



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday, 4 June 2019

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 4 June 2019

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 12:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Notices

PRESENTATION

The SPEAKER: I clarify that it was an exceptional circumstance to give the call to the member for Murray on the bell. The Standing Orders and Procedure Committee is investigating how we might allow the giving of additional notices of motion in the future. That issue is being worked through at the moment.

Private Members' Statements

CAMPBELLTOWN-CAMDEN GHOSTS WOMEN'S CRICKET TEAM

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (12:16): I would like to talk about the outstanding finish to this year's cricket season by the Campbelltown-Camden Ghosts women's first grade cricket team. The Ghosts entered four teams in the south-west cricket association for the 2017-2018 season: the first, second and third grade women's teams, along with the Brewer Shield under-17 team. James Broadbent was the women's coaching director. The Campbelltown-Camden District Cricket Club first contested the Sydney Cricket Association [SCA] competition in the 1985-86 season. The original sides were formed from elite cricketers in the Macarthur region and that is still the case, with 95 per cent of playing staff rising through the local junior association, providing opportunities for all players. Over the years since the club's inception, the club has won 15 premierships throughout the grades and it has won the SCA grade club championship.

The Ghosts proudly boasts players who have played for Australia, such as Shane and Brett Lee, Michael Bevan and Corey Richards. Sarah Coyte was the first woman to advance to play for Australia and I am sure that, with this season's outstanding win by the first grade women's team, more female cricketers from the Ghosts will one day be playing for Australia. Sadly, the last match had to be abandoned due to inclement weather, but because the Ghosts finished the season on top of the ladder, the trophy was awarded to them. I am sure the girls would have preferred to play out the match but unfortunately that was not possible. Many times we have watched matches where Australia was on the brink of a win and the rain has settled in and all has been abandoned. I congratulate the players: Clara Iemma, Lauren Cheatle, Stephanie Ellsmore, Belinda Vakarewa, Kayla Burton, Isabella Greig, Jade Stein, Jess Langford, Claire Koski, Hannah Darlington, Dharmini Chauhan, Yardley Polsen, Shania Martin, Kelly Rowlings, Kaelah Austin and Tanya Bailey; and the captain, Hannah Trethewy. I am sure all of those involved are very proud of the women and their achievement.

HOMELESSNESS

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (12:19): I will talk about homelessness in Auburn but first I will make some observations. There is much debate around whether Marie Antoinette said, "Qu'ils mangent de la brioche", or, "Let them eat cake". Of course it is largely untrue that she used the phrase and its origin is possibly folklore of similar stories across Europe. But since the French Revolution put a stop to the annual summer tour to the continent of the wealthy—a trip not really worth losing one's head over—the phrase has served as a cautionary reminder to the wealthy and powerful. As Cicero opined, "The higher we are placed, the more humbly we should walk." However, this advice appears to have been lost on the New South Wales Treasurer whose recent opinion piece in *The Sydney Morning Herald* seems to be a self-indulgent criticism or his personal assessment of the failings of the Labor Party. In his estimation its greatest sin appears to be a tendency to behave as a bunch of "social justice crusaders" drifting to the left and out of touch with mainstream Australia and, yes, for good measure the Treasurer throws in Marie Antoinette.

The Treasurer appears to have missed the memo on 31 March 2019 when the New South Wales Premier announced that she wanted a Cabinet focused on compassion and empathy, which could almost be a job description for the "social justice crusaders". If "social justice crusader" is meant to be an insult, it is not a very cutting one. The concepts of drifting to the left and mainstream Australia are not strangers to each other. It is a pity that when given a free run in the press the Treasurer failed to use the opportunity to deal with some pressing problems and perhaps take a look at a few numbers around the State. As the member for Auburn I would suggest

he turns his attention to some facts. The Auburn electorate has the second highest homelessness rate in New South Wales. That is not a statistic indicating that other electorates have reduced their homelessness and, as a result, Auburn has moved up the list. It is a huge increase over the entire electorate and a figure that should be ringing alarm bells in the New South Wales Government.

In the first five years of the Coalition Government homelessness in the suburb of Auburn rose 177 per cent. In 2011 there were 478 homeless persons. By 2016 the number of homeless people in that area was 1,322. In the Regents Park, Berala and Lidcombe area the number had increased 172 per cent, rising from 144 in 2011 to 391. In Granville South and Guildford it had increased 114 per cent from 160 to 342. In the period 2011-16 under this Government, in those suburbs alone the number of homeless people increased from 761 to 2,055. Over the course of just five years there were an additional 1,294 homeless people in the Auburn electorate.

That statistic that goes hand in hand with the high unemployment rate in Auburn which is also the second highest in the State. Despite the mantra of this Government that "You can have it all" there would appear to be an ever increasing gap between those that can have it and those that cannot. The record for this Government has not been a story of shiny investment in infrastructure or services for the residents of Auburn. Indeed it is a story of neglect and cuts. Rather than the provision of shiny new trains, over 100 train services have been cut in the Auburn electorate impacting all six stations on the two train lines.

The reintroduction of the tolls on the M4 has not delivered any new freeways or a faster commute for Auburn residents. What has been delivered is a congestion nightmare to suburbs further along the M4 as traffic has been diverted to local streets of Auburn creating a rat run. High schools lack investment and the Treasurer can join me for a tour of Granville South High School at any time. Hospital services at Auburn Hospital have also been cut. Members of community groups that previously had funding to ensure our local youngsters do not become disengaged have told me that funding has been diverted elsewhere. The stark figures for the Auburn electorate can only be diversions for political expediency rather than addressing pressing needs. Importantly, on a day when the weather is so appalling—snow falling in the mountains and gusting winds—the Treasurer might turn his mind to the 2,000 homeless men, women and children in Auburn and ask himself the question whether his comments are a short step from patronising to arrogant.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (12:23): I listened to the comments of the member for Auburn for about a minute and 30 seconds before I heard her mention her electorate. However, I must remind the member that the Government announced in phase two of its \$1.1 billion Social and Affordable Housing Fund that over 1,000 new properties will be delivered through four different partners: Anglicare, Housing Plus, SGCH Portfolio Limited and UnitingCare Australia. That is above the already existing commitments that will take the contribution of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund to more than 3,400 new homes. That is only achievable because of the strong economic management that has been delivered by members on this side of the House. That economic management allows for \$1 billion to be invested in social and affordable housing. That is a tangible benefit that will be seen by many members of the community across Western Sydney, including in Auburn.

SENATOR JOHN "WACKA" WILLIAMS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (12:24): In 25 days' time we will see the drawing to a close of the wonderful 11-year career in the Australian Senate of Senator John "Wacka" Williams. Based at Inverell, Wacka is a Senator who stands apart from many of his Senate colleagues. He does not live in a capital city, he does not have an office in a capital city and he is not largely anonymous to the people he serves. Wacka was born and grew up in South Australia but has called Inverell, and the New England part of New South Wales, home for the best part of his life. He has cared deeply about people in country New South Wales and country Australia and has made a lot of lives better through his service in the Australian Parliament. I said at a farewell to him on Sunday—at the Inverell racecourse, where a couple of hundred people enjoyed a lovely barbecue lunch—that Wacka was an unusual senator. I meant that as a compliment, because he is unusual in that he stands out from the pack.

He started off his career in a very unusual way by challenging a sitting Senator, Sandy Macdonald, at preselection to take his spot in the Senate. At that time it was very unusual—and still is. Typically people who want to go into the Senate to represent our State for The Nationals wait for a vacancy to appear. In typical Wacka style he said, "I'm not very happy with what Sandy has been up to so I'm going to knock him off and take his spot." He was a truck driver and as he drove his trucks around New England and the State he was busily making phone calls to achieve his goal. From memory he defeated Sandy Macdonald 37 votes to 28 or 29 at that preselection some 12 years ago.

Since then Wacka has gone on to be a passionate advocate for many issues and causes that are important to the lives of country people, including the rules around the importation of overseas motor vehicles and motor

vehicle parts; the categorisation, definition and labelling of eggs; and his latest achievement—I think he will be remembered most for this and he can look back on it with pride—his consistent and persistent attacks on the terrible behaviour of the banks and the people involved in other financial institutions in Australia. While many members—including Prime Ministers, senior government Ministers and senior shadow Ministers in the Federal Parliament—berated him, saying, "We don't need a royal commission into the banking sector; there's nothing to see here," eventually Wacka won the day. If we look at what that inquiry has revealed we see how lucky we are that he succeeded.

As a result of that inquiry a number of people are facing charges. They may ultimately do prison time for absolutely despicable behaviour. The inquiry revealed a terrible culture within many of our financial institutions. I think Wacka's only regret—it is certainly my regret—is that he will not be in Parliament to ensure that the recommendations of the royal commission are properly implemented by Government and by the Parliament of Australia. Despite that, he has done this country a great service with respect to that issue alone, let alone all of the other things that he and the team at his Inverell office have done for the past 11 years for people in my part of the world.

From a partisan point of view, Wacka's legacy in our region is important. At the time that he went into the Senate the New England region was represented by independents in the Northern Tablelands State electorate in Tamworth and in the Federal electorate of New England. Wacka did a lot of work to keep the home fires burning. He kept branch membership high and also started new branches in the region, which are still going strongly today. He was also, along with John Shaw—I say this tongue in cheek—one of the masterminds of getting my predecessor, Richard Torbay, a very popular and hardworking member of Parliament, to join The Nationals to run for the Federal electorate of New England. Whilst that did not work out well for some individuals, the end result was that The Nationals now hold both the State and Federal seats of the New England region. Wacka succeeded in doing what he started out to achieve. I put on record my sincere appreciation for his efforts. Wacka was one of a kind and he will be missed sorely. Thanks for everything you have done, Wacka.

GOULBURN ELECTORATE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (12:29): I bring to the attention of the House a number of wonderful examples of the level of community spirit in my electorate of Goulburn. Recently in my inaugural speech I pledged to put the communities and people of my electorate first because I believe that politics, first and foremost, is about our people and the communities in which they live. To extend this sentiment, I believe in the age-old saying, "It takes a village to raise a child". No individual or family functions in isolation. Instead, we must work together for the betterment of our regions.

Although I have been the member for Goulburn for only a short time, I am proud of the high level of community spirit throughout my electorate, with communities assisting communities as volunteers and through fundraising and local business endeavours. The Wingecarribee Vocal Muster in the Southern Highlands is a great example. Led by the fantastic Richard Lane, the not-for-profit organisation assists secondary school music students in channelling their energies into music. The project has no commercial or profit motives; in fact, where possible, Mr Lane is active in securing financial assistance for his students. He is not afraid to bang on a few doors to make his students' dreams a reality. I commend Mr Lane for fostering local talent and encouraging personal growth by building confidence.

The Wingecarribee region is well known not just for its agriculture but also for its high level of community sentiment. The Wingecarribee Volunteer Centre has more than 14 years of experience as a regional leader in providing volunteer support to the community. What a great initiative. It would not have seen the successes it has had if it were not for the enthusiasm of all those involved. Stretching to the furthest corner of the Goulburn electorate is the work of Mr Andrew Corcoran, a boys' mentor and head teacher at Boorowa Central School. Wanting to build resilience and provide life-coaching skills in his young male students, Mr Corcoran recently advocated for funding to provide mental health training to teachers at the school. I was pleased to hear that the Murrumbidgee Local Health District has agreed to provide the training to the school. What a fantastic result—a local mentor doing everything he can to achieve a positive result for his school community. As the local member, I could not be prouder of Mr Corcoran and the local health district for providing the training.

The PCYC in Goulburn is another great example. Recently I had the pleasure of visiting the club with the Premier and the Minister for Police, the Hon. David Elliott. The Goulburn PCYC has initiated a program known as Fit For Life, which not only provides a fitness class to secondary school children but also promotes school attendance. It also provides breakfast and shower facilities and, if necessary, an ear to listen. Amanda Thornthwaite and Mark Croker of Goulburn are the headliners of this program. It has been such a success that it is likely to be implemented in Yass. Well done to Mandy and Mark. Their efforts in improving the lives of Goulburn youth do not go unnoticed. I am humbled to be the newly elected member for Goulburn. I look forward

to further representing the needs of those who have put their faith in me. While all of our communities are different in so many ways, they all have one common thread: a great community spirit and a big heart.

CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:33): Today I raise concerns about the impact of the CBD and South East Light Rail project in my electorate. I have repeatedly categorised the project as a shambles. Yesterday the people of New South Wales were hit with a bill of \$576 million in settlement of litigation by the Spanish contractor. This brings the total project cost to \$2.77 billion. The project was floated at \$1.2 billion and announced at \$1.6 billion and will probably be delivered for not less than \$3 billion. It is already one of the most expensive projects of its kind in the country. How did it go so wrong? The answer is in a 2012 report of Infrastructure NSW in which, at the request of the O'Farrell Government, it considered the prioritising and costing of a long-term infrastructure strategy. Infrastructure NSW must have had a crystal ball because the published and recommended advice to the Government reads precisely like a commentary of what went wrong with the current CBD light rail project. Infrastructure NSW said:

... from a technical perspective, buses and light rail ... fulfil a similar role ... Both bus and light rail can be segregated from existing traffic to increase journey speed and reliability.

...

Light rail is however, significantly more expensive than bus services, has no material speed benefits, is less flexible in traffic and if service reforms to the operation of CBD bus services are implemented does not offer significantly greater capacity.

A 2017 report of EMM Consulting found that light rail would reduce capacity on the Anzac Parade corridor and would require the retention of a third to a half of the existing bus services that now run on Anzac Parade—with the road narrowed from six to four lanes. Everybody in Sydney knows about the disruption along George Street; residents in my electorate have suffered tortuous years of sleepless nights; and businesses in Kensington and Kingsford have collapsed. Infrastructure NSW warned the Government about this as well, stating:

Delivering light rail into Sydney's CBD is a significant construction project and would cause substantial disruption for several years. In particular, the need to move utility services, e.g. electricity and telecommunications services currently below George Street, could impose significant costs and delays. The impacts on retail business are also likely to be significant.

Heeding that warning alone would have saved the State half a billion dollars. Infrastructure NSW further said:

Sydney's CBD is extremely congested. Solutions that work in low density CBDs ... are unlikely to work here. Delivering light rail ... is not impossible, but ... an ill-considered light rail plan can lead to years of disruption and financial disaster ...

The report cited cities such as Edinburgh, where light rail took six years to build and was delivered at three times the cost, and Jerusalem, where light rail took nine years to build at double the original cost. Crucially, Infrastructure NSW recommended:

... other solutions to bus congestion and capacity be implemented before commitment is made to CBD light rail.

Infrastructure NSW put up a big red flag and told the New South Wales Government, "Do not do this". Reading these warnings is like a kick in the guts. How many other public projects could have been delivered for \$3 billion? How many nurses and teachers could have been hired? Those opposite stand condemned by their hubris and incompetence on this project. Yet they come into the House and crow about their infrastructure achievements. I have stood in Kensington and watched contractors dig up the road and the footpath—obstructing businesses in the process—only to find cables, landlines and utility works and place the dirt back again. The people of New South Wales will soon work out the con perpetrated by the Coalition with this outrageous project. It is a testament to the Government's incompetence.

GLENRAY INDUSTRIES

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:38): It gives me great pleasure to talk in this House about Glenray Industries, an organisation in my electorate that has been making a huge difference to the local community. Glenray Industries provides accommodation, employment, respite care, lifestyle and learning opportunities for people with disabilities. It gives people with disabilities the opportunity to live, learn, work and achieve. These are things that we sometimes take for granted. Our local community is fortunate that an organisation like this is able to support people by giving them the same opportunities that many of us take for granted every day.

I also take this opportunity to talk about the incredible community spirit shown by people in the City of Bathurst and the surrounding area. In May 2018 a devastating fire completely destroyed the Glenray Industries laundry. On that day the community of Bathurst woke to hear that the Glenray laundry had been burnt to the ground. This was devastating not only because Glenray Industries employs people with disability, but also because the fire threatened the future viability of the business. Glenray is an institution and has been around for more than 60 years. It has provided incredible and invaluable support for people with disability to gain meaningful

employment. Each of its supported employees receives vocational training and the opportunity to have a meaningful job, such as staffing the Glenray laundry.

The laundry has employed many local people for more than 20 years. It is a successful enterprise that has supported many businesses in and around the region, including by laundering and washing linen for several hotels and motels in the Central West. I have visited Glenray on many occasions and I am always inspired by the incredible mateship between employees, the pride they take in their work, and their commitment and dedication to supporting people in achieving their goals.

There is no doubt that the May fire had a devastating impact on the community. However, the following Monday, through the generosity of the Catholic diocese, Glenray was provided with use of the former St Catherine's nursing home facility in Busby Street. It has a commercial laundry and office facilities and ensured that Glenray Industries could continue to employ more than 70 people. The diocese's generosity also meant that the laundry could continue to operate and to fulfil service agreements that it already entered into with commercial operators. The Premier visited Glenray last year when it was operating out of St Catherine's nursing home and announced a \$10,000 grant to purchase equipment and ensure it could get through that particularly tough time.

The New South Wales Government has since given Glenray additional funds so that it can buy more new equipment. It is most exciting that new premises were built earlier this year and the laundry has now officially reopened. At the reopening ceremony we acknowledged the support and generosity of the wider community and shared in the staff's appreciation and delight at having a new facility. This modern, first-class facility will continue to provide employment and to service the wider area. I congratulate Brian Adams and the board of Glenray, who have done an amazing job through this difficult time and seen a brand-new local facility rise from the ashes. It is most important for families whose loved ones work in that facility to know they have a place to go each day where they can enjoy the company of the people around them.

STRATA COMMITTEES

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:43): More than one million people live in strata communities in this State, and the sector is growing rapidly. Apartments already represent 80 per cent of homes in my electorate. Increasingly, I hear from owners and occupiers about problems for which the available dispute resolution processes are difficult, expensive and slow—if not non-existent. We urgently need reform to promote consumer protection, social cohesion and better living. I am particularly concerned about corruption, serious maladministration or problems that put residents' health and safety at risk and where mediation and tribunal action do not help. I raise two examples recently presented to my office. In one building five owners separately reported serious allegations that the strata committee and strata manager collude to extort funds from owners. They say that works are conducted without owners corporation approval, essential work that affects non-committee members is never approved, jobs are contracted to committee associates at inflated prices, common property works are charged to individual lot owners and the strata manager ignores owners other than members of the strata committee.

One owner could not get the committee to approve an electrician to fix her bathroom light after a pipe burst and flooded the fixture, even after EnergyAustralia confirmed that using the light posed an electrocution risk. I understand from owners that the chairperson and treasurer of the committee are married and hold multiple proxies, which they demand from letting agents in the building. It is unclear whether their proxies exceed permissible limits. Owners tell me that the strata manager gives the chairperson and treasurer unfettered access to the owners corporation's funds without needed approvals. They tell me that funds were used to pay legal fees to fight other owners taking action about these concerns without approval at a general meeting. Now owners are scared to pursue their rights in court.

In a different building, constituents reported that the ceiling in five rooms of their top-floor apartment has leaked since they moved in in 2015. They cannot use their kitchen when it rains and they cannot sell or lease the property because of damage and mould. The problem was clearly identified as the roof membrane but the strata committee denied responsibility for repairs. My constituents tell me that the committee also refuses to fix a non-compliant fire door connected to their home. The owners have spent over \$200,000 in legal fees taking their case to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. Despite multiple rulings in their favour, the committee continues to refuse to conduct repairs and NCAT has no power to force compliance. The owners have few options other than to keep pursuing the matter through the tribunal and the courts. Meanwhile, their health and safety is at risk and their home does not function.

As in the previous example, these constituents tell me that the committee used building funds for legal fees to fight their case without approval at a general meeting. They also told me that the members blocking essential building works wield power through holding large numbers of proxies. The Government's responses to my representations show how difficult it can be to get fairness in schemes where serious corruption and

dysfunction exist. Owners concerned that their strata manager and committee collude to misappropriate funds were told to raise their concerns about the strata manager with the strata committee or to ask the strata manager to add a motion to a general meeting to discuss the matter. Owners who were unable to get urgent repairs to damage that creates serious risks to health and safety were told to try mediation and tribunal action, despite the likelihood of a drawn-out case and lack of remedy even if the tribunal rules in their favour.

The Owners Corporation Network reports that this sort of serious dysfunction occurs regularly. In other cases of corruption, serious maladministration or when someone's health and safety is at risk there are oversight bodies that can investigate, such as the police, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission or SafeWork NSW. Fair Trading is not sufficiently resourced or empowered to enforce the law. We urgently need a dedicated commissioner for strata who has oversight and audit powers to review serious issues. A commissioner would address other strata challenges including defects, fire safety, proxy farming, short-term letting, renewal and sustainability.

Strata communities are more than just consumers of property services; they are constituents of the fastest-growing form of housing. They warrant a dedicated statutory officer to provide support and to advise government. Strata committees increasingly deal with complex issues and I support the owners corporation strata committee support service proposal for providing independent support, advice, training and representation funded by a small fee on levies. If owners in dysfunctional buildings cannot get help, apartments will be seen as an unattractive investment and living option at a time when population and economic growth depend on high-rise living. I call on the Government to create a new commissioner for strata living.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:48): In May this year the Country Women's Association of New South Wales Conference was held in the beautiful surrounds of Albury. The conference took place over five days and included workshops, business sessions, various displays and social activities involving the 460 delegates and other visitors. Because I was raised on the land, I am fully aware of the positive influence that the Country Women's Association [CWA] has had, and continues to have, on regional Australia. My family has its own connection with the CWA and it has contributed to my upbringing.

The CWA was formed in 1922 when country women were fighting isolation and a lack of health facilities. The members worked tirelessly to build and staff maternity wards, hospitals, schools and rest homes, as well as set up baby health centres, fund bush nurses and so much more. Overall, membership in the New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory divisions of the CWA comprises women from all walks of life and includes approximately 8,000 women in 370 local branches. This is further devolved into 30 groups of which Murray is the local group for the Albury electorate.

The conference in Albury marked the ninety-seventh time that CWA branches have come together to discuss issues that are important to the health of our regional communities. The importance of this conference was recognised by the Governor of New South Wales, Justice Margaret Beazley, as she made the journey down the Hume to open proceedings. Murray Group President Genevieve Knobel personally invited the Prime Minister during his September 2018 visit to Albury to attend the event. Despite the Federal election campaign, the Prime Minister kindly took the time to attend the conference. It is fair to say that Genevieve was delighted he accepted the invitation. The economic benefits for the local community were there for all to see as local motels, restaurants and cafes were booked out during the conference. CWA members also travelled further afield to visit the delightful surrounds of Albury, boosting the local tourism industry. Genevieve and her crew did a great job as they hosted this showpiece event at the Albury Entertainment Centre. The conference welcomed members from across New South Wales. One member, Mrs Willoughby-Reynolds, said that this was her thirtieth conference and "this one was up there with the best of them".

The conference focused on medical research that the CWA has funded for endometriosis. Findings presented at the conference showed some very positive results and delegates expressed the hope that maybe in five or six years there will be a simple test rather than women being required to submit to surgery—what a great outcome that would be for all women in Australia. Country women have left us in no doubt that they are concerned about the impact of drought on their regional and rural communities and about the issues surrounding planning for the Murray-Darling Basin. They were particularly keen to discuss the quality of drinking water for regional communities and the need for it to be of the highest priority for their membership. These dedicated women are concerned that the quality of drinking water is completely inadequate for many regional areas. They rightly state that both water supply and water quality should offer similar standards as those afforded to metropolitan residents. With that in mind, they are intending to speak to governments at all levels to promote the idea of greater transparency in decision-making around the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. Another discussion point that the CWA is pursuing relates to drones. The devices are becoming increasingly prevalent and, whilst they can be used for

legitimate and useful purposes, there are concerns that drones are encroaching on the privacy of people both on the land and in urban areas.

The CWA is an organisation that spreads far and wide across Australia. It certainly extends right across the Albury electorate. Nine branches within the electorate make up the Murray Group—Albury, Albury Evening, Gerogery, Holbrook, Jindera, Little Billabong, Oaklands, Table Top and Glen-Mannus. The group covers very different geographical areas throughout the electorate and is a great example of the diversity of women represented by the CWA. Having the CWA come together for its annual conference in Albury was an honour for us and further demonstrated the importance of the city within the landscape of regional New South Wales. The women loved being in town and took full advantage of all the great things the city has to offer. In short, the conference was a triumph for the CWA and Albury. Many tangible outcomes came from the conference that will help to ensure that the CWA remains as relevant today as it was when it was formed in 1922.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (12:53): I congratulate the member for Albury on raising the topic of the Country Women's Association [CWA]. I am a proud member of the CWA branch of Milton. I encourage the member to go along to its morning teas and experience some of the joys that the CWA members can create. The member for Albury raised the importance of the CWA in regional New South Wales and its history as a very strong and committed organisation. Now, more than ever, as many regions are facing drought, the CWA is becoming a vital part of those communities. I congratulate the member for Albury on reaching out to the CWA and attending the conference. He should make sure he goes to the morning teas.

WICKED CAMPERS

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (12:54): Local residents in my Lismore electorate have requested that I seek changes to the law to rid our roads of the vans that display racist, sexist and, in some cases, misogynist slogans—commonly called Wicked camper vans. On 27 April a resident emailed me saying, "Hi Janelle, this is disgusting." She was referring to a slogan that I cannot repeat in this place, as robust as this place can be. She further stated, "Anything that you can do to help get them off our roads would be great." I responded saying, "I agree. The slogan is demeaning. I shall do my best to help stop this menace and explore what action can be taken and/or needs to be through the Parliament."

The action I decided to take was to inform the community of my view and intended actions. I drafted a letter to the editor, which was published in *The Northern Star*. I undertook research to try to determine what the law is in New South Wales and searched other jurisdictions for the national approach, particularly Queensland where a group of women activists had some success with getting the law changed. I asked the Parliamentary Library staff to undertake specific research. I thank them and acknowledge their excellent work. The next thing that happened—and this brings me to the Country Women's Association, which makes three members who have referred to it today—is that the news then broke that the CWA had begun a campaign to rid our roads of these most offensive slogans. The Bangalow branch of the CWA Far North Coast Group moved the following motion for urgency:

That the policy of CWA of NSW be to have vehicles bearing slogans promoting sexism, racism and violence banned from Australian roads.

The motion was agreed to at the conference to which the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads and the Minister for Local Government referred earlier. I confirmed it was moved by the Bangalow branch. I have had contact with the branch president, Di Campbell, who has made public comment on the matter. Can members imagine anyone writing the slogans and anyone wanting to drive a van with the slogans on it? Where are their heads? Really! We are not in the 1970s. I understand that other MPs have expressed their concern in this place and the other place. Some members have discussed this with me with a view to taking concerted action. I stand to be corrected but when I researched the legal framework I deduced that in New South Wales a vehicle may be refused registration if it has been registered in another State or Territory, the registration in that State has been cancelled or suspended and the reasons for the cancellation or suspension still exist.

That is a start but it does not result in the desired removal off our roads of vans with offensive slogans. We need to find a more straightforward way to do it. Under the advertising standards framework some slogans can be found to be offensive, but there is no legal rational power within the framework to act. Perhaps we could consider a two-step approach. The first step would be that New South Wales laws be changed to have the vehicles deregistered if Ad Standards finds them to be offensive. However, it would be ideal to be able to have them off our roads the second we sight them and not have to undertake a long process and wait for the vehicle to be found offensive and then removed. The second step would be that as a Parliament we could seek to have the matter debated with a view to finding a way forward to settle it.

I commend local residents for raising this with me. We have seen a lot of those vans on our roads in the Northern Rivers area. Some parents and grandparents say, "I've got the kids in the car and I don't want them reading these slogans." I have placed a question on notice to ask the Attorney General about specific details around this. My private member's statement is not meant to pre-empt his response but rather to further advance the campaign to rid our roads of these disgraceful slogans.

BALMAIN ELECTORATE FERRY SERVICES

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (12:59): More than 14 million people cross Sydney Harbour by ferry every year. With congestion increasing throughout our city, ferries provide a unique public transport solution that takes traffic off our roads and provides a fantastic trip for both commuters for work and also for tourists. This is especially important in my electorate of Balmain—a beautiful peninsula with limited space surrounded by a huge expanse of water. I have been a strong advocate for the improvement of our ferry network, particularly the infrastructure. I have been working hard to ensure that our ferry wharves are accessible for people with disabilities, for parents and for people with prams. Since my election in 2011 I am delighted to say that there has been significant investment in our ferry network; in particular, an investment in excess of \$10 million in our local wharves to focus on increasing accessibility. But we can do more.

While improving accessibility has been a key focus for me, it is clear now that we need to expand the network. In Glebe and Annandale almost 5,000 people have signed our petition for new ferry stops. We have had strong support for our proposal for a new ferry stop at White Bay and over 1,400 people have supported our campaign to reinstate ferry services at west Balmain. My office has also invested in a feasibility study to demonstrate the case for new ferry services. Researchers John Stamolis and Conrad Waters outlined two potential scenarios using the 2011 census and New South Wales Bureau of Transport data to estimate the use of a Glebe ferry service by workers. They overlaid the results of these scenarios with ferry census data to estimate the total use of a Glebe ferry service by all potential commuters; that is, workers and other commuters.

Of course, workers are the key and the foundation for the provision of a new service, so we focused on that cohort in particular. The transport survey we used was based on 2011 data. Since then, Sydney's population has grown by more than 1 million people. We have had some significant developments in the area, such as the Harold Park development, which is ideally positioned to benefit from a new ferry service. People in areas adjacent to Glebe-Forest Lodge, such as Annandale and parts of Pyrmont and Ultimo, could also use this service to boost numbers. We have been talking about an Annandale and Glebe service and I wanted to mention the Glebe one today, in particular.

Scenario one set out in the feasibility study uses 2011 census data relating to ferry use for three suburbs that have similar characteristics to Glebe. Inner-city locations that share Glebe's comparatively high residential numbers are Balmain, where 6.9 per cent of residents travel to work by ferry; Kirribilli, 9.1 per cent; and Balmain East, 23 per cent. The number of trips that workers would take on a Glebe ferry service was estimated by applying a usage rate of 8 per cent, which is at the lower end for these suburbs. The results from scenario one estimate that a total of 601 Glebe workers would use a ferry each day, which is over 1,202 return trips; while 527 workers or 1,054 return trips would come to Glebe from other locations.

Scenario two refines scenario one by narrowing it down to a more specific subset of people: those who travel from Glebe to a workplace near an existing wharf. For Glebe-Forest Lodge, a surprisingly high figure of 4,139, or 55 per cent, of workers met this criterion. It then considers the number of workers who travel to Glebe from a location near a ferry wharf, which was 955 workers. Again, the research applied a usage rate of 8 per cent, which means that 331 Glebe workers would use the service and 76 would come to Glebe using a ferry. Using both estimates, Glebe was seen as viable when compared with worker use of other ferries. In both cases, the results for Glebe rank very high amongst existing established ferry services. If we look at performance and take out tourist locations such as Manly, Taronga Zoo and Cockatoo Island, a Glebe ferry service would outperform Neutral Bay, Cremorne Point, Meadowbank, Abbotsford, Woolwich, Rydalmere, Parramatta, Double Bay, South Mosman, Huntleys Point, Drummoyne, Kirribilli and so on. This document indicates how important this facility and new ferry service could be.

While we support public ownership and operation of public transport, we recognise that the Government is considering expanding the service. We have presented this case to the operator of our ferries, and provided it to the Minister for Transport and Roads. The data is solid, and the customer demand and community support is clearly there. I will continue to work incredibly hard to make sure that we can expand our ferry services. We want people to be able to take a quick, enjoyable and positive trip to reduce road congestion by taking people out of buses and off our roads. I look forward to working with the Minister for Transport and Roads to ensure that we can introduce new services, in particular at Glebe and Annandale. I commend this issue to the Minister, and look forward to working constructively to expand our public transport network.

ROYAL INSTITUTE FOR DEAF AND BLIND CHILDREN

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (13:04): I convey the thoughts and concerns of the people of Baulkham Hills regarding the community work done by the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children [RIDBC] in North Rocks to assist children and families in the past year. On Wednesday 22 May the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, Gareth Ward, and I attended the RIDBC's annual general meeting. I am pleased to inform the House that 2018 marked the third year of a substantial strategic evolution for the RIDBC that will result in a new era of service provision for Australians with vision or hearing loss, their families and the professionals who support them.

For members who may be unfamiliar with the RIDBC, it is Australia's largest non-government provider of education, therapy and cochlear implant services for children and adults with vision or hearing loss, their families and the professionals who work tirelessly to ensure that their disabilities do not hinder their lifestyle. Since its establishment in 1860—20 years before education became compulsory for sighted and hearing children in this State and more than 80 years before school attendance became compulsory for children who were deaf and blind—the RIDBC pioneered research, education, care and treatment for generations of Australians. Its mission "to provide quality and innovative services to achieve best outcomes" is evident through its provision of services to more than 9,000 adults and children, along with support for their families and carers every year. In 2018 I was thrilled to note that over 2,800 children received assessment and diagnostic services, and more than 1,000 children received support in early intervention services and schools.

Over the past decade the RIDBC's footprint has continued to expand, with services now being provided from an extensive network of 20 sites and telepractice services across Australia, including regional and remote areas using high-quality video conferencing technology. With more than 450 staff and 1,000 volunteers supporting the organisation through fundraising activities, the RIDBC's range of specialist services is unique in Australia and is administered by a broad group of highly qualified professionals. Using in-person sessions combined with modern technology, the institute connects children, adults and families across Australia to the expert education, therapy, cochlear implant, and vision or hearing support services they need.

In 2014 the institute acquired Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre [SCIC] to provide Australia's largest and most comprehensive cochlear implant program for people of all ages. This acquisition represented a significant milestone in the institute's evolution, resulting in the provision of cochlear implant, therapy and rehabilitation services to both children and adults for the first time in its 157-year history. I was delighted to note that under the program in the past year, support was provided to over 4,000 recipients, where 42 per cent of implant recipients were public patients and more than 420 implant surgeries were performed by its affiliated ear, nose and throat [ENT] surgeons. The reach of this service continues to grow and the institute is now working with 12 ENT surgeons and 23 partner hospitals, ensuring increased access for those who can benefit from this life-changing technology.

World-class research and education is also essential to the institute's commitment to maintaining best practice standards, and ensuring it remains relevant and responsive to the changing needs of the clients. At the beginning of last year the institute staged Australia's biggest ever braille camp as part of its teleschool tenth anniversary celebrations. While it can be daunting for families who have no-one else in their community facing similar challenges, the camp provided the opportunity for children and families to meet and learn vital new skills, and share their experiences in person where geographical boundaries do not apply. In addition, more than 30 significant research projects and more than a dozen staff published research findings throughout 2018 under the auspices of the RIDBC Renwick Centre and the SCIC research programs, which included 165 postgraduate enrolments and 54 graduates in sensory disability. Indeed, 2018 marked the second year of the RIDBC Renwick Centre student enrolments into the Macquarie University's Master of Disability Studies program, leading to qualifications such as teachers of the deaf and teachers of students with vision impairment, and as orientation and mobility instructors.

With plans underway to relocate its head office in North Rocks to Macquarie University by 2022, the institute's transition towards a new exemplar schools model for children who are deaf or hard of hearing will reach more people than ever before and demonstrate excellent practice in the field of sensory disability. I am confident that the institute will continue to build on its success at the Australian Hearing Hub at Macquarie University, where it will work in partnership with others in its sector to provide cochlear implant services, early intervention and therapy programs for children and adults with vision or hearing loss. I congratulate this much-needed local facility on its work, particularly president, Sean Wareing and chief executive Chris Rehn on their efforts, and wish them and their team every success for the future.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (13:09): I was the first person in New South Wales with a disability to become the Minister for Disability Services. I am legally blind. As the Minister for Disability Services I congratulate the member for Baulkham Hills,

and Minister for Police and Emergency Services, on his commitment to the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children. At the meeting I noted the respect shown for the member's support of that organisation. On the night three things in particular stunned and delighted me: the dedication and professionalism of the staff; the outstanding number of volunteers who support this incredibly worthy cause; and, most importantly, the outcomes being achieved. For some of these children and young people to enter university and achieve their dreams is something that all members would commend. I commend the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children for its great work and I thank the member for Baulkham Hills for his dedication to this wonderful organisation.

WALLSEND ELECTORATE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:10): The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal announced a review of transport fares in New South Wales so I felt compelled to ask my constituents, "What is the major issue keeping you off public transport?" The issue of "reliability" was overwhelmingly nominated as the major barrier that prevented them from using public transport in Wallsend. In a Facebook poll, 76 per cent said they would make use of the buses in the Wallsend electorate if they were more reliable and 24 per cent said buses were too expensive. For example, Noel and Amanda said, "Very poor routes, virtually impossible to find out a timetable to follow." Sue said, "Poor routes and lack of connectivity. Notice how empty the buses are? Reroute them and they will be full!" Other respondents provided more specific examples of unreliable services in Wallsend. Wes said, "From Elmore Vale there was previously one bus to get into the city. There are now two buses or two buses and a train for some locations. If they don't sync up, the trip can take more than 99 minutes."

I was not surprised. In all but five of the past 21 months Keolis Downer has failed to meet the key performance indicator of 95 per cent on-time running. When this Government offloaded public transport in July 2017 to Keolis Downer, a private provider, complaints about the reliability of the service went through the roof and in January 2018, with the introduction of the new routes and timetables, that flood of complaints became a tsunami. Eventually, not once but twice, my fellow Hunter members of Parliament and I presented a petition for debate in this place. More than 20,000 signatures calling on the Government to fix Newcastle's buses were collected. Before the change public transport in my electorate was not perfect and now some services are slightly better. However, people have not been attracted to these services primarily because of their poor reliability and the multiple bus rides required to get to town.

On 30 May a resident of Noella Avenue in New Lambton, who is over 80 and relies on public transport, visited my office. Before the change in January 2018 she could easily catch a bus close to her home. Now she is forced to cross major roads using a cane. She had a letter with her, which she presented on behalf of other residents of Noella Avenue and surrounding streets, seeking a route adjustment for the number 13 bus. A minor route diversion would alleviate issues for many local residents, including a couple in their 80s who require public transport to attend appointments for chronic medical conditions. They have lived in New Lambton all their lives and the service they relied on abruptly disappeared a year and a half ago.

I have passed on the letter in question to private provider Keolis Downer and to the Minister, and I await a thoughtful response from them. But this is only one example of all the public transport problems, particularly in the Lambton and New Lambton area. I call on the Minister for Transport and Roads, Keolis Downer and the New South Wales Government to work together to provide an innovative and modern transport mix for Wallsend residents. That means restoring, continuing and expanding the very successful service that runs from the Hunter Stadium to the Newcastle CBD. It means restoring the now defunct system from the Hunter Stadium to the John Hunter Hospital. It means looking to expedite the Newcastle inner-city bypass. It means committing to the Glendale interchange. When all these services are delivered, I hope to see more Wallsend people out of their cars and on to public transport. Until we make public transport more attractive and reliable that will not happen.

PRINCES HIGHWAY

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (13:15): I bring to the attention of the House a couple of important issues relating to the Princes Highway. In particular, I recognise my colleague the member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock, and Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack. A number of weeks ago we negotiated an arrangement for the building of the Milton-Ulladulla bypass. This arrangement is not only about building the bypass but also about duplicating the Princes Highway. Very pleasingly, the Federal Government has committed to tip in \$400 million towards this project, which is estimated to cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars. At the time of the election this Government made very clear that it intends to duplicate the highway to save lives. Considering some 30 lives have been lost in the last five or so years on the highway south of the Jervis Bay turn-off, we intend to get on and deliver on this commitment.

In the last eight years in government, this Government has substantially delivered on its commitment to the Princes Highway, particularly on projects in the Kiama electorate. Now we are moving down the coast to ensure the duplication process continues—be it at the Moruya bypass, the Jervis Bay to Sussex Inlet turn-off or

the duplication around Milton-Ulladulla. We are also negotiating with Canberra around the 80-20 funding split, which will mean that we can get on with duplicating the road all the way to Tuross Heads fairly quickly—within 10 years. The road will then be duplicated further down the coast. Another key project is the \$274 million Batemans Bay Bridge project, which will be life-changing for locals and visitors to the region, particularly given the intersection improvements for the Kings Highway.

It is pleasing to note that a lot of jobs will be associated with these projects. The member for South Coast and I visited the Infrastructure Skills Legacy Training hub with the Premier to discuss the Bomaderry to Berry link project. We know that 10 per cent of the workforce are Aboriginal people and 16 per cent of the workforce are under the age of 25. This type of infrastructure investment will change the lives of young people by giving them work opportunities. I have to say that the attitude of some who complain about a sliding door on a metro train is extraordinary when we think about young Aboriginal people getting to work without having a minibus available to get them there. That is what is happening in the country. I intend to spend a bit more time and effort in making sure that young Aboriginal people are given every opportunity to work on infrastructure programs in the bush and that they have access to public transport to get to work.

The contrast is quite telling. I met with the CEO of the Aboriginal Land Council at Wallaga Lake on the same day complaints were reported in the media about minor teething issues on the multibillion-dollar Sydney Metro Northwest project. I listened to the CEO talking about young Aboriginal people—largely in their late teens or early twenties—who wanted to get a start in life by getting the right job, instead of going down the sorts of pathways open to previous generations. I cannot think of a clearer contrast, and yet this is what happened the Friday before last. The Wallaga Lake community wants to get its young folk to the infrastructure training centre, which has been established by the Government in Batemans Bay, so that they can learn the skills to build Batemans Bay's \$274 million bridge and then transfer those skills to the next project.

We have to get our priorities right, and that is what we are going to do. More broadly, we are about saving lives on the highway. We are about making sure that there is a Commonwealth contribution. Given the \$3.5 billion that has gone in, with both the new \$1.5 billion injection and the \$2 billion that we already put in to duplicate the highway from Sydney south, we just have to be smarter in terms of workforce development in the bush. If it is a case of providing a minibus then we will have to find a way through that. The project work that is happening such as the Berry to Bomaderry highway upgrade; the Batemans Bay Bridge replacement; the work happening in the South Coast electorate, including at Burrill Lake and the like; and the work that is going to happen at Nowra Bridge is life-changing for our communities in terms of saving lives and, more importantly, in changing lives along the way because of the building work that happens on these roads. There is no doubt that there is more to come. With work around Sussex Inlet, the Moruya bypass and Milton-Ulladulla in the next four to five years, the opportunities are going to be very important for our young people.

Community Recognition Statements

NINA HUYNH

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (13:20): Nina Huynh remembers the moment she was given her first job at the award-winning hatted Potts Point restaurant Yellow. After the birth of her first daughter the Glenmore Park chef decided it was time to follow her passion and enrolled at TAFE NSW whilst working nights in the hospitality industry to gain experience. After many years of hard work juggling motherhood, work and study Nina landed her dream job at Yellow. I love the statement she made in a recent interview. She said, "I find that women, we don't give us enough credit—we are so strong." I could not agree more. I congratulate Nina on chasing and achieving her dream. I hope her journey to success inspires her daughter and all other young women who may believe that they cannot chase and achieve their dreams. Nina's story is one that engenders hope and belief.

WALLSEND ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:21): Four schools in the Wallsend electorate have been awarded up to \$1,000 to aid in environmental projects as part of Woolworths' Junior Landcare grants program. I applaud our local schools for working to improve our environmental footprint. I congratulate principal Christopher Parkinson of Wallsend South Public School, director Vicki Geach of the Glendale Early Education Centre, principal Gerry Vandermaat of Our Lady of Victories Primary School at Shortland and principal Daniel Ariel of St Patrick's Primary School Wallsend. The projects funded include a rainforest habitat restoration project, which is very popular. I congratulate all our local schools for their involvement in improving our beautiful community.

MACMASTERS BEACH SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:22): I acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the MacMasters Beach Surf Life Saving Club, of which I am a member. On Saturday night the club had its annual awards

presentation. I give a big shout out to Peter Roden, who was given life membership on the evening. This season the club completed 7,389 patrol hours; approximately 60,000 people visited the beach; the club performed 45 rescues, 3,244 preventative actions, 72 first aid actions and five ambulance call-outs; and the beach was closed for about 45 hours during the season due to inclement weather. I thank the hundreds of members of MacMasters Beach Surf Life Saving Club. They do a wonderful job keeping our beaches safe. Again this season we did not have a single drowning death on a patrolled beach on the Central Coast. That is testament to the outstanding work done by the volunteer surf lifesavers across the Central Coast.

ILLAWARRA IFTAR

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:23): Last Friday night I had the honour of attending an iftar dinner at the Bilal Mosque in Cringila, hosted by the Islamic Society of Illawarra. I thank their secretary, Dincer Ipek, for inviting me along. It was an absolute pleasure to spend the evening with Illawarra locals of all different faiths and backgrounds and to join in celebrating Ramadan's holiest of nights. Iftar is a traditional evening meal shared by families and communities, in which the Islamic people break their fast during the holy month of Ramadan. It is an opportunity to reflect on our lives and habits and to feel connected to our communities. We also had the special honour of being joined by the Consul-General of Turkey, Melih Karalar, for the occasion. I thank the organisers and hosts of the wonderful event and every member of the Islamic community for their generosity and kind welcome. The evening was a great reminder of the diversity of culture and faith in the Illawarra. I am very grateful to have attended. I wish the entire Islamic community a happy Ramadan.

YOUNG JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:24): Recently I had the pleasure of catching up with Young Junior Rugby League. I share with the House the great work of this club in promoting and facilitating women's sport. Since 2011 female league tag representation has grown from four to 114 players. To move with the times the junior Cherrypickers have been proactive in seeking and receiving more than \$99,000 in grant funding to construct new girls' change room facilities. Thanks to the great work of this local sports club and this Government's support Young women in league will feel welcome and comfortable playing their chosen sport. Finally I send a huge shout-out to all the Young boys and girls who play league and league tag. They are the future of these sports. I thank the families and local sponsors that support the Young Cherrypickers club.

JACKSON HARRIGAN

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (13:25): The electorate of Coogee is home to some of the very best beaches in New South Wales but with these beaches comes the responsibility to keep beachgoers safe. That is why I am extremely proud to inform the House of Jackson Harrigan, a 19-year-old boy who lives in Bronte. Jackson's Ocean Live beach safety system has the potential to save lives, something desperately needed after the worst coastal drowning figures in 15 years. It is fantastic to see young people caring so much about their community and actively working to make it a better place. As a surf lifesaver myself I know firsthand how important proper communication channels are for ensuring that beach visitors are adequately informed. I take this opportunity to congratulate Jackson and his father Dean for all the work they are doing in the area.

STUART SONTER

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:25): I offer my congratulations to Stuart Sonter on being awarded life membership of the Maclean Show Society. Stuart first became involved with the show in 1971 and has been organising the cattle sections for many years. He loves the people and the farmers that he meets through the show. Stuart is one of our unsung heroes who just goes about his business with no fanfare or noise. He loves Maclean and has always rolled up his sleeves to help where he can. Local organisations would be lost without the support of their volunteers like Stuart who are prepared to give their time and knowledge to ensure events run smoothly. Stuart has a few health issues at the moment and we are all thinking of him: Good on you, Stuart.

HOLROYD PARRAMATTA GOANNAS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:26): On 25 May 2019 it was great to join Prospect's local footy team the Holroyd Parramatta Goannas on its 2019 sponsor's day. Our community joined to support all the teams who were playing. It was wonderful to see the passion, hard work and dedication for footy. The Goannas have two senior women's teams, two senior men's teams, an under 19s team and nine junior club teams. I congratulate the Goannas women's and men's teams and the coaching staff for raising money for Beyond Blue on the day and for hosting this great event. I acknowledge the club's marketing manager, Peter Taylor; president, Clive Sharp; secretary, Heather Watson; and vice-presidents, Justin Cenneen and Rob Mannion for their work and commitment to local sport. I look forward to the team winning another women's premierships flag and gaining a men's premierships flag this season.

JACE TYLER

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (13:27): Today I make special mention of Kingscliff local Jace Tyler. Jace is a 14-year-old who suffers from cerebral palsy but he has not let that stop him enjoying his favourite things. Last year Jace joined a social wheelchair basketball competition on the Gold Coast so he could play the sport he loves. After just a few months playing with the Coomera club he found himself being scouted to join the Queensland junior representative side, Rolling Thunder. Jace and his team travelled to Townsville last month to play in the junior national championships in which they finished second. What an amazing achievement, Jace. It is great to hear that he has set his sights on becoming part of the under-23s team for The World Games in 2021.

FAMILY PRIDE PICNIC

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:28): Families come in all shapes and sizes. No matter where they are from, what they look like or how they are made, each and every family has value. This was the message of the annual Family Pride Picnic held this past weekend by Rainbow Families NSW. This is the fourth annual Family Pride Picnic and forms the Australian celebration of International Family Equality Day, which is marked in 50 countries around the globe. The picnic brings together organisations such as ACON, the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, Twenty 10, Wear it Purple, the NSW Police Force and the Gender Centre, and is sponsored by the Commonwealth Bank and the City of Sydney. There were jumping castles, food trucks and performances, as well as resources, information and advocacy for LGBTIQ parents and a new resource in the *Trans and Gender Diverse Parents Guide*. This year, along with my four-year-old, Archie, I also achieved a life goal of meeting Justine Clarke. We had a great day. I congratulate Rainbow Families and everyone involved in the day's success.

TUCKS ROAD, TOONGABBIE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:29): Since becoming the member for Seven Hills, I have had the pleasure of working with a dedicated local community group to oppose inappropriate development in Tucks Road, Toongabbie. Again I place on record my particular thanks to Wendy Lazanas, John Lazanas and Paul Battersby for their consistent community engagement in ensuring the inappropriate development is not approved. They are stalwarts of the community's campaign opposing the inappropriate development of 21 and 21A Tucks Road. Recently we had good news, as we learnt that the Department of Planning and Environment has refused the developer's site compatibility certificate. That is another step in the right direction toward quashing the overall proposal. Now we need to ensure that local councillors back the wishes of the Toongabbie community, which sees the development application as overreaching and incompatible with the community. I will continue to advocate with John, Wendy, Paul and all the residents of Toongabbie to fight the inappropriate development of Tucks Road.

WYONG MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (13:30): I have spoken before about the fantastic shows put on by the Wyong Musical Theatre Company. The company does great local shows and it did not fail to impress with another great show, *Disenchanted*. A fantastic cast took us inside the real thoughts of Disney's princesses in a hilarious, witty and entertaining take on characters we may have thought we were familiar with. Maddie Richards, Natasha Bass, Natalie Eva, Sancia West, Tina Leautia, Aimee Honor-Eltham, Eden Dennis, Liz Beck, Margaret Holdom and Rebecca Holland played the princesses. Well done to director Kim Rowley and her team on another thoroughly enjoyable production. The show was topped off with a strong performance from Andrew Harmon and his orchestra. I thank all those involved for another thoroughly entertaining night at The Grove theatre.

WARRINGAH AUSTRALIA REMEMBERS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:31): I pay tribute to the Warringah Australia Remembers committee and, in particular, to chair Colonel John Platt, CSC, for another excellent service commemorating the seventy-seventh anniversary of the attack on Sydney Harbour, which occurred in late May and early June 1942. More than 350 people joined us—including representatives of the Consul-General of Japan, Consul-General of the United States, Chief of the Defence Force and Chief of Army—to remember the night of 31 May 1942 when three Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour. This year our guest speaker was Mr Peter FitzSimons, AM, who gave an engaging address on Australia's military history and the importance of local communities in remembering our war dead. I thank the Warringah Australia Remembers committee, which was founded by former member for Warringah the Hon. Tony Abbott, for being the custodian of this important commemorative service for almost 25 years. It is a great honour that I take on this service in my role as the Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans and I look forward to strengthening its already strong legacy over the coming years.

UMINA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:32): On every level it has been another awesome season for Umina Surf Life Saving Club. I congratulate all at the club, which now hosts the largest membership on the coast and again this year was incredibly successful at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, or Aussies. We all love the way Umina Surf Life Saving Club perfectly includes and delivers to members of all ages, going over and above to create and deliver innovative new programs to connect our community with surf lifesaving and provide beach safety. While patrol is its prime function, with over 9,000 volunteer hours on the beach this summer and 104 members with 100 per cent attendance, the club hosts many champions who are role models and heroes well beyond Umina Surf Life Saving Club. Jemma Smith is a super-strong human who is always committed, dedicated, humble and so talented. Bailey Johns smashed the State, national and world championships—three different conditions, three different races and three very different wins. He reinforces the Umina motto that "If you want to race with the best, you have to train with the best". I congratulate Bailey and super coach Trevor Gee on their fantastic performances; everyone's hero Steve Murphy on being named Club Life Saver of the Year; and all at Umina Beach on another fabulous season.

CAMDEN HAVEN PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP AWARDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:33): I recognise our hardworking community leaders in Camden Haven who were recently nominated for the Pride of Workmanship Awards, hosted by the Rotary Club of Laurieton. The Pride of Workmanship Awards are an annual celebration that recognises an individual for outstanding service to an organisation and for selfless contribution to their community. During the awards presentation, held at the Laurieton United Services Club, nine members of the community were nominated by an employer or a Rotarian for their achievement, commitment and ability to inspire their customers or fellow employees. Awards were presented in the form of a certificate, bearing a citation by the employer of the outstanding work ethic and qualities of the nominated employees. The inaugural Pride of Workmanship program was hosted in 1957 by the Rotary Club of Pennant Hills and was aimed at rewarding community members for their valued contributions that went above and beyond their roles' responsibilities. I acknowledge the 2019 Pride of Workmanship Award recipients Clint Barklmore, Renee Butterworth, Lachlan Cavallaro, Hannah Coombes, Leanne Head, Peter Monaghan, Jan Francis, Cheryl Pearson and Phoebe Woodford.

CLARE MURPHY AND KIRSTEN BELETICH

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:34): I acknowledge and congratulate Clare Murphy and Kirsten Beletich, teachers from St Francis Xavier's College, on their work in engaging with newly arrived refugees in Newcastle. Ms Murphy and Ms Beletich are two of 10 teachers from St Francis Xavier's College who have volunteered to help break down language barriers for refugees and to acclimatise new arrivals to Australia's more idiosyncratic cultural nuances. The classes these teachers offer do more than teach a language; they build a community. They are vital to assisting refugees orientate themselves with the Australian way of life, develop their confidence and abilities and give back to their new home. I applaud Ms Murphy, Ms Beletich and their fellow volunteers. Well done!

PINK SILKS PERPETUAL TRUST

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (13:35): When I think about dedication to fine causes, my mind turns to a leading Coffs Harbour health charity, the Pink Silks Trust. The Coffs Harbour Pink Silks Perpetual Trust is a local registered charity that is committed to raising awareness and funds for local women who are challenged by cancer or illness. The trust's motto is "Covering all bases in local women's health" and 90 per cent of its funding is utilised in all aspects of local women's health issues such as prevention, research, capital equipment purchases, assisting local support groups, increased awareness of disease and illnesses, education, and initiation of new services to the community. The Pink Silks Trust co-ordinates events throughout the year including Pink Silks High Tea, Ladies & Tradies, Pink Silks Golf Day and Pink Silks Race Day. I thank the Pink Silks committee members for all they do: chair and founder Tanya Johnson, treasurer Alison Blanshard, secretary Stacy Graham, social media representative Nicole Pymont, Richard Hinton who is responsible for its website, Chris McGregor who is responsible for its database, and events manager Deb Gooley.

REVEREND CHORBISHOP NARSAI YOUKHANIS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:36): On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I congratulate Reverend Chorbishop Narsai Youkhanis on his election and consecration as Bishop Abraham of London and Western Europe. On Sunday 26 May 2019 the Episcopal consecration was presided over by His Holiness Mar Gewargis III Sliwa, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, in front of family, friends, community leaders and parishioners of St Hurmizd Cathedral in Greenfield Park. Bishop Abraham was born in Iraq and migrated to Australia in 1995. He was raised in Fairfield and educated at Fairvale and Prairievale

Public Schools and St Johns Park High School. His Grace has completed degrees and Masters degrees at the University of New South Wales, Macquarie University, Australian Catholic University and the University of Sydney. On behalf of the Fairfield community, I wish Bishop Abraham all the best as he embarks upon his new ministry in Western Europe.

DUBBO ATHLETICS CLUB

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (13:37): I congratulate the team members from the Dubbo Athletics Club who competed at the Athletics Australia Track and Field Championships in April. Nosa Obaseki, Alex Eves, Lachlan Townsend, Ella Penman, Maya Piras and Millie Gooch formed what was possibly Dubbo's biggest contingent ever at the event. All the team members performed well, defying injuries and also the tyranny of distance to record a total of 10 top 10 finishes. I congratulate Nosa Obaseki who qualified for the Athletics New South Wales Target Talent Program in not one but three throwing disciplines. I also congratulate para-athlete Alex Eves who finished third and fourth in the T36 100 metre and 200 metre sprint events at her first ever national championship. It is important to recognise the efforts of Dubbo coach Mark Penman and I thank him for his dedication in training all six athletes. Well done!

MIKE MCKEY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:38): My electorate is home to the exceptionally beautiful and popular Redhead Beach. Of course, with every beautiful beach comes the need for beach patrol to keep visitors safe. As the patrolling season has come to an end, I thank our surf lifesavers for their hard work over a tough season. I particularly acknowledge the work of past President of Redhead Surf Lifesaving Club, Mike McKey. Mike's outstanding leadership has contributed to Redhead Surf Lifesaving Club being very highly regarded at both State and National levels. As a surf lifesaver for many years, Mike has selflessly volunteered his time to keeping swimmers, boardriders and general users of Redhead Beach safe. He has been and continues to be an intrinsic part of the well-organised, strong and vibrant club that is Redhead Surf Life Saving Club—a club with over 600 nippers. I thank Mike McKey for his continued contribution to the Redhead community.

ROUSE HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (13:39): On 30 April 2019 I was honoured to attend the tenth anniversary celebration of Rouse Hill High School. It was a great event where foundation students and teachers joined in the celebration. Since opening in 2009 the school has grown from a mere 180 students with 18 teachers and five support staff to over 870 students and 61 teaching staff this year. I would like to mention the following members of both the faculty and staff for their ongoing commitment to the school over the past decade: Ms Kara Brockhurst, Mrs Jennifer Fildes, Mrs Denise Cox, Mrs Jill Guy, Mr Simon Kelly, Mr Richard Medcalf, Ms Vicki Zacharia, Mrs Brawn and Mr Charters. I would also like to make special mention of Ms Kim Chapman, the foundation principal, who has provided an outstanding of quality education and leadership in her time over the past decade, and Mrs Michelle Yates, the foundation deputy principal, whose strong values and excellent leadership skills have enabled Rouse Hill High to become a successful and thriving school community. Congratulations once again to Rouse Hill High School and its teachers, staff and students on the outstanding level of education in my electorate.

MAITLAND ROLLER DERBY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (13:40): I wish the Maitland Roller Derby League a very happy fifth birthday and congratulate it on the occasion of its first bout played on home turf in Maitland. Roller derby is a sport that is not for the faint of heart. It is full contact and played on concrete or hardwood floors. It requires great skill and athleticism. Players must constantly employ offensive and defensive tactics and rely heavily on their teammates. Perhaps best of all, roller derby is an inclusive sport that cultivates empowerment and body confidence. Roller derby celebrates all body types and values strength and power. The past five years have been a journey for Maitland Roller Derby, and not just up and down the east coast, as the league has played in various bouts, scrimmages and tournaments. The league effectively has been homeless. It has had space to train but not a space where its fans can come and watch. All that changed on the weekend; it has now all come together. Well done to founders Tootsie Turbo and Baroness Von Brutal—or Natasha Lloyd-Jones and Nicole Clark, as they are known outside the derby. Thank you for bringing roller derby to Maitland.

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (13:41): On Saturday 1 June I had the privilege of hosting a Cancer Council NSW Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. I look forward to this event each and every year as a way to support the Cancer Council, which supports so many people in their darkest of hours. Cancer has affected many Australians, whether it is those diagnosed with cancer or the loved ones of those diagnosed with this awful disease. Cancer unfairly and sadly took my mother at the age of 41—far too soon—and it is in her memory I host a morning

tea annually. I look forward to the day when cancer is simply a fork in the road and not a debilitating disease or life sentence. It is only with the community support of the Cancer Council that this wish for a cancer-free world may one day be a reality.

I thank my wife, Adla Coure, and my son, James, for cooking up a feast of cupcakes, along with Sarah from Dreaming of Cupcakes for donating cupcakes and Oatley RSL for its generous donation. Additionally, I thank the Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association of Australia and Sue Young from Mortdale Wholesalers for their generous donations. Thank you to all those who came and supported; together we raised over \$5,000.

BANKSTOWN SPORTS BASEBALL CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:42): Recently I was honoured to accept the role of patron of Bankstown Sports Baseball Club. At the club's annual presentation day, which I attended, it was great to see local players receiving recognition for their sporting achievements and sharing that moment with family and friends. I thank President Jeffrey Craft and the rest of the executive of Bankstown Sports Baseball Club for organising the presentation day and for their efforts throughout the entire season. I take this opportunity to acknowledge Bankstown Sports Club and Vice President Dick Phillips for their tremendous support of many different sporting codes in the Bankstown area, particularly baseball. I thank the executive for giving me the privilege of becoming patron. Congratulations to all the players, coaches, parents and family members for their support of baseball and for the way the club has grown in the region. I would like to see the organisation continue to go from strength to strength. I once again thank them for their support of young kids in Bankstown.

LAVINGTON EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (13:43): I congratulate Lavington East Public School on the excellent work it is doing to create a new generation of leaders in our community. Lavington East Public School highly values student leadership development. The school community and staff, together with the P&C, has shown its support in this regard by sending Govinda Sapkota, Star Slater, Clara Schneider-Fuller, Zachary Hart and Jessica Lynch to a student leadership outlook conference. A total of 430 participants from the Riverina and Victoria came together in Albury to learn about leadership. The topics included character traits of leaders, how to contribute to a team and ways to positively influence the culture of the school. The leaders will now develop a plan to make a difference. The school leadership team has led many initiatives throughout the year, such as the successful Big Veggie Crunch Day, an event that is supported by NSW Health to focus on increasing the serves of vegetables that children eat daily and on improving the health of school students. Lavington East Public School is creating better citizens. I commend the principal and staff for their excellent work.

TOOWOON BAY SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (13:44): I acknowledge Toowoong Bay Surf Life Saving Club and its presentation night held on 1 June 2019, which I attended. Formed in 1954, the club does a marvellous job patrolling one of my electorate's busiest beaches. Many families and visitors are attracted to the sheltered waters of Toowoong Bay. I acknowledge and congratulate all those who received awards on the night, particularly Phillip Raymont on being awarded the 15-year National Medal of service and Dean Griffin who has performed 25 years of service and received a National Medal clasp for an additional 10 years of patrol. Also worthy of note is the Fillingham family, who received several awards for their service. I recognise president Graham Sherer and the office-bearers for the 2018-19 season: Dee Stadelmann, Simon Hicks, Lisa Willcockson and Karen Hickmott. I thank the club for its continued service and positive impact on our local community.

PORT HACKING DRAGON BOAT CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (13:45): Last weekend I helped Sydney's oldest dragon boat club, the Port Hacking Dragon Boat Club, celebrate its thirty-fifth birthday and its signing of a lease on its new clubhouse at Wonga Road, Yowie Bay. The club, which has around 60 members, promotes its activities to people of all abilities. It has social and competitive teams which include men, women and mixed teams. Founded in 1983, the club contested Australia's first dragon boat race in 1984 and won the inaugural Australian dragon boat race at Farm Cove. It went on to represent Australia in Singapore and Hong Kong, with the club returning to Hong Kong in 1993. Club coach Lorrae Fitzgerald competed in the Australian team in 2017, after winning gold and silver medals at the Australian championships that year. Vicki Fulton was awarded the Warren Ford award for clubman of the year for her coaching and committee work. The late Warren Ford was a longstanding president of the club and was instrumental in the club's development. His family created the annual Warren Ford award in his memory. I congratulate club president Ken Fitzgerald and the club committee and wish the club the best in the future as it promotes a great social form of exercise.

FAIRFIELD RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (13:46): I acknowledge the Fairfield Relay For Life committee and Ms Denise Daynes from Cancer Council NSW for running a successful high tea event for cancer survivors and carers on 31 May 2019. The event, which was held at Canley Heights RSL, was attended by many locals. Cancer is the leading cause of death in Australia. Without the Cancer Council's work, survival rates would not be as high as they are today. This year the Fairfield Relay For Life will be held from 16 November to 17 November. I wish the organising committee every success in beating last year's record of \$120,000.

MOSMAN CROQUET CLUB

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:47): I congratulate Mosman Croquet Club on its ninety-fifth birthday. On the weekend I joined its members to celebrate this milestone. The club's first foundation meeting was held at Mosman Town Hall on 12 June 1924. It was an exclusive women's club until 1948, after which it allowed male members. However, women are still the cornerstone of the club. I congratulate its members, in particular, President Mary Gibson. I thank the club for its continued support in helping community members develop their croquet skills and working with disability groups, and also for ensuring their wellbeing in times of stress and ill health. I note that the club, with the support of the Royal Historical Society, is looking to digitise its minute books, letters and documents, which date back to 1924. I look forward to reading some of those documents. Once again I congratulate Mosman Croquet Club and wish it a happy birthday.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:48): On 26 May 2019 I joined thousands of people at the Club Marconi in Bossley Park with the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry [ICCI] in commemoration of Italian Republic Day, a celebration of democracy in Italy. On this day in 1946 the Italian people were called to the polls and finally embraced a democratic republic. The festival was covered in red, green and white to celebrate the Italian flag and nationhood. It was amazing to see the vitality and diversity of western Sydney's Italian Australian community in the electorate of Prospect, with food, dancing and culture on display. I acknowledge and thank Club Marconi President Vince Foti and the Club Marconi board, ICCI Chairman Fabio Grassia and CEO Rachele Grassi for organising such a successful event—buona festa della repubblica!

LARA SCOTT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (13:49): Lara Scott lives at Glenmore Park in my electorate. In 2017 Lara's daughter, Lylah, was born with epidermolysis bullosa [EB]. This is a rare disease where the skin blisters and peels at the slightest touch. Affecting all three layers of skin and internal mucosal linings, EB has been likened to living with third-degree burns. Lara has advocated tirelessly for greater awareness and funding for sufferers of EB, taking part in numerous campaigns to raise support. In May, as part of Australia's PB4EB campaign, Lara lifted 310 kilograms to raise funds for the Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association [DEBRA]. DEBRA is a not-for-profit, volunteer-based organisation that assists children and adults living with EB by providing necessary support services, medical supplies and more. I congratulate Lara on her efforts to raise awareness of epidermolysis bullosa as well as fundraising for all children living with EB.

PRETTY BEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:50): I acknowledge the outstanding parliament at the Pretty Beach Public School and the great work by the acting principal, Dave Rattray. Last week I visited the school to attend the parliament and at the same time presented the school community with a new New South Wales flag. Some very in-depth topics were debated while I was there. The school is in the process of putting in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden, which I was able to secure funding for late last year. The new LED signboard, which was funded through the Community Building Partnership program for the P&C, is now up and running. Again, I congratulate the school parliament, acting principal Dave Rattray and the P&C at Pretty Beach Public School for doing a fantastic job for the school community.

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

Visitors

VISITORS

I welcome the year 11 legal studies students and teachers from De La Salle College, Revesby Heights. They are guests of the member for East Hills. I also welcome Kim Simpson, guest of the member for Ballina. I welcome Mia Bowcher, a year 10 student from the Riverina Anglican College who is doing work experience in the member for Wagga Wagga's office and is a guest of the member for Wagga Wagga. Finally, I acknowledge

Yesenia Posadas and Phoebe Thompson from the University of New South Wales Career Ready Mentoring Program. They are guests of the member for Parramatta and of the Hon. Courtney Houssos from the other place.

Question Time

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:23): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Given that the Commissioner of Police has now said that the investigation into the leaking of personal information has concluded, will the Minister now outline to the House the specific action that he took when Revenue NSW asked his office to delete this sensitive information?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:23): I thank the member for his question. As I have said from the outset, my staff were asked to assist the relevant authority in its investigation. I instructed my staff to assist in this regard. I can now inform the House that, according to a police spokesperson:

Inquiries conducted by Strike Force Holmlea have concluded and in the absence of other evidence no further investigation is possible. No criminal charges have been laid.

I have nothing further to say on this issue.

EDUCATION

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:24): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government delivering more choice for New South Wales families so all kids can fulfil their potential?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:24): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her question. I know that she is passionate about the future of public education in New South Wales, as are all members in this place, but the difference is that the Liberal-Nationals Government has acted on its commitments. I am incredibly proud to lead a government that is investing record amounts in new school buildings, school halls and school infrastructure across New South Wales. But what is also incredibly important to us is what happens inside the classroom.

I take this opportunity to thank our hardworking teachers and to discuss three initiatives that I was pleased to announce with the Minister for Education, Minister Mitchell from the other place, to improve the quality outcomes for each and every student in New South Wales. No matter where they live and no matter which school they attend, students should have the opportunity to be their best. As members know, the former Minister for Education, Minister Stokes, introduced a brilliant pilot scheme called the Bump It Up program, which identified schools that, for whatever reason, were not doing as well as other schools in their region. Under the program, special emphasis and focus were put on schools within the same socio-economic region—whether in the bush, in the city or in our regions—that were identified as schools that could do better and could improve.

I am pleased to say that a significant number of the 137 schools that were part of this program noticed improvements in literacy and numeracy and in other indicators, showing that the standards of the school and of each student in the program were being raised. We announced this morning that we want everybody to see improved outcomes. No matter the ability of the child, where the school is located or where the child lives, every student should have the opportunity to have their standards raised. I am incredibly proud to see the Bump It Up program now being introduced across the State.

I am also very pleased to say that the Government will put additional emphasis into the high-potential and gifted students program. We want to ensure that those students in the public system who have that additional capability have the opportunity, through extra teaching and through their school environment, to reach their full potential. I was pleased to announce today a new selective high school in south-western Sydney. We know those opposite do not like the idea of selective schools and I object to the comments of the shadow education Minister about a two-tiered public education system. There is nothing wrong with working hard and being successful in New South Wales.

Ms Trish Doyle: Equality of opportunity.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Exactly. We are providing equality of opportunity. Why should students in south-western Sydney not have the chance to go to a selective school? Why should the residents not have a chance to go to a selective school? I bring to the attention of those opposite that more than 322,000 students attend high schools across the State but just over 4,000 students attend selective schools. What is wrong with having an extra selective school in south-western Sydney?

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

Mr David Harris: That's what we did.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: You did not. Only 46 schools offer selective streams in New South Wales. The Opposition cannot tell the truth.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is a shame that those opposite do not respond to the wishes of school communities and parents. We want to ensure that every student has equality of opportunity in New South Wales, and that is why the Bump It Up program—which Labor never bothered to introduce—is having real results. It means that no matter where students go to school they know that their school is focused on raising standards across the board, irrespective of the child's ability. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Lakemba and the member for Wyong that they are each on a call to order. I will call them to order again if they continue to interject. I will also call the member for Blue Mountains to order if she continues to interject.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is a shame that those opposite cannot recognise that every child deserves equality of opportunity, including equality of opportunity, if they have the ability, to attend a selective school. It demonstrates how out of touch those opposite are.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Why is it that when those opposite were in government they spoke a lot about public education but they closed down schools? Those opposite never bothered to bring in a program like Bump It Up, which ensures that all students have the ability to attend a selective school. It is interesting how sensitive those opposite are. They cannot handle the fact that a Liberal-Nationals Government has ensured that the future of public education is secure in New South Wales. They cannot handle the fact that every child in New South Wales has the best chance now, more than ever before in the State's history, to be their best, to have a career path they want and to secure a job that ensures they have a healthy future. We know that that all starts in the classroom.

I take this opportunity to thank all the teachers who work hard in schools around the State. In particular I thank Principal Fetherston and all the students at Alexandria Park Community School, which I had the pleasure of visiting this morning. It is a great school—a public school that has selective streams but also ensures that every child has the opportunity to be their best, and that is what this State is about. We do not apologise for allowing people to reach their full potential; there is nothing wrong with that. But that right should exist for every child no matter where they live, no matter what their circumstances are, and that is exactly what our policy will do.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:31): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Last chance, mate. Given on 28 May in relation to this police investigation the Minister said to this House, "Once it has been concluded we will make some statements", can the Minister now inform the House what action he took after Revenue NSW asked him to delete the information it had mistakenly sent?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:32): I thank the member for his question. I have every confidence in the way the police conducted its investigation. I refer to my previous answer.

AIR FREIGHT

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:32): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on its plan for inland air freight?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:33): I thank the member—100 per cent for the Tweed—for his question. Not only is he a great member but he is the member who is delivering the Tweed Hospital, which was an issue in the recent State election. Once again, the Labor Party got it wrong—they did not back the nurses, the doctors, all the allied health professionals or the community; the Labor Party was busy backing in one of its developer mates. We are on the right side of history; we will see the delivery of Tweed Hospital and ensure that we secure health service delivery not only for the Tweed but also for some of the southern part of Queensland—Tweed being one of the cross-border communities.

We are in the middle of a tough drought and it is very easy to talk down regional New South Wales, but today I will take some time to talk up the opportunity that is ahead of us in regional New South Wales. In my

recent trips with the Minister for Water, the Premier and a number of local members it was clear that plenty of opportunities exist across the regions. On a recent trip down the Murray River we saw the opportunity for some of the world's best produce to be delivered not only at a local level for the domestic market but also internationally. I think Griffith and the Riverina are really leading the way with those products. It was nice to catch up with Vito Mancini from Redbelly Citrus, who grows blood oranges.

A Government member: Is he your cousin?

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, he is not my cousin. He is a good Italian young man. I could talk to him because he is not my cousin. Vito runs a business that is in the forefront in relation to citrus—the blood oranges are a superb product and one he believes is an export opportunity. That is why the New South Wales Government has issued a tender for the opportunity to create international freight airports; the opportunity to move produce from the regions into international markets within 24 to 36 hours. We know that airfreight for perishable goods is the way forward. Linking our farmers and producers directly to markets abroad will empower them to get the best price for their produce and give us the opportunity to grow new and existing markets across the globe. Vito is just one example of a producer who has a vision but needs governments to build those connections—and we all know connectivity is the key to connecting producers and markets. I wish Vito all the best.

This is underpinned by the proceeds from Snowy Hydro. We identified a series of pillars where we want to see investment across regional New South Wales: in water security, in digital connectivity and in mobile phone networks. We are being quite ambitious here, trying to make sure that with these proceeds, as well as leveraging some private-sector investment from the telcos and maybe some Federal Government investment, we can make regional New South Wales mobile blackspot free. That would be fantastic for using new technology to connect markets. We also announced a Special Activation Precinct with those hydro funds, which is about attracting new businesses and industries to regional New South Wales by building connections to road and rail and, of course, international freight airports—the opportunity to link our producers to global markets.

I know that since the announcement of the tender being awarded—and we are out there at the moment talking to communities in a lot of local government areas—many regional New South Wales communities have put their regions forward to connect their produce and their communities to global markets. This is important because when you look at regional New South Wales and you see the industries that underpin us, you realise that not only agriculture but also resources and mining—both very important—already have export links. If we can move the dial when it comes to our producers and the export of produce, it will make a real difference for the prosperity of regional New South Wales. That is why it is important that we focus on these connections. The primary export sector in regional New South Wales is worth about \$6.1 billion. We have seen some significant increases in beef, sheep and wool exports—up about 33 per cent. That is across markets such as China, Japan and the United States of America [USA]. [*Extension of time*]

There is extra opportunity for those markets. In 2018 China, Japan and the United States were the largest destinations of primary industry exports from New South Wales. Exports to China increased by 17 per cent, to \$1.76 billion; exports to Japan increased by 7 per cent, to \$559 million; exports to the USA increased by 16 per cent, to \$546 million. Eight out of the 10 largest markets by value were located in Asia. Australia—and I use a line from Barnaby Joyce—is not going to be the "food bowl" for Asia, but the delicatessen: selling high-value produce and making sure our farmers get paid for the quality they produce. That gives us an opportunity to lock in those export items in niche markets across Asia. The highest value export industries were beef, wool and sheep. China, Japan and the USA were the largest destinations for those, as I touched on.

Broadacre crops were reported at \$1.13 billion and livestock, meat and other products contributed \$3.17 billion in exports, accounting for approximately 59 per cent of the total primary industry exports in New South Wales. So you can see there is already organic growth, and an opportunity to do it better by connecting our markets and producers to the global market to build prosperity in the regions. Yes, we are doing it tough during the drought. Yes, things are a little bit dire in parts of this State. But one thing we are committed to, through the support of the New South Wales Government, through the drought package, or the stimulus through investment that we are seeing in roads, rail, hospitals and schools, is fast tracking investment and diversifying local economies. That is our focus. The truth is that there is a strong future for regional New South Wales. So rather than talking down the regions, today we start talking up the regions because we are open for business and this investment in connectivity from regions to international markets can only improve the situation.

PERSONAL INFORMATION SECURITY

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (14:40): My question is directed to the Premier. Did her chief of staff know that the media story contained in the private records held by Revenue NSW was based on information disseminated without consent?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:40): I am pleased to answer this question. As the House has been advised, and as is on the public record today, the police have concluded their investigations. The statement they released said that in the absence of other evidence no further investigation is possible. They also said no criminal charges have been laid. Now that the police investigation is closed, I am pleased to confirm to the House that to the best of my understanding, not a single member of my staff was contacted by police or interviewed and the matter is closed. I say to those opposite, of course it is appropriate to raise issues which concern the people of New South Wales—

Mr Clayton Barr: Mr Speaker—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Hang on, I haven't finished my answer.

The SPEAKER: What standing order is the member referring to. The Premier is being incredibly relevant.

Mr Clayton Barr: It is Standing Order 129 and it relates to the fact that—

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The Premier is being directly and incredibly relevant. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat.

Mr Clayton Barr: The Premier has just explained that the police did not deem necessity—

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

Mr Clayton Barr: The question was whether her chief of staff knew.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. The Premier will continue; she has been extremely relevant.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The problem with those opposite is they cannot handle the truth.

Mr Ryan Park: What a stupid thing to say.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Mr Speaker, I ask you to caution the acting interim Leader of the Opposition on the use of his language in this place. I say to those opposite: I am happy to stand and answer questions on this matter for days on end, for weeks on end. So long as Opposition members do not focus on the issues that are relevant to the people of New South Wales, they will be in Opposition for a very, very long time.

The SPEAKER: I remind the Leader of the Opposition that I am a little more tolerant with the leaders on either side, but he is pushing it too far. If he continues, I will place him on call to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I have answered the question I was asked by the member for Cessnock. We know those opposite have been without a leader for 71 days. A small bit of advice—they should also focus on the issues that matter for the eight million people of New South Wales.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:43): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Can the Minister outline to this House the reason why his adviser, Tom Green, resigned from his office?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:44): I can confirm that Mr Green resigned from my office. I accepted his resignation. I will leave it at that.

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (14:44): I address a question to the Minister for Health and Medical Research. Will the Minister inform the House how the Government is delivering on its plan for world-class health care?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (14:44): I thank the member for Oatley for his question. As a loyal supporter of St George Hospital, he went to a lot of trouble to test the emergency department a couple of weeks ago. He did an extraordinary job—well done. I hear that both the emergency department and the member had a happy outcome. Hooray for Coure has managed to secure almost \$400 million for the redevelopment of St George Hospital. I am glad that the member did not end up back in the intensive care unit because Theresa Jacques would have asked to increase the four-pod ICU to eight pods if he had been admitted. I am glad the member was thrown out of the emergency department.

This Government is delivering a world-class healthcare system. We are able to do that because we have world-class staff, we have world-class doctors, we have world-class nurses and we have world-class facilities. As I indicated, during his time as the local member of Parliament the member for Oatley has received almost

\$400 million for the redevelopment of St George Hospital. Across New South Wales an enormous amount of infrastructure has been delivered. In the first two terms of this Government about \$10 billion of infrastructure was delivered and during the next four years a shade more than \$8.4 billion will be invested in new hospitals. It does not matter where you are in New South Wales—whether you are in the city, Newcastle, Wollongong, the Hunter or the regions—there is money going into new infrastructure.

We have seen many new regional hospitals: In the south-east there is Bega; in the north-west there is Tamworth; there is Parkes and Forbes; stages one and two of Dubbo are complete; and stages three and four of Dubbo are underway. Broken Hill has received \$30 million, with Inverell also receiving \$30 million. The list goes on. The Tweed Hospital has received more than half a billion dollars. The regions are receiving a massive proportion of the money going into infrastructure across the State. In the city substantial amounts of money are being invested, including: three quarters of a billion dollars for the Prince of Wales campus renewal; almost three quarters of a billion dollars for Liverpool Hospital; almost three quarters of a billion dollars for Campbelltown Hospital; \$341 million for Concord hospital; \$1 billion for Westmead Hospital; and \$700 million for Blacktown Mount Druitt Hospital. It does not matter what part of the State you look at, there is new infrastructure. Last night I had the opportunity to hear the infinite wisdom of the two prospective leaders of the losers on the other side of the House.

[Opposition members interjected.]

The losers in political circumstances, not individually or personally. I am saying "the political losers". I would not be that person. I was glued to the computer screen listening to the member for Kogarah and the member for Strathfield—who appears to have disappeared.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. I thank the Minister for the first three minutes of his answer but he is now straying from any relevance to the question.

The SPEAKER: When a Minister has been quite relevant in their response I permit a slight digression, and that is what the Minister is currently doing. The Minister has the call.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not know whether in the short time I have I will be able to make a proper assessment of both members. But both of them were hopeless—absolutely hopeless.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: I draw the attention of the Chair to the fact that the Minister is now flouting your ruling. He is not being relevant at this point.

The SPEAKER: I expect the Minister to return to the leave of the question shortly. I gave him a little leeway.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Mr Speaker, I am quoting from last night's debate relating to health issues.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. That is entirely irrelevant to the question asked.

The SPEAKER: I grant the Minister a two-minute extension, but I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have not had a moment to do that, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: That is why I granted an extension of two minutes.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Last night both members who are the potential candidates to lead those opposite—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Port Stephens has not given the Minister a chance to answer.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The member for Strathfield said, "We actually have to start thinking about the health system a little bit differently." She did start thinking about it quite differently. The member continued, "If we are going to take on Gladys Berejiklian we are going to have to start telling the stories of an older person in a hospital who cannot find somewhere to go, who is taking up a bed." The member thinks that is the health system. The member should be aware that is the Federal Government's responsibility. The reason they are in hospital is that we are accommodating and looking after those patients until they find an available bed in the aged-care system. The member improved.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order—

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

Ms Jodie Harrison: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. I fail to see how this is relevant to how the Government is delivering on health.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being relevant.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: This is a person who wants to be the Premier of this State at some stage. She said, "We know that intensive care units are facing long waiting lists." Intensive care units do not have waiting lists; there is no such thing.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms Kate Washington: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. As the member for Charlestown said, this is not relevant to how the Government is delivering on health.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is speaking directly on the health system and I regard him as being relevant to the question.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The member finished by saying, "And I promise you that I will have in my shadow Cabinet someone who is equally as effective as Walt Secord but can also tell the story of people." In other words, Walt is out. Thank heavens there is a chance. Chris Minns, we are not quite sure, but I think he might be voting for you, brother.

REGIONAL INNOVATION

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (14:52): I address a question to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. Will the Minister inform the House how the Government is delivering on its plan for regional innovation?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:52): I thank the member for Dubbo for his question, and I congratulate him on the inroads he has made since his election on 28 March. The member is doing an outstanding job. The residents of Dubbo can rest assured that he is wasting no time and has been knocking on Ministers' doors and advocating for his electorate. The member has ensured that Dubbo is front and centre when it comes to looking after regional New South Wales.

Mr David Elliott: It has a great zoo.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: It does have a great zoo. I was fortunate that my first visit as Minister was to the Dubbo electorate at the request of the member for Dubbo. The member said, "You have to come out because there is someone I want you to meet." So away we went out to the great electorate of Dubbo. We got in the car and I thought, "I wonder where we are going." Members are not measured by how many hands they shake but by whose hands they shake. During the short time since he was elected to Parliament, this member has contacted and shaken hands with people that those opposite would run away from—I am talking about the greyhound racing industry. The member for Dubbo and I stood in front of a large billboard at the greyhound track in Dubbo.

Mr Greg Warren: Got a photo?

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: We do actually have a photo. The billboard endorsed the rival Independent candidate of the member for Dubbo. But the member for Dubbo had the guts, the determination and the commitment to go to the track and take me, as the Minister responsible for racing, to meet the club's president, Shayne Stiff. That is the way this Government works—by listening. I am very pleased to say that the olive branch was extended to Shayne Stiff and the greyhound club in Dubbo, and Shayne Stiff accepted that olive branch. We look forward to continuing to work with the Dubbo Greyhound Racing Club and Shayne Stiff, and for that I thank the member for Dubbo, Dugald Saunders.

But I have drifted away from the question, which is about innovation. The member for Dubbo is innovative in making friends with people who oppose us, and that is what we do. We are in safe hands when it comes to innovation in the community of Dubbo. The reason I talk about being in safe hands through innovation is that we are embracing technology through innovation—yes, we are. Innovation is something I would like to talk seriously about.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Oh, the hands again.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I thank the member for Swansea for her concern.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. If the Minister is not relevant to the question he will not be granted an extension of time.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Through innovation we are making our communities safer.

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

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: We talk about how dangerous quad bikes are.

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

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: We are talking about safety in the workplace. The member for Dubbo and I launched *The A-Z of Farm Safety*, which focuses on safety through innovation. One way of doing that is using drones on farms. Drones are taking the place of quad bikes; we know that quad bikes are dangerous. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: The Minister will return to the leave of the question for the two minutes he has remaining to complete his answer.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Since 2017, quad bikes have been the leading cause of farm accidents. There have been seven tragic deaths related to quad bikes since 2017. We are trying to look at innovative ways to help to make farmers using these powerful pieces of machinery safe on their farms. Farmers use quad bikes on a daily basis; they are an integral part of farm operations. We are trying to educate farmers to be safer on their farms—for example, when they jump on a quad and rip across their property through difficult terrain to check a farm gate, a fence, that a trough contains water, how many cattle there are, whether sheep have moved or any other situation. We will offer farmers a rebate to buy a drone and park their quad bike in a safe place. We will encourage them to use their drone by sending it to check on areas that are difficult to access on a quad. We are being innovative through this approach of offering rebates on the cost of purchasing drones.

We are also offering rebates on a number of other pieces of equipment to make farmers' use of quads safer. For example, we are offering rebates on the purchase of helmets, rollover protection systems and safety training. Many farmers are taking up these opportunities. However, safety stops with the owner of the quad bike when it comes to operating this piece of machinery. We need to get innovative in the way we think about farm safety. We need to encourage farmers to think about the safety of a quad bike when they put the quad in a difficult situation that is not within the manufacturer's specifications. We are looking at safety at the very highest level when it comes to quad bikes. There is much more work to be done on this and I will be happy to update the House on further developments at a later stage.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (15:00): My question is directed to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services. Given the Government's commitment to halve homelessness by 2025, how will the Minister work with homelessness services and government agencies to achieve this and ensure that people who are homeless get access to safe and supported housing?

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (15:00): Is it not great to get a question on policy from those opposite? In fact, it seems that the crossbench is having to carry a very difficult burden when it comes to leadership on issues from those opposite. On the issue of leadership, as members of the House know, I have a visual impairment and I am classified as legally blind. But that has nothing to do with the fact that I cannot see any leadership on the other side of the Chamber. I congratulate the member for Sydney on his re-election and the increased majority that he secured. I particularly commend the member for Sydney for his advocacy on the issue of homelessness. I know that he is an important and strong voice for his electorate, which is why the Premier included him on the Premier's Council on Homelessness. I have no doubt that he will make a welcome contribution to the council. This Government takes homelessness very seriously, as I know all members of the House do.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Did you write that?

Mr GARETH WARD: No, you need more talent than that. I was pleased to join with the member for Sydney to meet Nicole Yade from Lou's Place, a unique community-based refuge for women in crisis from experiencing homelessness, feeling isolated or being in need of support. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet with the member for Sydney and see the great work being undertaken at Lou's Place, and particularly to meet the volunteers and hear about their great work in providing assistance to women in need. We also visited the Wayside Chapel, where we met John Owen and discussed how the chapel provides unconditional love, care and support for all people who are on the streets of Kings Cross. I was impressed by the services offered at the Wayside Chapel. Last week I spoke at the Act to End Street Sleeping Symposium, where I affirmed this Government's

commitment to improving the lives of everyone across the State, especially those most vulnerable. I appreciated the contribution of the member for Sydney at that event.

On 13 February the New South Wales Government joined the global initiative to end street sleeping. New South Wales is the first state in the world to set a target for the whole of the State, not just an individual city. It is an ambitious target, but one that I know the Government is ready and willing to meet. The agreement was signed between the New South Wales Government, the City of Sydney, the Institute of Global Homelessness, St Vincent de Paul, St Vincent's Health, Mission Australia, the Salvation Army, Wesley Mission, Neami National and Yfoundations. The agreement commits signatories to reduce rough sleeping in the City of Sydney by 25 per cent by 2020, reduce rough sleeping in the City of Sydney and New South Wales by 50 per cent by 2025, and work towards zero rough sleeping in the City of Sydney and the whole of New South Wales.

Early planning for meeting these targets has us focusing on three critical areas: turning off the tap through initiatives to reduce demand pressures and prevent people from experiencing rough sleeping; effective, holistic supports through initiatives to improve the responses people receive when experiencing rough sleeping; and clear pathways through initiatives for to provide long-term housing for people experiencing rough sleeping, linked to appropriate supports. I know that all members are committed to these goals. We are well on our way to tackling homelessness, specifically youth homelessness. I am proud that in the 2018-19 budget this Government committed \$1 billion just to homelessness services over the next four years. This money will build on the remarkable results that we are already achieving in supporting vulnerable people and rough sleepers into permanent accommodation. And we are making a real difference.

I am advised that 23,654 households were assisted with temporary accommodation in 2017-18; that is 10,000 more households than in 2012-13. I am advised that 71,628 clients received specialist homelessness services in 2017-18, an increase of more than 19,000 clients since 2012-13. And I am informed by FACS that 5,531 young people who presented alone in unstable housing received specialist homelessness services in 2017-18, an increase of 37 per cent compared with 2012-13. I advise the House that 19,914 Aboriginal clients received specialist homelessness services in 2017-18, which is 79 per cent more Aboriginal clients receiving specialist homelessness services compared with 2012-13.

I take this opportunity to commend former Minister Goward for her hard work and dedication to achieving these results. But I know she would want me to say that, as promising as these results are, there is still much more to be done. I am pleased the Government is investing \$61 million of new funding over four years to implement its Homelessness Strategy. That funding for 2018-19 includes \$20 million for homelessness social impact investments. I was pleased to join the member for Sydney, together with Cameron French, to launch Home and Healthy at St Vincent's Hospital's Sydney Tierney House. [*Extension of time*]

That organisation is about delivering outcomes for people who enter homelessness and who come into the health system, and to make sure that they get the support they need to not re-enter homelessness again at that key point when they are receiving treatment. The new funding also includes: \$10.6 million for sustaining tenancy support, \$9.1 million for additional transitional accommodation, \$6.2 million to expand Staying Home Leaving Violence programs at five new sites, \$4.7 million for universal risk screening and supports to respond early to young people at risk, and \$10.7 million for assertive outreach and health services to proactively support rough sleepers. The assertive outreach program is a highly effective strategy that is combating homelessness and engaging rough sleepers proactively.

I was delighted to join with the member for Sydney to meet hardworking FACS staff, particularly Holly and Daniel, on the streets of Sydney and to see their work firsthand to find permanent accommodation for people sleeping rough. I also did this with the member for Parramatta and my good friend Minister for Skills Mr Geoff Lee, when we met with Rocko and Heather in Parramatta and witnessed their challenging, yet brilliant, proactive work to build relations with those in need. One of the services I met with in Parramatta was Parramatta Mission where Paul Moussa and his great mission team were providing meals to support people in need. I was delighted with their work.

But it is sometimes the homelessness you cannot see in the city that is most difficult to address, and this includes homelessness in our regions. I was delighted to note the pilot for assertive outreach in our regions is continuing in the Tweed electorate, and I thank the member for Tweed for his advocacy on this issue. I do not want to see people sleeping rough on our streets during inclement weather. I note we have colder conditions and that is why I have spoken to FACS about additional outreach work, as requested by the member for Sydney, to make sure that we address some of the temporary accommodation questions that he raised. I also want to make sure that we can find places for people when they need them, particularly at this chilly and cold time of the year. We want to make sure that we provide that support to those who need it most. I remind the House that the St Vincent's Winter Sleepout is on 30 June. I encourage all members to take part in it.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:07): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How is the Government showing leadership in fighting for jobs in the regional sector? Are there any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (15:08): How did your little debate go last night? Did you bring your palm cards? I thought Jodi won.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Treasurer will resume his seat. The Treasurer has had all of five seconds to get into his answer. I am happy to hear the member's point of order, which is why I asked the Clerk to stop the clock.

Mr Guy Zangari: The Treasurer should direct all his comments through the Chair and not over the table, which is disorderly.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Treasurer will continue

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I just thought she put in a really strong performance. I give her a five out of 10.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will hear the member's point of order. The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Guy Zangari: The Treasurer is flouting your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I remind the Treasurer to direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I apologise. I will do. Something has been bothering me and I was going to speak to the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections about this. In their upcoming election, do you get a vote if you are in jail? Antony Green will not be able to call it until the Cooma booth and the Silverwater booth come in late at night, because they are all backing in Jailbird Jodi.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: My point of Standing Order is 129. The question asked was about jobs and resources, and what the Government was doing. I ask you to bring the Treasurer back to the question.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will be mindful of Standing Order 129 and return to the leave of the question.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Following after Low Energy Luke. The member for Upper Hunter had a great election result. He is a man who saw off not just one Labor candidate, but two at the last election. Importantly, he did this because he knows the importance of a strong mining and resources sector in New South Wales. He knows the industry employs over 40,000 people across this State directly and indirectly. It keeps many of our local economies and communities growing. It is an industry that New South Wales Labor, as we know, wants to immediately irresponsibly shut down to appease its inner-city elites at the expense of working families, seniors and small business owners who rely on energy every single day.

The reality is the New South Wales Labor Party has turned its back on its blue collar workers who it was elected to represent. In fact, even in the election campaign the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union turned its back on the Labor Party for the first time in a long time. The mining union finally realised that its miners need mines. I remember being up in the Hunter following the budget last year, but we did not get to see the member for Newcastle.

Mr Clayton Barr: Have you ever been to the Hunter, Dom?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I had a great time up there.

Mr Clayton Barr: When were you there?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I do not know why members opposite keep talking it down. How good is Newcastle under the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government? It is revitalised. There is a light rail. It is on budget, on time. It is fantastic. I love it. There is a university doing well, the accords, the hospital is going well, investment and more schools. Cessnock is even going well.

Mr Clayton Barr: Have you ever met a coalminer in your life?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Plenty. In fact, talking about coal there is a guy up there called Joel Fitzgibbon—he is a bit of a gibbon, this bloke. He was very silent during the Federal election and when I was up

there I was talking about the importance of the coal industry and he said that my comments were ignorance from an inner-city conservative. That is not very nice. I am not an inner-city conservative. I am a suburbs man. I am from the 'burbs; a number of them over the past 12 years.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129. We are four minutes into the answer and he still has not gone to the substance of the question.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is being relevant.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: He was on *Q&A* last night, if you missed it. The member for Cessnock probably missed it. He said that he warned the Labor Party that its policies were ruining coal jobs and that was eroding its support in regional Australia. What a fraud? This bloke says nothing during the election campaign. He is not saying anything about Labor's policies where people will lose their jobs in his electorate, and only when he is facing the prospect of losing his own job does he start to actually support workers. You would not want to be in the trenches with that bloke. In fact, someone tweeted last night, "Say what you like about Joel Fitzgibbon, but he is so knowledgeable about winning marginal seats. He has managed to win one when he has been pre-selected in a safe one."

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I warn the member for Cessnock that I will put him on a call to order for being disruptive if he continues to take points of order.

Mr Clayton Barr: You can put me on a call. It is Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Cessnock to order for the second time. You are being disruptive. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat.

Mr Clayton Barr: This has nothing to do with the question—

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. I have ruled that the Treasurer is being relevant.

Mr Clayton Barr: Can I ask the questioner to read the question again please?

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the third time. I have ruled the Treasurer is being relevant.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Cessnock that he is on three calls to order. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat and be quiet.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We on this side of the House back mining because it is important for our economy. The mining sector alone was worth \$16.8 billion and represented 2.9 per cent of the New South Wales economy in 2016-17. It contributes over \$1.8 billion a year in royalties, which is used to fund our nurses, teachers and police officers with a total contribution of \$7.4 billion. *[Extension of time]*

There will be funding of \$7.4 billion over the next four years. According to the NSW Mining Industry Expenditure Impact Survey, the industry injected \$10.7 billion into the New South Wales economy last year, including \$3 billion in wages for over 24,000 workers. Back to the contest, I read recently that a Labor member said that they would not want to be seen to be publicly backing the member for Kogarah for fear of repercussions from the unions.

Mr David Mehan: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What a gutless wonder to have said that.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is being relevant.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Kogarah is the guy putting up his hand to be the Leader of the Opposition for the next 12 years to lead that lot opposite, but they cannot even put their names to it.

The SPEAKER: Has the Treasurer completed his answer?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: These are real. Their how-to-votes have come out.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This is Chris Minns' one. Chris Minns is one, Jodi McKay is two.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat now.

Ms Kate Washington: There are two points of order: First, using props in this House.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It is not a prop. These are real how-to-votes and you are calling them a prop.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will be quiet so I can hear the member's point of order.

Ms Kate Washington: It is the use of props because the Hansard staff cannot put that into their transcript.

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

Ms Kate Washington: It is Standing Order 129. How is this relevant to the question that was asked? It is not at all relevant.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer has been relevant. I am sure he will draw a connection soon.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Election resources. Here is Jodi McKay. She is supporting herself first at number one and Chris Minns at number two. It is a very simple. Even Labor members will be able to fill them in.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will hear the member for Port Stephens, given that the Treasurer has not returned directly to the leave of the question.

Ms Kate Washington: The point of order remains Standing Order 129. The Treasurer is not being relevant.

The SPEAKER: I direct the Treasurer to make his comments more relevant.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I think Jodi has put more effort into hers with a bit of colour, but in any event it is a great election. It is Labor versus Labor. It is an election that even Labor cannot lose.

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INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Investigation into the conduct of NSW Corrective Services Officers at Lithgow Correctional Centre*, dated June 2019, received out of session on 3 June 2019. I order that the report be printed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Financial Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Universities 2018 Audits*, dated 31 May 2019, received out of session on 31 May 2019 and authorised to be printed.

Committees

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Deputy Chair

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 4 June 2019 Alexander Hart Greenwich was elected Deputy Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Sydney's Night Time Economy.

Announcements

DIVISION BELLS

The SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the House, I advise the House that last week some members missed divisions. As all members would be aware, the Legislative Assembly division bells do not ring in all parts of the building. Accordingly, having been asked to look into the issue, I have asked the Facilities Branch of the

Department of Parliamentary Services to identify those areas where the Assembly bells are not heard and to investigate options to bolster the audio infrastructure in those parts of the building.

In the meantime, I advise members that from today it is proposed that for the conduct of a division, as for establishing a quorum, the bells be rung as one continuous bell for up to four minutes. This temporary trial measure is to be implemented by way of a suspension of standing and sessional orders for the next two sittings weeks. In the longer term, I will liaise on this matter with members of the Standing Orders and Procedures Committee.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: DIVISION BELLS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (15:19): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended for the remainder of the 2019 Budget Sittings to provide for the bells for divisions to be rung as for a quorum call, being one long continuous bell for up to four minutes.

I note this is a trial, given that there are sections of the building where the bells cannot be heard.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (15:19): The Opposition does not oppose the motion. However I am slightly concerned about the possibility of confusion between quorum calls and divisions. But granted it is being done on a trial basis, that makes perfect sense.

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

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

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**.

Glebe Island Multi-User Facility

Petition calling on the Government to commission an independent impact assessment of the proposed Glebe Island Multi-User Facility and to protect adjacent residential amenity by imposing operating conditions such as night and weekend bans, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Pet Shops

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

Social Housing Mental Health Services

Petition requesting community outreach and support programs for social housing tenants with mental illnesses, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Motions Accorded Priority

WESTERN SYDNEY STADIUM

Consideration

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (15:20): I seek priority for my motion because finally, under the Liberal-Nationals Government, the people of western Sydney are getting the services and the infrastructure they deserve. For 16 years under those opposite the people of western Sydney languished. We had more and more investment in housing, but we languished in roads, rail, schools, hospitals, entertainment, police stations and courthouses, et cetera, because we did not get the corresponding investment. Finally, under this Government, we are seeing an infrastructure boom across western Sydney the likes of which has never been witnessed in the history of our region.

This motion should be accorded priority because those opposite chose to pit one side of our community against the other by using the mantra in the election, "Hospitals and schools before stadia". They wanted to rip off parts of our community and say, "No, you don't deserve the best infrastructure that we can provide." Those opposite wanted all of it to go into investment and schools. The people of New South Wales were wiser than those opposite gave them credit for, and rejected their claim. They said, "No, we pick this side of politics—the Liberals and The Nationals—because they have a vision and they have the capability to deliver for everyone in this State." Stadia as well as hospitals, schools, roads, rail and infrastructure, you name it.

Mr Brad Hazzard: "You can have it all", to quote somebody famous.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES: The Minister for Health took the words out of my mouth. At the Liberal campaign launch the Premier made a statement that the people of New South Wales can have it all, but only from this side of Government. What is interesting is that when the amazing Bankwest Stadium, the Western Sydney Stadium in Parramatta, opened, three Labor members campaigned against it, but then stepped in and enjoyed it. The member for Granville, the member for Blacktown and the member for Prospect were the ones who enjoyed the hospitality of New South Wales taxpayers, yet hypocritically they campaigned against it.

The people of New South Wales have spoken at the ballot box and said, "We choose the Liberals and The Nationals' vision and capability to deliver for our State." I call on the rest of the Labor Party to join with their three colleagues who led the way—Granville, Blacktown and Prospect. They led the way. Well done you three for saying, "This is where we need to go as a party. We need to embrace everyone in our community: those who love sport and those who love the arts." Come on board and come and join the train for prosperity that is the New South Wales Liberals and The Nationals.

CITY OF RYDE COUNCIL

Consideration

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (15:24): My motion deserves priority today because it goes fundamentally to the heart of who this Government is and what it stands for. It is about integrity, honesty and willingness to be transparent about the way in which we extinguish the funds of this community. They are taxpayer funds and we are entitled to some answers on exactly what is happening in the State right now. We have an incredible situation. Members of this Parliament would be well aware that when grant applications are made in this State, typically a detailed process with a lot of checks and balances takes place. Indeed, I have supported my local council and participated in the application for the Stronger Communities fund. I know the depth of explanations required, and the need for the council to be an active and engaged participant in the process, to accept responsibility for any funds that come its way, to own and administer those funds and to take responsibility for the infrastructure that might be built with those funds. I have done all of this with my community.

It is incredible to think that in this instance the City of Ryde council has been delivered a \$2.35 million grant on the basis of an application and process that it seems to know very little about, but one that seems to favour, in particular, one councillor on that council who has a colourful past that people can google. More importantly for this purpose, that councillor has a direct family link to a senior Minister in this Government. The fact that this application has been processed raises enormous questions about the probity of the process. At the time, the then local government Minister, according to Minister Dominello's Facebook, apparently was lobbied by him directly for support for this grant application that the council did not know about. Having received support from the then local government Minister, Minister Dominello applauded her efforts on Facebook. In response to media inquiries, then Minister Upton said:

That's a small amount of money. It's like a local electorate grant.

To that former Minister I say this on behalf of my colleagues on this side: I will have one of them every day; I will have one of those small grants of \$2.35 million every day. An important question needs to be answered here and it can be answered by the Minister for Local Government if she puts on the table all of the papers related to this particular grant process. There is absolutely no way imaginable that this grant should have been awarded to a council that did not make the application. The family link to the Minister raises yet another question about what is going on inside his department and his electorate office.

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

The House divided.

Ayes	48
Noes	43
Majority.....	5

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
 Berejiklian, Ms G
 Conolly, Mr K
 Coure, Mr M
 Dominello, Mr V
 Gibbons, Ms M
 Hancock, Mrs S
 Johnsen, Mr M
 Lindsay, Ms W
 Pavey, Mrs M
 Preston, Ms R
 Saunders, Mr D
 Singh, Mr G
 Stokes, Mr R
 Tuckerman, Mrs W
 Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
 Bromhead, Mr S
 Constance, Mr A
 Crouch, Mr A (teller)
 Elliott, Mr D
 Griffin, Mr J
 Hazzard, Mr B
 Kean, Mr M
 Marshall, Mr A
 Perrottet, Mr D
 Provest, Mr G
 Sidgreaves, Mr P
 Smith, Mr N
 Taylor, Mr M
 Upton, Ms G
 Williams, Mrs L

Barilaro, Mr J
 Clancy, Mr J
 Cooke, Ms S (teller)
 Davies, Mrs T
 Evans, Mr L.J.
 Gulaptis, Mr C
 Henskens, Mr A
 Lee, Dr G
 McGirr, Dr J
 Petinos, Ms E
 Roberts, Mr A
 Sidoti, Mr J
 Speakman, Mr M
 Toole, Mr P
 Ward, Mr G
 Wilson, Ms F

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
 Barr, Mr C
 Catley, Ms Y
 Crakanthorp, Mr T
 Dib, Mr J
 Finn, Ms J
 Haylen, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 Lynch, Mr P
 Mehan, Mr D
 O'Neill, Dr M
 Piper, Mr G
 Smith, Ms T.F.
 Warren, Mr G
 Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
 Butler, Mr R
 Chanthivong, Mr A
 Daley, Mr M
 Donato, Mr P
 Harris, Mr D
 Hoenic, Mr R
 Lulich, Mr N (teller)
 McDermott, Dr H
 Mihailuk, Ms T
 Park, Mr R
 Saffin, Ms J
 Tesch, Ms L
 Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
 Car, Ms P
 Cotsis, Ms S
 Dalton, Mrs H
 Doyle, Ms T
 Harrison, Ms J
 Hornery, Ms S
 Leong, Ms J
 McKay, Ms J
 Minns, Mr C
 Parker, Mr J
 Scully, Mr P
 Voltz, Ms L
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Motion agreed to.**WESTERN SYDNEY STADIUM****Priority**

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (15:34): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the recent opening of the new Western Sydney Stadium.
- (2) Notes that this vital piece of sporting infrastructure is a game changer for western Sydney.
- (3) Calls on the Opposition to support the Government's agenda so that New South Wales can have the best stadiums as well as the best schools, the best hospitals, the best roads and the best public transport system.

This motion recognises, as the people of New South Wales also recognised at the recent State election, that the New South Wales Liberal and Nationals Government has a vision for all citizens in New South Wales. This Government will ensure that we have the best hospitals, schools, roads and railways. We will also ensure that we invest in all aspects of our community—everything from sporting arenas to cultural facilities. Western Sydney Stadium is the first cab off the rank in our stadia strategy and what an exciting stadium to behold. It has been dubbed "the people's stadium" because it has been designed for everyone. It is a spectacular piece of infrastructure and one that the residents of western Sydney absolutely love.

Western Sydney Stadium is unique to New South Wales. It is the first of a number of stadia that will come about in the next couple of years. This brand-new, world-class rectangular venue, which has 30,000 seats, replaces the 30-year-old Parramatta Stadium, which had 2,000 seats. In the lead-up to the last State election the

Opposition pitted sports fans and sports lovers against people who are passionately concerned about our schools and hospitals. Through the Rebuilding NSW program the Government is supporting not only sporting events, but also the sporting industries that wrap around the events—the people who get work when these big sporting events take place, accommodation venues and nearby restaurants. Indeed, the rebuild of our sporting stadium adds to the multi-billion dollar tourism economy in New South Wales.

Whilst New South Wales has a higher economic performance rating and a lower rate of unemployment growth compared with other States and Territories, we cannot rest on our laurels and expect that to continue. We have to work hard, plan and make tough investment decisions, which sometimes may be unpopular, to benefit the community in the long run. The amazing opportunity that the Western Sydney Stadium rebuild offers to my community is exceptional; it is just the start of what our stadia strategy will deliver for our community. I do not know if those opposite look at *The Daily Telegraph* online but I have—

Ms Kate Washington: No.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES: Well, you do. That is where you get your question time strategy from.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Mulgoa will direct her comments through the Chair.

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will be heard in silence.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES: They will have to go to the interweb to find it. Significantly, a picture of the Allianz Stadium razed to the ground in preparation for the \$730 million stadium rebuild was often the backdrop of the then Leader of the Opposition when he called for investment in schools and hospitals before stadia in the lead-up to the last election. That image was emblematic of the political fortunes of those opposite. The Labor Party was razed to the ground at the last State election and 71 days after the State election it is still leaderless. The once great and mighty New South Wales Labor Party is now a shambolic remnant of itself as they continue to fight and backstab each other. However, we on this side of the House remain focused and determined to govern every day of the next four years for the people of New South Wales. We will continue to put them first in our vision and investments. We are making multi-billion dollar investments in our hospitals—the likes of which New South Wales has never seen before—in education, roads and rails, and further investments in our sporting stadia, as the people of New South Wales deserve.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (15:39): That was an interesting speech.

Mr Anthony Roberts: A very good one.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: If you think so. In the first instance we might have to give Guy Zangari a call and have him send a message to the Government outlining the Opposition's position on Western Sydney Stadium because the Government has missed it. I am sure they will read it. He will send that along and then they might get the position of the Labor Party right. It is all right. It is good to be lectured by members on the other side of the House on what they do not understand or know. In her contribution the member for Mulgoa failed to mention what was delivered by the Labor Government when we were in office for 16 years. I am the member for the electorate of Auburn. In the 16 years under a Labor Government in my electorate we got a new stadium and a new hospital. I do not know what the member was talking about because the Labor Government did invest. Now the Premier may want to steal Labor's "Bob the Builder" mantra but there is one difference between what Bob Carr did and what this Government does—Bob Carr brought infrastructure in on budget. He did not waste money. He did not spend \$220 million buying out the leases of ANZ Stadium because it was a priority to be redeveloped and then decide not to do it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will be heard in silence.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: He did not waste an additional \$570 million on light rail because he could not get the specifications right in the contract. The Labor Government, unlike the people on that side of the Chamber, spent money wisely on behalf of the people of New South Wales to deliver infrastructure on time and on budget. Everything those opposite touch blows out. The time and the budget blows out and the people of western Sydney pay for it. Earlier today I spoke in this Chamber about homelessness in Auburn. My electorate has the second highest homelessness rate in the State. Did the Minister refer to Auburn when he was speaking about homelessness earlier today? Not once. Today 2,000 people on the streets of Auburn are homeless while this Government spends billions of dollars on stadiums.

Those opposite talk about their social housing package; \$1 billion is one stadium to the mob on the other side. That is one stadium. Labor is interested in sporting facilities in western Sydney. Why? We are interested in a pool at Parramatta—a pool the Government promised it would start six months ago. Those opposite managed

to get a Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements application in for a stadium in the Eastern Suburbs in just one week. It has been six months. Stuart Ayres said in November that he would build the pool immediately. Where is it? Where is this sporting infrastructure that those opposite are so keen on? Swimming is the biggest sport in this country. We have not heard one word from those opposite about that kind of infrastructure since they have been in office. It is an absolute disgrace for Government members to talk about the infrastructure they are delivering; they are not delivering. What have they done in Auburn? Six stations have had their train services cut. Have we got any new trains? No. Every station in Auburn has had its train services cut.

That is what the Government does in western Sydney. It might pick out its little targeted seats and say, "We will give you this. We will give you a bit of a backhander. Here you go. You can have a nice, shiny train." What do they do in Auburn and Granville, which has the highest unemployment rate? They cut our train services. Does Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School get an upgrade? No, it does not. What do they get in eastern Sydney? They get a shiny new stadium. Government members can talk about their dodgy business plan and dodgy figures but they might want to take a look at that. None of the figures for the infrastructure they are talking about adds up! When Mike Baird was here there used to be a consensus on stadiums but the minute he turned his back on this Chamber and walked out the door, at every opportunity the Minister for Sport was undermining the Government's position. That is the example those opposite set. They look after their mates at the big end of town. They do not worry about western Sydney schools, hospitals or the areas with the highest unemployment and homelessness rates. As long as they have a new stadium down at the Sydney Cricket Ground they will be happy.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:44): I commend the member for Mulgoa for moving this motion because it reminds us of the tremendous election victory by the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government, when the people of New South Wales chose delivery over scaremongering. New South Wales has the best schools, the best hospitals and the best stadiums all thanks to this Government. This Government is committed to securing major sporting events that deliver economic and social benefits for the people of New South Wales. Now that we are building for the future, the Western Sydney Stadium is the first cab off the rank in a new era of world-class sporting and entertainment events. The new Western Sydney Stadium replaces the 30-year-old Parramatta Stadium with a new world-class 30,000 seat stadium, putting sports fans' experience at the forefront.

The people of New South Wales can be rightly proud of and enjoy this unique facility, as the live sporting experience is unparalleled. The seats are so close to the field that there is really no bad seat at Bankwest Stadium. With the steepest stands in the country the fans are so close to the on-field action they can feel every tackle, every pass and can be truly involved in the event. We have already locked in more than 30 sporting and entertainment events for Bankwest Stadium this year, with more to be announced soon. This will make New South Wales number one again for attracting blockbuster sporting and entertainment events and will create a best-in-class fan experience at venues people cannot wait to visit. But it does not end with the Western Sydney Stadium.

Over the next few years the people of New South Wales will see the Government deliver a new 45,000-seat stadium to replace Allianz Stadium at Moore Park and a new 75,000-seat rectangular stadium to replace ANZ Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park. Labor fails to understand that over the period that the ANZ and Allianz stadiums are being rebuilt, the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government will invest \$200 billion in health and education, including \$1.3 billion for the Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. This stadium investment represents 1 per cent of what the New South Wales Government will invest in health and education over the period of construction. It will mean that the people of New South Wales can have the best stadiums, the best schools, the best hospitals, the best roads and the best public transport. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to return New South Wales to its rightful position as the nation's premier destination for sport and entertainment events, all thanks to this Government. We have demonstrated that with this Government's responsible economic management we can have schools—Milperra Public School in my electorate will be receiving a new hall—and hospitals, with record funding for Bankstown Hospital, and stadiums. Under the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government we really can have it all—hospitals, schools and stadiums.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (15:47): The member for Mulgoa is right in one respect in relation to this motion today: The Bankwest Stadium and the razed stadium at Allianz are emblematic of the arrogance, waste and wrong priorities of this Government. At the election the people in rural and regional New South Wales showed they are not happy. The Government lost the electorates of Barwon, Murray and Lismore because it did not listen. If the Government believes that people in rural and regional New South Wales think they have it all, it has got it so wrong. In my electorate of Port Stephens, in 2015 we were promised a duplication of Nelson Bay Road but all we have been given is a roundabout. The Government promised \$200 million for an M1 missing link that will revolutionise transport, not only in the Hunter but across the State, and nothing has happened. In rural and regional hospitals across the State nurses and staff cannot meet the need. At Tomaree Hospital in Port Stephens one nurse saw 150 patients come through the emergency department on one day during the Christmas holidays. That is not having it all in rural and regional New South Wales.

We are pleased the people of western Sydney are able to go to a sparkly new stadium but we are not very happy with our roads, we are not happy with our schools or our kids sitting in demountable classrooms. We are not happy with our hospitals and our residents having to travel hundreds of kilometres just to get dialysis or chemotherapy. People cannot even get the palliative care to have the dignity in death that they need. This all speaks to the wrong priorities of this Government, which is prepared to waste billions of dollars on sparkling new stadiums in Sydney when rural and regional New South Wales are doing it tough. Families across the State are seeking food from services because they cannot put food on their tables. They are also seeking support because they cannot pay their energy bills because the Government has flogged off the electricity and their bills have gone up 60 per cent. The Government thinks families in rural and regional New South Wales are not hurting; that is why it lost seats in the last election. This stadium spend is emblematic of the Government's arrogance and all its wrong priorities. The Government may think everyone has got it all, but that is absolutely not the case in rural and regional New South Wales.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (15:50): In reply: I thank the member for Auburn, the member for East Hills and the member for Port Stephens for their contributions to debate on the Bankwest Stadium, which is now open and providing amazing opportunities for people in western Sydney and beyond. I will correct the record in relation to comments made by those opposite in this debate. Our whole stadium strategy is 1 per cent of our entire infrastructure program of works. This infrastructure investment to boost and strengthen the capability of our sporting arenas will build our economy. We have also committed the largest amount of funding to palliative care. Last year we announced \$100 million in funding for palliative care. On the weekend we announced a new program called Gas Switch. Many in our community have utilised the Energy Switch program.

Gas Switch is another mechanism whereby members of our community right across New South Wales can tap into the benefits and save on their electricity bills. People in my electorate of Mulgoa, on average, save the most from Energy Switch. Gas Switch comes on top of 40 other cost-of-living measures. Those opposite were in government for 16 years and they did nothing to support our communities like we are doing. The Liberal-Nationals Government has the capability, expertise, nous and desire to manage the economy of New South Wales, and to make smart choices to build our economy so that we have the money to invest in our hospitals, schools, roads and rail. A week ago the Sydney Metro Northwest opened \$1 billion under budget.

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

Mrs TANYA DAVIES: That is why this Government will always work hard to ensure that the people of New South Wales, regardless of where they live, have the investment, services, infrastructure and the quality of life they deserve. The fact those opposite did nothing to invest in western Sydney for 16 years was the primary reason I entered politics. I campaigned in 2010 to get rid of the former Labor Government in 2011 to ensure that western Sydney would have spokespeople—me and my colleague the member for Penrith—who would stand up and ensure the best for western Sydney. I am proud to be delivering that for them today.

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

The House divided.

Ayes50
Noes39
Majority.....11

AYES

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
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R

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
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M

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
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P

AYES

Tuckerman, Mrs W
Williams, Mr R

Upton, Ms G
Wilson, Ms F

Ward, Mr G

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
O'Neill, Dr M
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dib, Mr J
Harris, Mr D
Hoening, Mr R
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Motion agreed to.*Announcements***AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members that Australia's Biggest Morning Tea will be held tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. in the Strangers' Lounge. I encourage everyone to support Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. Good luck to all those chefs.

*Bills***LIBRARY AMENDMENT BILL 2019****First Reading**

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2019**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Mrs Shelley Hancock, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (16:01): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Local Government Amendment Bill 2019. This is the first bill that I have had the honour to present as the Minister for Local Government. It reflects the Government's commitment to assist local councils through consultation and the easing of regulatory burden. Through this bill the New South Wales Government is ensuring councils are given the time they need to have important conversations with their communities about changes to the rating system and to make important decisions about arrangements for council elections in 2020. The bill will also remove some of the current limits on local government procurement and make other amendments to cut red tape and reduce the regulatory burden on councils and local communities. It will also allow more opportunities for councils to share regulatory services and staff across existing boundaries to achieve higher quality services and best value for money.

There is currently in place a three-year rating path freeze in the Local Government Act that applies to councils merged in 2016, and the process of rates harmonisation was scheduled to occur next year. This means that significant decisions about the way rates are calculated and levied within these councils will be made by the

outgoing elected council shortly before the election and handed over to the incoming council to implement. This may be appropriate in some council areas in which the outgoing council has been working with its community on rates harmonisation for some time and in which the community fully understands the impacts. However, having served as an elected councillor myself, I also know how important it is for a newly elected council to have the opportunity to work directly with its community to set strategic goals and priorities, and to decide on appropriate pricing and levels of service. The Act provides a pathway to achieve this through the integrated planning and reporting process. This will allow newly-elected councils to have conversations with their community on rating, including rates harmonisation in the case of newly-formed councils, when developing the long-term Community Strategic Plan, the four-year delivery program and annual operational plans for their term of office.

For this reason the bill extends the rates path freeze for a further 12 months for new councils that want it to ensure that councillors elected in 2020 are part of the decision-making process. It is important to note the extension will be optional, as some councils have been working with their community on these issues for some time and are ready to move to the new framework. As the new Minister, I do not want to disadvantage councils so I am moving in this manner in this bill. Councils will also have the option to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] for a special rates variation should they so desire, in consultation with communities—as is standard practice. We need to give councils the option for more time to have challenging conversations with their communities about the rates harmonisation process, including why some rates will need to rise, so that they can work through those issues with their communities. By respecting the role of councils and providing them with sufficient time to engage with their communities on this important and challenging issue the Government is demonstrating its commitment to reset the relationship between State and local governments in New South Wales.

Another important amendment is required because of a current IPART review into the cost of local government elections. The bill gives councils until October 2019 to nominate their election provider, giving them time to consider the IPART report before making an important decision. I am pleased to say that the bill delivers practical changes to procurement procedures that councils have long been asking for. It will increase the tender threshold from \$150,000 to \$250,000 so that councils can go to competitive tender and it also provides sensible exemptions on disclosing fees, to prevent councils from being commercially disadvantaged in procurement negotiations. It will also open the door for councils to access the same pre-qualified professional services as the State Government so that it can directly procure services from disability employment organisations and nationally pre-qualified road and bridge construction organisations.

This is good news for councils. They have been asking this Government to make this change for some time so they can get best value for their ratepayers' dollars. We are also delivering on a commitment to open the door for local government to save money by sharing staff and services and responsibilities with neighbouring councils. Councils have told this Government clearly that they want to retain their own local identity but they also want opportunities to undertake cost-sharing and service provision with their neighbours where appropriate. The bill takes the first steps towards enabling that by allowing councils to work together more effectively on regulation and approvals across their borders. It will open opportunities for cross-border delegation of regulatory functions where appropriate and where councils choose to do so and provide a power to make regulations for the mutual recognition of council approvals. When fully implemented the bill will better support local businesses and cut red tape. For example, the changes could allow mobile businesses operating across multiple local government areas to apply for approval once rather than multiple times. We will be working closely with councils to explore how those new opportunities might be used effectively in their area.

I turn now to the clauses of the bill. The bill will extend the rate path freeze for a further 12 months from three rating years to four rating years. The amendment will apply to councils that merged in 2016. Importantly, while the newly formed councils are highly supportive of this proposed amendment and will most likely take up the additional year of the rates freeze, I can amend the relevant ministerial determination under the Act to exempt any council from the extension if the council has had appropriate conversations with the community and is ready to harmonise from 1 July 2020. As stated, this will allow councils who move to harmonisation to apply through IPART for a special rates variation. The bill gives councils until 1 October 2019 to enter into an arrangement with the Electoral Commissioner to administer the 2020 ordinary election. The bill will allow councils to enter such an arrangement with the Electoral Commissioner on or before 1 January 2020. Councils support this extension because it gives them time to consider the outcomes of the IPART review into election costs, which is due for completion in August 2019. The review result will enable them to make effective and informed decisions about election arrangements.

I will now turn to the amendments which will cut unnecessary red tape and save time and cost for local councils and their communities. The bill will increase the tendering threshold from \$150,000 to \$250,000. This means councils are not required to go to competitive tender for contracts with an estimated value less than \$250,000. This is a good provision in the bill and local governments have been asking for this for many years.

Procurement costs are now much higher than when the threshold was legislated and the current threshold causes unnecessary cost and delay to many council projects. Government guidance and internal council processes have also improved to better support councils to ensure good procurement practices based on probity and value for money. Lifting the tendering threshold for councils is common sense. It will reduce a significant red tape burden on councils and businesses wishing to tender for local government work. The bill will also exempt councils from the requirement to invite tenders before entering into a contract with a disability employment organisation approved under the Public Works and Procurement Act 1912 or firms pre-qualified under the National Prequalification system for Civil (Road and Bridge) Construction Contracts.

This provision will increase local government purchasing opportunities to support businesses that employ people with a disability. It will also make it easier for councils to enter into contracts with nationally pre-qualified road and bridge construction firms. The bill enables regulations to be made to exempt councils from requirements to advertise council fees or to determine fees in accordance with a pricing methodology adopted in the council's operational plan. The exemption can relate only to fees made for a commercial activity by a council. This provision will prevent councils from being commercially disadvantaged by other service providers when negotiating contract fees.

The bill delivers on the Government's commitment to help councils save money by sharing staff services and responsibilities in relation to regulatory activities with neighbouring councils. The bill proposes to allow councils to work together more effectively across their borders by enabling regulations to be made to prescribe a scheme for the mutual recognition of council approvals. The proposed scheme will allow councils to recognise approvals issued under section 68 of the Act and streamline the conditions and other requirements of the approval. Once established this scheme will provide huge savings in time and cost and cut red tape for small and mobile businesses which currently require separate approvals from different councils to operate in different local government areas. This scheme will be of huge benefit to businesses such as skip bin operators, fitness trainers, mobile food vendors and mobile dog groomers working on community land or in public places such as footpaths or roads.

To make sure we get this right the Government will develop the scheme in close consultation with councils and the community on issues such as local conditions that may need to apply. Having advocated for and supported small businesses throughout my career I am passionate about this amendment. It will cut red tape and make life easier for businesses working across council boundaries. Important amendments are also proposed to facilitate the sharing of regulatory functions between councils. The amendments will enable a council wishing to delegate a certain regulatory function to another council to do so if the other council accepts that function. The amendments clarify that a regulatory function can be delegated to any joint organisation, whether or not the council is a member of that joint organisation.

The Government will consult with councils and communities about the delegation of regulatory functions to ensure adequate safeguards are in place so that they are carried out in a way that continues to protect public health and safety. The bill amends the Public Interest Disclosures Act to remove the requirement for councils to table an annual public interest disclosures report in Parliament when it has already been included in their annual report. This is another example of how the Government is cutting red tape and the regulatory burden on councils. Over the past two months I have had the opportunity to meet and speak with a number of mayors, councillors, stakeholders and members of this place about issues facing the local government sector. That is an important part of my role. I encourage local members to talk to me about the issues facing them and to bring their councillors, general managers and mayors to meet me. I have spent much of the past eight weeks doing exactly that.

Yesterday I had the great pleasure of joining the Parliamentary Secretary, and member for Manly, as well as the mayor and general manager of the Northern Beaches Council, which is a shining star amongst the merged councils. It is amazing to see what it has been doing. We discussed the benefits of the significant investment the New South Wales Government has made within the LGA. Northern Beaches Councils is going from strength to strength, due in part to the strong partnership with the State Government and the professional leadership present in that local council. I thank Councillor Linda Scott, Deputy Mayor of the City of Sydney and President of Local Government NSW for her ongoing assistance and advice. As the Minister, I look forward to continuing a strong partnership with Local Government NSW. We are already working together to deliver strong outcomes. I have talked to Linda Scott about some of the reforms that I have in mind and she has been extremely supportive.

On Friday of last week I joined more than 60 mayors from rural and regional councils and expressed my strong desire to work closely with them to assist with the unique challenges they face. Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, and I also convened a meeting of chairs and executive officers of joint organisations. We have further issues to discuss, but I want to make sure that they have ongoing future success because the joint operation role is essential. Last month I met United Services Union General Secretary Graeme Kelly. I commend him and union members for their passion, professionalism and dedication to the local government sector—the people

represented by this union. I look forward to continued meetings with the USU and building a strong relationship to make sure that we all succeed. I thank the union for its insight and input into issues facing employees and the local government sector. I thank Annalisa Haskell, Chief Executive Officer of Local Government Professionals, and her team for their ongoing contribution to deliver a stronger sector and for their assistance to me and my office to date.

I congratulate members who have already lined up to meet with me, having lined up as early as possible to demonstrate their passion for local government. I congratulate the member for Goulburn, the member for Myall Lakes, the member for Sydney, the member for Wagga Wagga, the member for Murray, the member for Dubbo, the member for Oatley, the member for Albury—who met with me twice, I think—the member for Parramatta and the member for Oxley. I know that the members are waiting to see me and I can assure them they will be on a list. I believe the member for Cootamundra will meet with me soon, as will the member for Blacktown and the member for Monaro. It is my intention as the Minister to continue to meet with all stakeholders and members so that they can talk to me about the issues they are facing so that we can try to resolve some of those issues. They might wish to meet with me simply to boast about their councils, because some councils are doing a fantastic job.

I am pleased the bill goes some way to deliver on the issues that have been raised with me to date, such as the rate path freeze. This power is in response to the issues raised by the local government sector, which has approached me about reforming the sector and easing regulatory burdens. I cannot imagine that any member on the other side of the Chamber would oppose the bill, because it is a response to local government concerns. I know members on the other side are passionate about local government, as are members on this side, such as the member for Lane Cove.

The bill delivers on the Government's commitment to ensure that councils are transparent and accountable to the communities they serve. Importantly this bill reflects the collaborative relationship between the Government and councils in delivering what local communities want. Finally, this bill delivers on our commitment to cutting red tape for the local government sector, local businesses and the broader community. I am really surprised at how many members of Parliament served on local councils. They have brought that experience and passion to this Chamber. I thought there might be half a dozen such members on each side, but I have four pages of members on both sides—

Ms Felicity Wilson: Name them all and tell us about their service.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Did you say name them? The member for Balmain, Jamie Parker, served on Leichhardt Council from 1999 to 2008. The member for Bankstown served on Bankstown Council. The member for Bathurst, Paul Toole, served on Evans Shire Council before it merged to become Bathurst Regional Council. The member for Blacktown was elected in 2004 and became mayor in 2014. The member for Cabramatta, Nick Lalich, served on City of Fairfield Council. The member for Camden, Peter Sidgreaves, was elected to Camden City Council in 2012. Others are the member for Campbelltown, Greg Warren; the member for Castle Hill; and the member for Charlestown, Jodie Harrison. The member for Clarence, Chris Gulaptis, served on Maclean Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council and the new amalgamated council. The member for Coogee, Marjorie O'Neill, served on Waverley Council. The member for Davidson served on North Sydney Council. Where am I, the member for South Coast, on the list? I served for 17½ years on Shoalhaven City Council. I think I am the longest serving councillor in this Chamber, but then I am the oldest.

Mr Anthony Roberts: You started young.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I started at 12. The member for Drummoyne, John Sidoti, served on Burwood Council and was mayor from 2009-2011. The member for Goulburn, Wendy Tuckerman, served on Boorowa Council and Hilltops Council. The member for Granville, Julia Finn, served on Parramatta City Council. The member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston, served on The Hills Shire Council for 10 years. The member for Heffron, Ron Hoenig, served on the Municipality of Botany. He was an alderman, which ages him. I was an alderman too.

Mr David Elliott: An alderwoman.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: An older woman! Ron Hoenig was mayor when it became City of Botany Bay on 11 May 1996. He showed real commitment. The member for Holsworthy, Melanie Gibbons, served on Sutherland Shire Council. The member for Kiama served on Shoalhaven Council as deputy mayor. The member for Kogarah, Chris Minns, served on Hurstville City Council in 2004 as a Penshurst ward councillor and was elected for a term as deputy mayor in 2007 to 2008. The member for Lake Macquarie, Greg Piper, served on Lake Macquarie Council. The member for Lane Cove, Anthony Roberts, served on Lane Cove Council as councillor from 1995 to 2005, as deputy mayor and two terms as mayor. Is that right?

Mr Anthony Roberts: Yes.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: That shows unbelievable commitment and I thank the member for his passion. The member for Liverpool, Paul Lynch, served on Liverpool City Council and as deputy mayor on Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils. The member for Londonderry, Prue Car, served on Penrith City Council. The member for Macquarie Fields, Anoulack Chanthivong, served on Campbelltown City Council and as mayor from 2011 to 2012. The member for Manly, James Griffin, served a single term as a councillor on Manly Council, and as deputy mayor from 2015 to 2016 when the council was amalgamated into the Northern Beaches Council. The member for Maroubra, Michael Daley, served as councillor on Randwick City Council in 1995 and as deputy mayor from 2000 to 2004. The member for Monaro, John Barilaro, was elected as an independent councillor of Queanbeyan City Council in 2008 and served on the council until 2011. The member for Mount Druitt, Edmond Atalla, was elected to serve on Blacktown City Council in 2004, and in 2006 and 2007 he held the position as deputy mayor.

The member for Mulgoa, Tanya Davies, served on Penrith City Council. The member for Myall Lakes, Stephen Bromhead, served as a councillor on the Greater Taree City Council. The member for Newcastle, Tim Crakanthorp, served as a member of Newcastle City Council. The member for Northern Tablelands, Adam Marshall, was an impressive councillor. He was elected to Gunnedah Shire Council in 2004, aged 19, and in 2008 he served as deputy mayor and then mayor of Gunnedah. The member for Oatley, Mark Coure, served on Kogarah City Council representing West Ward. The member for Riverstone, Kevin Conolly, served on Hawkesbury City Council from 1999 and was deputy mayor from 2001 to 2004. The member for Ryde, Victor Dominello, served on City of Ryde Council from 1995.

The member for Seven Hills, Mark Taylor, was a councillor at The Hills Shire from 2012 to 2017. The member for Summer Hill, Jo Haylen, was the youngest ever female Mayor of Marrickville from 2013 to 2014, which is a great achievement. The member for Upper Hunter, Michael Johnsen, served on the Upper Hunter Shire Council and as mayor from 2009 to 2012. The member for Wallsend, Sonia Hornery, served on Newcastle City Council from 2002. The member for Wollondilly, Nathaniel Smith, served on Kogarah Council prior to his election. This is an unbelievably long list of members of this place who contributed to local government in this State.

Mr David Elliott: What about the other place?

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I do not care about the other place; I never have. But I do have something to say about the other place. I would ask members of the Opposition to point out to the Shadow Minister for Local Government in the other place that he made a completely erroneous statement to the effect that I stood back while the Office of Local Government was abolished. I invite the shadow Minister to come to Nowra to look at the Office of Local Government, which still has its staff intact—all 65 of them. I invite the shadow Minister to apologise to those members of staff, because they have taken great offence to his statement. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

CRIMES (ADMINISTRATION OF SENTENCES) AMENDMENT (INMATE BEHAVIOUR) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 28 May 2019.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (16:24): I will make a modest contribution in support of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. As the former corrective services Minister, I congratulate my successor, who is in the Chamber, on introducing the bill, which honours one of our election commitments to strengthen the current legislative framework and enhance the safety of correctional officers. The bill addresses valid concerns raised by Corrective Services and the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW, given the recent decision of the District Court case *Hamzy v R*. In considering its position on the bill the Opposition should reflect on the fact that this election commitment was made by the former Minister, my good self, to the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW. The union sought the Government to issue this legislation as a very important means to allow it to do its job in a better and safer environment.

In the District Court case, the court found that it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct that may also constitute a correctional centre offence or criminal offence. I recall a matter that was in the public domain in the weeks before the election, which initiated the Government's commitment to the union to introduce this bill. It was quite clear to me that then existing incentives were not working. In light of the court decision, this Government has noted that our Corrective Services

staff need certainty to continue to use incentive-based schemes to respond to inmate behaviour, including misconduct, which certainty will ensure better security and safety in correctional facilities.

The bill brings about a number of benefits. Firstly, the bill will provide a discretionary power for the commissioner of Corrective Services NSW to adopt policies to manage inmate behaviour. I pay tribute to Commissioner Peter Severin for his work with both myself and the incumbent Minister to ensure that that discretionary power is fair, transparent and is used at the appropriate times according to law. It is worth noting that the bill adopts the same approach as other provisions under the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 and is consistent with the commissioner's existing powers. Secondly, correctional officers should enjoy the full protection of the law and enhanced safety. Everyone wants our Corrective Services staff to be as safe as possible given that they are working in a very difficult environment. But to do this they need the right tools. We often appropriately say that correctional officers are the last line of defence in the war not only against criminals but also against many other individuals who want to do our community harm.

This Government is getting on with the job of giving them the tools, including behaviour management plans. Without those plans the community and correctional centres would be exposed to increased risk. The bill should progress in advance of the outcome of any judicial review proceedings to address concerns about the safety of correctional facilities and staff and provide certainty for the ongoing management of inmates. I pay tribute to the Minister for bringing this legislation before the House so swiftly after the election. It is about ensuring that officers have the confidence of the Government and the protection provided in this amendment. I am sorry that the shadow Minister did not see fit to remain in the Chamber for my contribution. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:29): I draw the attention of the House to its standing orders and the precedent that has been set in debates. As I adjourned the debate following the second reading speech, it is customary that I be afforded the courtesy of providing a contribution to the second reading debate. In seeking the call, I note that the former Minister for Corrections showed complete arrogance and disrespect for the longstanding traditions of this House, which afford the person who leads for the Opposition to address the bill in response to the Minister.

I lead for the Labor Opposition on the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. The primary objective of the bill is to close a loophole which presently exists in the legislation which denies correctional officers the capacity to sufficiently manage an inmate's behaviour through the revocation of certain "withdrawable privileges", irrespective of the circumstances. The bill before us today was incepted as a result of industrial action when correctional officers went on a snap strike after a spate of assaults, several of which occurred within a single week at Goulburn's supermax prison. Those assaults vary in nature and have left correctional officers with a range of injuries, from being battered and bruised to suffering broken bones, from being hospitalised following an assault to even having urine and faeces thrown at them. Nobody can deny that our State's correctional officers are routinely forced to put up with a lot of nasty things. It should be abundantly clear by now why correctional officers were fed up with being treated like punching bags, given the system has not only failed to adequately protect them but it is yet to provide correctional officers with sufficient tools and resources necessary to empower them to remediate issues as they arise.

In February 2019 a judge handed down the decision to reverse Bassam Hamzy's 20-month sentence extension after bashing a supermax correctional officer in 2017. The court found it unlawful under the current legislation to use incentive-based schemes to remove withdrawable privileges as a result of an inmate's conduct. As a result, Hamzy's conviction for assaulting a correctional officer was quashed. In lieu of all the prior incidents and assaults of officers throughout the corrections system, this decision acted as the catalyst which sparked outrage throughout the entire system. Correctional officers firmly believed this decision sent a clear message to anyone inside a jail that it was okay to assault correctional officers and staff.

Correctional officers understood this decision would have serious implications for their ability to manage and maintain discipline within the State's jails. More than two-thirds of the State's correctional officers joined their brothers and sisters in solidarity and walked off the job. Each of them understood the dangers their colleagues faced on a daily basis, and to see how the system blatantly disregarded their safety and wellbeing was nothing short of a blow to the guts for correctional officers across the State. Correctional officers play a vital part in the frontline roles which are essential to our State. Each seasoned correctional officer in New South Wales would have been a victim or would have worked with someone who has been injured on the job as a result of being assaulted while performing their duties.

It is incredibly unjust for the system to expect our State's dedicated correctional officers to continue putting their own safety on the line while depriving them of the basic tools and support structure necessary to allow them to appropriately manage and maintain good order within the State's jails. In light of this enormous issue, legislative change is required to ensure New South Wales correctional officers have the requisite tools to

enable them to continue doing their job with the full knowledge that their efforts will be supported by the laws that are envisaged in this place. That is why we are here today.

The Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019 will amend the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 No. 93 to introduce new section 65A, which will permit the Commissioner of Corrective Services to adopt behaviour management policies to manage the behaviour of inmates in New South Wales correctional centres. Amendments set out in the bill will encompass any matter relating to the behavioural management of an inmate in accordance with this Act, while specifying the circumstances in which a withdrawable privilege may be modified. This may be achieved through either increasing or depriving an inmate of a particular withdrawable privilege.

Withdrawable privileges are supposed to be tools available to assist to incentivise good behaviour and to be revoked should an inmate's behaviour regress. Clearly recent events have highlighted the need for correctional officers to have the tools and resources necessary to appropriately manage inmate behaviour while operating within this type of structured incentive scheme. The amendments should take the appropriate steps to ensure that we do not have a repeat of the aforementioned issues. New section 65A (3) (a) will allow for the modification of privileges provided under a behaviour management policy to be authorised, even if the proposed modification is a correctional centre offence or criminal offence.

For those who are unaware, a correctional centre offence is any act or omission by an inmate while in custody that has been declared to be an offence under schedule 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation. These modifications can be made at any time, irrespective of any proceedings or processes that are underway, or any penalties that would be imposed with regard to such an offence. This legislation aims to provide correctional officers with the necessary reassurances that behavioural management programs and withdrawable privileges can be used as effective means to manage the safety and security of inmates in our State's correctional centres.

Members of the New South Wales Labor Party wholeheartedly support the State's correctional officers. They believe the officers deserve the assurance that the system will support them while enabling them to carry out their duties as safely and effectively as possible throughout the State. The legislation provides a solution to one of the many issues that affect the good and proper working order of the Corrections portfolio in New South Wales. On numerous occasions we have highlighted issues relating to inmate escapes, contraband finds and assaults, which severely impact the ability of correctional officers to maintain and manage the safety and security of centres. These issues emphasise the longstanding problems of overcrowding within correctional centres, an over-casualised workforce and the removal of the assistant superintendent rank in some centres across New South Wales.

The Labor Opposition members do not oppose this bill as it aims to resolve one important issue affecting correctional officers and their ability to perform their duties. However, I put on record that the Coalition has failed to resolve many longstanding issues that it has created since coming to government in 2011. I implore the new Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, Anthony Roberts—who is at the table—to rectify his predecessor's failings and to stand with the hardworking and dedicated staff of the Department of Corrective Services. The Minister needs to take action to remedy the terrible mess he has inherited. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:38): I speak to the short but very important Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. The bill was introduced by the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, Anthony Roberts, who is in the Chamber. The Minister has a deep understanding of those who serve in uniform and across the justice environment. The Minister has served the nation and understands the challenging and difficult job facing those in our correctional centres each and every day. I am confident that the community is in good hands with this Minister in charge of the portfolio. I am pleased to speak in favour of this amending bill, both in my role as the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice and as a representative—for a number of years—of New South Wales corrections facility officers and employees whom I am proud to call constituents of Seven Hills.

The bill follows the decision of *Hamzy v R* by the District Court of New South Wales in February this year. The judgement of the court created uncertainty concerning the ability of corrective services officers to use incentive-based schemes, such as behavioural management plans, to manage inmate behaviour and respond to misconduct. The court ruled that it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct that may also constitute a correctional centre offence or criminal offence where it is not done in accordance with the process in the Act. The outcomes of the decision have caused significant concern for Corrective Services and for the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW.

Schedule 1 inserts new section 65A into division 6 of part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. The proposed section permits the Commissioner of Corrective Services to adopt policies to manage the behaviour of inmates of correctional centres, appropriately called "behaviour management policies". A behaviour management policy may include any matter relating to the management of the behaviour of inmates and may specify the circumstances in which certain privileges provided to inmates may be modified by being either increased or withdrawn. A modification to the privileges of an inmate in accordance with a behaviour management policy may occur at any time, even if the circumstances causing the modification relate to an offence. This modification to the privileges of an inmate does not affect, and is not affected by, any proceedings or penalty for the related offence.

This bill will equip our hardworking corrections officers with the tools they need to carry out their work with inmates in a safe and effective manner and with authority. Under this bill behaviour management policies will have greater scope to incentivise better and good behaviour from inmates of New South Wales corrections facilities and assist in controlling behaviour that might fall short of any standard. Encouraging better and good behaviour from all inmates—not just high-risk inmates—can not only improve the safety of correction centres, corrections officers, other staff and fellow inmates but also maintain the safety of the community, which goes to the heart of good government. The bill will not reduce the rights and privileges of inmates below the minimum standards as provided for in the Act and as stipulated in the regulations. It also does not attempt to override the established common law principle of considering in sentencing the extra-curial punishment likely to be inflicted on an offender, otherwise than by a court of law.

The bill does, however, ensure that all inmates in New South Wales corrections facilities will be subject to behavioural management policies. Currently, behavioural management policies comprise a tiered program with four levels or stages. Inmates have access to increased privileges if they progress through the stages and they have access to decreased privileges if they regress. A wide range of withdrawable privileges are prescribed by the regulations, including the ability to purchase goods, the keeping of approved personal property, pursuing a hobby, access to music and films, the use of a telephone, leave permits and participation in contact visits.

The New South Wales Government knows that an important way to reduce recidivism in the State is by offering inmates, especially high-risk inmates, another path forward and showing them that our society values and, in many cases, rewards pro-social and good behaviour. By promoting an adherence to the rules of the corrections facility through the use of the behaviour management policies contained in the bill, the experience of the inmates of New South Wales correctional facilities will be akin to that in our lawful society. It will aim to break down the attitudes towards authority and the behaviours that may have resulted in the inmates' incarceration, which they would be in danger of resuming upon their release.

If it were not already clear, it might also be useful to add that, according to the existing Act, the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW can delegate his functions to any person. The bill will adopt the same approach with regard to the delegation of the functions of the commissioner to ensure that the correctional officers involved with the day-to-day management of our facilities can make swift changes to the behaviour management policies of their inmates from time to time, as circumstances permit. Members might also recall that the Government made an election commitment to amend the Act regardless of the outcome of any leave application to appeal the District Court's decision in *Hamzy v R*. The Government committed to ensure that any loophole would be addressed and that the legislation would be strengthened. The commitment was aimed at ensuring that correctional officers enjoy the full protection of the law and that their safety is enhanced. In advance of any judicial review proceedings, it is important to address concerns about the safety of correctional facilities and Corrective Services staff and to provide certainty for the ongoing management of inmates, especially those considered to be of high risk.

I am pleased to support the bill as the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice and also, as I have said before, as the representative of a number of dedicated and tireless New South Wales corrections facility officers and employees who live in the electorate of Seven Hills. Like members on both sides of the House, I offer them my heartfelt thanks for their work in difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions. In my previous role as Parliamentary Secretary for Counter Terrorism, Corrections and Veterans, I had numerous opportunities to attend passing-out parades and graduations at the Corrective Services Academy at Brush Farm. It was an absolute honour to be there, representing the Minister at the time, and to see proud families and friends congratulating those officers as they progressed through their programs and started working at our correctional facilities across New South Wales.

Unfortunately, it was also necessary to attend commemoration days to remember the officers who had fallen in the line of duty. I say "unfortunately" because it is unfortunate that such things occur in our facilities. It is an example of the dangerous job they do. They do it not only in service to the community but also for what they

believe in. As I have said previously, I wish them all the best in their day-to-day duties. I hope that this legislation goes some way towards giving them the safe environment they deserve for protecting our community.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:48): The Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019 aims to protect correctional centres' ability to implement behavioural management policies and withdrawable privileges—practices put in question by a recent court ruling. The Government says that implementing behavioural management policies and the privilege withdrawal system can continue to make prisons safer. Prisons are unsafe places, particularly for inmates who are at constant risk of violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment and sexual assault. The loss of freedom and privacy, the confined space and the rigid routine, the power hierarchy inherent in the system and a population of mostly people with some form of disadvantage make jail a hotbed for conflict and problem behaviour.

The aim of behaviour management policies and the privilege withdrawal system is to maintain good order and encourage good behaviour among inmates, but the withdrawal of privileges has the potential to have significant impacts on vulnerable inmates and the families of inmates. We know that people with an intellectual disability are over-represented in the prison system. They are easy targets for bullies and, as a result, suffer more than others in prisons. Research by Human Rights Watch found regular violations of the rights of prisoners with disability. Inmates with an intellectual disability often struggle with the rigid system of prison life and will end up breaching rules and losing privileges regularly. It is unclear whether removing privileges for people with an intellectual disability will have any behavioural benefits.

I am particularly concerned when reduced family contact is used as a form of punishment, with visits reduced or contact denied, especially in the case of juveniles and women with children. Children should always have full access to, and contact with, their families and the people who love and support them. Being placed in care increases the likelihood of offending and ending up in the justice system, so we know that reducing family contact only adds to the problems that cause offending. If the Government's focus is on rehabilitation rather than increasing recidivism, denying children in correctional centres the ability to hug their family members or talk to them in private about their concerns can have no benefit for their health and wellbeing. It should not be permitted.

Nearly three-quarters of women in prisons are mothers, with 62 per cent of them being the sole caregiver, mostly to children aged under six. Mothers must have regular contact with their children regardless of what happens inside prisons. Not being able to hold their children or talk to them in private punishes not only women inmates but also their children. That has an enduring effect, including putting them at risk of State care and potential run-ins with the law. The remoteness of women's prisons already makes family visits difficult. Women's prisons should not control family contact in any way as a form of discipline. The court case that called privilege withdrawals into question should be used as an opportunity to review the system and assess the impacts of current approaches.

To make prisons safer, ultimately we should aim to reduce the prison population. The justice system is expensive and has significant social costs for those affected and wider community costs from inmates being discharging to unemployment, homelessness, poor health, State care and, potentially, a career in crime. Overall, the prison population in New South Wales has been growing rapidly, increasing from 10,000 in 2013 to 13,651 in 2018 and plateauing in the past 12 months. The widely reported over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in correctional facilities is of great concern. While arrests of Indigenous people for violent and property offences have reduced by more than a third, there has not been a corresponding decrease in the imprisonment rate. Indeed, the number of Indigenous prisoners doubled between 2001 and 2015. In juvenile centres, half the population is Indigenous; in adult prisons, a quarter of the male and a third of the female population is Indigenous.

Reducing incarceration rates is an essential step in closing the gap and achieving full reconciliation. Culturally sensitive legal services, particularly for young Aboriginals, are needed and the Koori Court—which is being expanded to the Surry Hills Children's Court—should be used across the State. Drug courts have also been shown to be effective. We now have three drug courts but more drug rehabilitation programs are vital. We also need to treat drug use as a health concern, not a criminal matter, and stop imprisoning people for their drug habits. We need to find a new way of dealing with offending when disadvantage is a clear factor. Homelessness, mental health, cognitive impairment, addiction, poverty, trauma, sexual assault, family and domestic violence, and being placed in State care are all known factors in offending.

The focus of the criminal justice system must be prevention, early intervention, diversion, rehabilitation and integration; investment and reform must shift in this direction. Bail needs significant reform. Almost a third of adult prisoners and more than half of juvenile prisoners are on remand. The presumption of innocence must form the basis of bail decisions, where bail is refused only because there is an unacceptable risk that the accused will commit a serious crime, endanger the community or interfere with witnesses or will not appear in court. Reform to bail laws will always be at risk of shock-jock and sensational media attacks, and I do not believe

improvements will happen unless there is multi-partisan support, with all members taking an evidence-based approach rather than pandering to and inflaming community fears.

Correctional centres would be safer if they gave prisoners the opportunity to gain new skills, treat drug problems and mental illness, and move away from a life of offending. We must expand resource prevention, early intervention, diversion and rehabilitation programs, and help offenders integrate back into their families and communities, maintain homes and get work. We must trial innovation and test new approaches to spending money better and improving outcomes for offenders and the community. I call for a new approach to dealing with offending and a review of the impacts of privilege withdrawal policies, particularly withdrawal of family contact.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (16:55): As the newly elected member for Goulburn, I wholeheartedly support the urgent need for the amendments included in the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. Management of inmate behaviour by Corrective Services NSW includes using incentive-based schemes that are separate to the correctional discipline process in division 6 of part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. In Goulburn's jails, which are renowned for housing the worst of the worst, incentive-based behavioural programs are widely used and applied to our inmates. Incentive-based schemes allow operations to respond immediately to negative inmate behaviour and ensure the safety of staff and other inmates. They can include increasing or decreasing withdrawable privileges in order to encourage positive inmate behaviour.

After talking with the local management team, including Governor Larry Bolger, we have learned that incentive-based schemes work. In fact, they are critical for managing inmate behaviour and the safety of our correctional centres. Behaviour management plans are a fundamental strategy for the behaviour management of high-risk offenders, and without them our communities and the correctional centres in which they operate would be exposed to increased risk. The Hamzy judgement in February 2019 has created uncertainty about the ability of Corrective Services to use incentive-based schemes such as behavioural management plans to manage inmate behaviour and respond to misconduct in a timely manner. In response to the Hamzy judgement, in March this year over 200 staff walked off the job at Goulburn jail, sparking a statewide strike.

The court found that it is unlawful to use behavioural management plans to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct that may also constitute a correctional centre offence or criminal offence where it is not done in accordance with the process in division 6 of part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act. Correctional services involve both enforcing conditions and enforcing the consequences of breaking those conditions. We should present choices to inmates by defining conditions and consequences without threatening those inmates. This makes them aware that they have a choice about how they behave. This is particularly important in Goulburn: The increased risk associated with our inmates means we must do everything we can to ensure that our correctional officers return home safely to their families at the end of each working day.

The Hamzy decision has caused significant concern for Corrective Services and for the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW. I know this because I have spoken with several concerned corrections officers and their families. The strike by our correctional officers in March was a cry for help and this amending bill is a sign of solidarity—a sign that this Government will do everything it can to protect our frontline corrections officers. We can achieve this by continuing to incentivise positive inmate behaviour and by responding appropriately to adverse behaviour such as assaulting a correctional officer—as in the Hamzy case.

Confronting angry or irate offenders may be among the most difficult duties in corrections. It is a learned skill. The ability to successfully achieve de-escalation can have definite safety and security implications. This bill is a no-brainer. It is a necessary measure to provide certainty and clarity to Corrective Services' operations and to ensure that our officers on the ground have the tools required to manage inmate behaviour and staff safety. In addition to enhancing correctional officers' safety, these amendments also act to enhance the safety of other inmates as they would allow Corrective Services to withdraw privileges in response to inmate-on-inmate assaults, thus providing an immediate response and protecting other inmates.

As the member for Goulburn, I cannot stress the importance of this bill highly enough. The Parliament of New South Wales has a responsibility to do everything it can to protect the safety of our correctional officers. That includes ensuring they are equipped with appropriate behaviour management tools and can carry out their roles not only effectively, but also with minimal further risk to safety where possible. I congratulate the Minister on taking swift action and introducing this bill to the House. I thank him for enhancing correctional officers' safety.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:00): I speak on behalf of The Greens in debate on the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. While we will not oppose the bill in this Chamber, I put on record some of our concerns and make it clear that my colleague The Greens' justice spokesperson in the other place, David Shoebridge, will make further comments, contributions and impact assessments of the bill. The bill amends the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate

Behaviour) Bill 2019 to insert a new section 65A, which specifically provides a power for the commissioner to adopt policies to manage the behaviour of inmates in correctional centres. These policies can include any matter relating to the management of the behaviour of inmates in accordance with the Act and regulations. They can also specify when withdrawable privileges provided to an inmate can be modified either to increase or decrease the inmate's privileges. This applies even when the behaviour this relates to is an act that is an offence, it can be done regardless of proceedings for such offence, and it does not prevent proceedings for an offence taking place.

It is important to proceed with caution whenever we see any government introducing bills that seek to overturn decisions of the courts. It is always prudent to approach those situations with caution and to look closely and carefully when we see that occur. If the court—which has assessed all the relevant facts in the situation—has made a particular decision, we should ask first and foremost why the Government does not respect that decision. The answer is usually—as it appears to be in this case—because the Government desires to have punishment enforced even when the courts do not agree. It does not tend to be the other way around: Government bills tend to increase the amount of punishment that is enforced.

In this case, the court found that the use of behaviour management plans to punish inmates was inconsistent with the Act and purported to create a parallel punishment system to the one identified in the Act. The punishment for a correctional centre offence can already include the removal of privileges, following the decision of the jail's governor. I note that at no point in the second reading speech or in this bill is the word "rehabilitation" mentioned. We have all heard the reasons that inmate behaviour needs to be looked at, but the member for Sydney articulated clearly some serious concerns about the type of punishment that is implemented in these cases—particularly punishment given to women in prison who have young children with them in prison and whose children are then also punished as a result. While we are talking about this issue, I give a shout-out to Sisters Inside for the amazing work it does supporting women in prison and women coming out of the prison system.

I highlight the valuable work done by the Law and Safety Committee in the previous Parliament in relation to diversionary programs for juveniles in the juvenile justice system. The committee found that there are many valuable programs and support that can be provided to juveniles to try to prevent them from entering the prison system. I urge the Government to look at some of the recommendations of that committee, which heard directly from young juvenile detainees who had very clear ideas about what might stop them from returning to the juvenile justice system—for example, simply providing them with a free Opal card for six months when they leave the juvenile justice system. Most of them breach their bail conditions when they cannot meet their reporting requirement, and they cannot do that because they cannot afford to put money on their Opal card, and end up back in the juvenile justice system.

We could be doing many things to support rehabilitation and to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system and our prison system in this first place. As I have pointed out, we should all be very concerned that this bill seeks to remove court-imposed limits on double victimisation of inmates. As I mentioned, my Greens colleague and justice spokesperson in the other place, David Shoebridge, will address that issue more fully in the debate in the other place. The Greens will not oppose the bill in this House, but we will raise a number of concerns in the other place.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (17:08): I speak in support of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. I thank my friends and colleagues the former Minister for Corrections David Elliott and the current Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, Anthony Roberts. The job of any government is to house and feed inmates. Anything in addition to that is a privilege, not a right. We have a responsibility to keep our corrections staff safe; they do a great job. We must ensure that Corrective Services NSW and the staff that are running these facilities are afforded the protections they need.

First, I recognise the work of Corrective Services officers at the South Coast Correctional Centre, many of whom live in my electorate. Only recently I heard about the great work these staff are doing, not only in the centre but also in our community, helping offenders deliver new playground facilities for children with disability at Bomaderry Public School—my old public school. This work not only results in great facilities for our community, but also provides offenders with the skills to find themselves jobs on release. This all works towards helping to reduce reoffending.

This bill is crucial in the Government's efforts to support Corrective Services staff, ensuring that staff can get on with their jobs safely. The bill makes it clear to inmates that unacceptable behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated. The bill is pertinent in the response to the outcome of the Hamzy case. The District Court decision in that case found that using incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges is a prohibited response to inmate misconduct. With all due respect to the findings of the judiciary, the decision has highlighted justice concerns for Corrective Services and for prison officers seeking safety in their workplace. There is also the issue

of inmate behaviour and the risk of reoffending if poor conduct has not been corrected. It is of the utmost importance that these safety concerns are resolved for the sake of both the corrections staff and inmates.

It is the duty of this House to clarify procedure that is causing concern for Corrective Services NSW staff and the community, to ensure that community standards are reflected in the operations of our prison system. The bill will provide clarity and certainty for staff at corrections facilities using incentive-based schemes in their response to inmate behaviour. This will ensure that our corrections staff are confident in their efforts to manage inmate behaviour. The bill will enable a discretionary power for the Corrective Services NSW Commissioner to facilitate policy that can manage inmate behaviour and ensure safety is a priority in all facilities. I repeat: This is about ensuring safety. We have an obligation to house and feed inmates, but they should not expect anything more than that, particularly if they are putting the lives of our staff at risk. They should expect nothing more than the strictest response from corrections, as will be the case with the powers contained in the bill.

Importantly, the bill adopts an approach that is consistent with other provisions under the Act. Additionally, the bill is in keeping with the existing powers of the Corrective Services NSW Commissioner. I commend Mr Severin and his team for their great work in these facilities. No-one wants to have these facilities, but they are an important part of the justice journey for many people. I am proud of the work the staff do in the corrections facility in my community. The facility has been a major employer for my community.

The people of New South Wales and this Government hope that employees of Corrective Services NSW and of the juvenile justice system can manage inmates effectively and can be assured of their personal safety within a potentially dangerous workplace. We should not be unreasonably limiting corrections officers; they require urgent clarity on this issue. Providing safety for the staff in corrections facilities and enabling the successful rehabilitation of inmates with behavioural difficulties requires certainty surrounding the law. This is inclusive of behavioural management plans that assist in managing high-risk offenders. Without these management strategies, the community and staff within corrections facilities are at an unacceptable risk.

The amendment will remove legal uncertainty and provide clarity for Corrective Services NSW operations whilst simultaneously assisting in the management of inmate behaviour. This Government stands behind our hardworking correctional officers. We stand behind their right to have a safe workplace in which to do their important job as part of the justice journey of prison inmates. I do not like seeing anyone end up in a correctional facility, but if they are there they are there for a reason. Our corrections officers should have the powers they need to manage that behaviour and to keep themselves safe. I commend former Minister Elliott and Minister Roberts for bringing forward these provisions to the House. The provisions should be adopted with great alacrity and with acclamation because it is about keeping our corrections staff safe. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:11): I make a contribution to debate on the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. We support this important and essential bill, which addresses the issue that arose last year, and I congratulate the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections on bringing the bill to the House. In the Cessnock electorate we have a rapidly expanding prison that will soon be one of the largest, if not the largest prison in the Southern Hemisphere. More than 1,800 inmates will be housed there when construction is completed. Because we have had a prison facility in my community since I was a little boy some 40 years ago, I have had the good fortune to know a number of people who work in these prisons. With all due respect to some of the contributions that have been made to this debate earlier today, I suggest that those members talk to prison staff and listen more closely and carefully to some of the issues that arise in prisons that the staff have to deal with.

When I talk about the workforce in the community that I have the good fortune to call friends, I am talking about prison officers, people who work in administration, teachers, people who work on programs, psychologists, social workers—the whole gamut—and some of the stories I hear about the things that happen inside our facilities are quite extraordinary and beyond imagination. The staff who work in these facilities should be able to work in a safe environment and they should be able to work in a way so the inmates themselves understand that there will be a response to their bad behaviour and that everything they do will have a consequence. The staff who work in correctional facilities have to have the power to respond to bad behaviour. I emphasise to everybody who may not understand this that, sadly, prison inmates by and large are incredibly poorly educated, have many mental health and emotional issues, and quite often function at a level that is equivalent to a teenager or perhaps even younger.

In that regard I bring people's attention to what we are talking about in this bill. Try to think how you might deal with a teenager or a child who is eight, 10, 12 or 13 years old, and trying to simply explain to them that if they do that, this will be the consequence—and those things can be immediate. If you spit in the face of a corrections officer, then you might have this privilege withdrawn. If you do not attend the programs and education

classes that are provided for you while you are in the facility being rehabilitated, then you might have these other privileges withdrawn; you might not be able to do your buy-ups and things like that.

What resonates with an individual prisoner will be different from prisoner to prisoner. What drives the behaviour of a prisoner, in any of these situations, is different from prisoner to prisoner. Quite often in our facilities, unfortunately, the behaviours of individual prisoners are not behaviours of their choice. They might, in fact, be told they have to do certain things or else there will be retributions—which will be very physical and violent—down the track. Sometimes these prisoners, these inmates, are doing things they do not necessarily want to do, that they have not necessarily chosen to do, but they are forced to do them because of the hierarchies and "law of the jungle" things going on inside the facility. That is an unfortunate and a sad reality, but it is a reality. It is a lived reality every single day. Our prison officers are best placed to understand that.

We need our prison officers to be able to leverage back against that type of conduct and behaviour, so that when an inmate is either choosing to do a certain thing or being coerced to do a certain thing, they understand that if they do that the response from those who look after them while they are in jail will be whatever that consequence is. We do that with our children as we raise them. Every teacher in classrooms across the State and country does that in the classroom when dealing with children, and trying to shape and guide them to be more productive and positive members of their broader community. We do that in this very Chamber, with the power of the Speaker in that Chair! If you do A it leads to B. Trust me, Madam Temporary Speaker Wilson, I have been on the receiving end of a number of those decisions, and only once was there a false call from that Chair against me.

But this is the point: I am an elected official; surely I am entitled to sit in this Chamber. Under the old rule of our prisons—which we are changing here—the suggestion was that that place had no right or entitlement to impose a consequential punishment for something you do once you are inside. That is the same as me saying there should be no right for the Speaker to impose upon me a consequential punishment no matter what I do in here. Imagine! Imagine if I were able to come up to the side of the Speaker's chair and spit in the Speaker's face, or physically attack the Speaker in the chair, or call the Speaker all sorts of names without consequence or punishment. Imagine the mayhem that would exist in this House.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Mr CLAYTON BARR: But it is not, because we have consequences to actions and they are enforceable, and that allows us to have something close to civility. Sometimes people like me need to be rehabilitated about their ways in this place by a punishment imposed upon them. I understand that. It is important for inmates in our facilities to understand that if they do certain things that are outside of the rules, policies, procedures and programs of the prison, there will be consequences for those particular actions. There is no one consequence that will work for every inmate. They have a variety of backgrounds, a variety of triggers and a variety of motivators. For one inmate, if you take away their powers to buy-up, that will be the most significant thing you can do to them that week. For another, if you incarcerate them in isolation, they might deem that as a reward because that is not their trigger. For another, it might be about having people come to visit them. For another, it might be about moving towards a more preferential job inside the jail—moving from industries where it is hard physical labour to the library or the kitchen where they actually do something they enjoy. These are rewards or punishments, depending on where the you are in your scheme.

There are many, many, many opportunities in our jails for rewards for good behaviour for inmates who are serving their time productively and doing well. There are lots of opportunities for them to be recognised for that. But by the same token we have to have the capacity to impose alternative punishments or things that will discourage people from doing certain things. We have to be able to do that. These punishments internally are not on top of the sentence they already have. They already have a sentence to be locked up for 10 or 12 years. But if you are locked up for 10 or 12 years, that is your punishment for the crime you committed on the outside. But once you are on the inside, if you choose to violently attack a prison officer, or if you choose to abuse the privilege of being a low security prisoner and you wander off and may be sneak back in later that afternoon, you deserve a consequence for that action that you did inside the prison. That is not on top of the punishment for what you did outside, because that is a prescribed term.

You should be able to be punished for things you do inside the prison, and you should be able to be rewarded for things you do inside the prison—that is rehabilitation. That is teaching and encouraging these people, who often are poorly educated and have been let down by so many other parts of our society. That is teaching them basic things about rights and responsibilities, and that is at the crux of this bill. There are so many reasons why people end up in prison; some of them are the saddest stories ever. In short, I just want to say that some of our women in prisons are there because that is the safest place for them to be. They would rather be in prison than out in their community or back in the domestic violence situation they came from. That is how complex our

prisons are. This is a good piece of legislation; it is a correct and right response to what is happening in our prisons day in and day out. That is why we support this bill.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:21): I, too, speak on the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. I commend the member for Cessnock for the way that he supported the bill and recognised the importance of this amendment. Any member who has a Corrective Services facility in their electorate would understand clearly the importance of this amendment and the importance of protecting our Corrective Services staff. They are there to do a job, just like everybody else, and they should be able to do it safely, without risk, and to return home to their families. In my electorate of Grafton we have had a jail for well over 100 years, so we well and truly know the importance of the role Corrective Services officers play and the risk they take every day they go to the jail. We are getting a new jail built, which will be Australia's largest jail. It will contain something like 1,700 inmates, 1,000 of whom will be maximum security inmates—both male and female—and approximately 700 minimum security inmates.

It will have about 600 permanent staff and we want to ensure that those staff—who will be living locally—are protected. Hopefully this legislation will protect those staff. It is nothing that we do not do at home. When we punish our children for misbehaving we say to them, "You're not watching TV tonight. Off to your bedroom." If they do not clean their room, "You're grounded." We also punish people in society: if you drink and drive you will lose your licence; if you steal, you go to jail. Hence, we come to this amending legislation. Once you are in jail you have to behave. You have a responsibility not only to other inmates, but also to prison officers.

The jail that is being built and will be operated by the private sector, Serco, will implement a program to provide tablets to all of the inmates. The tablets will have a filter on them so the inmates cannot access pornography sites or betting sites. They will be used to educate them and to connect them to the outside world in some filtered sense. That will be a privilege and not a right. If that privilege is abused the tablets will be taken off them. If they abuse other rights within the jail other privileges will be removed. The bill has been drafted only to ensure that behaviour management policies can lawfully operate alongside the existing correctional discipline provisions of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. It does not create additional powers that affect the rights of inmates.

The proposed amendment is necessary because management of inmate behaviour by Corrective Services NSW includes using incentive-based schemes that are separate from the correctional discipline process in division 6, part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. The schemes allow an immediate response to negative inmate behaviour to ensure the safety of staff and other inmates, and can include increasing or decreasing withdrawable privileges to encourage positive inmate behaviour. In February 2019 the decision of the District Court in *Hamzy v Regina* created uncertainty over the ability of corrective services to use incentive-based schemes such as behavioural management plans to manage inmate behaviour and respond to misconduct.

The court found that it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct that may also constitute a correctional centre offence or criminal offence where it is not done in accordance with the process in division 6, part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. The decision has caused significant concern for Corrective Services and for the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW. The bill will implement the Government's election commitment to strengthen the current legislative framework and enhance the safety of correctional officers.

The bill will provide a discretionary power for the Corrective Services NSW Commissioner to adopt policies to manage inmate behaviour. This will provide certainty for correctional officers in their ability to continue to use incentive-based schemes to respond to inmate behaviour, including misconduct, and will ensure better security and safety in correctional facilities for both prison staff and inmates. The commissioner already has broad powers relating to the care, control, and management of offenders and this amendment is not intended to increase or diminish those powers other than as is required to facilitate the modification of privileges under a behaviour management policy.

The amendments in the bill will support these functions and in particular provide legal certainty to ensure the commissioner is able to put in place appropriate policies to manage inmate behaviour. This power should apply equally to all inmates. The bill proposes a discretionary power for the commissioner to approve policies for inmate behaviour management. This can include policies that incentivise positive inmate behaviour such as participation in rehabilitation programs and that respond appropriately to adverse behaviour such as assaulting a correctional officer. The classification of inmates according to risk is generally at the commissioner's discretion and includes risk assessments.

Limiting the application of behavioural management policies to high-risk inmates may have unanticipated operational impacts. Incentive-based schemes are critical for Corrective Services NSW to manage

inmates and the safety of correctional centres. Behaviour management plans are a fundamental strategy for behaviour management for high-risk offenders and without them the community and correctional centres would be exposed to increased risk. It is vital that correctional officers are safe and are equipped with appropriate behaviour management tools when carrying out their essential work at correctional facilities. The bill will address concerns about the safety of corrective services staff and ensure certainty surrounding the use of incentive-based schemes to manage offender behaviour in custody.

The bill provides for a new subsection 65A (2) (a), which states that a behaviour management policy may include any matter relating to the management of the behaviour of inmates in accordance with the Act and the regulations. This means that other than the modification of withdrawable privileges, Corrective Services NSW will not be empowered to do anything under a behaviour management policy that is not already permitted by the Act. This ensures that wherever the Act and regulations specify a minimum level to which inmates are to be afforded certain rights or privileges, nothing in a behaviour management policy will permit them being reduced below that level.

Further, the common law recognises that extra-curial punishment inflicted on an offender otherwise than by a court of law can be taken into account at sentencing and is to be afforded such weight as the sentencing court considers appropriate. The bill will not override this common law principle. This also ensures that wherever the Act and regulations specify a minimum level to which inmates are to be afforded certain rights or privileges, nothing in a behaviour management policy will permit them being reduced below that level. In some cases safeguards around the withdrawal of privileges are integrated into the definition of the privileges themselves. For example, clause 163 (f) of the regulations declares the use of library facilities to be a withdrawable privilege except where the use is necessary to enable study or research in the inmate's capacity as a student enrolled in a course of study or training.

Further, the common law recognises that extra-curial punishment inflicted on an offender otherwise than by a court of law can be taken into account at sentencing and is to be afforded such weight as the sentencing court considers appropriate. The bill will not override this principle. The primary purpose of a behaviour management policy will be to reward desirable inmate behaviour, not to punish antisocial behaviour. This bill will give corrections staff the tools they need to ensure both their own safety and the security of correctional centres. It is also to ensure the safety of inmates in their custody. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:31): I speak to the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. It is appropriate to acknowledge the previous Minister for Corrective Services, David Elliott, who is present in the Chamber. The previous Minister excelled in not only protecting the staff, but also in attempting to rehabilitate some of the worst offenders in the State. The purpose of the bill is to amend division 6, part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 to permit the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW to adopt policies to manage the behaviour of inmates in correctional centres to better ensure correctional officer safety.

Like many on both sides of the House I believe that the safety of our public servants and the hardworking correctional service is paramount to many of the decisions we may make here. Management of inmate behaviour by Corrective Services NSW includes using incentive-based schemes that are separate from the correctional discipline procedures in division 6, part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. The scheme allows for the immediate response to negative inmate behavior to ensure the safety of staff and other inmates, and can be included in increasing or decreasing withdrawable privileges to encourage positive inmate behaviour.

In February 2019 the decision of the District Court in *Hamzy v Regina* created uncertainty over the ability of Corrective Services to use incentive-based schemes such as behavioural management plans to manage inmate behaviour and respond to misconduct. The court found that it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct that may also constitute a correctional centre offence or criminal offence that is not done in accordance with the process in division 6, part 2 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. The member for Clarence did not mention that. The outcome of the decision has caused significant concern for Corrective Services and for the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW.

The bill also implements the Government's election commitment, which I believe is very important. This Liberal-Nationals Government not only makes election commitments but also delivers on election commitments. Since 2011, when we came to government, we have made and delivered on countless commitments to the people of New South Wales. We have made commitments not only to improve correctional services but also to increase the number of police officers, with an extra 1,500 designated for rural areas. We have also made commitments to city-based projects like the metro projects. We have made commitments to build additional bridges. I know the member for Clarence is very happy about the construction of a new correctional centre in his electorate, which will house about 1,700 inmates and employ about 600 staff. He is also happy about the construction of the new

Grafton Bridge. The member for Myall Lakes is very pleased about the delivery of this Government's election commitments.

The bill before us is about delivering on the Government's commitments. It will provide a discretionary power for the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW to adopt policies to manage inmate behaviour. This will provide certainty for correctional officers in their ability to continue to use incentive-based schemes to respond to inmate behaviour, including misconduct. The bill will therefore ensure better security and safety in correctional facilities. During the last term of government I had the privilege of chairing the Committee on Law and Safety inquiry into juvenile justice. In the course of the inquiry process, we visited correctional facilities.

I imagine many people in this place have never been to a correctional facility in their life. It is a very sobering experience. We visited juvenile facilities in Wagga Wagga, Dubbo and Reiby, the girls facility in western Sydney. At those facilities we saw 14-metre fences with razor wire, steel doors and anti-riot gear at the disposal of staff. The staff do an amazing job, but one of the issues raised during the inquiry was rehabilitation of prisoners. We heard that rehabilitation is about giving inmates incentives to reform. Like many in this House, I would prefer that inmates, particularly juveniles, do not remain in the system. I know that, once prisoners reach the age of about 18, unfortunately they are almost lost to the system.

In my electorate I have had the privilege of dealing with one of our local churches, the Vibe Church, which runs a 12-month program for former prisoners who are on parole and who are suffering from ice addiction. To date, the program has had a 95 per cent success rate. I have spoken to the prisoners, most of whom are in their mid-twenties to late thirties. Many of them have been incarcerated for virtually their whole adult lives and many have lost contact with their families. The program's success rate means that we are getting closer to understanding the psyche of prisoners while at the same time recognising that society needs to be protected. We need a two-pronged approach, which is why I support the amendments in this legislation. We recognise not only that prisoners should serve their time for their crime but also that we need to put continued effort into the rehabilitation of prisoners. The last thing we want is for released prisoners to reoffend. The bill focuses on correctional officers as well as prisoners.

We often lose sight of the effect that prisoners have on their victims, whether young or old. Often these effects last a lifetime and can be devastating. Victims can have long-term symptoms and so I think this legislation is important. I have often remarked in this place that Australians react very poorly to being told what to do. This probably started in the days of the First Fleet and remains true to this day. However, Australians react strongly to incentives and rewards. More work needs to be done, but I am pleased with the progress being made to support prisoners and custodial officers. We must ensure that custodial officers are safe. No-one wants to work in an unsafe environment. Custodial officers do a very difficult job and they should be applauded for their hard work. The bill will strengthen the current legislative framework to enhance the safety of custodial officers. More importantly, the legislation enhances the opportunity to reward prisoners for good behaviour, which will minimise the risk for custodial officers. Therefore, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:40): I speak in support of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019 introduced by the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, the Hon. Anthony Roberts. I commend him for the speed with which he has reacted to bring this bill before the House. I am pleased to support the bill simply because it supports corrections services staff in their duty and cracks down on poor inmate behaviour in our State prisons. The need for this bill has arisen from a recent District Court decision, *Hamzy v R*, which found that it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawal privileges in response to inmate conduct. Whilst we need to be mindful and respectful of the court's findings, the decision has raised concerns for corrective services staff.

Although there is no corrections facility in the Coffs Harbour electorate, the Liberal-Nationals Government, in partnership with the private sector, is nearing the completion of a new 1,700-bed corrections facility in the neighbouring Clarence electorate. Many of the 600 employees will choose to live in the Coffs Harbour electorate. They will drive along the recently opened dual carriageway—another project delivered by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government—to the 400-acre corrections facility.

The bill has been drafted to ensure that behaviour management policies can operate lawfully alongside the existing correctional discipline provisions of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. What this bill does not do is create additional powers that affect the rights of inmates. The commissioner already has broad powers relating to the care, control and management of offenders, and this amendment is not intended to increase or diminish those powers other than as is required to facilitate the modification of privileges under a behaviour management policy.

The bill provides for a new section 65A (2) (a), which states that a behaviour management policy may include any matter relating to the management of the behaviour of inmates in accordance with the Act and the

regulations. This means that, other than the modification of withdrawable privileges, Corrective Services NSW will not be empowered to do anything under a behaviour management policy that is not already permitted by the Act. This also ensures that, wherever the Act and regulations specify a minimum level to which inmates are to be afforded certain rights or privileges, nothing in a behaviour management policy will permit them to be reduced to below that level.

In some cases, safeguards around the withdrawal of privileges are integrated into the definition of the privileges themselves. For example, clause 163 (f) of the regulations declares the use of library facilities to be a withdrawable privilege, except where the use is necessary to enable study or research in the inmate's capacity as a student enrolled in a course of study or training. Further, the common law recognises that extra-curial punishment inflicted on an offender otherwise than by a court of law can be taken into account at sentencing and is to be afforded such weight as the sentencing court considers appropriate. The bill will not override this principle.

The primary purpose of a behaviour management policy will be to reward desirable inmate behaviour, not to punish antisocial behaviour. This bill will give corrections staff the tools they need to ensure both their own safety and the security of correctional centres. Frontline corrections officers play a very important role in our justice system. This amendment bill will give corrections officers the tools to perform their jobs safely. It will give the families of corrections officers more comfort by knowing that there are tools available to them to create a safe working environment and improve the behaviour of inmates in the corrections system. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:44): I support the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. The object of this bill is to permit the Commissioner of Corrective Services to adopt policies to manage the behaviour of inmates of correctional centres, which includes the withdrawal of privileges provided to inmates. The bill has been drafted only to ensure that behaviour management policies can lawfully operate alongside the existing correctional discipline provisions of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. It does not create additional powers to affect the rights of inmates. The commissioner already has broad powers relating to the care, control, and management of offenders. This amendment is not intended to increase or diminish those powers other than as is required to facilitate the modification privileges under a behaviour management policy.

Division 6, part 2 of the Act currently sets out a process for dealing with correctional centre offences, with penalties including the deprivation of prescribed withdrawable privileges. Withdrawable privileges include the ability to purchase goods, the use of a telephone and participation in contact visits. Management of inmate behaviour by Corrective Services NSW includes using incentive-based schemes that are separate from the correctional centre offences process in division 6, part 2 of the Act. The schemes allows an immediate response to negative inmate behaviour to ensure the safety of staff and other inmates, and involves increasing or decreasing inmate privileges in order to encourage positive inmate behaviour.

A recent decision of the District Court, *Hamzy v R*, found it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct that may also constitute a correctional centre offences where it is done otherwise than in accordance with the process set out in division 6, part 2. The District Court judge quashed an inmate's conviction for assaulting a correctional officer and ordered a permanent stay of the prosecution. The decision prompted statewide industrial action by correctional officers in March 2019, prior to the election. The Government committed to amending the Act to ensure that any loophole is addressed and the legislation is strengthened. The Government has fulfilled its election promise.

The safety of correctional officers is paramount. Modifying the behaviour of inmates also protects other inmates so the whole of the correctional community will benefit from this. In whatever course our life takes there are incentives and disincentives. In this legislation people are encouraging, through incentives, to ensure that their conduct is proper. Incentive-based schemes are still in use, on the basis that the Director of Public Prosecutions is seeking judicial review of the District Court decision. The amendment will removal legal uncertainty for correctional service operations while enhancing staff safety and the ability to manage inmate behaviour. New section 65A (2) (a) states:

- (2) A behaviour management policy may:
 - (a) include any matter relating to the management of the behaviour of inmates in accordance with the Act and the regulations.

That means, other than the modification of withdrawable privileges, Corrective Services NSW will not be empowered to do anything under a behaviour management policy that is not already permitted by the Act. This will also ensure that wherever the Act and regulations specify a minimum level to which inmates are to be afforded certain rights or privileges, nothing in a behaviour management policy will permit them being reduced below that

level. The bill implements the Government's election commitment and will prevent further industrial action. This Government stands by correctional officers.

In some cases safeguards around the withdrawal of privileges are integrated into the definition of the privileges themselves. For example, clause 163 (f) of the regulations declares the use of library facilities to be a withdrawable privilege, except where the use is necessary to enable study or research in the inmate's capacity as a student enrolled in a course of study or training. Further, the common law recognises that extra-curial punishment inflicted on an offender otherwise than by a court of law can be taken into account at sentencing and is to be afforded such weight as the sentencing court considers appropriate. The bill will not override this principle. This is a common sense bill that will be of benefit to the whole of the correctional service community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (17:49): I support the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. The bill speaks to the heart of what this Government stands for—cracking down on poor inmate behaviour and backing up our fantastic Corrective Services staff who do a magnificent job in this State and we must support them. The bill is a response to a recent decision of the District Court in *Hamzy v R*, which found it is unlawful to use incentive-based schemes to reduce withdrawable privileges in response to inmate conduct. Whilst I am respectful of the court's findings, the decision has raised significant concern for Corrective Services NSW and for the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW, which are valid and need to be addressed.

Our corrective services staff need certainty to continue to use incentive-based schemes to respond to inmate behaviour, including misconduct, and to ensure better security and safety in correctional facilities. The bill will provide a discretionary power for the Commissioner of Corrective Services to adopt policies to manage inmate behaviour. Importantly, this bill adopts the same approach as other provisions under the Act, and is consistent with the commissioner's existing powers. Everyone wants Corrective Services staff to be as safe as they can be, in an often difficult working environment. To be safe, they need the right tools. Those rights include behaviour management plans, which are a fundamental strategy for behaviour management for high-risk offenders. Without them, the community and Correctional Centres would be exposed to increased risk. Incentive-based schemes are still in use, on the basis that the Director of Public Prosecutions is seeking judicial review of the District Court decision. The amendment will remove legal uncertainty for the operations of Correction Services NSW, whilst enhancing staff safety and the ability to manage inmate behaviour. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:52): I support the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. The very heart of this bill is about enhancing the safety of our correctional officers and helping strengthen the framework around managing inmates at our correctional facilities. In my electorate of Dubbo we have two correctional centres based near the township of Wellington—the original Wellington facility, and the Macquarie Correctional Centre, which was opened by my colleague the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in his former role. It was great to see him in my electorate. All the staff at both those centres do a fantastic job.

The Government gave an election commitment to amend the legislation, regardless of whether an appeal was unsuccessful in the *Hamzy v R*. We committed to ensure that any loophole was addressed, and the legislation strengthened to ensure that our correctional officers enjoy the full protection of the law and enhanced safety. It is vital that our correctional officers are both safe and are equipped with appropriate behaviour management tools when carrying out their essential work at our correctional facilities. This bill needs to be progressed now—in advance of the outcome of any judicial review proceedings—in order to address those concerns and to make sure we keep our officers safe. Behaviour management plans are currently used in many of our correctional centres and these plans set the minimum standard expected for inmates. The aim of these plans is to reduce anti-social behaviour by reinforcing positive and pro-social behaviour.

These incentive-based schemes used by Corrective Services NSW involve the withdrawal of privileges from an inmate following regression in behaviour or conduct. However, it operates above that baseline, being the rights afforded to an inmate under the legislation and regulations. The privileges can be augmented to effectively manage inmate behaviour. There are four stages of the plan so inmates can have access to increased privileges if they progress through the stages and receive fewer privileges if they regress through the stages. A wide range of withdrawable privileges include things such as the ability to purchase goods, keeping of approved personal property and participation in contact visits. The purpose of an incentive scheme is to reward desirable behaviour, not to punish.

I have a number of friends who work in the facilities of Wellington Correctional Centre and Macquarie Correctional Centre. A common comment among them is how effective these incentive-based schemes are in helping to manage inmate behaviour—especially high-risk inmates. I have toured both facilities and spent time

with staff and inmates in a variety of different situations. Earlier this year I attended the Wellington Correctional Centre ahead of the National Corrections Day. National Corrections Day is held on 18 January and is an opportunity to celebrate the work of the State's 9,000 prison, parole and other corrective services staff.

During my visit to the Wellington Correctional Centre I was able to witness how staff and inmates interact during a normal day. On that particular day, inmates were taking part in a range of activities, including working in the centre's bakery. It was great to see a group of inmates working together to bake bread and bread rolls, and making a range of other goods including pies. The other benefit of such an activity is the ability for an inmate to achieve a qualification while serving time. In this case, the inmates were able to work towards a Certificate II or Certificate III qualification in baking under the guidance of staff. It is a very positive incentive and it is part of the incentive to work well and as part of a team, while providing the possibility of a career path in the future.

During my 30-45 minutes in the bakery, I talked to the inmates and staff about what they liked about this type of operation. The inmates indicated that it was valued as a way to earn money for their "buy-up" account—I will talk more about that in a moment—and from the staff perspective, it was a good way of encouraging a work ethic and the provision of rewards. The buy-up system is an important way that a modern correctional centre operates and functions. Inmates themselves are part of the packing shop, to provide simple goods such as biscuits, drinks and personal hygiene items on a regular basis. Watching the packing and distributing of these "buy-up" packs was fascinating—running like a well-oiled machine. It is a shop within the correctional facility and it all happens in a large warehouse, with the packing and distribution of these buy-up packs being carried out by the inmates under supervision.

It is an incentive-based activity and it works extremely well. It sets clear guidelines around acceptable behaviour and staff rely on it on a daily basis to help manage behaviour. Incentive-based schemes are critical for Corrective Services NSW to properly manage inmates and continue to ensure safety in correctional centres. Well done to all the staff who do such a great job at the correctional centres at Wellington and Macquarie. I commend this bill to the House.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:58): I speak in debate on the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019. At its core, this bill is about the safety of our valued correctional officers. As many members will know, the town of Junee is within the Cootamundra electorate and houses the Junee Correctional Centre. The Junee Correctional Centre was the first privately managed centre in the State and the major incident rate at the centre remains low. Since opening in 1993, the centre has been managed by GEO, on behalf of Corrective Services NSW, and is the largest regional correctional centre in New South Wales. The centre's primary role is to safely and securely house 853 adult male prisoners and progress their sentence plans by delivering a comprehensive range of educational, training, vocational and cognitive-behavioural programs. Together, these activities aim to lower a prisoner's risk of reoffending.

The staff at Junee achieve exceptionally high levels of prisoner engagement with its rehabilitative interventions. These include developing strategies to encourage and enable previously-marginalised prisoner groups such as Indigenous Australians and the chronically ill to participate. I could tell many positive stories about the Junee Correctional Centre such as the numerous inmates who are enrolled in TAFE courses and the inmates who annually restore a vintage car and auction it for charity. Last year's vehicle—a WB one tonner Holden utility—raised \$78,000 for Junee's Can Assist and this year the team hopes to achieve more than \$100,000 for Country Hope charity.

The structure and programs in place at the Junee Correctional Centre are geared toward the education and successful reintegration of prisoners into society upon their release. The staff care about the future of the inmates and my office has received a number of letters from active inmates about the superiority of their treatment and experience in that jail. One would be hard pressed to find a resident in Junee who does not have some connection to the jail in terms of employment. The centre currently employs more than 280 staff, around half of whom are from the local area, including 230 full-time and casual custodial staff.

This bill concerns the safety of those 230 staff. Correctional officers, who have one of the most challenging and demanding jobs imaginable, should be able to go to work in an environment that they know is designed to protect them, when facing potentially dangerous criminals. Incentive-based schemes are part of the operational fabric of our jails which manage the behaviour of inmates. The withdrawal of privileges is used to manage inmate behaviour and encourage positive behaviour. Incentive-based schemes are critical for Corrective Services NSW to manage inmates and the safety of correctional centres. Behaviour management plans are a fundamental strategy for behaviour management for high-risk offenders and without them the community and correctional centres would be exposed to increased risk.

The New South Wales District Court decision of *Hamzy v R* in February 2019 has created uncertainty over the ability of correctional staff to use incentive-based schemes such as behavioural management plans, where

such schemes overlap with the correctional centre discipline provisions of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. This bill will provide clarity and certainty to corrective services officers to ensure that there can be an immediate lawful response to address inmate behaviour, without affecting the outcomes of any disciplinary proceedings or criminal proceedings. This method of behavioural management should be used to ensure that our law-abiding, hardworking correctional officers—including 230 in Junee—return home from work safely.

During the election this Government made a commitment to strengthen the legislation and enhance correctional officer safety. This bill is about keeping that promise to those workers. We care about the safety of this vital, frontline group of workers who are key to the safety of New South Wales. The proposed amendments will ensure that staff of Corrective Services NSW have the flexibility to respond quickly and effectively to incidents involving inmate misconduct, regardless of whether the incident later results in formal disciplinary proceedings or criminal prosecution.

The Junee jail is currently undergoing an expansion which will take its capacity to 1,270 inmates. The expansion of the existing 853-bed facility is part of the New South Wales Government's \$3.8 billion investment in increasing capacity in the State's prisons. The upgrade includes four accommodation blocks, a new industries building with bakery and laundry, two ovals and even a new canine unit for dogs. This infrastructure and capacity upgrade needs to be delivered with improved securities for our staff, to ensure our jails are able to effectively manage the prisoners they hold. Once the correctional centre is up and running, there will be over 300 custodial staff. The provision of new local jobs will create a diverse range of employment opportunities and it is estimated that the jobs will inject more than \$5 million per year into the local economy.

We must ensure that the jobs are enticing so that we attract more people to regional New South Wales to fill them and boost the economy. As one can imagine correctional officers have tough, frontline jobs; they are not for everyone. Recruitment for those positions can be a challenging task. I echo the words of the Minister in saying that the hardworking corrections officers of New South Wales work under the most dangerous conditions and our heartfelt thanks goes to them for the work they do. This Government and this Premier have ensured that the new legislation enables them to have the tools to carry out their tasks safely, efficiently and with authority. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections) (18:05): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Baulkham Hills, Fairfield, Seven Hills, Kiama, Clarence, Tweed, Coffs Harbour, Myall Lakes, Wollondilly, Sydney, Newtown, Cessnock, Dubbo and Cootamundra for contributing to the debate on this important and common sense bill. I thank the former Minister for Corrections, the Hon. David Elliott, for his foresight and ability to respond when it was most needed. Quite frankly, our Corrective Services staff, many whom I have had the absolute privilege of meeting personally, need our support to get on and do their job. The Opposition spokesman, the member for Fairfield, pointed out rightly what some of the staff have been subjected to, which is absolutely disgraceful. The bill is part of giving them the necessary tools to do their job. This Government encourages and supports an immediate response to negative inmate behaviour to ensure the safety of staff and other inmates.

The bill is also principally in response to the decision of the District Court in *Hamzy v R* in February this year. Whilst I am always respectful of court findings, the decision has unfortunately created uncertainty over the ability of Corrective Services to use incentive-based schemes to manage inmate behaviour and, importantly, respond to misconduct. Therefore, the bill addresses valid concerns raised by Corrective Services and the Prison Officers Vocational Branch of the Public Service Association of NSW. Through this bill, inmates who seek to physically assault our corrections officers or other inmates will find themselves subject to immediate consequences. They will not escape the removal of privileges by way of technicality.

The bill will not affect privileges below any statutory minimum. I understand that the member for Sydney raised the issue of family visits. I assure members that family visits will be withdrawn. However, contact visits may be withdrawn for a prescribed period of time. Being a Green, the member for Newtown criticised the bill and the second reading speech for not including the narrative around rehabilitation, reducing recidivism and the programs available to deliver them. On behalf of all members in this House, except The Greens, I am proud to say that Corrective Services currently provide a number of excellent programs, as well as a remarkable Corrective Services industry. In fact, if the member for Newtown had paid attention, she would have had a snapshot of the excellent current programs provided by Corrective Services and its fantastic results in reducing recidivism.

But I digress somewhat. The bill is about unacceptable behaviour in the community and whilst serving a custodial sentence. I commend the hardworking correctional officers who deal with difficult and dangerous people on a daily basis. As the member for Cessnock said, "Corrections officers deserve certainty, security and safety in doing their job." As a member of the Liberal-Nationals Government, and along with members opposite, I am

proud to present the bill to give certainty, safety and authority to those individuals who have a very dangerous job and risk their lives every day to protect our community. 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.

Third Reading

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:11): National Volunteer Week acknowledges the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers. The 2019 National Volunteer Week ran from 20 May to 26 May with the theme "Making a world of difference". The slogan of many MPs is "Making a difference"; I am one of them. I take this opportunity to thank all volunteers, but especially one person. I acknowledge the tireless work of Gandhi Sindyan who is a multicultural community liaison officer with the Campsie Police Area Command. Although he is employed, he does an incredible amount of volunteering. It is great to see the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in the Chamber because it is a wonderful thing for Gandhi.

If members have paid attention to my speeches they would know I have mentioned the Campsie Police Area Command on a number of occasions for its community work, its deep roots within the community and its approach to policing. Gandhi has worked as a multicultural community liaison officer since April 1999 and he has made a world of difference to our local community and beyond. I met Gandhi when I was a head teacher of English and history and deputy principal at Belmore Boys High School. I worked with him while dealing with some difficult boys. At a community event we struck up a friendship and it was the start of an excellent working relationship. I have an enormous amount of respect for Gandhi. I have spoken about him on many occasions, but never in Parliament; today is a fitting opportunity.

Over his 20 years of service, Gandhi has received numerous citations, commendations and awards from the NSW Police Force and community groups to recognise his work. During this time he has established and kept leadership of the Wise Up program, which is run by Campsie police. Wise Up is an outstanding program that was developed by him, alongside other organisations such as Police Citizens Youth Clubs, Greater Western Sydney Giants, the Canterbury Bankstown Football Club, Lighthouse Community Support, the Lebanese Muslim Association and Canterbury State Emergency Service. Working with a group of students one term at a time, the program takes them on different outings one day a week and teaches them to wise up.

I give the example of Angela, whom I met three years ago. Angela was in year 9 and a part of the Wise Up program when I hosted students in Parliament for an award ceremony. Like a lot of people, she has a pretty difficult life story. Two weeks ago I attended an iftar dinner at Kingsgrove North High School and I learned that Angela is the school captain. I was so proud. I said to Gandhi, "Mate, I remember when you introduced me to her as a year 9 kid who was lost and troubled. If we take a moment to work with people, it can make a difference. I have seen firsthand the benefits of the program and the difference it has made in the lives of many children. Currently the group has about 20 kids and it runs on the smell of an oily rag. It is a volunteering effort. Gandhi has managed to bring those people and agencies together, including the Police Citizens Youth Club, the Bulldogs, the Giants and the State Emergency Service. It is unreal and shows the value of volunteering and what people can do when they work with their heart and their passion.

Gandhi Sindyan also chairs the committee for White Ribbon's No Excuse for Abuse march in Lakemba that is run in conjunction with White Ribbon Day. Last year about 7,000 people walked through the streets. Gandhi is also involved with the Ramadan Nights committee in Lakemba, school programs and youth mentoring. He is incredibly reliable. The following example is what prompted me to speak about him today. Yesterday someone rang my electorate office on behalf of an 84-year-old lady. This lady needed assistance with some young people who were hanging around her house and frightening her. My first port of call was to ring Gandhi. I said, "Gandhi, can we deal with this? I will forward you the email." The situation has been dealt with. We not only made contact with the lady but we also spoke to the kids. They moved on after we said, "Guys, this is not good. What you think of as clowning around is actually quite frightening to an 84-year-old."

I told Gandhi Sindyan I wanted to give him some credit. But he is so incredibly humble that he only asked me to acknowledge the people he works closely with: Sina Winterstein, the other multicultural community

liaison officer; Sari; Bilal; Emad; Ali; Nicole; Najah; Michael and Meena. Gandhi's role mostly involves working with the community, but the amount of additional volunteering that he does is exceptional. Our community is at its best when we work together for the betterment of others. I thank all the unsung volunteers in my electorate and across New South Wales. I thank them for the thousands of hours of their time and for making a world of difference in the lives of others.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (18:16): It would be inappropriate for me not to respond to the member for Lakemba's private member's statement, in particular, Gandhi Sindyan and his work at the Campsie Police Station over the past 20 years. I note that the member for East Hills is in the Chamber. Yesterday I sat with her, her local police force and the member for Lakemba at East Hills. She represents a part of Sydney that I have a great deal of affection for, because it is where I grew up. I suggest that the member for Lakemba pass on the House's thanks and my thanks to Mr Sindyan for his service. The various accolades he has received in his role with the Police Citizen Youth Club, various sporting organisations and the State Emergency Service are proof positive that we have a fine and well-resourced police force staffed with people who will go the extra mile. We want proactive people in a civilian police force. I note the member's comments about the success of youth diversion programs. In my time in the Ministry and in the various portfolios which I have had, youth diversions have been the best way to divert people from a life of crime. I commend the member for his statement.

HELENSBURGH OFF ROAD CYCLE CLUB

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (18:17): On the weekend the Helensburgh Off Road Cycling Club [HORCC] hosted a Red Rode fundraising event at the Helensburgh mountain bike tracks to raise money for the 2508 Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal. The small community in Helensburgh came together to support the fundraising event and approximately 80 to 100 kids, accompanied by their parents, collectively raised just over \$1,700. The proceeds will go towards Helensburgh Salvos' new community worker, as well as funding the Salvation Army's national programs. The day was a lot of fun. There was a kids' ride and an adult fitness challenge and many people received great prizes donated by sponsors of the event. I take this opportunity to mention those sponsors: Osprey Packs Australia, Wild Magazine, Sydney and Southern Tree Services, Helensburgh Butchery and Helensburgh Hotel. The generosity and support of those sponsors contributed greatly to the success of the event.

HORCC President Matt Cady did a marvellous job in organising the event and I commend him for his efforts. HORCC promotes a healthy and active lifestyle through mountain bike riding, with approximately 90 members over a diverse range of ages from children to senior adults. Its members have achieved success in well-recognised competitions at national, State and local events with the club supporting its members with transport, training and equipment. The club is also a social network and provides the opportunity for residents to meet with like-minded people and become part of their community. It is an extremely active group in the community and was instrumental in repairing the mountain bike track where its fundraising event was held over the weekend. A club representative visited my office to discuss the state of the track and the need for repairs. It is great to see HORCC's concept turn into a reality and become a community asset. I am pleased that it has been supported by the State Government through several successful grants. I look forward to supporting the club well into the future. I understand that it faced challenges during the process and I commend the club for its hard work and effort in completing this project.

Recently Helensburgh has been a hub for exciting activities. On 16 May Service NSW's new mobile service centre visited Helensburgh at Charles Harper Park. The custom-fitted Service NSW bus will spend around 46 weeks a year on the road in areas where Service NSW has no existing physical presence, saving residents time and money. It performs every major Service NSW transaction, including driver knowledge tests and cost of living appointments, and helps people to access more than 70 government rebates and savings such as Energy Switch, \$100 Active Kids and Creative Kids vouchers and cheaper green slips

I visited the Service NSW bus whilst it was in town, not only to see firsthand residents accessing the service but also to renew my car's registration. It is a smooth process as you do not need to make an appointment—you just turn up and are served. The experience was great; the staff were extremely friendly, helpful and efficient. This is an extremely valuable service. I look forward to the mobile service centre visiting Helensburgh again on 4 July. I encourage all residents of Helensburgh and the surrounding areas to take advantage of the opportunity to perform any Service NSW transactions they need to next time the bus is in town.

Those two events in Helensburgh show that the community of Helensburgh is a fantastic township. It was established in the early 1800s and has family groups which go all the way back to that time. Recently I had the opportunity to visit Helensburgh and hear about its historic society, which published a book on the flu epidemic which occurred in the 1930s. I will speak about that in future. Every electorate has these communities, villages

and towns. I am proud of my Helensburgh community and look forward to visiting it many times over the next couple of years.

UNA FARLEY 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (18:22): I am delighted to inform the House of the 100th birthday of Una Farley, a resident of Stroud Community Lodge in the Upper Hunter electorate. It is interesting to note that Una was Maitland's first female taxidriver and did not retire until the age of 82. On 9 May 2019 Una Farley marked another rare milestone, celebrating her 100th birthday. Not only was Una a keen driver but she also loved horses. She learnt to ride plough horses when she was three years old and later graduated to her favourite pony, Trixie, before she took on a spirited mare, Grey Betty. She said, "It was an outdoor life. Horses were my life."

Una's love affair with horses led her to compete from approximately the age of 12 in many shows in the Upper Hunter electorate. She would travel to shows at Muswellbrook, Scone, Merriwa, Murrurundi and Maitland and of course she travelled to the Royal Easter Show in Sydney. Una was a successful horsewoman. Over the years she was named Lady Rider at many shows and also competed as a hunting jumper. Hunting is the Old World name for showjumping in which a horse and its rider jump a course and are judged based on their accuracy, grace and elegance. Una also participated in flag racing, showed champion hacks and participated in buggy classes. She also was a line umpire for Hunter River Valley Polo Association.

Born in her grandmother's house in Morpeth Road, East Maitland on 9 May 1919 Una Farley had siblings William, Douglas, Betty and Joan. Her surviving younger sister, Joan McGregor, lives nearby at Washpool. Una studied domestic science before working as a cashier at Nichols' butcher shop and then going to the munitions factory in Rutherford. Una met Lance Farley and the pair married in 1942. Sadly, Lance died in 1957. Her love affair with taxi driving started when she was asked to do a favour. Una said:

I had my own car and was getting petrol at Mr Ford's garage just off the Long Bridge at Maitland. I worked in the munitions factory as a driver during the war years and so he knew I had a public licence and asked me to pick someone up.

But before she could become a fully fledged taxi driver she had to jump through some hoops. It was the then Minister for Transport, the late Milton Morris, who instigated her securing the licence in 1954, but she had the restriction of being off the road between dusk and dawn. I do not know why. The one condition Una always made was that she would take time off for the Sydney Royal Easter Show, which she attended just about every year to catch up with friends. Despite her 12-hour shifts driving taxis, no matter what time of day she came in Una always enjoyed a hot meal and counting her money. She said, "I liked the driving and I met a lot of different people."

On the day of her 100th birthday on Thursday 9 May 2019 the staff at the Stroud Community Lodge made it very special for her. I am told Una was awake at 12.15 a.m. to celebrate with a cup of tea and a song from one of the staff members. The day was extra special for Una as NBN TV from Newcastle was there to feature Una on her 100th birthday highlighting the wonderful years she had experienced, particularly her career in taxi driving. On Saturday official celebrations were held for Una at the Stroud Community Lodge where family and friends gathered to celebrate her birthday and read the wonderful birthday congratulatory messages she had received. I take this opportunity to thank the Stroud Community Lodge for the wonderful care and compassion they convey not only to Una, but also to all the other residents of the lodge. I congratulate Una Farley on her 100th birthday and I applaud her spirit and outlook on life—she is a very inspirational lady.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Happy birthday, Una.

WATER RESTRICTIONS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:26): Today I address the state of water management in my electorate and across New South Wales. From last Saturday water restrictions were enforced for residents across Sydney, including for my constituents in Coogee. This is the first time in a decade that Australia's largest city has been placed under water usage restrictions. Water restrictions like these are often marketed as the Government taking proper precautions. More often they are simply a front for poor planning and a knee-jerk reaction to a steeply worsening dam level. This provides yet another example of this Liberal-Nationals Government's systematic approach of handballing the complex issues of government for the people of New South Wales.

Individual constituents will now have to make significant adjustments to their day-to-day behaviours, and businesses will need to make substantial changes to their systems, with many now needing to work through more red tape in the form of water-use exemptions. Even more damning is that during the current period of drought, Sydneysiders will be paying Veolia, a French company, exorbitant fees for desalinated water under a secretive deal struck by the Liberal-Nationals Government that has never been properly explained to the people of New South Wales.

Water is a basic utility and for the history of New South Wales our water supply has been reliably provided by the State Government—until now. In 2012, the Liberal-Nationals Government sold the Sydney desalination plant in a typical grab for cash. After a few rainy months, the Liberals and The Nationals went on record saying there would be no future use for the desalination plant. That prediction worked out well, did it not? Thanks to the Government's insatiable, yet extremely short-sighted, desire to privatise all the State's core assets, the people of New South Wales will now be paying more for their water to plump the profits of an offshore company. Surely the people of New South Wales deserve better than this.

We also know that if we are feeling the water pinch here in the city and in Coogee, our friends and family in regional towns across New South Wales have been doing it harder and for longer. Many of our most western communities have been on stage four water restrictions for more than a year, with some recently moving to stage five restrictions. Farmers across New South Wales go to work every day to put food on their tables and on our tables, and also on the shelves of supermarkets, grocers, butchers and bakers across the State. Many farmers across the agricultural regions of New South Wales have been on zero water allocations for well over a year. Reduced access to water forces down production capacity, results in cuts to staffing and the tightening of purse strings.

This predicament breeds one of the most under-recognised aspects of droughts: A drought of water produces a drought of finance. Especially in regional communities, water is money. Water is intrinsically linked to regional economies, and the flow-on effects of drought spread quickly from the farm gate to the high streets. As farmers' incomes dry up, so too does the major cash flow into regional towns. It is the little luxuries that go first when one's budget position worsens, but it is the little luxuries that make all the hard work worthwhile. Cafes, gift shops, hairdressers and pubs are often the first to feel the impact of a lower discretionary spend, but more essential retailers soon follow. At times Coogee may seem a long way from the driest parts of western New South Wales, but what the election campaign made clear was that the people of Coogee care about their own environment and that of western New South Wales.

At times, residents in metropolitan electorates like mine are guilty of not taking advantage of our circumstances and, as was made clear to me during the election, my constituents want to play a role in easing the burdens of the State's farmers and regional communities. I signalled my intention to take action up-front in my inaugural speech and today I do so. For many years it has been clear that the Coogee electorate has a stormwater problem—a pervasive issue that has impacted one of Sydney's most beautiful and well-visited beaches for decades. One of the major issues with the Coogee stormwater problem is the sheer volume of water that ends up on Coogee beach, water that potentially could be captured and used for our parks, backyards and toilets through stormwater harvesting and the installation of residential smart tanks.

Currently Sydney Water provides grants to businesses and individuals to harvest water under strict and onerous regulations. I believe we can do better and go further. While the Liberal-Nationals Government committed \$2.5 million to merely send Coogee stormwater down the stream, I believe we can do better. New South Wales is in drought and we need to ensure that all our water problems are addressed in environmentally sustainable and economically responsible ways. We live on the driest habitable continent on earth. Droughts are not new to the people of New South Wales, but they should again be disappointed in this Liberal-Nationals Government—disappointed in the Government's lack of foresight to engage the desalination plant sooner, disappointed in the Government's inability to manage output effectively and water levels to this point and, most of all, disappointed in the Government's willingness to pass the burdens of governing onto the residents of Sydney.

MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE AND WATER QUALITY

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (18:32): This evening I address the issue of toxic water and question why nothing is being done to address a deadly disease that is spiking across rural New South Wales. In my life I have occasionally travelled to developing countries in Africa and Asia. The one thing that stands out as being different in those countries from First World Australia is that you cannot drink the tap water. I am always told that the water is dangerous and it can make you sick. I no longer have to travel overseas to experience this fear. There is something truly rotten in the water across rural New South Wales. More than likely it is making some people very sick indeed.

Motor Neurone Disease [MND] is one of the cruellest diseases known to man. It attacks the nerve cells, weakening muscles until they become totally limp. MND sufferers gradually lose their ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe, before they ultimately lose their life. The rate of MND is seven times higher in my home town of Griffith than the national average. There are several other MND hotspots across rural New South Wales, including in Menindee, Wagga Wagga, Lake Cargelligo, Narrandera, Leeton, Hay and Port Macquarie.

What do all these towns have in common? It seems towns near blue-green algae-infected waterways have the highest rates of MND. Research indicates that a neurotoxin called BMAA, a bioproduct of blue-green algae, could be linked to MND. Toxic levels of blue-green algae are present in Lake Wyangan, near Griffith, and in

several other waterways across rural New South Wales. We still do not know how big the risk is and what exactly makes some people more susceptible than others. That is why research is so vital. It is only when we determine conclusively the cause of the disease that we can take action to halt its spread and help those who are suffering. Sadly, governments and councils seem to be operating on the principle that what we do not know will not hurt us.

In 2012 Macquarie University commenced a research project in the Riverina aimed at determining the cause of the region's shockingly high MND rates. But this study is in danger of collapsing due to a lack of government funding. One brave MND sufferer in Griffith, Tania Magoci, organised to collect urine samples herself, put them in an esky and drive them to Sydney because regional airlines would not allow her to fly the samples. Tania is doing it tough at the moment. The muscles are gradually dying in her body, and she sometimes struggles to walk. She is on a nebuliser for five hours a day to assist her breathing. Tania grew up near Lake Wyangan where she spent her summers waterskiing and boating. She desperately wants to know whether her exposure to water at Lake Wyangan accelerated her genetic predisposition to motor neurone disease [MND]. What hurts Tania more than her muscle cramps is the indifference she has copped from the people who are supposed to look after our rivers and our health system.

She has raised her concerns with both local and State governments. They are all able to brush her off by saying that there is no conclusive proof about what causes MND. She is deeply worried that governments are not taking the risks seriously, and that more and more people in Griffith will be struck by this illness. In 2017 Griffith City Council actually sourced the town's supply of tap water from blue-green-algae-infested Lake Wyangan without even warning the locals beforehand of this controversial decision. Lake Wyangan water is deemed too unsafe to swim in, so why is it okay to drink?

If the water in rural New South Wales is making us sick, we have the right to know about it. I urge the New South Wales Government to make this a high priority and to look critically at water quality and water management across New South Wales. I am happy to provide more information to anyone in the Government who is interested, and to facilitate a meeting with the researchers or with Tania. This is something that should be beyond politics. If Sydneysiders were experiencing seven times the rate of deadly MND compared to the national average, the Government would probably call a state of emergency. I ask the New South Wales Government to show concern for a tragedy happening in our bush.

AUSTRALIAN KOOKABURRA KIDS FOUNDATION

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (18:36): I was delighted recently to host a corporate lunch for the Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation here in State Parliament, which was also attended by the member for Miranda and the member for Heathcote. Kookaburra Kids was able to discuss the valuable work that they do in assisting children in families affected by mental illness. The event was able to raise a staggering \$90,000 for Kookaburra Kids which will help them with life-changing programs, including intervention and education through various activities.

Kookaburra Kids grew up in the Sutherland Shire, and has now been supporting children living in families affected by mental illness for 16 years. It has expanded rapidly over the past few years, increasing its presence in two additional States in the last year. It now has offices in New South Wales, Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, with a particularly strong presence in Sydney, the Sutherland Shire, Illawarra, Hunter, Central Coast and Canberra. Kookaburra Kids supports children living in families affected by mental illness. The program provides recreational educational camps and other activities, giving children a break in a fun, positive and safe environment.

A central component of the Kookaburra Kids camp is the chat group run by qualified volunteer leaders. It provides a chance to learn about mental illness and how it affects families, and gives kids the chance to share their experiences and discover and improve their coping skills and resilience. Kookaburra Kids holds camps over weekends at various locations. They give kids the experience of participating in activities like canoeing, archery, giant swing, go-karts, craft, laser tag and so on. Activities are held during the school holidays to let kids catch up with friends from camp for a free, fun day out, with activities like ice-skating, laser tag, bowling, movies, putt-putt golf and beach activities.

Kookaburra Kids runs a program dedicated to supporting the needs of kids from serving and ex-serving Australian Defence Force families, in partnership with the Department of Veterans' Affairs. That program provides respite camps, activity days, and age-appropriate mental health education, focusing on coping skills and resilience while allowing children to bond with peers who face similar challenges. I mentioned that Kookaburra Kids grew up in the shire, and has now expanded around Australia. Recently, it held its first activity in Victoria with a first camp, and that was done in cooperation with Medibank. It was supported by Medibank as part of its Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. The service is provided at no cost to families, so the ongoing support of partners like Medibank and the Department of Veterans' Affairs is vital to ensuring that this work continues.

I congratulate Chris Giles, who lives in my electorate, who became the CEO in February this year, and I note the great work that the outgoing CEO Pam Brown, who also lives in my electorate, did for Kookaburra Kids.

I congratulate the newly appointed chairman, Patricia Reid, on her elevation to the chairmanship position. Kookaburra Kids relies heavily on volunteers. The club has around 400 volunteers, and a 56-strong staff team who run the programs. Kookaburra Kids performs great and important work in our community. When we hear statistics such as that one in four children in Australia live in a household impacted by mental illness, and that children who have a parent with mental illness are 50 per cent more likely to develop a mental health issue without some form of early intervention, it highlights how important the evidence-based services are that Kookaburra Kids provides. I acknowledge the great work that Kookaburra Kids have done. It was a pleasure to join the member for Miranda and the member for Heathcote at the corporate lunch recently here in Parliament House, and I wish Kookaburra Kids every success as it goes on to bigger and better activities helping kids who are living in families affected by mental illness.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:41): Today I commend the Central Coast Council for its recent adoption of an affordable housing policy, and challenge the NSW Government to invest in incentives to increase affordable housing stock across our great State. The influx of buyers fleeing Sydney's housing costs, the lower availability of social housing, and the 20-plus years wait for public housing have caused a drastic shortage of affordable housing for sale or rent in our community. I congratulate the community on their support of the policy and for the sensible suggestions and comments that were made during the process to deliver an even better policy.

It was very disappointing to hear the scaremongering and fear being whipped up by certain people for their own benefit—claims that this would create ghettos or, heaven forbid, result in more social housing. Your son or daughter might separate from their partner and seek lower cost housing, lose a job or, heaven forbid, become disabled in an accident and be unable to work, or leave employment and be unable to find another job. An older person whose spouse has passed away might be on a reduced retirement income, or a young person might be trying to save to enter the housing market. These are real circumstances in our community, and there are many people whom I call my friends who struggle to pay rent, let alone afford to purchase a home where we live.

I think many people would be shocked to realise that social housing is sprinkled everywhere through our communities. We need to make clear the difference between social and affordable housing. Social housing is government-owned and operated—the old Housing Commission. Affordable housing is not this. Affordable housing is just normal private homes where the developer has been given an incentive to sell them at a lower price to ensure more people can have a look-in. Affordable housing is much more than social housing. A diverse mix of housing types is required to meet the needs of a diverse community. For example, right now there are three family homes under \$500,000 available to buy on the peninsula. A family would have to be earning between \$100,000 and \$160,000, depending on the website you look at, to get in the door of one of those properties. That is possibly more than two teachers earn or a police officer, nurse or truck driver, or small business owner; yet we think there is no housing affordability crisis. For entire professions, home ownership is now out of the question in our community.

In the next 15 years, the Central Coast will have 1,900 more low-income households. Refusing to build affordable homes does not keep these people away, as some would have you think. They still live in our community, just more precariously, on friends' couches, in expensive granny flats or on the street. It might be confronting for some people to hear but the reality is that a low-income household is one earning \$46,000 to \$74,000 per year. That does not buy a home on the peninsula any more. Central Coast Council's affordable housing policy gives hope to these people that they may find a home. This is about giving everyday working Australians the opportunity to own their own home; or at least be able to rent affordably. On the coast we need a greater diversity of housing. Not everyone needs or wants to live in a detached home. Modern apartments are cheaper to build and more attractive for a lot of people looking for affordable housing. We need to be willing to see the future of housing in our community differently.

We need to be respectful of each other during this debate. People want to move to the Central Coast. Current demand means that many locals are being pushed away from the area because they cannot pay the premium prices that new residents escaping Sydney are willing to pay. People who grew up locally should be able to stay local if that is what they choose but right now that is not so easy. If there is more and cheaper housing hopefully they will be able to stay. This policy will make it more attractive for private developers to build homes that are affordable for more people in our community and that is a good thing. In New York City, driven by tenants unions, investors are given incentives to blend developments of social, affordable and market sale properties. Housing affordability in New South Wales is not something that will be addressed by one level of government alone. It is a multifaceted issue which requires a multifaceted approach from Federal and State governments working in tandem with local governments.

FIREFIGHTERS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (18:45): Firefighters play an important role in ensuring that our community is safe and secure in what can be especially stressful times in our lives. With this in mind it was an honour on 17 May 2019 to represent the Minister for Emergency Services at a recent graduation ceremony to welcome and thank our newest firefighters to the ranks of Fire and Rescue NSW. These men and women have signed up for one of the most challenging and demanding jobs in our community and in my opinion one of the most important. They have done this because they all have one thing in common: They want to serve the community. Fire and Rescue NSW is one of the most professional, well-equipped and highly trained firefighting and rescue organisations in the world.

Regardless of their posting, over the course of their career they may see service elsewhere in the State, across Australia or even in another country. In times of crisis and emergency Fire and Rescue NSW can be trusted—and the world knows it. Earlier this year Fire and Rescue NSW specialists were deployed to Tasmania to help battle the destructive bushfires burning across the State. Last year firefighters were deployed to North America to support local authorities with devastating wildfires in the United States of America and Canada and to Tonga to help in the recovery efforts after Cyclone Gita. I recently visited Tonga and heard of their efforts from an appreciative community.

The recent recruits had a variety of backgrounds including the defence forces, primary school teaching, barista, paramedic, cabin crew and life guards. They were a mixed bunch and will make a real difference in the community. I thank all of these men and women for putting their hands up to serve our community, New South Wales and Australia. I wish them all long, prosperous and safe careers as firefighters. St Florian's Day is named after the patron Saint of Firefighters and was held on 4 May 2019. This is a very important day on any firefighter's calendar. It is a day to acknowledge the work of firefighters who have gone above and beyond in their duties. It is also an opportunity to commend all firefighters for their courageous efforts to protect people and property throughout our State.

I pay tribute to the 74,000 men and women who volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service to serve and protect our communities. The NSW Rural Fire Service [RFS] responds to a vast range of incidents including bush and grass fires, house fires, vehicle fires, assisting with flood and storm emergencies, search and rescue operations and deployments further afield when required. I would like to thank all RFS members of the Sandy Point, Menai and Casula stations in the Holsworthy electorate. I love having them in the electorate and look forward to continuing our work together. I acknowledge all of the Fire and Rescue NSW community in the Holsworthy electorate who were recently acknowledged in the St Florian's Day awards.

As a community we are enormously proud of the bravery and dedication that our local firefighters show every time they put on their uniforms. We can never take their contribution for granted and it is important to recognise the sacrifice they make to protect our lives and property. Specifically I acknowledge: Keith Sanchez, John Styles, Matthew Gregory, Rodney Toms, Corey Nisbet, Jeremy Gotch, and Kirron Duncan from Fire and Rescue, Liverpool, on receiving an assistant commissioner's certificate of appreciation. They received this award for their actions at a motor vehicle accident at Chipping Norton on 13 May 2018.

I acknowledge and congratulate Mark Ecob and Corey Nisbet from Fire and Rescue, Liverpool, for receiving a deputy commissioner's certificate of appreciation. It was presented to these members for their actions at a motor vehicle accident at Menangle on 13 September 2017. I thank and congratulate all firefighters for their continued dedication and passion in protecting our local community. Finally, I acknowledge and congratulate the Liverpool and Menai Fire and Rescue firefighters on holding successful open days.

I had the pleasure of attending the Fire and Rescue, Liverpool, event at Moorebank with my two little girls—who had a ball! My youngest did not want to leave the fire engine. They are still running around wearing the red plastic hats they were given on the day. I may have a future firefighter in the family. A range of free activities included firefighting demonstrations, station tours and safety presentations. Families had the opportunity to get close to firefighters, fire trucks and special equipment while learning about the critical work they do to protect the community. I again thank all of our firefighters and RFS members for the amazing job they do to help forge a safe and strong community.

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:50): Community broadcasting is Australia's largest independent media sector, is a key pillar in the Australian media landscape, and is recognised internationally as one of the most successful examples of grassroots media. Six million Australians tune in to more than 350 not-for-profit community-owned and operated radio services operating across the country each week. These

stations provide programming that caters to the needs and interests of their communities and contribute to and reflect an Australia that is an open society, a strong democracy and a vibrant culture.

Serving my electorate of Davidson are a number of stations including Fine Music 102.5 formerly known as 2MBS. The station has been broadcasting for 44 years to the whole of Sydney from studios in St Leonards. Fine Music 102.5 is run by the Music Broadcasting Society of NSW and the station plays classical music as well as opera, jazz, film soundtracks and show tunes. Like all community stations, Fine Music is dependent on volunteers. One of my constituents, Brendan Walsh of Lindfield, left the station last year after 40 years as a volunteer presenter. I am sure Brendan left an indelible mark on his listeners over the past 40 years and is already greatly missed.

During his time at the station he enjoyed interviewing artists, composers and singers but most of all presenting music and introducing others to light classical music. Brendan presented his first program in 1975 and continued to build a loyal following by engaging his listeners with music they wanted to hear and crossing many musical boundaries. I wish Brendan all the best for the future and thank him for his tireless voluntary contribution to community radio. Australia's community radio sector has developed rapidly since Australia's first community radio station was licensed in 1972. I understand the number of permanently licensed stations has grown by over 75 per cent in the last decade.

Community radio stations operate as independent not-for-profit organisations which actively encourage access and participation by members of their communities in all aspects of broadcast operations. In addition to independent revenue raising community radio stations receive government funding through the Community Broadcasting Foundation, which is an independent not-for-profit funding body for community broadcasting in Australia. Also broadcasting to the Davidson area is Northside Broadcasting Co-operative, 2NSB, a community radio station based in Chatswood. On-air it is referred to as North Shore's FM 99.3 and last year celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary.

The station prides itself on responding to community feedback and plays a variety of music not heard on other radio stations. North Shore FM 99.3 provides a lot of local news, views and matters of local interest. I have particularly enjoyed on-air chats with Geoff Stanwell, Penny Howell and Richard Bell. There are as many as 120 volunteers who donate their personal time to keep the station running. Volunteers are involved in on-air presenting, technical support, program production, bookkeeping, general administration and even cleaning.

Radio Northern Beaches is the community radio station for the Manly, Warringah and Pittwater community. Broadcasting on 88.7 and 90.3, the station serves the northern beaches from Manly to Palm Beach and inland to Terrey Hills. Radio Northern Beaches is run by the Manly-Warringah Media Co-operative. It airs programs that are mostly made and presented by local residents. I have chatted numerous times with the engaging Ian Nicholas. The station first went to air full time in March 1984. Its guiding philosophy is that local individuals and groups should have the opportunity to speak to their community as effectively as possible, without censorship and without commercial pressure. Its aim is to promote a more effective and creative community life, break down prejudice and remove isolation.

Stations like Fine Music 102.5, North Shore FM 99.3 and Radio Northern Beaches all operate on tight budgets, as does Triple H FM 100 in the Hornsby region, represented by the member for Hornsby, who is in the Chamber. Their funding comes from government grants, local business sponsorships and personal donations. Most have no paid staff and it is the dedication of volunteers that keeps them running. They provide an outstanding service. Around 31,000 people are currently actively involved in the 357 community radio stations operating across Australia. I congratulate all of the community members who volunteer on community radio stations. Community broadcasting is a wonderful community asset, more accurately representing our social and cultural diversity than other media. It provides local news, and performs a wonderful function in connecting and creating communities.

HUNTER WATER

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (18:56): For all its many flaws, this Government is great at one thing: accounting tricks. Those opposite have been crowing about their economic management skills since the second they got into government, but they are obsessed with short-term gain at the expense of the State's long-term future. It is smash-and-grab economics writ large, dressed up with bureaucratic language and obscured by spreadsheet sleight of hand. It is not surprising that the former Premier has gone on to be a senior executive at the NAB, and I have no doubt that this Premier—when she has had enough and chucks it in—will follow her predecessor into the high-flying world of corporate finance.

It is easy to sell off New South Wales' money-making assets—from the poles and wires to the Port of Newcastle—in order to fund lavish, attention-grabbing infrastructure projects, but those opposite will ultimately

end up with a budget full of black holes. With the housing market starting to slow, and the effects of economic growth failing to reach most of the population, the Government can only ride the bow wave of stamp duty for so long. Now they are starting to raid the piggy bank. We saw that in Newcastle recently, with the Government turning to Hunter Water for an additional \$100 million in dividends. This Government has tried to use Hunter Water as an ATM previously, but its last effort, which came in July 2018, was abandoned following a public outcry.

The Government has not said why it has sought the extra dividend, which comes on top of the \$44 million standard annual dividend. That standard dividend is 70 per cent of after-tax profits. Some quick maths tells us that Hunter Water's profit was in the \$63 million range; therefore, in order to pay out the additional \$100 million, Hunter Water will need to borrow it from somewhere. Where is Hunter Water going to find a \$100 million loan? Why, from Treasury Corporation, of course. T-Corp will spot Hunter Water a cool \$100 million, on top of the \$1.1 billion Hunter Water already owes. You know what they say: a hundred million here, a hundred million there, sooner or later it adds up to real money. It is a high-stakes corporate shell-game; a classic example of robbing Peter to pay Paul. It is a tax-by-stealth on Hunter Water customers.

With the Government able to claim a double boost to the budget bottom line just by shuffling some papers and putting some numbers into a spreadsheet—a \$100 million debt that can be listed as an asset by T-Corp, and an injection of \$100 million in cash from Hunter Water. And what does this budget sleight of hand mean for Hunter Water customers? The corporation can only load up on debt for so long before it needs to start paying it off, and when those loans come due it will be the customers who will be paying. That means higher fees or lower services or both, but the money has to come from somewhere. This budgeteer brinkmanship cannot last forever, Mr Perrottet. My colleagues and I are starting to feel like Cassandra, the princess of Troy who, Aeschylus tells us, was cursed to make prophecies that were true but no-one believed.

We have stood against the privatisation of public assets precisely because it would lead to this situation—that is, once the big-ticket items were sold, the Government will hold organisations like Hunter Water up by the ankles to shake out whatever loose change it can get. The Government has accused us of running a fear campaign, but look at what has happened since: The family silver is all but gone; the infrastructure projects are seeing cost blow-out after cost blow-out; the housing market is starting to slow. All of this puts the State's finances in a precarious position, and all those opposite have to show for all of this chicanery is a razor-thin surplus—a surplus that reflects not savvy economic management but blind ideology and a slash-and-burn approach to governance.

Hunter Water customers stand to pay the price for this Government's economic recklessness. The Government has turned Hunter Water into a cash cow, an ATM from which it can make withdrawals without scruple. For all the world, this looks like an effort to lay the groundwork for a privatisation push. Call me Cassandra, but given this Government's record, would it really be so surprising if those opposite planned to load Hunter Water up with debt, make an argument that the corporation is not capable of managing itself and then try to offload it to a private bidder? Added to this Government's proven track record of loading up privatisation leases with anti-competitive clauses, who knows what issues this might present to future Hunter Water customers? This is not good enough. The people of Newcastle deserve better than a Government that will plunder their services in order to prop up a budget it has riddled with holes. [*Time expired.*]

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The member's time has expired. He will end his contribution. If he does not he will be asked to leave the Chamber under Standing Order 249.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP: Hand back that \$100 million to Hunter residents, Mr Perrottet, and stop robbing Newcastle to pay for Sydney's infrastructure and debt.

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

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: You gave the previous member a bit of extra time.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I am running the show. I place the member for Newcastle on three calls to order.

QUEANBEYAN RODEO

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (19:02): It is disappointing that the member for Newcastle has nothing nice to say about his electorate. I do not know why he spends time in this House; he should probably get out of politics. I inform the House of a community event that continues to make a big difference to the local Queanbeyan area and my electorate. Community spirit is alive and well right across the Monaro and I consider myself very fortunate to represent such compassionate people. The caring nature of Monaro is like no other. From Queanbeyan to Delegate, or from Adaminaby to Braidwood, there is always someone in the electorate willing to help. It is their community-

orientated nature that makes the Monaro electorate unique. The support people around the electorate show to one another is truly symbolic of community spirit.

One community event that encapsulates the compassionate nature of Monaro is the Patches Asphalt Queanbeyan Rodeo. As one of the biggest events on the Queanbeyan calendar, 2019 marked 18 years of rodeo entertainment for Queanbeyan. I always enjoy attending the rodeo and I commend the committee for the enormous event they organise. It is not an easy task to transform the Queanbeyan showground into a rodeo ground and host a huge crowd, but they do every year with a smile on their face with the support of many sponsors and volunteers. Whilst the Queanbeyan Rodeo committee organises and delivers such a wonderful event, it is not possible without the support of the broader community including businesses that are major sponsors—to name a few, Patches Asphalt, Monaro Mix, Queanbeyan Pre Mix Concrete, Coates Hire, Waco Kwikform, Skyview Windows, ABS Facade and Bridgewater Multidoors.

The support of these businesses enables the committee to hold a fantastic family event each and every year. The volunteers on the 10-person committee are Mark Mills, Gary Gray, Christine Corkhill, Ron Hill, Sue Gray, Kerry Cox, George Harriden, Sabina Pantos, Craig Cartwright and Christine McMahon. This committee proves continually that a combination of volunteer work, gestures of goodwill and donations are the foundation of community spirit. Recently I attended the Queanbeyan Rodeo's presentation dinner. The dinner is held annually after its major event, and the committee celebrates its success, thanks its sponsors and donates funds back to local community organisations. This year a record \$55,000 was invested back into the community through donations. This is a new record for the committee and undoubtedly an amazing achievement.

Charities to receive donations from Queanbeyan Rodeo were Tree House—a fantastic organisation that is celebrating its own successes—Respite Care for Queanbeyan, Rise Above, Meals on Wheels, R U OK?, the Country Women's Association, and Home in Queanbeyan. Those charities are well known in the area and provide essential support to the community. Other groups to receive financial support included 1st Jerrabomberra Scouts, Queanbeyan Pony Club, Weston Creek Women's Cricket Club, Bywong Community Association, Geary's Gap Pony Club, Girl Guides, Queanbeyan Rural Fire Service and the Lions club. This funding will allow those organisations to improve facilities and purchase new equipment.

The Queanbeyan Rodeo Committee also provided sponsorship to five junior Australian riders who will attend the International High School Rodeo finals in America. The young riders were thrilled to have the support of the Queanbeyan Rodeo in fulfilling their dreams. I wish Montana Jackson, Alex Pace, Jackson Searle, Tom Ings and Montana Wilkinson the very best of luck when they head to America in July to compete. Finally, I acknowledge the incredible work of the Queanbeyan Rodeo Committee volunteers. Their dedication, sincerity and generosity is integral to their achievements. I am proud to live in such a supportive community with many wonderful people who put the community first and, more importantly, put on such a significant event that is 18 years in the making. It is a great success story not only for community entertainment but also because the proceeds are reinvested in the many community groups that make the Monaro, and my home town of Queanbeyan, a great place to live.

PACIFIC HILLS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (19:07): I pay tribute to a great educational institution in Hornsby, Pacific Hills Christian School. This year the school is celebrating 40 years in operation—a phenomenal achievement. I take this opportunity to congratulate all the staff, parents and students who have been part of the school for the past four decades. Recently I was pleased to join the school for its official birthday celebrations, and it was wonderful to hear some of the great things the school has achieved over those 40 years. The principal is the great man, Dr Ted Boyce, who has been at the helm since 1985. He has created a school that is dedicated to ensuring the success of each and every student who passes through the gates. He is an asset to the school, and I have no doubt the reason it has been so successful.

When it opened its doors in 1979 the school was called the Pennant Hills Christian School. It had just eight students, one teacher and two rooms rented at the Lutanda Children's Home, which was an orphanage located in Pennant Hills. The first principal was Mr Ken Oliver. Word spread about the success of the school and in its second year student numbers grew to 41. In 1981 it started secondary classes and integrated students living with a disability into mainstream classes. By 1985 the school had outgrown the Pennant Hills location and needed a new base, which was when it moved to Quarry Road in Dural.

From those humble beginnings in 1985, the school has grown to be the impressive nine-hectare campus it is today. Having visited the school many times, I know the school community is immensely proud of the grounds and facilities. With these state-of-the-art facilities, students can take part in many extracurricular activities. Students can join the STEM club, which competes with other schools to design and build a Formula One car. They can compete in interschool sporting competitions or perform in the school musical—and I tell you the latest

production of *Mary Poppins* would have rivalled any by the Sydney Theatre Company. This is just one example of the many great things on offer at Pacific Hills Christian School. It certainly does not do anything by halves and every student who attends the school comes away with a well-rounded education and the ability to participate in a huge number of events and activities.

Dural is not the only campus, with five other schools in country regions. Schools also operate out of Tweed Heads, Maclean and Muswellbrook. In 2015 the Pacific Hills Christian School started New Hope School, which is a special school that caters for children with autism and mild to moderate disabilities. New Hope School is located on the same campus and is a wonderful learning environment for the students. Students at New Hope School are given individual support and small group work to ensure the best outcomes for every single one of them. I have always loved to visit New Hope School to meet the students and see how well they are progressing.

Teaching students the importance of service is vital to Pacific Hills Christian School. Each student is taught the importance of giving back to the community not just locally but around the world. Each year up to 15 teams travel to different parts of the world to serve people in need. The younger students are involved in more local activities, such as visiting retirement villages, while older students attend events around the Sydney area. These are just some of the reasons the school is a stand-out in the Hornsby area. I congratulate the staff of Pacific Hills Christian School on everything they do in the community.

I attended the recent fortieth anniversary celebrations with my colleague the Federal member for Berowra, Julian Leeser, and the Mayor of Hornsby, the Hon. Philip Ruddock. It is unusual to have all three levels of government represented at an event, and it is a testament to the profound impact that Pacific Hills Christian School has had over 40 years on its students, their families, its staff and the wider community. For over four decades the school has gone from eight students with one teacher in two rooms to around 1,300 students with 150 staff on more than nine hectares. The transformation is worthy of celebration. But we should also celebrate what has not changed over 40 years: the commitment of parents to build a community of faith around their children.

We celebrate the hard work and sacrifice of generations of parents. We celebrate the staff who have devoted themselves to nurturing every child and developing their God-given talents. We celebrate the ethic of service that characterises the outstanding young people who graduate each year. As the local State member of Parliament, I come across Pacific Hills graduates almost every day in almost every walk of life. They are proud of the school, and we are proud of them. They are the school's greatest legacy. Congratulations on 40 years, Pacific Hills Christian School. I wish you another 40 years of educating the young people of the district in wisdom and knowledge in Christ.

FIREFIGHTER WORKERS COMPENSATION

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (19:12): Recently the Government tried to sneakily pass on the costs of its new measures to increase workers compensation coverage for volunteer and career firefighters to ordinary people across New South Wales, including those emergency service workers whom the Government's measures are meant to assist. Instead of funding its workers compensation package from Consolidated Revenue and the workers compensation scheme, the Government decided—without telling the public—that funding for the changes would be collected from the emergency services levy. This means that the costs of these measures will be passed on to ordinary people and to local councils, including through a 15 per cent increase to the home insurance emergency services levy, which will cost ordinary people—including those firefighters this package is meant to assist—approximately \$100 million per year.

Local councils will also have to pay a 15 per cent increase, which will cost them approximately \$15 million per year. This means that rural and regional councils, many of which are affected by drought, will have to find the money for levy increases through cuts to existing budgets and services. Unfortunately, when the bill were passed the Government made no attempt to explain how these new measures to increase workers compensation coverage for career and volunteer firefighters would be paid for. I fear that the Government has not been honest with the public. It has never once said how this package will be paid for and has sneakily passed the cost on to the people of New South Wales. This is a vital package for our firefighters—don't get me wrong—but instead of paying for it out of Consolidated Revenue and through a properly funded workers compensation scheme, the Government has decided to pass on the cost. It feels like a kick in the guts for local councils, especially those in regional and rural New South Wales. As we know, local councils are now looking for ways to cut services and jobs to pay these increased fees.

Because the Government failed to disclose the impact during debate on the bill last year, councils are now scrambling to consult with their communities. I am told that the impact is being felt very hard. For instance, Cumberland Council has been hit by a hike of an additional \$83,500. That is a 19.5 per cent increase. Oberon Council will be forced to pay up to \$70,000 more for this year's levy. The Upper Lachlan Shire Council

has been hit with a 24.43 per cent increase—that is more than \$108,00. In the Blue Mountains there has been a 16.9 per cent increase, amounting to a rise of \$360,000 on the current financial year. This is not a matter of begrudging workers compensation; we support workers compensation when it is needed. But this is cost shifting at its worst: It is cost shifting by the State Government to everyday people via their local councils.

I thank the people who have worked hard in this place to highlight the deficiencies of what should have been a measure to assist the firefighters in our communities. I thank the shadow Minister for Finance, Services and Property, Clayton Barr; the shadow Treasurer, Ryan Park; and the shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Guy Zangari, for their work in this space. I also thank my colleague in the other place the shadow Minister for Local Government, Peter Primrose, who has travelled the length and breadth of New South Wales, over and over again, to talk to councillors and whose address to the Legislative Council I have relied on heavily and referred to tonight. I thank the Fire Brigade Employees Union for its incredible advocacy over a long period in the lead-up to debate on this legislation. The union, particularly Leighton Drury and Michael Nairn, has shown outstanding support on behalf of all firefighters throughout New South Wales. I also acknowledge the hardworking, dedicated and selfless firefighters in the Blue Mountains region, the Rural Fire Service and Fire & Rescue NSW—including my son.

COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:17): Under the leadership of the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals, we are experiencing an infrastructure boom from the heart of Sydney to the furthest reaches of my rural electorate. During elections the focus on commitments—and there were many—becomes sharp. However, I take this opportunity to draw the attention of the House to the achievements delivered in recent weeks in the Cootamundra electorate. As the Sydney Metro Northwest opened last week, in Weddin truck drivers, farmers and average road users alike were celebrating the opening of the new Lignum Creek Bridge. The bridge, which replaces a wooden crossing dating back to 1937, has been delivered almost two months ahead of schedule and half a million dollars within budget. The new \$6.2 million concrete structure sits on a critical crossing on the Mid Western Highway, which sees 250 vehicles pass a day. A third of those are heavy vehicles—that is about 75 trucks a day.

The new 72-metre long bridge is stronger, wider and smoother and will make for a safer and less fatiguing journey for all highway users. The bridge joins Grenfell on the Mid Western Highway with West Wyalong on the Newell Highway. Improving important infrastructure such as the Lignum Creek Bridge helps our farmers get their produce from paddock to plate and port more quickly and safely. The project was budgeted at \$6.7 million but it was delivered for just \$6.2 million, allowing the Government to reinvest those savings in other great projects across the State. The project also supported local jobs and investment by employing 16 people: six people during bridge construction and up to 10 people during road construction.

Last October, I was lucky to see the skill of the bridge builders when I watched them expertly lower 22 tonnes of bridge girders into place. They had to repeat the exercise 16 times to complete the fantastic new crossing. Work started in July last year and was completed sooner than expected thanks to favourable weather conditions and good project design and planning. For that, credit must be given to on-site project manager Renee Massirt, who did a stellar job on her first-ever major project with Roads and Maritime Services. It was a great result—I am so proud of her.

The New South Wales Government's Bridges for the Bush program made this project, and so many others in our rural communities, happen. When it comes to regional road upgrades, The Nationals in government have invested more than any other party. Since 2011 the Government has delivered over \$19.5 billion in road funding in regional New South Wales. In addition, it has supported local councils with more than \$3 billion in road funding over the past eight years. Following the State election, The Nationals will invest an additional \$1 billion in fixing local roads and bridges through the Fixing Country Roads program, including \$500 million to replace all the worst timber bridges across regional New South Wales.

In the Cootamundra electorate the third round of Fixing Country Roads is funding four bridge upgrades in the Hilltops Council area, totalling \$8.3 million. That includes a \$1.2 million upgrade to Wambanumba Creek Bridge on Murringo Road, which will save truckies a 40-kilometre detour. The existing concrete bridge, which dates back to 1974, has a load limit of 10 tonnes, meaning nothing heavier than a pick-up truck can use it. The new bridge will make a huge difference to freight operators and primary producers. I am so pleased that this wonderful upgrade will become a reality. Spring Creek Bridge is receiving \$2.2 million for a full bridge replacement to enable greater carrying capacity, eliminating a detour currently affecting 7,500 heavy vehicles every year. Cudgell Creek Bridge is receiving \$2.5 million for another full replacement, allowing for heavier loads and continued efficient access for primary producers along Old Forbes Road.

Finally, Hannons Bridge on Murringo Gap Road is receiving \$2.4 million for a replacement, allowing heavier loads and eliminating a 40-kilometre detour for more than 4,400 heavy vehicles every year. In addition to safety and productivity boosts, the upgrades will of course ease the tax burden on local ratepayers, with Hilltops Council liberated from the burden of ongoing maintenance of ageing bridges. There is no shortage of progress on transport infrastructure in the bush. The projects completed and started in the Cootamundra electorate alone demonstrate that tools are not downed for an election. The Liberal-Nationals Government is delivering for the bush and the city. As we prepare the next budget, the people of New South Wales can be confident the next four years will see an ambitious continuation of that investment and delivery.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (19:22): I commend the member for Cootamundra for not only her usual erudite presentation, but also her wonderful summary of the Government's investments in the Cootamundra electorate. The member for Cootamundra congratulated the council, the community and the people who constructed the bridges, but I congratulate the member for Cootamundra. Getting anything done in the bush always involves a partnership between local members, councils and communities. Without a fierce and passionate advocate like the member for Cootamundra, none of those projects would have proceeded—let alone received the attention of the Government and the significant investment of millions of dollars. I say well done to the Hilltops Council and to all the communities, and well done to the member for Cootamundra.

BANKSTOWN AIRPORT

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (19:23): Bankstown Airport has been a fixture in the East Hills local area for many decades. In 1939 the Bankstown Airport site was established as an air base at the commencement of World War II. Today it is New South Wales' second busiest airport. The airport serves as a flying base for the majority of Sydney's air emergency services. It is home to PolAir, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia, the Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service, CareFlight and the Toll NSW Ambulance Rescue Helicopter base and training facility. Yesterday I welcomed the news of a new state-of-the-art headquarters for our New South Wales PolAir unit located at Bankstown Airport. As the member for East Hills, I was honoured to attend the turning of the first sod on the 2.5-hectare purpose-built facility. The New South Wales Government will invest \$35 million in new police helicopters for the PolAir unit. It will further support our police in keeping our communities safe and make our local Bankstown Airport home to the region's emergency air services.

New South Wales Treasurer Dominic Perrottet, Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott, Commissioner of Police Mick Fuller and Sydney Metro Airports Chief Executive Officer Lee de Winton were present at the sod-turning event. Much like today, it was a cold and windy day—minus the rain. However, the excitement about a new state-of-the-art headquarters for New South Wales PolAir warmed those who witnessed the turning of the first sod. The PolAir unit is primarily concerned with the commissioner's priority of reducing crime. Other services and operations that PolAir supports include searches for missing persons, including missing children, the elderly, bushwalkers, vessels or aircraft; operations targeting crime; specialised rescue missions; reconnaissance tasks; and counterterrorism operations. The NSW Police Force will be the \$35 million centre's primary tenant. The centre will be funded by Sydney Metro Airports and will house five PolAir helicopters and three fixed-wing aircraft.

The additional capability of this state-of-the-art facility will assist the police further in keeping the community safe. I again welcome the Government's commitment to the \$35 million investment towards the upgrade of the PolAir fleet. The New South Wales Government, through the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliott, has welcomed the Sydney Metro Airports investment and confirmed that the Government will deliver the new helicopters, which will operate out of the facility at Bankstown Airport, to support the vital work of police. It is essential that they work with the best technologies to continue to keep our communities safe. The centre is due to open in July 2020 and the first of three new helicopters will arrive in late 2020.

Following the announcement, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and I visited the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, which is also resident on the Bankstown Airport site. The Volunteer Rescue Association is a volunteer aerial search-and-locate organisation with a number of volunteers, including a cache of pilots, navigators and observers. Yesterday the Minister and I met with Squadron Leader Graham Williams, Business Development Officer and pilot Eric Wyman and Region Co-ordinator Steven Heimann. The Australian Civil Air Patrol is a not-for-profit organisation whose mission statement is to serve the community by providing aerial support in times of need. Over the organisation's 20 years of service, Australian Civil Air Patrol has grown to include airborne emergency transport of personnel and equipment, maritime searches, overland searches and angel flights.

While the introduction of drone technology has provided additional and accessible capability to observe hazards such as sharks, there is still demand for the services provided by this highly worthy organisation. Its

members come from all walks of life and give their time freely to help those in need. I commend the fantastic local organisation highly for its great work and I look forward to one day going on a real flight training exercise with the squadron.

BLACKTOWN ELECTORATE

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (19:27): I thank the constituents of the Blacktown electorate who have given me the great honour and opportunity to represent their views in Fifty-Seventh Parliament of New South Wales. I particularly thank the many people who are generally not involved in election campaigns but who decided to get involved and help my campaign. They include volunteers from the community, sporting and religious organisations, businesses and the general public. I thank the many Labor Party branch members, trade unionists and parliamentarians who spent their time in my electorate. I thank my campaign director, Rebel Hanlon, ably supported by Rachael Hanlon, who coordinated a wonderful campaign. His time, advice and support are always valued. Like always, life member Martha Lynch continues to be a fountain of strength and looks after me. She once met the legendary Ben Chifley and has maintained the principles of the Labor movement ever since.

Many people gave much of their time. In particular, I mention Jim Kelly, Satish Kumar, Usha Singh, Stuart and Jenny McKindler, Chris Pilao, Bill and Judith Archer, Carmen Portelli, Keith McMahon, Kenny Carver, Lucas Cayanan, Patrick Dako, Jack Miller, Gus Garcia, Cherie and Geoff Harrison, Tony Jansson, Jeff Lees, Mike Moore, Sudhir Lodh, Ryan and Deborah Mahon, Adrian and Julia Michaels, Nandini Panchal, Dennis Riddell, Bill Sais, Balraj Sangha, Arturo and Tess Sayas, Clyde Sinclair, Judith Thomas, Zeljko Torbica, Conchita Valenzuela, John Worrell, John Costello and Natividad Millarez. I will probably give a further speech later for those I have missed. I am sure I missed quite a few others who helped out. They gave a lot of their time.

Joseph Laquian and all the members of the Filipino Labor Alliance Group [FLAG] are much appreciated. I also acknowledge the hard work of my councillor colleagues, whether they helped out on my campaign or on surrounding campaigns. They include Deputy Mayor Tony Bleasdale, Kathie Collins—the queen of pre-poll—Carol Israel, Julie Griffiths, Moninder Singh, Kevin Gillies, Susai Benjamin, Chris Quilkey and Brad Bunting. I thank my union friends who helped out, including Daniel Walton from the Australian Workers' Union; Alex Claassens and the Rail, Tram and Bus Union; Graeme Kelly and the United Services Union; and Mark Morey and Unions NSW. I appreciate the help and support of my predecessor John Robertson, former Greenway MP Frank Mossfield, as well current Federal MPs Michelle Rowland and Ed Husic.

I say a special thank you to my wonderful wife, Anne, who put many hours into not only my campaign but also her many community activities. Her support and love is my tower of strength—thank you. Many other people were involved and I thank each and every one of them. For their hard work and dedication, I thank my electoral staff, led by Elizabeth Banks and including Wendy Chen, Justine Ndayi, Subrina Can and Kimberley Campbell. The challenges are ahead of us. The State Liberals keep saying that they will govern for all and wish to reduce the congestion resulting from an expanding western Sydney.

The agenda that my electorate advocates for includes constructing lifts at Doonside station; filling the massive vacancies in nursing, allied health and doctors at Blacktown Hospital; improving the buildings and learning environment at our schools; ensuring our TAFEs are properly resourced; properly funding State roads and commuter car parks to support expansion; providing more police; providing a health recovery and rehabilitation centre for the City of Blacktown; and supporting the Australian Catholic University in Blacktown CBD. There is plenty to do in this term. Once again, thank you to everyone who supported me. Let us work together and ensure that the State provides the much-needed physical and social infrastructure required for a massively growing population in the City of Blacktown.

GRAFTON BRIDGE

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (19:32): I inform the House of the great progress being made on the new Grafton Bridge. Just last month construction of the new 525-metre Grafton Bridge over the Clarence River entered the home stretch, with the project passing the halfway mark. The new bridge has been much anticipated since it was announced by The Nationals in the lead-up to the 2011 State election. The \$240 million project will revolutionise life in the Clarence Valley and reconnect Grafton and South Grafton in the way that the original bridge did 80 years ago. The bridge is the single biggest infrastructure spend that the jacaranda city has ever seen and will benefit Grafton and the Clarence Valley for decades.

I drive over the bridge every day when I go into my electorate office in Grafton. Watching the new bridge go up reminds me that actions speak louder than words. The bridge was promised many times in the past. The last failed promise was prior to the 2007 State election, when Premier Bob Carr gave an ironclad guarantee to build the bridge, only to renege on his commitment after the election. It took The Nationals in government to deliver

the long-awaited bridge for the people of Grafton and the Clarence Valley. The new Grafton Bridge demonstrates The Nationals' commitment to regional New South Wales.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the contribution of two very community-minded people: Ron Bell and Des Harvey. They have advocated for a new bridge in Grafton for decades and they kept pushing for it at every opportunity they had. They turned the dream into a reality and it is a great testament to their perseverance, dedication and commitment to Grafton and the Clarence Valley. They put the spotlight on Grafton and no doubt helped to influence the Government in funding the new bridge. When it is finished later this year, the new bridge will alleviate the pressure on the existing bridge, making it safer for the thousands of locals who use it each day as well as heavy vehicles, emergency services and holiday makers. The delays and frustrations that motorists encounter while heading to work in the morning or trying to get home at the end of the day will evaporate. It will be safer and quicker for mums taking their kids to and from school every day.

The new bridge will have one lane each way when it opens, but we are planning for the future—the new bridge will easily be expanded to two lanes each way. So far, 88 of the 176 pre-cast segments and all 14 Super T girders required for the bridge are in place, resulting in a 262-metre continuous span. The pre-cast segments are built onsite and weigh between 60 tonnes and 70 tonnes. The way that segments are lifted into place and joined together is an engineering marvel. Pier heads are being lifted into place at the northern side of the bridge in preparation for the rest of the pre-cast segments, which will then be attached.

Another bridge milestone will be achieved in the coming weeks, with preparation in full swing for the replacement of the rail bridge over Pound Street. Pound Street will become the northern approach to the new bridge. The trusses for this bridge are already in Grafton awaiting installation over the Queen's Birthday long weekend, from Saturday 8 June to Monday 10 June. The project team will work for 72 hours straight to remove the current rail bridge and replace it with a 42-metre steel truss bridge. Fulton Hogan, the bridge contractor, has been very professional and has integrated itself into the local community. It has used local suppliers and contractors, and has sponsored a number of local organisations. As I mentioned earlier, the new bridge will be completed later this year. I have no doubt that when the two bridges are both open to traffic they will significantly ease traffic congestion in peak hours and through the course of the day. In closing, I must thank former Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight Duncan Gay for his commitment to this new bridge in Grafton.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (19:36): I congratulate the member for Clarence. He is a great local member and a great local champion. The Grafton Bridge cost \$240 million. Those who have travelled the North Coast know how important this bridge is. The Nationals in Government are delivering the bridge. They are committed to regional New South Wales and to delivering for regional New South Wales. The member for Clarence spoke about how actions speak louder than words and I know that in the electorate of Clarence he is known as the action man. New bridge, new highway, new jail—there are so many things happening in that area and in other electorates such as Myall Lakes. Once again, I congratulate the member for Clarence on his contribution.

HAWKESBURY SHOW

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:37): Every year the beauty of Hawkesbury's community spirit is showcased during the Hawkesbury Show with a celebration of talent and interests across all demographics, industries and walks of life. The Hawkesbury Show is the second largest show in New South Wales—second only to the Sydney Royal Easter Show. It is organised by the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association, a not-for-profit organisation that seeks to sustain the agricultural show movement, and to develop and maintain the Hawkesbury Showground where the show is held annually. It is committed to honouring agricultural achievement and excellence through competitions and events.

The Hawkesbury Show is ingrained in Hawkesbury's history and culture: The first Hawkesbury Show was conducted in Clarendon in 1845. The show was described at the time by *The Sydney Morning Herald* as being attended by upwards of 3,000 people, with people travelling to the show on horseback, in carts and gigs or simply by walking to the show. The show was arranged by various associations until 1879, when the current Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association was formed. It has held a show every year since then with the exception of 1919 due to the flu epidemic and from 1941 to 1946 due to the showground being used to house troops during the war.

The show moved onto the present grounds in Clarendon in 1987 and has been held there ever since. This year's Hawkesbury Show was conducted from 10 May to 12 May. The showcasing of talent was wide and varied, and included agricultural and non-agricultural talent. Team D-Max entertained the crowd with some very interesting and intriguing car soccer. There were live reptile shows, racing pigs, dairy-milking demonstrations, singing and dancing performances, motorbike and car performances and—my favourite—sheep dog trials. For those who were brave enough there were carnival rides that catered for all ages. As well, there was a wide range

of show bags. The Agricultural Education Day was one of many events and workshops that educated attendees. The horse events and show jumping were entertaining to watch.

I to pay tribute to all the providers of food and drinks for playing their part to showcase Hawkesbury hospitality at its finest. This was the first Hawkesbury Show in which a pavilion was dedicated to the showcasing of local produce. The pavilion, called Taste the Hawkesbury, allowed attendees to chat to local producers and taste their produce. The Hawkesbury area is renowned as the food bowl of Sydney and visitors were not disappointed. It was lovely to see people from different ages, demographics and interests join together at the end of Friday and Saturday evenings to enjoy the fireworks display. I compliment the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association.

I particularly mention the president of the association, Ross Matheson, who was named the 2019 Citizen of the Year in the Hawkesbury Australia Day Awards earlier this year. Mr Matheson has been volunteering with the group for over 40 years, during which time he has been a committee member and director for 30 years, vice president for 10 years, and deputy president for two years. Ross believes that if you are going to do something, you should put your maximum effort into it. Anyone who has been to the show, would acknowledge that Ross's motto shines through with every show experience. I also pay my respects to the volunteers and sponsors, and to the Hawkesbury community as a whole, for showcasing Hawkesbury's amazing talent for all to see. I look forward to next year's show.

MULGOA ELECTORATE SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:41): In keeping with the sporting theme of my speeches in this House today, I will speak about many of the inspiring and talented sportspeople in the Mulgoa electorate and mention some notable achievers who have exceeded in their respective sports. Congratulations to St Clair netballer and New South Wales Swifts Vice-Captain Paige Hadley, who has been invited to train with the Diamonds, Australia's national netball squad, at Netball Australia Centre of Excellence. Paige is a World Cup winner and played for Australia last year. Congratulations to 18-year-old Shaylan Whatman, who has been selected to represent Australia at the under-19 Softball Women's World Cup in the Junior Spirit team. She will compete against some of the best athletes from all over the world. Afterwards she will remain in the United States to study and play softball at Pensacola State College in Florida.

Congratulations to 13-year-old Glenmore Park local, baseballer Kyan Wallington, who has been selected to fly to the United States to play before selectors for a chance at a scholarship. Kyan has been selected for the NxtGen Big League Dreams 2019 team after impressing selectors in the United States. He propelled himself into the spotlight after representing his district, State and country in the Sydney West team. Congratulations to Dimitrios Kambanis from St Clair, who had his very first mixed martial arts fight last year and won with flying colours. In between fights and his own training regime, Kambanis spends six days a week teaching children and adults martial arts. Congratulations to horse-reining champion, 14-year-old Charlotte Callinan, of Mulgoa. Along with her horses, Opie and Wimpy, Charlotte has taken out multiple State championships on the way to being crowned Reining Australia's high points youth champion. Congratulations to Rose Nelson, from Wallacia, who has just been named in the under-16 New South Wales Metro basketball team for the second consecutive year.

Congratulations to Erskine Park gymnast, Tamia Fonua, who starred for Australia at the 2018 International Gymnastics Federation's Trampoline Gymnastics World Age Group Competition in St Petersburg, Russia. At age 12, Tamia earned a gold medal in girls 11-12, and finished eighth in double-mini trampoline. Tamia also earned gold medals in under-13 girls double-mini trampoline and tumbling at the Loulé Cup in Portugal. Congratulations to Lachlan Green, from Glenmore Park, who won a gold medal in discus last year, representing Sydney Metropolitan West at the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association championships. The local athlete threw 37.04 metres, beating his personal best by 4.01 metres and being crowned the best 11-year-old boy in the State in discus in that competition.

The Penrith Valley Sports Foundation has also recognised people for their achievements. I congratulate Aaliyah Vehikite from St Clair on being awarded the Sky Encouragement Award. Only eight years old, Aaliyah has been involved in Little Athletics for five years, soccer for four and Oztag for two. She has just started touch football and swimming as well. She recently attended the zone athletics competition, where she placed first in all her events. I congratulate William Mather from Glenmore Park, who was been awarded the Junior Sportsperson Award for March for his development and skill in water polo. William was selected to join the New South Wales Combined High Schools open water polo team to play in the Australian all schools competition held in May.

I congratulate Hannah Darlington from Erskine Park, who was awarded the Senior Sport Star Award for her amazing development and skill in cricket. Hannah began playing cricket at 11 years old and within six years she has exceeded herself. I also congratulate Hayley Barsby from St Clair, who was awarded the Junior Sportsperson Award for the month of November 2018 for her amazing development and skill in netball. Hayley

has been playing netball for 12 years. She recently competed in the open nationals for New South Wales and was selected to represent Australia in indoor netball for the under-21s team.

I make special mention of two inspiring athletes: Matilda and Logan. Matilda Mobbs from Glenmore Park is taking the junior swimming world by storm. When Matilda was diagnosed with spina bifida at six months, her parents were told that she would not be able to perform resistance style exercises—thus her swimming career began. At the age of three, Matilda received her first pair of full leg braces and a walking frame to assist her mobility. She gained incredible strength from swimming and now, aged nine, she has not only met her idol Ellie Cole—a local swimming champion with spina bifida—but also received three gold medals and has qualified for the NSW State Primary Schools Sports Association swimming championships.

Logan Wade from Erskine Park plays football for the St Clair Comets. His mum, Bree, recently wrote to the *Nepean News* to nominate him for the Emmy Gees Kid's Shout after he was diagnosed with myoclonic-tonic epilepsy three years ago. Doctors have found it difficult to control Logan's epilepsy and he currently takes three types of medications. Despite his ongoing health issues, every Saturday Logan takes to the field with his team, always the first one to high-five any player that scores. Local footballer and community champion Mark Geyer declared Logan the winner of the award. I congratulate all sporting achievers and wish them well as they continue to pursue their sporting passions.

MAMBO WETLANDS

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (19:46): My community received great news last week: the six hectares of precious koala habitat that this Government sold off in 2016 have finally been returned to public hands. Following a vigorous community campaign, Mambo Wetlands is now protected once again. Its sensitive ecosystem of mangroves, seagrasses, saltmarsh, bushland and old growth forest has been saved from clearing and development. Its threatened species—including the powerful owl, squirrel gliders, wallum froglets, flying foxes, green bell frogs and white-bellied sea eagles—have been defended. And, of course, our endangered Port Stephens koalas will have their core-breeding habitat remain as it is, as it should. This is a significant and substantial win for my community, which has fought so long and so hard for the parcel of land to be returned to public ownership. I pay particular tribute to and thank the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands Conservation Group, along with its many members, supporters and allies, including Port Stephens Koalas, who made the win possible. Without their dogged determination and fighting spirit, the land would have been bulldozed and developed—it is that simple.

Most members would be aware of the history of the Mambo Wetlands. I have spoken about it often enough in this place. It is core koala habitat, and an essential part of our regional ecosystem. It effectively serves as the lungs of the Port Stephens Great Lakes Marine Park. In 2016 my community was shocked to see a for-sale sign erected on the site. One month later, it was sold to a property developer for \$250,000 via an online auction. Shortly afterwards, the Government admitted it made a mistake. The Government's Hunter spokesperson, Scot MacDonald, said that the Government had failed in its responsibility to protect the land. He said, "I'm happy to admit that we need better processes for reserving these kinds of parcels of land for habitat."

In the spirit of acknowledging its so-called mistake, how has the Government learned from this sorry saga? What processes have been put in place to ensure that this debacle does not happen again? The answer is: none. The Government could do the same thing tomorrow. Essentially, it boils down to the fact that this was never a mistake. The Mambo Wetlands were not sold to a property developer accidentally. It was a deliberate decision giving effect to the Government's policy to sell off everything it can. Separate to that policy, documents obtained from a Government Information (Public Access) Act request have proven that the Government was well aware of strong community opposition before the parcel of land was flogged off.

Continually framing the sale as a mistake is just not accurate. Every time the Government calls it a mistake the community members who fought so hard to stop the sale get angrier, because they know the truth. Their phone calls and letters to the decision-makers were ignored. Their invitations to Ministers to attend community meetings were declined. Their initial petition was rejected—a petition which was handed to the Minister for Education, who ultimately signed off on the sale and then received the \$250,000 cheque from the property developer. This was not a mistake. It was an ideological fire sale of precious environmental land by a government that could not care less until it became a political liability. That is the history and that is the context.

I genuinely thank the new Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean, for finally getting this done. He inherited a mess to clean up following the last election and I appreciate the haste with which he has acted. My community and I are grateful and I look forward to working with him further to protect our local wildlife and improve our beautiful environment in Port Stephens. I have already spoken to him today about the importance of returning Fishermans Bay land to the Tomaree National Park. I am sure the Minister is as frustrated as I am given that the taxpayers of New South Wales have borne the brunt of that debacle. The Government has admitted that

the cost of it has been at least \$150,000. I suspect the final cost will be much higher than the Government will care to admit, but we are relieved the land is once again protected.

Alongside everything else this win shows that community campaigns work, that victories do happen and that it is worth fighting for what you believe in. This victory will re-energise many communities in my electorate such as those that have been fighting for justice for the PFAS contamination in Williamstown, Salt Ash and Fullerton Cove. It will also re-energise the communities that have been fighting for a public high school in Medowie, which is desperately needed and long overdue; the communities that have been fighting for the promised Nelson Bay Road upgrade; and the communities that have been fighting for better local health services, particularly dialysis and palliative care services. With this victory comes an important lesson: people's voices matter. Whether it is signing a petition, attending a rally, making a sign or writing a letter, collectively, as a community, we can win. I congratulate and thank the Port Stephens community. This win is theirs.

CENTRAL COAST SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:52:0): Each year I speak in this place on many occasions about the success of our sporting men and women on the Central Coast. I certainly do not want to miss an opportunity again this year. In April the Your Local Club Academy Games were held at Cameron Park in the Hunter region, following a number of years when the competition was hosted in our region on the Central Coast. The annual Your Local Club Academy Games provides an opportunity for local teams to compete in an environment where it would not otherwise be possible. Central Coast Academy of Sport athletes hotly contested events across a number of sports, including Australian Football League or AFL, basketball, netball, golf, hockey and triathlon. Twenty-four athletes from the Central Coast participated in the weekend of competition.

The Central Coast Academy Games recorded the best results in basketball from the hotly contested games. Both the boys and girls teams took home gold medals. Grand final scores were Central Coast 80 to Newcastle 60 for the boys, and Central Coast 93 to Newcastle 68 for the girls. I am extremely proud to be the patron of the Central Coast Crusaders basketball team. I attend as many of their games as I can. Over time I have got to know many of the young players and I congratulate them on receiving gold medals. Both teams had extensive preparation leading into the games and it is very pleasing that they secured the double win. It has been a long time since the Central Coast Academy of Sport has been able to claim both titles. Will Granger, the new coach, should also be acknowledged for his many hours of hard work.

The Central Coast team also competed in golf. The boys' side was very successful, playing at Pacific Dunes Golf Club in Port Stephens and Belmont Golf Club in Lake Macquarie. I congratulate Zac Camilleri, Josh Hawkshaw, Jack Toyne and Connor Rigby, who finished third in extremely competitive conditions. In netball the division two team was short of players due to a number of injuries in the week leading up to the games. That led the team to fall short in the number of available goal shooters, yet they persisted and played with great enthusiasm all weekend long. The results for both teams in the Sunday games were outstanding. The division two team recorded only one loss and a win-loss tally of 3-1. The division one team did a great job under difficult circumstances, with some hard games against the "powerhouse" teams of western Sydney and the Sydney Netball Academy. Congratulations to the coaches, Jess Morgan, Casey Judge and Jessie-Ellen Standen, and all players who worked extremely hard during the competition.

The Central Coast hockey team—like all our local teams—also performed well at the Academy Games. The boys squad comprised seven players and started off on Saturday with some difficult losses, but followed on Sunday with big wins. These certainly invigorated the team and put them in fifth place overall. In a first for the hockey team, Katelyn Williams joined the boys team as a goalkeeper. I am told that Katelyn was outstanding and was rewarded with the tournament's Most Valuable Player award. Finally, in the triathlon a team of eight Central Coast athletes contested the event for the first time in two years. It was held at Cams Wharf in Lake Macquarie, which is a good location as it is challenging but suitable for athletes. Saturday consisted of an individual event with a 200-metre swim, a five-kilometre ride, and a 1.5-kilometre run.

On Sunday there was a mixed team relay with a 400-metre swim, a 10-kilometre ride, and a three-kilometre run. Well done to Logan Pugsley, who came second; and Melissa Blume, who came third. Regardless of which sport, our local representatives did the region proud at the Academy Games. As I said before, the Your Local Club Academy Games is an incredible opportunity to showcase skills and talents from regional academies at a State level—and this year was no different. I congratulate all our local athletes who took part in the weekend of competition. The results, particularly in basketball, were outstanding. Central Coast Academy of Sport athletes represented our region very well and their efforts would not have been possible without the coaches and managers, many of whom are volunteers.

I say thank you to Mitch Ede, Brent Ede, Scott Reed, Will Granger, Tim Hudson, Hamish Loader, Aimee Pope, Taylah Thomas, Nick Hassab, Wayne Cassidy, Tek Tea, Kellie Hassab, Jason Millers, Jess Morgan,

Casey Judge, Jessie-Ellen Standen, Donna Judge, Claire Bird, Brett Johnson, Mark McDermott and Robyn Low-Hart. I acknowledge also the outstanding work of Central Coast Academy of Sport Chairman Ian "Moose" Robilliard. I congratulate all the competitors on a great time at the games.

COFFS HARBOUR LIFEGUARDS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:56): I pay tribute to the outstanding service of Coffs Harbour City Council's lifeguard team. Three of them—Hugo Craigan, Alex Swadling and Lifeguard Service Team Leader Greg Hackfath—are recipients of the Meritorious Award, bestowed for dangerous rescue, bravery and/or outstanding application of lifesaving rescue and first-aid skills. The awards were announced at the recent 2019 Australian Professional Ocean Lifeguard Association's annual industry conference.

One week before Christmas last year the trio leapt into action, along with other first responders, as a dire emergency unfolded at Moonee Creek. The event was recorded as part of the Meritorious Award nomination prepared by Greg Hackfath for his two colleagues. Lifeguards Greg Hackfath, Hugo Craigan and Alex Swadling responded to a call for assistance at 6.15 p.m. on Monday 18 December 2018 for two missing persons swept out to sea at Moonee Creek, 10 kilometres north of Coffs Harbour. They responded without question and made their way to the site of the reported incident, where they received further information that six people had been swept out of the creek mouth and all were missing. Hugo and Alex proceeded immediately into some pretty challenging ocean conditions while Greg obtained further details from the police officer in charge on the scene.

With a 1.5 metre north-east swell, 20-knot north-easterly winds and floodwaters from Moonee Creek on an outgoing tide, it was a pretty heavy situation and their first thoughts were that they would be recovering six bodies. Thankfully, upon their arrival they found that two of the teenagers could be assisted from the water and were in good health. However, that still left four people to rescue. After getting additional information and ferrying a police officer across the creek so that he could access the headland, Greg entered the creek mouth following Hugo and Alex. After negotiating the break, Greg saw that Hugo was 500 to 700 metres out to sea in the current from the outgoing creek. He had plucked the remaining teenage girl from the water and was returning her to the beach alive. Greg continued out to where Hugo had rescued the girl while Alex searched approximately 500 metres to the south.

At this stage, about 500 metres out from the beach, Greg found one of the missing persons and placed him on his board, but he was unresponsive. Greg headed toward the shore and was approximately 100 metres from the beach when Hugo turned up on his way back out. Hugo offered to help Greg and they swapped boards. Greg returned back out to sea to find Alex, who had been conducting an intensive search for the last 30 minutes for the remaining person, some 700 metres out to sea. In the meantime Hugo paddled the missing person whom Greg had found to shore. Hugo kept hold of his patient, got him to the beach, and found another of the missing persons in the surf zone closer to shore. He was also unresponsive.

Alex and Greg continued to search for another 30 to 40 minutes during which time the Westpac Rescue Helicopter had begun searching. Eventually they both returned to the beach where Hugo was assisting in CPR efforts. Greg then relieved Hugo doing CPR whilst Alex assisted the police and State Emergency Service [SES] with recovery. Greg, Hugo and one of the bystanders continued CPR for approximately 40 minutes on one of the victims before both males who had been retrieved were, unfortunately, pronounced dead. They then spoke briefly with police, ambulance and SES personnel before leaving the scene.

To quote Greg directly from the nomination, "I believe that Hugo and Alex deserve an award. Their commitment to the role is exceptional. They showed professionalism beyond their years and their actions speak for themselves. Through selfless acts, empathy, their skills plus their knowledge they pass onto others. They work together effortlessly and achieve outcomes seemingly without trying, yet maintain all that we strive for in this job. This can be a challenging role at times, and dealing with death and injury can take its toll. However, these two do it without question, help each other and the others in our team and make my life easier by the way they operate." As a sad footnote, three days later the remaining deceased person was found at Point Plomer, near Port Macquarie, some 124 kilometres away. I commend the bravery of these three individuals and thank them for their work to keep our beaches safe.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (20:01): The electorate of Auburn is now home to the New South Wales Rugby League at Sydney Olympic Park. This is a nod to the long tradition of rugby league in the electorate of Auburn and the soul of rugby league, which, at least during my youth, was so much a part of the history of Lidcombe Oval. This week the first State of Origin match will be played in Brisbane. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to one of the greats from Lidcombe Oval, Tommy Raudonikis, who was both the inaugural State of Origin captain in 1980 and a former captain of the Kangaroos.

Tommy Raudonikis is considered one of the toughest halves to have ever played the game. He was emblematic of the rough-and-tumble suburbs we grew up in around Lidcombe Oval. There was no quarter given in the fibro city in which we lived, and Tommy Raudonikis was our champion on the rugby league field. The cattle calls and brawls of the game were as memorable as the theatre of the game, but the fights and the infamous fibros versus silvertails battles sometimes overshadowed just what a tremendous rugby league player Tommy was.

Tommy first played for New South Wales in 1971, and toured New Zealand with the Australian squad that year. He made the first of 20 test appearances for Australia against New Zealand and captained Australia in the third and deciding test against Great Britain on the 1973 Kangaroo tour. He is the only player to have played over 200 first grade games for Western Suburbs Magpies. He went on to coach Wests Tigers in the 1990s, and in 1997 he coached the New South Wales State of Origin team to a historic win. His coaching style would be described today as motivational. I am not sure if it is folklore, but Roy Masters recounts the tale of Tommy producing an ox heart in the Campbelltown change rooms when Wests were performing badly and stabbing it with a coat peg. Some players still swear the heart was beating. The apparently terrified Wests team turned their performance around and went out and beat the opposition.

For all his toughness on the field, Tommy appears to be just as tough off the field. In 2006 he had a quadruple bypass, and he came through after a five-hour operation. He has now fought off cancer three times, and still has the fire burning in the belly to ensure he delivered a message to the current State of Origin team. Tommy's challenge to the current New South Wales State of Origin team is that if he can beat cancer three times they can beat Queensland. Only time will tell if they can deliver. I hope for Tommy Raudonikis they can.

Last week Tommy Raudonikis was inducted into the National Rugby League Hall of Fame. It is well deserved for a man who has always lived on his own terms and always fought for what he believes in. It adds to the numerous other awards he has received, not least of which is the Rothmans Medal in 1972 and the Dally M Representative Player of the Year in 1980. But for those of us who watched Tommy, "Dallas", Boyd and Giteau in those rough-and-tumble days of the seventies at Lidcombe Oval, Tommy will never need any medals. He taught us to stand up and fight and never take a backward step—always take on an opportunity—and not to be scared of the tough guys. He is a hero to our generation and is the stuff western Sydney is made of. He is Lidcombe Oval's favourite son. His induction into the hall of fame is well deserved and hopefully it will deliver a typical Tommy motivational lift for the 2019 State of Origin team to go out and give it their all tomorrow night.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:05 until
Wednesday 5 June 2019 at 10:00.**