



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 30 May 2019

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bills	1061
Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2019	1061
Second Reading Debate	1061
Consideration in Detail	1061
Third Reading	1062
Governor	1062
Address-In-Reply	1062
Business of the House	1066
Postponement of Business	1066
Bills	1066
Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019	1066
Second Reading Debate	1066
Motions	1074
Vivid Sydney	1074
National Reconciliation Week	1079
North Shore Electorate Schools	1088
Moore Park	1090
Visitors	1091
Visitors	1091
Commemorations	1091
National Reconciliation Week	1091
Question Time	1091
Minister for Customer Service	1091
Rail Operations Centre	1091
Minister for Customer Service	1092
Regional Rail Infrastructure	1093
Minister for Customer Service	1094
Jobs Growth	1094
Sydney Children's Hospital Network	1096
Environment Policy	1097
Barwon Electorate Water Supply	1099
Community Safety	1100
Business of the House	1101
Condolence Motions: Order of Business	1101
Petitions	1102
Petitions Received	1102
Matter of Public Importance	1102
Ramadan	1102
Community Recognition Statements	1106
Cafe Patina	1106

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

NSW Justices Association	1106
Millie Chalker	1106
Coogee Lifesaving Awards	1106
Taldumande Youth Services	1107
Joshua Lee	1107
Terrigal Haven Oval	1107
<i>Colours of Country Art Exhibition</i>	1107
Tribute to Alf Scott	1107
Tribute to Ron Austin	1108
Melissa Hanson	1108
Samaritans Recovery Point	1108
Casino Relay for Life	1108
Eileen Yip	1108
Waratah Respite Services	1109
Vesak Day	1109
Maja Maziuk	1109
Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch	1109
1st East Roseville Scout Group	1109
Mascot Public School	1110
Silvia Hardy	1110
Penrith City National Servicemen's Association	1110
North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club	1110
Tribute to His Beatitude Mar Nasrallah Boutros Cardinal Sfeir	1110
Gavin Souter	1111
Sinilia Radivojevic	1111
Breakers Country Club	1111
Surry Hills Community Connect	1111
Tribute to Father John Pearce	1111
Alexandra Eves	1112
St George Little Athletics	1112
Cambodia Vision	1112
Private Members' Statements	1112
Port Stephens Electorate Volunteers	1112
1st Ermington Scout Group	1113
Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-Operative	1114
Petitions	1115
Forster-Tuncurry Public Hospital	1115
Discussion	1115
Private Members' Statements	1117
Riverstone Electorate Policing	1117
Kemps Creek Sporting and Bowling Club	1117
Dubbo Electorate Agricultural Shows	1118

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Urban Planning	1119
Rutherford Ambulance Station	1120
Australia's Biggest Morning Tea	1121
Plastics Pollution.....	1122
Disability Advocacy.....	1122
Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Sailing Club.....	1123
Goulburn Electorate	1124
Londonderry Electorate Roads	1125
Feral Red Deer	1125
Morisset Country Club.....	1126
Emergency Services Awards	1127
Climate Change.....	1128
Vietnamese Students Association	1129
Lake Conjola	1129
Anti-Semitism.....	1130
Sydney Metro Northwest	1131
Tribute to Dennis Van Someren	1132
Cootamundra High School.....	1132

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 30 May 2019

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 10:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 9 May 2019.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (10:11): I lead for the Opposition on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2019. The Opposition does not oppose the bill in the form in which it will be when the Government amendments have been adopted. The bill provides a multiplicity of purportedly non-controversial amendments to Acts and statutory instruments. It is a mechanism for making multiple minor changes that has been used by governments of all persuasions over several decades. The only provision I refer to specifically is schedule 1.1, which is now going to be withdrawn from the bill. I simply note that that is as a result of my opposition to it. I had a problem with that provision because, granted the use of technology, the extension from seven days to 28 days just seemed absurd. In addition to that, granted it deals with the Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Act, if that period is extended there is a greater likelihood that casual employees would miss out. In addition to that, as I am advised, the consultation with the stakeholders was entirely inadequate. Apart from that, granted the Government amendments, the Opposition does not oppose the bill.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (10:12): In reply: I thank the member for Liverpool for his contribution to debate on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2019. I foreshadow that the Government will be moving amendments to this bill and ask that the bill be considered in detail. Schedule 1 to the bill contains policy changes of a minor and non-controversial nature that are too inconsequential to warrant the introduction of a separate amending bill. It contains amendments to 21 Acts and related amendments to two regulations. The bill also deals with matters of pure statute law revision, repeals various acts and provisions that no longer have any operation, and includes savings and transitional provisions as well as other technical amendments. The amendments contained in the bill, subject to the foreshadowed amendments, are not contentious. As part of the ongoing statute law revision program, this bill enables minor policy changes to be made efficiently and redundant legislation to be repealed. Overall it helps to ensure that New South Wales legislation remains as up to date and effective as possible. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Mark Speakman.

Consideration in Detail

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: By leave: I shall propose the bill in one group of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 to 3 and schedules 1 to 4 be agreed to.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (10:15): By leave: I move Government amendments Nos 1 to 6 on sheet c2019-008B in globo:

- No. 1 **Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Act 1986 No 19**
Page 3, Schedule 1.1, lines 2–9. Omit all words on those lines.
- No. 2 **Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009 No 86**
Page 5, Schedule 1.7 [2], lines 9–11. Omit all words on those lines.
- No. 3 **Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009 No 86**

Page 5, Schedule 1.7, line 13. Omit "Item [1] of the proposed amendments". Insert instead "The proposed amendment".

No. 4 **Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009 No 86**

Page 5, Schedule 1.7, line 19. Omit all words on that line.

No. 5 **Road Transport Act 2013 No 18**

Page 9, Schedule 1.17 [2], lines 7 and 8. Omit all words on those lines.

No. 6 **Road Transport Act 2013 No 18**

Page 9, Schedule 1.17, lines 26 and 27. Omit all words on those lines.

The amendments to the bill remove clause 1.1 of schedule 1, which contained a proposed amendment to the Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Act 1986. The amendments remove item [2] of clause 1.7 of schedule 1, which contained a proposed amendment to the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009. The amendments to the bill remove item [2] of clause 1.17 of schedule 1, which contained a proposed amendment to the Road Transport Act 2013. There is a longstanding practice in this place that statute law revision bills are passed only with the agreement of all parties. In the spirit of this protocol the Government has moved these amendments in response to objections raised by various members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the amendments Nos 1 to 6 on sheet c2019-00B be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that clauses 1 to 3 and schedules 1 to 4 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 3 and schedules 1 to 4 as amended agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Governor

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Debate resumed from 9 May 2019.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (10:17): I thank the House very much for the opportunity to complete my contribution to the address-in-reply to the speech delivered by the Governor at the opening of this Parliament. The final comments that I wanted to make in this contribution to the address-in-reply are in relation to acknowledging and putting on the parliamentary record my very deep and sincere thanks and appreciation for the support that I have from my family to enable me to work as the local member for Mulgoa. I want to place on the parliamentary record my very sincere thanks for the efforts, support, patience and long suffering of my husband, Mark Davies. He is a small business owner. It is he, and he alone, who runs his business and has the full weight and responsibility of everything to do with that business. He takes phone calls during the evening and on weekends to run that business and try to make a living out of it. He does that while looking after our two children when I am in this place performing my roles and responsibilities as a member of Parliament.

I place on the parliamentary record my very sincere appreciation for his support to maintain and keep our family running when I am in this place or working in the community and at night-time serving the community. I also thank my children. Next year my daughter Laura will commence high school; she was not even at school when I first began in this place. Little Harry will turn three in September this year; he has only ever known his mum as a member of Parliament. I thank them for their patience and understanding. I have a wonderful opportunity to instil in them the virtue and value of community service and of working hard to make people's lives better.

I highlight a conversation I had with my daughter last week while we were driving home from school. She was asking me questions about Parliament and Government; being in year 6 she is studying that in her curriculum. As we drove along Mulgoa Road and through the Mulgoa suburb, I pointed to a physical piece of infrastructure—an almost \$100,000 covered outdoor learning area [COLA]—that has just been completed and opened in that small public school in Mulgoa. I pointed to the infrastructure and said, "Laura, one of Mum's opportunities as a local member is to find out the needs of the community—whether that is a community of people, sportspersons or schools—and begin to speak up and ask for help from the Government for those needs."

I told my daughter that the school was too small for the Department of Education requirement to get a piece of asset infrastructure like the COLA. It would just not qualify because of its scale. Because of the school's history and heritage, it had no all-weather covered area at all. There was not even a school hall that the children could go into during recess and lunch time during rain or cold weather. When it rained and it was freezing cold, the children had to remain in classrooms. Not only does that not work for the students—they need to exercise, get fresh air and let out energy—but also it makes it difficult for the teachers to teach when the children are restless. I was able to explain to my daughter physically the importance of my work as a local member of Parliament in delivering the COLA.

To that end, I thank the then Minister for Education, the Hon. Rob Stokes, for listening to my community's need and for doing what it took to meet that need. Tomorrow we will go there to see in person the joy on the children's faces as they enjoy that piece of infrastructure. As the member of Mulgoa it is a wonderful and an incredible opportunity—a privilege—to be warmly embraced and supported by my community again for the third time. To my parents and my mother-in-law, who also support our family to enable me to do my work and serve my community, I say thank you. I thank my community for their overwhelming support in the last election. I look forward to continuing to serve them and to work hard together to make our region of western Sydney all that it can possibly be. Thank you.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (10:22): In contributing to the address-in-reply to the Governor's Speech, I note that convention provides for the government of the day to heavily influence, if not outright dictate, the Governor's opening address to Parliament. Any critique of the Governor's address today should not be seen as a reflection on the Governor herself but on this Government that wrote her address to Parliament. The Governor outlined five items that are on this Government's agenda over the next four years. I will seek to outline how this Government's prior performance on those tasks should give us pause in considering its capacity to deliver any of the five points.

The Government has set itself five key performance indicators on which it wants to be judged. Come its performance review in four years, I suspect we will find it has not lived up to the task. The Governor outlined the Government's goals as, firstly, delivering a strong economy, quality jobs and job security for workers of today and tomorrow; secondly, providing the highest quality education, no matter where a person lives or what their circumstances may be; thirdly, creating well-connected communities and quality local environments; fourthly, making Government work better for people by putting the customer at the centre of everything Government does; and fifthly, breaking the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage by fixing problems that have been in the too-hard basket for too long. They are all worthy goals.

While this Government likes to talk up its economic agenda, that may also be its undoing. Having sold off \$70 billion in assets, including many income-producing ones, for a quick fix, the Government now faces structural revenue issues. The write-down in projected stamp duty revenue has eroded the projected surpluses and there are looming changes to GST distribution and uncoded liabilities such as the Sydney light rail court action. Together the revenue challenges will erode projected surpluses and undermine the Government's ability to respond to emerging global headwinds. The 16 years of Labor governments under Carr, Iemma, Rees and Keneally delivered a budget deficit in only one year—the same one as the global financial crisis.

This Government has liked to paint the past Labor governments as ones of debt and deficit but it is far from the truth. As the global economy faltered a sensible Labor government injected money into the economy and kept unemployment low. I know those on the other side like to dredge up proposals that were never implemented, but I ask: What is their plan B for this State when global shockwaves hit our shores? How will they replace the revenue we are not getting from stamp duty as the housing market corrects itself? When all assets have been sold and the cupboard is bare, will they just look at each other and shrug their shoulders?

The last point of that agenda item is job security, an almost insulting inclusion from a Government that has championed casualisation within its own public sector and failed to take any steps to address casualisation in the private sector. Over the past eight years jobs have become more insecure, the gig economy has expanded and wages growth has stalled. To give one example in the disability services sector, this Government forced the transfer of staff from the Ageing, Disability and Home Care agency into the private sector with no offer of redundancies. The two-year job guarantee for those workers will expire soon and already there are reports of workers being told they will end up on a lower wage once the job guarantee ends. Today's *Newcastle Herald* reports that more than 120 nurses face loss of jobs with no entitlements whatsoever as a result of the enabling Act that this Government legislated and implemented. What if the workers in the Ageing, Disability and Home Care agency have no private job to go to? The answer is that they lose their job and have no entitlements. This Government may talk about its economic and employment wishes, but its track record has seen job security decrease while asset sales undermine future budget security.

The Government's next agenda item was a quality education, regardless of where one lives. Coming from regional New South Wales I know it remains true that too often one's postcode determines one's opportunities in life. Public education remains the greatest tool to reduce that opportunity gap. Growing up in Mulwala, Tumut and then Albury, I was able to have a quality public education, went on to study law at Sydney University and later was elected to this place. I owe much of that to the quality public education I received. The gap in opportunity is particularly true when it comes to post-school education. For decades regional TAFE campuses were the lifeline for post-school training in country areas, offering courses in industries in which regional kids had a chance to get a job.

The past eight years have seen a relentless attack on TAFE: the sacking of thousands of TAFE teachers and the cutting of courses left, right and centre. With that history I was surprised that the Government committed to building a new TAFE campus in Port Stephens; we wait to see if it ever appears. It seems that if you are a kid in the bush or in the suburbs trying to learn new skills, this Government is happy to tear down your opportunities and close your TAFE. But if you happen to be lucky enough to live in a marginal seat, the Government is happy to build whole new TAFE campuses. School facilities were also regularly raised during the election campaign.

The Coalition Government promised to reduce the school maintenance backlog in Port Stephens to zero. The Government made the announcement despite neglecting schools for years and allowing the backlog to grow to record levels. When teachers in classrooms have to paint over mould because they cannot get the funding to clean up or fix up the drain pipes, you know something is wrong. Students across New South Wales deserve better than this. The Coalition has promised to clear the backlog entirely and we will hold them to account on this as well. The glaring absence in the Government's commitments and promises during the election in Port Stephens was a public high school for Medowie, which was promised by an incoming Minister for Education.

In 2011 Adrian Piccoli, a former Minister for Education, promised that Medowie would get a high school. Since then we have heard nothing from this Government. I will continue to fight for my community because they desperately need a public high school. The children are sick of sitting on buses for hours without seatbelts and sitting three to a seat on dangerous roads. But it is clearly early childhood education where this Government's record on education falls to new lows. The Auditor-General has exposed repeated underspends in the early childhood budget, totalling over \$350 million in funding allocated to preschools but never spent.

Year after year this Government has let New South Wales have the highest preschool costs and lowest enrolment because it does not care about investing in early childhood education. Even the introduction of funding for three-year-olds has been botched. This was the centrepiece announcement of the last budget but we do not even hear about it now. Why? Because the sector found out that the Government was going to fund three-year-olds at only 25 per cent of the four-year-old funding rate and the first lot of payments will not happen until the end of the financial year, despite centres being told to enrol three-year-olds from January.

This Government does not care about early childhood education—if it does not care about where education starts then it does not care about education at all. If this Government wants to deliver on its goal of a high-quality education for all, then it must start by resetting its relationship with the early childhood education sector, after years of deceit and over-promises. The Government should significantly increase its investment per child to at least the Australian average, if not higher. Most urgently, the Premier should condemn the actions of the Scott Morrison Government and its intention to cease the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education.

The Government's next goal is for "quality local environments". The Minister for Transport and Roads may have something to say about the U-turn required for this Government to start considering the environment. The list of this Government's environmental sins would exhaust the *Hansard* reporters, so I will highlight only some of the most egregious damage to our shared environment. In my electorate the Government's sale of the Mambo Wetlands still causes disbelief. This six-hectare parcel of koala habitat on the shores of Port Stephens was sold to a property developer in 2016 for only \$250,000 via an online auction. While this Government may want to talk about stopping the extinction of koalas in New South Wales, its actions in Port Stephens show that its words are meaningless.

Despite being well informed of the importance of this land prior to the sale—including a departmental briefing note released under freedom of information, which noted the local opposition to the sale—the Government pressed on with the sale. That is typical of this arrogant Government. It was only a few weeks after the sale that members of the Government admitted it was a mistake, but even now—three years later—the land is still in the hands of a property developer and local residents are continuing to fight about two development approvals over the site. The Government has said that it will buy back the land but the community is tired of waiting. We have been given no update on the process and everyone remains sceptical that we will ever see the land restored to the protection of public ownership so that koalas can continue to breed at that site.

At the other end of my electorate residents have been engaged in a much more personal fight for justice after this Government proved unable to protect them from environmental contamination. These residents had their land and water contaminated by the Department of Defence over many decades. Worse still, the NSW Environment Protection Agency [EPA] and other government agencies were aware of the contamination for many years prior to residents being informed. Since 2015 the residents of Williamtown, Salt Ash and Fullerton Cove have been seeking justice from the Department of Defence and fair compensation for their contaminated land and water.

The New South Wales government agencies charged with protecting our environment have failed to support those residents and assist them to achieve justice against the Department of Defence. Incredibly, four years after the EPA told residents to stop drinking their bore water, to stop eating their eggs and to stop eating the vegetables that they produce on their land, the chemical PFAS has not been banned in New South Wales, despite South Australia and Queensland taking steps to ban it. This Government has failed to protect the environment for the citizens of Williamtown, Salt Ash and Fullerton Cove. It cannot claim to support "quality local environments" while these residents are trapped on contaminated land.

I recently wrote to the Premier about this issue, as the elected representative group that the former member of Parliament, and Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter and Central Coast, Scot MacDonald, used to chair has not met for many, many months and appears to have been disbanded without announcement. The community reference group that residents give up their workday to attend has continued to meet, but from the outset elected representatives have been banned from attending those meetings. If the Government is not prepared to brief elected representatives about contaminated land in their own electorates, then they should at least be allowed to attend the community reference group—the group has been asking for the inclusion of their local members of Parliament since its inception. I am eagerly awaiting the Premier's response to that request. It was equally disappointing that not one mention was made of this most important issue in the electorate of Port Stephens during the recent State election campaign by the Liberal Party.

This Government will need to urgently decide whether it is prepared to take real action to prevent koalas from becoming extinct in the wild, particularly at Port Stephens. In the west of my electorate a longstanding quarry is seeking to expand its footprint into the surrounding bushland. An environmental assessment has found that the clearing of 45 hectares of bushland will "adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of the species". Rarely have I seen an environmental impact assessment be so direct in its criticism of a project and this environmental impact assessment was created for the developer. This application will be a test for the planning department and for whether it is prepared to take the steps needed to protect this iconic native species.

Only a short time ago a sand mine was approved on koala habitat at Williamtown and there is a current application for a sand mine at Bobs Farm, which would have similar negative impacts on the local koala population. The destruction of this koala habitat by these small projects is important, but the scale of habitat destruction in other parts of the State is the result of perhaps the worst piece of legislation to be forced through the previous Parliament. Land clearing across regional New South Wales has risen dramatically in the months since this Government's biodiversity laws were passed. Landowners have been given the green light by this Government to clear enormous amounts of native bushland and precious habitat, erode soil quality, increase erosion, increase dust and reduce access to shade. The cumulative impact of this land clearing will never be seen by the city-centric members opposite but in regional areas this environmental damage may be irreversible. *[Extension of time]*

The next agenda item focuses on putting the customer at the centre of everything the Government does. That should be rewritten as: We will put the private data of our citizens at the centre of every smear campaign this Government does. It may shock those on the other side that this Government has citizens, not customers. The Government does not come with a warranty and, unfortunately, its citizens cannot get a refund for shonky goods. The corporatisation of government services is not delivering results for those who need them the most. Women escaping domestic violence do not worry about the benefit-cost ratio of the refuge they are in.

But they do care that this Government turfed out locally run management committees and replaced them with large providers with no local connections. They care that it combined domestic violence refugees with general homelessness programs. They care that most of the time all the refuges are full and come with long waiting lists. Families care that reintroduced tolls will increase above inflation over the next 40 years so that private financiers can make an even larger profit. Older residents care that more government services are now only available online, which leaves them locked out from applying for services.

The Minister for Customer Service should spend some time reflecting on how he will protect the citizen personal data that is being merged into a super agency, rather than championing slogans that are better placed at an overpriced corporate retreat than in a House of Parliament. This corporate attitude will no doubt impact the Government's ability to deliver on its final agenda item—breaking the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage.

Fair-minded people can disagree on strategies to reduce intergenerational disadvantage, but no fair-minded person can look at the record of the past eight years and think it is going in the right direction.

According to child protection data, between January 2018 and December 2018, 98,766 children in New South Wales were deemed as being at risk of significant harm—an increase of almost 3,000 from the previous year. Of those almost 100,000 children at risk of significant harm, only 28 per cent received a face-to-face assessment. That means that although Government was notified of concerns for the safety of around 70,000 children, none of those children received a face-to-face assessment. The lack of follow-up was particularly concerning in regional New South Wales. This includes areas like the Hunter, where only 20 per cent of reported cases were assessed face-to-face.

The rate was only 19 per cent in Murrumbidgee, 24 per cent in western New South Wales, 17 per cent on the Central Coast and 24 per cent in the Far West. This compares to a follow-up rate of 38 per cent in south-western Sydney, 33 per cent in south-eastern Sydney and 33 per cent in the Sydney jurisdiction. If we cannot protect children who are reported as being at risk of significant harm then we will not be able to address the social consequences that arise from a childhood of harm. This Government has presided over a woeful record in the child protection system, having refused to implement the recommendations of David Tune's report into out-of-home care or the recommendations of the 2017 parliamentary inquiry into child protection.

Business interrupted.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

Ms ANNA WATSON: On behalf of Mr Ryan Park: In accordance with Standing Order 101 I postpone general business notice of motion (for bills) No. 1 [Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill].

Bills

FAIR TRADING AMENDMENT (CASH LOAN MACHINES) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from Thursday 9 May 2019.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (10:42): I lead for the Government in response to the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. The bill seeks to prohibit cash loan machines from operating in New South Wales. Unfortunately, cash loan machines are only a small part of a much wider problem in payday lending. This problem requires action at a national level. The member for Swansea, who moved this bill, is in the Chamber today. She and I have spoken about this issue and share the same views about the financial vulnerability of some members of our community and the way lenders take advantage of them.

The Opposition intends this bill to protect vulnerable members of our community from unscrupulous credit contracts. Unfortunately, this could not be further from reality. The member for Swansea and I have spoken about the broader issue with payday loans and why the Government opposes this bill. I thank the member for Swansea for having taken the time to discuss this issue briefly with me last night, and I look forward to having further discussions with her following today's debate. We need to advocate for change to the Commonwealth legislation which ultimately governs credit contracts; that is the most appropriate way to address this issue. I have already written to the Federal Treasurer this week, informing him that the position of the New South Wales Government is to see legislation brought forward to address issues in payday lending as a priority.

The most important thing to note about the bill is that it does not stop financially vulnerable people from accessing payday loans. People can still do it online in various ways. We want to see proper reform to small amount credit contracts, which often have ridiculously high interest rates, unreasonable repayment schedules and disproportionate penalties for people who struggle to meet their strict conditions. The bill does not fix these problems. The market for payday loans is dominated by credit providers who operate online or through bricks-and-mortar stores across Australia.

Cash loan machines are fairly new and, to be honest, they have drawn attention to loopholes in Commonwealth legislation. There is only one cash loan machine operator in New South Wales, with a total of nine machines. Interestingly, that New South Wales operator also offers online loans. It has openly stated that those are more popular than the cash machine loans. For this reason, the operator has publicly stated that it does not intend to increase the number of machines available. This means that prohibiting cash loan machines will have a limited impact or perhaps no impact on the offering of payday loans.

The New South Wales Government already prohibits or restricts these types of machines in locations associated with problem borrowing: at hotels, clubs, and within casino boundaries. If the Parliament were to pass this bill and ban these machines, it would raise greater concern and send a dangerous message to the community that we have somehow fixed the problem with payday lending. The truth is that we would not have fixed the problem. If we banned these machines, we would almost be saying to financially vulnerable people that payday loans are okay as long as people do not use cash loan machines. The truth is that these loans are not okay. They are still accessible in other forms.

The Government does not speak against this bill because of political ideology. I note that the member for Swansea has great intentions—as do Government members. We do not speak against this bill because we believe the Opposition has poor intentions. We have been clear about that. I know how passionate the member for Swansea is about protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities. I ask her to join with us. The Government speaks against this bill because we know that sometimes the best intentions result in unintended consequences. This issue must be dealt with by the Federal Government. If we are to achieve our shared desired result then I urge the Opposition to support the Government in a bipartisan approach to progress reforms to payday lending through the Commonwealth Parliament and protect vulnerable people.

The Government is deeply concerned by the harms which payday lending can cause in our community. It gives consumers access to loans which they may be unable to afford to repay, and its high charges and fees can trap consumers in a spiral of debt. It causes not only financial hardship, but also all the associated harmful social consequences, including housing insecurity, homelessness, family breakdown and adverse impacts on mental health. The New South Wales Government has a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable people and to educate people about responsible lending. For this reason, I am greatly concerned about the consequences of payday lending—as is the member for Swansea.

To be frank, some of the practices that are currently accepted in this credit lending space make me angry. People are being taken advantage of when they are at their most vulnerable. I am acutely aware of the impact that payday lending can have on communities. The core of the issue relates to responsible lending. Cash loan machines are only one aspect of that issue. Banning cash loan machines is like changing a phone's case because we do not like the apps installed on the phone. You can remove the cover but the apps are still there. To fix the problem you have to go to the cause, not the carrier.

That is why the Government is supporting changes at a national level to increase protections for consumers in small amount credit contracts. A national system is vital as it goes to the core of the issue and will also combat small amount credit contracts offered online and through bricks-and-mortar stores, which the bill does not target. These contracts are regulated by the Commonwealth through the National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009, which was enacted after New South Wales, along with other States and Territories, agreed to move to a national system of regulating consumer credit.

Providers of payday loans are already subject to the responsible lending provisions in the Commonwealth Act. In 2016 the Commonwealth conducted an independent review of small amount credit contracts, which identified many of the harms payday lending can cause and made recommendations for reforms to address them. Since then the Commonwealth has consulted on a bill to implement the recommendations of that review. The draft Commonwealth bill covers key aspects of payday lending, including affordability, suitability of lending, fee structure, warning statements, penalty enforcement, disclosure and unsolicited offers. I ask the Commonwealth Government, now that the election is over and the Government has been returned, to get on with fixing this problem that we want fixed to protect our communities. That is why I have written to the Federal Treasurer and have asked him to give the issue a high priority in the new Parliament. The inaction by the Federal Government on this issue has gone on for way too long and it is deplorable.

I will also raise the issue of payday lending, and cash loan machines in particular, with my Commonwealth, State and Territory colleagues at our next meeting at the Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs in August. I will take the views of the member for Swansea forward because she wants to protect those most vulnerable, as we all do across this Chamber. When vulnerable people need help most they are being ripped off by people who do not care for their welfare or for the state that they are in. In the interim, the New South Wales Government will continue to monitor the market and review the possibility of a freeze on expansion if there is any further rollout of cash loan machines. We must deal with legislation in the right way, so that it delivers outcomes for the communities we represent. It is what is expected of us as parliamentarians, as representatives of our communities first and foremost, and what has been entrusted to me as a Minister of the Government.

I will take a moment to talk about some of the broader issues that are important to this debate—issues not about the machines or even about the contracts or the laws, but about those people in our communities who are facing financial hardship: families, friends, colleagues or people we might see in the street on a daily basis.

When we return to our electorate offices they are the ones who, as a last resort, are seeking meetings with us to assist them; we see such people daily. For whatever reason, they are turning to unworkable lending arrangements because of a need for extra funds at short notice. Those times can be extremely stressful for individuals and families. I dread to think what it would feel like as a father of three children to walk into your house after a long day at work, only to find that the fridge has carked it, all the contents have gone to waste and you are staring at a bank balance that would be lucky to fill up the car with petrol for a week.

At a time like that, I can see how the proposition of fast finance could be extremely appealing to someone looking for a way to fix the problem quickly and how the instinct to provide immediate care to one's family would be front of mind. That is why New South Wales is trying to address the harms caused by payday lending through other means. There are other options available for those who are seeking financial support and assistance in dire times. We have a No Interest Loans Scheme, a community-managed micro-credit program, which provides no-fee, interest-free loans of up to \$1,500 to individuals and families on low incomes to purchase essential goods and services. This gives individuals and families an alternative to seeking expensive forms of credit from payday lenders when they face unexpected bills.

Also, Fair Trading operates a Financial Counselling Services Program, which funds not-for-profit organisations across the State to provide free-of-charge financial counselling by accredited counsellors, as well as a credit and debt hotline. This ensures that consumers in New South Wales can seek accurate and impartial advice about their financial situation and the consequences of entering into payday loans. We should look at educating those most vulnerable about the alternatives available to them to work their way out of financial stress instead of falling into a deep, dark spiral that could ultimately ruin them. We should educate them about responsible financial management and a way forward, not back.

We must impress the need for change on the Federal Government. We must not give a false message to the community that with this bill in this place we could have fixed the problem. The bill does not do that. The Government's position clearly sets out a meaningful change to the policy setting, which will achieve the outcome that I know the member for Swansea has in her heart for her communities. I know she has good intentions and for that reason I strongly encourage her to seriously consider talking to her team about supporting the Government's approach. We can get there. I say to my colleagues that the public put a lot of trust in us to make legislation that improves lives, not legislation that is only a bandaid solution. We must get to the core of the problem and I think we can do that together. The Government is committed to making legislation that improves lives, and this bill simply does not do that. I believe there is a better way to fix this issue and I encourage those opposite to work with us in a bipartisan way so that we can do it together and help those most vulnerable in our community. I know the member for Swansea wants to do it and, as the member for Tamworth, I want to do it. For those reasons, I oppose the bill.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (10:57): I make a contribution to debate on the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. At the outset I congratulate the member for Swansea, the shadow Minister, for this very sensible bill, which is very popular in the electorate of Wallsend. The community has reached out and said this is what they desperately need, particularly for people in the more working-class areas of Wallsend. I thank the Minister for his understanding and for the measured way in which he just spoke. I am pleased that he has written to the Federal Treasurer and suggested that the Treasurer get on with it. We look forward to the response.

Times are tough for many people in Wallsend. Our cost of living is rising, housing is getting more expensive and petrol and groceries are becoming ridiculously more expensive. When wages are flat it makes life very difficult. Unemployment, particularly in Wallsend, remains above the State average. People with no employment or precarious employment, and often with little in the way of savings, are vulnerable to any financial surprises. If your car breaks down or your washing machine stops working the little bit of money you have squirrelled away goes in a flash.

Instant cash loan machines are designed specifically to target people in that situation. They offer one-off cash investments with enormous interest rates. They are predatory and they trap people into cycles of debt. It can be hard, or almost impossible, to escape them. Full-time employed customers can access up to \$600, existing customers can access up to \$950 and people on Centrelink payments can apply for up to \$300. The fees for these loans are exorbitant: There is a 20 per cent establishment fee, a 4 per cent monthly fee and daily fees of \$6 for late payments up to a limit of 43 days.

We know that Newstart recipients barely survive on less than \$40 a day. If a desperate Newstart recipient takes out a \$300 loan there is an establishment fee of \$60. There is a \$12 fee each month and up to \$258 in added daily fees. This is on top of comparative interest rates between of 112 per cent and 407 per cent. For people barely making ends meet, those fees and the horrifically high interest rates can mean a lifelong debt sentence—almost a death sentence. This is made worse because these machines have no way to check the ability of users to pay back

the debts they incur. They are a dodgy way to sell a dodgy product. They are spreading under this Government, and that is scary. This is extreme corporate greed at the expense of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Some argue that instant cash machines serve a social good and people desperate for money should be able to access it, but they are telling falsehoods in order to protect their profit margins. Remember, unregulated lending and spending led to the global financial crisis. It is telling that these machines do not appear in the more well-off suburbs in the Wallsend electorate. They do not appear in New Lambton and they do not appear in Merewether and Newcastle, where houses are valued at \$2 million or \$3 million. I wonder why that is? Why do they target the working-class areas to place these payday machines?

Feedback from the Wallsend community has been overwhelmingly opposed to instant loan machines and in favour of the bill introduced by the member for Swansea. Sue from Maryland says, "Excellent. Easy money is never a good thing. Especially when the loans are called in and can't be paid. These entities aren't in it for anything but profit. And lots of it." Marie from Rankin Park says, "People, wake up and don't use them, as they are only trying to get people into trouble ..." They are already vulnerable. Michelline agrees, saying, "Don't want them. There are more than enough ways to get a loan that can get you into strife as it is!"

Responding to a *Newcastle Herald* cartoon depicting an instant loan cash machine as a shark waiting to swallow unsuspecting people, Margaret said, "The shark says it all! Great news!" Margaret is right. The operators of these machines call themselves "credit providers" but they are just loan sharks. This bill is an effort at harm minimisation. Just as government regulations keep ATMs away from gaming machines in clubs, this bill will keep these dangerous machines away from those to whom they will do the most damage. Despite what operators might say, instant cash loan machines do not offer a service to the community; they are a drain on the most vulnerable in our community. I support the bill and I urge members to make it law. I look forward to the meaningful changes mentioned by the Minister to payday loans.

The Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation said that the Government is trying to achieve something good. I look forward to hearing about it. I agree with the member for Swansea and the shadow Minister that banning the machines shows the most vulnerable that we care. The member for Swansea also said it demonstrates that we are fair dinkum about reforms. I agree with her. I urge all members to support the bill of the member for Swansea.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (11:04): I speak in opposition to the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. In doing so, I draw attention to the need for this House to ensure that it handles legislation in a way that is in line with the Australian Constitution. If any of those opposite troubled themselves to read the bill drafted by Parliamentary Counsel, they would see immediately that the new section 58O, which this bill proposes to insert into the Fair Trading Act, itself draws upon the National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009. That is a statute of the Commonwealth Parliament. The National Credit Code was created by schedule 1 to that Act.

That immediately raises a significant constitutional issue. Many members in this place would like to amend a number of policies and laws legislated by the Commonwealth Parliament. The desire for change has led State Parliaments across Australia to pass legislation that contradicts Commonwealth legislation. Nobody is doubting the sincerity of the member for Swansea in bringing forward the bill; it is admirable to take a stand on matters that are important to us. But we must respect the constitutional structure of our Federation. We must respect the Commonwealth Constitution and the way in which legislative change occurs within the great Commonwealth of Australia. The law and the Constitution do matter.

The approach of the member for Swansea through this bill, although well intentioned, is a little like a scene from the great Australian film *The Castle*—simply thinking that the "vibe" of the thing is great is not enough. You need to have legislative power to make changes to the law. If anybody who supports the bill had regard to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act section 51 (xiii), it would be abundantly clear to them that the power to make laws in this area is part of the legislative power of the Commonwealth Parliament. Any Labor members who are cognisant of political, legislative and constitutional history will know that was the power the Federal Labor Party tried to use to nationalise the Australian banking system. That case went all the way to the Privy Council, where it was successfully argued by future Federal Liberal Attorney-General Sir Garfield Barwick. The Privy Council overturned the proposed nationalisation of the Australian banking system.

The legislative power that this bill seeks to interfere with is clearly a legislative power of the Commonwealth. That is made clear on the face of the bill. The bill refers to Commonwealth legislation that it seeks to interfere with. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for observing appropriate constitutional process. He informed the House that he has written to the Federal Minister with responsibility for this area, asking him to be cognisant of this issue. I respectfully suggest to this House that this is the entirely appropriate constitutional way to deal with the issue that has been raised by the member for Swansea. Rather than

take up the time of this Parliament debating an unlawful, unconstitutional bill, the member for Swansea could have simply written to the State Minister to draw his attention to the issue and then Minister Anderson could have written to the responsible Federal Minister and appropriate processes would have been put in place.

The Government understands the need to protect those who are most financially vulnerable. However, the greatest concern this bill raises is that the substance of the bill does not deal with the entirety of the issue at hand. The risk the bill poses is that it will divert the conversation from the broader issue and simply confine it to a small part of the broader issue, which is the machines that are issuing this kind of credit. There are only nine of these machines in New South Wales. If we remove those nine machines, we certainly would not remove access to the contracts and thus address the important issue of a business model designed to take advantage of vulnerable people, which is the much bigger and much more important issue at hand. If we remove those nine machines, we would still have the high interest rates—indeed, usury rates—the often unreasonable payment terms and the disproportionate penalties.

Removing the machines would have only a minimal impact upon the problem. Merely removing the machines does not provide adequate protection for consumers, which is the very matter that Minister Anderson has written to his Federal counterpart about. Many of us may be fortunate never to have been in a situation of being down to our last dollar, needing to raise funds for an unexpected emergency that has arisen and therefore being vulnerable to a desire to avail ourselves of this kind of very aggressive lending. A number of things can give rise to people having to avail themselves of such loans: It could be a broken appliance, car repairs, home repairs or an unexpected travel bill, perhaps to attend the funeral of a loved one. It is at those times that financially vulnerable people may look for extra financial assistance, fall prey to these merchants of usury credit and find themselves vulnerable to entering into improvident lending agreements.

I raise this matter because access to finance is becoming a more important issue. Since the global financial crisis, lending processes have certainly tightened and, as a consequence of the royal commission into the financial services sector, credit from top-tier lenders is possibly more constrained than it has ever been. It is an important issue and we on this side of the House do not gainsay that it is an important issue. However, there is a proper way to deal with this issue, and the bill before the House is not the right way to go about it. We, as parliamentarians, are custodians of the legislation of this State. It is imperative that we do not undertake hollow gesturing exercises in this place when there is no constitutional power to achieve the objective, no matter how well-meaning the exercise may be.

The simple question that each member should ask themselves when voting on this bill is: Will I truly help the problem if I pass a bill, which under section 109 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act will be inconsistent with a piece of national legislation and therefore invalid? The bill's invalidity will be very clear. So let us not turn this Parliament into some hollow gestures exercise. Let us recognise the constitutional structure of our great Commonwealth of Australia and let us recognise that this issue falls fairly and squarely within the legislative power of the Commonwealth of Australia. We should support the Minister's actions in that regard.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I remind members to be on their best behaviour. Those who are not will be removed from the Chamber for 30 minutes under Standing Order 249. I remind members to switch their mobile phones to silent or to turn them off when they are in the Chamber. If another mobile phone goes off in the Chamber, the member responsible will be removed for 30 minutes under Standing Order 249.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (11:15): I open my contribution to debate on the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019 by stating that I appreciate the contributions of the member for Ku-ring-gai and the Minister. However, I had a look through the list of where these machines are located and I did not see one in Ku-ring-gai or in Tamworth. However, I did see that there is one in Berkeley, I did see one in Cessnock, I did see one in Raymond Terrace and I did see one in Lake Macquarie. There is a reason for choosing to place these machines in specific locations. Indeed, the company accepts that there is a reason for their location. When this matter was raised last year it told the *Illawarra Mercury* that the locations were part of a trial "to test the viability of the business model".

What is the business model? The business model is ripping people off. Let us make no bones about it. The Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation and the member for Ku-ring-gai touched on it when they expressed great sympathy and understanding for people affected by the process. However, I am not aware that their electorate offices have been visited by someone who has been caught in a debt trap by these machines. The member for Ku-ring-gai went to great lengths to argue his position by quoting from *The Castle* and talking about the Constitution, the vibe—everything. However, he did not produce any legal advice to block the passage of this bill. Labor does not want to prohibit the installation of cash loan machines; it wants these machines gone.

My community wants them gone. The next time the mother of someone affected by these machines comes into my office or approaches me outside Berkeley shops—where a machine is located in a tobacconist

immediately next door to a pub and just down the road from a large club—to talk about the trouble her son or daughter has got into, I will say, "Don't worry, the member for Ku-ring-gai suggested we observe appropriate constitutional process". She will reply, "Thank goodness because that will fix the problem". That will not stop the debt trap these people have got themselves into.

We are not saying the Federal Government has no role to play in this matter—it certainly does. The Federal Government has known for three years that it has a role to play, while the legislation went nowhere. The Federal legislation gathered more dust than is gathered by half the legislation and private members' bills in this place. Reform starts with some sort of action. As a State Government, we have a responsibility to take some sort of action. If that action means this bill will be challenged in the High Court on a question of constitutionality, that is good. At least then the issue that underlies this bill will be exposed. The Federal Government will be exposed for its laziness when it comes to this issue. But the Minister said that he has written a letter. That is good. I look forward to seeing the response in due course—no, I will not hold my breath.

I will share some information about the community where one of these machines is located, the Berkeley community. Let us look at the demographics and socio-economics of Berkeley, Lake Heights and Cringila. One-third of workers are part time. Household incomes average \$1,049 per week. To put that in context, according to the 2016 census, the New South Wales average household income is \$1,486. Nearly one-third of residents—just over 28 per cent—have a weekly household income of less than \$650, compared with less than 20 per cent of people across New South Wales. That is the sort of demographic I am talking about. I am talking about people who generally do not have the bank balance that allows them to deal with short-term hits such as the car breaking down, the fridge conking out or a medical emergency. They simply do not have the money available. What they do have available is a big, orange machine at the local tobacconist. They can punch in a few details and get themselves into debt very quickly.

Let us go through what happens. People go to the Berkeley tobacconist, plug their details into the machine and get \$600. That is the most basic debt. People can be on a weekly income of as little as \$620 per week and borrow \$600. Bear that in mind. The fee on that debt is \$144—almost one-quarter of the total amount borrowed. People need some money to buy a fridge, to fix the car or to manage other cashflow issues and they automatically incur a debt of \$744 straightaway. That debt must be repaid at a rate of around \$200 a week. So a person earning as little as \$620 per week can be hit with repayments of \$200 a week. If they fail to repay the loan, the lender is legally allowed to charge as much in fees as the original amount borrowed. So a borrower on an income of \$620 per week can end up with a \$1,200 debt on a \$600 loan. Do the maths: It does not work out.

This issue was the subject of a great deal of criticism when it was raised in the Illawarra some time ago. A great reporter from the ABC, Gavin Coote, reported that shop attendants at one tobacco store where a machine was located told him that the machines had proven popular, but they noted a large proportion of users were from low-income backgrounds. When people were interviewed at Berkeley shops by WIN Television and 9News Illawarra, they said that lenders get cash from the machine often to buy cigarettes. I do not criticise them for that but it shows the types of people who are being targeted. Another factor is that people from as far as away as Campbelltown travel to the Illawarra simply to access these machines. That is a problem. I accept that people can jump on the internet and do the same transaction but it is important that State governments take action. We also have a responsibility.

I welcome a group of student leaders in the public gallery, some of whom are from Illawarra Sports High School in Berkeley and will be familiar with this issue. Members of Parliament have been speaking to them today about leadership and explaining how State governments act and how members take care of our communities. They will hear next a contribution from a Government member—if the Government has another speaker on the bill—who will say, "This one is a bit too hard; it is all the Commonwealth's responsibility and we can't do anything." But we can do something: We can support this bill and remove these machines that do nothing more than take advantage of people from highly vulnerable communities.

Muhammad Yunus, the Bangladeshi banker and economist who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, developed microfinance to alleviate poverty, not to get people into debt traps. The bill is pretty simple, and the Opposition supports the same principle. We believe these nine machines—there are not hundreds of them—should be removed and no more allowed to be installed in New South Wales because that is the right thing to do. We are sick and tired of hearing from constituents who have got themselves into financial trouble that they cannot get out of. The Opposition is showing leadership—which the students in the gallery expect to see from us as legislators—because our Federal counterparts will not.

In 2015 the Federal Government conducted a review of small account credit contracts that recommended changes to these sorts of loans. Legislation was sitting on the table right up until the Parliament prorogued for the recent election. A royal commission has been held into the banking and financial services industry. The bill is not the only part of the solution but it shows the kind of leadership that people expect to see from this Parliament.

Delaying action until the Federal Government does something is not the only answer available to us. It is time for us to take action and to show leadership. It is time for us to step up and help communities such as Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and other places where these machines are located. That is what those communities expect of us. I am certain that staff of the Illawarra Legal Centre, which each year sees thousands of people from my communities who are in debt and in trouble, also expect us to get rid of these machines. It is time for the Government to act. Members opposite should support the bill.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery school leaders from high schools across New South Wales who are attending the Secondary Schools Leadership Program conducted by the Parliamentary Education Unit.

Mr Ray Williams: Many from the great electorate of Castle Hill.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I am advised that many are from the great electorate of Castle Hill.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (11:25): It may come as no surprise that I support the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019 and the member for Swansea, and shadow Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, in her pursuit of justice for the most vulnerable people in New South Wales who are being enticed further into a debt trap that the State Government can alleviate. The Government, and the member for Ku-ring-gai in particular, have shown that they understand the risks to vulnerable people in our communities but they choose not to pursue this matter with the vigour that people are pleading for. This is a vile industry that has established itself in New South Wales and, indeed, across Australia.

We have only to look across the Pacific Ocean to the United States of America to see this problem at its absolute worse. Payday lenders—whether bricks-and-mortar or online lenders or vending machines—always target the most depressed and vulnerable communities in that country. Exactly the same model is being rolled out in New South Wales and across the country. I listened to the contribution of the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation and it is clear that he understands the situation. I was pleased to hear that the Minister is passionate about taking up this matter. But that does not negate the good intentions of the member for Swansea and her attempt to legislate in the New South Wales Parliament to address the problems within our communities.

We know that payday lending involves not only vending machines but also online payday loans and bricks-and-mortar establishments. It is not dissimilar to the loan sharking we saw many years ago. Perhaps today people do not have their knees broken or suffer assaults by lenders trying to extract payment and take vengeance, but the financial implications and pain remain for the individuals affected and their families. We must address this issue. These machines are not a financial leg-up for people in financial distress. They are not intended to be a leg-up; they are the exact opposite. They trap people in poverty and impact entire communities.

All of the nine instant payday loan machines currently operating in this State are located in lower socio-economic areas, predominantly in the Hunter and on the Central Coast and the South Coast. They are clearly targeting the demographic that they see as susceptible due to relatively low incomes and no doubt lower financial literacy. I appreciate the contribution of the member for Ku-ring-gai but, as the member for Wollongong pointed out, it is very unlikely that he will be seeing in his office people who have been caught by this particular trap.

There are alternatives. Unfortunately, many of these people are not financially literate to the level that we would hope they would be. The Australian Securities and Investments Commission's MoneySmart website provides a number of alternatives and advice for people who are caught in financial circumstances where they might need short-term money loans. As has been suggested, there is a whole range of reasons why people may be there. It may be due to health concerns in the family, a sick child or a sick wife or a sick husband. It might be that somebody has been laid off and just cannot cover their bills. It might be that they need to put new tyres on the car to be legal, to register it, or even to drive on the street to look for a job. It may well be that they have some legal situation. It could be that people end up in a fine trap.

I am very pleased to hear that the Minister has gone to his Federal counterpart to address this broadscale issue that he has rightly identified. But I suggest that with the dispersion of cash machines across New South Wales this industry has crossed a line, and I thank the member for Swansea for bringing this to our attention. It is well and good to talk about the Constitution and the Federal jurisdiction. The fact of the matter is that this issue warrants discussion in this Chamber because it is affecting people in our communities. If we can raise it here and more members of Parliament and more members of the public—particularly members of the media—know that we are onto it, we will suss out this vile industry and that is a good thing. I wish that the bill could be passed here today but this is an Opposition bill and, regardless of its merit, that is not likely to happen. I recognise that the Minister has identified that this is a genuine issue and it is going to be pursued at a higher level. We have a local and national responsibility to do whatever we can to look after our local communities.

Once again I thank the member for Swansea for bringing this to our attention. I thank and acknowledge the Minister for what is clearly his recognition of the problem. I call on him to make sure that this issue is not forgotten and that it does not just drop off the edge, which happens so often. I was talking to the member for Wollongong about another issue in the same space. In 2011, under this Government, we started talking about the rollout of sports betting around New South Wales and Australia and we tried to take that on. There were some slight improvements and, all of a sudden, it fell off the radar. That industry has become ubiquitous. It has won. I do not know that it could ever be rolled back. I do not want to see the same situation happen with cash loan machines. We must ensure that we address this issue because this particular industry is targeting the most vulnerable people in our community.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (11:33): It is an honour to be here with the students who are visiting us from across New South Wales to listen carefully to debate on the bill. It is interesting to think about their socio-economic backgrounds, whether they have one of these cash machine payday loan facilities in their community and the socio-economic implications of targeting vulnerable people. Listen carefully. Legislation in this place definitely looks at protecting members of New South Wales. I commend the shadow Minister for Better Regulation, the member for Swansea, for bringing this bill to the House. As we heard from members on this side of the House, this issue is important to people living in low socio-economic communities.

I commend the member for Swansea for deploring the inaction of the Federal Government in protecting the most vulnerable people. It has had three years to act and nothing has been done, which is why we need to bring it to this place. While it is said to be unconstitutional, let us take some action because people in my community are being absolutely ripped off. These people do not care for the welfare or wellbeing of people who are preyed on by loan sharks. Somewhere in a Sydney office, or possibly overseas, the people living in my electorate are being preyed on. Decisions are being made to install a cash loan machine in Woy Woy—the best electorate in New South Wales—which will not make the community better. It is not a community service. The only reason for it is to make money.

They looked at the demographics of the area and saw vulnerable people—just as they have in Wyong, Swansea, Lake Macquarie and Wollongong. I listened to the member for Ku-ring-gai, but there is not a loan machine in his community or in the communities of members on the other side who are saying no to this legislation. Successive State and Federal Liberal governments have let down people by stripping them of support and jobs and now they are desperate to make ends meet. It is appalling that they saw a chance to make a profit from their vulnerability. We know that in-need communities are being targeted with cash loan machines. It is community members who are hit with an unexpected illness, a parking fine or who are in need of replacing an appliance who turn to these options to get by.

When a highway patrolman hit hundreds of families in my community with a fine of over \$260 for parking on the grass verge at the front of their homes, they went into meltdown. That gave me an indication of how close to the bone they are living. The bill is about communities like mine who are facing serious financial hardship. They are young families with not one cent of spare cash. They are desperate people who have lost an important part of their income as a result of harsh cuts to penalty rates. They are families that have seen their electricity bills more than double as the Liberal Government has privatised electricity across this State and, unregulated, it is out of control. They are families who are now supporting their children to attend TAFE, which used to be free in New South Wales. Families are now paying \$3,000 a year to send their kids to TAFE. In my community, where we have seen classes in TAFE shut down, families are spending their very tight incomes on sending their kids to Newcastle and Sydney by train to get an education because this Government is squeezing TAFE. A whole bunch of courses have shut down in Gosford and Newcastle and kids have to travel by train.

People in my community can no longer visit their families in hospital because the hospital parking fee has gone from \$1.70 an hour to \$6.70 an hour. Those rising costs make a difference to my community. Petrol costs are also increasing. My community boycotts petrol in our local community because the prices are so high. As housing costs increase, families—not just individuals—pay more than \$300 a week to live in garages that we call granny flats. Governments should ensure that communities are not taken advantage of by snake oil salesmen who offer easy money to people who are in the least able position to repay it quickly. As the member for Wollongong said, they are then hit with massive interest payments that are double the cost of the loan and they are usually on an income that is equivalent to the whole loan.

Payday lenders prey on consumers in poor financial circumstances by offering small amount credit contracts that trap low-income earners in a cycle of debt. Payday lenders can have comparison interest rates between 112 per cent and 407 per cent. Whilst Federal Labor has acted on this, it is no surprise that the Liberal Government has not. For three years the Federal Government has not taken action, but let us hope that the new Federal Government does. Recently instant cash loan machines with loans from \$50 to \$1,000 have appeared in low socio-economic communities, targeting low-income earners. The limits increase even when users access the

machines multiple times. The machines can look just like ATMs and require little more identification to operate than a bank card. Users receive an instant cash loan and repayments are direct-debited from the user's bank account. The loans have a 20 per cent establishment fee, a 4 per cent monthly fee and daily fees of \$6 for late payments.

First-time employed customers can access up to \$600, Centrelink beneficiaries can access \$300 and existing customers can access up to \$950. The payday lenders use sophisticated software to detect when users receive payments—for example, from Centrelink—and time the direct debits in line with those payments. That should be criminal. I commend the work of my colleague the member for Swansea for bringing the bill to the House. The member for Tamworth implies that the ruthless operators do not intend to expand. Do members believe this? Do members believe other operators will not appear? There is money to be made. It is those issues that differentiate the Labor Party from the Liberal Party. Labor will always fight for our communities over the interests of big business making a profit at the expense of us all.

There is no such thing as free money or cheap money and governments must act to stop the scams from entrapping more people in debt as they may never be able to escape from it. If the New South Wales Government really believes in protecting our vulnerable people, it needs to check who of its Federal counterparts has an interest in payday loans and take action to protect the people of our great State. Whilst we wait for the Federal leadership, this Government has an urgent responsibility to protect all people who can least afford the interest rates. I reinforce the words of the member for Wollongong that they are not in electorates of the shadow Minister for Better Regulation or those on the other side.

The member for Swansea is requesting that all people in New South Wales be protected. While we await for appropriate constitutional process, referred to by the member for Ku-ring-gai, we should remember that we have already waited three years but the Federal Government has done nothing. On behalf of my community, I sincerely thank the member for Swansea for bringing the bill before the House and for truly representing the people in my community and across New South Wales who are suffering as the cost of living rises. They cannot afford to be further exploited by the ruthless process.

Debate interrupted.

Motions

VIVID SYDNEY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (11:42:2): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges that Vivid Sydney is the largest festival of light, music, and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere.
- (2) Notes that 2.25 million people are expected to attend this year's event generating over \$172 million in visitor expenditure for the New South Wales economy.
- (3) Encourages people from across New South Wales to go to Vivid and help support this year's charity partner, the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Members would be aware that last week marked the return of Vivid Sydney to our magnificent harbour city, commencing a 23-day celebration of arts, commerce and technology until 15 June 2019. Vivid Sydney will again shine a light on Sydney as Australia's hub for culture and innovation. Members on this side of the House are aware of the value of creative industries in New South Wales and the jobs that the sector generates. The State's thriving arts, culture and creative sector is the largest in Australia and over the next decade it is expected to be a key driver of the State's economic growth, exports and innovation.

As Vivid Sydney is the largest festival of light, music and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere, we have made it a significant event in the New South Wales events calendar. It is important that all members recognise the contribution of the event to the State's visitor economy and creative industries each year. It is a unique annual event featuring an outdoor gallery of extraordinary lighting installations, a cutting-edge contemporary music program, some of the world's most important creative industry forums and, of course, the spectacular illumination of the Sydney Opera House sails. The multi-award-winning winter festival makes Sydney the envy of the world. It puts a global focus on our harbour city while providing a significant injection to the State's visitor economy.

Last year alone 2.25 million people attended Vivid Sydney, delivering almost \$173 million in visitor spending to the economy. That included more than 284,000 overnight visitors from interstate and overseas, including, for example, 26,600 visitors from China alone. As we know, this is a key market for tourism for the State. The Vivid Sydney festival has something to offer for everyone, from a program of multi-genre music, stimulating ideas from global thinkers and creators, and dazzling light art across the city. Tourism dollars are pouring into our city's businesses as well as in regional New South Wales.

Last year 33,000 of our Vivid visitors extended their stay in New South Wales and spent an additional \$13 million. In my community and electorate, Vivid's Lights for the Wild at Taronga Zoo shines a light on the wonders of wildlife and endangered animals through an awe-inspiring display of giant animal sculptures that can be seen from Wednesday to Sunday evenings during Vivid and on the Queen's Birthday, a public holiday, on 10 June. Last week I was again grateful to join with Vivid in launching Lights for the Wild this year. We welcomed the Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean, and were joined by the CEO of Taronga Cameron Kerr and chairman of the board Steve Crane.

This year four new installations draw attention to endangered species and conservation efforts to build a better environmental future. The new animal lanterns include a pride of lions and an iconic Australian koala and laser gardens, in addition to celebrating our three beautiful new Sumatran tiger cubs. They can also be seen at the zoo and the installation includes the playful lanterns rolling around in their image. When guests enter the heritage archway of Taronga, they are greeted by a massive multimedia light projection that showcases Taronga's 10 legacy species, about whom I have spoken before. They are fragile species across Australia and Sumatra that Taronga has committed to protect. One of them is the corroboree frog. The first step into the Vivid experience at Taronga Zoo is an installation about the Australian bush, where we are greeted by the iconic symbol of Taronga, the platypus, along with the corroboree frog and other Australian species.

Members may be aware that Taronga has been instrumental in reintroducing native species to the wild. Taronga has reintroduced about 50,000 animals, including the corroboree frog, into the wild. In addition to the Aussie bush, the illuminated trail also features some fragile habitats such as the Blue Wild, Sumatran Wild and African Wild. The Taronga Institute of Science and Learning, which the Duke and Duchess of Sussex opened last year—I know many of my colleagues were jealous that I was there and they were not—becomes home to magnificent Australian native animals such as the Tasmanian devil, the regent honeyeater and the echidna. They take up residence in the forecourt.

A cast of colourful Australian animals brought to life can be found along the Aussie bush path, including a funnel-web spider, giant redback spiders, cicadas, a bilby, the epic goanna and a saltwater crocodile. In the Blue Wild, guests will meet the stunning male weedy sea dragon with his clutch of eggs. But the heroes of the Sumatran Wild path are those three playful tiger cubs. The path celebrates the birth of Mawar, Tengah Malam and Pemanah. Their watchful mother, Kartika, is found further along. The new lions take their pride of place at the beginning of the African Wild before guests are treated to Taronga Zoo Sydney's breathtaking iconic views of the Sydney Harbour foreshore, which is particularly illuminated as it sparkles and shines with the lights of Vivid Sydney.

The installations bring the importance of preserving and protecting the threatened species into the minds of visitors. They focus on human connections to the wild and highlight that it is not a destination far away from where we are; the wild actually starts in our backyards. I note that when turning a corner there I was confronted with the bush turkey or brush turkey, which people on the North Shore know roams wild along our streets and disturbs our gardens, but is one of our important local native species. I was very grateful to Taronga for including an installation of the brush turkey as well.

To make a real impact on our attitudes as individuals towards wildlife, Taronga invites guests to step into a world of scientific discovery and make a pledge to wildlife conservation and be a light for the wild. All ticket proceeds directly support Taronga's work in conservation and wildlife care. Vivid Sydney at Taronga Zoo gives families and big kids a moment in time to consider how we can all become champions of the wild through simple choices such as choosing sustainable palm oil or reducing our waste footprint. Members are aware of, and supportive of, Vivid Sydney's status as a significant event for our great city and its huge economic numbers. I hope members will join me today in acknowledging the economic and social contribution of Vivid Sydney to this great city and great State. I also see the great benefit of Taronga Zoo using this opportunity not only to create something special for our community and the Sydneysiders throughout winter but also to once more shine a light on the conservation efforts that we can all be a part of.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I have noticed that all the students in the gallery are paying attention. You are wonderful ambassadors for your schools. Congratulations.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (11:49): I too reiterate the sentiments of Madam Temporary Speaker and on behalf of all members in this Chamber I thank our student leaders for their participation in listening to this motion about Vivid Sydney. I thank also the member for North Shore for her motion but let us record correctly that we should thank the 2009 Labor Government and the former Minister for Tourism, who is sitting behind me, for bringing forward this idea of lights, music and creativity. Of course we are going to celebrate Vivid because Sydney becomes a beautiful winter wonderland. How good is it to walk around various parts of the city with loved ones, family and friends and enjoy great lights and good food from our hospitality industry? We would probably otherwise be at home on a cold May or June evening not doing much. Vivid attracts about 2.5 million visitors to our city and it is great for the State's coffers so let us support it wholeheartedly.

As the member for North Shore has indicated, this year the support will go to the charity partner of the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia, which performs an amazing service in attending to those in rural and remote areas throughout the State. Vivid started in 2009 as Smart Light Sydney—a festival to promote energy efficiency, lighting up the Opera House—which laid the groundwork for this particular annual event. Many places throughout Sydney are now being lit up and showcased to the world. One of the great things about modern technology is social media. We encourage all people to use Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter to promote our city. We are proud that we can showcase our wonderful monuments—whether it be Circular Quay, the City Recital Hall, the Royal Botanic Gardens or the Sydney Opera House—that say we are Sydney, we are unique and we are celebrating who we are through this wonderful festival.

Vivid is a major contributor to our economy. Everyone gets very excited about Vivid. I can tell the House that over the past few years the feedback I have received from friends and loved ones living overseas is very warming; they would like to be here for this festival of ideas and lights. Vivid captures the minds, hearts and imaginations of the people who attend. One only needs to look at the hundreds of thousands of social media posts that indicate everyone is having a good time at Vivid. I put on record a special thanks to the Vivid creative team. Each year when Vivid finishes the team gets together for a debrief on what happened over those 23 days and to organise the next one. Preparing for Vivid the following year is pretty much a full-on yearly event.

Massive crowds come to enjoy the wonderful delights of light and sound but it does not happen that easily. Vivid happens swiftly and with ease because of our emergency service workers and the teams of volunteers. On behalf of all members I thank our emergency service workers and volunteers because without them we would not be safe at Vivid. I spoke earlier about the hospitality industry and its delivery of fantastic foods. Vivid is now a global event that attracts many visitors. How good it is that we can enjoy foods from around the world in the heart of our city? Vivid Sydney is not only held in the city but also goes a little further afield to places such as Chatswood, Parramatta and Taronga Zoo. That is a good thing. I urge the residents of western Sydney to do themselves a favour and jump on a ferry at Parramatta—

Dr Geoff Lee: Hear, hear!

Mr GUY ZANGARI: As the member for Fairfield I suggest that people should leave their cars at home and catch some mode of public transport to Vivid. Those of us who in the past have tried to come by car have realised that public transport is the best option. I note the excitement of the member for Parramatta because I have promoted Parramatta in my contribution. I repeat, people should jump on the ferry at Parramatta, Meadow Bank or Cabarita and travel to Darling Harbour or Circular Quay to enjoy the Vivid experience with their family and friends. Fairfield is a nice place. One never knows, perhaps we might have Vivid Fairfield? It would be lovely.

Dr Geoff Lee: What sort of food would you have?

Mr GUY ZANGARI: The food is already catered for in our area. All they have to do is bring the lights and we will have a party in the western suburbs. I again thank the member for North Shore for her motion. Those on this side of the House realise the importance of Vivid Sydney not only to our cultural heritage but also to our night-time economy. We wish all those who are contributing at Vivid all the very best for another successful festival and we look forward to many to come. Finally, this motion acknowledges the great work of the former Labor Government for bringing this wonderful idea to the people of New South Wales.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (11:56): I thank the member for North Shore for her motion. Vivid Sydney celebrates creativity, innovation and the cutting-edge application of technology. Vivid Sydney has grown to be the largest festival of light, music and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere, and it is accompanied by the vision to become a leader in the delivery of sustainable events of an international scale. People rightly ask about the use of energy to power all the light displays at Vivid—

Dr Geoff Lee: It is a lot of electricity.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: The member for Parramatta will be delighted to know that all grid-connected lighting installations are powered entirely by GreenPower Accredited Renewable Energy, sourced from regional New South Wales, and complement Vivid Sydney's sustainability initiatives. The use of efficient LED technologies means that the lights in installations draw about one-tenth of the power of a regular light globe. Improving the sustainability of Vivid Sydney is a key focus. Destination NSW has been working with partners to provide expertise in identifying additional ways to reduce the event's carbon footprint and this work supports the corporate social responsibility objectives of developing a sustainable event. At the core of the Vivid Sydney sustainability program is identifying areas in which potential negative impacts can be continually minimised, whilst also maximising existing positive outcomes of the event for all stakeholders. This is achieved through the ongoing close collaboration between Destination NSW and its sustainability partners, the Banksia Foundation and Informed 365.

Echoing Vivid Sydney's theme of innovation, Informed 365 has developed a digital platform that supports the vision to become a leader in the delivery of sustainable events on an international scale. The interactive information technology platform developed by Informed 365 tracks, measures and converts identified metrics to produce key data, including monitoring waste management, energy use and social inclusion. As Vivid Sydney's official energy partner, TransGrid—and I acknowledge Chief Executive Officer Paul Italiano—has provided a detailed breakdown of energy use during Vivid Sydney to enable the development of ongoing strategies to reduce costs and effectively manage the event's carbon footprint. TransGrid hosted an informative dinner recently where Vivid light curator Lucy Keeler and TransGrid CEO Paul Italiano explained how this all came together. I thank them for their wonderful contribution to Vivid Sydney.

All of these measures are delivering strong results for Vivid Sydney. In 2018 close collaboration between Destination NSW, the Banksia Foundation and Informed 365 enabled more than 83,000 kilowatt hours of energy to be offset through the purchase of large generation certificates, also known as green power, from certified New South Wales generators. In addition, more than 267 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent have been offset through the purchase of accredited carbon offset credits in regional New South Wales projects. This improves the sustainability of Vivid Sydney.

Improving the accessibility of Vivid Sydney is also a key focus for growing the event. The Vivid Music and Vivid Ideas event programs also offer many options for people with disability. Many venues are wheelchair friendly and have accessible ticket options and the Vivid Ideas GameChanger events have Auslan interpreters. Destination NSW has an access and inclusion coordinator who can take phone calls to discuss visitors' specific needs. The New South Wales Government is committed to delivering Vivid Sydney as an event that strives to be as sustainable and accessible as possible to all visitors.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (12:00): Growing an event to become the largest festival of light, music and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere does not happen by chance. Vivid Sydney is undeniably the best example of team New South Wales working together to deliver an event that is accessible for all, exciting, safe and sustainable. People from my electorate of East Hills love to come into the city and see all the beautiful sights that Vivid has to offer. Vivid Sydney is owned, managed and produced for the New South Wales Government by Destination NSW, which works collaboratively across Government to ensure the successful delivery of an event of this scale. Vivid Sydney 2019 will run for 23 nights across multiple precincts including The Rocks, the Sydney Opera House, Darling Harbour, Luna Park and Chatswood. The event has grown to monumental proportions over the past 10 years. In 2018 Vivid Sydney attracted 2.25 million visitors—10 times more than a decade ago. Those visitors spent a total of \$173 million—up from \$2.6 million in 2009.

Our sponsor, American Express, ensures volunteers are on the ground every night staffing the information kiosks, helping visitors to interact with the light installations and providing essential services like helping to reunite lost children with their parents or guardians. Interest in volunteering grows every year. This year around 400 volunteers are pitching in and looking fabulous in their pink jackets. Vivid Sydney has increased its international appeal to corporate sponsors, especially multinationals. In 2019 Samsung, American Express, TransGrid and Pixar have extended their support to Vivid Sydney.

Our access and inclusion partner, Cushman and Wakefield, also plays a vital role in helping all visitors to enjoy Vivid Sydney. The City of Sydney also provides a strong level of support to the delivery of Vivid Sydney, as do North Sydney and Willoughby councils. I draw members' attention to the breadth of support provided by New South Wales Government agencies to Destination NSW, and thank them for their contribution. These include the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Port Authority of New South Wales, the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, the Sydney Opera House and the Taronga Conservation Society Australia.

Of primary importance is the support provided by New South Wales police and Transport for NSW to ensure safe transit getting to and from the event. I also acknowledge Vivid Sydney's beneficiary charity partner this year, the Royal Flying Doctor Service South Eastern Section [SES]. I am delighted that the Royal Flying Doctor Service SES has the opportunity during Vivid Sydney to spread awareness of and raise funds in support of its work in regional New South Wales. Just like Vivid Sydney, the Royal Flying Doctor Service SES reaches hundreds of thousands of people each year. This is made possible through public support.

I was thrilled to attend a fundraiser for the Royal Flying Doctor Service at Club Mount Lewis earlier in May, by invitation from East Hills constituent Anthony Ayoub. My electorate of East Hills is fortunate to have a Royal Flying Doctor base at Bankstown Airport, which began operations in 1994. The Bankstown base plays a large role in the great work that the flying doctors do, as it is the home of the Rural Aerial Health Service [RAHS]. The majority of the RAHS's flights are made from Bankstown Airport. Its fleet of 21 aircraft has enabled 4,804 GP clinics to be delivered to remote communities. This includes more than 35,000 consultations for mental health and alcohol and drug treatments, as well as a range of specialist services.

As the official charity partner for Vivid Sydney 2019, the Royal Flying Doctor Service SES is selling merchandise and hosting a fundraising event at the Museum of Contemporary Art. I am sure members would agree that we should all be proud of the value that Vivid Sydney brings to our State. It is truly a team effort that delivers immense returns for our State. Vivid Sydney runs until Saturday 15 June. If any members have not yet been out to experience it, I encourage them to do so without delay.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:05): I thank the Member for North Shore for moving this motion. Vivid is an outstanding event in the New South Wales calendar. I also acknowledge the contributions of the member for Fairfield and the member for Manly and the excellent contribution of the member for East Hills. I note that it was her first speech on a motion in this Chamber. The Vivid festival allows all the people of New South Wales to enjoy the beautiful lights of Sydney and its harbour. This motion allows us to highlight how Vivid has established itself over the past 10 years to become Australia's largest event.

This year Vivid will run for 23 nights, from 24 May to 15 June. More than 2.25 million people are expected to attend this fantastic event. That is equivalent to almost half the population of Sydney. There are more than 50 light installations scattered across Barangaroo, Chatswood, Circular Quay, The Rocks, Darling Harbour, Luna Park, the Royal Botanic Garden and Taronga Zoo. I hope that Vivid can one day be extended to other regions, especially the Central Coast. I think a Vivid installation on the Skillion would be fantastic. I note that the member for Wyong is in the Chamber and that he might think Norah Head Lighthouse is a good location for a Vivid show. We have already seen Vivid grow so much and there are opportunities for it to expand from the Sydney bowl and across New South Wales.

Many Central Coast residents will travel by train to be a part of Vivid 2019. I caught up with a good mate of mine, Leo, at Vivid. He and I popped down to the harbour this week and Leo was gobsmacked by the beauty of the festival. The beautiful cityscape was lit up with amazing shows on the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge and Customs House. Leo was taken aback by the beauty of the show at Customs House. As a Central Coast local, he was quite taken with the whales, stingrays and everything else shown on the walls of Customs House. Even though it was a chilly evening, people came en masse to enjoy the shows. There was also a breathtaking light show on the Museum of Contemporary Art and all of Circular Quay was abuzz. Leo told me numerous times how impressed he was with the way New South Wales has embraced Vivid. This Government's firm support has seen Vivid grow into a popular event.

I congratulate Minister for Tourism Stuart Ayres on the Government's commitment to Vivid through Destination NSW. Vivid is significant for the Sydney economy and for jobs. In 2018 alone 185,887 travel packages were sold to domestic and international visitors. That is a 37 per cent increase on 2017 and goes to show the incredibly positive economic impact of Vivid for Sydney. When people travel to Sydney for Vivid, they often stay and visit other beautiful locations like the Central Coast.

Leo noted multiple times that night how, even though it was a freezing cold evening, people had come out en masse to enjoy the food, the hospitality and the incredible breathtaking light shows. I congratulate the member for North Shore on highlighting the beauty and importance of Vivid to our community. Long may Vivid continue. The Government fully supports Vivid and its continued growth. I thank all members for their contributions. Leo will not miss next year's show; he is looking forward to it. Vivid has gone from strength to strength. I commend this motion to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:09): In reply: It is wonderful to hear such support for and excitement about Vivid Sydney from members across the Chamber. When we think back some years to what Sydney was like during winter, we remember it could be a little cold and dark, but now we have a festival that brings to our city so much light, so many visitors and so much activity for our businesses, our restaurants and cafes, which boosts the night-time economy. The festival is also very important for our creative industries, which has a ripple effect through our community and through the economy more broadly. I thank the members representing the electorates of Fairfield, Manly, East Hills and Terrigal for their contributions to the debate.

There is no doubt that Vivid Sydney is one of the signature events for our city and our State. Vivid Sydney draws millions of visitors to the city in May and June each year, many of whom go on to explore regional New South Wales, as the member for Terrigal mentioned. The festival continually sets the benchmark for world-class events, creativity and innovation. As the member for Fairfield stated, events like Vivid Sydney are a vital contributor to the cultural vibrancy of New South Wales. He spoke about how it makes us proud of our city and our monuments. He also spoke about how important the festival is for our night-time economy and he thanked all the workers who contribute to making Vivid Sydney what it is.

One of the very important elements of the festival that the member for Fairfield mentioned was our wonderful public transport and how we should ensure that we utilise it. He spoke about the ferry from Parramatta,

but we remind people to take the wonderful shiny new Sydney Metro Northwest that connects to Chatswood; it is a great way to get into our city to enjoy Vivid Sydney

Vivid Sydney brings the world's leading creative industries, including light artists, musicians, performers and brilliant minds, to showcase Sydney as the creative industries hub of the Asia-Pacific. The Government is committed to growing and developing our creative economy, and Vivid Sydney is a wonderful launch pad to show the world what Sydney and New South Wales are capable of. The benefits of Vivid Sydney are also significant for our night-time economy. As the member for Terrigal stated, since Vivid Sydney's establishment the event has seen significant growth in visitors and in the economic impact it delivers. Under the stewardship of the New South Wales Government, the economic impact of Vivid Sydney has seen \$173 million injected into the State's visitor economy last year compared with \$2.6 million in 2009, which is a significant increase.

Our State is reaping the benefits of the New South Wales Government's significant investment in tourism and major events, with the goal being to triple overnight visitor expenditure by 2030. We will continue to build a top-class major events calendar for New South Wales and to promote our amazing State around the world. Having grown Vivid Sydney to be the largest festival of light, music and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere, we are determined that New South Wales will continue to be a leader in the delivery of sustainable and accessible events on an international scale.

As the member for East Hills stated, Vivid Sydney is undeniably the best example of team New South Wales working together to deliver an event that is accessible for all, exciting, safe and sustainable. In particular, the member for East Hills spoke about the range of partners that helped put Vivid Sydney together. I too acknowledge the work of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which is our charitable partner this year, which has been operating from Bankstown Airport in the East Hills electorate since 1994. I encourage people to go and buy their merchandise or support the fundraiser at the Museum of Contemporary Arts that the member for East Hills referred to.

There is a range of measures and special attractions included in the Vivid Sydney program to make the event as universally inclusive as possible and to improve its sustainability. As the member for Manly noted, the use of efficient light-emitting diode technologies means that the lights in installations draw about one-tenth of the power of a regular light globe. It is important for us to think about how we can better contribute to the environmental outcomes for our city. Congratulations to everybody involved in Vivid Sydney. I encourage all members to experience the wonderful sights, sounds and ideas of Vivid Sydney 2019. I would love to see members visit Taronga Zoo or Luna Park in my own community. I urge all members to join me in supporting this motion and acknowledging the hard work of all those who have put in countless hours to deliver what will be the biggest and best Vivid Sydney ever.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (12:13): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Celebrates National Reconciliation Week 2019.
- (2) Acknowledges National Sorry Day, the anniversary of the 1967 referendum, and the anniversary of the High Court Mabo decision.
- (3) Commits to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation based on historic truths.

Every year National Reconciliation Week focuses on a different theme. This year it is "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage". I will read an extract from an article written by Joanne Luke on 25 January 2019 called "Truth-telling to reimagine our nation(s) histories". I believe it is important that we hear directly from an Aboriginal person on this issue. She said:

Each and every Australia Day, I, like many Aboriginal people are made to feel excluded. We are told to "get over" or "forget" our history and experiences. Unlike many of the dominant culture who are able to celebrate "their" Australia, it is clear to us that not all Australians believe that our survival is worthy of celebration and our history worthy of remembrance. Despite in recent years an increasing acknowledgment that the 26th of January causes hurt to Aboriginal people, there still remains a lack of understanding around why the celebration of Australian nationhood is problematic to Aboriginal people.

Instead there is persistence that we celebrate an imagined Australia. Through the lens of colonialism, we are presented with a palatable history of war heroes, bronzed white bodies, engineering feats, cattlemen and pioneers. Through ongoing exertions of a white nation founded on white successes the nation suppresses the lived experiences of all others and distorts our true identity and histories. We forget our nation's truth. We forget our nation's brutal and ongoing violence inflicted on Aboriginal people in the territories claimed as Australia from 1901. We forget the rapes, the murders, the deprivation of liberties, the frontier wars, the

imprisonments, and the theft of land and children. Other heinous crimes against humanity in the 20th Century are remembered as such and are afforded a rightful remembrance that recognises the tragedy of the lives destroyed. In contrast Australia forgets.

To escape these limiting imaginations of nationhood we need truth-telling. To recognise the humanity of lived experiences of Aboriginal people we need truth-telling.

Truth-telling is what this Reconciliation Week is about. The Reconciliation Barometer survey, conducted by Reconciliation Australia every two years, shows attitudes shifting in support of some of the key aims of the reconciliation movement. The reconciliation barometer survey asked respondents, for the first time, about truth-telling in order to "acknowledge the reality of Australia's shared history". The results showed 80 per cent of people considered truth-telling important. Reconciliation Australia CEO Karen Mundine summed up well the importance of truth-telling when she said:

It's telling the stories of the good, the bad, and the ugly of the relationship between First Nations people and other Australians.

She went on to say:

I think what we're hoping to do is start the conversation. Let's start identifying what are some of those truths that we want to talk about and what would it take for us to come together around those conversations.

Many of us believe that one of the best ways to advance truth-telling is by the establishment of a treaty. Australia remains the largest Commonwealth country without a treaty with its Indigenous population. I recognise that Victoria is the first State making concrete moves towards a treaty, and for that it should be commended. At a local level, truth-telling is already helping heal communities. I attended the site of the Myall Creek massacre in the Northern Tablelands electorate where the process and conversations have led to descendants of both parties coming together annually to conduct a ceremony for those who died at the site of the infamous massacre. Aunty Sue Blacklock, one of the Elders who were instrumental in that story of reconciliation, summed up the goodwill this has already generated when she said:

I hope in the future we stop talking about the massacre and talk about the healing that has happened since.

While we often disingenuously debate our history, more Indigenous people are ending up in jail and an increasing number of children are being placed in out-of-home care due to the ongoing effects of intergenerational trauma. A formal truth-telling process could go some way to healing some of the wrongs of the past that have contributed to the trauma of today. We have come a long way, and I acknowledge that in this State, on both sides and in a bipartisan way, we have done many good things in relation to most of these issues, and that is good.

We now have to take the next step. We now have to consider whether we must make a treaty or an agreement and whether we tell the truth about the past in our education system so that our young people learn about this history. History does not necessarily repeat itself but it can certainly rhyme. Truth-telling is a way to ensure it does not happen again. On Sunday I attended an event with the member for Gosford at the Gosford Regional Gallery. I spoke of the stories of the Stolen Generations, explaining that most of the Australian population do not know that history and what was done to those people. Members of Parliament know of it because we are close to it, but the general population does not. Prior to the last election Labor announced a policy to develop a treaty process. I encourage the Government during this session of Parliament to look at a treaty and truth-telling as a way to continue the journey and attempt to heal the wrongs of the past.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:20): This week thousands of Australians across the country, including many here in New South Wales, are coming together to commemorate and celebrate a number of significant events and milestones which make up and neighbour National Reconciliation Week. Firstly, National Sorry Day: On 26 May we commemorate the Stolen Generations who were forcibly removed from their families and communities as a result of past government policies of assimilation. The effect of those policies shattered the ongoing lineage of the oldest culture on our planet. We wish to recognise the grief, suffering and loss endured by the Stolen Generations as individuals and families, and we must also recognise their resilience and perseverance.

The first National Sorry Day was held in 2008. It became the first public recognition of the Stolen Generations. This Government understands the need to work with and support members and families of the Stolen Generations. I am proud to be part of a Government that is leading the way by providing \$73 million in funding in response to the parliamentary inquiry report into Stolen Generations reparations, *Unfinished Business*. This includes the Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme that commenced in 2017, providing monetary reparations to Aboriginal people removed from their families under official policies of assimilation.

This week the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council retold stories he heard earlier this week from survivors of the Kinchela Boys Home, located just outside Kempsey. From 1924 to 1970 the Kinchela Boys Home housed boys forcibly removed from their homes, their families and their culture. I was so pleased to learn this Government has continued its support of First Nations people through heritage grants to assist in the truth-telling of the site. The grants included \$150,000 to the owners of the site, Kempsey Local Aboriginal Land

Council, for necessary conservation management building works; and \$70,000 to the corporation for heritage interpretation and healing space.

Our acknowledgement of the past will help these men and their families to heal. I ask that all members reflect on the fact that these acts of assimilation occurred during the lifetime of many in this place. There are members of the Stolen Generations who have yet to find and reconnect with their families and culture. Support from this Government is the perfect example to show it is already in tune with this year's National Reconciliation Week theme "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage". We acknowledge the occurrence of past atrocities and we are walking with and supporting Aboriginal Australians as they heal. We understand it is a pathway we walk together, all Australians. Secondly, we move on to the beginning of National Reconciliation Week. It is marked by the anniversary of the 1967 referendum on 27 May each year. The 1967 referendum is nationally significant not just to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians but to all Australians. Fifty-two years ago, a majority of Australians made a clear decision for change. The 1967 referendum asked the question:

Do you approve the proposed law for the alteration of the Constitution entitled "An Act to alter the Constitution so as to omit certain words relating to the people of the Aboriginal race in any state so that Aboriginals are to be counted in reckoning the population?"

While it may now seem to have been awkwardly worded, the sentiment was definitely in the words and in the outcome. The changes sought to hand over to the Commonwealth the power to make laws with respect to Aboriginal people wherever they lived in Australia. It also sought to include Aboriginal people in national censuses. Prior to this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians were not counted among the rest of us. For decades Australians who were born here and whose families had been here longer than any others were restricted in where they could live—even how they could live.

We owe respect to those lesser-known individuals who helped to hand out "vote yes" pamphlets, to the names immortalised in our nation's history, and to those who simply voted "yes". I acknowledge all of those who helped make the 1967 referendum the highest "yes" vote of any referendum in this country's history. I also acknowledge the campaign and ongoing fight in the lead-up to the 1967 referendum by so many. In 1965 one of the largest campaigns and examples of activism seeking change were the "freedom rides" that spread across this State. The Student Action for Aborigines organisation drove across the State visiting regional towns and collecting data and information for their studies while fighting against injustices faced by Aboriginal people. They questioned the treatment of Aboriginal ex-servicemen and the banning of Aboriginal people from the town pools in Moree and Kempsey.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians were denied access to RSL clubs and ceremonies across the country even though they fought—and died—for this country. The bookend to National Reconciliation Week falls on 3 June. It is the anniversary of the High Court's historic Mabo decision. Eddie Mabo, Father Dave Passi, Sam Passi, James Rice and Celuia Mapo Salee banded together and fought for recognition of their traditional lands on Murray Island, in the Torres Strait. The High Court decision overturned the doctrine of terra nullius. The High Court found that the Meriam plaintiffs did indeed have what we would consider native title rights over their traditional lands as they had proven an ongoing connection and use of their land prior to colonisation.

Following the High Court decision the Commonwealth introduced the Native Title Act 1993. The Act grants the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to apply to the Federal Court to have their traditional land, water rights and interests recognised. On this side of the House we understand the importance of promoting economic development opportunities for New South Wales residents and our great cultural heritage. "Giilang" means "story" in the Wiradjuri language. I ask members to listen to, respect and acknowledge giilang, the story of our First Nations.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (12:27): I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of this land, and pay my respects to the Elders past, present and emerging. I am honoured to speak to this motion acknowledging National Reconciliation Week. It is an important week for all Australians to pause and reflect on the history of our First Nations peoples. National Reconciliation Week runs from 27 May to 3 June. These two dates have significant historical weight and meaning. It is important to acknowledge that in this Parliament. Indeed, 27 May marks the anniversary of the 1967 referendum and 3 June marks the anniversary of the historic 1992 High Court Mabo decision. I am reminded, as are all of my colleagues, that these events are still very recent in historic terms. More recent still is the national apology to the Stolen Generations delivered by Prime Minister Rudd just over 10 years ago as the first order of business of his new government.

Whilst it is important to celebrate these milestones, we must also recognise that there is so much more work to be done. This week is a time to learn about Aboriginal people's history, culture and achievements and to reflect on how we can all contribute to achieving reconciliation. What I love about this week is that it is recognised in schools across the country. The theme of this year's National Reconciliation Week is "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage". During this week we are able to celebrate more than 65,000 years of Aboriginal culture,

history, stories and traditions, yet we must also acknowledge and recognise the hard truths of our history no matter how painful or uncomfortable they may be. It is important for us to acknowledge and reflect on the pain and trauma faced by Aboriginal people and communities during our shared history. Once we acknowledge our history, grounded in truth, we will be able to walk together to forge a positive and inclusive future for our First Nations people.

I acknowledge the presence in the advisers area of Aunty Norma Ingram, who is respected and loved by all members of this place. I thank our shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, David Harris, who has been an outstanding advocate for Aboriginal people and communities. The Labor Party will always be a party that supports and empowers Aboriginal people. We will also be a party that acknowledges the injustice of the past and works to right those injustices. When I announced that I will run for leadership of the New South Wales Labor Party I noted that, whilst there will be policies of our party that will be reviewed and changed if I am successful in my bid to lead the party, something that will never change is Labor's commitment to a treaty with Australia's First People. We know that a treaty is an important step towards reconciliation. The negotiation of a treaty will be a complex process and one that should be handled with care and consideration. In this process we know that it is important to bring the community together in order to take this important step towards reconciliation. As we celebrate and reflect on this week, I am reminded of the words of Paul Keating during the delivery of his now historic Redfern speech. He said:

... there is nothing to fear or to lose in the recognition of historical truth, or the extension of social justice, or the deepening of Australian social democracy to include indigenous Australians. There is everything to gain.

It is when we can understand each other's stories—stories that are grounded in truth—that we are able walk forward together. This week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories and explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (12:32): I commend the member for Wyong for moving this motion about National Reconciliation Week. He is an honest and passionate advocate for Aboriginal issues not only in this place but also in the wider community. This week all Australians are celebrating National Reconciliation Week. Local events around the country are being held to celebrate reconciliation and Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and its place in our nation's identity. In New South Wales we celebrate the Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of land and waters and pay our respect to elders past, present and emerging. In this place we acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and acknowledge their continued history with this place. As well as commemorating National Sorry Day and the anniversaries of the 1967 referendum and Mabo High Court decision, we also celebrate the anniversary of the Torres Strait Islander flag.

On 29 May we celebrate the flag designed by Mr Bernard Namok and its representation of the Torres Strait Islands. The flag is symbolic. The two green lines represent the mainlands of Australia and Papua New Guinea. The blue represents the ocean and waters. The black lines represent the Torres Strait Islander people. The centre symbol is a dhari representing the culture of the Torres Strait Islander people. The five-pointed star is representative of the five major island groups and nautical navigation. Torres Strait Islander Australians have a strong cultural connection, and many live in New South Wales. We acknowledge the Aboriginal people of New South Wales as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters, as well as the Aboriginal people who have moved into our wonderful State and the Torres Strait Islander Australians who help make our State culturally diverse.

This Government is proud to support a number of initiatives and programs that support Indigenous Australians as we reflect on this year's theme, "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage". I am proud to work for a government that is working towards remembering and healing the past while striving for better outcomes for our current and future generations. As my friend the member for Albury indicated when he spoke in elegant terms about the importance of the memorable Mabo case and native title, it is important to recognise that native title has been granted over more than one million square kilometres of Australian land and waters, representing approximately 15 per cent of Australian territorial lands and waters. There are currently 629 registered Indigenous Land Use Agreements, which are voluntary agreements between a native title group and others about the use of land and waters.

Prior to entering Parliament I had the privilege of working in the justice system in areas such as Kempsey, Macksville, Walgett and Bourke, all of which are home to a high proportion of Indigenous people. This work was a wonderful experience because I saw firsthand local communities working with outstanding workers in the areas of health, education and justice. I saw what can be achieved when a community comes together to work on programs and projects to make this State the wonderful place that it is. We need to work together for the betterment of those who will follow us.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:36): I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation as well as the Darkinjung people and the Guringai people. I am a representative of all those people in this Parliament. From the Derebin River in the south to Lake Macquarie-Awaba in the north, I am proud to speak of Auntie Bronwyn Chambers, who is a resident elder at the Central Coast Campus of the University of Newcastle and the author of the Darkinjung dictionary. This dictionary enables me and many others in our community to speak this language. I live in an area with more than 7,000 Aboriginal sites—possibly the second most dense incidence of Aboriginal sites in Australia. What an absolute honour to represent that area in this Parliament.

This year we recognise the importance of walking together towards reconciliation and sharing the journey. This year's theme, "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage", goes to the heart of the national conversation about reconciliation. It is about coming together. I think every week I am in this job it is National Reconciliation Week for me. It is about building relationships and creating a world and a narrative around trust and truth as a way to have strong and fair conversations in the reconciliation space. Trust and truth are vital if we are to address the history of this nation and why, to this day, we are fighting for reconciliation. The 2018 Australian Reconciliation Barometer, Reconciliation Australia's community survey, showed that Australians were firmly onside with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's call for a comprehensive process of truth-telling about Australia's colonial history.

We are now more aware of the realities of our past and the atrocities that befell, and continue to befall, our Aboriginal population. We need to address those realities so that we can walk towards a unified future of respect and understanding. Today in the New South Wales Parliament I acknowledge my Aboriginal brothers and sisters who developed the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I commend them for their action in taking this conversation to the Federal Parliament. The Uluru Statement from the Heart states:

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future. These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness.

Today in the New South Wales Parliament I acknowledge all the amazing Aboriginal people and organisations that are so very important in my community in moving towards a better space of being together and being courageous: the Darkinjung Local Area Land Council, and I welcome and congratulate its young chairman, Matt West, and chief executive officer Geoff Scott; and Mingaletta and the fabulous community there—Auntie Di, Auntie Elaine, Auntie Robyn, Auntie Anita, Auntie Colleen and Auntie Pam, who are amazing women. I reach out to Auntie Del and Auntie Lila. I thank all the Aboriginal education consultative groups across New South Wales and all their volunteers, who are primarily Aboriginal people. They are working to build and strengthen our communities to give young people so much power.

I thank the men's and women's groups, our Aboriginal leaders, the didj and dance groups, and Uncle Gavi, Uncle Phil and Uncle John, who are the leading voices in our community. I thank our emerging leaders, Stuart McMinn and Bruce, whom I am proud to know. I give a shout-out to my Federal colleagues—my heroes—Uncle Pat Dodson, Linda Burney and Malarndirri McCarthy. I say happy birthday to Audrey Hennessey—a proud young Yaegland and Wakka Wakka woman, who lives with us—for yesterday. May you live long. I know you are grounded in truth and we will continue to walk together in courage.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:40): I congratulate and welcome Mr Acting Speaker to the Speaker's panel. I also acknowledge and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. Indigenous Australians have had an ongoing connection to this country since before colonisation—something proved in the landmark Mabo High Court decision on 3 June 1992. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their culture are an important aspect of our history and Australia's identity. We have seen magnificent authors, scholars, engineers, leaders of industry and business owners who have given so much to New South Wales and Australia.

I pay homage to those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who work in our frontline services around the country—whether they be nurses, doctors, teachers, police officers or service men or women. Many serve the community while others serve their country. It was incredibly telling to have our first Aboriginal Federal Minister sworn in this week. It is noteworthy that today Indigenous service men and women serve in our Defence Force when only a few decades ago so many of them were excluded from local, State and national events for returned personnel. They were even denied entry to RSL clubs and sometimes made to purchase drinks from the back window and were not able to sit with their fellow servicemen.

Today I acknowledge and thank the close to 2,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women serving in the Australian Defence Force. What an act of reconciliation that, although still plagued with disadvantage, Indigenous Australians have chosen to stand and fight for our country. This is despite the fact that prior to the 1967 referendum they were not counted along with all other Australians and their relatives may have

been forced away from family, friends and culture and displaced under the policy of assimilation. Preserving Aboriginal culture is important to ensure that Indigenous customs, stories and traditions are carried forward into the future.

I am proud of the many local groups that help to continue to preserve this culture—especially the Liverpool-based group KARI. KARI is one of the largest Aboriginal foster care agencies, which aims to ensure that its community has access to culturally specific foster care services. Additionally, it gives young Aboriginal people opportunities to flourish by providing foster care, early intervention, cultural connectivity and capacity-building activities. It also offers local Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous organisations the opportunity to work together, with initiatives designed to close the gap and support Indigenous advancement.

KARI offers many different initiatives, including Indigenous consulting, Indigenous art programs and Indigenous education programs. It also runs the KARI Foundation, a cultural unit and the KARI Clinic. It is a very important group in our local community. One beautiful thing it does is hold a debutante ball for young Aboriginal girls, who are partnered by our local policemen. It is a lovely event and a sweet way to break down communication barriers that may exist in our community. I thank the governance board of KARI for its work, including Mr Gary Potts, chairman; Ms Isabelle Phillips, director; Ms Anne Martin, AO, director; Ms Casey Ralph, chief executive officer; and especially Mr Paul Ralph, director, who was integral to the founding of KARI.

We acknowledge the past, as we must. I am glad that our Government is working to heal past wrongdoings and working towards a reconciled future. Employment opportunities and reduced gaps in education and health will help to significantly reduce the disadvantage faced by so many. I am proud to be part of a government that is leading the way by providing \$73 million in funding in response to the parliamentary inquiry report into Stolen Generations reparations, *Unfinished Business*. That is just one of the ways this Government is not shying away from the past. I look forward to working side by side with our Indigenous community into the future.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (12:44): By leave: I too acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I also recognise the custodians of the land in Blacktown, the Darug Nation. Blacktown was aptly named after the Aboriginal community in 1812 on the Blacktown Native Institution site. National Reconciliation Week is taken extremely seriously by Blacktown City Council, which supports local communities. The Reconciliation Walk and Gathering, which started in Dawson Mall, Mount Druitt, and concert took place on 18 May. It was supported by the member for Mount Druitt, who is a former Blacktown councillor and is involved in many Aboriginal issues. Ed Husic also took time out of his busy schedule to join that important walk and support reconciliation events in Mount Druitt.

There were 10 stage performances and stalls in the area. The Kildare Road Medical Centre runs a program called "Deadly moves for kids", which encourages dance and culture. The centre should be commended for focusing on providing the best primary health care tailored to the Aboriginal community. Also present on the day were Danny Eastwood, a legendary Aboriginal artist; Kims Art; and representatives from the Aboriginal Legal Service and Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child & Family Centre. It was great to see so many different service providers get together to support and help people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait heritage move forward.

I highlight a very important ceremony that occurred on Monday 27 May called the Healing Feeling Gathering, which was coordinated by Jie Pittman from Liven Truth Productions. Many members have talked about bringing communities together so that our youth understand their heritage and the challenges of past mistakes. Jie Pittman should be commended for putting together school programs that enable children to understand and practise their culture. It is so important for them to understand and live their culture. If we want to truly reconcile, we must recognise Aboriginal culture. I hope that the Government takes up this program, which involves 12 schools, something like 350 students, aunties and uncles, and various community representatives who attended on 27 May.

Uncle Wes conducted the smoking ceremony and Uncle Greg Sims did the welcome to country. Aunty Jacinta Tobin, a fabulous musician and songwriter, was also present. Aunty Rita Wright told an impassioned story about the sad effects of her experiences as part of the Stolen Generation. She talked about the future and how we need to walk together and give young Aboriginal children who are growing up in our area the opportunity to recognise, live and be proud of their culture and move forward. It is important for the Government to support programs such as this. The program is unsupported and the local council should not be left to run it. I ask the Government to get on board and support this program.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (12:49): By leave: Congratulations, Mr Temporary Speaker, on your promotion to that role. The referendum of 1967 and the apology to the Stolen Generation were certainly turning points. That apology came out of the 1997 tabling of the *Bringing them Home* report in the Federal Parliament. We have come a long way since then. The theme of the 2019 National Reconciliation Week is "Grounded in

Truth: Walk Together with Courage". It is important to explore this year's theme of walking together by focusing in part on how we—as government bodies, local communities and the Aboriginal community as a whole—can walk together to encourage, empower and support our Indigenous community. It is important that across local, State and Federal government we work with Indigenous communities to form strong and equitable relationships. Unfortunately, unless we begin to work together to heal the wounds from our past, we cannot build a stronger future together.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey that reminds us all of the many generations who have fought hard and persevered to ensure meaningful change, but is also a stark reminder of how much there still is to go. For example, recent findings by Reconciliation Australia show that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people believe more must be done by government departments and all levels of government to close the gap in areas of disadvantage, including in our health system, justice system, educational opportunities and employment. Indigenous people are getting into the education system earlier and are staying for longer, which is a huge improvement on past statistics, providing a whole new generation with the building blocks—the very basics—for a brighter future. We are also witnessing similar trends in the workplace, but more can always be done. I look forward to the day that we can walk together hand in hand with our Indigenous community and when our Indigenous people have similar average life expectancies instead of the stark 10-year difference, on average, that currently exists.

Recently I attended the Georges River Council's National Reconciliation Week 2019 event and watched a documentary about reconciliation put together by the council and members of our community. I congratulate the council on the launch of the documentary, which is now on its website and in every major library in the Georges River Council area. As I said previously, we have come a long way since the referendum of 1967, but there is certainly more to be done in our community.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (12:52): By leave: Congratulations, Mr Temporary Speaker. I think this is the first time I have seen you in the chair. I wish you the very best in your role. We will behave always. I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay my respects to elders past and present, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and the Wadigal people in my electorate of Lakemba. I have spoken a number of times about the fact that there are two Australian stories. The Australian story does not start in 1770; the Australian story starts way back, 60,000 years ago. That story begins with the first sunrise, when people came here as the original custodians of the land—the First Nations people. The Australian story after that became a migrant story. But the history of Australia is a wonderful one.

What is even more wonderful about Australia—when I think we got better—was recognising that there was a history prior to 1770. Recently I watched a documentary entitled *Before 1770* made by a gentleman called Sheikh Wesam Charkawi from the Auburn area. Many members will know him as he runs Sydney Youth Connect. He ran a program for some Muslim youth and took them to Cape York, where 500 years earlier a group called the Makassans from Indonesia used to trade with the Wundall people from the Cape York area. After all these years there was recognition that trade had occurred, which is another example of the connection that existed before 1770.

Once upon a time I was a history teacher. It was great. I love history; it is amazing. Of course, the curriculum told teachers to teach colonial Australian history. We were not able to teach the whole Australian history because we did not talk about it as much as we now do. However, in teaching history, particularly post-colonisation history, we focused on the challenges facing Australia's Indigenous and First Nations people when colonisation took place and the impact it had. There was complete dislocation of their society and history of 60,000 years. Their culture, faith, practices and languages were lost. That was a tragic moment in Australia's history. But the theme today is reconciliation and moving forward together, which is so good to see.

I join members in acknowledging the presence of Aunty Norma Ingram in the advisers area. I acknowledge Uncle Harry from Lakemba RSL. I also acknowledge, in her absence, Linda Burney—one of my local MPs—and Senator Pat Dodson, who was also involved in part of the Makassans trip that I talked about earlier. We need to walk together as a nation, recognising all our stories. Every single one of our stories is important. Our Australian history cannot be defined only by what happened before 1770 or by what happened post-1770 or by what has happened in the past 15 years. Our Australian history is one long narrative that started 60,000 years ago and keeps going. Every single one of us, adding our own personal flavour, is part of the great Australian story.

People sometimes talk about symbols, but when I see an Aboriginal flag it is more than just a symbol to me. It is a first step. When I see a smoking ceremony happening at a school, that is not a symbol; it is a sign of respect. When I see governments and oppositions make genuine efforts to move forward together then I consider that to be a step in the right direction. When I see programs that are focused on increasing the educational outcomes, health outcomes, life expectancy outcomes and job prospects of First Nation people, that is not a

symbol. Together, we can make things much better—and we do that when we do it together. I thank the member for Wyong for bringing this motion to the House.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:56): By leave: I start by showing my respect to the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, who are the traditional custodians of the land upon which this Parliament is located, and also pay my respects to the Darkinjung people of the Central Coast, where my electorate of Terrigal is located. As other speakers have noted already, this week is National Reconciliation Week. This week we celebrate Indigenous arts and culture, including on the Central Coast. A number of events are happening across our community this week. The Gosford Regional Gallery features contemporary Indigenous arts and culture. The *Colours of Country* exhibition showcases a collection of works from local Aboriginal artists. At The Entrance, the Central Coast Council is hosting its annual Indigenous arts and culture showcase, with a visual and storytelling program for young Indigenous people aged three to 18 years. The community can also take part in a number of free workshops on visual storytelling and traditional basket weaving.

I am proud to be a Central Coast member. The area is ably represented by the Darkinjung Aboriginal Land Council, which is the pre-eminent Aboriginal authority on the Central Coast and is highly respected. I come from South Australia and I had never experienced a welcome to country. Taking part in Gavvy Duncan's welcome to country is inspiring—it is a beautiful moment. The people of the Central Coast have embraced the Darkinjung culture. Whether it is National Reconciliation Week or the Five Lands Walk, which notes the whale migration during the winter solstice, the Darkinjung people play a huge part in the Central Coast community. I am proud that the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association [NAISDA] is located at Mount Penang on the Central Coast. It is the first time in 40 years that NAISDA has had a permanent home.

I also highlight the historic levels of support that the Liberal-Nationals Government is giving to the Darkinjung people on the Central Coast. The Darkinjung, as I said before, are our local Indigenous representatives and they are also the pre-eminent Aboriginal cultural authority for our region. Earlier this year I was incredibly proud to jointly announce a suite of pioneering planning policies that will help the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council to better utilise its land. Indeed, it is the largest private landholder across the Central Coast region, totalling more than 3,700 hectares of land. The Darkinjung Delivery Framework will bring greater self-determination to the Darkinjung community. I cannot stress that enough. It encourages better social and economic results from land. Part of the framework includes a State Environmental Planning Policy, known as a SEPP. I cannot emphasise how significant that is for helping our region move forward. As the then Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts said:

[This initiative includes] revised planning processes, legal changes, ongoing collaboration and education between the NSW Government and Darkinjung that are unprecedented in their depth and breadth.

He added that the package sets the precedent for:

... future roll out to other Local Aboriginal Land Councils, enabling Aboriginal communities across New South Wales to better achieve economic self-determination from their lands.

I thank former Minister for Planning for his work and the new Minister, Rob Stokes, who is present in the Chamber. I look forward to welcoming him to the Central Coast to see the great work that the Darkinjung community is doing. I also compliment Matthew West, Chairman of the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council. His dynamic leadership in the area is unsurpassed. Matthew is a passionate man who wants to see the Darkinjung progress. The SEPP will provide that framework. I congratulate him on playing an active role in this process. I commend this motion to the House.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (13:00:3): By leave: I congratulate the member for Wyong on moving this motion today. It is important to have a process in Parliament to talk about reconciliation and truth-telling. Reconciliation Week starts with Sorry Day, which commemorates the *Bringing them Home* report and what happened to the Stolen Generations. Unfortunately, when it comes to truth-telling, much of that history has been lost. In my inaugural speech I spoke of my grandfather's brothers and sisters who were recorded to be at Mount Olive, also known as St Clair Aboriginal Mission Reserve, in Singleton. My grandfather would have been too young to have his name recorded at the time. The only reason there was a record was that all the Aboriginal children had been kicked out of the local public school and sent to the mission and they did not have a teacher. The mission was trying to establish some kind of educational facility on what was essentially a rubbish tip.

I do not know what happened to my grandfather because there are no records. He said that at times he was raised by a Church of England priest. I do not know why he ended up with a Church of England priest. I do not know how he got separated from his brothers and sisters. And I will never know. That is the reality for many Aboriginal families. The truth of what happened to them is lost in time. His mother was Aboriginal and his father, who was white, left the mission and went off to World War I. My understanding is that because there was trouble

in Walcha, he did not feel safe leaving the Aboriginal family there. On his enlistment papers for World War I, the mission has been crossed out and Singleton is recorded as his place of enlistment.

The records were changed and therefore do not acknowledge the existence of those missions and what was happening there. As the member for Holsworthy acknowledged, many Aboriginal people served in the First World War and Second World War. We should certainly acknowledge them. Much of that history has been lost. My uncle Keith, who worked on the Thai-Burma Railway, was captured in the fall of Singapore. I have sent his records and they are starting to put them together. At least six or seven Aboriginal soldiers worked on the Thai-Burma Railway. When I sent Uncle Keith's records I noted that he had a particularly bad service record. He was on charges every day. I notice Aunty Norma laughing at that. He was a bit of a rascal anyway so that would not have been unusual. Apparently Aboriginal soldiers were quite often on charges day after day. They were not used to a military life, coming off places like missions and having been brought up in other parts of the world.

That is the truth of what happened to the Aboriginal people and how much history has been lost. That is why a treaty is important. Australia should not be afraid of the treaty. As imperfect as it is, New Zealand has long had the Treaty of Waitangi. Its underlying framework has at least allowed a mechanism for land rights and the rights of Indigenous people to be recognised in New Zealand. Australia has always lacked that insight and that is why the Mabo decision is an important piece of history for the Aboriginal people. Quite frankly, I have always felt that if we wanted a national day of recognition, then we should recognise Mabo Day and Mabo's birthday. My view is that we should abolish the Queen's Birthday public holiday—I am sure the monarchists would be jumping up and down about that—and replace it with Mabo Day. That is a personal view; it is not necessarily party policy but we might keep working on that. It is time we recognised the Indigenous people. The acknowledgement of their right to their land is a good place to start.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (13:04:5): By leave: I will be brief but I also want to add my voice to this important debate. First, I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I acknowledge my very good friend Aunty Norma Ingram, who is in the Speaker's gallery today. I thank her for the amazing work that she has done, for her love and hard work, and for sharing her life story. During the 2019 election I learnt a lot about her life story and what she had to do when she and other people like Linda Burney were not recognised. That is a big black spot—a big shame—for our nation. I want Aunty Norma and everyone to know that I will do whatever I can, not only as a member of Parliament but as one of millions of Australians. The time is now. We can no longer wait. I also acknowledge the shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs, David Harris, who has done extensive work in this area. Since he has been responsible for the portfolio he has travelled extensively across our great State. As members know, I was on leave due to ill health but I was heartened to learn about some of David's important work. He took some very good policies to the 2019 election.

National Reconciliation Week has an important message about fostering better relationships between the broader Australian community and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We have a long way to go with respect to health, education, jobs and transportation for Aboriginal people. In my responsibility as shadow Minister for Women I know that many Indigenous women have chronic disease and others are not getting screening for breast cancer or cervical cancer. It distresses me that screening rates for diagnosis among Aboriginal women are still very low. I am passionate about improving that. I have spoken previously about it and I will continue to work hard to put plans in place. I am happy to work with the Government, the crossbench, our stakeholders and our Indigenous sisters about how we can increase the rates of screening. As other members have mentioned, we are also commemorating the 1967 referendum and the Mabo decision. They are two significant historical milestones. My children, George and Cassandra, often ask me why it is such a big deal. They say, "We don't have reconciliation, Mum." They make a very good point. The time has come. We have to act now.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (13:08:3): In reply: I thank the Government for allowing this motion to proceed. That was a good bipartisan show for the community that we are united on this issue. I thank the members representing the electorates of Albury, Strathfield, Seven Hills, Gosford, Holsworthy, Blacktown, Oatley, Lakemba, Terrigal, Auburn and Canterbury for their contributions. I also acknowledge Aunty Norma Ingram in the Speaker's gallery. I wish Aunty Norma was here delivering this speech. One day that might be the case.

It is great that everyone acknowledges special times like Reconciliation Week and the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee [NAIDOC], but acknowledgement is not enough; we need to start living these things. We need to start demonstrating through our actions every single day the importance of this issue. I am reminded of a good friend, young entrepreneur Cheree Toka, a young Kamilaroi woman, who had the dream of flying the Aboriginal flag permanently on the Sydney Harbour Bridge. She said eloquently at the time that here, in the so-called birthplace of this nation, there is no visible permanent recognition of the First Nations people. Anyone coming via cruise ship to Sydney or flying over in an aircraft will see nothing to show

that our First Nations people were here. She has made the simple request that the Aboriginal flag fly permanently on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

We can tunnel underground, we can build metros and massive freeways but apparently we cannot put one extra flagpole on the Sydney Harbour Bridge to fly the Aboriginal flag. It is really sad that we cannot have something that recognise the First People. The statement has been made that it is just symbolic: that it will not change health or education. That is 100 per cent correct, but we should have something that recognises the whole community. I was so angry when some right-wing commentators came out and attacked that concept, calling it divisive. It would bring the nation together. Reconciliation is about acknowledging our whole history, not just parts of our history and hiding the bits we do not like.

Acknowledgement of country should be standard and many members acknowledged it this morning. I note the campaign run by Councillor Ryan Tracey to have acknowledgement of country at The Hill Shire Council, but it has been voted down on several occasions. Council does an acknowledgement of the pioneers, which is fair enough, but it continually votes down a motion to acknowledge the First Peoples. Members cannot talk in this place about reconciliation and say sorry when we cannot even do the easy actions, the low-hanging fruit, the things that could be done simply. All members have expressed great sentiments this morning. I hope they go away and think about our history and what National Reconciliation Week means. It is not a holiday or something special that celebrates art and culture, although that is important. It is about our history and making a difference.

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

Motion agreed to.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Debate resumed from 9 May 2019.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:13): I speak on the motion moved by the member for North Shore. I thank her for moving this motion. It is great to see her in the Chamber and to have the opportunity to speak about the record investments to school infrastructure in New South Wales. Our Government is proud to be investing \$6 billion over the next four years in education infrastructure. I am pleased that two schools in my electorate of Terrigal are part of the 170 new or upgraded schools across New South Wales. The first of these projects is at Terrigal Public School, which includes 10 new classrooms as well as amenities upgrades. The sod-turning ceremony occurred almost a year ago to the day. Work is progressing incredibly quickly and is on track to being completed this year. The second is Wamberal Public School, with the project involving construction of 15 new classrooms and upgrades to the core facilities.

A key benefit of these projects is that building new classrooms provides high-quality education in a twenty-first century setting for our children of the future. The construction of these 25 new teaching spaces at Terrigal and Wamberal means that all demountables will be replaced with permanent classrooms. Across the Central Coast we are expecting 75,000 new residents between 2016 and 2036. This investment will future-proof our local educational facilities for the expected increase in student numbers. I thank Minister Stokes, as the former Minister for Education, for his work to ensure that the Central Coast community is benefiting from the huge statewide school building spree. I acknowledge also our new Minister for Education, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, in the other place. During the election campaign I had the pleasure of hosting Minister Mitchell at Avoca Beach Public School in my electorate.

Together we announced a new high-tech home for Healthy Harold. An inflatable dome-shaped pop-up classroom replaces the traditional bus and means 14,000 local students across 39 schools on the Central Coast will get to meet and learn from Healthy Harold. We know Healthy Harold has a really positive effect on the knowledge of children at quite a formative stage of their lives. Through Healthy Harold, students get access to drug, alcohol and anti-bullying programs, empowering young people to make good choices when it comes to their health and safety. I am pleased the Government can support an initiative that ensures more local students have access to Healthy Harold through the pop-up classrooms. Minister Mitchell and I also had the chance to drop by Pretty Beach Community Preschool and announce \$10,166.20 for outdoor musical equipment. This is thanks to a New South Wales Government initiative called the Quality Learning Environments program. Again I commend the member for North Shore for moving this motion.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:15): In reply: I thank the House for considering this motion congratulating the Government on its record investment in education and particularly Mosman High School, Neutral Bay Public School and North Sydney Demonstration School in my electorate. We have committed to upgrade these schools into the future to reflect the needs of my local growing community. I thank the members representing the electorates of Lakemba, Oatley, Auburn and Terrigal for their contributions to this debate. The

member for Lakemba "acknowledged there has been a lot of investment by the Government in our education and a lot of upgrades in our local schools". It was great to hear from the member for Lakemba that acknowledgement of the work that we are doing in education and the rollout of 190 more new and upgraded schools is underway—

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

He spoke about 170 to 190 schools across the State as part of our record \$6.5 billion investment in public school infrastructure because we want to ensure that each school provides the world-class facilities that our students and our teachers deserve. That cuts close to home for my community of North Shore but it is something we are doing across the entire State. This money is in addition to our existing record school infrastructure program, which caters for the growing demands of our outstanding public school system and will create more than 40,000 jobs over the next four year. The member for Oatley, Mark Coure, spoke about the contribution of this Government's investment program in his community. The member for Auburn spoke about some of the needs in her community. In the last sitting week the member for Auburn spoke about Homebush Boys, was it?

Mr Jihad Dib: Birrong.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Birrong Boys.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: Birrong Boys. She spoke about the number of schools in her community that she would like to see investment in over time.

Ms Lynda Voltz: I can give you the list.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: She has got the list in *Hansard*. I would encourage her to share that with Minister Mitchell because, as I have said, this Government is committed to ensuring that we have world-class education for students across the State. I thank also the member for Terrigal, Adam Crouch, who just spoke in support in the motion, including his reference to happy Healthy Harold, for whom I am happy to be an ambassador. I acknowledge the work of happy Healthy Harold. In particular, I acknowledge the Chief Executive Officer, Kellie Sloane, who works hard to ensure that our kids have healthy futures and are provided with good decision-making opportunities in relation to choices they make about risks in society or decisions about drug and alcohol use.

Our kids face challenges that are more than just the pedagogical educational needs of our students. They are going out into a world where they will face many challenges. Our schools can be a hub for other providers like Life Education and happy Healthy Harold to ensure we get these kinds of services and resources out to them. I thank the member for Terrigal for his contribution. My motion acknowledges what the Government is doing and trying to achieve for our students. Members may be aware that this funding envelope includes commencing work on more than 40 new and upgraded school projects in 2018-19 alone and is planning for a further 22 new and upgraded schools. I am sure this year many members of this House saw new schools opening in their communities. On day one, term one in 2019 the New South Wales Government opened for students across the State, including the Cammeraygal High School Senior Campus students in my community, 17 new and upgraded schools and almost 400 new classrooms.

In 2011 when the Liberal-Nationals Government was elected, it met a significant challenge and shortage of classrooms in my local community. We committed to build the Anzac Park Public School and the Cammeraygal High School—two schools that have since been built by this Government and opened. The Government's delivery on that election promise has made a huge difference to local students in my community. I once again congratulate Minister Rob Stokes on that delivery. I commend Minister Sarah Mitchell for what she will do locally in my community for Neutral Bay Public School, Mosman High School and North Sydney Demonstration School. I congratulate the Government on this record investment for our students.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh): The question is that the words proposed to be left out stand.

The House divided.

Ayes38
Noes50
Majority.....12

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Dib, Mr J

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Donato, Mr P

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dalton, Mrs H
Doyle, Ms T

AYES

Finn, Ms J
 Haylen, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 McDermott, Dr H
 Minns, Mr C
 Saffin, Ms J
 Tesch, Ms L
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Harris, Mr D
 Hoenig, Mr R
 Lalich, Mr N (teller)
 Mehan, Mr D
 O'Neill, Dr M
 Scully, Mr P
 Voltz, Ms L
 Zangari, Mr G

Harrison, Ms J
 Hornery, Ms S
 Lynch, Mr P
 Mihailuk, Ms T
 Parker, Mr J
 Smith, Ms T.F.
 Washington, Ms K

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
 Berejiklian, Ms G
 Conolly, Mr K
 Coure, Mr M
 Dominello, Mr V
 Gibbons, Ms M
 Gulaptis, Mr C
 Henskens, Mr A
 Lee, Dr G
 McGirr, Dr J
 Perrottet, Mr D
 Preston, Ms R
 Saunders, Mr D
 Smith, Mr N
 Taylor, Mr M
 Upton, Ms G
 Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
 Bromhead, Mr S
 Constance, Mr A
 Crouch, Mr A (teller)
 Elliott, Mr D
 Greenwich, Mr A
 Hancock, Mrs S
 Johnsen, Mr M
 Lindsay, Ms W
 O'Dea, Mr J
 Petinos, Ms E
 Provest, Mr G
 Sidgreaves, Mr P
 Speakman, Mr M
 Toole, Mr P
 Ward, Mr G
 Wilson, Ms F

Barilaro, Mr J
 Clancy, Mr J
 Cooke, Ms S (teller)
 Davies, Mrs T
 Evans, Mr L.J.
 Griffin, Mr J
 Hazzard, Mr B
 Kean, Mr M
 Marshall, Mr A
 Pavey, Mrs M
 Piper, Mr G
 Roberts, Mr A
 Sidoti, Mr J
 Stokes, Mr R
 Tuckerman, Mrs W
 Williams, Mr R

Amendment negatived.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh): The question is that the motion as moved be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.**MOORE PARK**

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (13:31): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Opposes any damage to, or encroachment on, Moore Park as a result of the Sydney Football Stadium redevelopment.
- (2) Notes the Government's commitment to invest in public spaces, including Moore Park.

Moore Park is part of Governor Macquarie's 1811 Sydney bequest, which set aside 250 hectares of land for the outdoor recreation needs of present and future Sydney generations. Less than a third of that bequest remains open public land. It is more vital than ever that we protect what is left. The parklands are facing increasing pressures from significant residential growth in surrounding suburbs. The Green Square development will house 60,000 new residents in apartments with no private open space adjacent to the parklands. Waterloo is earmarked for massive redevelopment, including 20 towers of 30 to 40 storeys, plus another 700 apartments near the metro station. The proposal has low levels of green open space, and the space planned will be windy and overshadowed.

Public green space is essential to the health and wellbeing of people in high-density living. People need space for respite and to soak up the sun, go for a walk or run, take their dogs out and have picnics and children's birthday parties. Without public open space, densely populated communities become toxic. Green open space and trees improve the city environment, absorbing pollution and reducing flooding. They provide habitat for wildlife, including those that pollinate flora.

Business interrupted.

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

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to Ralph Ashton and Jess Fuller from the Australian Futures Project, who spoke about the Parliamentary Leaders Program at lunch time. I thank the dozen members or so who attended the talk. I encourage all members who have not heard about the program to take a look at it. Some members, such as the member for Wollondilly, were at another function—the pie extravaganza—which I also attended in part.

I welcome high school captains from the electorate of Pittwater to the gallery today. They are guests of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the member for Pittwater. I acknowledge Ash Walker, Deputy Mayor of Gilgandra Shire Council, who is in the gallery today. He is a guest of the member for Dubbo. I also welcome the year 10 commerce students and teachers from Koorinal High School who are guests of the member for Wagga Wagga.

Commemorations

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

The SPEAKER: I take a moment to acknowledge that this sitting period falls within National Reconciliation Week. National Reconciliation Week is nationally celebrated each year and is bookended by two significant anniversaries in our history: the anniversary of the 1967 referendum on 27 May and the Mabo High Court decision on 3 June 1992. This week we learn about, commemorate and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and their culture and how they make up Australia's national identity.

I also acknowledge this year's theme is "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage". I encourage all members and, indeed, the public to continue to reflect on our shared history and how we as a nation can continue to walk the journey of reconciliation together. I reiterate the statements that the President of the Legislative Council and I made at this Parliament's opening. We stated our renewed commitment to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their efforts to strengthen and share their culture and heritage and to create a future that celebrates and values every person in New South Wales. As a symbol of that commitment, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags have both flown in the Parliament's forecourt this week.

Question Time

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:21): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Have any staff members been stood aside pending the outcome of the police investigation into the unauthorised disclosure of private, personal information?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:22): I thank the member for his question. As I have indicated previously, there is an investigation on foot and it would be inappropriate for me to comment—

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will cease interjecting. The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: As I have indicated previously, there is an investigation on foot by an authority. It would be absolutely inappropriate for me to comment on anything that relates to or could prejudice that investigation and I do not propose to do so.

RAIL OPERATIONS CENTRE

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (14:23): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government delivering to New South Wales by boosting train services and making the rail network more reliable for customers?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:23): I thank—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Oatley to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for Heathcote for his question, but also champion the enthusiasm of the member for Oatley because both of them appreciate how important rail services are to their communities. In particular, I thank the member for Heathcote for asking me this question today because this morning the Minister for Transport and Roads and I had the wonderful opportunity and pleasure to again conduct

an Australian first of opening our first fully integrated rail operation centre. I am thrilled to be able to do this. This project has been in the works for five years. I commend the Minister for Transport and Roads and his team, and particularly everybody at Sydney Trains, which was the lead agency in the development of this Rail Operations Centre [ROC]. For the first time, the Rail Operations Centre will integrate Sydney Trains, New South Wales Trains, metro platforms and Police Transport Command. It is the fully integrated 24/7 nerve centre of our rail operations. It will allow the people in charge of our rail network to see and deal with issues as they arise. Most importantly, what this investment in the ROC demonstrates—

Mr Dugald Saunders: ROC on!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Thank you. I appreciate that. This investment shows that this Government is not only investing in brand-new metros and brand-new rail carriages, but it is also investing in improving the existing network to ensure that the 1.3 million trips people take each day are as convenient and smooth as possible.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: Like yesterday?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Why does the member for Bankstown have a problem with transport?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We know she does not want a metro in her community, but I do not know why. In any event, the ROC that the Minister for Transport and I opened today is an example of the important investment we are putting into the existing network. These functions are critical when we acknowledge that last year 400 million trips were taken on the network. That is incredible. During my visit to the ROC I was pleased to learn that on-time running was at 99.5 per cent when we arrived and 99.7 per cent when we left. That is a great outcome. Well done to the Minister for Transport. While the ROC is going extremely well, something else is not going so well in New South Wales and that is the LOC, which is the Labor operations centre in Sussex Street. While the ROC is going extremely well, the LOC is not going so well. I had the opportunity to go past the LOC on my way to the ROC.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. While I appreciate the Premier was—

The SPEAKER: The Premier has the call. I permit slight digressions when a member is being generally relevant.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I was simply making the point that the ROC was going well. As I passed the LOC on my way to the ROC, I noted that after 66 days without a leader, the LOC is not doing well at all. It is interesting to note that recently rail experts from London, who have had a rail operations centre for some time, observed what was taking place at our ROC. They were impressed and even jealous because our ROC integrates many more operational functions than theirs does, including infrastructure, track work and all the other important things that go to making a rail journey as safe as possible. When I was at the ROC, the system's on-time running was 99.7 per cent. Unfortunately in those dark days in 2004 and 2005 when Labor was in office, on-time running was 62 per cent on average. [*Extension of time*]

In 2004 and 2005 when on-time running was 62 per cent, rather than trying to meet that challenge the Labor Party changed the definition of it. That is what the LOC does; it moves things around and changes definitions. While our Minister for Transport and Roads has literally put on tens of thousands of extra services weekly—whether by bus, train or ferry—under the Labor regime, more than 400 daily rail services were cut. There is a stark contrast between what we have achieved and what they achieved. We will continue to deliver those services and the infrastructure that the people of New South Wales need to improve the quality of their lives.

While the ROC is in great shape and the LOC continues to face its challenges, we do not think it is acceptable that the LOC has not produced a leader in 66 days. We do not think it is acceptable to the people of New South Wales that those opposite put Bill Shorten and his interests ahead of the interests of this State. While those opposite continue to express those sentiments and continue to disrespect this place and the people of New South Wales, we will continue to deliver on behalf of the great people of this State.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:30): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Does the Minister's staff member Tom Green have his full confidence?

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: Last week I took a point of order relating to Standing Order 128 (2) (a) to (h). Again today two questions have been asked that are in breach of that standing order. I seek a

rewrite of that question. I believe that the inference and imputation that the member for Keira is making against the Minister for Customer Service is out of order.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I uphold the question.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:31): I thank the member for his question. As I said, there is an investigation on foot as we speak. That investigation needs to play out. Once that investigation plays out, there may be a moment for comment. Until that point, I will not be making any comment about this matter.

REGIONAL RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (14:31): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on its plan for regional rail?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:31): I thank the member for Dubbo for his question. I acknowledge the Mayor of Blayney Shire Council, Councillor Scott Ferguson; David Somervaille; general manager Rebecca Ryan; and Mayor of Forbes Shire Council, Councillor Phyllis Miller, who are in the gallery. I thank each of them for their attendance today. It is because the State Government has collaborated with them to deliver projects and programs to regional and rural communities to make a difference to the lives of people in those areas. The member for Dubbo understands the importance of a strong regional rail and road network in New South Wales.

Today I joined the member for Dubbo, the member for Cootamundra, and the Minister for Water and the Newell Highway Task Force to announce that the New South Wales Government is investing more than \$500 million in the Newell Highway. That investment will see productivity and freight movements improve in this part of New South Wales. I am pleased that the member for Dubbo has asked this question today because it is obvious that those opposite are in need of something exciting. The mood is clear; they are flat. I did my bit yesterday by wearing an exciting shirt in an attempt to liven up the place, but even that could not excite the Opposition. Even the two aspiring leadership candidates seem to have taken a vow of silence this week, because they have not asked any questions during question time.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order: As a regional MP, I would like to hear the Government's plans for regional rail.

The SPEAKER: Are you asking for the Chamber to be quiet?

Ms Jodie Harrison: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: While our aspiring leaders are sitting back and listening, I hope that they are taking notes and learning what leadership is.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. If the Minister wants to express his admiration for NSW Labor, he should do so by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: This side of the House will get on with the job of delivering for New South Wales. We are creating thousands of jobs as we roll out our transformative infrastructure that will change the way people travel in this State. I know that the member for Dubbo is excited about the jobs that are being created by the construction of a purpose-built rail maintenance facility in Dubbo to service our new regional rail fleet. This project will transform passenger rail travel in the bush. The new fleet will replace the current XPT, Xplorer and Endeavour trains, some of which are more than 30 years old. In their place will be a modern fleet that will completely change the experience of rail travel in regional New South Wales.

The new fleet will comprise 117 new carriages to form 10 regional intercity trains, nine short regional trains and 10 long regional trains. Passengers will travel in comfort with all of the facilities expected of modern transport, including more comfortable seats, improved accessibility and charging points for electronic devices. Like many members in this place, I cannot wait to climb aboard those new trains for the first time and to see how our vision is being delivered. Best of all, from the perspective of the member for Dubbo, the new fleet will be maintained in Dubbo.

The SPEAKER: The member for Rockdale and the member for Gosford will be quiet.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We expect construction of the new maintenance facility will create more than 200 jobs. Another 60 new jobs will be created during the final train fit-out and commissioning works and we will

see 50 ongoing jobs during operations, including traineeships and apprenticeships. This is a huge boost to a town like Dubbo, a boost that would never have happened under a city-centric Labor government—a government that would not have had the vision to make an investment like this in the bush. [*Extension of time*]

We can see the excitement this project is creating locally. On Monday this week more than 120 people registered to meet with our regional rail fleet team in Dubbo to understand the opportunities this project will create for local businesses and suppliers. This project will drive investment and jobs in regional New South Wales especially at a time when we are feeling the effects of drought. We will see the start of construction of the new maintenance facility at the site in Dubbo in the new few weeks.

The final commissioning works on the new fleet will also be done in Dubbo ahead of the new trains progressively rolling out onto the tracks from 2023. This is exciting for Dubbo. I am excited that the member for Dubbo is excited and I urge those opposite to also get excited about this project. This project is just a snapshot of what is happening across regional New South Wales as this Government gets on with delivering its plan for better-connected roads and rail transport across the State. It is aimed at giving our regions better access to what they need and what they deserve. It is evidence of how this Government is delivering improved transport options for the regions and how we will continue to build connectivity across the State.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:38): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

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

Mr RYAN PARK: Given the refusal of the Minister for Customer Service to express confidence in his staff member Tom Green, why is he still working for the Minister?

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:39): I thank the member for his question. As I have indicated before, an investigation is on foot and I will not make any comment in relation to this matter until the conclusion of that investigation.

JOBS GROWTH

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:39): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How is the New South Wales Government creating record jobs and are there any alternatives?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:40): I begin by saying that I have been a member of this place for eight years and never have I seen a more low-energy performance from an Opposition than we have witnessed over the course of this week. Those opposite are so bad they are successfully turning this place into the upper House. It is the role of the Opposition to keep the Government accountable, but we are keeping the Opposition accountable. Those opposite may be demoralised but they have a job and they need to do it. They should take the weekend, take a little bit of time out and rally around Ryan—he needs some help. The member for Keira comes into this place and asks questions about the Minister for Customer Service. No-one in this place has more integrity than the Minister for Customer Service. Coming from a party whose last three leaders of the Opposition have had to stand down in disgrace and half of its last Cabinet are in jail—

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister is a minute into his answer and he has not yet touched on the substance of the question.

The SPEAKER: I expect he will shortly.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: How good is the member for Holsworthy? The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government is steaming right ahead. We have opened the Sydney Metro Northwest this week, we have the nation's strongest economy, we are building more hospitals than ever before in our State's history, and last night I spoke to the secretary of the education department, Mark Scott, and he said we are currently undertaking the largest school building program since Federation. But there is one criterion that we are most proud of and that is our record on jobs. Unlike those opposite, the party of welfare, we believe that the best form of social justice is providing people with a job.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We see work as a blessing, not as a punishment. Work delivers opportunities, self-reliance and the ability to make a contribution.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: As the great Ronald Reagan—the member for Liverpool's favourite—once said, "Work and family are at the centre of our lives, the foundation of our dignity as free people."

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Since 2011 more than 630,000 jobs have been created in this State. That is a big number. But behind every one of those jobs is a person making a contribution, a family being supported and a community getting ahead. These are the social dividends of the economic program that the Coalition is running. Over the past four years employment growth is tracking nearly double its average. New South Wales continues to be the best and easiest place to get a job. More people are working here than ever before; our participation rate is at 65.6 per cent, which is a record high. For regional New South Wales, as the Deputy Premier will know, the participation rate is the highest it has been since 1998. Female employment is also at record highs, driving jobs growth.

But the most pleasing of all is that I can reveal to the House today that for the first time ever youth unemployment in New South Wales has fallen to 9.8 per cent—the lowest in recorded history in our State. As John F. Kennedy once said, back in the days when the Left actually believed in something, "A rising tide lifts all the boats." Here in New South Wales that rising tide is the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government. This morning I received some new figures: the average jobs growth per month under New South Wales Premiers. Under Nathan Rees, 1,266 jobs were created per month. Under Neville Wran—who would be turning in his grave watching those guys on the other side—2,563 jobs were created per month. That is pretty good.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Bob Carr, 3,868 jobs per month. A lot of the public service there. Under Gladys Berejiklian, 11,385. More jobs in the history of this State by a country mile.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That is why with her leadership we have become the party of the worker. [*Extension of time*]

This morning my staff, who are doing the budget—a shout-out to them—put the inaugural speech of the member for Kogarah from four years ago on my desk.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What is the matter with this speech? This is one of the greatest speeches given in this place.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order is a combination of Standing Order 129 and Standing Order 131. First, earlier this year you stated that extensions of time would not be given if the member was being frivolous in their answer. Clearly the Treasurer is being frivolous. Secondly, the substance of what the Treasurer is about to talk about has nothing to do with the question asked.

The SPEAKER: I will clarify two matters: One, the Treasurer has been relevant for the vast bulk of his answer.

Mr Clayton Barr: Correct.

The SPEAKER: When a member has not been relevant for the vast bulk of their answer I will decline to give an extension. I will clarify what I have said previously. The Treasurer has been relevant and continues to be relevant. I will clarify again for the benefit of everyone that in exercising discretion on extensions I look at three primary factors at: First is the public interest; second is the level of unwarranted interruption from the Opposition—and during this question there has been a high level of unwarranted interruption; and first is how directly relevant the Minister has been in answering the question. On that assessment I granted an extension, which is appropriate. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This is a great speech. This is what the member said: "Trade unions are integral to both our success and our heritage but Labor needs to represent those who are not in a trade union". What is wrong with that? Ninety per cent of workers across this State are not members of a union.

Mr Chris Minns: Nothing.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Kogarah calls it out and he is shamed and abused.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: How is this not relevant?

Mr Paul Lynch: My point of order is Standing Order 129. The member has moved well away from the question asked.

Mr John Barilaro: The member for Kremlin should sit down.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will accept that point of order.

Mr Paul Lynch: The Deputy Premier, in his usual blundering manner, has used offensive words. I ask that he be directed to withdraw them.

Mr John Barilaro: I will not be withdrawing it.

The SPEAKER: Will the Deputy Premier withdraw the words?

Mr John Barilaro: Absolutely not.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The unions are not supporting the member. But I have told my union that I have taken over the SDA—a union I will monetise, modernise and privatise. I called my good mate Bernie Smith and we are tight in the right for the member for Kogarah.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: My point of order is relevance. The Minister has moved even further away than before from the purview of the question.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is about to conclude his answer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I read in *Margin Call* that he is having counselling with Kaila Murnain. There is no shame in that. We have all gone through it. Kaila told me that you are "Mr Right, just not Mr Right Now". As we know, her favourite love language is words of affirmation. [*Time expired.*]

SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL NETWORK

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (14:48): I direct my question to the Minister for Health and Medical Research. Given that Sydney surgeons are warning children's lives are at risk due to the Government's failure to properly support paediatric cardiac services at both Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, and Westmead Children's Hospital, will the Minister inform the House what practical steps he is taking to resolve this long-running matter as quickly as possible?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (14:49): I thank the member for Coogee for her question and congratulate her on her election victory. I trust that in the interests of patients across the community she will always feel free, as most of her colleagues do, if she is genuinely concerned about issues, to come and talk to me privately or publicly. I note the member has not been to see me on this issue. It might have been helpful if she had.

The member's question is pertinent. In 2010 the Sydney Children's Hospital Network was established by the former Labor Government. That network has been working for the best interests of patients. I thank the range of specialists that operate at both Westmead children's and Randwick children's hospitals. They do an extraordinary job. Over the years many patients have been given world-class service. Over the last few years there has been a difference of opinion between some groups of specialists at Westmead and Randwick about the range of paediatric cardiac services. That relates to professional views about which of those campuses may be best able to do it.

It is a professional and clinical decision considered by the specialists at both of those campuses. Both campuses have done a good job. Currently there are tensions between the two campuses and I have had the Health ministry working extensively with the chief executive and acting chief executive of the network. There have been numerous meetings between the health Minister and the specialists at both of those campuses. I have had numerous meetings over the last 18 months with a range of specialists to work through their particular concerns. Most of the specialties that operate across the network are working really well in the interests of patients. There are some challenges in the paediatric cardiac surgery area.

There have been tensions which have manifested in a lot more of the cardiac paediatric services being undertaken at Westmead. Randwick has a paediatric cardiac surgeon who is excellent and undertakes some work in the paediatric area. But the decisions taken by the clinical group that manages these issues have had a propensity to result in more patients dealt with at Westmead. There is a lot more work to be done at a professional clinical decision-making level as to what is in the interests of patients. I have been made aware that the Royal Hospital for Women, in particular, and Prince of Wales Hospital want to see a continuing paediatric cardiac capacity on

the campus at Randwick. That is obviously because babies born at 23 or 24 weeks, and sometimes even younger than that, are now able to be kept alive.

There is some sense from the Royal Hospital for Women that they would like to see a continuing presence on the Randwick campus. The paediatric cardiologist from Westmead argues that transfer from that hospital to Westmead is in the best interest of the patients. These are very challenging clinical decisions that need to be worked through without the intervention of politicians who know very little about it. I am sorry to say that whilst I respect the fact that it is in the member's area she needs to be cautious about making any public comments that indicate her preference one way or the other. At the end of the day it is about a clinical issue and what is in the best interests of patients.

I can assure the House that the ministry and I are doing everything we can to work with these clinicians behind the scenes. It is unfortunate that some of them have felt the need, when I have implemented a government review, to jump the gun and go public with their views. I think that does not help the patients to feel that they are getting the encouragement and the support they need. I encourage the doctors to continue discussions behind the scenes and not go public.

ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (14:54): My question is addressed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on its plan for the environment?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (14:54): What a great question from a great new member of this House. He is the best member for Camden we have ever had. I know it is a low bar, but can I say that the member for Camden's environmental credentials are well known. He is known around the Macarthur region as "green peace". It is great to get a question from him on the environment. I know that he and everyone who cares about our environment is excited about what the New South Wales Government is doing to protect our planet. What better place to start than Return and Earn?

Return and Earn is a great scheme that is reducing litter right across New South Wales. This scheme has meant that we have reduced litter volume by 33 per cent. We have received almost two billion bottles—not just from the Speaker's Garden—as a result of Return and Earn. The scheme will have a huge impact on our environment. It has also been a great win for community groups, for charities and for school groups, who earn much-needed money for community activities. Another great thing the New South Wales Government is doing for the environment is saving our species. We have the \$100 million Saving our Species Contestable Grants Program. No, Sussex Street cannot access that fund.

The saving our species fund is doing important work by saving endangered and threatened species across New South Wales. A great example of that is the Bellinger River snapping turtle, one of the rarest turtles on the planet. After a freak virus wiped out nearly 85 per cent of the population, thanks to the saving our species program and in conjunction with Taronga Zoo's re-breeding program, we were able to reintroduce the species to the wild. We are making a huge difference to species like the Bellinger River snapping turtle. What is exciting is not just what we have done but what we are going to do. As the Minister for Energy and Environment, I am determined to ensure that we tackle the issue of climate change and we reduce our carbon emissions. One way we will do that—

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Mr MATT KEAN: I note the interjection of the member for Cessnock, who is a knuckle dragger who denies the existence of climate change. One of the ways we will reduce our carbon emissions is by introducing regional renewable energy zones to drive investment into the regions. Introducing the zones is about creating jobs and at the same time bringing more supply into the system, which will drive down prices and reduce carbon emissions. It is an exciting time for the environment. Another thing I want to do—

Ms Kate Washington: Ask the koalas how they are feeling.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am glad the member for Port Stephens asked that. Another thing I want to do is to increase the footprint of our iconic national park network. We will start that straightaway by delivering our election commitment—

Ms Kate Washington: Are you going to land clear the rest or sell off the rest?

Mr MATT KEAN: —by delivering the Tugalong Station National Park in the Bowral region. I know the member for Goulburn is very excited about this development. We will increase the footprint of our national parks, enhance our natural environment and provide important protections for our koala habitat. This is very important work.

Ms Kate Washington: You're just selling off their habitat.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: These are important initiatives. We want to tackle climate change decisively and responsibly. We want to clean up litter right across New South Wales. We will continue to roll out the successful Return and Earn scheme. In addition to that, we have our saving the species program. We will look after species like the Bellinger River snapping turtle. I know the member for Cronulla was instrumental in delivering this great program. We will be saving not just the snapping turtle but also bandicoots, burrowing bettongs and other endangered species. We will make sure that their survival continues into the future.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Newcastle to order for the first time.

Mr MATT KEAN: These are important initiatives and, as I said, in addition we have our iconic national parks that do so much to enhance the amenity of communities right across New South Wales. I am determined to increase the footprint of and protect these national parks.

Mr John Barilaro: Hundreds of beautiful brumbies.

Mr MATT KEAN: While I am on the topic of national parks, I note the interjection of the member for Monaro, who cares deeply about the Kosciuszko National Park. I look forward to working with him to make sure we improve the visitor experience. [*Extension of time*]

We want not only to enhance the footprint of our national parks but also to improve the quality of our national parks. That is why we will take on feral animals and we will invest to make sure our national parks have the infrastructure so that people can have a great time in them. I will say that while the state of the natural environment in New South Wales is good, the state of the environment inside the Labor Party has never been worse. What we are seeing is the most toxic waste dump of a leadership contest in the history of the once-great Labor Party. I should get the Environment Protection Agency onto the Labor Party.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, relevance. The Minister ought to be talking about the importance of the environment, the topic of the question. He should be talking about the state of the Mambo Wetlands in Port Stephens—

The SPEAKER: The Minister can continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: We are not talking about stalking horses at the moment. What we are talking about is the contest between the member for Kogarah and the member for Strathfield and the environment inside the Labor Party. We have the member for Kogarah, the electoral Messiah, Mr 1.8 Per Cent. He is making safe seats marginal.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr MATT KEAN: Is it any wonder the member for Liverpool and the member for Swansea are backing the member for Strathfield?

Mr Paul Lynch: Do you want to sit down, you prat?

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Liverpool to withdraw that comment before I take his point of order.

Mr Paul Lynch: But he is a prat.

The SPEAKER: The member for Liverpool will resume his seat.

Mr MATT KEAN: Then we have the member for Strathfield touring the parties. She is so committed to Labor values, she tried to join the Liberal Party.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 76. The Minister knows very well that if he wants to attack members of this place, he should do so by way of a substantive motion and then we will start attacking those opposite. If the Minister wants to bring it on, bring it on.

The SPEAKER: Order! To the member for Keira's point of order, I believe that he was referring to Standing Order 73 rather than Standing Order 76. The member for Keira should get his standing order right. I note that general attacks on members of the Labor Party are acceptable, as are general attacks on members of the

Liberal Party. When an attack becomes unduly personal and targeted at an individual then Standing Order 73 becomes relevant. I regard the Minister's comments as being general in nature. The Minister may continue.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: To the point of order: Mr Speaker, yesterday you asked the member for Strathfield to resume her seat when those opposite made a personal explanation about one of the allegations that the Minister has raised. Given that the member for Strathfield was not given the opportunity—

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

Ms Jenny Aitchison: It is under Standing Order 73. Given that you did not allow the member the opportunity to defend herself against these allegations, I think you should stop the Minister from making them now.

Mr MATT KEAN: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: If the Minister is speaking to the point of order I will hear from him and then I will clarify Standing Order 62, which is the relevant standing order under which the ruling was made in relation to the member for Strathfield.

Mr MATT KEAN: Of course, this is about the environment because we know that under the leadership of the member for Kogarah even the safe-seat MPs are threatened species.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. Standing Order 73—not Standing Order 76, which was referred to by the Leader of the House—asks that members respect the following:

Imputations of improper motives and personal reflections on Members of either House are disorderly other than by substantive motion.

Standing Order 62, which was the request from the member for Strathfield, is about personal explanations. It states:

A Member may, when there is no question before the Chair and with the leave of the Speaker, explain a matter of a personal nature. A personal explanation shall not be debated and leave may be withdrawn by the Speaker at any time.

Previous rulings, including that of Speaker Torbay, have made it very clear that personal explanations should be brief and factual. I spoke with the member for Strathfield before I allowed her to give a personal explanation and I reminded her to be brief and factual. I make it very clear that the basis on which I asked the member for Strathfield to desist—and we spoke about it afterwards—is quite different. I clarify that in light of the comments that have been made. The Minister will conclude his answer and will be heard in total silence.

Mr MATT KEAN: Thank you for an excellent ruling, Mr Speaker. Let us call it for what it is: This leadership contest is a contest between a union hater and a Liberal sympathiser.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I am not taking points of order. The member for Wyong will resume his seat.

Mr MATT KEAN: That is what it is.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: Is it any wonder the member for Maroubra thought he could keep his job?

Mr David Harris: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 74. I refer to your earlier ruling. The Minister is clearly inciting members on this side of the Chamber to react and then they are put on calls to order. On the first day of the new Parliament you said you would not allow that to happen. We have been behaving pretty well, which those opposite have confirmed. Opposition members would appreciate your protection.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will complete his answer.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Wyong may not like it, but the reality is this is a battle royale between a union hater and a Liberal sympathiser. That is how low the Labor Party's stocks have fallen. We on this side of the Chamber will tackle climate change and those opposite need a change in the climate.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: Standing Order 59, tedious repetition.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has concluded his answer.

BARWON ELECTORATE WATER SUPPLY

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (15:07): My question is addressed to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing. Years of drought and the management of river systems have left entire towns in my electorate

without acceptable drinking water. I acknowledge some recent work at Bourke and Tilpa. What are the short-, medium- and long-run strategies for the supply of domestic water into Barwon communities?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (15:08): I thank the member for Barwon for his question, which is important not only for Barwon but also for the Northern Tablelands, the Murray and a whole range of communities across regional New South Wales. It is important to acknowledge and accept that many of these communities have faced this situation many times over many years. For example, the Darling River system has run dry approximately 35 times since the 1940s. We will stand beside those communities every step of the way to ensure they have acceptable and safe drinking water. Walgett and Brewarrina have faced some challenges in recent months, having had to rely on bore water. But recently there was an inflow into Walgett and Brewarrina, which is exciting and important. I attended a public meeting in Walgett and heard that salt in shower water was causing frail people to fall over—something those in Sydney could not imagine. We are working with that community and sending in drinking water for those who do not like the taste of bore water or do not accept it.

The Government will continue to work through this challenge. The Government has spent \$11.4 million ensuring the viability of town drinking supplies. Guyra in the electorate of the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, the member for Northern Tablelands, is located almost on top of the Great Dividing Range, which is a challenge. We have a pipeline going in there and that community will not run out of water. Tenterfield, which is on top of the Great Dividing Range right near the Queensland border, is a beautiful community. Locals—including an elderly gentleman about 90 years of age—say they have never before been able to walk across one of the creeks. That has been caused not by irrigation or over-extraction but because, quite simply, we have not had enough rain. We will work with these communities.

Recently the Mayor of Moree, Katrina Humphries, sent me some beautiful photographs showing some flow where the Barwon and the Mehi rivers join up. Water has come down into the Warrego system. We are working with Bourke. Some good flows have gone into the Darling so locals have gone from level 5 water restrictions, I think, to level 2. These are all positives. We also have to talk positively about regional New South Wales. Yes, we have some dry conditions but it is still a fabulous place to visit. We need people to travel there. I know the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney is working on plans to bring that about.

We gave that commitment to the people at Menindee, an area that from January has had some real struggles with water supply. The best solution to all these problems, aside from the Government standing beside and helping local communities, is rain. And we are doing that. James McTavish heads our town water supply drought program. We need rain and when it rains things will be much better. But things are still good in regional New South Wales. We want people to visit as it is still an exciting place to be. We will make sure those communities have good, safe drinking water through this extraordinary drought.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (15:12): My question is directed to the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections. How is the Government delivering on its plan for community safety?

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections) (15:12): Sorry, Mr Speaker. I am carrying 35 pies so I am running a bit slow. I thank the member for Goulburn for her question and congratulate her on her hard work for her local community. Recently I had the pleasure of attending the Goulburn Correctional Centre, which is a significant employer in the township. In company with the member for Goulburn, I officially opened the new High Risk Management Correctional Centre. I place on record this State's grateful thanks to the former corrections Minister, the Hon. David Elliot, for his work.

This is part of the New South Wales Government's \$47 million investment in countering terrorism and radicalisation in the prison system. The Government's first priority is to keep our community safe from those who seek to do us harm. New South Wales is a strong and connected society yet a small number of individuals with extreme and violent views want to divide us and threaten our safety. The New South Wales and Commonwealth governments have implemented comprehensive counterterror laws to minimise the risk of terrorism and manage terrorist offenders. I am pleased to inform the House that New South Wales has the toughest counterterror laws in the nation.

We are committed to adapting and strengthening our legislation to meet the evolving threat of terrorism. The Government has introduced new laws that provide certainty for police officers if they need to use lethal force in an act of terror. We have tightened bail laws and introduced a presumption against parole for people with links to terrorism. These laws, which were passed in New South Wales in 2015, require that bail must be refused for anyone who is charged with, or previously convicted of, certain terrorism-related offences. We have also

introduced new legislation that provides for offenders, including those not facing terror charges, to continue to be detained if they pose an unacceptable terrorist threat to the community.

Countering terrorism and violent extremism requires action from all levels of government. There are well-established arrangements in New South Wales to coordinate this important work. The Government has implemented the NSW Counter Terrorism Strategy as we are committed to continuous improvement to ensure that our counterterrorism and countering violent extremism efforts are well coordinated, cost effective and relevant. To counter terrorism and violent extremism, we have introduced a range of social policies and programs, criminal justice and intelligence measures, and legislative mechanisms. The NSW Counter Terrorism Strategy, which was released in December 2018, contains five objectives: resilience, diversion and disengagement, disruption, protection and incident management. This includes safety and security around crowded places and significant landmarks.

The public spaces of New South Wales: our stadiums—all of them—shopping centres, pedestrian malls and major events venues enrich the lives of everyone. Unfortunately, as events around the globe have shown, they are also potential targets of terrorist attacks, and require protective measures to minimise the risks of terrorism. This Government is committed to tackling violent extremism so that every person living in New South Wales continues to feel and be safe. Another measure the Government has committed to in countering violent extremism took place in November 2015 when the Government allocated \$47 million over four years to counter violent extremism. The funding was allocated to a range of countering violent extremism initiatives.

I am pleased to inform the House that the New South Wales Government engages with the private sector and community organisations to counter violent extremism by promoting and supporting initiatives. An example of this is where our Government has implemented the COMPACT and Social Cohesion for Stronger Communities initiative to work closely with communities to promote social cohesion and build community resilience. I am pleased to also inform the House that Multicultural NSW, under the new Minister—who is listening—is delivering NSW COMPACT, a community grants program that aims to promote social cohesion and community harmony by providing grants to 22 community-driven, youth-engagement projects involving an alliance of over 60 partner organisations.

The Engagement and Support program provides targeted interventions that seek to divert at-risk individuals. This is a voluntary program delivered by the Stronger Communities cluster, which supports individuals to be diverted from negative influences and behaviours that might lead to violent extremism. The New South Wales Government works with many service providers to provide this support, including non-government organisations, communities and the private sector. [*Extension of time*]

Together with a whole-of-government approach we have developed a School Communities Working Together program to ensure that all young people are provided with strong support. Our whole-of-government approach to safe communities also focused on addressing mental health and fixated threats, with the NSW Police Force and NSW Health establishing systems and procedures to address the risk posed to community safety by fixated persons. New South Wales also works closely with New Zealand, the Commonwealth and other Australian jurisdictions to continue to develop and deliver COAG-agreed capabilities.

The Government continues to evaluate its programs and initiatives to ensure a whole-of-government approach where at-risk individuals in New South Wales are diverted away from violent extremism, and violent extremists in New South Wales are disengaged from violent extremism. We continue to build community resilience in New South Wales to prevent and respond to violent extremism. A key priority of this Government is to reduce adult reoffending. The Community Safety Fund is another area that has supported 52 projects since 2015, including street lighting to improve resident safety, youth-focused initiatives and an apprehended violence order education program to reduce domestic violence. In conclusion, this Government is proud of the hard work and dedication many of the people of New South Wales contribute to ensure that we live in safe and prosperous communities across this great State.

Business of the House

CONDOLENCE MOTIONS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I advise the House that it is the Government's intention to move motions of condolence for:

- (1) The late Milton Arthur Morris, a former Minister of the Crown, on Wednesday 5 June 2019 straight after the consideration of motions accorded priority.
- (2) The late William Peter Coleman, a former Minister of the Crown, on Wednesday 31 July 2019 straight after the consideration of motions accorded priority.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Katoomba Airfield

Petition requesting that Katoomba Airfield be incorporated into the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service as an emergency airfield, received from **Ms Trish Doyle**.

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

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

Sydney Metro Pitt Street Over-station Developments

Petition rejecting the current proposed Sydney Metro Pitt Street over-station developments, 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**.

Low-cost Housing and Homelessness

Petition requesting increased funding for low-cost housing and homelessness services, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Pet Shops

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

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

Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program

Petition calling for an independent inquiry into the Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program, received from **Ms Jenny Aitchison**.

*Matter of Public Importance***RAMADAN**

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (15:32): I am getting déjà vu, because I spoke about Ramadan in a private member's statement only a couple of days ago. It is my pleasure to introduce Ramadan once again as a matter of public importance. I had a bit of a joke earlier with the member for North Shore about the pies that were being served—we were hoping that I might be able to get some. I do not know whose idea it was to bring in the pie van during Ramadan but it was pretty cruel! It is almost as cruel as the member for Gosford offering me some water the other day—although she was trying to be nice. I am sorry; dad jokes do not work at this time of the day. I acknowledge that I spoke about this issue on Tuesday but I could not fit in everything then. I acknowledge also that members on both sides of the House attend community iftars. The main element of Ramadan is that it is a holy time for people of Muslim faith and the month when the Holy Scripture—the *Koran*—was revealed.

I will outline some of the basics about Ramadan. At present Muslims in Australia are fasting from about 5.00 a.m. to about 5.00 p.m.—basically from sunrise to sunset. Generally people get up, if they can, at about 4.30 a.m. to have a quick meal—effectively an early breakfast—and then try to go back to sleep. This is called "sahoor". Fasting during the day means no food and no drink and then in the evening there is iftar. This is when the fast is broken and you can eat or drink anything that would normally be permissible. I often see a number of my colleagues in this place at different iftars across the community. I acknowledge the importance of iftar. As I said the other day, it has moved beyond the idea of something that is only for the Muslim community. One of the nicest features is the number of community groups that hold iftars and bring people together. I think that is really special. The other day I attended an iftar with my colleague the member for Fairfield, who I think will also speak on this matter, the member for Holsworthy and some other Government members, such as the member for Oatley. I think that is important.

When I talk about community groups, it is about how we can bring people together. The most important thing is to get to know each other and to spend some time together. Sharing a meal is really important. I also talk about a time I am really proud of. Back in the day when I used to be a school principal we had community dinners. We were very proud to be the first school to organise community dinners. The story goes that I was walking with a kid to the station after school. During Ramadan you start to get a little hungry and excited by three o'clock in the afternoon, and I said to him, "What are you eating tonight for iftar?" He replied, "We're having chicken." I said, "I love chicken." The young man said to me, "We have chicken every day." I thought he was having chicken as a treat but he said, "It's just me and mum. It's only ever me and mum having iftar together."

I had been telling him about how nice it was to have iftar with my family and community. At that moment I felt for that kid. I thought, "We have to do better than this. Let's have a school community dinner. We will do it for families who cannot break their fast with other families." But we went further than that. We did not want it to be just for the Muslim kids; this was part of building a school community. We ensured that all other kids came along with their families. The deal was the kids would come along and bring the food they would eat with their family. We got some donations also and all sorts of people attended.

What I love the most—and will never forget—is that teachers served the families that night. We served the community and we served the kids. The kids who loved it the most were those who had nowhere else to go and those who had been ex-students. Bringing people together is special. Today when I attend many school iftar dinners I think proudly for a little moment, "This thing started from that kid who was having chicken because he had nowhere else to go." Eventually we brought families and community groups together. It was not about the Muslim community; it was about every person in our school community. The funniest story is that one of the kids was suspended at the time. He got a message to me asking, "Sir, can I still come to the iftar dinner?" I thought, "Of course, he can." That is what the school community is about. For me, Ramadan is about bringing people of all faiths and communities together.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:27): As we heard from the member for Lakemba, this is the holy month of Ramadan when there is fasting during the day and feasting at night. I think the Bayside City Council is doing something this year for the second or third time at Rockdale. But at Lakemba, one of Sydney's most multicultural suburbs, vendors line the roads. If any members in this Chamber or people watching this debate have never been there, I suggest they visit Lakemba tonight to see it firsthand. It is not just Arabic food but food from the Bangladeshi community as well. In the past two weeks I have been there twice or three times. Street food from all over the world sums up the Ramadan night markets. Hundreds of visitors from New South Wales and overseas flock there every night. In some regards, it will be bigger than Vivid this weekend. It is huge.

Mr Jihad Dib: You're not moving to Lakemba, are you, Mark?

Mr MARK COURE: I am the shadow member for Lakemba. Many visitors flock there each night to explore the variety of food and learn more about different cultures. Many people are observing Ramadan this month and it is the focus of much conversation in the media, particularly on SBS. I have observed that when a community group issues the invitation, as the member for Lakemba said, it is for literally everyone—not just the Islamic community but the entire Sydney community. Those who are observing Ramadan could have kept Ramadan to themselves, but the invitation is for all of us to share. The breaking of the fast is a deeply giving act.

I have attended a number of iftar dinners this week and throughout my eight years in this place. There is no greater representation of cultural diversity than what you see in Lakemba. I acknowledge my friends in the Arabic community and the Bangladeshi community, particularly Councillor Mohammad Zaman Titu, who is a wonderful leader in the Bangladeshi community. He serves on Canterbury Bankstown council and has invited not just me but a number of Government members to Lakemba many times during Ramadan. I wish everyone, not just in Lakemba and throughout my electorate but also across the world, a very happy and holy month of Ramadan.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (15:30): As-salamu Alaykum.

Mr Jihad Dib: Wa alaykumu as-salam.

Ms JULIA FINN: Thank you. Ramadan is a traditional month of fasting, prayer, personal reflection, good deeds and giving to charity. People focus on the fasting aspect and on the wider community coming together for an iftar dinner. That has been an absolute delight throughout the entire Ramadan month. Focusing on becoming a better person and supporting those struggling in the community are also key aspects of the holy month. A few weeks ago I held my own iftar dinner that was attended by about 120 people from across my community—mainly Muslims but also Christian, Jewish and Hindu friends. It was a lovely dinner at a local Syrian restaurant in Merrylands. I was delighted to repay the hospitality that I have enjoyed on so many occasions.

This year many groups have invited me to iftar dinners. I am thankful for the invitations from a wide range of organisations such as the Gallipoli mosque, the Turkish consulate, Affinity, Islamic Charity Projects

Association, the Australian Malayalee Islamic Association, the Australian Jordanian Community Association, Parramatta Mosque, Granville South High School, Canterbury Bankstown council, Guildford Mosque, fashion designer Anjilla Seddeqi, the Premier, Granville Public School, the Lebanese Muslim Association, the Grand Mufti of Australia, El-Dunnieh Sons Charity Association, Lurnea High School, Merrylands High School and Auburn Girls High School.

At the end of Ramadan, when we celebrate Eid, Granville Boys High School has its enormous iftar dinner, which is attended by more than 1,000 people. It is a fantastic evening. I also congratulate Cumberland Council on holding Ramadan street markets for the first time. Based very much on what happens in Lakemba, about 20,000 people came together in Auburn on election night. Some people who were watching television did not make it. I found it far more celebratory on the street in Auburn! It was wonderful and I am really glad it was a success. I am only disappointed the council chose to hold it in Auburn rather than in Granville, but I hope it becomes a tradition in years to come—and not just for one night but perhaps throughout the entire holy month of Ramadan. I congratulate all my friends who have been fasting on their determination and on their journey. I wish them the best. To all my friends who have been participating in Ramadan activities, Ramadan Mubarak. Next week, it will be Eid Mubarak.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (15:34:0): By leave: I thank the member for Lakemba for bringing the holy month of Ramadan to the attention of the House as a matter of public importance. I listened with great interest to the comments on what Ramadan means to members who preceded me in this discussion. In addition to being a period of fasting, sacrifice, dedication and reflection, Ramadan engenders a feeling of bringing people together and that resonates very strongly with me. When Muslims break their fast, communities of all types of faith are drawn together in celebration.

I thank the Islamic Society of Albury Wodonga for inviting me to join when breaking their fast this week at iftar. The themes I took away from that celebration were generosity and hospitality of the Islamic community. Muslims rarely cause their generosity to be publicly known. For example, each year under the auspices of Carevan Albury the Islamic Society of Albury Wodonga contributes fresh meat to needy and homeless people—a wonderful gesture that reflects the generosity of Muslim people. At the iftar dinner, their hospitality also was on display. The member for Oatley and the member for Lakemba referred to the various cultures that come together and contribute a vast array of food from many different parts of the world.

At the recent iftar dinner I attended, I gained the impression that iftar is very much about the community. Men, women and children were celebrating together and included people of other faiths. For example, representatives from the Church of England joined in the celebration. Ramadan 2019 is a wonderful time for the Islamic Society of Albury Wodonga because this year the society intends to build a new mosque. A very special element in this year's celebration is that we look forward to seeing plans for the new mosque develop over the next eight to 12 months. I look forward to celebrating the opening of the new mosque with members of the Islamic Society of Albury Wodonga. I acknowledge the importance of Ramadan. I thank my friends at the Islamic Society of Albury Wodonga for their generosity. I look forward to celebrating with them again.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:36:4): By leave: I thank members for granting me an indulgence and enabling me to participate in the discussion of the matter of public importance, which has been brought to the attention of the House by the member for Lakemba. Ramadan 2019 is a great occasion not only for Islamic communities right across the world, particularly Islamic communities in New South Wales, but also for all communities. Ramadan is an occasion that brings people together. Ramadan is a period of prayer, fasting and giving of alms. For Muslims it is also an opportunity to spread the message of goodwill. The key messages conveyed by the iftar dinners I attended are that we should sit down with our neighbours, talk to them and spread the message of goodwill.

A common theme of the iftar dinners I attended in western Sydney and in Parliament House is that the New South Wales community is united. We are one community in the brotherhood and sisterhood of humanity. More importantly, another theme I noticed among the iftar dinners was the denunciation of violent extremism that occurs throughout the world. We must all stand united against violent extremism. Ramadan is an opportunity for all people to get together. I must mention that my Labor colleagues and Government members have been able to put aside our political differences, enjoy each other's company and, more importantly, support communities that are doing the hard yards to create social cohesion and harmony right throughout the community.

I offer special thanks to the Australian National Imams Council in Chullora, especially the Grand Mufti of Australia, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed, for his kind invitation to the iftar dinner last week in Chullora. I thank also the Lebanese Muslim Association and a very dear friend of every member of this House, Samier Dandan, for their iftar dinner I attended in Lakemba. I thank the Affinity Intercultural Foundation and Ahmet Polat, who is a cousin to everybody, for the Friendship Dialogue and iftar dinner at Parliament House, which is always a highlight during Ramadan. I offer thanks also to our friends at the Islamic Council Charity Projects Association whose iftar

dinner at Liverpool is always outstanding. It was great to notice the student volunteers providing the food for the iftar dinner and catering so well. I thank the Rahma Association, which is based in the Rahma Mosque Guildford, for inviting me to speak after evening prayers at the association's gathering. I was pleased to affirm that we are united and want to work towards peace in our communities. To the member for Lakemba, Mr Jihad Dib, I say Ramadan Mubarak to you and your family.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (15:39:5): By leave: Before I begin, I too say Ramadan Mubarak to all who are practising Ramadan this month. I am delighted to contribute to discussion on this matter of public importance, which recognises the importance and significance of Ramadan for the Australian Muslim community in New South Wales. I congratulate and thank the member for Lakemba for drawing Ramadan to the attention of the House. The member for Lakemba is a wonderful champion and advocate for multicultural communities in New South Wales. I have seen him a number of times at various iftar dinners this month. I suggest he has eaten out at iftar dinners more than any other member of this Parliament.

During this holiest month in the Islamic calendar, Muslims around the world observe Ramadan by abstaining from eating or drinking between the hours of sunrise and sunset. While fasting is a well-known aspect of Ramadan, for the information of those of us who are not Muslim I mention that Ramadan also is a time for introspection, reflection and families and friends coming together. That is what I most admire about Ramadan. Once the sun has set for the day, families, friends and communities come together to break their fast at dinners known as an iftar. This coming together as a community to share a meal is one of the things I love most about Ramadan.

My electorate of Strathfield is one of the most multicultural electorates in Sydney. It is also a multi-faith community, which is something I always celebrate. Over the past month, what I have admired most about the school community and my electorate is that they have hosted iftar dinners. I saw the member for Lakemba at one of those dinners, not only as a shadow Minister but also as a father of a student at the Burwood Girls High School. I attended an iftar dinner at the Homebush Boys High School where I heard a young man, Ibrahim Taha, speak so generously about his experiences as a young Muslim man. It inspires me greatly when people such as Ibrahim speak in front of their school community about what is most important to them.

I attended also an iftar dinner at the Strathfield South High School—that makes three high schools in my electorate I attended—and that also was a coming together of the community, students, parents, teachers and community leaders. It is by celebrating this religious observance that we are reminded of the example of the strength of our multicultural and multi-faith communities in New South Wales. To all Muslims who are observing Ramadan at this time surrounded by family and friends I say Ramadan Mubarak.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:43:0): In reply: I thank all members who contributed to the discussion. The member for Oatley and I share an electoral border and we often spend a lot of time together at various community events. The member for Oatley referred to the cultural diversity of his electorate and his involvement in that. The member for Granville highlighted the hospitality associated with Ramadan and mentioned that she hosted an iftar dinner at a local community centre for the people in her community to come together and celebrate. I thought it was really lovely to hear from the member for Albury about the Islamic Society of Albury Wodonga. Hopefully one day I will be able to visit Albury and join members of the Islamic community in Friday prayer.

The member for Fairfield, whose electorate also shares a border with my electorate, referred to the overriding theme of the community coming together as family. It is true that the member for Strathfield's electorate and mine are geographically close. As local members of Parliament, the member for Strathfield and I have attended a couple of iftar dinners at various school events. At one iftar event I attended, which the member for Strathfield also attended, I was acknowledged but had to say that I was actually there as a dad—which was really embarrassing for my daughter. If she had not invited me, I would have gone anyway in my official capacity.

Students at that particular school in Burwood and at Punchbowl Boys High School collected money together and made a donation to Human Appeal Australia to build water wells. We heard today about the drinking water issues and water restrictions in New South Wales, but in some countries kids, families and communities cannot access drinking water. I was impressed that these schoolkids raised money for something so important and were willing to give to that cause. It was exceptional.

I thank all members who contributed. The member for Strathfield and member for Fairfield both mentioned that we go to a lot of iftars. I just did a quick calculation—today is the twenty-fifth day of Ramadan and I have been to 16 iftars. I was in Parliament for six days and was not able to attend an iftar on those days, but I have had three iftars at home. I look forward to having a couple more iftars at home.

Ramadan is a special thing. I say from my heart that it is lovely when people who are not fasting wish me all the best or when my colleagues from all sides of the House and I have a great time together. Anything that

brings us together is important. One of the themes of Australia is that we are better when we are together, when we know each other, when we share each other's celebrations and when we respect each other. That is what makes Australia the greatest country on earth. There is less than an hour to go before those who are fasting will be able to drink some water. Tonight I will be breaking my fast with a meat pie and a cup of soup. Ramadan Kareem. Eid Mubarak.

Community Recognition Statements

CAFE PATINA

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:46): People in many suburbs of Sydney claim that their cafe makes the best coffee, bakes the best cakes or serves the most delicious meals. However, the judges have spoken and the award for the 2018 Sydney Cafe of the Year at the Savour Australia Restaurant and Catering Awards for Excellence has been won by Wahroonga's Cafe Patina. In just two years, husband and wife Stewart and Hilary Wallace have turned the former Coonanbarra Cafe, which was already a popular local spot, into Sydney's best. They have done it by serving wholesome, healthy food; supporting local and regional producers; and utilising fresh organic produce. Some 99 per cent of the cafe's menu is gluten-free.

Stewart worked as the head chef of the Coonanbarra Cafe between 1992 and 1995 and then opened restaurants in Paddington, London and Cape Town. He was later appointed as executive chef first at Cafe Sydney and then for 12 years at Garfish restaurant group. Hilary brings her extensive hotel management skills and flair to the table. But this venue is, by design, entirely lacking in pretension. The Wallaces have successfully created a casual and welcoming place overlooking the beautiful Wahroonga Park. Let us not forget about the food. The crispy fried goats cheese-filled zucchini flowers with pesto and lemon are a favourite and it is hard to go beyond the Patina mess.

NSW JUSTICES ASSOCIATION

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (15:47): I acknowledge that the NSW Justices Association held its twentieth annual conference at the Liverpool Catholic Club on 25 May this year. The association's president is Dr John Brodie, whom I have known for many years. The conference was hosted by the association's Liverpool branch. I acknowledge Liverpool branch president Cathryn Evans and branch secretary Lorraine Perry for their role in organising the conference. Other speakers addressing the conference included Sean Langshaw from Disability South West; Kamalle Dabboussy from the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre; Commander of Liverpool City Police Area, Superintendent Adam Whyte; Mayor Wendy Waller, and member for Werriwa, Anne Stanley. Justices of the peace perform a critical role in contemporary society. As John Brodie said at the conference, without the contribution of justices of the peace, the State Government would grind to a halt. The fact that their contributions are entirely voluntary should also be acknowledged. They perform a significant and important role in our community and it was a pleasure to attend the conference.

MILLIE CHALKER

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (15:48): Millie Chalker is a 16-year-old bodyboarder from Tuncurry who continues to demonstrate why she is the reigning Australian champion. At the 2019 Surfing NSW State title in Kiama earlier this month, Millie Chalker claimed an impressive round one win in the open women's division. Millie posted a respectable two-wave total on day one of the two-day titles before taking the maximum number of leaderboard points heading into the next day. Going into the second final, Millie Chalker was in the lead until her friend and competitor Kaylah Pisani got the wave and edged her out in the dying minutes. The year 11 Great Lakes College student is looking forward to surfing against some of the country's best at the Tweed Heads event. Millie will have two more practice surfs with the New South Wales pro tour in June and the Jeff Wilcox Memorial in July before she attends the national competition. I congratulate Millie Chalker on winning second place and wish her all the best in future.

COOGEE LIFESAVING AWARDS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:49): I commend the recipients of the Surf Life Saving Sydney Excellence Awards from my electorate of Coogee for their commitment to our community and their fantastic achievements. I congratulate Volunteer of the Year Doug Hawkins, Young Volunteer of the Year Thomas Small—who volunteered in excess of 400 hours—branch member of the year Matt Spooner, under 15s Lifesaver of the Year Tom Hetherington, Facilitator of the Year Glen Clarke, and the JD Team of the Year under 13s male and female beach teams from the Coogee Surf Life Saving Club. Although he is not in my electorate, I congratulate Surf Life Saver of the Year Mathew Harper and the rest of the award recipients on their achievements. As a fellow lifesaver, it is fantastic to see so many members of the Coogee electorate being rewarded for their efforts. I thank all the volunteer lifesavers who have helped keep our beaches and oceans safe this summer.

TALDUMANDE YOUTH SERVICES

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:50): I congratulate Taldumande Youth Services on its fantastic 2019 fundraising dinner. The dinner included a silent auction, with all proceeds going to support vulnerable and homeless children and young people. I acknowledge Taldumande's continued work, supporting young people aged 12 to 21 who are at risk of homelessness and family breakdown by providing accommodation programs, crisis accommodation and other services that reconnect family relationships and prevent further youth homelessness. Taldumande is committed to supporting young people and their families through challenging times and providing at-risk youth with life skills to prepare them for independent living and a brighter future. I acknowledge the work of CEO Lisa Graham, chairman Virginia Howard, and Kevin Tran, who was instrumental in organising this event. I was joined at this event by Federal member for North Sydney, Trent Zimmerman; Mayor of Mosman Council, Carolyn Corrigan; and Mayor of Northern Beaches Council, Michael Regan. They are all great supporters of Taldumande. I thank Taldumande for its work.

JOSHUA LEE

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (15:51): I acknowledge the hard work and impressive dedication of a special young man from my community of Port Stephens. Joshua Lee is only 11 years old and is already making headlines in his chosen sport of diving. He attends Medowie Christian School and is currently in year 6. However, because there are no diving facilities in Port Stephens he has to travel to Newcastle three times a week and to Sydney every weekend to train. Joshua's medal haul and title results are impressive. He has just returned from the National Championships in Perth with three gold medals and the title of Diving Australia's 12 to 13 years boys Diver of the Year. I recently had the honour of presenting Joshua with yet another New South Wales State Representative Award at a formal assembly at his school. Having sat beside his mum when Joshua and his brother were learning to swim, it is phenomenal to now see what he is achieving. I congratulate Josh and his family on all of their hard work and dedication; it is paying off.

TERRIGAL HAVEN OVAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:52): In June last year I had the pleasure of announcing \$132,650 for brand-new LED lighting at Terrigal Haven Oval. New lighting benefits the regular users of this field, including senior rugby union teams, junior rugby union teams, cricket teams and the general community. Now that daylight saving has ended for the year, the lighting will allow night games and night training. Last weekend the first ever night game was held under the new LED lights. Local teams, the Terrigal Trojans and the Avoca Sharks, played a close game, which Terrigal won 24-22. This project was made possible by the infrastructure grants program and aligns with this Government's goal of improving fitness, wellbeing and greater social interaction through sport and leisure activities. I congratulate Terrigal Rugby Union Club and president John Stevens on their successful funding application. I am delighted that the Central Coast is getting its fair share of State funding for projects like the Terrigal Haven Oval lighting upgrade.

COLOURS OF COUNTRY ART EXHIBITION

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:53): Over the weekend I was pleased to attend the *Colours of Country* art exhibition at the Gosford Regional Gallery in memory of Sean Lonergan as part of National Reconciliation Week. I give my thanks to the Colours of Country team for their great planning and hard work. I thank the day's sponsors, Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council and Gosford Community Regional Services. The member for Gosford and I had the pleasure of seeing some fantastic works by two of my favourite artists, Wendy Pawley and Dal Walters. I have examples of their artworks in my office. The exhibition was perfectly complemented by cultural markets. Once again the event was a great tribute to the life of Sean Lonergan, whom I knew in a professional capacity as Sean used to work for the Department of Fair Trading. I thank the organisers for inviting me to speak at the exhibition. I enjoyed it very much and I commend their work.

TRIBUTE TO ALF SCOTT

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (15:54): I join the Moree community in mourning the passing of 97-year-old Alf Scott, an absolute legend of the community. Aside from five years—four of which were during World War II and the last year of his life—Alf spent his whole life in the town of Moree. He was involved in Moree rugby league for 71 consecutive years. He kept detailed records of every Moree game and was able to recite every goal kicked, every tackle made and every try scored for every single season.

One of Alf's proudest moments was when he was made a life member of Moree Boars in 1973 when the club was known as the Big M. In 2016, in tribute to Alf, the Moree Boars introduced the Alf Scott Medal, which is awarded annually to a player in the club. Alf has been involved in many organisations in his life in Moree but

he is best known for his 57 years as a respected staff member at Assef's Moree. He knew every piece of clothing in the store and was well known for helping customers. Rest in peace, Alf. You will be sorely missed.

TRIBUTE TO RON AUSTIN

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:55): I draw the attention of the Parliament to the contribution of campaigner, activist and "Godfather of Mardi Gras" Ron Austin, who recently passed away at the age of 90. According to folklore, while mulling over the direction of an upcoming gay rights demonstration in 1978, Ron said, "Why don't we have a street party?", thus inspiring what we know today as the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. However, Ron's contribution did not end there. He was an early member of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution, a founding member of Phone a Friend, which still operates today, and later became an active member of the Pride History Group. He was a very proud 78er and marched in Mardi Gras parades for decades. Ron's legacy lives on today. When rallies were not having the desired results, Ron would always suggest different strategies and approaches to celebrate the lives and culture of LGBTIQ+ Australians and people in our community. This has continued to be used to achieve positive change for campaigns, including Mardi Gras, marriage equality and beyond. It has been Ron's positive message that has helped to pave the way. Vale, Ron Austin.

MELISSA HANSON

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:56): I take this opportunity to congratulate Melissa Hanson from Dubbo. Melissa is a registered nurse at Dubbo Base Hospital and was recently named the 2019 Nurse of the Year for the Western NSW Local Health District. Melissa is developing our health district's first residential aged care emergency department equivalent mobile service into local residential aged care facilities, a model that aims to save aged care residents from avoidable and unwanted visits to the emergency department. After receiving the Ian O'Rourke Scholarship, Melissa is also going to travel to New York's Mount Sinai hospital to learn more about this model of care. Melissa moved to Dubbo from Sydney six years ago and believes, as I do, that living in a regional centre opens up opportunities one would not normally get in the big smoke. Congratulations, Melissa, and thank you very much for your important work.

SAMARITANS RECOVERY POINT

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (15:57): On Monday I had the absolute pleasure of meeting Judy, Helen and Rob from Samaritans Recovery Point in Broadmeadow, Newcastle. I congratulate them and their team on the fantastic work they do helping those in the community who are dealing with substance abuse, facing life after prison or have debt-related issues. In particular, I recognise their efforts to provide a Work and Development Order for those who have debts with Revenue NSW. The Work and Development Order scheme was implemented by the former Labor Government in an effort to alleviate the stress of debt in our most disadvantaged communities. Many members in this place would be aware of the impact fines can have on vulnerable people. Individuals can work with Samaritans to pay off their fines by attending education programs and training courses or by volunteering. I commend the team also for the sterling work they do in helping homeless people and, in particular, in drug and ice rehabilitation. I commend all the effort put in by Samaritans Recovery Point and applaud the staff and volunteers who make it all work.

CASINO RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (15:58): Today I offer my congratulations to the organisers of the Casino Relay for Life, which was held last month at Queen Elizabeth Park in Casino. In the relay 350 survivors and carers walked to raise much-needed funds for Cancer Council NSW to help it in its fight against this insidious disease. Overall, more than \$41,795 was raised, with one team walking 888.48 kilometres by doing 496 laps of the oval. The funds raised will be used by the Cancer Council to provide support, programs and services for people going through their cancer journey, their families and their carers within the Richmond Valley. This is a huge achievement by all who were involved. I congratulate them and thank them for their contribution.

EILEEN YIP

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (15:59): I congratulate Eileen Yip, an extraordinary woman in my electorate, whom I recently had the pleasure of awarding the 2019 Strathfield Woman of the Year Award. This award is a unique opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the incredible contribution and hard work of women in the community. Eileen is a local business owner at Paddy's Markets, whose stall sells an array of fresh produce such as pumpkin, watermelon and ginger. What makes Eileen's story so impressive is that she is the fifth generation of her family to own and operate the stall at the markets. Indeed, the business was established in 1940 at Haymarket by her father and is now in its seventy-ninth year, making it one of the oldest sellers at the markets. This award also acknowledges Eileen's charitable work, including supporting New South Wales farmers through drought relief fundraisers last year. I commend to the House Eileen Yip's dedication and contribution to the community.

WARATAH RESPITE SERVICES

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:00): On 6 April I visited the Waratah Respite Services Open Day at the Coffs Harbour Community Village in Earl Street. It was one of my first duties as the new member for Coffs Harbour, coming only two days after the declaration of the polls. Waratah is a not-for-profit organisation that has been providing care and support to older people, people living with dementia and family carers for more than 30 years. Day programs at the Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga centres provide a range of activities for people to enjoy and are a break for families from their caring roles. The six-bedroom overnight respite cottage is fully accredited and provides longer care options from two nights to seven weeks each year. I pay tribute to the dedication of the volunteer management committee comprising president-chairperson Colleen Hull, vice-chairperson Des Kingdom, secretary Chris Spencer, treasurer Ken Ryan, Phil McLean, Maureen Jones, Gurk Singh and Denise McNally, representing the family carers. I pay tribute also to the leadership of manager Judy Bartholomew.

VESAK DAY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:01): On 19 May 2019 I had the honour to attend Vesak Day at the Phuoc Hue Buddhist Monastery, Wetherell Park. Vesak Day is the celebration of the birth of the Lord Buddha. The Lord Buddha was one of the greatest persons who has ever lived and his teachings in life have continued to inspire generations of our community. On Vesak Day the Vietnamese Buddhist community shared their history and tradition through speeches, songs and dance. I acknowledge the Senior Venerable Thich Phuoc Tam, OAM, and the Venerable Thich Phuoc Thai for their work and commitment to the Vietnamese community in Australia. May the blessings of the Lord Buddha be upon everyone.

MAJA MAZIUK

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (16:01): Today I commend squash player Maja Maziuk from Berowra Heights for her recent success at the 2019 Australian Junior Open Tournament. The competition was held at the Thornleigh Squash Centre. It is a very prestigious event with world and Australian ranking points at stake. Maja was among 210 competitors from across New Zealand, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Australia and she was one of 12 Thornleigh representatives. Maja's stand-out performance saw her win the under-13 girls division. Her talent as well as all her hard work should be applauded. Centre manager Anthony Rex also commented that her win capped off a fantastic few days of competition, with all the Thornleigh members having improved and learnt a lot over the competition. Congratulations, Maja. I am sure you will continue to do the community proud and I look forward to watching your star continue to rise.

CUMBERLAND RSL SUB-BRANCH

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:02): I take the opportunity to recognise the work of the Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch and congratulate it on the opening of its new offices at Harrow Road, Auburn. The genesis of the Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch dates back to 1916 when several Auburn ex-servicemen, invalided home after the Gallipoli campaign, met together on an irregular basis. Today the Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch is one of the largest RSLs in Sydney and their new office is the latest addition to their ongoing history. Sub-branches play an important role in the welfare of former defence men and women and their families, and the opening of this office provides an important addition to former and current defence personnel services in Auburn. This office will act as both a place for veterans to drop in and an important place to access assistance, particularly when dealing with government agencies such as veterans' affairs. I congratulate the Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch on its hard work in delivering this new office.

1ST EAST ROSEVILLE SCOUT GROUP

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:03): Established in 1946, the 1st East Roseville Scout Group recently celebrated 70 years of scouting on 31 March at Kalloona Scout Hall in Roseville Chase. The 1st East Roseville Scout Group also congratulated group adviser John Oakey on his 50 years of local service, and celebrated the launch of a new youth program and the return of the Venturers 14-18 years section after a 15-year hiatus. I attended the celebration with the Federal member for Bradfield, Paul Fletcher, Ku-ring-gai Council mayor Jennifer Anderson, former 1st East Roseville scout Dick Smith, as well as several Scouts NSW representatives, including Neville Tomkins, Kerry McGoldrick, Kerry Griffin and Peter Navin. I congratulate all involved in organising the wonderful celebration, especially group leader Graeme Stevenson and the event master of ceremonies and reunion committee member, Peter Read. I appreciate 1st East Roseville Scouts' ongoing commitment to developing character and good citizenship in young people and hope the scouts group will continue to flourish into the future.

MASCOT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:04): Anzac Day and the month of April are a time of solemn reflection on the sacrifices of all those past and present who have served in our armed forces in defence of this country. It was particularly moving and inspiring to visit Mascot Public School in April for their inaugural Anzac Day school assembly. Each year group laid unique and striking handmade wreaths in memory of the fallen. They sang a beautiful rendition of Michael Reynold's *Lest We Forget* and observed the last post and reveille with the deepest respect. I was impressed with the Mascot Public School community. I congratulate principal Helen Te Rata on the initiative. The torch of remembrance passes from generation to generation and I am so glad to know that the children of Mascot Public School will keep its flame alive. Lest we forget.

SILVIA HARDY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:05): Today I recognise a longstanding community hero, Silvia Hardy. Silvia recently retired after 24 years as the director of Narwee Preschool Kindergarten. This makes her the longest serving director in the St George area at the same centre. Over these years Silvia has assembled a dedicated, supportive and caring team of staff and built up extensive resources to support the preschool's program. Narwee Preschool Kindergarten is an inclusive environment with an excellent reputation. Silvia and I worked together to secure government funding to install an accessibility ramp and showering facility so the centre can accommodate children with additional needs. The preschool's motto is "serving the community" and I acknowledge Silvia for practically outworking this statement in her role as director. It was with great pleasure that I nominated Silvia as the Local Woman of the Year for Oatley. It was an honour to celebrate her award at the NSW Women of the Year awards ceremony earlier this year. Thank you, Silvia, for your service.

PENRITH CITY NATIONAL SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (16:06): On Sunday 26 May it was a privilege to attend the Penrith City Australian National Servicemen's Association thirteenth anniversary memorial at Victoria Park, St Marys, in my electorate. The National Servicemen's Association was founded in 1987 and is now the second largest ex-service organisation in the nation and has a very proud local branch in Penrith. The association promotes the health and welfare of national servicemen, commemorates the history and record of national service and has an active role supporting local communities—particularly in Penrith and St Marys in my electorate. It was a pleasure to address the thirteenth anniversary memorial on Sunday and to hear from former servicemen about their role during Australia's period of national service. I take this opportunity to congratulate president Harry May and his team on another great service.

NORTH CRONULLA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (16:07): I congratulate North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club on winning the rescue of the year award at last weekend's 2019 Surf Life Saving Sydney Branch awards of excellence. I congratulate in particular patrol team 7 and Sutherland lifeguards who, with support from the water safety team from the Australian Surf Rowers League event at Elouera, performed a mass rescue after a sandbank collapsed on Sunday 17 February. There were over 50 rescues, including the member for Rockdale. This outstanding multiple rescue was conducted over 15 minutes but must have seemed a lifetime to the rescuers and those they rescued. Thankfully all rescued people were returned to their families on the day. This rescue involved an outstanding display of lifesaving skills and reminds us why surf lifesaving clubs exist to keep the community safe. I congratulate the club on being awarded most awards per operational area and Warren Rennie, AM, on receiving life membership.

TRIBUTE TO HIS BEATITUDE MAR NASRALLAH BOUTROS CARDINAL SFEIR

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:08): On Sunday 19 May I joined the Maronite community at Our Lady of Lebanon Co-cathedral to commemorate the passing of His Beatitude Mar Nasrallah Boutros Cardinal Sfeir, Patriarch Emeritus of the Maronite Church, along with the members representing the electorates of Lakemba, Parramatta and Drummoyne. In his 98 years the Patriarch gave so much to the Maronite community and to Lebanon. Before his passing he said, "God granted me this long life with its joys and sorrows to allow me more time to adore him." He was ordained in 1950 and he taught literature, Arabic philosophy and translation at the College of Marist Fathers in Jounieh, before being elected, in 1961, titular Bishop of Tarsus of the Maronites and Vicar General for the Patriarchate of Antioch. Nasrallah Sfeir was elected the seventy-sixth Maronite Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch on 19 April 1986 and was made a cardinal in 1994. He served as Patriarch until 2011. I thank Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay for bringing us all together to commemorate the life and mourn the passing of this beloved man.

GAVIN SOUTER

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:09): I acknowledge the ninetieth birthday of a special Mosman resident, Gavin Souter. Gavin has been a Mosman resident since 1946 and members may know his name as an acclaimed journalist, historian and author of 12 non-fiction works. He joined the *Sydney Morning Herald* as a journalist in 1947 where he worked for 40 years, serving as a correspondent in New York and London and later as an assistant editor. Over the years he has received numerous awards for his work as a journalist and for his many non-fiction works, including the highly coveted Walkley Award for Australian journalism for his series of articles about Papua New Guinea. Locally, Gavin is most well-known for his work *A History of Mosman*, which was commissioned in 1991 for the centenary year of the Mosman Municipal Council. It is filled with a wealth of local history tracing back two centuries. The project took two years and revealed previously untold local stories and history. I was pleased that Gavin signed a copy for me when I visited him for his birthday. In 1988 Gavin was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia and was later raised to Officer level. Gavin is a tremendous inspiration even in his well-earned retirement and we wish him all the best in the future.

SINILIA RADIVOJEVIC

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:10): I acknowledge today the efforts of Ms Sinilia Radivojevic and her organising committee in putting together such a fantastic Biggest Morning Tea in Fairfield on 25 May this year in support of the Cancer Council NSW. As a victim of cancer myself I know only too well how cancer can affect patients and their families. Without the work that the Cancer Council does, as well as the various events that raise awareness, survival rates would not be as high as they are today compared to 20 years ago. I urge all members from both sides of the House to support the Cancer Council and its mission to eradicate cancer in any way it can. I hope that one day every living being on earth will be able to live in a cancer-free society.

BREAKERS COUNTRY CLUB

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:11): Earlier this year I had the pleasure of announcing a New South Wales Government grant to improve the facilities at Breakers Country Club in my electorate of Terrigal. The \$173,511 in funding from the Club Grants Category 3 Fund is targeted towards golf course improvements, building a new outdoor gymnasium and constructing shade coverings for the bowling greens. We have a large ageing population on the Central Coast. That is why it is important this infrastructure grant expands the range of sports on offer and encourages participants of all ages, abilities and levels of fitness. I am advised by Breakers Country Club staff the outdoor gym has now been completed. Access is free for all locals, so I encourage Wamberal residents to give it a go. This gym equipment is great to use as a warm-up or warm-down when playing golf or bowls. Finally, I note that \$50 million has been provided over the past term of government for these types of projects and I am really pleased that my electorate of Terrigal has benefited from this funding opportunity.

SURRY HILLS COMMUNITY CONNECT

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:12): I draw the attention of this Parliament to the recent Surry Hills Community Connect volunteer awards. The volunteer awards are aimed at recognising and honouring individuals whose volunteer contributions have made a significant impact on the lives of individuals living in the Surry Hills public housing area of Northcott and beyond. I congratulate this year's volunteers: Oscar McKinnon, Ricky James, Wendy O'Donnell, Marie Bidart, Milanda Ertl, Marc Harry, Mary Elwasfi, Mary Jardine, Jane Tai, Nathan Dore, Tim Lau, Damien Gleeson, Jack Hoffman, Fiorella Vayda, Graham Wiggins, Grant Parker and Dee Hagan. I was thrilled to present the awards to the following award winners, who also received some wonderful gifts: Katrina Hendrikson, Barbara Blewden, Kelly Hartley, Jack Franco, Roman Jaremczuk and Eric Thompson. I congratulate also Kira Weiss and her team at Surry Hills Community Connect and Roy on their work in the Surry Hills community and for ensuring the volunteers are recognised for their contributions.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER JOHN PEARCE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (14:13): It is with great sadness that I acknowledge the sudden passing of Father John Pearce, a much-loved and respected member of our inner west community. Prior to moving to New Zealand Father John was the long-serving parish priest of St Brigid's Catholic Church in Marrickville. Father John also dedicated considerable time to championing and supporting the vibrant multicultural community that makes our inner west community so strong. One such example of this work was the role that Father John played in founding the Marrickville Multifaith Roundtable. He continued this important work during his time in New Zealand, including organising a vigil to honour the victims and families of the Christchurch mosque shootings. I send my deepest condolences to Father John's family and all in our community who are grieving his loss.

ALEXANDRA EVES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:14): I congratulate Alexandra Eves from Dubbo on her selection to represent Australia on the world stage. Just three years ago Alex was lucky to survive a car crash and she was told she may never walk again. But she was fiercely determined in her rehabilitation and now she is one of the fastest T36 sprinters in the country. She ran at her first Australian Championships in April and now Alex has been named to represent Australia at the Oceania Area Championships in Townsville in June. Only two female para-athletes were chosen to contest the 100-metres race and she is one of them. Alex has said she hopes to be an example to other para-athletes. I think it is safe to say she has already done so. Congratulations, Alex, and good luck.

ST GEORGE LITTLE ATHLETICS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:15): I was recently informed of some outstanding results from members of the St George Little Athletics Centre. Lauren Carey is an under-17s athlete who has been at St George Little Athletics for more than 10 years. Lauren competed in Denmark last month in the under-20 World Junior Cross Country, where she finished sixteenth and was the first Australian across the line.

Dane Mitchell is a triple gold medallist at the recent Little Athletics NSW State Track and Field Championships, who gained selection in the New South Wales State team. Bailey-Dean Latanis is an under-12s athlete who has been at St George Little Athletics for more than six years. Bailey-Dean won the State Combined Event, this being his third year in a row to win first place. Bailey-Dean competed in the Trans-Tasman Team against New Zealand earlier this year, winning a gold medal in the 4x400m relay. Congratulations to Lauren, Dane and Bailey-Dean on these outstanding achievements. Little Athletics is a great track sport to get involved in. I am proud that my electorate is producing world-class athletes who are already competing in international competitions at such a young age.

CAMBODIA VISION

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:16): I attended the annual Cambodia Vision function held on Saturday 15 June. It is always a pleasure to have the opportunity to support incredibly pivotal charities that dedicate valuable hours to make a difference in the lives of those in need. I acknowledge Mr Chek Ming Ly, Chairperson of Cambodia Vision, as well Dr Peter Wong, Dr Tung Bui, Ms Thida Yang, Dr Hoc Ku, nurse Eileen Betts, nurse Barbara Morley, Dr Chris Brown and Dr Lyndon Chea. Mr Ly, along with his incredibly talented team, endeavour each year to visit remote towns in Cambodia to provide essential health services to those who do not have access to them. I acknowledge also the 15 volunteers from my electorate of Cabramatta as well as the electorate of my parliamentary colleague and member for Fairfield, Guy Zangari, for volunteering their time to support Cambodia Vision in 2018.

*Private Members' Statements***PORT STEPHENS ELECTORATE VOLUNTEERS**

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:17): My community of Port Stephens is the most beautiful electorate in New South Wales. In recognition of National Volunteer Week last week I pay tribute to some of the dedicated volunteer groups in Port Stephens. These groups help to make Port Stephens beautiful on the inside as well. Unfortunately I only have time to mention the work of a handful of groups in detail, but I put on the record my thanks to the many Rotary clubs, Lions clubs, Landcare groups, P&Cs, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, Rural Fire Service, business chambers, church groups, residents associations, action groups, progress association, RSLs, sporting groups, Country Women's Association branches, men's sheds, VIEW clubs, neighbourhood watch groups and other volunteers who make Port Stephens so special.

One of those special groups is Medowie Neighbourhood Watch. Re-formed in 2017, this group of volunteers has worked with police to identify crime patterns and work towards practical improvements such as portable night vision security cameras and encouraging locals to report all crime so police have an accurate view of what is happening. I give a special mention to former councillor Geoff Dingle for his work in re-forming this group. Another locally focused group is Karuah Working Together, which serves as an umbrella group for all of Karuah's community groups. It is a great model that works well to ensure the entire community is working together with a strong voice. Established after the Pacific Highway bypass, Karuah Working Together has helped to promote this beautiful town. It is pleasing to see the community of Karuah attracting more and more residents every year.

On the northern side of Port Stephens, the Myall River Action Group has lobbied for many years to improve the waterways of the Myall River and its connection to Port Stephens. Dredging is a regular point of discussion, as are slipways, wharves, boat registration and maritime regulation. I give a special mention to action

group member Gordon Grainger for his ongoing advocacy for the area and his almost daily phone calls and emails to me.

A prominent volunteer group in my area is Port Stephens Koalas. These volunteers are the guardian angels of our iconic and endangered koala population. In the face of enormous stresses on the local koala population, they are doing all that they can to ensure Port Stephens' endangered koalas will be able to be seen in the wild by future generations. Their work is heart-warming, but too often it is heartbreaking. I thank Carmel Northwood, Ron and Marian Land, Simone Aurino and all of the dedicated Port Stephens Koalas volunteers for their hard work and dedication.

Another important environmentally focused volunteer group is at the Hunter Region Botanic Gardens. Their focus on preserving and displaying local flora is driven by their army of volunteer members and supporters. From laying hundreds of metres of paving to cooking barbecues, there is nothing this group does not do and the results are stunning. If members ever want to escape the madness for a moment, stepping into the serenity of the gardens is the perfect antidote. I give a special mention to Ken Page, who recently took over as chairperson of the gardens.

We know in this place that smaller communities can struggle to get their voices heard, but the collective work of the Voices of Wallalong and Woodville [VOWW] has highlighted the importance of the rural character in the west of my electorate. This charming area is under repeated threat from property developers and VOWW has been a strong leading voice in protecting this rural landscape. I give special thanks to Margarete and Neil Ritchie and group secretary Meg Bear.

Caring for Our Port Stephens Youth [COPSY] is another group of devoted residents. They are from the Tomaree peninsula and have spent the last few years working towards developing more mental health support for local young people. After several years of planning and funding applications it was wonderful to join them for the opening of Jupiter, a place to talk, a free youth counselling service located at Tomaree Library. I take my hat off to John De Ridder, Geoffrey Basser, and the COPSY team for giving their time to work so hard to make their ideas a reality and young lives better.

The Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Association runs a number of engaging programs for older residents on the western side of Port Stephens. The group runs weekly social events, special functions and day trips for its members. One of the newer programs is an art program, which includes students from Alesco Senior College, bringing together the generations in a positive way.

The final volunteers I want to mention are people who did not choose to volunteer, but were forced into it. Members of the Williamtown Surrounds Residents Action Group, Salt Ash Community First and the Fullerton Cove Residents Action Group have spent the past four years fighting for justice after the Department of Defence contaminated their land. Volunteers hold our communities together. I cannot imagine what Port Stephens would be like without them. I thank everyone who volunteers their time, no matter how little or how much and whether they are experienced or they are new. Their generosity and community spirit make our communities special.

1ST ERMINGTON SCOUT GROUP

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (16:22): It gives me great pleasure to bring to the attention of the House the outstanding achievements of the 1st Ermington Scout Group. The 1st Ermington Scout Group has been part of the community for more than 60 years and helps youth to grow, to learn, to be the best they can be and to interact with others by providing training, games and challenging experiences. I acknowledge the leaders for the time, commitment and support that they provide to help the youth that attend 1st Ermington Scout Group: Sandy Know, Xavier Calder, Rebecca Know, Mark Andrews, Belinda Eysers, Stuart Bragg, Chris Richard, Claudia Ball, Diane Higgins, Josie Botto, Tallia Joel, Clinton Stewart, Ann McCredden, Michael Briggs, Andrew McCredden and Stephen Hughes.

I acknowledge also the following committee members who dedicate a lot of time and effort to help keep the 1st Ermington Scout Group running: Steven Spagnolo, chairperson; Paul Grundy, vice chairperson; Michael Majoor, treasurer; and Jason Huggett, secretary. I recognise the hard work of the volunteers who keep the group going especially Henry Cheng and Gavin Marsh for performing general repairs and looking after the grounds and Jo-Anne Fourro who helps with grant writing. I thank also Bruce Know for website maintenance, and Mark Richard and Chris Richard for performing grounds-keeping duties. The youth are all benefiting from the great local programming that is provided. I congratulate Annalies Marsh, Michael Hughes and Rhys Fourro-Huggett on receiving the Grey Wolf Award, which is the highest achievement a Cub Scout can attain. To attain this award they must demonstrate gold level achievements and skills in all seven categories of health and first aid, safety, ropes, outdoor scouting, cub scout traditions, symbols of Australia, promise and law as well as attending activities and meetings and delivering activities to other members.

I congratulate Christopher Richard on receiving the Queen's Scout Award. This award is one of the most prestigious of the scouting awards. The achievement of this award gains the Royal certificate, which is authorised by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Christopher has been recognised as being of good character and a worthy member of the Scout movement and who placed his skills and training at the disposal of the community for public service. The 1st Ermington Scout Group has fabulous leaders, members and supporters who have provided many years of service to the group. I recognise: Stephen Hughes, who received the Special Service Award for at least 12 months service; Josie Botto and Diane Higgins, who received the Meritorious Service Award for at least seven years' service; Sandy Knox, who received the Silver Wattle Award for at least 10 years' service; and Michael Majoor, who received the Outstanding Service Award for at least 12 years' service.

The 1st Ermington Scouts is a great club with many hardworking and dedicated volunteers. I was honoured to join them for their annual general meeting in May to hear about their fantastic programs and achievements and to recognise outstanding performers. Their growing numbers are testament to their hard work. Over the past few years they reopened their Joey Mob and Venturer unit, which has grown from fewer than 50 to 76 invested youth, 11 new chums in Joeys, Cubs and Scouts and 14 new leaders. I wish them all the best as they continue to grow and make a meaningful contribution in our community.

COFFS HARBOUR FISHERMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:26): The excited smiles and waves from the busloads of schoolkids arriving at the Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-operative last week said everything—theirs was no ordinary excursion. I had the great pleasure of joining Karangi Public School students from my electorate for an important State Government-funded initiative to boost our seafood industry on the Coffs Harbour coast and beyond. The students were hosted by the Chief Executive Officer of the Coffs Harbour-based Professional Fishermen's Association, Tricia Beatty, and the General Manager of the Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-operative, Dr Andrew Mitchell.

The visits, which took place over two action-packed days, were filled with plenty of hands-on activities, thought-provoking questions and conversations. Ms Beatty's fishing tour gave the children a close-up look at prawn trawlers and other vessels, and fishing gear, while Mr Cookie's co-op tour took in the handling of fish, peeling prawns and a touch tank. The excursion was designed to educate the students about the importance of supporting local seafood producers, the variety of the local seasonal range of seafood and how to handle seafood in a safe and respectful manner. We hope the students will now be able to urge their family and friends to buy local seafood and tell them of the wide variety of tasty and interesting seafood available in Coffs Harbour.

This has all come about thanks to the New South Wales Government's Supporting Seafood Future grants program. This program is aimed at helping fishing businesses, retailers and community groups boost awareness of local seafood. The Government wants more local seafood on New South Wales plates, because approximately 86 per cent of seafood in New South Wales is imported to meet our domestic needs. Our commercial fishers, fishmongers and co-ops are working hard every day out on the water and in their stores, and we are giving them the support they need to increase their connection to consumers. The Supporting Seafood Future grants program hopes to increase the value of New South Wales seafood and build marketing and promotion capability within the commercial fishing industry.

The seafood industry already has some great marketing campaigns running, including the "I Love Seafood" festival in Port Stephens and the "Loaves and Fishes" event at South West Rocks. This funding program will prompt more similarly great community events. New South Wales seafood producers have significant competitive advantages over our interstate competitors. Our seafood producers have some of the largest domestic and international tourist markets, the largest domestic market, the largest city in Australia, and some of the shortest distances to market of any seafood producers in Australia.

In April I was pleased to host a visit by my colleague the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, Adam Marshall, to the Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-op wharf when he announced that 12 projects would share in \$500,000 funding from the Supporting Seafood Future grants program to boost the value of the State's seafood industry. These successful grants are supporting a wide range of new initiatives across regional and metropolitan coastal locations. I am proud to say this includes \$186,263 for the Coffs Harbour-based Professional Fishermen's Association [PFA], which made successful applications for grant funding under Supporting Seafood Future to help them deliver five projects. The PFA provides a vital voice for New South Wales commercial fishers—in fact, it represents 200 of the State's commercial fishers.

The funding will allow the PFA to boost awareness of the industry and promote its many great products, including: the PFA production of a video focusing on values held in common between the industry and the community; a PFA social media campaign on topics such as underutilised New South Wales species, local markets and co-ops, and local seafood festivals and events; the PFA school excursions, which I spoke about earlier,

educating school students about their local seafood producers and seafood safety and quality; the PFA's winter prawn activity—producing a point-of-sale winter recipe for seafood retailers as part of the Love Australian Prawns campaign; and the PFA and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's Seafood Escape media campaign—four 30-minute television episodes featuring New South Wales fishers, retailers and chefs, and well-known fishing and sporting personalities such as Andrew Ettingshausen.

Short advertisements of about 15 to 30 seconds will be developed that can be used either in digital activations or in-store promotion. If our New South Wales seafood businesses are able to better promote their produce, they will be able to tap into new markets and get more local seafood on New South Wales plates. They just need this support to unlock their full potential and rise to the challenge of ensuring that fresh seafood is available not just along the coast, but also throughout New South Wales.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:26): I commend the member for Coffs Harbour for his advocacy for the fishing industry in his region. As a primary producer himself he is well aware of the valuable contribution that industry makes to his part of New South Wales, and right across the State there are similar examples. I commend the member for Coffs Harbour for his strong advocacy for his area.

Business interrupted.

Petitions

FORSTER-TUNCURRY PUBLIC HOSPITAL

Discussion

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:31): I refer to a petition of residents and visitors to the Myall Lakes electorate that calls on the Government to build a public hospital in the Forster-Tuncurry area to provide a 24-hour emergency department, medical imaging, ambulatory care and inpatient units. I thank the community of Myall Lakes and the many volunteers who put this petition together. It is fantastic to have the support of the Myall Lakes community to build a public hospital in Forster-Tuncurry.

The ageing population in Forster-Tuncurry and the Great Lakes area is growing. There is a permanent population of 38,000, with 20,000 in Forster-Tuncurry alone. During peak holiday periods that population increases to about 100,000, with more than 600,000 visitors per year. The population is rising by 3 per cent. Forster-Tuncurry is a half-hour drive from Taree. Some people query why another hospital is needed half an hour away from Taree. The answer is that parts of the Great Lakes, for example, Coomba Park, are 40 minutes away from Forster and then another half-hour from Taree. It takes an ambulance 40 minutes to get to Coomba Park, then 40 minutes to return to Forster-Tuncurry and another half an hour to get to Taree. That is the type of delay I am talking about.

This electorate has the oldest population in New South Wales. The Lyon Federal electorate population is the oldest in Australia. It is not that the people want another hospital, they need it. The community has been advocating for a new hospital for a long time. More than 30 years ago the community got together, purchased land and built its own community-based hospital, Cape Hawke Community Hospital. That hospital is still there, with a community board of volunteers who run it and lease it to Healthcare, a private organisation. Healthcare already has a partnership with Hunter New England Health and provides about eight public chemotherapy beds, six public renal dialysis chairs and 20 other beds at that hospital. That is a sign of the need for a facility, which is recognised by the community. It is great to see people backing it through this petition. Some people ask, "Why the petition?" For a number of years now we have written to Ministers about the need for a facility at Forster-Tuncurry. But the health bureaucrats have said continually there is no need and that people can go to Taree. The community have said that is not good enough.

I am very pleased to report that on 15 February this year the Minister visited the Manning Base Hospital in Taree and announced that \$140 million would be provided for stages one and two of Taree Hospital. Stage one is already underway, worth \$40 million, and there is a further \$100 million on top of that. Plus, there is a commitment to provide a public hospital at Forster-Tuncurry. Sadly, the Labor Party made a commitment of \$100 million only—not \$140 million—which included the \$40 million that was spent or being spent. So it was \$60 million in new money for the total redevelopment of Manning Base Hospital. Our \$140 million is for stages one and two, with another stage to come. But Labor forgot about that.

Staff told us on our visit that nobody from the Labor Party had been to see them or consulted with them. Labor then said about the public hospital at Forster, "We'll do the same. Whatever Steve says, we'll match it. We have been planning this for a long time." Inquiries to Health Infrastructure revealed that it has not been approached by Labor. There is no planning. Everybody in this room knows that the only planning done is by Health

Infrastructure—it plans public hospitals. As I said, the community are so pleased that we are planning and will deliver a public hospital in Forster.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:36): I contribute to this discussion on the petition of the member for Myall Lakes because I am most confused as to why the member has petitioned his own Government to get the health services that he says his community needs. The community ought to be asking the same question. I am sure many of them have done so and are quite perplexed as to why a member of The Nationals—their local member who is also a member of the current Government—is petitioning his own Government to provide the health services they need. It is because for eight long years, his Government—the Liberal-Nationals Government—failed to deliver those health services.

The member said himself that his community has been pushing and fighting for this hospital for many years. Why has the Government not delivered the health services that he says his community needs? I have no doubt they are needed. Communities across rural and regional New South Wales are desperate for more health services. Royal Far West reports that one in three children in rural and remote communities in New South Wales cannot access the health services they need because this Government's infrastructure agenda—its Sydney-centric infrastructure agenda—does not deliver to regional communities such as Myall Lakes.

This is the Government that tried to privatise five regional hospitals. The only reason it did not do so was the enormous pushback from unions and communities who knew it was a failed concept. This is the same Liberal-Nationals Government that forced mergers on the member's Myall Lakes community. He sat on his hands while that happened. This is also the Government that sought to ban greyhound racing. Again, the member sat on his hands. This is the Government that has imposed ridiculous restrictions on commercial fishers in the Myall Lakes area, and what has the member done? He has sat on his hands.

When we have a weak member whose own Government will not listen to him it starts to make sense why this petition is before the House today. The member has created a petition against his own Government in order to deliver the health services that his community needs. Good luck to the people who signed the petition. I truly hope that this Government delivers on its promise. But I represent the neighbouring electorate of Port Stephens and I know how difficult it is to get this Government to deliver on any of the promises it makes to regional communities.

We have a hospital in my electorate called Tomaree Hospital. Under this Government, the only redevelopment at that hospital in recent years was funded by a bequeathal. We now have an emergency department, but only because somebody bequeathed the necessary funds. Our community has been crying out for additional health services for years and years. Of course, the then Minister for Health came and opened the redevelopment—even though it was the result of a bequeathal from a private citizen and not funded by the State Government.

Under this Government, we have seen neglect of regional health services—and this petition is a testament to that fact. The Myall Lakes community has not had their needs met by this Government and so on the eve of an election the sitting member created a petition to make it look like he is an effective member. His own Government will not listen to him and deliver the services that his community needs. Regional communities are crying out for health services, and that need is writ large today when a sitting member of the Government has to petition the Government to deliver those services. Labor will stand by and support the member's community any day in an attempt to make the member for Myall Lakes accountable for the promises he makes to deliver health services in the future.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:41): It gives me great pleasure to speak on this petition. I pay tribute to the member for Myall Lakes, who has actively campaigned for his local community. Many areas want government services but I note the dedication and commitment of the member for Myall Lakes in not only promising but also delivering. I do not know where the member for Port Stephens has been. I see new regional hospitals virtually everywhere in New South Wales. I see them at Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Parkes, Dubbo and Lismore. The member for Northern Tablelands has a new one at Armidale. I believe one is under construction at Inverell.

In my electorate we have committed to a \$534 million brand-new hospital at Tweed Heads. At the recent State election the Labor Party actively campaigned to move it to the site of a developer mate down the road, which would have involved a delay of three or four years. The fact that the developer has been a major contributor to the Labor Party has nothing to do with it. Shame on the Labor Party for criticising the hardworking member for Myall Lakes, who is simply delivering for his community. We are spending billions of dollars on regional health in New South Wales. It has never looked so good. I am one of the few Coalition members in this Chamber who served in opposition. I remember 16 hard years of Labor when regional New South Wales hospitals received nothing from the incumbent government—absolutely zero. During the four years that I was in opposition all the

Labor Government provided in my electorate was \$100,000 to upgrade the electric doors of the hospital main foyer; that was it. We are in power now and we are spending close to \$534 million. Work is underway. The Labor Party tried to stop it, delay it and make it an election issue—and it was. The election was a referendum on the hospital. But who won the 19 booths? I did; the Liberal-Nationals Government did—100 per cent, a clean sweep. Not only did we win those 19 booths, we also increased the percentage. The silent majority have spoken. They are in favour of this Liberal-Nationals Government delivering critical services in regional New South Wales. I applaud the member for Myall Lakes for his commitment and understanding of local issues. Well done to the member for Myall Lakes.

Private Members' Statements

RIVERSTONE ELECTORATE POLICING

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:45:3): Over my eight privileged years serving as the member for Riverstone, I have had a number of great opportunities to welcome probationary constables to what was then the local area command and is now the police area command. I take that opportunity very seriously. It is a great thing that somebody commits to a career of service to their community and takes on that enormous responsibility. I am honoured to welcome the constables and have done so on numerous occasions because many new police have joined our police area command.

I expect to do it quite a bit more in the future because this Government has committed to providing 1,500 additional police officers over the next four years—the biggest single increase in the strength of the NSW Police Force in more than 30 years. The constable whom I welcomed—one of four who joined Quakers Hill Police Area Command recently—will be one of just over 100 in the authorised strength of that command, serving a district of more than 100 square kilometres; they each have about one square kilometre to look after. That includes the area between Marsden Park and Lalor Park and Vineyard to Marayong.

The rapid population growth in that region has fortunately so far not led to a significant increase in crime. It is a relatively benign area in terms of criminal activity, and I hope it long remains so. But it is a diverse and rapidly changing area with lots of the stresses of urban growth. The police have to respond to all of them and confront all the challenges in the course of a normal day's work. I commend the current superintendent, Commander Jenny Scholz, who recently took over from the long-serving Greg Peters, who retired in October last year after more than 40 years of service with the NSW Police Force. That is the depth of commitment of some officers in serving their community over such a long time. I have no doubt that Greg had a huge range of experiences across western Sydney and other places during his many years of service.

The police in the Quakers Hill Police Area Command serve all those growing suburbs. They are based at the police station at Riverstone—a new facility built and opened by this Government in 2016. It was built with capacity for additional officers in the future. We have allowed for the growth of the region so it is a bit spacious by police standards. Many officers comment that it does not feel like some of the other stations where they are crammed in tight; many older stations are a bit higgledy-piggledy. They have a facility with room for future growth.

The former station at Quakers Hill, which had been outgrown, fortunately has remained in police use. I was able to secure the commitment from a previous police Minister that when it was replaced we would continue to have a police presence there. The transport command is located at that facility along with some North West Metropolitan Region squads and various strike forces from time to time. Police are continually at that location. I thank all the officers who serve in the Quakers Hill Police Area Command and in the NSW Police Force. Each day when they put on the uniform they take on whatever comes. A diverse range of interesting opportunities, challenging opportunities or dire threats could come their way. They have no idea what the day holds for them.

But they do that to keep us, the rest of the community, safe and secure so we can go about our business without worrying about our safety. In the main, they are tremendously successful in that endeavour; they do a great job. I express my gratitude and that of my community to all those who perform that task on our behalf. That is why I am particularly proud to welcome aboard each of those who have made that commitment and undertaken that attestation of duty to serve this community. I welcome them and thank them for their service.

KEMPS CREEK SPORTING AND BOWLING CLUB

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:50:1): I inform the House of issues surrounding Kemps Creek Sporting and Bowling Club Limited that represent significant challenges for the club. The club is located on Elizabeth Drive. It describes itself as a medium-sized club on Elizabeth Drive between Penrith and Liverpool. A significant proportion of its membership and patrons come from suburbs such as Liverpool and Green Valley—that is, from constituents in the electorate that I represent. The club was established in 1963 and has now been on the current site for more than half a century.

The club has grown and developed over the years and has plans to pursue further development. It has encountered several challenges. One was the proposed route of the M12. There is now some certainty about the route. Its location in relation to the club has become clearer and is better now than it might have been. I note that the New South Wales Government is responsible for the planning and delivery of the M12 Motorway. The club's most immediate issues now relate to the proposed upgrade of Elizabeth Drive. The club has explained to me the difficulty it encountered in getting clarity on proposed routes and information generally about the M12. It feels it has now experienced the same problem with Elizabeth Drive.

The club is situated on the southern side of Elizabeth Drive and is accessed from Elizabeth Drive. The club understands that the proposed upgrade of Elizabeth Drive will create a dual-lane carriageway with a median strip separating the lanes. That will, of course, prohibit right-hand turns into and out of the club. That creates serious access issues for the club, and it has significant fears about the consequences of this for its patronage. The club advises me that in March 2018, together with an adjacent waste depot operator, it made submissions to Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] to try to resolve the issue of access. The club's email to RMS was dated 23 March 2018. Its solution was to develop an access road through an adjoining property from the club to join Elizabeth Drive at the current intersection with Mamre Road. That would provide direct access from both lanes on Elizabeth Drive for the club and the waste operation.

The club tells me that it has not been able to get a formal or written response from RMS about the proposal. It has been told by the waste operator that it, the waste operator, has been told by RMS that the proposal was rejected. The practical difficulty is that the proposed route of the access road is intersected by the proposed route of the M12. That means there needs to be access under the M12 for the access road to work. Obviously, for this to be resolved to the club's satisfaction, it needs to be done before too much happens with the M12. It would obviously not be realistic to imagine a tunnel or access being established after the M12 was built; it has to be developed in conjunction with the M12.

After the club lodged its submission in March 2018, a year passed without substantial response. All it had, as I said, was indirect advice from the neighbouring waste operator. The club then sent a further email to RMS, expressing its concern. It also pointed out that it had raised its concerns about access issues and Elizabeth Drive at a meeting with RMS as early as 2015. There have been several emails subsequent to this. In one dated 1 April this year, an RMS official said no final decision had been made, although that appears at odds with what the waste operator seems to have been told. The club is extremely frustrated at the lack of information and clarity. It is concerned that the proposal will be rejected because decisions will be taken about the M12, disregarding the issue of Elizabeth Drive. It finally received an apologetic phone call from an RMS officer on 14 May this year, which promised a meeting that I understand has not occurred yet.

The club's 2018 submission to RMS came after a community information session held by RMS at the club premises on 14 March in that year. The club noted that the session was advised that partial funding had been approved for the Elizabeth Drive upgrade. The submission referred to meetings between the club and two specified RMS staff in 2015 "held in relation to our concerns, being the proposal for Elizabeth Drive to become a dual-lane carriageway with median strips dividing the four-lane proposal". The submission continued, noting "our concerns back then were based on a clear restriction of trade if this proposal was to proceed, as to have a median strip restricting our entry and exit to the club, as members and guests would not be able to make a right turn from our property when exiting, nor would members or guests coming from Kemp Creek direction be able to make a right turn into our property". I am obviously supportive of the club and of resolving the issue surrounding access favourably to the club. I seek to have clarification for the club—a significant amount of their frustration comes from not being able to obtain clear information or definitive responses.

I ask for both clarification of the intentions of Roads and Maritime Services and a satisfactory result for the club. This is not just a general frustration; the lack of clarity has very real practical implications. It makes it very difficult, in fact impossible, for the club to plan ahead. The club leadership cannot provide information to club members—and it is not only members, but also staff and surrounding small businesses that are in a limbo of uncertainty. I am advised some good staff have left because of the uncertainty the club faces for its future. The frustration is increased because this is through no fault of the club. I ask RMS to engage significantly with the club and to resolve this issue of access.

DUBBO ELECTORATE AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:55): I bring to the attention of all members the ongoing importance of agricultural shows across regional and rural New South Wales. Over the past two weeks I have been lucky enough to be part of a couple of local shows in the electorate of Dubbo: the 144th annual Wellington Show, which I was delighted to officially open this year; and the 146th annual Dubbo Show. Local shows have the ability to bring all members of a local community together—whether it is small business owners, schools,

sporting clubs, people passionate about plants, the bakers and jam makers, the sewers, the quilters and, of course, the full range of the farming communities.

People and families who live in town or on properties come together for a few hours to celebrate and enjoy what it means to be part of a regional community. The Agricultural Societies Council of NSW is now in its ninetieth year as the parent body of the 195 agricultural show societies across the State. The goals of the council include the promotion and protection of the pastoral, agricultural, horticultural and industrial resources of Australia; the education of young people through the livestock judging competitions held throughout the State, culminating in State finals at the Sydney Royal Easter Show each year; and to promote the involvement of youth in shows by holding competitions for young people and encouraging them to participate in show societies and agricultural youth groups.

On that final point we are doing extremely well, with another great selection of showgirls and rural achievers at the recent Sydney Royal Easter Show. Stephanie Clancy was crowned the 2019 Sydney Royal Showgirl, and it was great to have her at the Wellington show recently to help announce the local showgirl, Meg Smith. Meg is an extremely talented young woman who has been involved in many different sporting clubs and community groups over the years, including the local pony club, swimming club and lots of dance groups. She is currently studying dance in Sydney and is hoping to be teaching dance from next year. Meg is fantastic with young children and is a great example to young people across the Wellington region.

At the Dubbo Show last weekend Tyla Comerford won the showgirl title. She will also represent her community extremely well over the next 12 months. Tyla is passionate about agriculture, especially the promotion of the cattle industry, and is currently in her third year of studying a Bachelor of Agriculture and Bachelor of Business at the University of New England. Having grown up on a farm, she has been involved in agriculture her entire life and showed cattle throughout her high school years in Dubbo. Both young women are leaders and are hoping to be strong ambassadors for their local communities. Talking of ambassadors, the Dubbo Show was officially opened by this year's Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Rural Achiever, James Cleaver. James grew up on the family farm at Nyngan, and works in Dubbo as a rural support worker for the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

These young men and women are a great example of why and how our local shows continue to matter, especially when times are tough, like now. As I walked around my local shows I was reminded of the many different ways we can enjoy the show. No matter who someone is or where they come from, there is something for everyone. I saw smile after smile at the pavilions as people, young and old, checked on how they or their friends had gone with entries across a range of categories of arts, crafts and cooking. Whether it was a group of men cheering on the cake-baking challenge, a first-time winner at the rose section or excited faces from local school children at the Lego challenge, it was all about sharing and enjoying.

There were also stacks of smiles in the cattle and sheep pavilions as local schoolchildren showed off the animals they had been preparing for months. The dog high jump never fails to attract a happy crowd, lots of people were watching the horses show-jumping in the centre ring, the speed shearing was unbelievable and there were many excited children in the friendship farm areas connecting with animals—and maybe having their first pony ride. It really is a great community event on so many levels. Hobart actually held Australia's first agricultural show in 1822; Sydney was the following year. The show societies were started to encourage and promote the future of agriculture in the colony. Now that has changed slightly but there is still the need to share our successes and our difficult times—shows have weathered wars, depressions, commodity price slumps and, of course, droughts.

Revitalised shows across New South Wales are encouraging competition, showcasing new varieties and technologies, and maintaining that all-important rural-metropolitan link. Especially now, in our world of social media and marketing, educating a wider audience about who our local farmers are, what a modern-day farmer and farm looks like and what a modern farmer actually does, is vital. Across my region we are lucky to have a number of extraordinary leaders in their fields who are taking that modern message forward to the world. The contemporary show faces lots of competition from other forms of entertainment, so they must continually strike a balance between tradition, the need to stay relevant and the need to evolve. Great communities are created by the people who take part in those communities. So I encourage everyone across New South Wales to go to their local show and support the future.

URBAN PLANNING

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (17:00): The issue of cigarette vending machines in pubs and clubs in my electorate has recently been raised with me. My local Cancer Council is admirably pursuing policy mechanisms to have these vending machines removed. We know that cigarettes are bad for health. These vending machines and their accessibility to the public are simply an environmental factor that encourages people to make bad choices about their health. While cigarette vending

machines can be considered environmental factors that encourage poor health, it is important for us to consider how we shape our environments to encourage people to make good choices about their health.

We often think of health in only reactive terms—we think about it through the idea of attending a hospital in an emergency. We reduce the role of health care further by devaluing any medical service other than those in an acute setting. Often we only think about health when we are facing the consequences of poor decisions. However, we must buck this tendency to think of health reactively. Health care is not a product to be purchased or fixed through surgical interventions; rather, it is a lifelong process in which our choices are a central determinant of outcomes.

Urban planning is recognised more and more as an effective tool to shape and manage built environments so that they encourage and support physical activity and access to healthy food. Urban planning can contribute to better physical and mental health outcomes in many ways—whether it is active transport links, greater access to open space for leisure and recreation or more greenery and trees to clean the air. For the first 50 years after Federation urban areas and cities like Sydney were built out, not up. While these suburbs were built for low-rise residential homes, with backyards and an individual's own personal green space, they were also built around the increased availability of the motor car, meaning that the communities they served became more and more disparate.

During this period Sydney's communities were designed with segregated uses—residential, commercial and recreational—rather than mixed use. Homes were built in the west and jobs were provided in the east. This segregated characteristic of Sydney has passively directed people into sedentary behaviour and unhealthy lifestyles, with our streetscapes shaped around private, rather than active or public, transport to get to and from work or to get around on weekends. However, more recently we have seen industry and governments at all levels moving away from the old modernist urban planning approach of segregated use. The Greater Sydney Commission's "A Metropolis of Three Cities" plan seeks to conquer the issue of homes in the west and jobs in the east, by creating urban and commercial hubs throughout the greater Sydney metropolitan area.

Creating jobs closer to home and building the parks, public space and the accompanying active transport infrastructure and connections alongside these jobs, inspires people to enjoy their natural environments outdoors and encourages commuters to get out of their cars and walk or ride to work. In this context groups like the Cancer Council are challenging us to build cities and suburbs that make healthy choices easier. As policymakers and governments building the communities of the future, we must encourage society to think of the preventative, rather than the reactive, approach to health. In my role as Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, I know the built environment has an important role to play in supporting human health as part of everyday life. I have mentioned some of the ways that the Government is encouraging healthier lifestyles through good urban planning. We have the planning policy levers available to us to encourage healthy lifestyles in our local and broader communities.

A quick look overseas has unearthed some good ideas that we could progressively adopt. In Washington, New York and Chicago better-built, delineated and protected cycleways both on streets and through public open spaces have encouraged people to take up a safe and active form of transport, whether for recreation or for their daily commute. Appropriating on-street car parking in some places, where appropriate, for public parklets or mini kerbside parks is a good way to provide for plants, trees, public seating and bike parking, especially in communities with high density and a lack of open green space. Montreal, Vancouver and Seattle have successful parklet programs.

Street planting and increasing the street-based tree canopy has been effective in larger cities like New York and Washington. Planting along old carriageways, incorporating trees and plants into cycle infrastructure, encouraging resident and business planting and properly replanting any trees affected by major infrastructure builds is a proven way to create a sense of space and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Connecting public green spaces has proven to be particularly effective in Seattle, where the council invested in connecting the waterfront with public spaces across the city's downtown area via an old viaduct. Sydney has the same opportunities with old utility, riparian and transport corridors that are no longer in use and could be used to better connect our communities with green open space. A local example in my community is car-dependent Bayview Heights, which was locked into automobility. It is now linked by a new pathway down through historic Church Point. There are so many ways in which our health can be improved by sensible approaches to urban planning.

RUTHERFORD AMBULANCE STATION

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:06): In November last year I spoke in this House about my advocacy for ambulance services in my electorate of Maitland. Tonight I relaunch my efforts to secure the

personnel desperately needed by the existing paramedic crews working from Rutherford ambulance station and the level of service the people of my electorate expect. I thank Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard, for his invitation this week to meet and discuss this priority issue for Maitland.

Since I last spoke on this issue in this place, the construction of the new Rutherford ambulance station has progressed. However, even after it is built it will still be Maitland's only ambulance station. The \$3.8 million building in Aberglasslyn Road has a roof overhead and internal building work is underway. However, progress has not been made in almost six months on the strength of Rutherford station's paramedic crew. In recent weeks I have received correspondence from Parliamentary Secretary for Health, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, advising that the new Rutherford station will be fit for purpose with an education facility and a management centre. While I am sure these are essential facilities for NSW Ambulance, they will be little more than a fresh facade on an already overstretched service.

The reality remains that on day and night shift just one road ambulance rolls out of Rutherford ambulance station that can transport a patient to hospital. Yes, we do have an ambulance rescue truck available 24/7 with two skilled paramedics who can treat a patient, but that is only half the job when patients need clinical care at the hospital. Through the Minister for Health and the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, NSW Ambulance has continually tried to reassure my electorate and me that surrounding paramedic crews are there to provide coverage for Maitland. I thank the paramedics from Beresfield, Kurri Kurri, Cessnock, Raymond Terrace, Dungog and other stations throughout Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the Hunter Valley who assist their Rutherford colleagues. I understand that backup is available for the Rutherford paramedics—especially the rescue crew—and that Maitland forms part of a wider network operation. However, the existing roster for Rutherford has been in place for approximately 20 years and Maitland has changed dramatically in those two decades.

As I mentioned recently, Maitland's population has grown by 25 per cent since the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] census. Its current population is 80,000 people. The ABS 2016 census shows children up to 14 years old made up more than 20 per cent of Maitland's population, while people 65 and over made up 15 per cent of the population. While there is no specific workload information available on paramedics, data published by the Bureau of Health Information provides some insight. Maitland is part of Ambulance NSW's Hunter Zone 2, which stretches from Beresfield in western Newcastle to Gloucester and then west to Merriwa and Murrumbidgee in the upper Hunter. There are 12 stations listed on the Bureau of Health Information's website. Rutherford is the unlisted thirteenth station. Even though Maitland is the biggest population centre within Hunter Zone 2, it does not even rate a mention on the website.

For the 2017-18 financial year more than 43,000 ambulances were dispatched to high priority or life threatening 1A responses, P1 emergency tasks and P2 urgent tasks in Zone 2. They transported passengers on more than 23,000 occasions. For the 2018 calendar year there were 44,000 ambulance responses. Transport was required on 24,000 occasions—more than half of the calls. I will closely monitor this information to compare the data for the current financial year against the previous financial year.

I mentioned earlier that work is progressing on the new Rutherford station. Construction is expected to be completed later this year and ambulance operations will commence in early 2020. I am optimistic that my discussions with the Minister for Health will be productive. However, I must continue to advocate for improved ambulance services in our community so that when they call 000 the people of Maitland can have confidence that help will arrive within a reasonable time frame. Once every couple of weeks I hear from people in my electorate who have been waiting for an ambulance that is either severely delayed or unable to transfer a patient to hospital. This shows the risks to life and health that go on in my electorate every day while this Government fails to adequately resource our ambulance stations. It is not only about cutting ribbons on new stations, it is also about ensuring crews are available to staff those stations. That should be a priority for this Government.

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (17:10): We are faced with challenges in life that are grievous and overwhelming in every respect, and cancer is one of those great challenges. It has damaged countless lives across the globe and continues to loom over our society, yet as a community we have found the strength to face these challenges and become stronger than any one individual. I acknowledge the perseverance and work of Cancer Council Australia. In Ryde we are proud to support all the marvellous work the Cancer Council does as a community. A testament to this support is seen in our love for the Cancer Council's annual Biggest Morning Tea, a now-famous charity event that brings the community together and supports the noble efforts of the Cancer Council. The drive started in 1993 and has only grown since then. The scale of the event is enormous; it is celebrated across the nation, making it truly Australia's biggest morning tea.

Many individuals joined with family and friends in small groups across Ryde, raising money where possible, and larger gatherings have been routinely held at libraries, schools and community groups. West Ryde

Library and Ryde Library both host popular morning teas and even use the treasured occasion to showcase local music. I attended a morning tea last Thursday at the Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club, where the event has become a proud tradition. The club hosted about 160 people and I was pleased to hear that the board of directors generously matched the money raised. I thank the new CEO of the club, Carl Pozzato, club president Jim McClymont and the board for their continued support of both charity and local community. The event was organised by the tireless efforts of Nicole Hendley and Lisa Kardenian, both of whom have donated significant amounts of time in ensuring a wonderful event.

The event attendees were entertained by the outstanding and the immensely talented Lisa Boudin. I sat with Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club staff who were able to attend the event, including Sarah Steel, Penny Wilson, Leah Ryan, Suey Yin and David McGregor. They made us feel welcome and noted that the morning tea was a full house and a great event. I was welcomed to the morning tea with open arms. I was pleased to speak with Helen Boyle and Winifred Magill, both part of the national seniors group that meets every third Wednesday at the club. I met Linda Osman, who was able to help her neighbour Emmie Washer attend the event. I was pleased to see Therese Wells, who was my neighbour when I was a kid growing up in Cave Avenue, Ryde.

It was fantastic to see that everyone carries the same warmth and sociability. The close-knit bonds that we share as a community were there for all to see. It was truly a special morning tea. I find myself fortunate to be part of a community so endowed with generosity. Participating in the Biggest Morning Tea is a privilege and support for the event grows each year. We in Ryde live in an amazing community and are truly blessed to foster and keep our traditions of kindness, community and charity. I thank everyone who puts in a great effort and gives up their time in their community to support the fight against cancer.

PLASTICS POLLUTION

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:14): This evening I speak on the important matter of plastics and their impact on our marine environment. According to Morgan Stanley, approximately 75 per cent of plastic that is manufactured each year is thrown away and approximately one garbage truck full of plastic is emptied into the oceans per minute around the world. We cannot imagine living in a world without plastic today; however, it is clear that as a community and a country, we, together with nations all around the world, given the ocean is in flux, need to do something about it. A lot of work has been put into looking at the entire cycle of how plastics are manufactured, how they are used, how they are thrown away and how they are ultimately, hopefully, recycled.

We need to address the challenge in a meaningful way, looking at investment from across government and the corporate sector to consider the full value chain of how plastics are engineered, manufactured, used, reused and disposed of. Ultimately, we need to look at support for and scalability of new ways of manufacturing plastic and creating a circular economy where ultimately those plastics do not go into the ocean but make their way back into the production process. Interestingly, organisations across the world, and increasingly financial services and businesses such as Morgan Stanley, who have launched a broad-based commitment to develop systemic solutions to reduce global plastic waste, are seeking to drive and scale investments, partnerships, programs and research that are needed to tackle the growing challenge of plastic waste, particularly that which reaches our oceans. That will require relationships with innovators, entrepreneurs, corporations and, increasingly, government.

I know that the Minister for Environment is incredibly passionate about looking at the issue of plastics and how they make their way into our ocean. We have seen the success of the Return and Earn program, which, as we heard in question time today, has delivered some significant benefits in removing litter and plastics from the litter stream. But of course there is more work that we can and should do. It is encouraging to see that whether it be financial services organisations, businesses large and small or the community, there is an increasing willingness to not only understand and accept that there is a problem but also to do something about it. From speaking to the Minister I know that he is incredibly passionate about solving this issue and, as the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, I am also passionate about solving this issue. We look forward to developing a suite of policies and initiatives that will tackle this issue to ensure that the facts and figures that are alarming, such as one garbage truck of plastic a minute going into the oceans, is not something we will see or have to deal with into the future.

DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (17:18): New South Wales should be accessible for all members of our community. But some people do not find it at all easy to access and navigate complex systems and I am concerned for those people in my electorate. People living with a disability in my electorate of Charlestown, as well as their families and carers rely on support from the Newcastle-based organisation Disability Advocacy, which is the largest rural and regional disability advocacy organisation, supporting clients across the whole of the Hunter, northern New South Wales and many other rural New South Wales locations.

In addition, although not having a local physical presence, statewide organisations such as the Physical Disability Council of NSW, People With Disability Australia, Family Advocacy, the New South Wales Council for Intellectual Disability, First People's Disability Network and the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association also provide services to people of Charlestown. Government reports and census data indicate that 18.2 per cent of the New South Wales population has a disability. That is almost one in five people. However, funding for disability advocacy in New South Wales sits at a meagre \$13 million per year. This \$13 million, which is a tiny fraction of the budget but which makes a huge difference to the lives of people living with a disability, will cease in June 2020. From that date advocacy organisations in my electorate will no longer be able to provide people with disabilities with the information and support they need to live their lives free from discrimination and with supports to navigate often complex systems.

Furthermore, the 2019 budget handed down by the Liberal-Nationals Federal Government robbed the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] of \$1.6 billion to prop up the Federal surplus. The New South Wales Liberals and Nationals are following their Federal counterparts' lead by continuing to cut funding to this sector. It is disgraceful. In addition, there is no doubt in my mind that removing this funding will put greater pressure on the public purse. Without advocacy many people living with a disability may end up with even more complex difficulties, leading to hospitalisation, homelessness or even incarceration.

The key issue here is that the NDIS is not a one-stop shop for people living with a disability. In its rush to embrace the scheme—a scheme that was developed by Labor—this Liberal-Nationals Government is neglecting this core piece of disability support infrastructure. Potentially a giant gaping hole is about to be created and millions of people are about to fall through it if the Berejiklian Government does not make a commitment to continue funding. The NDIS cannot help people facing difficult situations—whether it be in relation to education, housing, violence and abuse, transport or child protection—to stand up for their own rights or to find appropriate help for someone they love. For example, an NDIS employment service cannot independently go in to bat for someone who is being discriminated against at work. The NDIS also cannot advocate for improved access to public transport, for protecting workplace rights or for dealing with horrific cases of abuse, exploitation or discrimination.

It has to be recognised that the vast majority of the people who rely on disability advocacy at a State level are not eligible for the NDIS. I have constituents in my electorate over the age of 65 who have mobility issues and cannot access the NDIS because of the age cut-off. Without genuine advocacy these people will not have access to the quality of life they deserve. It is imperative that people with a disability, their families and carers in my electorate have access to a voice and someone to turn to when things are not working for them. Independent disability advocacy provides skilled, experienced advocates who can help people to address the barriers they are facing and provide the expert information they need to make informed choices. Unfortunately, these are not services currently provided by the NDIS. It is essential that the Berejiklian Government finally delivers long-term, sustainable funding for independent disability advocacy.

Many representations have been made to me that New South Wales should follow the lead of the Victorian Labor Government and continue to fully fund independent disability advocacy, information and support. I sincerely ask that the recently appointed Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, Mr Gareth Ward, takes a fresh look at this decision and commits to maintain sufficient funding of at least \$13 million for disability advocacy funding beyond June 2020.

HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI SAILING CLUB

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (17:23): Mr Temporary Speaker Evans, it is great to see you in the chair tonight given that I am going to acknowledge the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Sailing Club, which recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. This is a group that gets out on the beautiful Hawkesbury River each weekend, giving kids and adults an opportunity not only to learn to sail but also to enjoy spending time on the water. The club celebrated this significant milestone with members, both past and present, at its base at Lookout Bay near Brooklyn.

Since 1968 the club has been running during the summer months from September through to March, allowing kids to take part in learn-to-sail classes and a number of competitive events. Run under the banner of the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai PCYC, the club is going from strength to strength. This is thanks to the hard work of a bunch of dedicated volunteers who are determined to see the club grow and succeed. Kids can join the club from the age of eight. Over the past 50 years a thousand kids have been through the training sessions to go out on the water. The club owns and maintains a number of beginner vessels so all you need to bring is your enthusiasm. On Saturday races are held for more experienced sailors who wish to continue to develop their skills in the sport.

The club was started by the late Jim Brown who, with a bunch of his mates, wanted to sail on the weekend. Since this time many dedicated volunteers have taken on roles, both large and small, to ensure the club's continued

success. However, it is the Brown family that needs a special mention. They have contributed many years of service to the club. Jim's son Graham only recently stepped down from the role as commodore and the family was honoured at the fiftieth anniversary celebrations. Their contribution to the club has been immense and I sincerely thank them for everything they have done to make sailing on the Hawkesbury available to so many people across our community. I thank the current committee: commodore, David Downey; vice commodore, Alan Barrett; canteen coordinator, Danielle Bukovinsky; maintenance coordinator, Andrew Eisner; principal race officer, Brian Gleeson; principal training officer and registrar, Alexander Stewart; and safety boat maintenance officer, Greg Lowe.

The general committee includes Brian Gleeson, Chris Wyatt, Ed Kemp, Graham Brown, Jon Sharp, Justin Bakker, Mark H, Patrick Robbins and Ross Bowles. I thank each and every one of you for your time, dedication and remarkable service to our community. I was pleased in 2015 to support the club with a community building partnership grant of \$32,964 to upgrade the shed at the site. The club also received \$13,500 from NSW Sport and Recreation, which saw the purchase of a safety craft. Supporting the local sporting clubs in Hornsby is something I am always willing to do. I was very pleased to be able to help the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Sailing Club with this funding.

I know the committee hopes the next 50 years will see the club continue to grow and they have already started to recruit for their fifty-first season starting in September. They have something for all skill levels, with learn to sail and the youth racing programs on the Saturday. I would encourage everyone who wishes to know more to jump on their Facebook page or website at www.hornsbysailing.com. I take this opportunity to congratulate the club on a wonderful 50 years. I wish them every success. I am sure it will continue to succeed for the next 50 years. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous work of so many volunteers in the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Sailing Club and the PCYC.

They dedicate countless hours to making sure that members of the community who have a passion for sailing are able to do so and enjoy it. The Hornsby electorate is a beautiful part of the world and borders one of the most pristine waterways in the nation, the Hawkesbury River. That is where the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Sailing Club is based. It draws so many people who want to participate in a great sporting activity in the natural environment. Fifty years is no small achievement. It has occurred due to the dedication and hard work of so many people: I pay tribute to them and respect what they have done over so many years. I wish them every success. I am sure that 50 years into the future this club will be strong and continue to do great things in our community.

GOULBURN ELECTORATE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (17:27): As a newly elected member of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament of New South Wales, I bring to the attention of the House some very exciting election commitments made to the Goulburn electorate. But, first, I extend a heartfelt thank you to my constituents for their faith in me and for granting me this exciting opportunity to lead and represent their interests for the future. I am absolutely thrilled to say that over \$100 million was committed to my electorate during the campaign. That is above the \$120 million committed to the Goulburn Base Hospital in 2015. The Liberal-Nationals Government has now committed another \$30 million to add cancer and renal care facilities, including new outpatient and allied health clinics, increased parking and chemotherapy facilities.

The township of Goulburn is a great place to live and is growing fast. I have no doubt this redevelopment will go a long way to servicing the needs of the area and is certain to attract further quality healthcare staff to the region. The Government is investing a record \$8 billion in health infrastructure over the next four years, which will be wide-reaching. It was assumed that the major redevelopment works at Goulburn Base Hospital would be to the detriment of our more regional hospitals, but a \$2.5 million commitment to Crookwell District Hospital is proof that this is not the case.

The Government understands the importance of regional services and I, as the local member, am particularly pleased with the announcement to upgrade Crookwell District Hospital. The upgrade will include the emergency area, patient rooms and bathrooms, ward areas and the provision of extra medical equipment. The good news does not stop there. In regional New South Wales water quality issues are of the utmost importance. This is why we have not only contributed to a whole new business case for water treatment works for the township of Yass but also we have now extended this pledge and will fully upgrade the water treatment works as required.

Yass residents will also benefit from a new multi-purpose community hall project, estimated to cost \$9 million. This facility will be used for educational and recreational purposes. The community has been campaigning for this for some time. I am pleased this will now be delivered to meet the growing needs of both the Yass school community and the wider township. The Southern Highlands portion of my electorate has also received its fair share of moneys, with the announcement of \$20 million to construct a bypass in Moss Vale. It

will extend from Beaconsfield Road to Suttor Road and will include construction of a bridge over the main southern railway.

The community and I are astutely aware of its importance in order to ease traffic congestion and allow access to local businesses in Moss Vale. I will be ensuring this project is delivered as quickly as possible. There is a commitment to build a new police station in the Goulburn community and a drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation service. There is \$10 million pledged towards a major aquatic centre upgrade. I am meeting with the appropriate Ministers to ensure these projects are delivered in a timely manner—I have no doubt they will be. I am very excited to see what the next four years brings to the Goulburn electorate and I am proud to be part of a Government that recognises the significance of regional New South Wales.

LONDONDERRY ELECTORATE ROADS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:31): This evening I will talk about an important issue in the northern part of my electorate. For many years there has been a campaign to fix the dangerous intersection of Londonderry Road and The Driftway. The campaign to fix this road has been spurred on recently by a local couple who started an online petition after they had a bad accident at the intersection. Local residents will know the dangerous intersection of Londonderry Road and The Driftway. I note that the new member for Hawkesbury is in the Chamber and I know this is an issue that will be raised with her. Unfortunately there have been fatal accidents at this intersection. It is frequently used by very large trucks. It is known for being very dangerous.

It is a long straight road that is speed limited to 80 kilometres per hour. It desperately needs an upgrade. Part of the problem with this road is conjecture over who has responsibility for upgrading this dangerous road—particularly the intersection at Londonderry Road and The Driftway. The Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] control Londonderry Road, Hawkesbury Council controls The Driftway and Penrith City Council controls maintenance on The Driftway. The three entities cannot agree on who will fix this intersection. Local residents are calling for a roundabout. That seems to make sense to me. We cannot wait for another fatality before this issue is taken seriously. In good faith the two local councils have done as much as they can. Hawkesbury City Council has again written to the RMS to ask if there is any chance of funding from the State Government for a roundabout at that location. I support that call from Hawkesbury City Council and I would ask the Government to work sensibly with the two councils to come up with a solution.

It does not really make sense to local residents and it makes no sense to me as the local member that, because bureaucracy cannot come to terms with who has responsibility, residents have to continue to drive along this dangerous road. We know there is a possibility that those entering the intersection without looking closely may, unfortunately, get killed. I have written to the Minister for Transport and Roads asking him to look into this matter urgently. I am personally grateful—and I know the community is very grateful—that Alana Wilson, a local resident of Londonderry, has put a lot of her time into getting signatures for this online petition. I recently added a link to the petition on my Facebook page and I urge local residents to get involved and add their support to this campaign.

We do not want another accident to occur at the intersection of Londonderry Road and The Driftway. The vexed issue of responsibility for the intersection seems to be an issue and it seems it could be sorted out. I note that the Government has installed vehicle-activated signs on The Driftway. In good faith I thank the Government for installing these signs to alert motorists about upcoming stop signs. But we are still getting reports about very bad accidents at the intersection. I urge the Minister to consider investigating a way to work with Hawkesbury and Penrith councils to come up with a sensible solution. Surely something can be done to make this intersection safe. It is clearly an increasingly dangerous blackspot.

I do not need to remind members of this Chamber or residents of the community I represent that Londonderry is a growing area. More and more people are moving into this booming part of Sydney. Because many houses are being constructed in the area, there are lots of trucks on the road. I do not want to be standing in this Chamber in six months raising this issue again following another fatality on The Driftway. As the member for Londonderry, this will be one of my priorities during this term of government. I hope that soon my community will have cause to celebrate something positive happening to improve this intersection. We are seeking a good and sensible solution as a result of the Government working with local government to get this done.

FERAL RED DEER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:36): I highlight to the House today a problematic environmental issue that has plagued the Port Macquarie-Hastings and Camden Haven region in my electorate for over three decades. The increase in the population of feral red deer species has meant these animals are in disproportionate numbers in my electorate, causing tens of thousands of dollars in damage to personal possessions and properties, with severe environmental impacts being recorded to native vegetation, lakes and waterways.

I stand with my electorate today to denounce this feral pest and to call on the Government to consider ways to ensure landholders can more effectively manage deer. I am deeply concerned, having lived in Lake Cathie for more than 20 years and witnessed firsthand the impacts of the increasing feral deer population. Notwithstanding the State Government's recent intervention to cull numbers last year, if the current population is left uncontrolled and unclassified we could see further vehicle accidents and, sadly, the potential loss of life or severe injury as drivers attempt to evade this species on our rural and regional roads.

Since 2016 the New South Wales Government's North Coast Local Land Services has developed the Hastings Wild Deer Management Strategy. The strategy is designed to effectively reduce the numbers of feral deer in our communities. The strategy outlines a framework to prioritise actions to be accomplished to humanely euthanise and manage the deer population to ensure the safety and welfare of community members and the protection of endangered ecological species. It is also pertinent to highlight the significant impacts deer have on regional industries, which has only intensified by our ever evolving weather patterns and drought frequencies. The scope of the Hastings deer strategy focuses on historic control practices established to coordinate resources while implementing new control programs to protect key social and economic assets and to evaluate the overall success of the cooperative management program.

It recognises a vertebrate pest management plan is required not only to focus on numbers but to evaluate the adverse impacts of pest animals on people and the environment. Noted as one of the main environmental challenges in my electorate, our dedicated and hardworking Local Land Services [LLS] team in the North Coast has taken on the mammoth task to reduce the emerging pest species. In a reduction program carried out in 2017, 40 deer from 20 properties were effectively removed from an area of more than 800 hectares. In collaboration with the LLS, the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council has undertaken a series of ongoing control programs on its managed land. I must give credit where it is due and acknowledge that those programs have achieved some good results.

While the Hastings Wild Deer Management Strategy and the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council plan has reduced deer numbers in our community, it is paramount that we continue to remain on the front foot to ensure deer numbers do not overwhelmingly increase. That is why I believe the appropriate course of action is for the New South Wales Government to continue to investigate available measures to ensure landholders can effectively manage deer on their properties.

In Port Macquarie my constituency has told me that wild deer are feeding in urban areas, grazing along and crossing highways and local roads, and damaging a wide variety of native, ornamental and agricultural vegetation. There have been accounts of aggression towards livestock and people who have encountered them alone or in small groups. Initially action was taken with deer data to improve public safety. All road safety signs for deer on the highway and on local roads were matched against sightings to indicate the best location for the signs or the need for more signs. The second action was mapping the areas around Port Macquarie that most needed protection from wild deer. Among those were the intersection between the Oxley and Pacific highways, the three major roads into Port Macquarie, the koala habitat between Lake Cathie and Bonny Hills, and Port Macquarie's water reservoir.

One of the impediments to the current classification of wild deer is that landholders do not have the ability to euthanise wild deer by themselves and therefore have a limited capacity to reduce and control deer numbers on their properties. Consequently, the species continues to grow and thrive on farms and in urban centres like Port Macquarie and Lake Cathie. I stress that it is vital we continue to resource Local Land Services and local councils to appropriately coordinate our responses with the best scientific studies to effectively eradicate the wild deer population, which I strongly advocate for in the best interests of the people I represent on the mid North Coast.

MORISSET COUNTRY CLUB

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (17:41): To the disappointment of many in my community, the curtain has come down somewhat unexpectedly on Morisset Country Club, which has operated at Morisset for more than 51 years. It was not finances or bad management which ultimately saw the doors close last week; in fact, its current trading position was quite strong. Rather, the private owner of the site has taken vacant possession of its asset, with plans yet to be revealed. The golf course and facilities sit on 90 hectares of land. They were acquired by the Drysdale family company in 1989 and then leased back to the club under a deal done with the club's board at the time. The company has, I understand, provided the club with rent concessions many times. However, last October Drysdale Metals informed the club's board that it would not offer another long-term lease. Obviously, the original sale was a gamble that has not paid off.

Two weeks ago, the club's board was told it would need to vacate the premises and close the golf course and bowling green. It came as a great disappointment to many. In recent years the club had worked its way back

to a good financial position, due mainly to the excellent work of its board, headed by President Erica Ford. Although the club and associated facilities were given until 15 August to fully vacate the site, the doors have been closed since 19 May. The closure has devastated 719 golfing members, some of whom were foundation members. The club also had more than 2,000 social members, 66 lawn bowlers and 30 staff, who are now out of work.

Drysdale Metals has not publicly indicated its intentions for the site. This has caused distress in the local community and fuelled fears that a rezoning might see the site turned over to housing. I understand there are currently no applications to rezone or develop the site with council. While the site's immediate future is not clear, the Drysdales sought to rezone the land in 2013 but they were rejected by the councillors at the time. It would be fair to say that while the site could house valuable community facilities in the health and education sectors, many in the community want to see it retained for recreational use and to preserve the parkland provided by the golf course.

Personally, I am of the mind that we will cross that bridge when the owners make their intentions known. What concerns me in the short term is a number of matters which extend beyond the fact that 30 people have just lost their jobs and my local area has lost what was a genuine focal point for the local community. The club was a meeting place for people, as well as a place for passive recreation. The club has been—and I believe still is—used as an evacuation centre under the Lake Macquarie Disaster Management Plan. Indeed, it played such a role not so long ago when Dora Creek flooded during what is known as the *Pasha Bulker* storm in 2007. The club has in the past done an amazing job of assisting local people in such times of desperate need.

Not unimportantly, the club is also the largest venue in the area for private functions and public meetings. Near the club's front doors is a war memorial which becomes the focal point for large gatherings on Remembrance Day and Anzac Day. This club has had a long relationship with the South Lake Macquarie RSL Sub-Branch. This RSL Sub-Branch is developing a strategy to deal with this loss. However, many in the community will feel this loss of location heavily. On a lesser scale, the site also houses a Return and Earn reverse vending machine so another location may well need to be found for that as well. Many smaller clubs and groups have lost their regular meeting place, including for bowls and snooker.

Tomorrow I am hosting a meeting with a number of other community leaders in the hope of finding a way forward on these immediate problems. They include the Lake Macquarie mayor and councillors, council staff, senior police and emergency services personnel, the RSL Sub-branch, the PCYC and the local business chamber representatives. As I mentioned earlier, there is no argument that Drysdale Metals has the right to sell its property or pursue other uses, but other impacts go beyond the obvious loss of jobs and a valuable community recreational facility. I hope tomorrow's meeting will allow us to move forward with solutions to some of those impacts. I thank Morisset Country Club and those who have worked for it over the years for everything it has provided to and for the local community.

EMERGENCY SERVICES AWARDS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services)
(17:45): Mr Acting Speaker, I congratulate you on your ascension to the chair and on your election as member for Coffs Harbour. On Tuesday 21 May 2019 I was pleased to attend the Rural Fire Service Illawarra District medals presentation ceremony, which was held at the Illawarra District Fire Control Centre in Albion Park Rail. In attendance was Illawarra Regional Manager, Superintendent Greg Wardle from NSW Rural Fire Service, Councillor Kelly Marsh, and my colleague and friend the member for Wollongong, Paul Scully.

A total of 25 recipients were presented with medals and/or clasps, with a combined total years of service of 665 years. The Illawarra Rural Fire Service [RFS] district encompasses 1,000 volunteer members, 22 brigades, 44 firefighting vehicles and 30 support vehicles. Several local RFS volunteers were recognised for their distinguished service over a number of decades, but none more so than Allan "Curly" Wilson. Allan was introduced to the Volunteer Bush Fire Service by his father, Jim Wilson, who formed the Albion Park Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade in 1952. He joined as a member of the Albion Park Brigade in 1957. During Curly's continuous 62-plus years of service, he has held a number of operational and administrative positions. These positions include senior deputy captain, deputy captain and treasurer with both the Albion Park and Calderwood brigades. Curly is also a life member of Albion Park Brigade.

Curly and many older members of the Albion Park Brigade will remember the sirens that were positioned in strategic parts of Albion Park that rang to request members to attend the station. This is a far cry from the communication methods of today, and did lend itself to the odd hoax call. One of the first major fires Curly attended was the Jamberoo Saw Mill. Since then he has attended numerous fires in the broader Illawarra area and across New South Wales in areas such as Orange, Tamworth, Tarcutta, Shoalhaven and interstate to Victoria and the devastating Canberra fires of 2003, to name but a few. Curly has spent many hours on standby during days of

total fire bans awaiting deployment if required. He has also spent countless hours conducting hazard reduction burns and maintenance in and around the Albion Park and Calderwood stations.

Whilst in the Albion Park Brigade one of the major fundraising events was the annual bonfire and fireworks display held on the Queen's birthday long weekend. Curly was one of the dedicated members that planned and assisted with the safe and successful running of the event. Curly was also involved in organising the annual Albion Park Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade ball, trips to fun parks, nights out and family days and competing in Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade field days. Curly is still an active member of the Calderwood Brigade, holding the position of deputy captain, and he continues to assist with operational functions within the brigade. Allan "Curly" Wilson is a worthy recipient of the Long Service Medal and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th clasps. I place on the record my sincere thanks to Allan for his ongoing contribution.

I acknowledge and congratulate a few other award recipients from across the Kiama electorate, including Steven Caunt, my good friend, who received the Long Service Medal 1st Clasp for 27 years of service as a member of the Calderwood Brigade. Steven McCure received the Long Service Medal for 17 years of service as a member of the Jamberoo Brigade. It was wonderful to meet him and his family on the evening. Randall Macarthur received the Long Service Medal for 13 years of service as a member of the Foxground Brigade. I congratulate Colette Hamilton on her National Medal and 16 years of service. She joined the NSW Rural Fire Service in 2002 and became a member of Oak Flats Brigade in 2008. She joined the Community Safety Brigade in 2017.

During her time with the Rural Fire Service she has attained diplomas in business, management, quality auditing and project management, and certificate IV in training and education. She has also attained RFS qualifications as a firefighter and community safety facilitator. She holds the incident management team qualification as a logistics manager and over the years has worked her way through the aviation qualifications to become an aircraft officer. In 2018 Colette was deployed to fires in California as part of a contingent of 166 firefighters. She was one of six women within the contingent. She performed the role of aircraft manager whereby she managed firefighting aircraft and personnel for eight weeks, working 16-hour days, all whilst living in a one-man tent in the wilderness.

Colette has achieved a high level of competence and has attended all types of emergency incidents—local, interstate and overseas. She is also involved with assisting the New South Wales RFS with training programs for logistics, finance and aviation. Colette Hamilton is a worthy recipient of the National Medal. I thank all of our local RFS, State Emergency Service and other emergency services volunteers for their outstanding and selfless commitment to our region. They are the true unsung heroes of our community. Our emergency services volunteers risk their own lives and safety to help others and to help a mate in times of crisis. On behalf of a very grateful Kiama electorate and Illawarra district, thank you.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (17:50): One of the greatest challenges facing us as legislators in this Parliament is the looming crisis of climate change. Each of us has a duty to accept the overwhelming consensus on climate change and to work together to take real and immediate action. The fifth report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states:

Human influence on the climate system is clear, and recent ... emissions of green-house gases are the highest in history ... Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented ...

Despite the overwhelming evidence that we need to act now and act radically to reduce global emissions, our political culture remains logjammed over how and even whether to respond. The failure of politicians to act on climate change puts us at odds with the Australian community—and indeed the global community—who see the way forward and the urgency of the need for action but are being let down time and again. This has never been clearer to me than when I met with young students attending the climate change rallies in Sydney from Marrickville West Public School, Dulwich Hill High School of Visual Arts and Design, Canterbury Girls High School and other schools across my electorate.

Their message was clear: Even though they were too young to be part of our electoral process—too young to vote—they wanted their voices to be heard and for their future to matter to those our communities elect. They know that our failure to act will cost them dearly. Indeed, they had the greatest stake in the elections that have just passed. I was proud to stand with those students and to support their calls for urgent action. I was also proud to tell them about Labor's bold policies on climate change, both at Federal and State level. Labor's plan marked the most ambitious agenda on climate change and the environment ever put forward to the people of New South Wales by a party seeking to form government.

It included setting ambitious renewable energy targets of 50 per cent by 2030 and 100 per cent by 2050; putting households at the forefront of action on climate change by helping to install an extra 500,000 solar panels

on rooftops across this State, bringing the total number to over one million households; delivering seven gigawatts of renewable energy through large-scale wind and solar projects by 2030; introducing a climate change Act and establishing a new State-owned and run renewable energy company; and bringing experts together at a climate summit. Labor wants to droughtproof and futureproof New South Wales by holding a commission of inquiry into the Barwon-Darling river system, incorporating urban water sensitive design into our planning laws, protecting our urban rivers, investing in cycleways, doubling funding to Landcare, fighting plastic pollution and planting six million trees by 2030—an ambitious agenda.

It is a bold and genuine attempt to combat climate change and to deliver a healthier and cleaner planet than the one we inherited. That is what those students were talking to me about. Their message is clear and remains strong despite the recent electoral results. I acknowledge those who helped shape that agenda. I acknowledge the extraordinary work of the Hon. Penny Sharpe and the Hon. Adam Searle, the advocacy of the Labor Environment Action Network and the work of local groups in my electorate such as the Mudcrabs—the Cooks River Valley Association—the Addison Road Community Centre and the Cooks River Valley Alliance.

I know electoral fortune has not favoured those on this side of the House recently. I am sure there will be considerable analysis and debate as to why that it is the case, but it would be foolish to dismiss those results as a judgement on climate science or a rejection of a bold policy agenda to protect our planet for future generations. Those opposite need look no further than the broad swings against them in city seats like Warringah. We have a real opportunity in this place to break the political deadlock on climate change in this State and in this country. We need to deliver real leadership for our kids so they can trust us to deliver the action that they can be proud of.

VIETNAMESE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (17:55): I acknowledge the efforts and contributions that the New South Wales Vietnamese Students Association has put into its recent fundraiser held on 26 May for the charity VN Smiles, which raised a grand total of \$12,200. VN Smiles is a not-for-profit organisation that plays a pivotal role in establishing free dental hygiene awareness and services in Vietnam. Its vision is to provide world-class dental services—something we often take for granted here in Australia—to children in Vietnam. With thousands of families and children in Vietnam living with poor dental hygiene, it is important that we do whatever we can to improve their quality of life.

I commend the Vietnamese Students Association for their work in supporting VN Smiles. The New South Wales Vietnamese Students Association was formed in 1991 and consists of bright young individuals from universities across New South Wales. The association boasts more than 2,000 members, spanning varying ages, cultures and educational disciplines. Since its establishment in 1991, the association has supported numerous causes inside and outside my community, including, but not limited to, the Fairfield Relay for Life, the Tet Festival and the Moon Festival. It is without doubt that the work the association does in our communities to bridge differing cultures and unite individuals is fundamental in maintaining the cultural diversity that is embedded in the DNA of the Cabramatta electorate.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge Anton Nguyen, Regina Lee and Anne Ngo Thai. These fine young individuals have poured their hearts and souls into organising such a fantastic event and I know that their passion and commitment to making a difference will take them far in life. I wish the Vietnamese Students Association all the very best in the year to come and hope that they continue to inspire young individuals in my community and abroad through their work. I am very proud of them and I can say without a doubt that members on both sides of this House are also very proud of the work they do.

LAKE CONJOLA

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (17:57): I congratulate you, Temporary Speaker Singh, on your appointment to that role. I am sure you will enjoy the experience as I did. I speak on an issue in my electorate affecting the lifestyle and wellbeing of hundreds of local residents and visitors in the beautiful village of Lake Conjola. For far too long residents and visitors to the town have been impacted by low-level flooding caused by the prolonged closure of Lake Conjola. For months wharves, jetties and boating facilities, caravan parks, gardens, native vegetation, lawns, pathways, homes and thoroughfares have been adversely affected by low-level flooding and inundation. Just last month, in the space of just under two hours, the Conjola Community Association reported that the lake rose 100 millimetres, causing significant low-level flooding issues for the surrounding areas.

Further, residents have informed me on numerous occasions that the odour caused by the lack of environmental flows within Lake Conjola has been unbearable and has impacted tourism, particularly over the busy summer season. I am extremely frustrated on behalf of local residents. Conjola Community Association publicity officer Kristen Bird said:

... holidaymakers have lost business and people living lakeside are starting to see the waters rise into their properties.

Ms Bird went further to say: You can't launch the boats because the boat ramps are under water. The water table is so high, all the sewage is coming up through the drains ... trees have fallen into the lake. Last year, following frustrated representations from the community, I coordinated a roundtable meeting with representatives from Shoalhaven City Council, State Government agencies, local residents and the local community association to identify a pathway forward. That was the starting point for ongoing meetings, representations, conversations and contact with elected councillors and council staff as well as New South Wales Government agencies.

I have been working persistently with local residents to achieve an outcome for the residents of Lake Conjola. That outcome must be to open the lake in the interim and to work together to develop an acceptable and workable management plan for the lake. Conjola Community Association President Robyn Kerves has previously called on Shoalhaven City Council to "fast-track and implement recommendations for a coastal management plan and immediately commence strategic procedures to open and maintain an opening to restore some normality to both the physical and economic status of Lake Conjola". Additionally, Conjola Community Association member Dirk Treloar stated:

[...] Conjola Community Association representatives agreed to jointly review the current Interim Entrance Management Policy this year (2019) for the purpose of preparing and implementing a replacement Coastal Management Plan for Lake Conjola in 2020.

I am not critical of Shoalhaven City Council. I note that it has adopted an interim management policy for Lake Conjola and is proceeding to finalise a coastal management plan for it. However, this is due to the extensive lobbying by local residents and members of the Conjola Community Association including Robyn Kerves, Dirk Treloar and others. I mention also the continued efforts of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Patricia White, and Assistant Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mitchell Pakes, who have been driving the issue within the council and constantly liaising with the community to ensure that they are informed of progress.

I am pleased that last month Shoalhaven City Council formally lodged an application with the NSW Crown Lands for a licence to open Lake Conjola. I have been in close contact with the Crown lands office, other New South Wales government agencies and the Minister for Water, Property and Housing, Melinda Pavey. The Minister has been extremely understanding of the issues that local residents are facing, as I have explained them to her, and I thank her most sincerely for her consideration of this matter.

I am optimistic that common sense will prevail and a licence will be issued shortly to open the lake and clear the ebb channel. If not, the lake will open and close intermittently but will remain closed more often than not. We cannot ignore the conditions that the long-suffering community of Lake Conjola has endured for far too long. The New South Wales Government is carefully considering the application of Shoalhaven City Council, which, if approved, will allow council to proceed with an opening of the lake. It is a matter for council. However, I am informed that machinery is on site and council can proceed to open the lake as a priority should the application be granted.

Additionally, I am happy to announce that the State Government will provide Shoalhaven City Council with \$140,000 in grant funding to prepare a coastal management program for Lake Conjola. The funding allows council to continue its ongoing management of the lake's environmental health and will assist the future management of its lake. The coastal management program is the first step in council obtaining scientific information that can be used to develop effective management actions for the lake. The coastal management program will help council develop sustainable strategies to manage the entrance of the lake and to reduce the exposure of the community to coastal hazards in a changing climate.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (18:02:4): In the early morning hours of Sunday 10 February and Wednesday 17 April beachgoers and local residents woke to find murals across the Bondi Beach promenade vandalised with many anti-Semitic symbols. Bondi Beach is a beautiful, iconic and world-famous part of my electorate of Vaucluse, which I am proud to represent. The electorate is one of the most diverse in New South Wales and includes the largest Jewish community in the State. I am proud of that. I was shocked and appalled to see this kind of anti-Semitic hatred perpetrated in a part of our wonderful State—a place that openly and warmly welcomes people from all around the world as both visitors and citizens.

Then, in early May 2019, the Central Synagogue at Bondi Junction was victim to an online threat, which led to a complete shutdown of that synagogue. Our wonderful police, locally and across New South Wales at the most senior levels, were responsive as ever. They provided world-class support to that community at a time of extreme stress. Of course, this took place following the Poway shootings in the United States near San Diego, and the Christchurch shootings, when fear and trepidation were at an all-time high amongst the Jewish community—and rightly so. It is totally unacceptable that members of the Jewish community have to live in fear that is profoundly reinforced by those cowardly acts. Let me be clear: I stand in solidarity with the Jewish community.

In the eight years I have been in this Parliament I have represented them to ensure that they have the safest possible place in New South Wales to practice their religion and culture with pride and satisfaction. That is why during the last election campaign I worked hard to secure a commitment from the Government to provide much-needed funding for the Jewish Community Security Group to improve safety across New South Wales.

On 21 May 2019 I was proud to be at a NSW Jewish Board of Deputies plenum at the Sydney Jewish Museum. I was joined by Attorney General Mark Speakman and Minister John Sidoti to formally hand over funding of \$2 million for better community security to New South Wales Jewish leaders, NSW Jewish Board of Deputies President Lesli Berger and Chief Executive Officer Vic Alhadeff. The funding will not only strengthen security infrastructure but also improve the Jewish community's network of closed-circuit television cameras, control rooms and crisis centres at more than 30 places of worship, aged-care facilities and schools. Most importantly, it will bring peace of mind to that community.

This was no miracle. I consulted closely with the Jewish community on the security funding. Leading up to the election I had many conversations with the president and CEO of the Jewish Board of Deputies about what could be done to assist, and that help is now real. I thank Lesli and Vic for working with me and the Government in securing better practical outcomes for their community. The Jewish community is deeply involved in many local organisations and adds so much to my electorate and to New South Wales.

Although I cannot mention all of the many Jewish organisations I include them in my salute to the amazing work they do for their communities throughout the country. Local organisations include youth group Bnei Akiva, Bondi Mizrahi Shule, Central Synagogue, Chabad Double Day, the Centre On Ageing at Bondi Junction, Dover Heights Shule, Emanuel Shule, Jewish House, JewishCare, Our Big Kitchen, Kesser Torah College in Dover Heights, NSW Friendship Circle, Sephardi Synagogue in Woollahra and Kehillat Kadimah Synagogue in Rose Bay. The Jewish community came here with the First Fleet. They are embedded in our DNA as a community. They have shared in the growth of New South Wales and are our proud partners in making this State so great. I also thank Waverley councillors Leon Goltsman, Sally Betts and Will Nemesh for speaking out against anti-Semitism in our municipality. Whether at a local charity, an aged-care centre, a school or a shule, the Jewish people are pillars of our community. They must have the opportunity to share with us their faith, scripture and wisdom in safety and security.

SYDNEY METRO NORTHWEST

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:08): The completion and official opening of the Sydney Metro Northwest occurred last Sunday. It was a momentous event for the Government and also for the residents in the north of my electorate of Seven Hills. We can talk about the numbers—and I will later—but I will first quote my good friend the member for Castle Hill, who said in his successful motion accorded priority on Tuesday, "The proof really is in the pudding." The metro has opened for commuters as smoothly as the ride on the metro itself. I have received anecdotal evidence from my constituents that traffic for those driving or catching the morning bus to the city on the M2 Motorway is down and there is a noticeable amount of additional space for commuters using the T1 Western line from Parramatta to the Sydney CBD in the mornings.

No-one in this place should find the improvement to services and the benefit to commuters surprising; however, it is nonetheless worthy of acknowledgement and congratulations to all those involved. The Metro Northwest was probably one of the most talked about pieces of infrastructure in Sydney for decades. As soon as the Coalition Government was elected in 2011 it got cracking on with the project. The relentless prosecution of the project by the member for Willoughby, first as Minister for Transport, then as Treasurer, and now as Premier, has undoubtedly been one of the reasons why 140,000 locals and I made our way to put the first part of the Sydney Metro network to the test last Sunday.

What will the metro mean for commuters in my electorate of Seven Hills? Firstly, it will mean that they will be able to leave the car at home and get on a bus to take them from their front door to the metro station. Or, if they like, they could get a lift from a family member to a kiss and ride spot near the station for quick and easy access to the metro. Secondly, it will mean that they will be able to just turn up—no need to worry about timetables—and wait for the next train, which will only be a few minutes away in the mornings. Seven Hills commuters will be able to complete their journey safely with more closed-circuit television, better lighting, real-time customer assistance and safe platform access. It is one of the safest pieces of public transport infrastructure of its kind.

Finally, those on the new Sydney Metro Northwest will be able to enjoy a smooth ride. They can get some work done on their laptop, or perhaps read a novel, without a single jolt and without wasting time in traffic. Constituents in the south of my electorate are now enjoying a more roomy ride on train services on the T1 Western line. This Government has increased the capacity of the T1 line with extra trains and more services and, with the metro meeting demands for our growing area and mobile community, it will soon be duplicated. But it does not

stop there. This Government is already pushing ahead with the Parramatta Light Rail, which will connect my constituents in Westmead with hospitals, educational facilities and the Western Sydney Stadium.

Most importantly, a Sydney Metro West station will be built at Westmead. It will provide another turn-up-and-ride transport option for those commuting to and from the Parramatta area to the Sydney CBD. It will add to the Sydney Metro Southwest to form another integrated transport network, which will set our State up for decades to come. I feel very fortunate not only because my constituents are served by the M2, and now the Sydney Metro Northwest, but also because the residents in the north of my electorate now have options for travelling to the Sydney CBD. Constituents, particularly those in the south, are also served by the T1 Western line and will be by the Sydney Metro West—transport options that will provide choices into the future for my constituents.

This has only been made possible by the tireless advocacy of local residents who never gave up their fight for a line to Rouse Hill. The men and women of my electorate have also worked to build the bridges, tunnels, stations and lines that make up this brilliant addition to the Sydney transport system. To those people I reserve my greatest gratitude for the completion of this great project. They are the people who made all of this possible. I am sure that all members would agree that it is the individuals who built this fantastic piece of infrastructure that are most worthy of our praise.

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS VAN SOMEREN

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:13): I publicly recognise and thank Dennis van Someren for his unwavering and faithful service to an incredible cause. On 19 April 2019 Dennis accumulated 10 years volunteering for the ever-important, not-for-profit organisation SHINE for Kids that supports children and young people after they have been separated from a parent who has been incarcerated. It facilitates hope, inspires children to reach their potential, nurtures their growth and empowers them to succeed. It attempts to reduce the negative effects of parental imprisonment on children and young people. SHINE for Kids employs 45 people and has 330 volunteers. The organisation has stations in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Queensland. Its support stretches far and wide.

Indeed, 145,000 children under 16 years of age in Australia have had a parent in prison. SHINE for Kids enables those children to maintain as normal a life as possible. In the 2017-2018 financial year alone 5,709 children were supported at prison visits around Australia. Dennis, along with all other volunteers, encourages and supports the youth with continuing their engagement in studies and individual hobbies, nurturing and promoting a healthy lifestyle, and invalidating negative impacts that their parent's incarceration may have on their growth and progression. For Dennis, the mission and overarching purpose of SHINE for Kids hits quite literally close to home.

Dennis was in his early teens when his father was sentenced to three years in jail. It was in those years that he felt his family imploding. Dennis' experience in his teenage years allows him to empathise with the youth he meets and to be a steadfast figure of support and inspiration. Dennis, who spends much of his time driving children to and from correctional centres to visit their parents, also focuses on investing time with the youth as a mentor, mate and minder. One such example is his mentorship of an Aboriginal boy, Billy. Now 16 years of age, Billy first met Dennis when he was just eight years of age. While driving Billy to a number of correctional facilities and through mentoring during their interactions, Dennis encouraged Billy in his school achievements and sporting endeavours. Throughout the nine years Billy grew to trust Dennis and value his advice and guidance. Because of his eagerness for Billy to thrive, demonstrated by the endless amount of support he offered, Dennis built a connection with Billy's incarcerated mother and his grandmother, who is the carer of Billy. That provided Billy with a unique support circle.

That is just one of many examples of Dennis' overwhelming support to all he meets and that is because Dennis and SHINE for Kids, as a collective, strive for the betterment and flourishing of the children involved—a truly admirable cause. In addition to Dennis' direct work with the children, his efforts to advance their interests also extend to ensuring the continued functioning and success of SHINE for Kids by campaigning, attending meetings with members of Parliament, lobbying governments, politicians and key organisations, as well as speaking at many Rotary events to advance SHINE and its cause. Again, I thank and congratulate Dennis van Someren on reaching the milestone of 10 years as a volunteer for SHINE for Kids. He is a truly shining example of Hawkesbury's volunteering at its best.

COOTAMUNDRA HIGH SCHOOL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:17): Before the internet, before mobile phones, before I was born, before the moon landing, Cootamundra High School's old science labs were built. It was 1957 and at that time I have no doubt they were state of the art. Over the years, then decades, they were the very site of discovery where the flame of curiosity was lit for hundreds, if not thousands, of country kids who went on to pursue careers

in science. The students of 1957 may have dreamt of some of the technology we would be taking for granted come 2018 when those old labs were last used. The labs survived 17 different New South Wales Premiers and five changes of government, as well as a digital revolution, and I am sure that is something we are not necessarily so proud of. However, what I am proud of is the opportunity they present today. When I was elected in October 2017 the fight to upgrade the labs was well underway. In 2016 former student Gemma Sutherland started a petition calling for the same investment in country towns that she noted city secondary schools received in the budget. The petition garnered 454 signatures. The newest of the existing labs was built in 1971 and the oldest dates back to 1957. In her petition, Ms Sutherland said:

Students in rural schools are already disadvantaged enough without being faced with poor facilities. It is extremely important that we gain support for this petition to ensure the children of Cootamundra are given equal opportunity in their education.

I could not have said it better myself. When I first visited the labs, to be completely frank, I was shocked at what I saw. While departmental officials assured me that the labs were in good working condition, it was clear those run-down and outdated facilities were not going to inspire or enable any students to pursue degrees in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. This might not even be the first time that members are hearing this story, as the condition of the labs was the subject of media attention from ABC Sydney and Canberra.

It was without a doubt the most pressing and necessary upgrade across my electorate's more than 70 schools. After a number of letters and meetings, in September last year I was able to announce a \$630,000 upgrade of the labs. This month I welcomed new Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning Sarah Mitchell to the electorate to officially open the labs. Some 60 years on, it was a milestone worth marking. The new labs are truly phenomenal. The Minister and I received a tour of the facilities from school captains Mathew Friend and Brianna Herron and vice-captains Michaela Webb and Eliza Cooper. We saw the new fume hoods, emergency shower facilities and huge wall-mounted interactive whiteboards—but more than anything else we saw excitement on the faces of the next generation of scientists.

I thank and acknowledge former principal Dale Rands and head teacher of science Alasdair Sides, both strong advocates for the upgrade. I also thank and acknowledge the hardworking Cootamundra P&C and all former teachers and students who signed the petition. I thank the Minister's office for its support and the Department of Education and Schools Infrastructure NSW for making it happen. We want our students to learn in the best possible facilities so they are inspired every day they come to school. But with more than 2,000 public schools across the State, this is a big job. The Coalition parties are the right bunch for the job. The Cootamundra High science labs are just one project in the largest investment in public education infrastructure in our State's history. We are investing \$6 billion over the next four years.

Mr Geoff Provost: How much?

Ms STEPH COOKE: It is \$6 billion over the next four years to deliver more than 170 new and upgraded schools and support communities like Cootamundra across New South Wales. No doubt many of these planned upgrades have stories similar to that of the Cootamundra High School science labs. Our school communities are our strongest allies in improving educational facilities and outcomes for young Australians. When they call for help we must listen and we must act. I am proud to be part of a government that has listened, and I cannot wait to write letters of congratulations to the future cure-finding, prize-winning scientists currently wearing Cootamundra High School uniforms.

**The House adjourned pursuant to standing and sessional orders at 18:23 until
Tuesday 4 June at 12:00.**