories that substance abuse is starting at a much younger age. The days are gone—or maybe they still happen—when the worst thing a youth did was knock off a tinny from his dad's freezer or one of his durries to smoke at the back of the garage. Other epidemics that exist in society today are disturbing. Paragraph (1) of the motion moved by the member for Holsworthy states:

- (1) Notes the important contribution young people make to the community, fostering social cohesion and awareness.

That positive step highlights our role as community leaders in society and in New South Wales. We must never overlook the responsibility we all have to harness the potential of young people and youth throughout New South Wales. I talk to many young people in Campbelltown and other communities around New South Wales and, clearly, they feel disengaged, disconnected and not considered. It is easy for us to say that they are wrong; we should listen to what they say and take seriously the lack of consideration they say they receive. Paragraph (2) of the motion states:

- (2) Acknowledges the challenges and barriers young people can experience in society. We must acknowledge the challenges and barriers that young people face, particularly in modern society. We cannot ignore the standards of young people in our communities. I am disappointed when young people get a bad rap—often we hear only the negative stories. I commend the *Macarthur Chronicle*, the *Campbelltown-Macarthur Advertiser* and C91.3FM in my community for going the extra mile to tell the good news stories and outline the amazing achievements of our young people. I am sure it is the same in other communities. As community leaders, we know for every circumstance and situation there is a negative and a positive. We can choose to embrace the negative and turn it into a positive; we can put our energies into addressing the negatives as well as highlighting the positives. We can embrace both the negatives and the positives to arrive at a balanced outcome and give young people in our communities the support they need. Paragraph (3) of the motion states:
- (3) Commends the Government for its support for youth, particularly programs such as Youth Opportunities and Youth Frontiers.

This issue goes beyond the realms of politics. Bipartisanship on this issue is expected in this place. I know the Government does all it can to address the issues, as did the former Labor Government. The Minister for Youth in the former Labor Government, my good friend the Hon. Peter Primrose in the upper House, championed this cause. I spoke with him when he was Minister about the need to address these matters. There is a strong argument for having leadership on this issue at a ministerial level—and Peter's representations substantiate that point. Ultimately, the best way that we in this place can support our young people is, first and foremost, by listening to them. Having been heard, they feel engaged and considered. I once again commend the member for Holsworthy for bringing this motion to the House. I hope that the many young people in the Holsworthy electorate and throughout all our electorates understand that we do not ever forget them.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:21):** I acknowledge the great work of my good friend the member for Holsworthy in bringing this motion to the House. I acknowledge also the excellent contribution from the member for Campbelltown. As a member of the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government, I am proud of the support that our Government is giving to the Youth Frontiers program, the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Program, the Youth Opportunities program [YOP], Youth Week and the Community, in Partnership, taking Action—or COMPACT—program. Those programs, which have been developed by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government, have been widely praised by stakeholders across various communities. On the Central Coast the programs are being put to great effect.

Advocating for the interests of young people in New South Wales is such an important task, and it is incumbent on all members in this place to do so. I have the pleasure of not only seeing the delivery of these youth

development programs in my electorate but also meeting with the many young people whom these programs benefit. The comments of the member for Campbelltown about his electorate apply also to the Central Coast. Our local media do everything they can to show positive support for young people across our region as well. The programs I have mentioned share similar messages of inclusiveness, unity, capacity building and innovation. Genuine youth-led and youth-driven community participation is the cornerstone of these initiatives. The programs support young people's participation, engagement and inclusion in our community.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is committed to building stronger, more inclusive communities that acknowledge and celebrate the positive contributions that young people make every day of the week. This Government is about making sure all young people have opportunities to participate and contribute so that they have the best possible chance of reaching their potential in the future. Young people benefit particularly from the sense of belonging and unity that comes from being connected to their community, and the community spirit on the Central Coast is the best evidence of that. A supportive community contributes to wellbeing. Thriving communities are those that value their young people. Young people bring new perspectives, boundless energy, enthusiasm and innovative ideas to staid issues. Young people's capacity for creativity and ingenuity astounds me every time I meet with them, whether they are school leaders or kids just trying something new.

Youth participation is an effective early intervention strategy when it is focused on positive youth development and capacity building. Effective youth engagement fosters personal growth. By focusing on young people's strengths, interests, abilities and knowledge rather than on their limits, we inevitably enrich their emotional, social, cognitive and behavioural development. For example, projects funded under the Youth Opportunities program focus on giving young people the opportunity to develop a range of skills, including life skills, leadership, communication and teamwork. Since 2012, a total of 212 projects—valued at more than \$10.4 million—have been supported. But there is more to do. That is why over the next two years a further \$3 million has been committed to the Youth Opportunities program so that more youth-led and youth-driven projects can be supported across New South Wales.

I had the pleasure of announcing that the Regional Youth Support Services Inc. [RYSS] on the Central Coast will receive an additional \$49,710 to undertake the YOP pop-ups, which is a peer-to-peer education online and offsite project to be conducted in 2019 on the Central Coast. This is fantastic recognition of the great work done by Kim, Alex and the rest of the team at RYSS on the Central Coast. That is an extra almost \$50,000 to help them move forward with their fantastic programs. Genuine youth participation is what sets these youth programs apart, with adults working in partnership with young people on issues that are important to them. Today I urge all members of the House to recognise our collective responsibility to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to participate and contribute.

#### *Visitors*

### **VISITORS**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin):** I acknowledge as a visitor to the House Joy Cooper, who is a guest of the member for The Entrance.

#### *Motions*

### **YOUTH PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:25):** I also welcome to the Chamber Joy Cooper, a member of our Central Coast community. Like me, Joy is a teacher, so she would be happy to hear members saying great things about young people in our communities across New South Wales. I thank the member for Holsworthy for bringing this important motion to the House. Young people are our future; they contribute so much to communities across New South Wales. Their voices are so sincere and sometimes so free and they think about their belief structures without the rituals that society pushes upon them.

Next week is Children's Week. What a great celebration that will be. I commend everyone in New South Wales who is working hard to be part of that celebration. I also thank everyone in the Gosford electorate who has contributed to Youth Week to be held in April next year. I encourage them to apply for grants for funding that is available to celebrate young people in our communities. This year more than 100,000 people were involved in 900 events across New South Wales. Let us build on that and make it stronger for an exciting time in April next year.

As an ex-high school teacher, I wish to speak about the fantastic young people in public education. Student leaders are the future of our society. I had a phone call from one of our student leaders who has just been selected to go to China on a scholarship program that aims to create better futures for our young people in this country. He was part of the student representative council that, through the innocence of youth, campaigned and

fundraised to fly a second flag, an Aboriginal flag, in our playground. At the time I was new to the school and did not realise that lots of Aboriginal people came to the school that day to celebrate that flag. For a lot of them, it was the first time they had been in the school. Having that second flag, which was the voice of the young people, has now opened the gates of that school to Aboriginal people to be part of their kids' education and our education about cultural understanding in our community.

Last week I had the pleasure of visiting the Brisbane Water Secondary College Umina Campus, where year 7 students from two classes presented their fantastic ideas about community building. It was almost as though I was in a young people's Parliament. They spoke about matters that I have to consider every day in my electorate. They gave me ideas about managing coastal erosion; they talked about jobs and skills building for young people; and they had ideas about supporting young people with job seeking, including people with disabilities in sport and in the workforce. Six groups spoke about homelessness, which is an increasing concern for people in our community. I look forward to talking to some of those year 7 kids tomorrow at Orange Sky Laundry, which provides a platform for people to talk about their concerns and for the community to listen to the voices of homeless people.

Last year the young people at Woy Woy Public School took the initiative to celebrate the International Day of People with Disability. Those young people included kids with disabilities in their performance. They are providing a voice of inclusion. I thank the member for Holsworthy for acknowledging the challenges and barriers that young people face in our society. As the foster parent of an Aboriginal girl who has now grown up, I have a great appreciation of that. In closing, I am thankful for any funding that is provided for our young people. In our community, Regional Youth Support Services [RYSS] is a recipient of that funding. Through the RYSS Youth Bus, which tours the community and provides programs for young people, we will have a great opportunity through the voices of young people to build a better future for the young people of the Central Coast.

**Business interrupted.**

*Members*

#### VALEDICTORY SPEECH

**Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:29):** I have very mixed emotions about giving my valedictory speech. There are many people from all sides of the House, staff from various offices, Ministers' officers, parliamentary liaison officers and parliamentary departmental staff whom I consider friends and will miss when I no longer frequent this place. I have been asked on more than one occasion whether it was a hard decision to make to leave at the next election. No, it was not. It was the right decision for my family and I, which made it an easy decision. Since my decision, though, I must admit I have had the odd moment of self-doubt. When I walk through these doors every day the hairs on my neck still stand on end and I am overwhelmed by the significance of this place. From my very first day and up until this morning, that has not changed.

When self-doubt has arisen though, it has been very reassuring to have colleagues burst that bubble of utopia within minutes of me walking through the doors on a sitting day. Sometimes that has been achieved on my journey in. Those colleagues shall remain nameless—I will put it down to the plight of a Government Whip. I remember when Mike Baird first asked me to be Government Whip it came with the assurance of how wonderful I would feel each evening knowing I had made a difference. It would be a great learning curve and stepping stone to far greater things. There I was thinking, "Wow, I'm on the way to Cabinet. Heck, I could even be leadership material. Look what Stuart Ayres has achieved from Deputy Whip!" I could not have ever envisaged that I was selling myself so short. Far better than that was in stall for me—I would be elevated to Co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Cricket with Jo Haylen. Thanks, Jo. You have been fantastic to work with in that role. Thanks, Mike. My CV now boasts professional cat herding, ego management, diplomacy 101, and a whole section on why no means no.

I thought about reminding you all of my journey into this place; however, I decided against it on the grounds of hopefully talking more about others than myself. That said, I would encourage interested members and those elected after 2011 to get a copy of my inaugural speech; it is all in there. It makes great bedtime reading—with a warm cup of milk it is guaranteed to send you to sleep. A former member from my side of the House told me that a wise man once said, "The skill in attending a party is knowing when it's time to leave." Most people stay too long. Too often, it is usually the easier choice. Being from a hospitality background, before entering this place I was partial to the odd bet every now and again. Although I am no Antony Green, the ABC psephologist, I put a lot of faith in that other doyen of political science—Sportsbet. At the time of announcing I was not contesting the election Sportsbet had me at \$1.01 to win. I am confident that I am leaving on my own terms. The member for Lismore, the member for Albury and the member for Coffs Harbour all very eloquently read poetry into their valedictories, so I feel it is now a prerequisite. Not to be outdone, in the words of the immortal poet Kenny Rogers:

You've got to know when to hold 'em  
Know when to fold 'em  
Know when to walk away  
And know when to run

The only running I want to do is in the early morning at my own pace. I will cherish the friendships I have made, the relationships I have formed and the opportunities I have been given. I know that for all the sacrifices we have made as a family we have also been given many opportunities that others are not afforded. Although at times this job has had its challenges and has by no means been easy, it has been extremely fulfilling. I cannot put into words how rewarding it is to be able to serve the community you love and in which you and your family live. I am extremely proud of all that has been achieved in the Camden electorate over the past eight years while I have been the State member and all that I have fought for before that time whilst I was a councillor and mayor. Sincerely, I love my electorate and I am a much better person for having been given the honour to represent the people of Camden in some capacity over the past 18 years. I thank them for the privilege. I cannot repay the debt.

Today, though, is not about me listing my achievements in *Hansard* to record my version of history. I would not be the first politician to rewrite history's pages through his own lens. I remember when I went to my first confession at St Monica's Primary School at North Parramatta as a six-year-old my Dad told me to take my sleeping bag because I would need all night to confess my sins. I believe you would all need your sleeping bags with you today if I were to list all the good that this Government has contributed to my electorate over the past two terms. Though that is my opinion, my legacy is for each citizen to judge as they see fit.

Without a doubt, my fondest memories are of my time with schools, community groups, sporting groups and associations. To be invited into those groups and to be made to feel a part of their community is very special. It is something I have never taken for granted and will truly cherish. My annual primary and high school leader visits to this place have been highlights each year. If I had a dollar for every parent who said to me at school presentation time, "How do you sit through all these presentations day in, day out? It's hard enough when it's your own kids", I would not be looking for work when I leave this place. I can honestly say that I looked forward to them each year.

As members of Parliament, each and every one of us has the opportunity to help people every day. It is what makes our job so rewarding and makes up for the long hours and personal sacrifices we make as politicians. I am extremely proud of the countless people that my office has been able to help over the years. To all my staff, I say thank you for everything you have done in that regard. You have made a tremendous difference to the lives of so many people. Although I could give a number of examples—three recent ones come to mind.

On Anzac Day this year after the dawn service a couple came up to me and said, "We just wanted to thank you. We sincerely believe our daughter is alive today because of your intervention." Without going into the details, that really moved me. Another example is a young man who contacted me after having his police recruitment application rejected because of his association with criminals. His crime was visiting his father in jail each month. The young man himself had never been in trouble with the law. I admired that he had the ability to go one of two ways in life and he chose the greater path. However, he was being denied that due to his family. I am pleased to say that the decision was reconsidered and he has now been given the opportunity to serve our community as one of our finest.

Finally, when a private school in my electorate closed down a few years ago I rang Adrian Piccoli's chief of staff, Sheridan Dudley, and said, "We need to buy this school for a public school within the electorate." Sherry and Pic both jumped at the idea and ensured that the Government bought the site. I am extremely proud that Yandelora School for Specific Purposes will open day one next year and be the first special needs public school in my electorate. It is starting with eight classes and that will double over time. Those eight classes are already full—a huge win for the families of Camden.

In my inaugural speech I mentioned my four children, Amelia, Sophie, Tom and Matthew, and how proud I was of them then. In the past eight years I have watched you grow into the outstanding people of whom your mother and I are extremely proud. Your sport, your schooling and watching you develop as you enter each phase of your lives give me my greatest joy. Amelia, our eldest, finished her Higher School Certificate [HSC] a few weeks ago and turns 18 in two weeks. Amelia, I have never been as proud of you as I was on your graduation day last month, when a number of your teachers sought out your mother and me to tell us what a beautiful, caring and thoughtful person you are. That is better than any HSC mark you could achieve. We have watched you work so hard for your exams and you deserve every success. The person you have become will guarantee your success in the next phase of your life regardless of which path you choose to follow.

Sophie, we are extremely proud of you and the young lady you have become. I look forward to your football games each week and admire the work you do and dedication you have to your training and achieving your goals, whether on the sporting field or within the classroom. Whether watching you captain your Tigers team

to a premiership, leading your school team or taking the next step at Rams, you have made us very proud. Your leadership on the field is a credit to you. I can get lost whilst listening to you both sing and play the piano at home. You still have an unfulfilled date with *The Voice* though—back yourself.

Tom, we are extremely proud of the young man you have become. Your leadership qualities have been acknowledged as a middle school prefect and as this year's Campbelltown-Camden Ghosts Green Shield captain. Your dedication to school and cricket training is outstanding. Watching you take your six dismissals behind the stumps a month ago and getting your first Sydney grade 50 against Easts a few weeks ago was something you should be very proud of; we are. As parents, we are not allowed to have favourite kids, and Vicki and I would argue we do not. However, in the eyes of the older three that is negotiable. The fact that we took Matt to England and Scotland in July this year—stopping off at Old Trafford along the way—and left the older three at home to fend for themselves—coupled with the whinging when jobs are allocated—makes for a strong case that Matt is the favoured child.

We are so proud of you, Matt, with all that you have achieved both at school and in the sporting arena so far. You love your football. What you put in each week is tremendous. To watch you batting or behind the stumps in cricket season is fantastic. I cannot wait to see you and Tom out in the centre together one day. Just like Waugh, Marsh and Edwards, I look forward to many a game with Patterson and Patterson taking a stand. I am just not sure who will be handed the gloves and who will be the backup keeper. In my inaugural speech eight years ago I said:

I cannot contain the pride I have in my children and the people they are becoming. If they read this speech when they are older, I ask only one thing of them.

Never forget that the only important thing is family.

When it comes time to decide whether to look after your mother and I in our old age or have us committed to a nursing home, remember how good we have been to you over the years. They think I am joking—they are a mercenary bunch. It is families who are affected by our choice of careers in politics. I thank my wife, Vicki, for all her support over my time in public life. It has not always been easy and there have been times you have picked up the slack and gone well beyond the call of duty. Thank you for everything you have done for the family, quite often being the glue keeping it all together, all the time running a very successful chiropractic business of your own. Thank you for your love and support of the family. Interestingly enough, you have always been happy for this journey and you were actually happy for it to continue. Thank you.

This journey requires many people to help us achieve our goals and ambitions. A major reason I have been given the privilege to represent my electorate as its State member is that I am the Liberal member for Camden. John Fahey and Liz Kernohan in this place and John Ryan and Charlie Lynn in the other have all been outstanding Liberal representatives of my area who paved the way for me to come into this place. As I have mentioned, I am in debt to the people of Camden for their support over the years and I owe a huge thanks to the Liberal Party for theirs. Having worked very closely with State director Chris Stone, I can say you have my utmost respect and your job is very, very safe when I leave this place. I see your role as the Whip of the Liberal Party. You can keep it. I offer my thanks and best wishes to all at headquarters for your efforts.

I remember before the last State election I was working hand in hand with Liberal headquarters in my role as Whip. I formed a fantastic working relationship and great friendship with Anna Nix, who is here today. I am happy to share a story about a former Liberal State director. I had heard about, but not yet met at the time, the legendary and much-feared Tony Nutt. Anna rang me and said she was with Tony and he wanted to speak to me. Clearly unhappy with a member who was not playing ball, Tony went on an eight-minute tirade that felt much longer at the time and would have made a wharfie blush. He took breath on a couple of occasions but my inner sense was telling me not to interrupt. Finally, after an extended break, I asked, "Is it my turn to speak now?" Anna tells me my lack of interjections was very much appreciated by Tony and we went on to have a fantastic working relationship over that campaign.

To my parliamentary colleagues, I would like to thank you for your support, friendship, guidance and counsel over the years. This can be a toxic environment and at times a lonely one. I think it is something only members can fully understand. To those on the other side—Labor, Independents, Greens and Nick—thank you. I have made some good friends and great colleagues and have appreciated the respectful collegial environment in which we have worked. I wish you all the very best personally for the future. To the Opposition Whips, thank you for the spirit in which we have gone about running this place. I sincerely believe if our colleagues actually knew some of the things we did to ensure harmony and good outcomes they might be a little more obliging when asked.

It has been great working with you, Robbo, as Leader of the House. The wheels did not fall off too often. Thanks, John McGowan, for all your help keeping the ship steady. But more importantly, mate, what about our Republican friends falling over themselves during the Invictus Games? God save the Queen. To my Coalition

colleagues, it has been a tremendous ride. I have made some great friends and have really enjoyed working with you—maybe a little less since August 2014, but on the whole it has been fantastic. I will only single out a couple of individuals as each and every one of you has contributed to my experience and helped leave me with many wonderful lasting memories that have replaced a head of thick, dark black hair. I thank you all for your friendship, support and great humour and for contributing to my time in this place. Madam Speaker, it has been wonderful working with you. Thank you for your support and friendship.

Gibbo and Brommy—who is known affectionately as "Mudguts"—working with both of you in our roles as Whips has been fantastic. You have both been extremely loyal and great friends and at times have offered a much-needed different perspective on life. As a Coalition team, we really have achieved great things. I implore each and every one of you to stay united, stick together and bunker down behind our Premier and Deputy Premier. United, we can continue to achieve great things and ensure that New South Wales remains the number one State in all areas, as we so desperately want it to be. Divided, we will let down not only ourselves but also the people of this great State. As for the lasting memories, I look forward to sharing them with you all in my book. Although I have not read it, I am told that *Madam Lash* is a good read. Not a sequel, and with only some crossover content, I look forward to the publication of my first novel, *Mr Whippy*. I have found some great yarns and locked in the publisher. I am just finalising the pseudonyms. I look forward to coming back for a potential launch in this place next year.

When I was quite new to this place, then Premier Barry O'Farrell was extremely supportive. I thank him for his leadership at that time. Barry delivered us government and I acknowledge him for that. I am reminded of a story from that time about my father, Stewart. I did not have a bigger supporter on entering this place than Dad. Anybody who knew him knew how dry he was. I remember being at a good friend's birthday one night when I had just left the family hotel after 20-odd years to concentrate full time on being mayor and running for Parliament. One of the guests asked Dad whether he would cope without me. Without batting an eyelid, he said, "Absolutely. He's never at work anymore. If he hadn't left, I was going to sack him anyway." We all waited for the punchline. It never came.

That said, I could not have bigger supporters than Mum and Dad. Mum is here today. Thanks for everything you have done for our family. It is very much appreciated and you have been a tremendous help over the years. I also acknowledge Vicki's mum, Gai, and stepfather, Kim. Thank you for the tremendous support you have given to our family over the years. It too has made a world of difference and is much appreciated. I thank Jacquie, Brianna, Olivia and William for all their support of me and my family over this time. I look forward to our families spending more time together in the future. When Mike Baird and Troy Grant became Coalition leaders they gave their all and both did a fantastic job for our State and our Coalition. They have both become good friends and trusted colleagues. I thank them for their advice, guidance, support and friendship over my time in this place. It means a lot to me.

As much as I whinge and whine about my role as Government Whip, it really is a privilege to work so closely with the Premier of the day. I acknowledge Bay, Nige and Hutch from Mike's office. I loved working closely with them all to help deliver the then Premier's wishes. They were a fantastic team and great colleagues and I value their friendship. I sometimes find myself reminiscing about those days. Nige would call and say, "Mike needs so-and-so spoken to." We would walk the corridors, then burst into the unsuspecting member's office and deliver the message. I will never forget a conversation I had with one of our more accident-prone members. It was so robust it made my eyes water and I found myself looking down at the carpet. In true form, it filtered back to me within the hour that the conversation had been reversed. Nigel and I were summoned to the member's office so that he could give us a dressing down and we left with our tails between our legs. If you did not laugh, you would cry. Things became a lot more genteel when the wolf left the building.

To the Premier and Bara, it has been a privilege to serve you both. You are fantastic leaders, have been extremely supportive of me personally and have both become great friends. You work tirelessly to ensure that our State is the best it can be. I wish you both every success at the next election; you deserve it and I believe our State needs it. I thank Sarah, Brad, Tom, Zac and all in the Premier's office for their help and support in delivering the Premier's wishes. They have been great to work with. Premier, you have been extremely supportive of me over three election campaigns and on every day in between. I value your counsel, guidance, support and friendship. Thank you.

As I said in my opening, there are many staff in this place whom I will miss when I leave. To each and every person who works in Parliament and contributes to the day-to-day running of this place, thank you for your efforts. They do not go unnoticed. Although I am sure you do not hear it often, it is appreciated. Although I cannot mention you all by name, please know that you have all had an impact on my time here in different ways. Your congeniality, good humour and quite often just a hello have been greatly received. I acknowledge the wonderful efforts and service over the years of the catering staff, who ensure we are all sustained; the special constables,

who keep us all safe; the staff in facilities, member services, the procedure and table offices and Chamber services; and all the back-of-house staff who support us and enable us to do our jobs day in, day out. The education unit organises so many fantastic school visits and ensures that our schools are well serviced, our librarians keep us well informed and the cleaners, who are in before most members, ensure that our offices and all the public areas are well looked after for us to start each day.

I give special mention to Hansard, who have tidied up my speeches more times than I can remember and in some instances have even made them coherent. I know self-praise is no praise at all; however, I quite often surprise myself when reading my speeches the next day in *Hansard*. I think, "Oh, that sounds quite Churchillian—very different to how I remember delivering it." Thank you. To all the attendees and those who greet us at the front desk, thank you for your wonderful efforts. Ian Delahunty, you and your team do a great job and have added so much to my time here. Thank you Ian, Peter, Chris, Danny, Monica, Ian, April and Hayley for making this place what it is. I notice that Jeremy Travers is in the public gallery. He is a former attendant and a great mate. It is lovely to see him here. When I was chastised by a colleague for bringing this Parliament into disrepute by seemingly being the only member in nearly 200 years to have dared to wear a tracksuit to this place daily, it was an attendant who came to my defence. I am forever in your debt.

To Helen, Les, Catherine, Carly and all others in the Clerk's office, thank you for everything you have done to ensure that this place runs as smoothly as it does. Your advice has been invaluable and you have been a pleasure to work with. Some of my fondest memories of this place are the public sector Whips talks that I was invited to. I have enjoyed them all. To all the staff in Parliament who received Parliamentary Service Awards today, congratulations. Your service has been instrumental in the great running of this place. As the Legislative Assembly Clerk said this morning, your service is a community service. I say well done and thank you to Les Gönye for 40 years of service, Rebecca Cartwright for 25 years of service, Catherine Watson for 30 years of service, and to every other recipient.

No member of Parliament could do their job without an extremely loyal team of people behind them. Political staffers wear every criticism, feel every bruise and quite regularly and unfairly cop personal criticism for no other reason than whom they work for or because of their boss's party affiliations. I cannot put into words the debt I owe to my team. They have been the mainstay and stopgap over the past eight years, at times under extremely trying conditions. However, it is an extremely rewarding job and one in which you have all made a tremendous difference to the lives of many people. To my electorate office staff Brooke Logoitumua, Sarah Ryan, Narelle Irving and Natalie Symkowiak, who all filled in and helped out in the early days, thank you for everything you did for me and the office. It was much appreciated and I am happy that you have all moved on to greater opportunities.

To Theresa Fedeli, who has been with me since July last year, thank you for everything you have done for me and the office. You have been extremely loyal, a wonderful colleague on council and a great friend. Jo Sendt, who has been with me since 2013, thank you for everything you have brought to the office. Having you as part of the team has been wonderful. Your manner and the way in which you deal with people and issues is extremely caring and professional. Alison Zammit has been with me for the past two years. Thanks, Ali, for everything you have brought to the office. You have been a fantastic complement to our team and have contributed so much over that time. Kate Feeney, who was a school captain at Mater Dei, came to the office for work experience in 2011 and never left. Kate comes in every Friday and has been really fantastic. Kate, thanks for all you have contributed.

Alex Carne has been with me from day one and has also come into Parliament for all of that time. Thank you. Alex, you have been a fantastic, loyal and wonderful colleague and I cannot speak highly enough of all you have done for me. Alex, you are extremely well respected in this place. Thank you for your honesty, integrity and professionalism. Good luck with baby number three on the way. Debby Dewbery has run my office from day one. Thanks, Deb, for everything you have done for me in that time. You have done a tremendous job and been extremely proficient. You have also been invaluable when I have been in Parliament or not around. Thank you, Deb, for your loyalty, hard work and for everything you have done for me, both professionally and personally. The best office manager a member could ask for!

Georgie Williams and Alex Tooth, although technically you both worked for Brommy, thank you for everything you contributed to the Whip's office in your time here. You were both fantastic to work with and together we carried Brommy on a number of occasions. Anthea Savage, thank you for everything you have done within our office. Annie, you have been fantastic to work with. Your professionalism and the way you go about your work has been a breath of fresh air. Your support and friendship over the time is greatly appreciated. Brommy, look after her or you might just find she is poached in the not-too-distant future. Rebecca Cartwright is the cog that keeps Parliament running. The only condition Mike put on me when I became Whip was that I must keep Bec, and it only took me a few weeks to see why. Thank you for everything you do day in, day out in this

place and, quite often under very trying conditions, you keep the show going. Thank you for your loyalty and friendship. All we have achieved over the past four years is sincerely appreciated.

Just for the record, there is consensus in the House that—and I use Fraser's term—the "whippettes" are the only workers in the office. As Brommy and I will attest, I am sure on the odd occasion we have actually contributed to help the ladies out. At least in my instance I hope so, because I have put the whippettes down as referees on my CV for when I leave this place. Along my journey I have had a number of people who have offered honest advice, criticism when needed, support in the hard times, and who have never once wavered in their support of me. Thank you for everything you have given me in my journey in public life. Most importantly, you have given me friendship, loyalty and stood beside me in the good times and in the bad, when most needed. Thank you Max Hitchens, Mike Conway, Adriana Care, Lara Symkowiak, Ken Moroney and Jim Marsden for all that you have done. Words cannot convey my thanks.

Jim, in particular, was a colleague in the early days. I can honestly say I have grown more as a person as that relationship has grown. I cannot express what it means to me today. Only last Friday night Marsdens celebrated their fiftieth anniversary and the Premier was the guest speaker on the evening. To be sitting with Jim and Marion that evening will sincerely be one of my fondest memories I will take from this job. Your support and guidance, mate, has changed me as a person—I believe for the better. I would like to mention Camden Council and thank Ron Moore and all the staff who really do an outstanding job. Your support and efforts are really appreciated. Thank you, Camden councillors, for your efforts. It is not always an easy job but, regardless of persuasion, I believe you put the community first. Thanks Michael Morrison and Rob Mills for your personal support and friendship over the years.

Finally, Camden Mayor Peter Sidgreaves, the Liberal candidate for Camden, is here today. If given the opportunity, mate, you will do a fantastic job. You have my full support. Good luck and we wish you all the best. One of the jobs of a Whip is to ensure that we minimise divisions. I know I have gone over time; however, if nothing else, with your indulgence, I have managed to filibuster until lunch. Thank you for not moving "That the speaker be no longer heard". You would have been well within your rights to do so. Although I leave this place not fulfilling the career dreams and ambitions I had when I entered Parliament, I hope it can be said that I treated everybody respectfully, with dignity and a smile.

*Members stood in their places and applauded.*

**The SPEAKER:** I also welcome the family and friends of Chris Patterson to the Chamber.

#### *Motions*

### **YOUTH PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT**

#### **Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (13:08):** I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving this motion. Young people in New South Wales, through their personal and collective contributions, enhance our society, and for this they deserve recognition and our support. The Liberal-Nationals Government is committed to investing in young people by recognising their unique needs, talents and abilities. Through the RISEUP PCYC youth program, which was announced in mid-2018 by the New South Wales police Minister and police commissioner Mick Fuller, the Government is engaging in a statewide partnership with PCYC and local businesses to help link young people with real-life, on-the-job training. These are practical approaches to ensure young people are engaged and included in society in order to avoid the social problems that can often beset them. We want to ensure they have the skills and abilities to move through life with the confidence they need to tackle difficult periods, as well as the opportunity to experience and enjoy the benefits that New South Wales has to offer. Their future is our future and the more opportunities we can provide for young people to drive and create their own rich futures, the better off we will all be for it.

Everyone in the community, including all our young people, have something to give and they all want to contribute and participate in society. Without this enthusiasm and without the opportunities to participate, a community cannot thrive. That is why the Government believes it is important to provide these chances to young people, through a broad range of youth programs. The Government's Youth Opportunities program is an annual grants program that has invested \$10.4 million since 2012 in locally based projects that help connect young people with their communities, and build vital skills for succeeding as they transition to independence. Genuine youth participation is what makes the Youth Opportunities program unique. In this program, adults work in partnership with young people to tackle the issues that are important to them. This type of youth empowerment is the key to fostering personal growth. Its focus is the young people's strengths, interests, abilities and knowledge, rather than their limitations. The Government has also established a successful youth mentoring program, which has already benefited 3,500 youth across New South Wales since 2015.



Youth Frontiers is a statewide program reaching about 1,000 young people aged 12 to 16 each year. The program matches young people to an adult mentor and helps them to build a quality mentoring relationship and develop their confidence, self-esteem and communications skills. Young people participating in the program receive 35 hours of mentoring over a period of at least six months, including at least 10 hours of one-on-one, face- to-face mentoring. In 2018 young people involved in Youth Frontiers raised funds for drought-affected parts of New South Wales, advocated for their local council to build more youth-friendly recreational facilities and established a reading group for educationally disadvantaged primary school students.

The positive mentoring relationships fostered by Youth Frontiers and the confidence they gain through their community engagement projects serve as an extra source of support for young people who may have had limited life opportunities or may be under-engaged in school and community life. My local youth group, Engadine District Youth Services, received \$50,000 from the Minister for an online mentoring and training program. They are doing a fantastic job in my electorate and I wish them all the best into the future.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (13:12):** On this side of the House we often refer to the "light on the hill", which is our aspiration for a better tomorrow. If we were asked to explain in more detail what that might mean, it would be building a better world for our children. I welcome this motion by the member for Holsworthy and add my personal view: The future of our children and the world we build for our children should be front and centre of all our considerations when we conduct the business of this House. In many ways, as a society we are succeeding. Our children are better educated than previous generations. They are healthier generally and have a stronger sense of fairness than previous generations. They certainly have a greater sense of tolerance than previous generations did.

However, there is a number of challenges that relate directly to the world we are building for our young people. Youth unemployment is higher than it needs to be. In my area it is more than 15 per cent—higher than the State average of 10 per cent. Youth unemployment continues to be higher than unemployment for people of working age generally. That is a failure of this House and the economic system that we have constructed. We have had periods in the postwar history of this nation when youth unemployment has been much lower and we need to reflect on that from time to time. The Government could do better on the issues of housing and homelessness. Housing affordability today is worse than it was for people of my generation. That is an issue we have failed to handle properly during the life of this Parliament. There has been some success, but there is more to do in building a better world for our children. More things can be done locally. I mention some of the programs that our local school is engaged in to try to build a better world for our children.

Dr David Cullen, Principal of Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College and staff, have been committed to addressing their students' mental health and the stresses of transition from school to the after-school world, with some great programs. The college is partnering with the local health district and services in the area. Earlier this week Dr Cullen advised me that the aspiration to have a clinic on The Entrance campus of Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College to deal with the students' mental health and wellbeing is only around the corner. That is a great outcome for our area and I commend Dr Cullen and his staff for their work. I commend the motion to the House and encourage all members to do all they can to build a better world for our children.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (13:17):** By leave: As the Minister for Multiculturalism in New South Wales, I am also the Minister with responsibility for youth. I thank the member for Heathcote for bringing up Youth Opportunities during the debate on this important motion. That is a program that is run and funded under my authority as the Minister for Multiculturalism and it provides millions of dollars to youth programs across New South Wales. It is encouraging to see members across the parliamentary divide stand today to speak about young people. It is vital that we positively support young people.

Each year the Government invests millions of dollars in programs for young people. Across New South Wales, Youth Opportunities is one program that is proving its worth. Each year I have the opportunity to speak one-on-one to thousands of young people in many different electorates. Some of the problems with young people are often seen as being insurmountable. Even though I have mentioned the millions of dollars that have been invested in the State's youth, it is only a very small investment compared to the billions of dollars in the budget. It is money that is wisely invested. The outcomes are exceptional. We can only achieve these positive outcomes for young people if we partner with the appropriate people. Not only is there Youth Opportunities, but under our compact alliance there are over 30 different partnerships with organisations across New South Wales. It is those partners, initiatives and programs that are currently not only providing a great sense of harmony and support, but playing a huge role in mentoring young people.

The programs offer opportunities for young people to take up leadership roles. A few of the organisations that create those opportunities are the National Rugby League [NRL], the Australian Football League [AFL], and the Police and Community Youth Clubs [PCYC]. I place on the record of this House my great support for people

such as Dom Teakle, who is the chief executive officer of the PCYC. Some of the many youth support programs are Sydney Youth Connect 2020 and Youth Off The Streets that is run by Father Chris Riley, who is one of our COMPACT Alliance partners. I mention those organisations because it is to their credit that positive pathway programs enable our youth to lead positive lives. I do not pat myself on the back for the progress that is being made among young people: rather, I give credit to the many councils and the schools that run programs such as Raise, which is a youth mentoring program operating in approximately 50 schools across New South Wales.

The implementation of youth support programs is not an insurmountable task, provided that the organisations involved are given incentives, such as financial and volunteer support. One of the great strengths of New South Wales is the willingness of its people to participate in programs as volunteers. I express my gratitude to the hundreds of people who are motivated by their interest in assisting young people to participate as volunteers. I am immensely proud of the youth support programs and the organisations that are involved in giving our young people what they need to lead successful lives. I not only commend the motion to the House but also thank the Government for enabling me to support youth organisations by providing funding that is directed towards creating beneficial outcomes for young people.

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (13:21):** By leave: I thank the member for Holsworthy for bringing this motion to the attention of the House noting the important role that young people and youth play in our society. In my electorate of Cabramatta every week, regardless of age, literally thousands of people volunteer their time at community organisations, religious organisations, charities and more. A large number of those volunteers are young people who want to give back to the community. A specific example I bring to the attention of the House are the two co-chairs of the Fairfield Relay For Life committee, Kelvin Tran and Michael Tran. They are not related, but both have spent a tremendous amount of their personal time to organise the Relay For Life this year—a noble cause that raises money for cancer research by the Cancer Council.

Both of those young men are also active in their local communities. Kelvin is a member of the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society Management Committee and Michael is an ambassador for White Ribbon Day. I also bring to the attention of the House the massive efforts of Miss Rowena Tran, who is this year's Fairfield City Council Young Citizen of the Year and who is planning to establish a foundation to assist a rehabilitation centre in Vietnam where she volunteered twice to help with speech therapy for kids in 2017. As well as studying for a master's degree in speech pathology, she is an active member of the Fairfield Youth Advisory Council where she has advocated for the needs of youth and the multicultural community of Fairfield. She also has helped out with events such as the Fairfield Relay For Life and the Bring it On! Festival.

Three times a week Rowena Tran tutors at the libraries' homework centre that gives free assistance and study help for students. Last year she volunteered at a rural school in Taiwan to teach English and organised the second Christmas Giving Tree Appeal, which aims to give a positive experience to new refugees and migrants who have settled in the area. And as if that is not enough, Rowena was a Multicultural Youth Ambassador with the New South Wales Multicultural Youth Affairs Network and last year was selected to represent Australia at the University Scholars Leadership Symposium at the United Nations in Bangkok. We have a wealth of talented youth in Cabramatta. Miss Cindy Tan has singlehandedly organised fundraising at Freedom Plaza multiple times in the past few years, raising money to build plumbing systems and waterways in Uganda so that the people of Kyakadali can have clean water.

Earlier this year Miss Tan travelled to Uganda to roll up her sleeves and assist with the physical construction of this water system. She is also an active committee member of her temple and has done numerous other fundraising activities locally for organisations such as the Cancer Council on Daffodil Day. I could go on citing plenty of other examples of worthy youth in Cabramatta who do their best to give back to their community. Unfortunately, as the motion says, there can be barriers to youth achieving their goals, which often have to do with their socio-economic status, a lack of opportunity and a lack of support. We as a society have a responsibility to encourage and facilitate the fresh ideas and worthy activities of our future generations. They are our future, and the Government, whether it is Labor or Liberal, should keep in mind that we need to invest in their minds and their hard work so that the future of New South Wales remains bright.

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (13:25):** In reply: I commence my speech by thanking the member for Campbelltown; the member for Terrigal; the member for Gosford; the member for Heathcote; the member for The Entrance; the Minister who has responsibility for youth, and member for Castle Hill; and the member for Cabramatta. Many more members than I expected participated in the debate, which shows that we can all come together to acknowledge our youth and how important our young people are to us. As many members said that during the debate, young people are our future, which is why we all invest so heavily in them. It is very nice to hear success stories of young people, as mentioned by the member for Cabramatta, acknowledged in this House. Earlier during the valedictory speech by the member for Camden one of the things he did not mention was his role as the Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Employment in Western Sydney. Recently he held a very

successful forum attended by school leaders from several electorates to meet mentors and discuss having goals, meeting goals and benefiting from employment opportunities. Even though the member for Camden will not be a member of this House in 2019 and will be sadly missed, I hope that the forum will continue.

I particularly mention Lilly Lyons, who was a member of the Youth Advisory Council a couple of years ago. The Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services may have met Lilly at some stage. She is a phenomenal young lady. She has her own radio show and she has been a guest of Ben Fordham—and gave him a run for his money. She is an incredibly professional young lady. She has had her radio show since she was 13 years of age and does a phenomenal job on station RADAR 89.3 GLF. She is particularly passionate about advocating for survivors of child sexual abuse. For a lady so young who knows way too much, she is there to support so many people. She was a very wise choice as a member on the Youth Advisory Council. I encourage all young people to apply to be a member of that council as well.

The member for Campbelltown mentioned that our local media often circulate positive stories about young people who have found success and suggested we should put our energy into concentrating on positive stories. I would like our media to focus on World Positive Media Day on 22 June 2019. What a lovely idea it is to try to have only positive stories to promote a happy and harmonious community. I think that is something from which we could all benefit. Members of this House have backgrounds that never cease to surprise me. It is always when members speak on issues that resonate with their own backgrounds that we learn a little bit more about each other. The member for Gosford mentioned that she fostered an Aboriginal child and obviously she has unique experience when speaking on issues associated with fostering. She is quite right to say that young people speak without any barriers and without all the rituals that adults keep in mind before they speak. Young people speak freely and sometimes they come up with great ideas that make a real difference.

We do not want our communities to feel disengaged. We want them to feel that they can make a difference, and our young people are a fabulous place to start. As a member of this House and as Chair of the Committee on Children and Young People, I have worked very closely with the Advocate for Children and Young People. I thank Andrew Johnson and his team for all the work they do. The Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services will know how much time and effort they put into meeting so many young people to get thousands of stories and details of backgrounds on how we can help people to make a difference. I thank the House for acknowledging the motion and I thank members for coming together in a spirit of bipartisanship to discuss youth support programs. I also thank those who work with young people to give them the futures they deserve.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Anna Watson):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **WALLSEND ELECTORATE TRAFFIC CONGESTION**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:30):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Considers that congestion on Thomas Street, Newcastle Road, and Griffiths Road, which link Wallsend to Newcastle, has reached crisis levels.
- (2) Notes that despite a reduction in the speed limit, accidents along the roads are frequent.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight to formulate plans to ease Wallsend traffic congestion.

Traffic around Wallsend has reached crisis point. The significant population growth in the Hunter is causing more and more traffic to be channelled onto the M1 and the Hunter Expressway, impacting on the arterial roads leading into Wallsend and Newcastle. Increased traffic from the Hunter Valley is travelling down to the city and, with the Fletcher and Minmi suburbs continuing to expand rapidly, the problem is getting worse. Shortland residents regularly call my office complaining that heavy vehicles are using their suburban streets as a rat run to avoid the traffic crush on the Newcastle Inner City Bypass, posing a danger to pedestrians. A man who lives on Shortland Road told me, "The noise generated by these vehicles is unbelievable. There are a lot of young families and elderly people in the area and our lives are being disrupted by these big trucks coming through all hours of the day and night."

Minmi Road, the main connection to the rapidly growing suburbs of Maryland and Fletcher, is overloaded with traffic on a daily basis and the problem is exacerbating. A Maryland resident called to complain, saying, "I drive out to the valley every day for work and the longest part of my commute is between Maryland and Jesmond. Traffic is backed up all the way along Minmi Road and doesn't stop all the way down Newcastle Road." Newcastle Road is the worst of the lot. The run from Thomas Street onto Newcastle Road and through to Griffiths

Road is the main connection between Wallsend and the Newcastle central business district. At rush hour, traffic grinds to a standstill.

Last October, a truck overturned on Newcastle Road just after the Jesmond roundabout. Of the three westbound lanes, two were closed for hours, paralysing traffic throughout the western suburbs all day. Hundreds of hours of productivity were lost as people were left stuck in traffic. As early as 2012, the NRMA called for an integrated transport plan to meet the current and future needs of the region. At the time, former NRMA director Kyle Loades said, "As we head out to Lake Macquarie, particularly from Wallsend through to Lake Macquarie and Jesmond into Newcastle ... they're major thoroughfares that have serious congestion." We need to make plans to increase the capacity of roads and look at public transport. We have made repeated efforts to get answers to questions about what is happening with traffic reductions from Wallsend to Hamilton. We are still waiting on a response to explain the reasons that Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] has reduced that traffic.

It was reported that more than \$1 million in speeding fines have been recorded by RMS and the Government in the six months since the traffic reduction occurred. However, we have no evidence that there are fewer accidents on the road. We are still waiting on answers from the Minister. Work on the Newcastle Inner City Bypass needs to be sped up and the road needs to be built as soon as possible because of the gridlock that occurs. I urge the Minister to listen to the Hunter and Wallsend communities, build the Glendale interchange, build the intercity bypass, and start looking at future plans for roads.

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:33):** I put on record that in August 2013 Roads and Maritime Services completed a package of works to improve any intersections along the road that forms the main link between the M1 Pacific Motorway and Newcastle. Traffic along the road was expected to increase when the Hunter Expressway opened, with expressway motorists expected to take the Newcastle Link Road exit to travel into Newcastle. An upgrade of six key intersections was fully funded by the New South Wales Government, at a cost of \$50 million. Work on the final two intersection upgrades started in August 2012 and finished at the end of July. At the Douglas Street and Lake Road intersections the work included replacing the roundabouts at the Lake Road and Thomas Street intersection and improving the Douglas Street and Newcastle Road intersection, with traffic lights to better manage the traffic flow in the area. On Thomas Street, three through lanes were provided in each direction, and at Douglas Street and Newcastle Road—

**Debate interrupted.**

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

#### *Announcements*

### **DEATH OF JEREMY SPINAK, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE NSW JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES**

**The SPEAKER:** On behalf of all members, I acknowledge with some sadness the passing of Jeremy Spinak, former President of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mr Spinak's family today and with the Jewish community.

#### *Visitors*

### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I welcome to the gallery the red gum timber cutters—they could be a dangerous group—guests of the member for Murray. I also welcome Vickii McDonald from the Willoughby electorate office, who is joined by her brother Brett Salter, guests of the Premier, and member for Willoughby. Today Vickii received a Parliamentary Service Award for her 15 years of service. It was great to see you this morning and congratulations again. I welcome students and teachers from Eastwood Public School, Ermington Public School, the Italian Bilingual School and Ryde East Public School, guests of the Minister for Finance, Services and Property, and member for Ryde.

I also welcome Garry Edwards and Nathan Morris from Regional Livestock Exchanges, who are joined by Andy Madigan from Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association, guests of the Deputy Speaker, and member for Lismore. I welcome school leaders and their teachers from Cumberland High School, St Patrick's Marist College and Arthur Phillip High School, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, Western Sydney and Multiculturalism, and member for Parramatta.

I welcome members of the Shoalhaven Heads RSL Sub-Branch, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary for Education and the Illawarra and South Coast, and member for Kiama. I also welcome Camden mayor and Liberal candidate for Camden, Peter Sidgreaves, as well as Camden deputy mayor Theresa Fideli, and Camden

electorate officer Jo Sendt, guests of the Government Whip, and member for Camden. I also welcome Eric Kuang from North Sydney Boys High School and Sally Snashall from Queenwood, who are here with Rodney Timm and Virginia Howard from Mosman Bendigo Bank, guests of the member for North Shore.

I welcome members of the South Lakes University of the Third Age, guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. It was lovely to meet you all earlier. I also welcome Claude Holland, Mark Harvey and Ted Carnes from Denver, Colorado, guests of the member for Kogarah. I also welcome Sophie Carlton, Holsworthy electorate officer, guest of the member for Holsworthy. We welcome everybody to the Chamber this afternoon for the final question time of the week.

*Question Time*

**ROAD TOLLS**

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:19):** My question is directed to the Premier. In light of the fact that just over 27,000 people across New South Wales have taken advantage of the Government's tolling reward scheme, will the Premier now admit that the scheme has failed to meet its objectives and join Labor in bringing back the M4 cashback?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:20):** Before the 1995 election the Labor Party made promises to the electorate to remove the tolls on the M4 and the M5. Then Labor got elected and what did it do? It kept the tolls. What the Leader of the Opposition also wants us to forget is that when he was the roads Minister in New South Wales—in fact, in that horrible mini-budget of 2008 when Labor axed all free public transport for students—he also chose to increase tolls across Sydney Harbour crossings by 33 per cent.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition might try to hit me with a feather with a question or he might try to raise an issue that he purportedly cares about, but we know that those opposite always say one thing just before—

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure will come to order.

**Mr Michael Daley:** My point of order goes to Standing Order 129. What about the waste of your stadiums policy? That is the biggest waste of all.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Why don't you change your mind on stadiums if you want to help the people of New South Wales?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time. So much for good behaviour. The Premier has the call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It took the Leader of the Opposition two days to get back to the real Michael Daley. We know the Leader of the Opposition knows that he has asked a stupid question when he changes his question from tolls to stadiums midway through the answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting. Those members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber for the remainder of the day.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Before the 1995 election, Labor was going to axe the tolls; after the election, Labor put the tolls back on. The Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Roads for the 2008 mini-budget and what did he do? He increased the tolls by 33 per cent—and that is what he will do again if he has the chance.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** If the Leader of the Opposition tries that again he will be placed on three calls to order. Government members will come to order.

**Mr Michael Daley:** My point of order goes to Standing Order 129. The question was a simple one.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I heard it; it was simple.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Will the Premier join Labor to bring back cashback—and ditch stadiums while she is at it?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** He is the first Opposition leader who keeps answering the questions. If he does not like the answer, he ad-libs the questions. The difference between us and them is that we deliver on the promises we make.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** We said to the people of New South Wales if you spend more than \$25 a week on tolls we will give you free registration. We did not say we would do it after the election, but immediately. When the finance Minister and I announced the policy we backdated it to give people an extra advantage. That is the difference between this Government and those opposite. They cannot keep a promise and we deliver on our promises. I am happy to answer a question from the Leader of the Opposition about tolls any day of the week. Labor lied about the tolls. Labor lied about reducing tolls. When the Leader of the Opposition was roads Minister he put tolls up. That is his record. Look at ours.

#### **WESTCONNEX AND WESTERN SYDNEY**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (14:24):** I address my question to the Premier. Will the Premier inform the House how the New South Wales Government is delivering WestConnex and a stronger, better future for Western Sydney?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:25):** I thank the member for Seven Hills for his question. It is good timing given the previous question from the Leader of the Opposition. I commend the member for Seven Hills. Many people in his community rely on roads and public transport. I appreciate his interest in the largest road project in Australia at this point in time. When we talk about WestConnex we focus on how much road we are building and the jobs it is creating, which is fantastic. But today I will focus on quality of life.

We are giving people back time by building this road. There is nothing more important than spending time with your family or pursuing your own interests as opposed to sitting in traffic. This Government is congestion busting. We know the effort involved in building these projects, but this Government knows that if it does not do it those opposite never will. They never did. Our citizens will have a better quality of life rather than being stuck in traffic each day. I was pleased recently to go down into the M5 tunnel, which is making enormous progress. There are more than 750 workers, including 140 apprentices, working on that tunnel alone.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** How is that legal claim going?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Do you have a problem with that, as the shadow Minister for roads?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will cease arguing across the Chamber.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** As I was saying, it puts into perspective how much the workers sacrifice every day to build the project and the opportunities it brings for our citizens. In the future, if you are travelling from Parramatta to Sydney Airport you will save 40 minutes on the commute. That is a lot of time to save when travelling from Parramatta to Sydney Airport. Not everyone wants to travel to the central business district; many people travel across regions. If you are travelling from Liverpool to South Sydney you will save 30 minutes on your commute. I know the member for Holsworthy is interested in and appreciative of that. If you are travelling from Campbelltown to Sydney Airport you will save 22 minutes. If you are travelling from Moorebank to Port Botany you will save 20 minutes. If you are travelling from Burwood to Sydney you will save 20 minutes, and if you are travelling in the inner west between Beverly Hills and St Peters you will save 10 minutes.

On a daily basis that is a saving of 40 minutes each way, 80 minutes every day, multiplied by five—that is a lot of saved time. That is a lot of quality of life to return to people. That is why we build the infrastructure: not because we can say that we built a project, but because we know what it means to people's lives. We know that reducing congestion and allowing people to be more productive is a quality of life issue. It will allow people to do what they want to do rather than sitting in traffic. Those opposite promised to build the M4 and the M5 but never did it. When the Government announced the WestConnex project Labor opposed it. Earlier this year Labor opposed stage three—I do not understand why. Why would you oppose projects that improve the quality of life of your citizens? Why would you oppose projects that reduce congestion and travel times? I do not understand.

We know that, in addition to the travel time savings, it is having a positive impact on jobs—10,000 jobs will be created during the life of the project. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to visit a worksite with the Minister. I know Minister Ayres experiences this as the Minister for WestConnex. I get a kick out of hearing the stories of the workers: what has brought them to New South Wales, what brought them to work on that project, and what it means for them and their families and their livelihoods. Again, I call on those opposite to put politics aside and support this wonderful piece of infrastructure, to support what is in the best interests of the public. They promised it when they were in government but failed to deliver it. I read with interest that a mentor of the Leader

of the Opposition is former Premier Bob Carr. I note that a number of his former staff will be assisting the Leader of the Opposition. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition has not read Mr Carr's book *Run for Your Life*. [Extension of time]

On page 103, in relation to tolls, the former Premier writes, "We had said to the public, 'Well, you can wait another 15 years for this road and get it un-tolled or you can have it in three years and get it with a toll, albeit one that varies with distance'". He continues, "Motorists will accept a value for money argument. They will pay tolls to get a road now rather than face a decade or more stuck in traffic." That is what the Leader of the Opposition's mentor said. We know that those opposite say one thing before an election, they come to power and then they do not keep their promises. The Labor Party says one thing prior to an election and when it comes to power it does not keep its promises. I say to the people of New South Wales: Judge us on our record and judge the Leader of the Opposition on his.

### ROAD TOLLS

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:31):** I direct my question to the Minister for WestConnex. Given just 280 people in the Penrith postcode have benefited from the Government's tolling rewards scheme, will the Minister join with Labor to bring back the M4 cashback?

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

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:31):** I thank the member for Londonderry for her question.

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I love that Labor told everyone that every single person using the M4 will have to pay more than \$2,000 a year in tolls. They said it day after day. The member for Londonderry has just confirmed that 280 people spend more than \$25 a week—that is \$1,300. I thank the member for confirming to everyone in New South Wales that everything she campaigned on is a complete and utter dud. The year six students in the gallery can do the same math. They should come down into the Chamber and teach the member for Londonderry about managing and counting money.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order is under Standing Order 129. People are avoiding your toll; they are using Parramatta Road.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being relevant to the question. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time. I am sick of her theatrics at the microphone.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I thank the member for mentioning the 280 people. I love the fact that she uses WestConnex; I am encouraged by that. The Government has made sure the road that those opposite ignored has been completed. The M4 tunnel finally links Western Sydney to the central business district and will get us to the Anzac Bridge. The public want to know how Labor will fund the cashback scheme. Labor will not tell us what it will charge in the tunnel and that is because it will increase the toll to pay for the cashback scheme. It is just like Bob Carr in 1995: They say one thing before the election and then increase the toll to pay for the cashback.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Prospect will cease interjecting or he will be removed from the Chamber.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** That is what Labor is doing, and everyone knows it. If that is not correct tell us what the cost of the toll will be.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** We are not doing that because the contract is signed.

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We have hit a raw nerve. I thank the member for Londonderry for completely destroying the Labor Party policy on cashbacks.

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The Labor Party has rolled that out today. I could not have done it better myself. They say it is 280 people. What a great job. It is absolutely fantastic. Thanks for confirming today that Labor will jack up the toll further down the road for the cashback scheme. Labor has already cut \$670 million from the

Nepean Hospital budget. It still does not have enough, so it will jack up the toll again. While we are at it, if we travel from Penrith to the city on the Labor toll roads—the M7, the M2, the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Cross City Tunnel, the harbour bridge—it costs \$22.

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** If we travel on WestConnex all the way it costs \$8.95. Well done to the new tactics committee. Thank you for that. So that is 280 people—\$1,300. What happened to the \$2,000 that people were paying over and over? I am using Labor's data. Labor released the press release that stated that only 280 people spend \$1,300 on tolls. Congratulations, they get their dollars back.

**The SPEAKER:** Some Opposition members are embarrassing themselves.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We are saying that we will build the infrastructure. We have come up with a way to finance it and people travelling from Western Sydney, particularly from Penrith, can travel on the M7, the M2, the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Cross City Tunnel or the harbour bridge for a cost of \$22. Travelling to the city on WestConnex will cost \$7.95—unless of course Labor wins the next election then it will increase the toll on the tunnel to pay for its cashback scheme.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW REFORM

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (14:42):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. How is the New South Wales Government showing leadership on delivering domestic violence reform? Are there any alternatives?

**Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (14:43):** This Government's approach to tackling domestic violence in New South Wales is making a real difference. The NSW Bureau of Criminal Statistics and Research shows that New South Wales is leading the nation in recording a significant decline in domestic violence assault rates, which is a reduction that BOCSAR noted had not been recorded elsewhere in Australia. Today the Treasurer and I were proud to announce that this Government will introduce paid domestic violence leave for New South Wales Government sector employees to take effect from 1 January next year. This new entitlement will ensure the Government protects its workforce, which is the largest in Australia, from the scourge of domestic violence—and that includes frontline staff, police, teachers and nurses. This is a great result for victim survivors and will ensure that they have financial stability and extra time to rebuild their lives.

But let us remember where we were when we came to government. Under Labor, there was no plan for domestic violence. Under Labor, there was no leadership in domestic violence. Under Labour, there was no focus on perpetrators. Is it any wonder, because guess who was the police Minister in the dying days of that failed Labor Government? It was none other than the now Leader of the Opposition. He had no interest in domestic violence and no idea. Did he provide body-worn cameras for New South Wales police to record the evidence of domestic violence victims? No. Did he introduce Australia's first high-risk offender teams to go after the perpetrators of this dreadful crime? No. Did he roll out police suspect target management plans for domestic violence offenders? No.

Did he have Safer Pathway and Safety Action Meetings to support high-risk victims? No. Did he introduce a domestic violence disclosure scheme so that concerned members of the community could learn if their partner had a history of violent offences? No. He could have done any of those things as police Minister, but he did none of them. But we did. The Opposition has not hit the reset button; it has simply recycled a failed Minister from a failed Government. I read with interest in the *Australian* today that the Leader of the Opposition has brought the Sussex team Premier League back. But who is missing from the so-called Premier League? We could ask the Minister for Corrections—if he is in a good mood.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order: I have two points of order. The first is under Standing Order 73. The Minister is seeking to impugn the reputation of the Leader of the Opposition.

**The SPEAKER:** I have not heard anything of that nature at this stage. I do not uphold that point of order. The member for Fairfield may be pre-empting or predicting something that has not occurred. I will rule on that if it happens. What is the member's second point of order?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** It is under Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being relevant to the question asked.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** The question is about domestic violence. We want to know about domestic violence.



**The SPEAKER:** And she is about to tell you if you would cease interjecting.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** We are starting 16 days of activism against domestic violence and the Minister is going down this road?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member's behaviour is appalling. He will resume his seat. I call the member for Fairfield to order for the first time. Theatrics at the microphone are not appreciated.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Who is missing from the Premier League? If the Minister for Corrections is in a good mood, Eddie Obeid and Ian Macdonald could get a day pass. They could be in the Premier League and the band would be together again.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question, otherwise there will be relentless points of order. The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Labor has not changed. It is the same old Labor Party with the same old protection racket.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. Does the member for Bankstown have a problem? The wonderful behaviour of Opposition members has returned, and it did not take long. What is the member's point of order?

**Ms Kate Washington:** It is under Standing Order 129. You directed the Minister to return to the leave of the question but she has failed to do that.

**The SPEAKER:** I requested that she do that. I am listening to whether she does. Resume your seat.

**Ms Kate Washington:** She continued along the same lines, which were completely irrelevant to the question asked.

**The SPEAKER:** It is up to the Minister to prove relevance. I have not heard enough to know that it is irrelevant. If the member for Port Stephens interjects again, she will be called to order. It is theatrics at the microphone.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Protection rackets are part of Labor's DNA, because despite the Leader of the Opposition being quoted as saying, "If I am the leader of the Labor Party I do not want Luke Foley in my ranks"—

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat. I do not know whether the Minister is heading down the path of relevance to the question asked. At the moment she is arguing a point of view. She has said six more words. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Six days later and the member for Auburn is still in their ranks. Surely the expulsion of Luke Foley from the New South Wales Labor Party would have the support of you, you—

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** Point of order—

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** He should have your support; he was trying to get rid of you.

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** Madam Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** I am Madam Speaker.

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** It doesn't seem like it because she was pointing her finger at you before.

**The SPEAKER:** Resume your seat.

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** I thought the Minister was rude to you before.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Resume your seat or you will be removed from the Chamber without any warning from me. You are being disrespectful. Some of the behaviour today is appalling. New standards, indeed!

**Mrs Leslie Williams:** I seek an extension of time, which I know is normally two minutes but given the interjections from members on the other side I ask for three minutes.

**The SPEAKER:** Maybe if the member for Port Stephens was quiet the Minister could answer the question. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time. Two minutes is granted, not three.

*[Extension of time]*

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** Surely the expulsion of Luke Foley from the New South Wales Labor Party would have the support of the member for Bankstown, or the member for Summer Hill, or the member for Londonderry because the new Leader of the Opposition has failed again. He has kept up his track record. He has failed again and he has not been called out. It is the same old Labor Party.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** That was disgraceful.

**The SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Fairfield that I will decide what is disgraceful.

#### WESTCONNEX

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (14:43):** My question is directed to the Minister for WestConnex. Given that more than 40,000 people a day—

**The SPEAKER:** I will wait until Government members are quiet so we can hear the question from the member for Granville. The member treats this Chamber with respect at all times so she will be treated with respect. I call the member for Bega to order for the first time.

**Ms JULIA FINN:** Given that more than 40,000 people a day are clogging local roads to avoid the M4 toll and just 89 people in the Parramatta postcode have benefited from the tolling reward scheme, how does the Minister explain to the member for Parramatta why he will not bring back the M4 cashback?

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:44):** Can I just say—

**The SPEAKER:** No, you will not say anything. We will wait until Government members come to order. They think that cheering and carrying on is good behaviour; it is not. Do you want to repeat your last answer?

**Mr STUART AYRES:** No, I want to put Hawker Britton on my Christmas card list because these tactics are the best I have seen. We have not been able to get a question on WestConnex for two years; we get one change of tactics committee and we find out now that only 89 people in Parramatta are spending more than \$1,300 on the toll.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Londonderry will stop screaming.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Sorry, more—89 people. We promised we would finish the M4—the road that those opposite could not finish. We told people how we would pay for it so we could have the road and our schools, hospitals and all the infrastructure that we need. We also said we would duplicate the M5 tunnel—a tunnel that was never built big enough by those opposite—and we would link both of them to create and finish a motorway network across Sydney. We are doing so in a responsible fashion. The member for Granville and the member for Londonderry have completely destroyed the financial argument for Labor's tolling position.

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We are making sure that regular toll users get a benefit. That is why they get free registration. So when those two members come in and talk about 280 people and 89 people, all of the arguments about \$2,000 a year have just been blown straight out of the water.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Londonderry from the Chamber under Standing Order 249. After two days of relatively good behaviour in the bear pit, we have descended into the usual turmoil of interjections and noise.

*[The member for Londonderry left the Chamber at 14:47 accompanied by the Deputy-Serjeant-at-Arms]*

**Mr STUART AYRES:** It is some of the best public policy self-harm I have ever seen.

**The SPEAKER:** I am warning other members.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The puppet may have changed, but the puppet masters are exactly the same. The strings are still firmly attached and the same bad public policy still dominates the Labor Party. It is costing Western Sydney and that is why you cannot trust Labor.

#### STRONGER, BETTER REFORM

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (14:47):** My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the Government showing leadership to deliver stronger, better reforms and are there any alternatives?

**The SPEAKER:** All members who have been called to order once or twice are now been called to order three times.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:47):** How is the new leader going? Hindsight is a great thing, is it not? You could do a rerun. The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government has done great work and hard work in transforming New South Wales. We are building the roads, rail, schools and hospitals that the people of New South Wales and families right across this State deserve. We have made the tough decisions to recycle assets, to keep our budgets strong and to make things better for everyone. While we manage money well, we know that those opposite do not. Labor increased taxes 10 new times. They increased it 21 times. The Opposition leader was the finance Minister who introduced three new taxes in only 12 months. In contrast, in the past three budgets we have cut \$4.2 billion in taxes. As I reported to the House yesterday, our tax cuts are helping to increase wage growth.

The Liberals and Nationals want taxes lower and wages higher. Hot off the press a bit before question time: The unemployment rate in New South Wales is 4.4 per cent—the lowest in the nation for the forty-first straight month. The Government, as we know, has already cut stamp duty and helped 30,000 first home buyers storm back into the market across our State. Last week, we announced that we would be indexing stamp duty brackets to the consumer price index every year—changing them for the first time since 1986. The most instructive thing about that was how long it took the shadow Treasurer to get his head around that pretty straightforward change. In the morning, he was open to it; by the late afternoon, he opposed it. That is no surprise because Labor has never met a tax cut it wanted to support. The member for Keira does not care; we know he has already built up his property portfolio, his empire, using negative gearing on the way through. Speaking of negative gearing—

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: It is Standing Order 73. Personal reflections by the Treasurer against the member for Keira are clearly disorderly.

**The SPEAKER:** I will continue to listen.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** They are rewriting the questions. Hawker has been sacked; he is on a one-week retainer and he is gone. According to SQM Research, implementing these changes "is very risky and may trip the economy into a recession". Recession rewind strikes again. But you have to feel sorry for the shadow Treasurer because I have noticed he has been a bit down all week. It is the rumours of the reshuffle; those opposite have confided a few things in me this week. It explains why the member for Campbelltown cannot wipe that grin off his face. He has turned into the Energizer Bunny.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** It is Standing Order 129. Whatever the question was about, it was not about the matters with which the Treasurer is now regaling the House.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Liverpool must indicate that he heard the question. To take a valid point of order on relevance, the member needs to know what the question was. The Treasurer is being relevant.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We know that generally when you have a change of leader, what follows is a reshuffle. We are still waiting. The member for Maroubra is so lazy he has not had time to do a reshuffle, with his morning naps, late lunches and afternoon siestas. The level of talent—

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I did not hear what the Treasurer just said because I was momentarily distracted.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** I am sure you heard it as well as I heard the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I did. I am sorry about that.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** The Treasurer's comments were clearly personal reflections upon the Leader of the Opposition. They are a breach of Standing Order 73 without a substantive motion and they are disorderly.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition does not seem to be taking any offence. Treasurer, off you go.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The reason he is probably taking so long is the level of talent is so low on that side of the Chamber. I found out today that it is the first time in the Labor Party's history that it has been unable to find—

**Ms Jodie Harrison:** Point of order—

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —a credible deputy leader in the lower House.

**The SPEAKER:** I know the member for Charlestown has her instructions. The Clerk will stop the clock. Is the point of order on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition? With his back to us, he has not taken any offence.

**Ms Jodie Harrison:** I take the point of order on behalf of my constituents in Charlestown.

**The SPEAKER:** You do not need to do that. The point of order relates to a breach of standing orders.

**Ms Jodie Harrison:** It is Standing Order 129. The question was about reform and leadership. The Treasurer has five minutes to answer. If he thinks he is such a reformer, he should focus on Government reform.

**The SPEAKER:** Alternative approaches was also part of the question. There is no point of order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Talking about generational reform, I congratulate the Opposition on generational change. The only problem is it has gone in the wrong direction. It has gone backwards. As the Premier has raised, they are bringing the band back together—the band that brought New South Wales to its knees; the team that destroyed New South Wales and made it the worst State in the nation. Bruce Hawker from the Stone Age, Kris Neill from the Bob Carr age—

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** This answer is entirely relevant.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** It is *Grumpy Old Men* meets *Golden Girls*.

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I will clarify this after I hear the point of order. Did the member hear the question?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** It is Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** Did the member hear the question?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** I did; it is about reform. The Treasurer should be talking about his Government's reform.

**The SPEAKER:** The member did not hear the question.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** He is going way off course.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Fairfield has just demonstrated that he did not listen to the question, which clearly asked for any alternate approaches, and that is what the Treasurer is outlining and describing. He is being relevant. Got it? I warn members not to do that again. If they do they will be called to order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Another great ruling by Madam Speaker. In 2000 when I was in high school, in the Chris Neill in the Bob Carr days at the start of the decline, Labor cancelled the North West Metro for the forty-fifth time. [*Extension of time*]

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Port Stephens has had her final warning.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Back in 2000 Eddie Obeid signed up his first lease at Circular Quay. The sprightly member for Liverpool is now running the operation on that site. I asked him if it is congratulations for his first promotion since 1932. I expect Jack Lang to walk in any minute. Talking about reform—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. This is the last point of order I will take in this question because there has not been one legitimate breach of a standing order. I remind the member for Strathfield that she is already on three calls to order, so she should be very careful.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** I am entitled to take a point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I did not say you were not. I am listening to you. What is it? Don't carry on.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It is Standing Order 129. How can this be relevant to the question that was asked of him?

**The SPEAKER:** Because it is. It asked for alternate strategies as well as financial—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It was about reform within his portfolio.

**The SPEAKER:** It was also about any alternate approaches and that really will encompass a lot of other areas.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Before I came down to question time an anonymous envelope arrived in the office. It has a list of 12 names: Kogarah, Rockdale, Summer Hill, Newcastle, Heffron, Charlestown, Wallsend, Mount Druitt, Granville, John Graham, MLC—I have never heard of that suburb—and the member for Lakemba, the shadow education Minister. What were you thinking? I am thinking you are Gonski, mate.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I was not going to take another point of order, but because it is the member for Liverpool, who is generally reasonable, I will hear him. The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** The Treasurer was directing his comments directly to the member for Lakemba, which is clearly disorderly. Any comment should be through you.

**The SPEAKER:** I accept that. I uphold the point of order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We have not worked out who the last one is. It has a question mark. I would keep it very quiet, Clayton. It is between you and me; just don't tell anyone. While they have gone back a generation we are delivering for the next generation.

### **STRONGER, BETTER TOURISM AND MAJOR EVENTS**

**Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (14:57):** I address my question to the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills. How is the Government delivering strong, better tourism and major events to support economic growth in New South Wales?

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (14:58):** I thank the member for Murray for having me in his patch at Griffith recently at the Piccolo Family farm where I announced the first food and wine tourism strategy in this State to grow an industry in this State that is worth billions of dollars a year and employs tens of thousands of people. Through that strategy we will be working very hard—

**The SPEAKER:** The House will come to order. All Government and Opposition members who are having conversations will come to order. This Minister always has something interesting to say, so you should listen.

**Mr Chris Minns:** What?

**The SPEAKER:** I am sorry; the member for Kogarah is the expert on interesting things to say, of course, but nobody listens. The House will come to order.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL:** This Government will use that strategy to grow that industry, which is really important not just to the electorate of Murray where approximately 50 per cent of the wine product of this State is grown but also to ensure that we assist our wine producers in this State to get their product to more parts of the world and across Australia and, in turn, use those wonderful products—through wineries and cellar doors—to attract more record numbers of international tourists who are visiting our State, and to get them out to rural and regional New South Wales.

At the moment it is an absolute golden age for the visitor economy in our State with record visitation. We are the number one visitor economy space on every metric that is measured in this country, from international visitation, domestic visitation, overnight stays and overnight spend. New South Wales is not only the number one destination but also our lead continues to grow on the other States, particularly Queensland and Victoria, our major competitors. The latest International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey statistics showed that over the past 12 months more than 14 million international and domestic tourists visited this great State. Impressively, regional New South Wales has just seen its largest year for visitation and expenditure in the history of this State.

It is the golden years of visitation and years of increasing the number of tourists. In each year for the past eight years, this Government has seen the visitor economy grow, backed by its record investment, but it was not always so. As members know, before 2011 the visitor economy in this State was in disarray. From 2008 to 2011 visitor numbers to this State dropped by 3.1 per cent under the stewardship of the member for Strathfield. Those numbers were terrible. I am pleased to report to the House that since 2011 we have seen not only numbers of visitors to this State grow by 40 per cent but also the visitor spend grow by 57 per cent. The number of jobs in that sector also continues to grow. This Government's ambitious plan is to continue to have those numbers grow well into the future.

Quite recently the Government produced the second iteration, the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan to the year 2030, which will see the tourism sector grow from what it is today—an industry that is worth approximately \$30 billion a year to this State to one that is worth \$55 billion to this State's bottom line.

Impressively, this Government, for the first time, has set a regional New South Wales visitation target. It is the first State in our country to set such a target. We are looking to grow the number of visitors and the value of that sector to regional areas like the Murray and the Riverina, to an industry that is worth \$25 billion a year to rural and regional New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Maitland will come to order.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL:** At the moment we know that in regional New South Wales almost 100,000 people are employed directly in the tourism sector, a number that we are very keen to grow. We on this side of the House understand all too well that tourism is everyone's business. Tourism is about bringing people to our State to show them a great time. Outside the Sydney fringes tourism is critical to sustain business and to help create new jobs, particularly during what has been one of the most crippling droughts our State has ever experienced, so that country economies and small country towns and their businesses continue to survive. When this House adjourns next week for the last time this year people from this House and their families will enjoy the Christmas break. I wish everyone in this House a very merry Christmas and ask them to visit a regional location and enjoy our great State.

**The SPEAKER:** Members will cease wandering in and out of the Chamber. I prefer that all members remain in the Chamber unless they have been removed.

#### M4 TOLL CASHBACK PROGRAM

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:03):** My question is directed to the Minister for WestConnex. Given that tens of thousands of motorists every day—

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** This isn't "refresh"; it's "hit the delete button".

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will wait until the House comes to order.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** Given tens of thousands of motorists every day are avoiding the M4 tolls and given just 131 people in the Toongabbie postcode—

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** Do you avoid it? I bet you don't. I bet you're paying.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the Minister for Health to order for the first time.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** Given tens of thousands of motorists every day are avoiding the M4 tolls and just 131 people in the Toongabbie postcode have benefited from the Government's tolling reward scheme, how does the Minister explain to me and to the member for Seven Hills why he will not bring back the M4 cashback?

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:05):** One, two, three—three times in a row. Where is Bruce? Is Bruce here?

**Ms Gladys Berejiklian:** He has just tweeted.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Remarkably, unbelievably, Bruce is running question time tactics from Twitter now. I love the fact that in between questions two and three Bruce texts, "Get the crayons out and rewrite the question. We've got to change the tactics. Oh my God." And then they come up with "131". There is another suburb where Labor went out and told people it would cost thousands and thousands of dollars to drive on the M4.

**The SPEAKER:** I warn the member for Port Stephens for the last time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Using Labor's own data, the member has walked in and said there are only 131 people that are over the \$1,300. The member is nowhere near it. He has completely blown apart his own party's policy. It is fair to say it has been a remarkably difficult week for the New South Wales Labor Party when it comes to roads and transport. I have to go back to the schoolkids. Those opposite came up with a policy about making transport for schoolkids free, except they forgot something really important: the buses and the trains. They will let the schoolkids have their student Opal card but when they turn up to the bus stop with their free student Opal card there will be no bus.

**Dr Hugh McDermott:** Point of order—

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

**Dr Hugh McDermott:** It is Standing Order 129. It was not a free-ranging question. It was about the M4 tolls and a request to explain to me and to the member for Seven Hills how families in Toongabbie are impacted.

**The SPEAKER:** Indeed it was. The Minister has the call.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** It seems like Bruce is already fighting for his job; he has only been in it for a couple of days. Back to the students, under Labor's transport policy, they will get free transport but there will be no buses and no trains. They will have no way to get to sport or to school. It is the same when it comes to WestConnex and the M4. Those opposite say that people can have a road without them actually paying for it or allocating any budget for it.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order: It is Standing Order 74. I want to clarify whether the Minister is suggesting that there are no buses and trains across Sydney.

**The SPEAKER:** The member will resume his seat.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I am saying that Labor's policy does not have any buses or trains, but thanks for clarifying that. If Labor does not have any buses or trains for the schoolkids it does not cost anything, and that is why Labor does not have to put it in the costings. If those opposite had told the Parliamentary Budget Office what they were doing, the office would have said that they are a little bit short on the coin and might need to add a little bit more—just as they have done with WestConnex. Decade after decade those opposite told the people of Western Sydney that they would extend the M4 and connect it to the Anzac Bridge—and they never, ever did.

Right now there is a tunnel underneath Parramatta Road, which will be opened next year, that will connect people to the City West Link and from there people will be able to get in a tunnel and go to the Anzac Bridge. The people who live in the south-west of Sydney knew the day that Labor opened the M5 tunnel that it was never big enough. Every person who drives in that tunnel knows that Labor never built it properly, Labor never did it right. We on this side have come back in to fix it. The lesson from today's question time is those opposite are not ready for government and they cannot be trusted.

#### ORANGE PALLIATIVE CARE FACILITY

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (15:09):** My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Will the Minister assure the community of Orange that there will be an announcement prior to Christmas that the palliative care pilot will proceed with funding for a four-bed designated inpatient palliative care facility in Orange and that all four of these beds will be open for end-of-life care by the end of March 2019, as stated by the Executive Director of Allied Health and Innovation of Western NSW Local Health District in a radio interview last week?

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (15:09):** I thank the member for Orange for his question. As the member would be aware, I have had discussions with a very good and concerned group of residents in Orange about facilitating palliative care in Orange. The member is also aware that I sat with them while I was in Orange and talked about the process and how we can best achieve the outcome for local residents. The member—and, I am sure, other members—would be aware that last year the New South Wales Government, assisted very ably by the member for Port Macquarie and Parliamentary Secretary, had a series of roundtables across New South Wales that were aimed at palliative care. As a result there were a lot of insights given to the Government and a very large additional budget was put into palliative care.

I am sure the member is aware that in Orange The Nationals member Rick Colless has worked with me on a range of issues. He actually comes to talk to me about the questions he is asked. The Government has ensured that there have been a number of initiatives in and around Orange, including the new car park funding and work around the magnificent new hospital in Orange. In relation to palliative care, the member would be aware that there have been some discussions around the Dudley Private Hospital. The Dudley Private Hospital has offered certain arrangements for patients in Orange. But of course the Government has indicated quite clearly that it is looking at measures to support patients who need palliative care and their families in and around Orange. It is a challenge. The member would be aware of that because I have talked to him about it. I am not sure why he is asking this question now when I have discussed it with him.

**Mr Philip Donato:** Point of order: It relates to Standing Order 129. I am loath to interrupt the Minister because this is a very important issue, but the Executive Director of Allied Health and Innovation of Western NSW Local Health District said last week in a radio interview that it would be provided by the end of March 2019. I just want confirmation from the Minister as to whether that is correct.

**The SPEAKER:** I understand the point of order. The Minister has the call.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** As I said, the member has asked me and I have indicated to him the timetable and he has confirmed what he has already heard from the health representative. I have indicated to the member that the project went out to expressions of interest. That process concluded not long ago and it is now out for tender. The intention has always been to try to have a solution for the residents of Orange by March. In fact, if it

could be done more quickly the Government would do it more quickly. I value the member asking these questions but on an issue as sensitive and as important as palliative care he could have come to see me, as he has on other occasions. It is appropriate for him to do that and to work through the issues. The Liberal-Nationals Government continues to deliver for the people of Orange. We on this side will treat the member courteously and appropriately while he is the local member of Parliament, but I must say that I would find it far easier to work with a National Party member who not only would work productively but would actually value private conversations and not pull some silly stunt in the Parliament.

### REGIONAL HOSPITALS AND HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:14):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. How is the New South Wales Government delivering stronger and better hospitals and healthcare facilities, particularly in regional New South Wales, and are there any threats to this investment?

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (15:15):** I thank the member for Tweed. He is 100 per cent for the Tweed and fair dinkum about the Tweed. When it comes to anything to do with the Tweed, he is certainly there fighting for his hospitals, doctors, patients and staff. The regional areas of New South Wales have seen a bonanza of funds flow into health infrastructure. Since coming to government, in just seven years we have added 16,000 medical and health staff across the State. That is 9,000 nurses and the balance is in doctors and allied health staff. But the real gem is the amount of money that we have been able to put into health because we have effectively managed the economy in this State.

I was fascinated to read about some of the major hospital work that is presently going on in this State. I thought to myself, "Why don't I have a look at what the State Labor Party promised in 2015 at the last election and what it would have done?" It is interesting that the member who now leads the Labor Party was in the Cabinet that made those decisions. The question is: Can we trust State Labor under its new, revised, recycled leader? The answer is: No, of course we cannot. I want to look at what Labor promised and what Labor delivered. There are a series of hospitals and communities that have seen massive monies invested. As a rhetorical question, do you think that the Labor Party in its infrastructure document—the one that talked about all the money it was going to put into the regional hospitals of New South Wales—allocated any money whatsoever for Wagga Wagga Hospital?

**Government members:** No.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** You are right. The Coalition Government has invested \$431 million. Do you think any money was to be invested in Lismore Hospital?

**Government members:** No.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Right again. The Coalition Government invested \$232 million. Do you reckon there would have been one cent put towards Tamworth?

**Government members:** No.

**Mr Greg Piper:** They are rhetorical questions. Stop it.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** They are rhetorical and the member for Lake Macquarie should be answering them because he knows the answers.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Are Government members going to be called to order?

**The SPEAKER:** No, they are not. They are not interjecting.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Do you think the Labor Party would have invested one single rotten cent in the Coffs Harbour Hospital back when its current leader was in Cabinet?

**Government members:** No.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** We invested \$156 million.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order—

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Do you think there was anything in the State Labor document in 2015 for the Macksville hospital?

**Government members:** No.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Not a cent.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume his seat.



**Mr Paul Lynch:** It is disorderly to incite interjections. The Minister has now done it a number of times.

**The SPEAKER:** What is the member's point of order?

**Mr Paul Lynch:** The Minister is inciting interjections. That is clearly disorderly behaviour.

**The SPEAKER:** I would not class them as interjections. They are interruptions which interrupt the flow of the answer. There is a difference. Government members are answering rhetorical questions, behaviour to which no standing order applies, or they are making acclamations. The member for Liverpool needs to look up the word in a dictionary. There is no point of order. However, I caution Government members that their behaviour is unnecessary, even though the Minister is calling for it.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** I am happy to ask the member for Liverpool instead. He knows quite a bit about hospital redevelopment. Do you reckon there was one cent allocated in this document for Tumut Hospital? He cannot answer me. What do you think?

**Government members:** No.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: The Minister is clearly directing questions at me rather than through the Chair. It is clearly disorderly behaviour.

**The SPEAKER:** That is a valid point of order. I ask the Minister to direct his answer not to the member for Liverpool but through the Chair.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Can I ask him one more?

**The SPEAKER:** No.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Not even one? Not even about his own hospital, Liverpool Hospital? To the member for Liverpool, was one cent offered by your Labor Government or by Michael Daley to Liverpool Hospital? Was one cent allocated in Labor's last policy document? Was even one dollar allocated?

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: The Minister continues to breach the orders of the House by directing questions to me rather than through the Chair. He has now done it a second time.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister should direct his comments through the Chair.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** The Speaker is the font of all wisdom, so she knows the answer. For the benefit of the member for Liverpool, since he interrupted me, not one cent was allocated to Liverpool Hospital in the Labor Party policy document. The Coalition has committed \$750 million to it. [*Extension of time*]

The clear message is that Labor was not going to spend a brass razoo on any of the hospitals that have been paid for and funded by the Coalition. We have ensured that hospitals across this State have been funded. What about the Tweed Hospital? What is going on up there? I have been there quite a bit and I have heard a good motto for the member for Tweed: not only is the member 100 per cent for the Tweed, he is also 100 per cent for patients. Unfortunately, Labor is essentially using the Tweed Hospital as its personal fundraising cashbox. The current leader of the Labor Party has rewound and confirmed the message that has been delivered in the past few months by the shadow Minister for Health, the Hon. Walt Secord. Let us look at the connections. The shadow Minister used to be chief of staff to Justine Elliot, a Federal member of Parliament, who made sure that her husband would be the candidate for the Tweed. There is a dirty deal going on where Labor is pushing the—

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order—

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Does the member not want to hear about a dirty deal?

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. What is the member's point of order?

**Ms Kate Washington:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Minister cannot impugn other people's characters—not here, not in the other place and not in Federal Parliament—as he is attempting to do now.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Labor is using the Tweed Hospital as its own personal plaything. The doctors up there are annoyed with Labor. I note that a doctor from the Tweed was quoted in the paper this week saying that they are happy with the current arrangements. He said:

We've seen a very tough process and seen specialists in the field from traffic experts, building engineers and modelling experts working on this for a year now ... it would be a real setback for the whole project if things were to change.

Things will change because Labor is still doing its dirty deals, as it did for many years under the former Government and under this leader. [*Time expired.*]

*Business of the House*

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (15:23):** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended:

- (1) On Tuesday 20 November 2018 to provide for the following routine of business after the Motion Accorded Priority:
  - (a) Government Business;
  - (b) Community Recognition Statements—for a period of up to 30 minutes;
  - (c) Private Members' Statements; and
  - (d) the House to adjourn without motion moved.
- (2) On Wednesday 21 November 2018 to provide for the following routine of business after the conclusion of the Valedictory Speech by the member for Wollondilly:
  - (a) Committee Reports—take-note debates for a period of up to one hour;
  - (b) Government Business;
  - (c) Matter of Public Importance; and
  - (d) Private Members' Statements, after which the House shall adjourn without motion moved.
- (3) On Thursday 22 November 2018 to:
  - (a) provide for the following routine of business after the Placing and Disposal of Business:
    - (i) the moving and consideration of the motion "That the House take note of Christmas felicitations";
    - (ii) at 4.30 p.m. Business of the House—Petitions;
    - (iii) further consideration of the motion "That the House take note of Christmas felicitations", if not concluded;
    - (iv) Private Members' Statements; and
    - (v) the House to adjourn without motion moved.
  - (b) permit business to be interrupted at any time, excluding Question Time or during Business of the House—Petitions, for the reporting and consideration of messages from the Legislative Council, and to provide for the conduct of any divisions.
  - (c) provide for the following speaking time limits on Christmas felicitations:
    - (i) Premier—10 minutes;
    - (ii) Leader of the Opposition—10 minutes;
    - (iii) Deputy Premier—10 minutes;
    - (iv) Leader of the House—10 minutes;
    - (v) member for Liverpool—10 minutes;
    - (vi) member for Camden—five minutes;
    - (vii) member for Cabramatta—five minutes;
    - (viii) member for Holsworthy—five minutes;
    - (ix) member for Shellharbour—five minutes;
    - (x) member for Myall Lakes—five minutes;
    - (xi) up to five other Government members—five minutes each;
    - (xii) up to five other Opposition members—five minutes each; and
    - (xiii) up to three crossbench members—five minutes each.
  - (d) to provide that from the commencement of Christmas felicitations, until the rising of the House, no divisions be conducted or quorums be called.

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (15:25):** The Opposition has not been advised of this motion. We oppose the motion.

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....48  
 Noes .....32  
 Majority..... 16

**AYES**

Anderson, Mr K  
 Bromhead, Mr S (teller)  
 Constance, Mr A  
 Crouch, Mr A  
 Donato, Mr P  
 Evans, Mr L.J.  
 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

Aplin, Mr G  
 Brookes, Mr G  
 Cooke, Ms S  
 Davies, Mrs T  
 Elliott, Mr D  
 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

Ayres, Mr S  
 Conolly, Mr K  
 Coure, Mr M  
 Dominello, Mr V  
 Evans, Mr A.W.  
 Goward, Ms P  
 Gulaptis, Mr C  
 Humphries, Mr K  
 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

**NOES**

Aitchison, Ms J  
 Barr, Mr C  
 Crakanthorp, Mr T  
 Finn, Ms J  
 Haylen, Ms J  
 Kamper, Mr S  
 Lynch, Mr P  
 Mehan, Mr D  
 Park, Mr R  
 Tesch, Ms L  
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E  
 Catley, Ms Y  
 Daley, Mr M  
 Harris, Mr D  
 Hoenig, Mr R  
 Lalich, Mr N (teller)  
 McDermott, Dr H  
 Mihailuk, Ms T  
 Piper, Mr G  
 Warren, Mr G  
 Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S  
 Chanthivong, Mr A  
 Dib, Mr J  
 Harrison, Ms J  
 Hornery, Ms S  
 Leong, Ms J  
 McKay, Ms J  
 Minns, Mr C  
 Smith, Ms T.F.  
 Washington, Ms K

**PAIRS**

Barilaro, Mr J  
 Berejiklian, Ms G  
 Fraser, Mr A  
 Johnsen, Mr M

Cotsis, Ms S  
 Doyle, Ms T  
 Foley, Mr L  
 Scully, Mr P

**Motion agreed to.***Announcements***VALEDICTORY SPEECHES**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** Notwithstanding the attempt by Labor and The Greens to cancel Christmas in New South Wales, by way of formality, I ask any member on the opposite benches who wants to give a valedictory speech by the end of this term to inform my office.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

**Pet Shops**

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

**The Star Casino**

Petition opposing construction of a proposed residential and hotel tower on The Star casino site, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Sydney Metro Pitt Street Over-station Developments**

Petition rejecting the current proposed Sydney Metro Pitt Street over-station developments, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Leppington Railway Station Car Park**

Petitions calling for the construction of a multi-level commuter car park at Leppington railway station and the provision of temporary car parking in the interim, received from **Mr Paul Lynch**.

**Central Coast Palliative Care Unit**

Petition requesting a specialised palliative care unit on the Central Coast, received from **Ms Liesl Tesch**.

**Brisbane Water Channel**

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

**Sydney Football Stadium**

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

**Woy Woy Public Wharf**

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

**Short-term Letting**

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

**Short-term Holiday Letting**

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

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

**T1 Express Train Service**

Petition requesting reinstatement of the T1 express train service to Granville, Auburn, Harris Park and Clyde, received from **Ms Julia Finn**.

**Eurobodalla Shire Health Services**

Petition calling for improved accident and emergency, critical care and perioperative services and a new regional hospital in the Eurobodalla shire, received from **Mr Andrew Constance**.

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE****Report: Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales**

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** I move:

That this debate be now adjourned.

**Motion agreed to**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I order that the resumption of the debate stand an order of the day for a later hour.

### **COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**

#### **Report: Land release and housing supply in New South Wales**

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

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:36):** As Chair: I speak to the report I tabled on 25 October 2018 on the committee's inquiry into land release and housing supply. I thank the Minister for Planning for referring such an interesting and timely inquiry to the committee. We examined the planning system, from releasing land for development to building houses on it. It came as no surprise to us to find that our planning system is as complex as our State. Demand for land and housing is high, as is the demand for infrastructure. We heard from a wide range of stakeholders about their concerns with the planning system, including enabling legislation, strategic planning, development charges, infrastructure delivery, community building and affordable housing.

Despite those concerns, and the understandable complexity of the planning system, I am pleased that we found much good news to report. We have made 11 recommendations which build on that good news, with the aim of harnessing the enthusiasm for better planning in New South Wales to improve the system. The approach of the Greater Sydney Commission to metropolitan planning, including its strategic plans built on community engagement, collaboration and transparency, has been a game changer. We believe that the commission's approach can also be applied at the level where plans are implemented, developments are assessed, land is released, and houses are built.

We have recommended that the State Government establish a consultative process to identify ways to simplify and improve the planning system, and then develop a timetable for implementation. The review should be comprehensive and conducted quickly, capitalising on the appetite of stakeholders and the community for smarter planning. A transparent, public review will address many of the concerns raised during the inquiry, including the lack of understanding around the planning process, and elements of community cynicism. Our report highlights the critical importance of interagency collaboration to get things done. We commend the planning department, other State agencies and councils for working together effectively to deliver homes and to build communities where people want to live. The committee's recommendations will assure that collaboration by it being described and documented and the activities and achievements reported on.

We also found that there is a need to examine infrastructure funding to ensure that the right people are contributing the right amount at the right time in the delivery cycle. Infrastructure funding must be effective, timely and equitable so that people are delivered with the services they need when they are most in need of them. We recommended that an audit be undertaken of the current arrangements with a view to identifying how to simplify them. We also recommended that the NSW Commissioner for Productivity investigates alternative infrastructure funding models.

Throughout the inquiry, the committee heard from many expert stakeholders, who spoke passionately about the local character of their communities. We found that terms like "livability" and "character" are used frequently in planning documents but are not always well understood. The committee recommended that all stakeholders, including the community and councils, work together to better define and promote livability and character and how they are used in planning. We also recommended that this be measured and reported on, to ensure that livability and character are primary factors in development assessments.

The committee also examined issues around advocating for planning decisions. We looked at who the advocates are, what messages are communicated and how community agreement is achieved. We found that this kind of advocacy can be unpersuasive and is not always coordinated. It was made clear to us that the community needs more information to address its concerns, especially around higher residential densities and the trade-offs between amenity and character. Based on that, we recommended that the State Government examines the requirements for evidence-based advocacy of planning decisions. It is vital that information is collected and published in a way that better informs advocacy and addresses community concerns.

The committee hopes that the changes will ensure that planning advocacy is clearer and that any community trade-offs can be explained thoughtfully and clearly. I thank the stakeholders who contributed to the inquiry for their valuable input. I make special mention of representatives from the Department of Planning and Environment, the Greater Sydney Commission and Camden Council. They shared their planning expertise generously when they briefed us on a number of occasions and escorted us around the Macarthur region. I also thank Campbelltown City Council for hosting our public hearing. I thank my fellow committee members for their passionate contributions to our important inquiry. I thank especially the former Chair, the member for Wollondilly,

for guiding the inquiry almost to its end point. Finally, I thank the committee staff for their professionalism and support. I commend the report to the House.

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (15:41):** I make a contribution to the take-note debate on the report of the Committee on Environment and Planning on land release and housing supply in New South Wales. First, I thank Mr David Hale, the committee staff and my fellow members for the production of the report, which received numerous submissions from stakeholders. It is the second report of the Committee on Environment and Planning in this term of Parliament. I am pleased with the way the hearings have been conducted and the contributions of everyone involved. The committee's findings and recommendations will no doubt be used for further debate and policy development. But for me, the equation of supply and demand is never too far from the debate about development.

In New South Wales to date, there has been significant focus on the supply of housing through land release and planning policies that advocate increased height limits and densities as well as continual urban sprawl. That addresses the supply side of the equation, but we must look also at the demand side. When I refer to "demand" I do not mean people buying houses or off-the-plan apartments; I mean the fundamental needs that residents in New South Wales demand from their government. They rightly demand adequate infrastructure as part of urban development. They expect schools to educate their children, fair train services to get them to and from work, road upgrades to alleviate congestion and expanded hospitals to care for them and their families.

During my time on the committee, it has become increasingly apparent that poor planning in development and land supply can deliver sub-par outcomes for residents. I am, of course, referring both to the residents who are moving into growing areas and to residents who already live there. Poor planning can leave people feeling like the area they grew up in no longer feels like home. In the report, the committee found that the complexity of the New South Wales planning system impacts on land release, housing supply and infrastructure planning. Indeed, the planning system is complex. Perhaps the best way to simplify the system is to shift our attention from a sole focus on housing targets and planning instruments and think about how people live and where they live, because every decision made under the planning system can have significant impacts on people's quality of life and how they feel about urban growth. Finding No. 11 of the report states:

... the terms 'liveability' and 'character' are widely used, but not well understood.

I believe livability is intrinsically linked to quality of life. While character reflects an area's existing housing typology and its urban or suburban identity, those two factors must become formal primary considerations in the planning assessment system and our public policy framework, not just words in a parliamentary report. Through my Stop the Squeeze survey, people in my local community have loudly and clearly said what they think about urban development. Emphatically, 98 per cent of people said they have had enough of development in their suburb, and 96 per cent think that developers have too much power.

Those results reflect a constituency that has lost faith in the current planning system. The planning pendulum has emphatically swung way too far in favour of overdevelopment and supply without adequate consideration of community demands. Overwhelmingly, 98 per cent of respondents said it was important to retain the suburban charm, or character, of our area. To better explain the character I will paint a verbal picture: large blocks with single dwellings, wide streets and backyards where kids can play.

Similarly, 98 per cent of respondents to the Stop the Squeeze survey said it was important to retain our green open space. My survey highlights a fundamental shortcoming in the current planning system. We need a planning system that guarantees the delivery of infrastructure to meet people's basic needs. Anything less will result in sub-par outcomes for the very people the planning system is trying to house. If we fail to listen to the demands of our residents about quality of life and focus purely on supply without realising the impact of overdevelopment, the people we represent across New South Wales will be the losers of a planning system that is not in their favour.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:45):** I am pleased to speak to the Committee on Environment and Planning report on land release and housing supply in New South Wales. As Deputy Chair, I first congratulate the member for Manly on his election as Chair. Secondly, I pay tribute to the member for Wollondilly who chaired the committee through most of this inquiry. I also acknowledge the member for Seven Hills, the member for Macquarie Fields and the member for Balmain. It is a pleasure to work with such a bipartisan committee. The member for Manly has thanked the Minister for his referral and outlined the major recommendations the committee made.

I concur that the level of interest in our inquiry from stakeholders was high. Their contributions were thoughtful and well argued. I concur that the expertise of the planners we encountered at the Greater Sydney Commission, the Department of Planning and Environment and in local government was outstanding. There may be some debate around planning directions, but I can assure the House that planning in this State is in expert

hands. It is no surprise that an inquiry about land release and housing supply had something of a metropolitan focus. That is why I will highlight some of the equally important outcomes affecting planning in country New South Wales. Perhaps our most important finding for country New South Wales is that there is no need for a body like the Greater Sydney Commission to oversee planning outside Sydney. Country areas have different planning needs from Sydney.

The commission has done a great job in Sydney, but outside Sydney local councils are working with the Department of Planning and Environment to manage land release and housing supply in a less complex and better coordinated way. Yes, there are lessons we can learn from the commission, which we can apply in the country, but we do not need another layer of government. We need more collaboration between agencies and more transparent decision-making. Country New South Wales will benefit from our recommendations to simplify the planning system, and to better coordinate referrals to government agencies. The country will benefit from the audit we recommended into what funds are available for infrastructure and where they are kept. We will all benefit from the Commissioner for Productivity having a good look at the way we fund infrastructure and who pays for what.

I thank the 12 country councils who sent us submissions and the three who sent witnesses to appear at our inquiry. As usual, Tweed Shire Council was a major contributor. Vince Connell and Iain Lonsdale from Tweed impressed once again as witnesses. They cut through the complexities of planning and outlined the need of country communities for effective, timely and well-coordinated decision-making. I thank the witnesses from Wollongong and Lake Macquarie councils, who gave us clear and sensible advice. I also thank my colleagues on the committee for their cooperative and open-minded approach. I thank committee staff Clara Hawker, David Hale, Jacqueline Linnane, Madeleine Dowd, Ze Nan Ma and Mohini Mehta. It was a long inquiry and they kept us on track all the way.

In my time in Parliament I have always found the committee staff to be professional and to provide timely advice. I could not recommend them more highly. They work in difficult conditions putting up with members, and dealing with complex subjects is not an easy task. If there was a gold medal for patience they and the Clerks would be standing at the top of the podium. I commend the report to the House.

**Report noted.**

#### **JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**

##### **Report: Inquiry into the Impact of expenditure caps for local government election campaigns**

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

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:50):** I will make some brief comments on the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters on expenditure caps for local government elections and also make some points on behalf of my colleague the member for Wollongong, who has had to return to his electorate for a commitment this afternoon. Expenditure caps are now well entrenched as part of our democracy in New South Wales. However, when the expenditure caps under the existing Act were applied at local government level during the last two rounds of elections in 2016 and 2017 some anomalies emerged. As such the Government set the committee the task of determining an alternative model.

The model needed to take into account the need for equitable caps across different local government areas and different candidates; those who are part of political parties and those who are not. While there is general support for the continuation of caps, there were some problems with the existing system that warranted fixing. For example, under the current Act, Brewarrina Shire Council with 925 voters is subject to the same expenditure cap as the City of Sydney with 119,722 enrolled voters. Labor members remain concerned that the recommendations contained in the report do not achieve all that is needed. The introduction of those recommendations would be an improvement on the current very flawed system that has resulted in grossly inconsistent outcomes.

The committee was to report back to the Parliament this year and the intention of the Government was to draft and introduce legislation before the end of this parliamentary term. We will look to see if that happens, but Labor believes the consideration should be deferred pending proper and detailed modelling of the proposed option to determine if there are any unintended consequences. The committee notes that the Government got it wrong when—against advice—it rushed to include its spending caps model in the Act only a few months ago. As predicted, that model has proven to be unworkable. While the proposed model is an improvement it is again being rushed and again no detailed modelling or external assessment has been undertaken.

A proper, detailed and evidence-based approach should be used to develop the best possible model. It could easily be legislated by June next year. Presently, a party endorsed candidate in Brewarrina Shire Council is

subject to a cap of \$20,000, or \$21.62 per voter, while a similar candidate in the City of Sydney has the same cap, which translates to 17¢ per voter. A party endorsed group in Brewarrina has a cap of \$30,000, or \$32.43 per voter, while a party endorsed group in the City of Sydney has the same cap, which translates to 25¢ per voter. I think everyone can see the problem with that.

The problems in the operation of the existing cap were clear to everyone but the solution was not. The Local Government Association expressed no clear view on a preferred model. The association identified a range of problems, but the views on how to address them were as mixed as the sizes and compositions of the local government areas for which a cap was to be set. Differing council sizes means there is not a simple fix. Addressing one part of the problem can easily result in unintended consequences similar to those that have been experienced. There is an added complexity when mayors are popularly elected. I thank the House and the committee.

**Report noted.**

#### **COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION**

##### **Report: Review of the Health Care Complaints Commission Annual Report 2016-17**

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

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:55):** As Chair: The Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission report entitled "Review of the Health Care Complaints Commission Annual Reports 2016/17" was tabled on 26 October 2018 and is the third report that the committee has tabled in the fifty-sixth Parliament. It has been a great honour to chair the committee. The inquiry was self-referred on 13 February 2018 and a public hearing was held with the commissioner and her senior staff on 12 March. The review focused on complaint trends and management, outreach activities and intergovernmental relations. The annual report and review showed that, as in previous years, the commission experienced an increase in the number and complexity of complaints received. In 2016-17 the commission received 6,319 complaints, which was a 4 per cent increase on the previous year. That has impacted on the commission's ability to deal with complaints in a timely manner and to prioritise other work, such as expanding its community outreach activities.

The increase in complaints has been an ongoing issue for the commission. In the committee's review of the commission's 2015-16 annual report we recommended that the commission improve information and communication technology systems and administrative processes. In July this year the commission implemented a new online eComplaints portal, which is expected to be user-friendly for stakeholders, to streamline the complaints management process and to reduce the time needed to resolve any complaints. The committee will continue to monitor the trend of rising and more complex complaints, which is not exclusive to New South Wales, and the impact it is having on delivering services to the public. The committee heard that the commission is employing a range of other initiatives to address the increasing complexity of complaints. For example, we learnt that the commission will triage complaints using a risk-based approach to identify and focus on the most serious and complex complaints. We will be interested in the commission's evaluation of whether that initiative and others identified in the review and the annual report are having the desired impact.

The committee would like the commission to do more outreach activities with unregistered health practitioners. We have therefore recommended that the commission develop new initiatives to identify, target and engage with membership-based organisations for unregistered health practitioners. Those practitioners must comply with the code of conduct. Amongst other things, it requires delivering services in a safe and ethical manner, taking precautions for infection control, and not misinforming or financially exploiting clients. The commission told us that a challenge in targeting those practitioners for education is not knowing who they are. The commission identified an opportunity of working with membership-based organisations in those areas of practice. We are concerned about the potential risk to client safety from unregistered practitioners who do not comply with the code of conduct. The committee's recommendation should allow the commission to access more unregistered practitioners to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, their obligations. The recommendation should also allow the commission to help representative bodies with their accreditation processes so that members take into account the standards in the code of conduct and the commission's expectations.

Finally, we were encouraged to hear that the commission has good relationships with various State agencies and those relationships are growing stronger. However, we were concerned about difficulties the commission faced in attempting to access information from the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Administration relating to an important investigation. The committee has an interest in the impact of roles and functions of other government agencies and we will continue to monitor that area. In particular, we will be interested to hear whether the Consumer Health Regulators Group, which comprises State and Commonwealth regulators, assists in improving appropriate information-sharing initiatives.



I thank Commissioner Sue Dawson as well as her senior management team and all commission staff for their work and ongoing commitment to improving the New South Wales healthcare complaints system. I thank my fellow committee members from the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council for their engagement with the issues and for their contributions to the inquiry. I thank former Deputy Chair the member for Seven Hills, current Deputy Chair the member for Manly, the member for Murray, the member for Port Stephens, and the Hon. Lou Amato, the Hon. Mark Pearson and the Hon. Walt Secord in the other place.

I also thank the committee secretariat for their support and work, including Ben Foxe, Kieran Lewis, Jessica Falvey, Elaine Schofield, Millie Yeoh, Jennifer Gallagher, Jonathan Elliott, Leon Last and Abigail Turingan. That fantastic team has a high level of professionalism and an eye for detail and makes us look good. They go above and beyond in the work they do with parliamentarians, which makes our job that much easier. It has been a pleasure to work with them in this Fifty-sixth Parliament. I look forward to continuing to work with the commissioner and her team. I highlight their fantastic work and dedication. I congratulate Commissioner Sue Dawson and her small team of people doing an amazing job in New South Wales. I commend the report to the House.

**Report noted.**

### **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC)**

#### **Report: Examination of Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports October 2016-May 2017**

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

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (16:01):** As Chair: The Public Accounts Committee report entitled "Examination of the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports October 2016-May 2017" was tabled on 13 November 2018. It is the fifth and last report of the Public Accounts Committee Performance Audit Review Program to be tabled in the Fifty-Sixth Parliament and brings the total number of performance audits examined by the committee in this Parliament to 50, covering September 2013 to May 2017. One of the ways the Public Accounts Committee exercises its oversight role is to follow up on the recommendations made by the Auditor-General to its performance audit reports to ensure that agencies have responded appropriately to those recommendations. As part of that following up, the committee questions agency officials on the measures they have taken and, if considered necessary, conducts public hearings to gather additional information by examining agency representatives. The process has proven to be an effective means of testing the action taken on performance audits and maintaining a high level of scrutiny of the agencies under review.

The committee examined 10 performance audits during the inquiry. After considering agency responses to each audit, the committee determined that the audit reports into government advertising 2015-16 and assessing major development applications had been satisfactorily completed with the agencies concerned fully implementing the Auditor-General's recommendations. The committee sought further clarification on aspects of agency responses to four other performance audits—namely, preventing and managing worker injuries, building the readiness of the non-government sector for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, contingent workforce procurement and management, and therapeutic programs in prisons.

After receiving further details regarding the action taken to meet Audit Office requirements, the committee is satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken. The committee did not consider that recommendations contained in the remaining four performance audit reports had been fully addressed. To conduct a more detailed examination of these reports, the committee held a public hearing on 17 September 2018 to seek further information. The audits examined at the public hearing were the implementation of the New South Wales Government's program evaluation initiative; the CBD and South East Light Rail project; passenger rail punctuality; and planning for school infrastructure. The committee's further scrutiny of these four audits made findings resulting in 14 recommendations to address shortcomings in the implementation of the Auditor-General's reports.

The first set of committee recommendations direct the Government to improve the robustness of methodologies to measure the cost benefit and cost-effectiveness of its programs across all agencies and in collaboration with research institutions. The light rail project has been subject to much criticism based on its failure to provide transparent information about its business case and time frames for completion. The committee has recommended that Transport for NSW undertake an updated benefit-cost ratio analysis of the project and explain its rationale for classifying information as commercial in confidence.

In relation to rail punctuality, the committee expresses concerns about the future capacity of the passenger rail network and its ability to maintain punctuality with projected patronage increases. Recommendations are made for Transport for NSW and NSW Trains to implement network upgrades to create higher capacity, improve the provision of public information about customer delays, and better document strategies for predicting passenger

behaviour. In the final set of recommendations, the committee directs the Department of Education to refine the implementation of its School Assets Strategic Plan and to examine options to reduce infrastructure requirements in full collaboration with the broader community.

In conclusion, I sincerely thank Auditor-General Ms Margaret Crawford, Deputy Auditor-General Mr Ian Goodwin, and Assistant Auditor-General Ms Claudia Migotto for their input into this inquiry and their expertise in assisting the broader work of the Public Accounts Committee. As this will be the last report of the committee for this Parliament, I sincerely thank the Deputy Chair, Mr Stephen Bromhead, and the former Deputy Chair, Mr Mark Taylor, who is at the table. I also thank my fellow committee members Mr Adam Crouch, Mr Lee Evans, Mr Ryan Park, and Mr Greg Piper for their valuable contributions to the committee's work. It has certainly been a collegiate atmosphere and we have worked well today. In addition, I thank committee manager Bjarne Nordin and the secretariat—Madeleine Dowd, Ze Nan Ma and Derya Sekmen—for their outstanding work and assistance during the past four years and in the preparation of this report and many others. They do an outstanding job and this Parliament is truly lucky to have people of such calibre. I commend the report to the House.

**Report noted.**

**STAYSAFE (JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY)**

**Report: Review of Road Safety Issues for Future Inquiry**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member for Albury, chair of the hardest-working committee of all—Staysafe. The question is that the House take note of the report.

**Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:08):** As Chair: I endorse the Deputy Speaker's observation. On 13 November 2018 the Staysafe committee tabled its "Review of Road Safety Issues for Future Inquiry". A feature of the Staysafe committee over many years has been the number of calls, emails and letters we receive from stakeholders and the general community bringing road safety issues to our attention. For its final inquiry in the Fifty-sixth Parliament, the committee recognised this broad community interest in road safety and the work of Staysafe by inviting people to suggest issues that may not have received parliamentary scrutiny in the past. We were inspired by the Science and Technology Committee of the House of Commons, which made an open call in 2017 for suggested topics for future science inquiries.

In response to our call, Staysafe received 34 submissions. These came from a broad range of Staysafe's traditional stakeholders: researchers, health professionals, driver and rider advocates, industry and insurers, and of course members of the public. The submissions covered a wide range of topics, including crash investigation, driver behaviour, driver training, the heavy vehicle industry, road funding, road rules, technology, and vulnerable road users. We examined each submission closely for how the proposed inquiry would improve road safety and benefit the community, and we have recommended two proposed inquiries.

St John Ambulance NSW proposed that we inquire into the road safety benefits of making first-aid training compulsory for learner drivers. It argued that as other drivers are usually first on the scene of an accident, fatality rates can be lowered when those first on scene are trained in first aid. St John Ambulance NSW linked its proposal to evidence sourced from countries such as Germany and Austria, where first-aid training is already compulsory for learner drivers. The Blue Datto Foundation proposed that we inquire into the road safety benefits of tailoring road safety campaigning to specific communities.

The foundation mentors young drivers and delivers road safety campaigning in schools and youth forums. It presented evidence that young people feel that mainstream road safety campaigning does not always represent their needs. It also provided evidence that people in different regions identify different road safety priorities depending on their local needs and experiences. We felt that these two proposals were well argued and supported by evidence and were ready to be inquired into by the committee in the Fifty-seventh Parliament.

The committee identified another four proposed inquiries for further consideration. In these cases, we felt that there was another step to be examined before an inquiry could proceed. The four proposed inquiries were into funding local roads to reduce fatalities, improving crash investigation, examining the needs of older road users, and examining work practices in the heavy vehicle industry. Our review details our responses to all 34 submissions and the inquiries they proposed. The review is intended to assist the incoming committee in the Fifty-seventh Parliament to identify useful inquiry topics if it wishes to do so. It will also be useful to the New South Wales Government, which may wish to pursue the proposals itself. The incoming committee will continue to monitor the issues raised in the submissions as part of its remit to report on road safety in New South Wales.

Staysafe has a proud history. Since it was established in 1982, the committee has examined a broad range of road safety issues and made many valuable recommendations. These have included the introduction of random breath testing and the immediate suspension of licences for high-range drink-driving offences. In the Fifty-Sixth

Parliament, Staysafe inquired into motorcycle safety, driverless vehicles, driver education and training, and heavy vehicle safety and use of technology. In September this year the Government introduced a star safety rating system for motorcycle protective clothing based on our recommendation. This is the first consumer rating system of its kind in the world.

It has been a privilege to chair the Staysafe committee for eight years. I am honoured to have worked with so many people who are passionate about road safety, including elected members, professionals and staff, expert researchers, emergency service providers, community members and so on. I thank my colleagues on the committee for their input to this review and our other inquiries: my deputy chair, the Hon. Scott Farlow; Adam Crouch, the member for Terrigal; Dr Mehreen Faruqi; Thomas George, the Deputy Speaker and member for Lismore—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hear, hear!

**Mr GREG APLIN:** —Nick Lalich, the member for Cabramatta; the Hon. Daniel Mookhey; and Eleni Petinos, the member for Miranda. I also thank the stakeholders and members of the community who made submissions to this review, as well as those who have contributed to our inquiries over the past four years. Staysafe's achievements rest on their contributions and their commitment to road safety. I especially acknowledge the contributions of Bernard Carlon, Executive Director of the Centre for Road Safety, and Melinda Bailey, Executive Director for Compliance and Regulatory Services at Roads and Maritime Services. Bernard and Melinda have appeared regularly at our public hearings, answered our questions on notice, briefed us and hosted our site visits. Their expertise, availability and willingness to assist have helped the committee's work enormously.

I also thank the many parliamentary staff who have supported StaySafe during my time as chair. This review was ably supported by David Hale, Jacqueline Isles and Abigail Turingan. Road safety affects us all, whoever we are and however we use roads. Fatalities and injuries come at great personal, social and economic cost. As drivers, passengers, riders, pedestrians, family members, taxpayers, consumers and regulators, safer roads benefit us all. It has been an honour to have helped make our roads safer. I am pleased to know that this work will continue as we all work together towards achieving zero deaths on our roads. I commend the report to the House.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** With the indulgence of the House, I extend the appreciation of all committee members to the chair. The member for Albury has been the chair for eight years during which time he has led the Staysafe committee in a most professional and dedicated manner. He has done a wonderful job.

**Report noted.**

## **LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 64/56**

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

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:15):** As Chair: I refer to the Legislation Review Committee's sixty-fourth digest for this Parliament. In this digest the committee examined a total of 17 bills introduced in the past sitting week. The committee also identified issues in two regulations. I will now draw the attention of this Parliament to some of the key issues raised in this digest. The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Bill 2018 implements amendments to the child protection system to further the permanent placement principles in the Safe Home for Life reforms first announced in 2014. The committee noted issues with the bill centred around the rights of children and families.

First, the bill restricts the Children's Court from allocating parental responsibility solely to the Minister for a period longer than 24 months unless the court finds special circumstances that warrant a longer period. The committee noted the intention of the provision in encouraging parties to work towards restoration, guardianship orders or adoption within a defined time frame. However, the committee considered that a mandated time frame reduces the court's discretion and puts an arbitrary time frame on efforts for restoration and may result in some families having inadequate time to establish a realistic possibility for restoration. As such, the committee referred this issue to Parliament for its further consideration.

A second issue the committee noted concerned amendments to provide for a two-tiered list of considerations that the Children's Court must consider before granting leave to make an application to rescind or vary a care order. The committee acknowledged that primacy is given to the views of the child or young person and the intention of the amendments is to provide stability to children and young people in care arrangements. However, the committee noted that consideration of the applicant's case is now only an additional circumstance and may lead to insufficient weight being given to that consideration. Applicants can include a person from whom parental responsibility for the child or young person has been removed, such as birth parents or family members. The committee referred this issue to Parliament for its further consideration.

Another bill I refer to is the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018. Amendments in this bill will allow complainants involved in prescribed sexual offences proceedings to have a record of their original evidence tendered in related or subsequent proceedings. The committee noted that these provisions may impact on the accused's right to a fair trial, due to the defence potentially having a reduced ability to test the evidence of the complainant. However, the committee acknowledged that the relevant sections contain numerous safeguards that allow the court to exercise discretion as to whether the complainant should be compelled to give further evidence. For these reasons, and noting the trauma that may result in complainants having to provide sensitive evidence, the committee made no further comment.

The third bill to which I refer is the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Firefighters) Bill 2018. This bill introduces a presumptive right in the Workers Compensation Scheme for firefighters who are diagnosed with certain cancers. The committee noted the bill has limited retrospective effect. The committee will usually comment where a bill is drafted to have retrospective effect. However, as the retrospectivity acts to extend the benefits of the bill, the committee made no further comment.

I note one of the regulations that the committee reported on in this digest. The Sydney Olympic Park Authority Regulation 2018 makes provision for the regulation of activities at Sydney Olympic Park. The committee noted that the regulation provides the Sydney Olympic Park Authority with wide powers to restrict freedom of movement within the park, including prohibiting categories of persons from entering the park; directing a person to leave the park if the person causes inconvenience; and banning a person from entering the park for up to six months.

The committee noted that the provisions may trespass on the right to freedom of movement and freedom of assembly, particularly in the context of a public place and where there is little information provided as to what constitutes an inconvenience or when and what categories of persons can be prohibited from entering the park. That concludes my remarks on the sixty-fourth digest of this Parliament. As always, I encourage everyone to read the full digest, which is available on the committee's website. I thank my fellow committee members and the secretariat for their contributions. I commend the digest to the House.

#### **Report noted.**

### **JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE VALUER GENERAL**

#### **Report: Twelfth General Meeting with the Valuer General**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** The question is that the House take note of the report.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:20):** As Chair: I refer to the report of the Joint Select Committee on the Office of the Valuer General entitled "Twelfth General Meeting with the Valuer General", which was tabled in the House on 14 November 2018. It follows the committee's established practice of examining all annual reports issued by the Valuer General. The report tabled last week reviewed the 2016-17 reporting period, where evidence was taken from the Valuer General and representatives from Valuation Services in Property NSW. The committee's report builds on previous committee reviews and makes further recommendations to improve the overall governance and operation of the Office of the Valuer General and its interactions with landowners. The report made six recommendations designed to reduce potential conflicts of interest by strengthening arrangements with external valuation contractors; streamline compulsory acquisitions; improve personal privacy safeguards; and optimise service delivery by the provision of better information and enhanced quality assurance processes.

Major developments since the committee's previous review include improvements to the compulsory acquisitions process by incorporating a whole-of-government approach to such acquisitions. The committee noted that the Valuer General is working closely with Valuation Services to improve the timeliness of such determinations and to ensure procedural fairness. The use of preliminary reports enables better feedback prior to making land valuation and compensation decisions. The committee has recommended that the Valuer General and acquiring authorities devise a risk management based ranking of complex compensation cases to reduce duplication of effort and to maximise available resources.

A major development since the previous meeting has been the publication of a standalone annual report by the Office of the Valuer General. This responds to a previous committee recommendation to issue a separate report in order to consolidate operational activities in one publication and thereby raise the public profile of the Valuer General. It also provides an opportunity to inform the community more fully about the valuation system and the services provided in an easily accessible format. The committee's report has also raised the importance of protecting the personal information of landholders. The committee is mindful of growing community sensitivity regarding the collection of personal information and the need for reliable measures to ensure that agencies collect personal details for lawful purposes, protected from misuse and unauthorised release.

The committee therefore appreciates receiving the Valuer General's undertaking to address privacy issues as a regular part of his future annual reporting program. In response to the committee's previous recommendations, the Valuer General has improved website access to information about the valuation system for people of non-English speaking backgrounds. Material is now translated into 10 community languages, reflecting the ethnic diversity of landholders in New South Wales.

The committee has further recommended that the Valuer General expand multicultural media coverage as part of a future media and community education strategy. This is to ensure that landholders from non-English speaking backgrounds are adequately informed about the land valuation system in New South Wales, their rights in relation to objections to valuations for rating and taxing, and the ability to seek compensation in the case of compulsory acquisitions. Finally, the committee has recommended that the Valuer General continue to review and refine his quality assurance methodologies and provide regularly updated information to all New South Wales landholders.

In closing, I thank the Valuer General and his deputy for their very professional and helpful assistance to the committee and for giving evidence along with the officers from Valuation Services as part of this review. I also thank my committee colleagues and committee secretariat for their hard work, support and contributions to this inquiry. This is one of many committees I serve on. The Valuer General and his team are always responsive and professional in the delivery of an at times complex and emotional process, particularly with compulsory acquisitions. I believe I speak on behalf of all members of that committee when I praise the Valuer General and his department for their ongoing high level of professionalism and their future in the great State of New South Wales. I commend the report to the House.

**Report noted.**

## **COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **Report: Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (16:26):** The take-note debate on the report of the Committee on Children and Young People entitled "Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales" was adjourned earlier this afternoon after the chair of the committee addressed the report. The member for Charlestown has also spoken about the recommendations in the report. My contribution will be very short indeed. There are not many committee reports where the recommendations contained in the report are delivered almost entirely before the report is handed down by the committee. I use this opportunity to commend the Minister for Mental Health for the Strategic Framework for Suicide Prevention in NSW 2018-2023. That framework is a comprehensive response to many of the recommendations contained in the report. The Minister has recognised the great scourge of suicide in the community, and specifically the destruction of families when young people are impacted by suicide.

I make two very brief observations. The first is about the manner in which information and data are collected by various organisations, including the Coroner, in dealing with youth suicide. The report contains recommendations that seek to improve data collection processes so that those agencies charged with effectively delivering outcomes or dealing with communities in which youth suicide occurs have greater awareness of what is happening. Secondly, a very interesting part of the report that requires close examination is the impact of social media on young people in relation to potential online bullying and as a forum for diminishing the self-worth of young people in their own eyes. The committee heard evidence about some tragic circumstances. As a community, we need to monitor the way that young people use social media and how it is monitored by parents and various other organisations.

It was a pleasure to serve on this committee. We heard many tragic stories from people who were prepared to share with us details of the impact on their families of their children taking their own lives. Many people continued grieving years and years after the suicide occurred. As a Parliament and a government, we need to put in place measures such as the framework we have adopted to aid suicide prevention. We owe it to those families to deliver better outcomes for them. Our committee was well led by the member for Holsworthy and its membership includes those from the other place—I do not know why people talk about "the other place"; I have discovered that it is pre-eminent in this building—who made a significant contribution to the inquiry. I commend the member for Holsworthy, the committee generally and the staff who assisted us with this report. I commend the report to the House.

**Report noted.**

*Petitions***KINGSCLIFF LOCALITY PLAN****Discussion**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:30):** I speak on the petition from certain citizens opposing the proposal to increase allowable building heights in Kingscliff, as exhibited in the Kingscliff Locality Plan, and calling for three-storey height limits on buildings in medium-density and mixed-use zones. The petition was signed by more than 16,000 residents, which makes it overwhelmingly clear that the people of the North Coast do not want to see building height limits removed and Gold Coast style high-rise overdevelopment take over their community. The petition tabled by NSW Labor comes as the Liberal-Nationals Government looks set to reject Tweed Shire Council's plan to limit buildings to a maximum of no more than three storeys.

The coastal town of Kingscliff should be allowed to retain its unique village appeal and not be overrun by high-rise buildings. Only Labor will protect Kingscliff from overdevelopment. This will be a huge issue at the March 2019 election. Labor's commitment is to retain the longstanding three-storey height limit across Kingscliff and other Tweed coastal villages as a measure to protect the Tweed coast's distinctive feel and quality of life for its residents. The last thing Labor wants to see is Kingscliff filled with Gold Coast style high-rise apartments. Whether it be high-rise buildings in Kingscliff or a nine-storey high-rise hospital on Cudgen farmland, The Nationals are seeking to drive inappropriate development across the Tweed.

The Tweed Hospital development has become mired in controversy and secrecy. Indeed, the community is rightly questioning the State Government's shock decision to impose a hospital on State significant prime agricultural farmland on the doorstep of Kingscliff without any consultation. I state at the outset that NSW Labor is 100 per cent committed to building a new hospital in the Tweed if it is elected in March 2019. That commitment is ironclad. Labor recognises that this area has been neglected by The Nationals for eight long years, that it has a growing population and that the Tweed needs a world-class facility. Despite the widespread support for the Tweed Hospital from all political parties and community members, The Nationals have chosen to ignore the community's wishes in their hospital site selection.

The hospital site selected by the Berejiklian Government is in the wrong location and will ruin Kingscliff and the stunning rich, red volcanic soil farmlands. In 2002 the area was protected and designated as land of State significance by the Carr Labor Government. Not only does The Nationals' hospital proposal overdevelop prime agricultural land, taking it away from future generations; The Nationals are attempting to change the entire face of Kingscliff. We recently discovered that the environmental impact statement released by the Government shows it is planning to build Tweed Hospital with a staggering nine storeys, completely ignoring the three-storey height limit for which the community has fought so hard. Locals know that if this prime agricultural land is rezoned to build the nine-storey hospital it will be a green light for property developers to rezone adjoining farmland for mega development of the area. The hospital is being used as a Trojan Horse to impose development in opposition to community expectations on the Tweed coast.

This proposal flies in the face of the 16,000 people who signed this petition demanding to keep Kingscliff to just three storeys—not nine storeys as the Government would impose on the community. The Labor Party thanks independent Tweed Councillor Ron Cooper, who has been a tireless advocate for the Tweed community. Ron has educated the community and galvanised support for a three-storey height limit in Kingscliff. He has highlighted that this fight for the heart and soul of Kingscliff is not a new one. Local surfers and community activists have been fighting inappropriate development in the Tweed for more than 30 years. Being so close to the Gold Coast, the local community knew what was at stake even back then.

But despite the community being so vocal on height limits for so long, The Nationals refuse to listen. This is reflective of this Liberal-Nationals Government—whether it be on forced council mergers, hospital privatisations and closures or its billion dollar stadium splurge—it just does not listen to the community. Hayley and Jim Paddon and the Relocate team, a coalition of farmers and community activists, have been incredibly vocal in pushing for the Tweed Hospital not to be built on Cudgen farmland. We offer our sincere thanks to Hayley for her hard work, which has culminated in 8,000 signatures calling on the State Government to relocate the Tweed Hospital. She is just another example of a community member and activist who has been ignored by the Berejiklian Government.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** Before I call the member for Tweed, I remind all members that under Standing Order 52 the member will be heard in silence.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:35):** I acknowledge the petitioners' concern that the draft locality plan increases allowable building heights in parts of Kingscliff. As opposed to what the member for Wyong stated earlier, community consultation and engagement in the planning system are now enshrined as key components of

the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act because the Government acknowledges that local communities best know what they need. Community consultation has been integral to the development of this plan. It is important to note the Kingscliff Locality Plan is being prepared by Tweed Shire Council, not the Department of Planning. The Department of Planning gave the Tweed Shire Council four years to consult with the wider community. The Tweed Shire Council has failed to legitimately consult with the Tweed community. I have made representations to the Minister for Planning, and I am pleased to say that Tweed Shire Council has now been given another year extension. It is up to the council to legitimately consult with the wider community.

The State Government is encouraging councils and their communities to take control of local planning issues. The comments made previously in this Chamber are false and misleading. The whole onus of the building heights has been on the Tweed Shire Council. It started the process some 3½ years ago, then voted to move away from legitimately consulting with the wider community, for reasons best known to council. To clarify, the site for the new proposed hospital was not picked by The Nationals or by the Liberal Party; it was picked by a team of experts in health infrastructure. These are departmental heads. I find it quite insulting that members would come into this Chamber and tip a bucket on those hardworking public servants who are only doing their jobs. They are experts in their field and that is what we employ them for.

What the Labor Party has proposed, along with various members and proposed candidates in the area, is to move the hospital. With an ironclad agreement, they want to put it on a major developer's site—a developer who has made significant contributions to the Labor Party in the past. This smacks of the Labor Party of old. I am so angry about this. Members opposite have gone against the advice of departmental heads, so it will be on their heads if they move that hospital to the developer's site. It will be referred immediately to the Independent Commission Against Corruption and we will once again see a number of Labor members brought in front of the commission. They are going directly against the professionals in the Department of Planning and in the Department of Health.

We have provided guidance and design guidelines through the metro and regional plans, but the ultimate decision lies with council. All these petitioners praise Councillor Ron Cooper, but I can only shake my head in disbelief. He runs around the town with a billboard that has pictures of 20-storey buildings. He was the one that moved in council to move away from legitimately consulting with the wider community. He should hang his head in shame. It is shameful and misleading. The council has the ability to submit reports. It has sat on its hands for 3½ years.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST:** It is typical of those on the other side to blame everyone else, but it is not them. Ron Cooper, Reece Byrnes and the mayor moved away from legitimately consulting. Government members listen to local people. Opposition members should do so. Ron does not listen to local people; that petition was wrongly worded. I had to represent that to the departments to enable discussion in this Chamber. He knows that. If he is watching now he will know that we had to ask for this petition to be debated in this place. I do not know when the member for Wyong was last in the Tweed but whoever wrote his script is severely misinformed and misdirected. Once again this is another typical Labor ploy to delay a hospital. According to the Medical Staff Council, people will die if this hospital is not built on time. The more it is delayed, the more harm will be done.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** The display in this Chamber has been appalling from both sides. Under Standing Order 52 members will be heard in silence. We have been through this before with petitions. Members may not like what is being said but they will listen in silence. Members will be removed from the Chamber if this level of interjection continues, and those members will miss out on the opportunity to make community recognition statements. The member for Bankstown will be heard in silence.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:41):** Labor is committed to a new hospital in the Tweed. For the past five minutes we have seen nothing other than crocodile tears from the member for Tweed. He has the hide to attack Tweed Shire Council because it wants to preserve and protect the beautiful character of the village of Kingscliff. The member for Tweed wants to allow developers to run riot around Kingscliff. He has now said that Tweed Shire Council has not consulted enough with the public. He is ignoring the fact that this petition has 16,000 names of local residents and visitors angry with the Government. They are angry that the Government will run riot over the locality plan, allowing all sorts of height limits in Kingscliff, which will turn the town into a new Gold Coast. That is what The Nationals in Tweed want. They want high rise in Tweed. The hospital is being used as a Trojan Horse to allow more overdevelopment in Tweed shire.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK:** The member had five minutes to clarify the Government's position on whether it supports overdevelopment of Kingscliff and the Tweed. We heard squat from the member to show that he was against overdevelopment in his own electorate. He had a wonderful opportunity to make it clear that he does not want developers to run riot in his backyard. Clearly he has very little to say about that. Instead, he took the opportunity in coward's castle to attack some poor council but did not clarify why the Government has been chasing that council for four years demanding that it rezone its towns to accommodate more overdevelopment. The member had an opportunity to explain this but he failed to do so.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The comments of the member do not go to the heart of the issue. This petition is about providing a service to patients at Kingscliff. The member should not stick so closely to telling mistruths. The signatory to this petition was Luke Foley who has already been shown to be untruthful.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** The Minister will resume his seat. The member's time has expired. Members will be heard in silence. There are too many interjections.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:44):** Interestingly, this petition was brought to the House by the disgraced member for Auburn, Luke Foley. The Opposition's comments in the discussion are just as disgraceful as the former Leader of the Opposition. Those opposite should get their facts right. They should visit Tweed Heads to know what it is like in the northern rivers region rather than make comments from their metropolitan seats in Sydney. This Government welcomes feedback from people affected by planning decisions and on matters of development. We listen to the people of New South Wales. We have been working to improve transparency and to increase opportunities for the community to have their say. That is why the member for Tweed pleaded with the Minister for Planning to extend the time for consultation by the council.

The council had decided not to consult with the community. Members need to understand the council in the Tweed. For example, The Greens mayor was going to ban any of the tradies who worked on the hospital site from working on council jobs. What does the mayor have against tradies? What is her agenda? We need to balance growing residential, business and employment needs with the need to maintain local character and the local area. The Government understands that those matters have to be canvassed. Tweed Shire Council is preparing the Kingscliff Locality Plan to provide a 30-year vision and planning framework to guide the growth and expansion of Kingscliff.

The Kingscliff locality has the most rapid population growth in the Tweed shire and strategic planning is needed to manage future development. I acknowledge that the draft locality plan increases allowable building heights in parts of Kingscliff. The locality plan seeks to increase building heights by 3.6 metres—or just over one storey—in Kingscliff business zones. It proposes to reduce heights in the majority of Kingscliff, including the medium-density zones and along Marine Parade in the town centre. I am advised that the increased heights are not located on the beachfront. Housing affordability is proposed to be improved by providing a more diverse range of housing types throughout the urban area of Kingscliff.

The department supports the council's approach in undertaking a locality planning process, which will enable the views of the community to be considered before final decisions are reached. The consultation period was extended by six months to enable the views of the community to be heard. The Government listens to the views of the community before making decisions that impact on them. The Department of Planning and Environment recognised the importance of being thorough and methodical by including, in March 2018, strategic planning in the updated Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. [*Time expired.*]

#### *Matter of Public Importance*

#### **DIWALI FESTIVAL**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:48):** Namaste. Last week we commemorated Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights. Diwali is an important occasion for the Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and Sikh communities and the large population from the Indian subcontinent in my electorate, across New South Wales and worldwide. The festival of lights is the largest festival in India and is famous for its many large and colourful events. An ancient festival to celebrate the triumph of light over dark, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil, Diwali—from the Sanskrit word "Deepavali"—marks the return of Lord Ram from exile after vanquishing the demon king Ravana. The diyas or clay lamps were lit to assist his return to Ayodhya. Today diyas are still lit and homes are decorated with other coloured lights and beautiful rangoli.

The main festival night of Diwali takes place on the darkest new moon night of the Hindu lunisolar month, Kartika, which is all the better to see the fireworks and enjoy the symbolic burning of lamps and candles. It is the night when offerings are made to Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity. It is deeply significant for all Hindus. I joined the local Hindu community in their hundreds to visit the BAPS Mandir near my home, along with the



member for Strathfield and the member for Parramatta, and Shri Mandir, which is Australia's oldest Hindu temple, to celebrate Diwali with prayers and offerings.

In recent years India has been the largest single source of migrants to Australia. There are now more than half a million Indian Australians. Patel is now the most common surname in Parramatta and one of the most common surnames in my electorate. Migrants from India, Sri Lanka and Nepal make a great contribution to our local community. These highly educated and hardworking people have made a great contribution in the professions at our hospitals, running small businesses, as councillors, in sporting and services clubs, as school leaders, and through the local parents and citizens associations. But they have not left Diwali behind. Diwali is celebrated for only five days in India but it seems to last for two or three weeks in Sydney.

I commend the Cumberland Council and the City of Parramatta Council for both literally coming to the party with Diwali this year. The City of Parramatta supported the Council of Indian Australians in holding its Little India Diwali Fair in Harris Park a few weeks ago. This Saturday night the Cumberland Council will host its Diwali celebrations in Wentworthville. Its Diwali banners look fantastic too. I commend Cumberland Council for celebrating the religious traditions of our diverse community. The celebrations were enjoyed by everyone in the community. These activities were in addition to the fantastic Hindu Council celebrations in Parramatta Park, which are now in their twentieth year, and the Federation of Indian Associations of New South Wales held its first Diwali fair in Merrylands. Diwali is a bright and vibrant time of the year for the whole community.

I briefly mention a recent event that embodies the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness. Many people would have been distressed, as I was, to hear of the recent vandalism of the Barathiye Mandir in Regents Park a few weeks before Diwali. I was horrified. The day after I heard the news I went to visit the temple during the last October sitting week. The evidence was still being processed by the police and nothing had been cleared up. It was confronting. The expression of hate in damaging the faces of 30 Hindu deities is something that will stay with me forever.

The people at the temple told me they would be having a working bee the following day to clean the entire temple and they estimated that it would take all day, if not the whole weekend. I volunteered to help but I could not get there until noon. When I arrived with the shadow Minister for Multiculturalism and the member for Lakemba, we were slightly embarrassed to find that the Mandir had been so inundated with volunteers from the congregation, their neighbourhood and complete strangers who were horrified by the attack that they were finished cleaning up after only an hour or two. There was almost nothing left for us to do, but they still appreciated our visit.

Barathiye Mandir also has been inundated with offers of financial support to deal with the \$50,000 worth of damage to the deities, musical instruments, equipment and carpets. They are overwhelmed by the generosity and kindness, and they are not vengeful. This is the triumph of light over darkness. It says something wonderful about our multicultural society that, despite the tiny minority of haters, so many people went out of their way to help complete strangers. Diwali is a wonderful celebration to which we can all relate. The triumph of light over darkness and good over evil is a universal aspiration. I hope everyone is inspired this Diwali to find their inner light and inner strength. To everyone, may the festival of lights bring joy, peace and prosperity to you and your families. I wish everyone a happy Deepavali and a successful and prosperous year ahead.

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:56):** I am pleased to make a contribution to debate on the matter of public importance which recognises Diwali. I thank the member for Granville for drawing the festival of lights to the attention of the House. More than 550,000 people identify with Indian and south-Asian ancestry in New South Wales. This event is becoming a major festival in Sydney as communities come together to celebrate their Indian heritage and culture. At this important time of year all members of our community, irrespective of their background, come together to celebrate the universal message of Diwali. This message is a joyous one—the symbolic victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. It is great to see that each and every year more people from all backgrounds celebrate Diwali.

The Liberal-Nationals Government has supported many multicultural festivals and events across New South Wales, and this year Diwali was no different. This year there was tremendous representation of our Parliament at the festivals across Parramatta, Harris Park, Merrylands, Rouse Hill, Ryde, Strathfield, Liverpool and other parts of the State. The festivals are examples of grassroots-based events that are safe and cohesive, and they bring together people from all backgrounds and faiths. Some of the events attract close to 50,000 people and they are also an important driver of small businesses in our suburbs. Festivals like Diwali are a testament to the richness of cultural diversity in New South Wales.

But they also highlight the importance of maintaining and building our social cohesion. That is why the New South Wales Liberal and Nationals Government invested \$10.9 million into our community language schools. It is a recognition of the strengths of the cultural heritage and diversity of our migrants. In New South

Wales we have seven Hindi schools, 10 Sanskrit schools and 12 Tamil community language schools, to name but a few of the Indian languages. This is also an indicator of the growth of the Indian and South Asian communities in New South Wales and the important role they play in maintaining our social cohesion.

I was proud to see again this year the New South Wales Liberal and Nationals Government turning the Opera House sails to gold to signify this important festival. Not only did this bring praise from the South Asian community; it also received tremendous positive coverage across social and overseas media. Such coverage highlights the importance of the positive message of Diwali, the symbolic victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. I congratulate Premier Berejiklian and the Minister for Multiculturalism for lighting this iconic building to mark this important festival. It was great to join them to watch those lights go on.

On Thursday 1 November I had the honour of representing the Minister for Multiculturalism at a Diwali Networking Event and diya-lighting ceremony hosted by the Fiji Consul General and Trade Commissioner. It was nice to see the member for Granville there. It was a wonderful event, celebrated with members of the Fijian Indian community. That community comprises around 8,000 people in New South Wales, with a great many of those people residing in or around the Holsworthy electorate. They are hardworking and community focused, and I thank them for having me at their event. I pay tribute to Ms Barbara Ward, president of the India Australia Business Council, who was also at this event and who did a lot of work on it. I have known Barbara for some time, and I know that she is deeply passionate about highlighting her culture and bringing our communities together.

Locally, I also attended the Diwali Mela celebrations at the Northumberland Street car park in Liverpool. This celebration has been running for some years and, as always, it was a wonderful event full of colour, music and great food. During this visit I had the opportunity to speak with the owner of Aaaroma Classic, a restaurant in Prestons that specialises in Indian, Fijian and Nepalese food. The owners were also running a stall at the event and it was nice to catch up with them. Their food looked and smelled delicious, so I cannot wait to visit them at their store in Prestons to have a meal very soon. I was on my way to a very big lunch and I did not want to insult my host by not eating, so I will catch up with Aaaroma Classic and enjoy their food sometime in the future. I congratulate the organisers once again on organising such a fabulous event, and I look forward to attending it again next year.

The people of New South Wales come from 300 different ancestries and more than 260 different birthplaces. We also follow more than 140 different religions and speak more than 275 different languages. That is why festivals like Diwali are significant in recognising the achievements of our cultural diversity, and they provide an opportunity for our diverse communities to celebrate their success with the wider society. I again thank the member for Granville for bringing this matter of public importance to the House and I wish everybody a happy Diwali.

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:57):** Blacktown City is home to seven State electorates and more than 40,000 people of Indian or subcontinental heritage, and it is my pleasure to speak on this matter of public importance brought forward by the member for Granville. Blacktown council boasts two councillors of Indian heritage, Councillor Susai Benjamin and Councillor Moninder Singh, who both undertake many volunteer activities in our community. Keiasha Naidoo, council's communication and engagement officer, also played an active role in connecting Blacktown council to local community events.

Last week our Hindu population celebrated Diwali, which brought high energy, radiant colour and light displays to our city. It was heartwarming to see the Indian shops in Blacktown central business district buzzing with activity and more than the usual number of people in the city wearing traditional Indian dress. Diwali is the traditional Hindu festival of lights when people light up their homes with lamps and candles, make traditional Indian sweets and take the opportunity to share special meals with family and friends. My fellow councillors and local members of Parliament—the member for Mount Druitt, the member for Prospect, the member for Londonderry, the member for Strathfield and the member for Granville—attended many of the events around the city of Blacktown.

At each of the events we were moved by the warmth, generosity and community spirit of the people from the Indian diaspora celebrating this beautiful festival. It was very special to see so many people from various cultures embracing the festival by dressing up, dancing or sharing special meals with their Indian friends. The council is also proud to be part of the celebrations with the Diwali Lights Competition and the winning houses will be determined soon. One of the messages I take away from this cultural festival is light over darkness. It is a message that transcends all aspects of our lives. I was moved also by the way members of the Indian community come together to support each other, and to celebrate and bring this rich culture into our schools, events and businesses.

Diwali has the spiritual meaning of victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance. This message is relevant not only for the way we ought to conduct business in this Parliament but also for the way we ought to conduct our personal lives. Our Indian community is a true reflection of our multicultural population. Cultural festivals such as Diwali are important for us to learn from each other and to preserve our cultural identity. As this festival draws to a close I wish all our Hindu residents a happy Diwali. May the light shine bright in their homes and lives and continue bringing this rich culture to life in our beautiful city of Blacktown and across New South Wales and Australia. I hope that the divine lights of Diwali bring peace, prosperity, health and love to all. Happy Diwali.

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:00):** In reply: I thank the member for Holsworthy and the member for Blacktown for their contributions. This year Diwali has been fantastic. It is being celebrated in more places and by more organisations and involves more members of the community than ever before. In fact, earlier in the week, the member for Orange spoke about joining in the Diwali celebrations in Orange, which reflects the great contribution that people from the Indian subcontinent are making in New South Wales.

The member for Holsworthy spoke about joining in the local celebrations in Liverpool, the wonderful Hindi, Sanskrit and Tamil community language schools in New South Wales and the great tradition that has been established in recent years of turning the sails of the Opera House saffron. It was a pity that there was a break with tradition this year when only the Liberal Party was invited to join the Premier in lighting the Opera House. That was not a victory of light over darkness and it was not as apolitical as it should have been. There is always room for improvement.

The member for Holsworthy also mentioned the wonderful Fiji Consulate-General and Trade Commission event that she and I attended, the great work done by Barbara Ward from the Australia India Business Council to host the event and the great work that Barbara does throughout the year. I thank the member for Blacktown for his contribution. Two councillors on Blacktown City Council are from India. They are both making a great contribution and are well known and active in the community. There are many events on around Blacktown during Diwali and in the lead-up to Diwali. I attended two dandiya dance events put on by the Gujarati community during Navratri, which is a period of nine days in the lead-up to Diwali. It seems to go for more than a month in this State as they get performers to visit from India.

Blacktown also hosts the Diwali Lights Competition, which in part is the inspiration for the Diwali competition that I have with the member for Strathfield. I am confident that despite Strathfield winning last year, Granville will win this year. It has not been decided yet but we have had some great entries in Granville and I am looking forward to seeing the look on the face of the member for Strathfield when she sees how much better and brighter the lights shine in Granville. I thank everyone for their contributions. Diwali is a special time of the year and it is wonderful to see hundreds of thousands of people celebrating this fantastic festival across Sydney and across New South Wales.

#### *Community Recognition Statements*

#### **YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR NICHOLAS PARSONS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:03):** I recognise 2018 Myall Lakes Young Citizen of the Year Nicholas Parsons. For the past eight years Nicholas has been heavily involved in MidCoast Musical group activities. His amazing musical talent has been shared without reserve, along with his encouragement of others in both school and wider community activities. Since 2000 Nicholas has been volunteering in the Great Lakes concert and jazz bands, and for the past four years he has headed the trumpet section. He regularly performs as a bugler for Anzac and Remembrance Day ceremonies across the Myall Lakes electorate, including Sunday last. In 2016 Nicholas received the Junior Artist of the Year award for the Great Lakes area and is the lead trumpet player for the Sinfonia Mid North Coast orchestra. I wish Nicholas the best of success for the future.

#### **TRIBUTE TO ANN SYMONDS**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (17:04):** It is with great regret that I acknowledge the passing of Ann Symonds, a member of the Legislative Council from 1982 to 1998 and hero to Labor women. Ann was born in Murwillumbah and trained as a teacher. She was elected to Waverley Council in 1974 and in 1977 became Waverley's first female deputy mayor. As a legislator, her passions were widespread and broad. She fought for women's rights, for people with disability, for people experiencing homelessness, for the rights of prisoners and for drug law reform. Ann was a founding member of the National Foundation for Women and a founding member of the Australian Parliamentary Group on Drug Law Reform. It is a visionary group of 100 parliamentarians committed to an illicit drug use policy that is rooted in evidence and common sense. I send my deepest condolences to Ann's family and to all those who are grieving her loss. Ann inspired me with her passion and bravery. She paved the way for Labor women and we will not let her down.

### WINSTON HILLS LITTLE ATHLETICS CENTRE

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:05):** Recently it was my pleasure to attend a morning of activities at Winston Hills Little Athletics Centre at Gooden Reserve. I was delighted to award the club with a \$4,500 grant that will be of tremendous benefit to the club and its athletes. The grant money will assist the club to purchase additional track solutions equipment including speakers, monitors and electronic timing equipment, a defibrillator battery, and a new barbeque to help with weekly fundraising. I send special congratulations and best wishes to Amelia, Audrey, Lachlan, Lucie and Pat, who are shortly off to represent the Winston Hills Little Athletics Centre at nationals competitions.

I thank club president Phil Dew and his dedicated committee for all their hard work and for the many hours spent setting up, manning the barbeque, recording times and running the events. It is their efforts and the efforts of the many volunteers at our local little athletics clubs that ensure they continue to thrive and create spectacular future Olympic champions. Once again I congratulate Winston Hills Little Athletics Centre on its successful grant. I send my best wishes to those headed to nationals and wish everyone luck for the rest of the athletics season.

### GOLDEN BOOT AWARD RECIPIENT ISABELLE KELLY

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (17:06):** Earlier this week Australian Jillaroos centre and Chittaway local Isabelle Kelly was named the inaugural Rugby League International Federation [RLIF] women's Golden Boot winner. I have previously spoken about Isabelle and her achievements in the inaugural Women's Rugby League Origin series, but it would be remiss of me not to brag again about this great coastly talent and her latest achievement. The RLIF Golden Boot award recognises the most outstanding performances in both men's and women's international rugby league matches and covers all fully sanctioned international games played from last December's world cup final to last week's second test between Australia and New Zealand. Out of all the competitors in those matches, Isabelle was the winner. That is no small feat when she also spent much of the year playing the inaugural women's Origin series and the inaugural Women's Rugby League series. This year Isabelle has gone from strength to strength and her community is extremely proud of her.

### NSW JUSTICES ASSOCIATION HORNSBY BRANCH

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (17:07):** I pay tribute to the NSW Justices Association Hornsby branch, which provides support and assistance for justices of the peace [JPs] in our local area. It has recently celebrated its tenth birthday and as a patron I am proud to be part of that amazing organisation. It started with just 20 members and has now grown to more than 120. The Hornsby branch members first started their community JP desk at Cherrybrook shops in 2008. Ten years later, it is still held every Saturday. They also provide services at Carlingford Court. In 2017 Hornsby members completed approximately 6,000 documents. This year to date they have completed approximately 4,600. Hornsby members provide JP services at many local libraries and the Supreme Court. The branch continues to meet on the second Monday of each month at Magpies Waitara. I thank President John Tibbitts along with the executive committee members Brian Heasman, Ruth Churchill, Brian Carney, Jann O'Connor, Gavin Moehead and Pat McDonald. I thank them for the outstanding service that they and all JPs provide. I wish them a happy tenth anniversary.

### WOY WOY SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:08):** Huge congratulations and gratitude go to all the team involved in the Woy Woy Sustainable Living Festival 2018. It was tragic to see the original Woytopia 2018 at Woy Woy South Public School washed out after all their efforts to make it happen. We all watched them agonising on Facebook the evening before as the rain came down, and then in the morning when the water was ankle deep across the school playground. Massive credit goes to Mark Mann and the Woytopia team for never giving up and for persevering to help vendors sell all their stock in the weeks after the planned event.

I give a thumbs up to those guys. Huge cheers to them for persevering to get Woytopia happening this weekend at the Umina Beach markets. There will be music; reptiles; green talks on solar, ecology, and reducing food waste; circus play; storytelling; mask making; and loads of food and fun. With the Jasmine Green Cafe right next door, there is always tasty coffee and treats to be had. A huge thank you to the hardworking Peninsula Community Group, which will hold a Christmas party fundraiser at Everglades on 15 December to help recover lost expenses. I encourage everyone to come along this Sunday and to celebrate Woytopia.

### WOLLONDILLY ELECTORATE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS RECIPIENTS

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (17:09):** It gives me great pleasure to recognise Wilton Rural Fire Service Captain Paul Shearer for his valiant 50 years serving and protecting the Wilton community. That dedication was recognised in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours with Mr Shearer receiving an Australian Fire

Service Medal. Captain Shearer is nothing short of an inspiration to not only the Wilton community but also many communities throughout New South Wales. Mr Shearer's demonstration of discipline, bravery and sacrifice epitomises what community leadership is all about. Our community will continue to learn from Captain Shearer as his valiant efforts will continue to inspire people for generations to come. I acknowledge also Peter Casey, a music director, composer and orchestrator, who has been recognised for 40 years of service to the musical theatre industry. He too was a Queen's Birthday Honours recipient and is now officially a Member of the Order of Australia. He has been musical director for many productions. He has done a great job and is very passionate. I congratulate him on his service.

#### **ROUGHTOBER SLEEPOUT**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:10):** I congratulate all those who participated in the Roughtober Sleepout in Darlinghurst in support of the great work of Rough Edges, a drop-in and support centre for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The sleepout occurred at St John's Anglican Church in Darlinghurst and I was glad to participate with Darlinghurst locals. I especially acknowledge the support of Facebook group Darlo Darlings and note the funds raised by all who participated.

#### **GRANDVIEWS WOMEN'S BOWLING CLUB**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:11):** It was with immense pleasure that I was able to again sponsor Grandviews Women's Bowling Club and its annual charity day. I attended the event last month and acted as the club's barrel drawer for the mega raffle. I congratulate President Barbara Thurtell, Mary Teasdale and the ladies of Grandviews Women's Bowling Club on hosting an outstanding fundraising event. Scleroderma NSW was the charity of choice this year, chosen in loving memory of one of the club's members who passed away last year. Scleroderma is a chronic disease that causes hardening and tightening of the skin and connective tissues. A total of \$4,600 was raised for the charity. I was very impressed with the efforts of members and friends, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make their annual charity day so successful. The generosity of local businesses and clubs that donated raffle prizes was outstanding. I congratulate the club and commend its members' efforts to the House.

#### **TRIBUTE TO THE BENNETTS FAMILY**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (17:12):** Recently I had the opportunity to attend the farewell high tea of Deb Bennetts at Georges Hall. Reverend Gary Bennetts, Deb and family will soon move from St Martin's Anglican Church at Georges Hall to South Carlton. They have been at Georges Hall for close to 11 years and during that time have embraced Georges Hall and the entire community. Deb has worked tirelessly on the Georges Hall Parents and Citizens Association while Reverend Gary Bennetts has worked tirelessly to build an amazing church at Georges Hall. They are a beautiful family, with five children, and they will be dearly missed. However, I am sure that the community of South Carlton will welcome that amazing family with open arms. I will miss our lovely Christmas gingerbread tea gatherings that we have always shared. I thank the Bennetts family for their incredible work for the Bankstown electorate.

#### **INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH FATHER THOMAS VARGHESE**

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (17:13):** I recognise Father Thomas Varghese of Wattle Grove. Father Varghese moved to Sydney in 1986 and not long after he established Sydney's first Indian Orthodox Church in Wattle Grove after seeing the need to support the Indian Orthodox community. It was originally attended by 45 families. The services were held in many different churches and homes. Over time it has grown into the large community it now services. In 1990, under Father Thomas' dedicated leadership and motivation, the congregation became official, allowing the Indian Orthodox community to worship together. In 1998 Father Thomas was ordained as a priest. In 2001 the congregation bought land at Wattle Grove and built its own church building. Father Thomas went on to establish more churches around Australia—in Canberra, Brisbane and Townsville. Thanks to the efforts and commitments of Father Thomas the Indian Orthodox community continues to inspire and thrive. Once again I thank Father Thomas Varghese for all his dedication and work for the Indian Orthodox community, especially in Wattle Grove, and encourage him to continue his inspiring work.

#### **CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (17:14):** On Sunday 11 November 2018 I attended Remembrance Day services in my electorate of Charlestown. One was held in Redhead and one in Dudley. They are small communities but they punch above their weight when it comes to people serving our country. This year Remembrance Day was especially important, given that it was the centenary of the war to end all wars. At the Redhead service I lay a tribute of books for local schools. I extend a warm thank you to Donald "Banjo" Paterson, Chairman of the Redhead Memorial Committee, for inviting me take part in the special moment in our local history. The service was a poignant reminder of the fragility of life and the sacrifice of past and present local

serving members of the Australian Defence Force. Lest we forget those who lost their lives, those whose lives were forever changed, those who have fought in wars since and those who continue to serve.

#### **MINGARA ATHLETICS TRACK**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:15):** Last week I was thrilled to join The Entrance councillor Jilly Pilon and the Hon. Taylor Martin, MLC, to announce \$425,000 in funding to upgrade the Mingara Athletics Track. This is a huge achievement for our region as it follows a month-long community campaign. I thank every local resident who signed the petition in support of upgrading the Mingara Athletics Track. We know that synthetic tracks require fixing after 12 to 15 years and the current track has lasted up to 18 years. The \$425,000 from the State Liberal Government will secure the future of this regional facility for the dozens of schools and sport clubs that use it. I sincerely thank Mingara Leisure Group Chief Executive Officer Paul Barnett and Sarah Ferman for their assistance in promoting our community campaign. Managing Director of Central Coast Academy of Sport Ian Robilliard is a strong and vocal advocate for funding for our region. I thank him for his support. I look forward to Labor following our lead in supporting the Mingara Athletics Track.

#### **NSW FEDERATION OF TAMIL SCHOOLS CULTURAL EVENT**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:16):** It was fantastic to attend the NSW Federation of Tamil Schools annual cultural event on 28 October 2018 at Girraween Public School. The NSW Federation of Tamil Schools is an umbrella body of all Tamil community language schools in New South Wales, including the Wentworthville Tamil Study Centre, which I represent in the electorate of Prospect. The annual cultural event showcased the language and cultural skills of member schools and celebrated the achievements of students and teachers who achieved excellent learning outcomes. I was honoured to present the keynote address and award certificates to teachers and students at the function. I congratulate President Mugunthan Vijay, students, teachers and the organising committee on holding a brilliant event.

#### **CENTENARY OF ARMISTICE COMMEMORATION**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:17):** I draw attention to some of the hard work of our RSL sub-branches and communities in commemorating the Centenary of Armistice last Sunday. There were too many breathtaking displays to name, but the ceramic poppies that coat the town Centotaph in Coolamon, the knitted poppies spilling from above the ANZ building in Junee, the new red callistemon garden in Ungarie, and the 6,500 poppies dropped into a field of onlookers from a Hudson bomber in Temora are among the numerous tributes that our communities have been preparing for months. I was touched by stories and meetings with locals in many small communities and towns across our electorate who were preparing for this solemn day. I thank everyone for their passion and dedication to remembering our fallen.

#### **MILTON ULLADULLA FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:17):** I applaud the work of the Milton Ulladulla Family History Society, a fantastic local organisation on the South Coast. This group is run by volunteers with a passion for research and local history. They do an amazing job documenting the history of the area, its pioneers and its many colourful characters. It was established in 1984 and provides the local community with a number of services and resources, including a database with more than 13,000 entries on local inhabitants from settlement to the mid-1900s. I helped the group secure its current home at the Ulladulla Civic Centre and attended its opening in 2014. I am also its patron. I was honoured to be invited back again only last week to present some of its members with life membership and certificates of appreciation. Well done to John Sparks for a fantastic event. I congratulate Meg Hammond, Margaret Hope, Val Williams, Marilyn Boyd, Julie Gullan, Leslie Harrison, Elaine Holloway, Pam Johnson, Lynette Johnson, Lorelle Lee, Michael McMahoan, Margaret Magnusson, Christine Moss, Gayle Stewart, Cheryl Stokes and David Weaver.

#### **TRIBUTE TO JEREMY SPINAK**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (17:19):** I offer condolences to Jeremy Spinak and the entire Jewish community. Today I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Jeremy Spinak at the age of 36, a person who has given so much to the Jewish community and to multicultural communities more broadly across New South Wales. During Jeremy's tenure as president of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, a role that he held up until three months ago, the organisation has grown from strength to strength. A much loved and greatly respected leader of the Jewish community, Jeremy's presence will be sorely missed. A tireless supporter of social cohesion and harmony across our communities, Jeremy focused on building a safer New South Wales for all our multicultural communities. He was a bridge builder between those communities. My thoughts and prayers, as well as those of members in the New South Wales Parliament, are with the Spinak family and the Jewish community during this time of sorrow.

### WHITE RIBBON WALK

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (17:20):** The white ribbon has become one of the most well-recognised symbols in our society today. The wearing of a white ribbon indicates support for Australia's campaign to stop men's violence against women. Domestic violence is a scourge on our society which can have devastating effects on both the victim and the perpetrator, and their families. Last Monday I attended the Fairfield police and community White Ribbon Walk launch at the Cabravale Leisure Centre. Every year the local police are joined by students and community groups in a symbolic march that has become a statement in the fight against family and domestic violence. I was joined at the launch by my colleague Mr Guy Zangari the member for Fairfield, as well as Superintendent Peter Lennon, APM, Commander of the Fairfield City Police Command, Senior Sergeant Brett Grenfell, and the domestic and family violence team. This year's White Ribbon Walk will take place on 26 November starting at Cabravale Park at 9.00 a.m. I encourage all community members to attend, to wear the white ribbon and to take part in the walk as this is a fight that we can and must win.

### WORLD TEACHERS' DAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:21):** I acknowledge our local leaders in education from across the Port Macquarie electorate who recently were recognised for their exceptional commitment and enthusiasm to teaching at the 2018 World Teachers' Day awards. Held on 26 October the 2018 World Teachers' Day Awards were celebrated locally at the Little Fish Cafe and vineyard in Port Macquarie. Those claiming the prestigious award on the evening included: Jody Bond and Cherry Nelson from Tacking Point Public School; Hayley Branch and Tim Kallmier from St Columba Anglican School; Bianca Smith and Gunilla Haydon from the University of Newcastle; Deanna Pollard from Columba Cottage Early Learning Centre; Sonia West from St Joseph's Regional College; and Natalia Bilton, Kym Barry, Samantha Burbidge, Phil Ebbs, Rosemary Black and Prue Gonzelez from Charles Sturt University

Others claiming the prestigious award on the evening included: Martin Dures and Jo Day from Heritage Christian School; Lisa Barnett and Richard Thomas from Wauchope Public School; Catherine U'Brien from St Agnes' Primary School; Melissa Rosenbaum from Port Macquarie Public School; Deanna Maurer and Nicole Wells from Hastings Secondary College, Port Macquarie Campus; Craig Ainsworth and Fleur Eichler from Westport Public School; and Bernadette Ainsworth from Lake Cathie Public School. I thank our dedicated team of professional educators for the special role they play in a student's life and commend them for their advocacy in championing education reforms to support each student's learning outcomes.

### MADONNA DI LORETO

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:22):** On Sunday 11 November 2018 I had the great pleasure of attending the twenty-fifth annual Festa della Madonna di Loreto at Fairfield Showground. The day started with a traditional mass that was followed by a great range of Italian entertainment, culture, food, activities and so much more. Celebrations were held throughout the day and into the evening, with a tremendous turnout from the local community who all got a taste of traditional Italian cuisine and festivities. I congratulate Madonna di Loreto Association President Tony Mittiga and the organising committee on hosting another incredibly successful festa. Celebrations continue to get bigger and better with each passing year. I am looking forward to seeing what Tony and the committee have in store for us in 2019.

### SOUTH-EAST NSW LIONS DISTRICT CONVENTION

**Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:23):** On 19 October 2018 I had the pleasure of attending the South-East NSW Lions District Convention hosted by the Jervis Bay Lions Club. It was a fantastic opportunity to see all of the South Coast Lions members—some of whom have been members for almost a lifetime—and to thank them for the contribution they have made to their local communities. Lions clubs are emblematic of the unique community spirit that exists on the South Coast. They are always there to lend a hand, to light up the barbecue or to chip in to help with whatever need arises. I congratulate the Jervis Bay Lions Club on its organisation of the convention, which is a mammoth task. I thank each of the South Coast Lions clubs including: the Jervis Bay Lions Club, led by President William Gray; the Nowra Lions Club, led by President Frederick Vormister; the Sussex Inlet and District Lions Club, led by President Laurie Stretton; the Milton Ulladulla Lions Club, led by President Gerard Taniane; and the Shoalhaven Lioness Club, which this year celebrated its fortieth anniversary which I was happy to attend.

### ST MARY QUEEN OF HEAVEN FETE

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (17:24):** Last week my husband and I had the pleasure of attending the church and school fete at St Mary Queen of Heaven in Georges Hall. I acknowledge Father Joseph, whom I dearly love. I also acknowledge the wonderful parents and friends committee, Principal Monica Palmer, the teachers and all the parishioners and families who attended. It was a beautiful fete, at which I purchased

a beautiful homemade cake. It was wonderful to see so many children enjoying the rides and the many stalls. I congratulate organisers on a wonderful occasion. It is important that we join our schools and churches by attending their fetes and supporting their fundraising efforts.

#### **NORTH NOWRA PUBLIC SCHOOL MEMORIAL GARDEN**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:25):** Last Friday 9 November I was privileged to attend the official opening of the North Nowra Public School Memorial Garden to celebrate 20 years of public education in North Nowra. The opening coincided with Remembrance Day and the centenary of the end of World War I. The ceremony commenced with a deeply touching welcome to country by Uncle Tom and a reflection by Chief Petty Officer Trent Kerrison from HMAS *Albatross*, who was the special guest speaker.

The opening of the memorial garden was the centrepiece of the Centenary of Armistice assembly. Uncle Tom and Chief Petty Officer Kerrison were joined by student Eric Shaw and the principal of North Nowra Public School, Mr Peter Wright-Smith, in opening the garden. I thank North Nowra Public School for holding such an incredibly touching and sensational event. All of the staff, guests and students were extremely reverent throughout, and I wish to thank those involved and North Nowra Public School for holding such a moving event. Lest we forget.

#### **MACKILLOP CATHOLIC COLLEGE, WARNERVALE**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (17:26):** I am proud to say that last month students from MacKillop Catholic College, Warnervale, won a group award for outstanding choreography at the national OzTheatrics Junior Theatre Celebration Australia in Newcastle. The students performed an extract from *The Little Mermaid Jr.* production and clearly impressed the educational consultants from iTheatrics in New York and leading musical theatre personalities from Australia. Students Trinity Young and Phoenix Morley were named Junior Theatre Celebration All-Stars; outstanding performers attending the event who performed a song during the closing ceremony for event attendees. I am proud to have these talented up-and-comers in my electorate, and I know that their school and community share my pride in their achievements.

#### **KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOK LAUNCH**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:27):** Earlier this week our Parliament appropriately marked the centenary of the cessation of hostilities in World War I. The Ku-ring-gai Historical Society will soon launch the fourth and final volume of *Rallying the Troops: A World War I Commemoration*. The series commemorates approximately 1,800 people associated with the Ku-ring-gai council area who served in the Great War. The fourth volume retells the stories of more than 430 of those veterans—including Ku-ring-gai's only recipient of the Victoria Cross, Major Blair Wark, VC, DSO. Scheduled for 25 November 2018 at the Hornsby RSL Club, the book launch will feature guest speaker Lambis Englezos, AM, and emcee Lieutenant Colonel Paul Simadas, who is chairman of the Western Front Association. I congratulate coordinators of the World War I Writers Group of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society Kathie Rieth and David Wilkins, and all involved in this project.

#### **ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY TOASTY TALK**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:28):** Our community is filled with creative genius. Earlier this month, we celebrated another ingenious solution with the introduction of St Vinnie's Toasty Talk upstairs in the new connectivity hub. I congratulate the wonderful Nikki and Catherine, who gathered loads of their team from across the coast. I also congratulate beautiful Jo from BaptistCare, who looks after our over-50s, and Catherine from Mary Mac's Place, who feeds approximately 70-plus people every day, as well as gorgeous locals who are living tough and rough in our community. We all came together in the wonderful refurbished area, with views out over the beautiful Brisbane Water, to be in a place of healing and support that will really change lives in our community.

Under the guise of Toasty Talk, clients come in and make healthy toasties alongside support people, build rapport and develop the trust and understanding needed to move beyond homelessness and complete vulnerability. I am confident that this team of community angels have created yet another way to care for vulnerable people who are doing it tough as the cost of living and risk of homelessness increase in our community. To them, I express my thanks, love and gratitude.

#### **MYALL LAKES CULTURAL AWARD WINNER LUCA SAUNDERS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:29):** I acknowledge the 2018 Myall Lakes Cultural Award winner, Luca Saunders. Luca, who is 13 years old, attends Taree High School and has a passion for singing, saying that she hopes to inspire people through her voice. Luca has performed at the Taree Carols by Candlelight event and will co-host it this year with her dad, Andy. Luca is a favourite at the Melbourne Comedy Festival's Asylum Seekers Resources Centre Benefit Concert, having performed in the concert every year since she was



11 years old. This year she spoke at the Ocean Rhythms Festival about her pride in being a strong Biripi woman, and recently featured in the film *Teach a Man to Fish*. Luca teaches traditional Aboriginal dance at Taree High School and is considered a cultural ambassador for the school. Described as a positive role model for her peers, Luca aspires to make a difference in the community and to promote the rich culture of the Biripi nation.

#### WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:30):** On Monday 12 November 2018 I had the great pleasure of standing alongside local residents, my colleague the member for Cabramatta, Nick Lalich, and the Fairfield Police Area Command to launch the White Ribbon's campaign for 16 days of activism against family and domestic violence. Alarming, more than 50 per cent of all assaults reported to our local police are domestic violence related, but domestic violence remains under-reported throughout the State. Our local community has rallied together to take a stand to say no to family and domestic violence in our area, and many have pledged to help raise awareness and to campaign for change throughout the community. On 26 November 2018 the Fairfield City White Ribbon Walk will take place. The walk has been growing in popularity in recent years, with participants taking the oath never to commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women. I urge all members to get involved with their local White Ribbon campaign and to help spread the word throughout their communities.

#### TRIBUTE TO MURRAY WILCOX, AO

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (17:31):** I acknowledge the incredible contribution of Murray Wilcox, AO, who passed away last week. Mr Wilcox was an eminent jurist and a distinguished planning lawyer and environmentalist. He made an incredible contribution to Australian jurisprudence, particularly in the development of environmental planning law. I commend his wonderful contribution during a long and distinguished career.

#### BICOL COMMUNITIES LEAGUE TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:31):** On 9 November 2018 I was privileged to attend the Bicol Communities League Incorporated twelfth anniversary celebrations at Fairfield RSL. The event showcased the active contribution of Bicolanos within our Western Sydney community. The Bicol Communities League comprises Filipino Australians of Bicol ancestry and is the only regional community organisation that provides equitable leadership by rotating roles among the six provincial constituencies that make up the governing body. I congratulate chairperson Benjamin Bogat and the Province of Camarine Norte, which assumed leadership of the league on the night. I wish them all the best in their future endeavours in showcasing the unique traditions, culture and heritage of the Bicol community. I also congratulate the treasurer and chair of the Souvenir Program Committee, Demi Robinson, 2016-17 chairperson Roberto Lastica—or "Bobby" to his friends—and the organising committee on hosting this wonderful celebration.

#### DARLING POINT SOCIETY

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (17:32):** I commend the Darling Point Society on another successful annual general meeting, held on 7 November 2018. It was well attended by local residents and included lively debate, a generous raffle draw, and lots of delicious food and baked goods to share. I thank the committee for the opportunity to share with it my work over the past year as the local member of Parliament. I congratulate the committee members on their re-election, including president Charlotte Feldman, vice-president Gary Newton, secretary Robert Pompei, treasurer Harry Rich, membership secretary Lorraine Jones, parks and open spaces officer Jasmine Steele, environment officer Harry Pearsall, social media officer Jillian Blackall, public relations officer Karin Olah and special events officer Rowena Hamilton. I also congratulate president Charlotte Feldman on her strong and enduring commitment to our local community and on tirelessly helping to protect its character and amenity.

#### BRISBANE WATER SECONDARY COLLEGE

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:33):** Hats off and a huge round of applause for the year 7 students at Brisbane Water Secondary College who presented fabulous ideas that they believe will improve our community. They might be young, but they certainly have their finger on the pulse of positive community development. It was great to hear their creative ideas about homelessness, improving the sense of community in Nauru and improving mental health. I love hearing about improving job training, animal justice and access to sport and employment for people with disabilities on the coast. The Government could definitely take some pages out of their book regarding coastal management, such as dune planting and fencing, local youth markets and a youth engagement centre. It was great to be able to connect them with real community groups that are doing a great job facilitating the changes that are occurring on the coast. I look forward to seeing them working hard to achieve the positive change they

want in our world. Congratulations, year 7! The students really understand community development and are a credit to their school and our community. They reassure me that the future is in safe hands.

#### **BEROWRA NETBALL CLUB**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (17:34):** I want to congratulate one of my favourite sporting groups, the Berowra Netball Club, for an amazing 2018 season. The club had 12 out of 25 teams make the finals, nine of which finished first or second. Eight teams went on to make the grand final in what has been the best ever season for the club. I am very proud of them. This is a truly community club with wonderful support from parents and players. I was pleased to attend its recent presentation day at the Berowra club, and the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement as the players were awarded their medals for the season.

I congratulate everyone involved, including the committee's outstanding president Mick Flarey and committee members: Gillian Boyd, Letitia Watson-Ley, Tammie Mitchell, Christian Kelly, Kerstin O'Sullivan, Leigh-Anne Hartwig, Claire Whalley, Sophie Greenhalgh, Lisa Tutton, Kaneeta Flarey, Christine Blue, Michelle Rae, Marilyn McTaggart, Patricia Ribeiro, Michelle Steel, Karen Winter, Fiona Eskbank, Shane Orre and Angelique Gaynor. I thank them for inviting me to the presentation day and I look forward to their success in 2019.

#### **FOOTBALL NSW STATE AWARDS NIGHT 2018**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:35):** The Football NSW State awards night 2018 was held on 3 November at The Warwick. The night acknowledged the achievements of football volunteers across the State. I congratulate Mrs Elaine Gaffney of the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association on receiving the State award. Elaine has held numerous roles in Southern Districts, being the first female coach at Club Marconi. Elaine is passionate about football and always strives to help boys and girls achieve their best playing the world game. I congratulate Elaine, as I am very proud of her efforts.

#### **WOLLONDILLY JUSTICE OF THE PEACE**

##### **MR JOHN FAIRLEY**

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (17:36):** I want recognise four of Wollondilly's true community members. With 200 years of Justice of the Peace service between them, Mr Barry Apps, Mr Ian Cropper, Mr Peter Lloyd and Mr Edward Osborne deserve a well-earned thankyou for all they do within our community. Each person has renewed their Justice of the Peace [JP] status over the years and reached a 50-year service milestone. Being a JP is a voluntary service provided to the community, one which gives personal satisfaction. They have provided this service to so many of my local constituents.

It gives me great pleasure to recognise Mr John Fairley's impressive effort of generating enough funds to feed his cows in the ongoing drought conditions. Like so many across the State and the country, he initiated a campaign for people to adopt a cow, which was to help feed his cattle. It is a fantastic initiative. I thank everyone who has helped him.

##### **TANNER KIRSCHNER**

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (17:37):** I acknowledge Tanner Kirschner, a teen from Pleasure Point, who is spreading the word of being water wise amongst her community. Tanner has been inspired by her parents, who also consciously take the simple steps to reduce water usage. Her father hooked up a hose to the washing machine so that all the water used in their washing would be reused on their lawn. Her mother also uses a bucket to catch excess water in the shower and recycles it. Tanner joined her family to reduce water usage by partnering with Sydney Water to raise awareness during National Water Week in October. At school the teenager encourages her peers to support the cause with her own handy tips to save water. One of Tanner's favourite ways to save water is coming home from school or sport and tipping her empty water into the garden. She loves going to the local nursery and picking out native plants that require less water. I thank Tanner for being water wise and I encourage everyone to take the conscious steps to save.

#### *Private Members' Statements*

##### **SEBASTIAN AGUIAR**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:38):** On Friday 9 November 2018 members from John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, St John the Baptist Parish and wider Fairfield and Liverpool communities came together to raise money for a worthy cause, Motorvate Sebastian's Fight for Life. The evening had an impressive turnout as 650 people gathered at the Manor on Elizabeth to help the Aguiar family raise funds for a new specialised vehicle to transport Sebastian Aguiar and his family.

Eleven-year-old Sebastian suffers from ROHHAD, which stands for rapid-onset obesity with hypothalamic dysfunction, hypoventilation and autonomic dysregulation. He is the only person in Australia who lives with this disease. When Sebastian was five, his parents noticed significant changes in his weight. There was a marked increase in his weight as he rapidly went from 25 kilograms to 45 kilograms over a period of three months. Today 11-year-old Sebastian weighs in at 110 kilograms despite his highly regulated and restricted diet of only 500 calories a day. Sebastian's medical condition has continued to decline over the years and so has his ability to participate in and enjoy so many things that the world has to offer a child. Due to his medical condition, Sebastian is now confined to a wheelchair and he requires medical breathing equipment round the clock. As such, he has a permanent tube inserted into his throat to help him breathe.

Simple daily tasks are a struggle for the family, especially when it comes to transporting Sebastian to and from home, school and the hospital. Sebastian's mother, Luisa, is a true saint of a lady who does not complain and is committed to lovingly raising her three young children while caring for Sebastian as a full-time carer. Despite the situation she and her family are in, they have not asked for any assistance with fundraising or to seek support because until recently there has not been any support available. As members may well appreciate, the odds are stacked against Sebastian as there are no support groups or campaigners championing the cause for him. It has been a lonely fight for the only individual in Australia with this disease. The Aguiar family have been truly blessed to have such an amazing school and local community who want to dig deep and provide as much help as they possibly can to assist Sebastian in his ongoing battle with ROHHAD. A number of champions, parents, teachers and students alike from John the Baptist Catholic Primary School have stepped in to take charge and support the Aguiar family in this ongoing battle.

Traditionally, at the end of an academic year, the year 6 parents get together and organise a graduating party to celebrate the achievements of students. This year a group of 25 parents came together to organise the Motorvate fundraiser, whose aim was to raise enough funds to purchase a modified car for the Aguiar family as the cost of the vehicle would be in excess of \$60,000. The Motorvate fundraiser was a huge success with more than \$150,000 raised. The event would not have been possible without the help from 114 generous local businesses, community groups, schools, clubs, religious organisations and individuals. So generous were the donations that the fundraiser took the form of silent auctions, major raffle, mystery raffle, lucky card, lucky bags and pick a key. In order to bag a prize attendees needed to get in early for tickets, as they sold like hot cakes.

It was a truly remarkable moment and I thank everyone who attended for digging deep to support Sebastian and his family. There was a great variety of entertainment on the night, including Tony Sergi, Victoria Tafunai, LPM Uruguayan Candombe and the master of ceremonies Mr George Magoulas. Special thanks to George for doing an outstanding job for the entire night, marshalling people and organising the drawing of the raffles. The night would not have been possible without the love, care and support from the organising committee. I pay tribute to them for helping the Aguiar family. I thank Mrs Rina Furia and Mrs Rosalie Capolupo for being the spokespersons for the organising committee. On behalf of the entire community we wish Sebastian and the Aguiar family well. The community will always remain with them to assist however we possibly can.

### **SOUTH COAST ROAD UPGRADES**

**Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:43):** I express my disappointment about a local South Coast issue affecting the residents of Currarong, a small village in the Jervis Bay area. It is only accessible via one road—Currarong Road—which serves as a link to the Princes Highway and the rest of the South Coast, including main town centres such as Nowra and Ulladulla to the south. Members would be aware of the tragic number of road fatalities that the South Coast has experienced in recent years, both on and off the Princes Highway, each having rocked our local emergency service personnel and the community.

I have spoken in this place on a number of occasions to lend my voice and support to Fairfax Media's Fix It Now campaign advocating for the duplication of the highway south of Jervis Bay Road. However, it is not only our main highways that hold the power to take human life. I am proud to say we as a government have realised this and acted swiftly to ensure that the condition of local roads is not also a contributing factor to a rising road toll. Across the Shoalhaven there is a total of \$905 million in road assets, ranking the local government area as the largest in the region in terms of roads, above Wollongong, Eurobodalla, Bega Valley and Shellharbour.

Since 2011 many, many millions of dollars have been invested in the upgrade of the South Coast's local road network to improve safety, reduce congestion and increase freight capacity. In recent years alone more than \$20 million has been invested towards upgrading vital thoroughfares such as Flinders Road, Matron Porter Drive, Naval College Road, Bolong Road, Culburra Road, Little Forest Road and Sussex Inlet Road. In the 2018-19 State budget a further \$4 million was secured to assist Shoalhaven City Council to upgrade key sections of road, and help keep motorists and pedestrians safe. This budget would include funds for Jacobs Drive at Sussex Inlet, Mitchell Parade and Donlon Road intersection at Mollymook Beach, Green Street and Warden Street intersection

in Ulladulla, Sussex Inlet Road near Old Berrara Road, Greenwell Point Road near Pyree, Forest Road at Cornberton, Naval College Road at Worrowing Heights, Coonernia Road at Wollumboola, and Currarong Road.

For a long time the Currarong community have been calling on their local councillors and the Mayor of Shoalhaven City Council, Councillor Amanda Findlay, to improve their main community linkage. The road is in urgent need of repair. Currarong Road is not a New South Wales Government responsibility, but Shoalhaven City Council needed the Government's assistance to undertake any kind of upgrade of the road. It is a project essential to this community. Therefore I lobbied for this project, secured initial funding, and again, after a lot of hard work, was able to secure additional funding this year. Because not only are we delivering bypasses, deviations, bridges, duplications and other large scale projects like hospital upgrades and schools purchases, but we are also prioritising essential regional roads and community infrastructure.

The New South Wales Government provided Shoalhaven City Council with a total of \$1.45 million over two years to commence construction, because we on this side listen to the community and deliver. The funding was approved and would have made significant improvements such as widening, sealing, clearing hazards, and installing barriers and audio tactile markings. In addition, Shoalhaven City Council was provided with \$45,000 for the options development of the project. Through development of the project in 2017-18, council identified an alternative scope of works based on the original scope being cost prohibitive. Its original application had not taken into account the full scope of works required. Two options were then submitted to Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] for consideration for approval of a cost and scope variation: option 1 for an additional \$2.05 million or option 2 for an additional \$750,000. Both of these options were for a reduced road safety scope and benefit.

For the residents of Currarong, the project went from shovel-ready to non-existent overnight. The road remains severely potholed and dangerous. The shoulders remain unsealed. On just about any section of Currarong Road there is an accident waiting to happen. As a result of this, members of the Currarong Community Association came to see me along with its president, Tony Lund, to explain their disappointment that the funding had been lost because of the application. They are very disappointed and, frankly, I share their disappointment. Currarong community and residents rely on this road. We can no longer neglect the road.

Residents have been told the council does not have this road in a future program of works and because of the funding disappointment they do not see any way to move forward. I express my intention to work very closely with RMS and with Shoalhaven City Council. We also need to work in partnership with the community, because they were kept in the dark about the funding and so was I. We all needed to know why this funding was lost, and that it had been lost, so that we could move forward. In the future I hope we can work with council and they will be honest with us about what has happened on our road network.

### **BARYULGIL COMMUNITY**

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:48):** I inform the House of a remarkable community in my electorate. Baryulgil is a small community located in Bundjalung country about 75 kilometres north-west of Grafton in far northern New South Wales. The community was founded in the late 1890s as a small scattering of camps of both non-Aboriginal miners and Bundjalung people. It is the birthplace of Australian cricketer Jack Marsh and former boxer Tony Mundine.

Despite being a predominantly Koori community, Baryulgil has had a long history of racial segregation. For many years the local Bundjalung people had been camped several kilometres to the west of Baryulgil, further along the Clarence River and adjacent to Yulgilbar Castle. The squatters who had displaced the Bundjalung people from the majority of their traditional lands had done so through years of pitched battles and massacres. Later the cruel blow was compounded by the Bundjalung people being relied upon for their skills as poorly paid slave labour in the cattle industry. The squattocracy built vast family empires on the back of such abuses.

A number of Bundjalung people had been employed as stockmen and domestic servants, both on the Yulgilbar run—originally 200,000 acres—and other properties in the area. When the Bundjalung people's services were no longer required by the Ogilvie family they were shunted to Baryulgil and placed on The Square, which is named for its approximate shape. Historically, other than agriculture, asbestos mining had been the most important industry in the Baryulgil area. The Baryulgil asbestos mine closed in the 1970s, but the impacts of the mine are well documented and still felt by the community today. At first it was the former miners who were struck down, but eventually it was also their partners and their children.

The Square and the overall Baryulgil community consists of a few dozen homes, a community hall and a primary school. Until the early 1980s the township had been serviced by a general store that also operated as a fuel outlet and post office. Despite the town's relative value to the region, Baryulgil was not provided with running water until 1976, and electricity was not available until May 1983. This is a community that has lived on

the fringes since it was first settled and so I was very pleased when the New South Wales Minister for Aboriginal Affairs the Hon. Sarah Mitchell accepted my invitation to meet with community members.

Last week, when she visited the remote settlement in the Upper Clarence Valley, she was the first government Minister—Federal or State—to do so. She met with elders and members of the local Aboriginal land councils at a community centre known as The Hub, then made a quick visit to talk to children and teachers at Baryulgil Public School. At The Hub she met with Baryulgil elders Heather Monaghan; Pauline Donnelly; Dorothy Daley; Andrew Donnelly; Ross James, CEO of Baryulgil Local Aboriginal Land Council; Sloane Donnelly, The Hub co-ordinator; Sharon Monaghan, Baryulgil Local Aboriginal Land Council Board member; and Avery Brown and Giane Smajstr from the New School of Arts Neighbourhood Centre.

Finally, she visited the Baryulgil cemetery where a Government grant of \$62,000 has enabled the community to use ground-penetrating radar to get an accurate picture of the location of grave sites in and near the cemetery site. During her talks at The Hub, the Minister heard of several issues facing the community. The community desperately needs funding for some sort of mechanised grave-digging equipment. They have to dig the graves by hand and it often takes three or four days to dig through the hard soil. Andrew Donnelly digs the graves, and it is not only hard yakka but very sad work because it is a small community and everyone knows each other.

There are 12 to 15 funerals a year here, on average, and each grave is dug by hand. I asked the Minister whether there was funding for equipment, like a Bobcat or similar, for the community to use. It could also be used for other repair jobs around the community—for example, after rain events to repair the access to the cemetery. The cemetery is located on private land. It is owned by Yulgilbar Station and the community has a long lease over the cemetery. It is located some distance from the road and it is just an open paddock exposed to the elements—hot and wet in the summer and cold in the winter. I also asked the Minister for funding to provide a shelter for families who come to bury their loved ones. Many are old and frail and it is absolutely cruel to expose them to the elements when they are grieving and at their most vulnerable. This is a community that never asks for much, and now that they need some very basic services they deserve to be heard. I implore the Minister and the Government to respond generously.

#### **COLLAROY SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB**

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research)**  
**(17:53):** Those who have grown up on the northern beaches or anywhere on the coast of New South Wales will know that the members of the surf life saving movement are heroes and that that movement is the basis of so much of the culture of our communities. Today I will talk about the Collaroy Surf Life Saving Club. Its outreach goes far beyond the coast of New South Wales. In the past few weeks, a group of boaties from Collaroy Surf Life Saving Club, led by Rod Macqueen, has brought together a number of community groups to collect thousands of dollars worth of food and household items to take to the western part of New South Wales, around the Dubbo region. Scott Macqueen, a lot of the boaties and the other members of the Collaroy Surf Life Saving Club had heard the struggles that our farmers were facing. Accordingly, Scott acted as the instrument to bring others together, and they certainly did come together. Just last week they came to Dubbo and reached out with friendship and care to the farmers of the region around Dubbo. After that exercise, Scott wrote to his colleagues:

That wraps up the Boaties Big Food Drop for 2018. Thank you to Team Rubicon, Surf Life Saving NSW, Clubs NSW and our sponsors in the local community for your support for this worthy cause. We are now known as the yellow shirts by the Dubbo locals. The grey shirts of Team Rubicon and the yellow shirts of Surf Life Saving proved to inspire and cement the great partnership. We hope that our presence brought some optimism and relief to those that are suffering during tough times. Our goal is to build on our first convoy to drought-stricken Dubbo and that in the future the yellow shirt becomes a symbol of trust and endearment that is more than just saving lives on the beach. This operation was a truly amazing and rewarding journey for all who participated in it. Some said it was a life-changing experience. It really does put things in perspective and makes you realise just how lucky we are to live on the coast.

One of the colleagues who went on this journey of friendship and camaraderie posted a message on Facebook that explains the impact that this project has had on the boaties, let alone the farmers who received the support. This is his message:

Last weekend, a handful of us were privileged enough to be granted the opportunity to head out to numerous farms in the Dubbo region to offer donated goods and lend a hand on their farms. Teaming up with Team Rubicon and Lions, we spread ourselves out amongst various farms and helped the locals with general maintenance. In my 3 day visit, I was able to reach out to 50+ farmers, and provide manual labour to 2 of them. I was also lucky enough to listen in to a few stories and learned about some of the hardship each farmer has gone through. In some cases, I think the farmers were more grateful to be talking with someone rather than having work done on their farm. I experienced first hand just how dry and arid the earth has become in the western parts of NSW. I also got a glimpse of how hard a simple task can become in 35°C heat, with limited resources and shade. Driving home, reminiscing over my experience, I came to a conclusion—farmers are bloody tough humans.

He then thanked Scott Macqueen, Team Rubicon and Surf Life Saving Australia for providing the opportunity to him. We all know that our farmers have been struggling. One of the members of the Queenscliff Surf Life Saving

Club told me that he had an opportunity to work on a couple of farms, and it was very much a case of being able to show the care and concern that others outside the farming community have for our farmers. I thank each and every one of the surf lifesavers on the whole of the New South Wales coast. They all do amazing work, but to think of others in this way is just amazing. The surf lifesavers deserve our acclamation, the farmers deserve our thanks, and both groups deserve our constant thoughts because they both make our great community what it is today.

### **TUGGERAH RAILWAY STATION LIFTS**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:58):** Tuggerah railway station is the fourth most used station in the region, after Gosford, Woy Woy and Wyong. Each day more than 1,500 people use Tuggerah railway station and the commuter parking is full at 7.00 a.m. That means passengers who travel later, particularly older people, have to park at the nearby Tuggerah Super Centre and walk to the station. The ramps at the station are almost 500 metres from one side to the other. So the distance and grade of the ramps makes it very difficult for the elderly and the disabled. Last Friday the Shadow Minister for Transport, and member for Strathfield, Jodi McKay joined the member for Gosford and the member for The Entrance to announce that if Labor is elected to office in March 2019 then lifts will be installed at the station.

The lifts at Tuggerah railway station have an interesting history. When I was the member for Wyong between 2007 and 2011, we doubled the size of the commuter car park, built a new transport interchange and started to install lifts at the station. Holes were dug and an awning was built because platform number 1 was being widened. Surprisingly, at the 2011 election a Liberal was elected as the local member. Shortly after that the new Liberal Government took away the funding and the project was never finished. The Liberal Government expressed its thanks to the people of Wyong for electing a Liberal member by taking away the money for the lifts. At Tuggerah railway station there is now a hole in the ground and an awning, only half of which can be used. There is also a fence in the middle of the awning because the concrete was not laid to finish the widening for the lifts. But the people in the electorates of Wyong and The Entrance can be assured that if we are elected to office in March 2018 they will finally get the lifts, which should have been built almost 10 years ago, at Tuggerah railway station.

The Berejiklian Government is always crowing about its infrastructure funding. Ironically, the first time we had a Liberal member for Wyong this infrastructure funding was taken away and the project was left half-finished. So we had new car parking, a new transport interchange, a hole in the ground and half an awning, and then the money went to Sydney. Since that time the locals have been signing petitions and holding rallies but the Government has been deaf to their cries to finish what was started. It is nothing short of galling that, to date, the responses received from the Government have been that the station is accessible for disabled people. That is absolute rubbish. The member for Gosford is in the Chamber and she will attest to that. Fairhaven has a workshop nearby. Every morning when those young people get off the train they have to struggle for 500 metres from one side of the ramp to the other ramp in order to get to the Tuggerah Business Park to start work.

The Tuggerah Super Centre and Westfield Tuggerah, both very big shopping centres, are also nearby. So each day workers, the elderly, the young and old, men and women are catching the train to and from Tuggerah railway station but there are no lifts. We really appreciated the member for Strathfield, Jodi McKay, coming up and making that announcement. People in the area well know that Labor will be finishing the job we started, which was stalled by the Liberal Government. The media has seen the unfinished awning. The platform is actually dangerous because if a fast freight train, for example, passes the station in the morning when large groups of commuters are waiting to catch the train to Sydney they almost get sucked off the platform—in fact, that is why the platform was being widened. This is a safety issue, and Labor is going to finish the job.

### **MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (18:03):** Tonight I inform the House about health services in the Manning and Great Lakes area. I have spoken before about these issues. I now call on the Government to fund stage two of the Manning Hospital redevelopment and public health facilities in Forster-Tuncurry. The \$20 million stage one of the Manning Hospital redevelopment is underway, including the newly opened oncology unit and the Nita Reed Renal Dialysis Unit. That is \$20 million. Another \$20 million was announced in June for moving medical imaging into a new building and freeing up that area. The sum of \$4.5 million will be used for important building maintenance.

I am calling for stage two funding, which involves replacement of a ward building, a pathology section, a pharmacy area and administration buildings that were built in the 1940s. Those facilities are no longer fit for purpose or for modern medicine, nor do the facilities provide adequate storage space for equipment or capacity for an increase in patient numbers. Now there are insufficient beds and wards for patients. I congratulate the

Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research, the Hon. Brad Hazzard, for the additional \$20 million for stage one, but I call for funding for the stage two redevelopment of that hospital.

There is also a great need for hospital facilities in Forster-Tuncurry, approximately a half-hour drive from Taree. Some people ask why, if Taree hospital is only a half-hour drive away, Forster-Tuncurry would need a hospital. My response is that the population centre in Forster-Tuncurry is larger than the population of many regional centres. Approximately 20,000 people live in Forster-Tuncurry and the town centre services approximately 38,000 residents and 600,000 visitors a year. In addition, Forster-Tuncurry services areas to the south of the town centre—areas such as Green Point, Coomba Park, Smiths Lake, Pacific Palms and Seal Rocks—and it is up to a 45-minute drive from some of those areas into Forster and an additional half-hour drive to Taree. The residents are an ageing population, with Myall Lakes the "oldest" electorate in New South Wales. With age comes medical issues, so Forster-Tuncurry really needs a hospital.

A campaign by the media and comments by some doctors, health groups and advocacy groups in the Manning area suggest that a hospital is not needed in Forster. It is not a case of either we have stage two of the Taree hospital or a hospital in Forster; rather, this is a case of the community working together to enhance the area's hospital facilities and medical services by having a small public hospital facility in Forster-Tuncurry, which will relieve pressure on the Manning Hospital. I maintain my call for the full amount of funding for the Manning Hospital and funding for a hospital facility in Forster-Tuncurry. Fortunately, there are numerous doctors in the Manning and in the Great Lakes who understand the problem and who are calling for the expansion of health services in Forster and enhancement of the health facilities in Taree.

Last week I spoke to a registered nurse who works at the Manning Hospital who said that she could not think of anything better than having a facility in Forster to relieve the pressure on the Manning Hospital. Both facilities are very much needed. Over the past several years I have spoken to the Minister and written to the Minister's office, but the Hunter New England Local Health District responded to that correspondence by providing advice to the Minister in relation to a HealthOne clinic, a multipurpose clinic and a public-private partnership at Forster. At all times those bureaucrats have said no to the proposals.

I call on the local health district bureaucrats to examine the statistics and take into account the fact that there are numerous centres within a half-hour drive of a main hospital that have been provided with a second hospital based on need. This is not a case of just wanting a hospital facility in Forster; rather, there is a need to upgrade the Manning Hospital and deliver stage two and, equally, there is a need for a public health facility in Forster-Tuncurry. I call on the department to provide that advice and I call on the Government to provide the funding.

### WOLLONDILLY ELECTORATE

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (18:08):** Tonight I will highlight some of the important work I have done recently. I may be retiring from Parliament, but as I have said many times this year in this House since I made that announcement, there is still fire in the belly and I will continue to fight for my electorate. Recently it was an absolute honour to go to K Ranch Arena in Mount Hunter and hang out with the legends of country music—Drew McAlister, who is a good friend of mine now, Adam Harvey and Adam Brand. They are Golden Guitar winners and heroes of the music industry. They were appearing at the Country Music Stampede, which was held at K Ranch Arena, and it was great to be able to secure funding for that event, which promotes tourism. Many people were there. It is just over an hour and a half out of Sydney, in Sydney's backyard—in the Wollondilly electorate. Many people told me that they went there purely because of that one event. A little bit of help goes a long, long way. I thank all the organisers of that event.

That is not the only thing that I have been able to achieve recently. I announced \$3 million for investigative and planning work for the Picton bypass. That investigation has just concluded and will inform the best path to build the new bridge, which will go from somewhere between Wilton and Molong over the gorge and across to Picton and Tahmoor. It is much needed and will cost in the vicinity of \$60 million. The next government will build it, but we have committed to that project and that has gone down a real treat.

Recently I visited Wingecarribee State Emergency Service in the Southern Highlands, which is the busiest SES unit in New South Wales, because the Hume Highway is in the electorate and a lot of people travel through the area. It was great to be able to hand them the keys to a new vehicle. Their current vehicle is a 1977 model—that is the year that I was born—so they were very happy to receive the keys. That 1977 vehicle had done only about 31,000 kilometres and it was in pristine condition. They look after their equipment but it was time for an upgrade.

I will not go through the amounts of funding now, but I have been working with many local community groups. I am pleased to say that we have been able to give the Southern Highlands Junior Australian Football Club

some money to help with their Welby Oval canteen and amenities upgrade. It was great to let Cawdor Public School know that we have given it money to build a treehouse adventure playground for the students. I mentioned the new vehicle for Wingecarribee State Emergency Service: We have also given the Wingecarribee SES some money to build on its facilities to train even more people. As well, we have given the Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney money to build a children's playground.

It gave me great pleasure this morning to ring the principal of Buxton Public School and say we have some money for the school to upgrade one of its facilities. The principal was over the moon. It is one of the smallest schools in my electorate, being a rural and regional electorate, but that money has gone a long way. It would have taken years for the parents and citizens association to raise that kind of money, so it was good to be able to help the school out. The Lebanese Maronite Order St Nehmetullah Monastery Appin was in desperate need of a toilet block. We were able to secure some money for that. The Presbyterian Church in the Southern Highlands needed a toilet for the disabled and we were able to help it with some of the most basic infrastructure needs. There are always competing priorities, but something as simple as that makes a huge difference in people's lives.

**Ms Liesl Tesch:** Hear, hear!

**Mr JAI ROWELL:** I acknowledge the "Hear, hear!" from the other side. We were able to give the Anglican Church at Wilton some money to install solar panels. The Colo Vale Community Association does a fantastic job and we were able to give it a small amount of money to build a dividing fence to help it with what it does. Members of the Southern Highlands Off Road Radio Controlled Car Club came to see me a year ago, seeking funding for a drivers stand. I told them not to worry and that we would work together. They rang me during the year and asked if I could still secure some money, notwithstanding I am leaving Parliament. I told them we would do it. Today I rang up their president to say we had some money for the club, and they were very pleased. Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council has received some money to restore its dam and continue to build its yabby farm. The Bowral Golf Club has been after some money for some time, and we were able to secure that. That is what happens when members work with their local community, and I will continue to fight for every cent I can.

#### ETTALONG CHANNEL DREDGING

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:13):** I speak on an issue that persists in my electorate. It is affecting tourism, employment, schoolkids, small businesses, commuters and the wellbeing of constituents in both the Gosford and Terrigal electorates. Despite announcing in July that dredging was about to finish, the member for Terrigal has left us all in the lurch with regard to what is happening with the dredging. The handling of the dredging by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has been nothing short of disgusting, and the debacle continues to utterly perplex the community. The member for Terrigal said that it would cost just short of \$7 million to carry out major remedial works to widen the channel. The Government has had eight years to invest in our community, yet the channel is still blocked and commuters are still waiting to be able to use it to get to and from work.

The member for Terrigal is on the other side of the waterway from the Gosford electorate. Why has he not lobbied his Government to get things in place long before now? So far, the Government has spent more than \$1 million on emergency dredging—\$666,000 this year alone—and still the ferry is not operating. The dredging project is listed as being 60 per cent complete on the Department of Industry website. How can it be almost completed if it is only 60 per cent done? I received a letter from the Minister for Lands and Forestry stating, "It is completed at the ocean end." That is all well and good but it does not mean that the ferry can get through safely. It also says that the decision to not run services in mid to high tides is for Fantasea. I understand that the responsibility for the safety of the ferry operation belongs to another government department, but the Minister cannot expect commuters to start their journey to work at Ettalong at high tide and then return home to Patonga at low tide. It is an absolutely ridiculous concept for the schoolkids and people of the Central Coast.

Funding for the emergency dredging was announced in May, but what has been achieved? The community is begging for help. I also received a letter from the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. The plan is that people will be dropped somewhere to start their journey to work and then finish their journey in a completely different suburb. The Minister cannot come up with any support for the people of the Terrigal or Gosford electorates to get to and from the ferry service. It is time to have a good look at what is going on. We need a long-term plan for our community. The community has been trying so hard. In the Ettalong community, which relies heavily on the tourist dollar and the commuters toing and froing, businesses have closed down. There is depression and real mental health issues in the community, with a promise of something coming that has never been delivered.



Our fantastic communities organised for great flags to be installed along the Ettalong shopfronts to try to promote the local community. They did that for the oyster festival last weekend with the view that the ferry would be operating—and all the information from the Government pointed to that. We have had nothing. Last month, they thought it would be operating, due to information they had been given. We had a great red carpet day, but there were no tourists from the northern beaches, who are usually great participants in our local community. My question to the Government is: How much longer will my local community have to suffer before someone in the Government takes the problem seriously? I call on the member for Terrigal and the Liberal-Nationals Government to come up with a long-term solution. Supposedly, we are getting another \$1.25 million. That is \$1.25 million that will be taken from ratepayers input into the curb and guttering program on the peninsula. It is not going to make our people happy. We need a better solution. Before I finish, I wish everyone celebrating the Yes vote a happy anniversary.

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:17):** The member for Terrigal is an incredibly hardworking, competent and vocal member on the Central Coast. Unfortunately, his voice is sometimes drowned out by the irrational voices of others on the Central Coast. The member for Terrigal is following the dredging issue assiduously. There is a role for the council to play. I note that the member for Gosford does not want the council to spend money on solutions. But the member for Terrigal is dedicated to addressing these issues. I understand that the ferry is a private ferry, so there is a role for a private operator to be involved in that solution as well. The member for Terrigal is following the issue, as is the Government. I note the comments of the member for Gosford and suggest that she sticks to the issues, rather than attacking individuals.

### TRIBUTE TO KEVIN WARD

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (18:19):** Former Uralla Shire Councillor Kevin Ward is a champion bloke. He is a stalwart of the Uralla community, a good friend of mine and a wonderful friend of the local community. I note in this place Kevin's fine record of public service to Uralla for almost 15 years. Sadly, Kevin's health has taken a turn for the worse. He has made the very difficult personal decision to step away from the council duties he loves and is passionate about spending more time with Sandra, his wife of many years, and concentrating on more important things.

On Monday night it was wonderful to join Kevin and Sandra at the Top Pub as they were surrounded by so many from the Uralla community. It was a wonderful evening of celebration of Kevin's long career in local government. What struck me about the dinner was not only the large number of people present but also the wide variety of personalities and the number of community organisations, campaigns and activities that were represented. Throughout a career of nearly 15 years in local government Kevin Ward has touched the hearts of a lot of people. They and the Uralla shire community have benefited from his years of service and hard work. Kevin will now turn his attention to his health and spending time with Sandra and his family. I wish him well. No-one has deserved best wishes from the local community more than Kevin.

Kevin loves his Uralla Tigers rugby league team. Kevin is the best footy season barman in the Northern Tablelands. It is always service with a smile; he knew your drink order and was quick with a joke and analysis of the team and club. His presence will be missed. The Uralla Golf Club will be seeing more of Kevin these days and I am sure he has plans to improve something at the club while he enjoys a hit or two of a golf ball. There is no denying that Kevin Ward's retirement will leave a huge gap in the Uralla Shire Council chambers. I know that his colleagues around that table share my disappointment that his public service has ended.

Throughout the past 14 years Kevin served Uralla and the wider district with absolute commitment and distinction as a councillor and former mayor. His contribution has always been with the best interests of his community at heart. Having previously been in Kevin's shoes on Gunnedah Shire Council, I understand that being a long-term councillor is not always an easy road. But Kevin always undertook his duties with real diligence and compassion—and always with a smile on his dial. In addition to his work on council, Kevin has been a tireless champion of the community, local sporting groups and community organisations. I believe Kevin was a founding member of McMaugh Gardens, a beautiful aged-care facility in the middle of Uralla. He continues to fundraise, help out, talk to residents and do what is needed to ensure that the local community facility continues to flourish.

Kevin is not the first Ward to have made a lasting impression on the good townsfolk of Uralla. He shares his last name with Uralla's own notorious horse thief, bushranger and murderer Fred Ward—better known as Captain Thunderbolt. I assure you he is no relation. I am pleased to report that Kevin's good deeds have gone a long way to restore the name of Ward in our neck of the woods. He is an absolute champion. From a personal perspective, I have always enjoyed his friendship, his sincerity and his forthright advice to me as the local member. At times it is hard to hear, but it is always welcome because it comes from his heart and with the community in mind. I say thank you to him for his service to the community. Here's cheers to him—he deserves it.

## PITTWATER ELECTORATE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (18:2):** Pittwater is one of the most extraordinary urbanised places on the planet with a string of coastal suburbs, villages and hamlets lazing along an ancient rocky coastline from Narrabeen to Palm Beach and around the bays and inlets of Pittwater, Cowan Creek and Coal and Candle Creek. Some 65,000 residents are surrounded by a turquoise sea and a green canopy of angophoras, cabbage tree palms and eucalypts displaying every shade of green—from deep chartreuse to subtle sage and olive and everything in between. There must be few places on earth where a global city abuts directly onto World Heritage-listed forests that have remained largely untouched since the last Ice Age. Our bustling communities sit on the doorstep of the wilderness—the ocean on one side and untouched forests on the other; an amazing blend of biodiversity and humanity that graphically symbolises the nature of the archetypal Australian experience of urbanity.

However, this beauty comes hand in hand with incredible fragility, meaning that our natural surrounds are all at once our main attractor and our Achilles heel. Indeed, as we have grown and developed we have increased our exposure to environmental risks, without any barriers between us and our key sources of peril. This means that almost any geographic or climatic risk could become a reality for our community—increased flood risks from rising sea levels, higher landslide risks from increasing rainfall intensity and elevated bushfire risk with our homes flanked by untouched forests that provide acres of ripe kindling for the upcoming bushfire season. And unfortunately, on the latter risk, our community is not unique.

Around the world we have devastating evidence of the impact of bushfires and other natural disasters amplified by a changing climate. As we speak, bushfires are tearing through the west coast of America, forcing more than 15,000 residents to flee their homes. A few months ago Greece battled one of the deadliest wildfires in history, second only to the Black Saturday fires in Victoria. Even the United Kingdom, a historical stranger to the perils of bushfires, is not immune, with Greater Manchester engulfed in wildfires for more than three weeks in its summer this year. This is not to mention the increasing prevalence and ferocity of fires in Siberia, Borneo and other parts of Asia, which are being fuelled by forests that are growing faster than ever aided by the CO2 fertilisation effect, and burning peat bogs that turn carbon sinks into carbon emitters.

Closer to home our entire State continues to battle one of the worst droughts in history, with emergency services warning that we are heading into uncharted territory for the coming bushfire season. I hope I am wrong but I fear the worst for the coming season. Like many in my community, my memory is seared with the impacts of the 1994 bushfires that turned swathes of Pittwater into a moonscape. The hundreds of firefighters, many volunteers, who service the Pittwater community do an incredible job. Every season they risk their lives to keep us safe and I thank them for everything they do, particularly as we head into the summer.

However, despite this mounting body of evidence that climate-related risk is rising, some politicians declare that addressing rising CO2 emissions must be balanced with the national interest of developing new coalfields and investing in more coal-burning power plants. But this is a false dichotomy. There are not only two options and we must urgently recognise that addressing climate change is in the national interest. The risks we face from climate change are real and they are unacceptably high. As Republican President Theodore Roosevelt once noted:

The civilized people of today look back with horror at their medieval ancestors who wantonly destroyed great works of art ... we turn our rivers and streams into sewers and dumping grounds, we pollute the air, we destroy our forests, and exterminate fishes, birds and mammals.

Our descendants 100 years from now are poised to look back at us with similar incredulity, baffled as to how we could so easily destroy our environment when the benefits of looking after it are so manifestly evident. We must adapt to our changing environment, not fight it or, worse still, ignore it. We must have robust discussions around land use, planning, land management and how and where we develop new areas with roads, bridges and other infrastructure, particularly residential development.

Whether it is in architecture, urban planning or landscaping, the way in which our built environment responds to and reflects our natural environment must be uniquely Australian. We must stop importing designs and ideas from overseas—Newport in Pittwater must not look like Newport in Orange County. It is time that we developed a uniquely Australian approach to manage our climate risk, an approach that reflects and responds to our environment and that futureproofs our beautiful country and our beautiful community for generations to come. It is time to stop paying lip-service to the need to be environmentally responsible and time to reignite Australia's strong legacy of leadership on environmental sustainability. On that we must not be unique.

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:29):** I always enjoy listening to the member for Pittwater because Pittwater's beauty is matched by the poetic language and turn of phrase of the member for Pittwater. His words of warning are salient reminders of the risks of an Australian summer, the realities of a changing climate

and an environment that must be managed for future generations in a sensible way. I thank the member for Pittwater for his excellent private member's statement.

### TRIBUTE TO DR MAX SHAW

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (18:29):** Tonight I bring to the attention of the House the extraordinary contribution of Dr Max Shaw to my community in Parramatta, in particular through the community of the Redeemer Baptist School and the fellowship of the Redeemer Baptist Church. In 1960 Dr Shaw began his working life as a research associate with the CSIRO in Brisbane. After completing a PhD in microbiology at the University of California, Max moved to Sydney in 1970 to take up an appointment as research director at one of the largest private research laboratories in the Southern Hemisphere. By that time he was already a world expert on cheese starters and baker's yeast. Dr Shaw's expertise and integrity as a food and research consultant were highly regarded by governments and industry throughout Australia.

On weekdays Dr Shaw was a research scientist but on weekends he was a youth director in a local Baptist church where up to 100 counter-culture young people, kids with big problems—including bikies and drug addicts—started attending the evening service. Responding to their need for a new start so that these young people could have a good life, Max became a founding elder in a radical initiative to provide an intentional Christian community with families providing support 24/7, giving them hope for healing and redemption. In 1974 those families formed the Redeemer Baptist Church. Dr Shaw's home, Koinonia, remained open until the end of his life, with dozens of young people finding a new foundation for hope and lasting change for the better. Redeemer became a bulwark where souls with particular needs could find shelter.

In 1977 Dr Shaw resigned his prestigious research directorate to form his own consulting business so that he could be more flexible in providing pastoral care for youth in the extended household ministry when it was needed. As friends and fellow founding elders of Redeemer Baptist Church, Noel Cannon—founding principal of Redeemer Baptist School—and Max Shaw led the Redeemer congregation into the vision for Redeemer Baptist School, which commenced in 1981. In that year, in addition to operating his consulting business and lecturing at university, Dr Shaw became Redeemer's first home science teacher and later Redeemer's first hospitality teacher. He continued to teach that subject until a couple of years ago. After a life-threatening illness and long convalescence from 1983 to 1986, Dr Shaw relinquished his leadership in the world of business and science and took up the role of headmaster to serve alongside the principal at Redeemer, in which role he served for the next 22 years.

During those years Dr Shaw also became the founding centre director for The Hills Regional Skills Centre which, in 1991, was the first registered training organisation in Australia belonging to an independent school delivering vocational education to its school students. The Australian College of Educators awarded Dr Shaw with a Fellowship in 2011 in recognition of this achievement. Following his retirement as headmaster in 2008 Dr Shaw continued his involvement at Redeemer in an active role as headmaster emeritus until his final illness, offering wisdom and friendship to the school executive, parents and students alike. Dr Shaw is survived by his wife and family, who continue his legacy of service to the community, and he is also survived by a school that delivers excellence with a Christian world view in education.

This year Redeemer students have not only won State and national awards in science, literacy, mathematics and athletics but also contributed to genuine reconciliation in the building of a much-appreciated meeting facility for the Indigenous community at Kempsey. On Pennant Hills Road outside the Redeemer Baptist School in North Parramatta for a week after Dr Shaw's passing there was a memorial on a large screen summarising his contribution as headmaster, teacher, elder and friend. He always made his home, his time, his money and his intelligence available to the service of Jesus Christ for anyone in need. Dr Shaw's contribution is worthy of our recognition.

### SPORT

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:34):** This speech has been prepared with the assistance of Liam Smit of Belrose, who is undertaking work experience with my office this week. He is in year 10 at Northern Beaches Christian School and a keen sportsman. "Sport has the power to change the world," announced Nelson Mandela in opening his speech at the Laureus World Sports Awards. New South Wales is no exception to this powerful statement. Sport has the power to change our State, and it is already doing just that. First, sport has the power to bring communities together. Family and friends often participate in activities or cheer for their loved ones on the field, pitch or court. And what is more important than family? On a typical Aussie summer's Saturday many in the community are out at local events enjoying sausage sizzles, shouting for mates and chatting with others, who might, surprisingly, live in the same street. Without sport, it would not be the same community we know and love today.

Secondly, sport has the power to promote integration. People of different races, backgrounds, nationalities and religions all speak the language of sport in our multicultural society. Deng Adut, the 2017 New South Wales Australian of the Year, was a child soldier in South Sudan before making the trip to Australia as a refugee and finding himself facing many challenges associated with integration, such as the English language and cultural adaptation. Deng says that soccer was key to helping him integrate into his community in Sydney's west. He is just one of many whose sport has assisted them integrate into society.

Thirdly, sport has the power to develop health in New South Wales communities. Sport causes biochemical reactions to occur in the brain, improving our mental state. To put it simply, our brains love sport. Sport counters excessive screen use by children and its negative effects, such as lack of sleep, sensory overload and antisocial behaviours. Sport allows us to develop a good support system of friends and teammates who can be relied on in times of hardship in our lives. Furthermore, it has been proven to reduce stress and anxiety. The benefits of sport are certainly strong in supporting our mental health, as they are for our physical health. Sport alleviates pressure on our public health system as well as producing a healthier and happier population. Fourthly, sport assists with youth development, providing education on essential life skills, such as working in a team, sportsmanship, reliability and social skills. Thus, good character and life education are encouraged through sport.

So how has the Government been supporting sport in New South Wales, including in northern Sydney? Liam Smit is particularly impressed by this year's record \$401 million sports budget in New South Wales and a foreshadowed investment into world-class stadiums that will support the growth of sport in this State. Liam finds it truly incredible that on the northern beaches almost everybody lives within walking distance of a public oval. He appreciates the investment in sports on both an individual and a community scale. Investments such as the Active Kids vouchers are enabling kids to get involved in sport from a young age.

Liam thanks the Government for community investments such as the investment into improving the soccer fields at Cromer Park and many other ovals and stadiums in Sydney and its suburbs. He also thanks us for promoting professional sport. The fact that somebody can watch their favourite sports teams in person or on their television at home helps build community and inspiration for smaller, local teams. That could assist some of the world's greatest sporting heroes to emerge, with future generations in turn inspired. As Liam says, when we invest in sport, we also invest in communities, health and education, and we are fundamentally investing in the lives of people. Well done to Liam.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** I thank the member for Davidson. I also congratulate Liam on an excellently crafted speech, very well delivered by the member for Davidson. Judging from that speech, I am sure Liam has a very bright future ahead of him. I thank Liam for that fantastic contribution.

#### **BANKSTOWN ELECTORATE REMEMBRANCE DAY COMMEMORATIONS**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (18:40):** Last Sunday 11 November marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the armistice that ended the First World War. One hundred years ago in 1918 at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month the guns of the Western Front fell silent for the first time in four years. I wholeheartedly thank the Bankstown RSL Sub-Branch for inviting me to address its Remembrance Day service. I was honoured to lay a wreath in remembrance of all those who lost their lives in the war. I thank president Terry Cochrane and secretary John Woodley for giving me this opportunity and, as always, for ensuring that Bankstown commemorates these important services. I also thank Chester Hill RSL Sub-Branch and Bass Hill RSL Sub-Branch for their kind invitations; unfortunately, I was unable to attend their services. I note that all three services in my electorate were very well attended. There were many families and it was particularly lovely to see many schools bring along their students on a Sunday. Many veterans, of course, also attended with their family and friends.

On Remembrance Day we stand united as proud Australians to put aside our cultural, religious and ideological differences so that we can commemorate those brave men and women who have served this country with courage and chivalry in all theatres of war. The one minute's silence that we observe is an opportunity for us to reflect upon the brave men and women from our country, State and local community who have fought for the freedom that we now so graciously enjoy. We will forever be indebted to their service. Remembrance Day is a time to renew our pledge to those fallen heroes by remembering all Australian servicemen and servicewomen who have lost their lives in armed conflict across the globe. In particular, I note the many veterans in my electorate who have sacrificed so much for the wonderful freedom that we enjoy today.

Following the cessation of World War I, that pledge was of a different nature. The one minute of silence that we observe today had a more personal connection to Australians. It was an era in which everybody had a loved one, family member or friend who was impacted by the Great War. Today we live in an era in which many of us fail to understand the true perils, experiences and cost of war. Remembrance Day is an opportunity, particularly

for young Australians and school students, to truly appreciate the lifestyle that we enjoy today by attending commemorative events across the country and carrying on the legacy of all Australians who have died in armed conflict. I again acknowledge the students who attended services in my electorate. I am always pleased that all our services have a high number of school students, principals and teachers who endeavour to ensure that schools commemorate the many brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for Australia.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier honours the lives and memories of all the brave men and women who laid down their lives and is a good reminder of the number of lives that were lost. In the four years of World War I, more than 330,000 Australians served overseas and more than 60,000 lost their lives. One-third of Allied soldiers were left without a gravestone; hence the term "unknown soldier" came to be used out of respect for those men and women who remain in unmarked graves. I again thank my sub-branches. I also thank the War Widows' Guild for knitting the beautiful red poppies for the occasion. I was surprised that they had knitted so many that they were able to hand them out to the hundreds of people in the crowd. It was a wonderful way to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War and to honour the fallen. As I said, we are extremely lucky to live in this great country and to have RSL sub-branches that tirelessly ensure our community continues to commemorate the brave men and women who sacrificed so much for Australia.

### MIRANDA ELECTORATE

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:45):** I draw the attention of the House to the achievements of some of the amazing people in the electorate of Miranda. I extend my warmest congratulations to my good friend Councillor Carmelo Pesce on his re-election as Mayor of Sutherland Shire Council. That is no mean feat, because by the end of this term Councillor Pesce will have served the people of the shire with distinction for five successive years as mayor. I have had the pleasure of working alongside Councillor Pesce over the past three or more years and can attest to his love of and dedication to our shire. Councillor Pesce works tirelessly for all members of our community.

As a lifelong shire resident and local business owner, he is passionate about delivering projects that ensure our shire remains the best place to live, to work and to raise a family. It is his integrity, congeniality, loyalty to his team, passion and fierce advocacy for our shire that has resulted in his peers entrusting Councillor Pesce with this honour. His commitment to our community is unwavering and, with the support and encouragement of his beautiful wife Nikki, I know he will continue to serve our community diligently. I also take this opportunity to congratulate incoming Deputy Mayor Councillor Steve Simpson on his election and acknowledge the dedication of outgoing Deputy Mayor Councillor Peter Scaysbrook. I thank him for working in such a bipartisan and collegiate manner to deliver for the residents of the Sutherland shire over the past two years.

I recently nominated Barrie Meadows of Kareela for a NSW Government Community Service Award for his long-serving commitment to sport education. Barrie has dedicated his life to teaching sport both on and off the field, having had a long and successful career as a teacher and a coach at local schools. Barrie was the sports master for health and physical education at the former Jannali Boys High School and also founded the Jannali High School Basketball Club. He was actively involved in the Sutherland District Basketball Association, volunteering his services as a coach and serving as secretary and president. After retiring in 2009, Barrie began volunteering at Oyster Bay Public School, working to develop students' basketball skills. Since his involvement, the school now boasts 64 student representatives competing in Sutherland Primary Schools Sports Association events each week. Barrie's service shows remarkable character and his devotion to sport education has touched the lives of many people. I thank him for his service to our community and congratulate him on this award.

The electorate of Miranda is proudly home to Endeavour Sports High School, this year's winner of the prestigious Secondary School of the Year award at the 2018 Australian Education Awards. The school is regarded as one of the best public sports schools in New South Wales, attracting and retaining many talented athletes from across the State. It maintains formal coaching and training partnerships with the Sydney Swans, the Sydney Sixers, Southern Districts Rugby and the Cronulla Sharks. It won the major education sector award for high standards of teaching and learning, demonstrating commitment to improving teaching and curriculum delivery, strong communication links with students, parents, and teachers, and effective management of facilities, finances and human resources. This well-deserved achievement reflects the combined effort of the dedicated staff, teachers, students and parents at Endeavour Sports High School. I acknowledge in particular Principal James Kozlowski and deputy principals Jocelyn Gooch and Nagla Jebeile. I look forward to witnessing Endeavour's continued growth and success into the future.

Liz Adams of Kareela recently launched her new book *Kareela—Lucky and Liveable*, which celebrates the suburb's fiftieth anniversary. Liz is a historian by trade and has lived in the local area for 47 years. After Kareela was named by Domain in 2016 as the most livable place in the Sutherland shire, Liz decided to research and trace the history of the suburb to capture the stories of the original residents for the present community to enjoy and reflect upon. The shire is incredibly fortunate to have longstanding residents like Liz,

who are passionate about our local history and enthusiastic about sharing this knowledge with the community. Kareela is just one of the many suburbs within the Sutherland shire—and indeed the Miranda electorate—that is rich in history and steeped in local character and charm. I congratulate and thank Liz for creating this lasting depiction of our local area. The Miranda electorate is shaped by the remarkable people who reside within it, and I am grateful for the opportunity to highlight some of their many achievements.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** I also congratulate Councillor Pesce on his fifth consecutive term as mayor. He does an amazing job.

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY CENTENARY

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (18:49):** This past Sunday 11 November 2018 marked the 100th anniversary of Remembrance Day, also known internationally as Armistice Day. One hundred years ago on 11 November 1918 the guns on the Western Front fell silent after four years of continuous warfare, bringing World War I to its conclusion. German armies were in retreat, with five divisions of the Australian Corps being at the forefront of the Allied advance since summer 1918. By the time German leaders had signed an armistice, bringing an end to the war, 12,000 Australians had lost their lives in 1918 alone, with almost 48,000 casualties.

If we look at the toll of the entire war effort from 1914 to 1918, we see that more than 60,000 brave Australians lost their lives during World War I. Globally, World War I brought about the mobilisation of more than 70 million people, leaving nine to 13 million dead. Tragically, it is believed that almost a third of those killed have no known graves. That is why it is so important that we acknowledge the sacrifices of those who gave up everything so that future Australians like us could have a chance for freedom.

That is why for 100 years we have marked Remembrance Day with the coming together of community at official functions and the playing of the *Last Post* and the observation of a minute's silence at 11.00 a.m. on the eleventh day of the eleventh month. In my electorate of Cabramatta wreaths were laid at Cabra-Vale Diggers and the Mounties clubs to honour their sacrifice. It is also important to acknowledge our current men and women who make up our armed forces. Apart from being the bravest, they are also some of the most skilled and big-hearted people one could ever find. They willingly put up their hands to go to the most dangerous places in the world, away from the love and support of their families, as they try to make the world a better place.

Our armed forces give everything for us and ask for very little in return. Unfortunately, after serving in combat sometimes soldiers return injured or maimed, without arms or legs, or with a post-traumatic stress disorder. Putting their lives back together after encountering such horrific experiences can be difficult and we need to do our best to support them in their time of need. Whether it be socially or financially, these brave Australians need us. It was wonderful to see the recent Invictus Games take place and showcase the talent and bravery of injured veterans to a massive audience.

Events like that help those who have returned to rediscover their self-worth, which can help stave off social isolation and depression. Congratulations to all those involved in the Invictus Games and a big thankyou to all our armed forces as we acknowledge the hard work, sacrifice and bravery that goes into defending freedom for the world. For Remembrance Day, remember all those who lost their lives in the First World War. May they rest in peace. Lest we forget.

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY CENTENARY

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (18:53):** I refer to Remembrance Day. On 10 November this year I had the opportunity to attend the unveiling of a new cenotaph at Greenway Park in Cherrybrook. The cenotaph was unveiled to commemorate the contribution of persons of Indian descent who had served with the Australian Imperial Force at Gallipoli in 1915. I was surprised to find out that, when we had a population of four million people and when 60,000 young Australians died, we had no cenotaph in Australia that commemorated the contribution of Indian-Australians to the campaign at Gallipoli. Fifteen of those Indian-Australians fought at Gallipoli. I acknowledge the contribution of the Federal member for Berowra, Julian Leeser, who worked tirelessly with members of the community in ensuring that the cenotaph was delivered for the people of Cherrybrook.

There was an extraordinary turnout at Cherrybrook to celebrate that day. I acknowledge the contribution of those people because it was a singular event that the community celebrated. However, before doing so, I identify the Indians who fought at Gallipoli and whose names now appear on the plaque, which will become a seminal point of celebration on each Remembrance Day and Anzac Day. The persons who participated were Davy Singh, Dasanda Singh, Ganessa Singh, Gurbachan Singh, Johan Singh, Juwan Singh, Linna Singh, Nain Singh Sailani, Nundah Singh, Sarn Singh and Sirdar Singh. One thing they had in common is that all of them were members of the Sikh community and probably they were all part of the Gorkha contribution to the Australian infantry forces.

We used that day as an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the Indian community. Today the Hindu Council of Australia wanted to ensure that they were properly acknowledged. I acknowledge the contribution of India's High Commissioner to Australia, Dr A. M. Gondane, and his wife. I acknowledge also the contribution of Mr Vanlalvawna, the Consul General of India, who is about to leave Australia. During his tenure as Consul General, his contribution to the unity of the Indian community in Australia has been singular. I place on record his outstanding contribution to the community and his involvement by his attendance at many community events.

**Mr Jonathan O'Dea:** Hear, hear!

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I acknowledge also the contribution of Hornsby Shire Council and Mayor Philip Ruddock, who ensured that—

**Mr Matt Kean:** He's worshipped.

**Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** He is worshipped. I owe a lot to Mayor Ruddock and his contribution, which I am delighted to acknowledge. Terry James, the President of the Hornsby RSL Sub-Branch, also worked to make it happen. I acknowledge the Hindu Council of Australia under the leadership of President Prakash Mehta and its project team under the guidance of Bhagwat Chauhan, Sanjeev Bhakri, Ashwani Sharma and Ashwani Jain. Hari Harinath, the chair of Multicultural NSW's advisory board, was there and participated, as did Steve Hopwood, President of Legacy, Hornsby Chapter, and Detective Superintendent Gavin Dengate from the NSW Police Force. Major Dr Jaykar Dave, one of the serving members of the Australian Defence Force with an Indian background, was also present. Rajeev Maini, the designer of the cenotaph, and Vijay Badhwar, cenotaph engineer, were also there. Community members Praveen Gupta and Mrs Jilly Warren from the Berowra Armistice Centenary Grants Committee and veterans from all wars participated. I am delighted to acknowledge their contribution to a significant landmark in the electorate of Epping.

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (18:59):** I acknowledge the outstanding work of the member for Epping for the past four years for his community. He is an exceptional member of Parliament and he cares deeply about his community of Epping. I acknowledge also the outstanding work of our mutual friend Mr Julian Leaser, the member for Berowra. I commend him for his work to establish this fantastic memorial. The memorial at the Cherrybrook Community and Cultural Centre commemorates the service and sacrifice made by Indians who served in the First Australian Imperial Force.

The relationship between our two nations goes back a long way. This memorial is a fitting tribute not only to the bravery of those soldiers but also to the deep links between our two countries. I acknowledge everyone involved, including the Hindu Council of Australia and many community members. I single out my great friend Parveen Gupta, who has done incredible work to bring us to this point. There are so many who have done so much to commemorate the service of Indians who fought alongside our Australians and to bonding our two nations together.

### **BEROWRA MUSICAL SOCIETY**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (19:00):** I pay tribute to a group of talented singers and performers who recently blew me away with a truly electrifying performance of the musical *Grease*. The Berowra Musical Society paid tribute to the iconic hit show in an ensemble performance that could rival that of the original cast. It has been 40 years since the movie hit theatres, but it has become without doubt the most successful musical movie of all time. It catapulted Olivia Newton-John and John Travolta into mega stardom, but I think the Berowra Musical Society stars Josh Brown, who played Danny, and Brianna Sykes-Spencer, who played Sandy, could give those two a run for their money. The entire production was seamless and entertaining, and the talent at this local level was just phenomenal.

The production was directed by the very talented Ryan Henderson. This is his second time in the director's chair. Seeing the calibre of the cast on stage, he has put together an amazing production. I congratulate Ryan on his efforts. He was assisted by musical director Mike Howell, a teacher at Normanhurst Boys High School, who has a long history of involvement in productions at the Berowra Musical Society. From playing instruments to assisting with the stage crew, he has pretty much done it all. Choreography was looked after by Briony Johnston and Monique Harris. Briony, who has been dancing since the age of three, studied at The McDonald College and has a long list of musical society credits to her name. Monique, a full-time dance teacher, is one of the best tap dancers in Australia. Her expertise was seen on stage through the casts' amazing dance moves. I could use a few tips from her.

The cast included Candice Arnold, who has been part of the Berowra Musical Society for the past 20 years; Tom Cousins, who first joined the group at age 11 and has been performing every year since; and Darcy Brianna Gilroy, who has performed in eight Berowra musicals and took her first leading role as Marty in this

production. The cast also included seasoned Berowra Musical Society performers Myles Burgin, Savannah Sissons, Karl Elbourne, Ellie Sykes-Spencer, Patrick Dunstan, Ben Piccin, Emily Kaufman and Jordan Macri. Dan Jones celebrated 21 years with the Berowra Musical Society this year and this is the second time he has performed in the musical *Grease* for the group. Another 20-year veteran was cast member Kelly Watts, who played Ms Lynch. I make special mention of Issy Gilbert, who is just 16 and did a fantastic job playing Patty.

It was not the performing alone that made this show stand out: the orchestra did a wonderful job supporting the on-stage actors. Assistant musical director Nixon Huynh and featured vocalist Rhiannon Winchester should be congratulated, along with the orchestra Mike Howell, Kali Gillen, Emma Hosogoe, Lincoln Hung, Emma Gambino, John McCarthy, Zac de Silva and Daniel Youssef. Just as in any profession, the support crew helps to make the actors look as good as they do. This performance of *Grease* was no different. The ensemble was fantastic in their on-stage support.

I congratulate Daniella Brown, Ella Friend, Harry Gougousidis, Dayton Guo, Samuel Kalnins, Yao Ko, Julian Kok, Courtney Larkham, Jacob Macri, Bradley Murphy, Graeme Murphy, Sarah Paull, Caitlin Seery, Conor Seery, David Taylor, Emily Teede, Zoe Tillett, Liv Turner, Narinder Vaccarella, Heather Wagland and Caitlin Williams. Behind-the-scenes work may be hard to see, but it is of great importance to the success of a production. The show would not go on without the hard work and dedication of production manager Grahame Jones, stage manager Michael Sanchez and set designer Ryan Henderson. They did an amazing job.

I also thank the supporting staff Max Henderson, Maegan Chin, Jessica Funk, Jess Herbert, Nick Hiebl, Philip Lentz, Sean Longhurst, Tim Murphy, David Funk, Frank Placko, Ian Trott, Joshua Stephen, Antony Youssef, Briony Johnston, Darcy Gilroy, James Worner, Mark Robinson, Karl Elbourne, Brian Paull, Karen Jones, Kirsty Parker Morton, Mark Myers, Miriam Myers, David Potter and Melissa Jones. I have named so many volunteers who have given their time to ensure this production has gone off without a hitch. I am very much looking forward to Berowra Musical's next performance *Catch Me If You Can* which will be staged in May next year. I encourage everyone to get along and see it. Congratulations to the Berowra Musical Society.

The society has been setting the standard high since 1986, and every year it does not disappoint. With two major musicals and a Christmas pantomime, the society is very busy entertaining the people of Hornsby, and it does the job exceptionally well. The hardworking committee is headed by president Graham Jones and is supported by Karen Jones, Kirsty Parker-Morton, David Funk, Candice Arnold, Darcy Gilroy, Savannah Sissons, Kelly Watts, Caitlin Seery and Miriam Myers. For over 30 years they have made us laugh, cry and sing out loud. May they continue to do this for many years to come. I thank everyone involved in the Berowra Musical Society. It is an absolutely sensational group. I cannot wait for the next production. Keep up the great work. I thank you for all you do.

#### CENTENARY OF ARMISTICE

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (19:05):** The theme of the evening seems to be the centenary of Armistice Day. I join many of my colleagues by acknowledging the work that our local communities do to commemorate the centenary of the Armistice of the Great War. Last Sunday marked 100 years since the end of World War I—the war to end all wars—on the Western Front. Church bells echoed across the towns and villages in France and people gathered to sing *La Marseillaise* as the dull booms of guns and roaring blasts of shells mellowed into silence on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918.

The war to end all wars was over at last, after more than four years of endless carnage and warfare which saw the devastating and unforgettable loss of 62,000 Australians in one of the most destructive conflicts known to mankind. As we cast our minds back over the past century to commemorate the Armistice that marked the end of the First World War, we are invited to pause, to reflect and, with untold thankfulness, to remember the ultimate sacrifice made by many men and women in the darkest of years to protect the values and freedoms we fortuitously enjoy today.

It is, therefore, with great honour that I enlighten the House about recent events held in the Baulkham Hills electorate to pay tribute to the armed conflicts in which our great nation was engaged and the heroic servicemen and servicewomen who have persisted to defend our country at a moment's notice, unswervingly and unflinching. Last Sunday, 11 November, I had the privilege to represent our Premier at my local community event, the Centenary of Armistice Finale at the historic Bella Vista Farm. The finale, which was jointly held by The Hills Shire Council and the Castle Hill RSL Sub-Branch, was accompanied by the Castle Hill RSL Youth Wind Orchestra, which played Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, alongside saluting gun troops from the 9th Regiment Royal Australian Artillery.



I commend the orchestra director, James Brice, a good friend of mine, and the skilful young musicians whose mastery of the favoured festival spectacle was second to none. I also commend the following individuals for their efforts in making the event truly unforgettable: my great friend and mentor Colonel Don Tait, OAM, the finale's project manager; David Hand, Chair of the Armistice Grants Committee in the Mitchell electorate; Bev Jordan, The Hills much adored community volunteer and media connector; Gareth McCray, OAM, 2CH's great breakfast announcer, who kindly agreed to be the master of ceremonies at the finale; and Professor Dr Michelle Byrne, Mayor of The Hills Shire Council, whose recent unveiling of honour boards commemorating 576 Hills locals who fought for Australia during the Boer War and World War I was much admired.

Of course, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the extraordinary individuals from the Lancer Band and Lancer Guard, personnel from the 9th Regiment Royal Australian Artillery, the cadet unit from Baulkham Hills High School, the pipe band and, indeed, our 16 Centenary of Anzac ambassadors for The Hills shire. After reading a citation from a First World War Victoria Cross recipient, I presented each ambassador with a plaque to recognise their service to The Hills community during the Centenary of Anzac. I congratulate the 2015 ambassadors Austin Rosier from Kellyville High School, Stephen Hancock from The Hills Grammar School and Hannah Kohler from Northholm Grammar School and the 2016 ambassadors Renee Preketes-Tardiani from Crestwood High School, Jason Lambe from Oakhill College and Daniella Scotti from Marian College.

The 2017 ambassadors were Hannah Barrett from Castle Hill High School, Caitlin McDonald from Marian College, Lauren Leaver from Crestwood High School and Will Sampson from The Hills Grammar School. The 2018 ambassadors were Cali Doyle from The Hills Grammar School, Jesse Krauksts-Garofano from Oakhill College, Anna Antonito from Kellyville High School, Heather Anderson from Marian College and Michael Dell'Aquila, who was recently elected captain of Marian College and is also the nephew of the member for Ryde and Minister for Finance.

In commemoration of the Centenary of ANZAC, I hope members will join me to remember the brave men and women who honoured our freedom by defending this great nation, safeguarding our democracy and standing against tyranny at the ultimate deprivation of their longevity. For our tomorrows, they gave their today. Lest we forget.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch):** I thank the Minister for his private member's statement and note his many contributions to the Centenary of the Anzac. I note also that the Terrigal Armistice Memorial was officially used for the first time last weekend. I look forward to the Minister visiting my electorate soon for the official rededication. I thank him for his support of that fantastic feature.

### **HORNSBY HEIGHTS FOOTBALL CLUB**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (19:10):** Today I pay tribute to one of the great football clubs in the Hornsby district, the Hornsby Heights Football Club. The club comprises players aged from under six all the way to seniors and is one of the largest clubs in the Hornsby shire. It first started in 1962 when the Ku-ring-gai and District Soccer Association approached Ray Menser about forming a junior soccer team in the area. Ray called around to some residents and with the assistance of Jack Berry from the Mount Colah Football Club went about fielding a team. The first Hornsby Heights team formed was the under 10s, which was quickly followed by an under 14s team. They wore donated jerseys and chose the colours bottle green and orange, as they were as close to the Australian national sporting colours as they were allowed.

It did not take long for the club to grow and in two years there were seven registered teams. It was also the year that four players were picked for representative teams—two from the under nines and two from the under 10s. The community was important in those early years in helping to promote and raise money for the club. The community helped with raffles by selling club memorabilia, and secretary John Tollman even donated a Morris LC3 panel van for the teams to be driven around in. The club chose the hornet as its mascot in 1966, and it is still part of the club's identity to this day.

This is truly a grassroots soccer community and club, where community members got together to ensure there was a place for the kids to play and learn the game that they loved. This community spirit has continued, with Hornsby Heights Football Club taking a "team first" approach. There is no individual on the pitch who is more important than any other, no matter their grade or age. Players have a never-say-die attitude but they play to the rules and respect their opponents, coaches, referees and teammates at all times. This philosophy is important to give kids a good foundation in sportsmanship and leadership.

Hornsby Heights is exceptionally proud of its girls teams, who compete in the Diamond League. This league is for girls who want to play competitive soccer and are ready to take their skills to the next level. In 2018 the club was pleased to have Chloe Logarzo, current Matilda and Sydney FC player taking on the role of technical

director for the girls football. She is an amazing role model and mentor for these young footy players. Female soccer is one of the fastest developing sports and Hornsby Heights is certainly leading the way. Hornsby Heights is known as the home of development. Every team from the under sixes to the under 11s takes part in a T3 professional coaching session one afternoon a week across the entire season. This is included in the registration and helps to develop the players confidence, ball skills and one-on-one skills.

The club is run by a dedicated group of volunteers who go above and beyond for their local footy club. The job of chairman is shared by the great Adam Buttenshaw and Stuart Dever, while Marcis Morgan and Glenn Frost act as secretary and treasurer. Caroline Buttenshaw and Nerys Thompson are the all-important registrars, ensuring all kids are put into a team. Ian Fowler, Craig Becchio and Campbell Watt make up the rest of the committee. Looking after all aspects of girls football is my mate and coaching coordinator Mick Da Silva. Chad Lawrence is technical director for the MiniRoos and Gavin Oliver looks after junior football. The mens all ages coach is Ken Wyper.

As I read through the list of committee members and helpers in this club, I am blown away by how many have put up their hands to get in and help. This can sometimes be a battle at a community organisation but not for Hornsby Heights. The club's age coordinators are Marcis Morgan, Kevin Cherry, Barry Westgarth, Michael Howard, Patrick Kiss, Adam Buttenshaw, Tom Saunders, Rod Matthews and Peter Thomsett. Peter also looks after the referees. Maxine Edwards looks after publicity and also makes up part of the committee for girls football, which includes Trudi Stook, Lisa Dunne and Mick Da Silva, while Nicole Stack, Phil Wilkinson, Sudesh Chander, Mike Hall, Phil Brooks, Matt Kennelly, Oliver Ross and Frank Melissari make up the general committee.

It was with great pleasure that I was able to join members of the committee and players to announce the club would be receiving a grant of \$125,000, thanks to the Asian Legacy Fund, an initiative of Football NSW and the New South Wales Government. The money will go towards improving the lights at Montview Oval. Montview Oval has one of the best playing surfaces in the league and has been the home of the Hornsby Heights Football Club since its humble beginnings in the 1960s. We were able to upgrade the playing surface at the oval through the efforts of Campbell Watt and Malcolm Waldock working with me and the State Government. Indeed, this has made it one of the best pitches in the whole Northern Suburbs Football Association. The improved lighting will make a real difference on those cold, dark winter nights. I have truly enjoyed being the patron of the Hornsby Heights Football Club. It certainly is one of the greatest clubs that I am able to represent. I look forward to seeing its continued success on the pitch and its growth as a club off the pitch. The volunteer and community spirit at Hornsby Heights Football Club is without question. Go, Hornsby Heights Hornets!

### ROSEVILLE RSL SUB-BRANCH

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:15):** The Roseville RSL Sub-Branch in my electorate of Davidson has sacrificially served veterans and the local community for more than 85 years. I commend its faithful community service and I am pleased to highlight a small selection of its recent activities. Roseville Sub-Branch Vice President Tony Adams was recently invited by the Premier to attend a service held on 20 October to commemorate the reopening of the Anzac War Memorial in Hyde Park. In 2014 Tony and four others received the Legion of Honour from the French Minister of Veteran Affairs at the same Anzac War Memorial. After the service Tony reconnected with Major General Mark Kelly, Repatriation Commissioner, having travelled to the United Kingdom with him and others in 2016 for the Queen's unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial in London. The Federal Government also selected Tony to attend the opening of the International Bomber Command Centre at Lincoln in the United Kingdom in April this year.

During the Anzac War Memorial service, it was announced that Major General Gordon Maitland, AO, OBE, RFD, ED, had passed away only two days before. A member of the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch, Gordon lived on the North Shore and had a longstanding association with the Anzac War Memorial. As a 17-year-old, he enlisted in the 2nd Australian Imperial Force during the Second World War. In addition to a distinguished military career, Gordon enjoyed several influential civilian positions, including Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Agricultural Society, Chief Manager of the Commonwealth Bank and member of several New South Wales Government committees. His death notice, published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 20 October, read: Major General Gordon Maitland 1926—2018. Late of North Turramurra, dearly beloved husband of Dorothy (married 6 November 1948—deceased). Loved and respected father and father-in-law of Neil (deceased) and Jan Maitland, Barbara and Tim Hodges, and Elizabeth and Rod Charman. Loving grandfather of James, Louise, Victoria, Katherine, Joshua and Andrew. Great-grandfather of Layla, Alexis, Oscar, Cali, Riley and Madeline. The senior surviving Army officer with 2nd World War service. Long-time Chief of Clan Maitland in Australia. A military funeral will be held at 10:30 am on 29th October at the Parish Church of St James, King Street, Sydney. In his time Gordon pursued a passion for military history and he published six books. Shortly before his passing, the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch President, Mike Askey, informed Gordon that one of his books, *Honours and Awards of the Army*, would be presented to all schools attending the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch's upcoming Remembrance

Day ceremony. In addition to ceremonies I attended at Forestville and St Ives recently, last week I attended the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch. The service marked 100 years since the Armistice was signed between the Allies and Germany at Compiegne, France, for the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front in World War I. It also honoured Major Blair Wark, VC, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery in operations against the Hindenburg Line during World War I. As usual, the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch admirably engaged local schools—27 on this occasion—in its excellent ceremony.

Recently we saw the success of the Invictus Games in Sydney. I am pleased that the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch vice-president, Malcolm Whitney, was one of the five RSL NSW service members to be selected to present a medal at the Invictus Games. He presented a medal at the men's 50 metres breaststroke ISB medal ceremony during the swimming finals and subsequently attended the closing ceremony with his wife. Mindful of all the activities associated with the Roseville RSL Sub-Branch and its positive contributions to our broader community, I strongly encourage any serving or past members of the Armed Forces to consider joining their local RSL branch and for the rest of us to support their efforts.

### CENTENARY OF ARMISTICE DAY

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (19:21):** In November 1918, stretcher-bearer Langford Colley-Priest wrote home to his parents in Sydney:

On Monday morning the 11th ...at 11 a.m. hostilities ceased for the first time in four years on the western front ... The end of this awful slaughter and bloodshed is at hand ... I can just imagine the people in Australia nearly going crazy, with joy, when they heard of the news.

For four years and three months the war had raged through Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific. Australians could finally look forward to a Christmas with peace on earth. The Allies were victorious, but the nation had paid a heavy price. From a population of fewer than five million, almost 417,000 men enlisted, more than 60,000 were killed and 156,000 were wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner. Last Sunday the Hornsby RSL Pipes and Drums Band played in honour of all who did their duty and in solemn remembrance of the fallen and the wounded. They honoured the sacrifice of all Hornsby families for whom the Armistice brought joy suffused with grief.

The Smith family ran a bakery near where the Hornsby Inn now stands. All their customers knew that the two eldest brothers, Len and Stanley, had enlisted. Len was a railway signalman and Stanley was a clerk. Sapper Stanley Smith of the 2nd Australian Division Signals Company was killed in action in France, dying of his wounds on 29 June 1916. Just a few weeks after his brother's death, Private Leonard Smith of the First Australian Field Ambulance, who was known to his family as Len, was killed in the Battle of Pozieres.

Another Hornsby family, the Somervilles, ran the produce store on Jersey Street. They sent their sons, Robert and Charles, to war. Robert served at Gallipoli. Charles was the rascally larrikin boy on whom the cartoon character Ginger Meggs was based. Grown up and tempered by war, Driver Charles Somerville served on the gun that officially fired the last shot at the Germans near Ypres in Belgium. Many of their mates perished but both Somerville boys came home.

After serving on the Western Front, Charles Somerville would have been forgiven for thinking he had done his bit and that his service to his country was at an end. Instead, he stood for election to Hornsby council and served for a record 33 terms. In 1921 he was elected president of the Hornsby RSL Branch. His ongoing service to the community was recognised last Sunday. In 1923 when the Hornsby Cenotaph was dedicated, Charles Somerville honoured Private Smith and Sapper Smith as well as the other 59 men from the Hornsby shire who enlisted but never came home. Two families, two sets of brothers, among the hundreds of men from Hornsby and the district who answered their country's call.

In the heart of the community they loved, we honour all of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of Australia. With sadness, we acknowledge the suffering of the widows and orphans, the families bereft. We grieve for those who have borne the scars of their service on their bodies and in their minds, and we salute the nurses, whose service to the wounded was beyond all praise. We pay solemn tribute to the 2,000 pipers and drummers killed in the Great War, and with grateful hearts we acknowledge the servicemen who came home from the war and, like Charles Somerville, dedicated their lives to building the Hornsby we know and love today.

On the eve of the landing at Gallipoli, at the very start of Australia's war, Private Len Smith wrote of his determination to worthily uphold the reputation of the district. On the centenary of the end of the war, we renew our determination to be worthy of his courage and his sacrifice. As the strains of *When the Battle's O'er* ring out, here at home and around the world, we rededicate ourselves to making a real and lasting use of the peace for which so many sacrificed so much. On this 100th anniversary of the Armistice, we promise, for 100 years of tomorrows, that we will remember them. Lest we forget.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:27 until**

**Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 12:00.**