



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 5 June 2019

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 5 June 2019

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Announcements

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

The SPEAKER: The Standing Orders and Procedures Committee is of a mind to expand the time for the giving of notices of motion from 10 minutes to 15 minutes, which will take effect after the winter recess.

Documents

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Domestic waste management in Campbelltown City Council and Fairfield City Council*, dated 5 June 2019 and received this day.

Announcements

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

The SPEAKER: I remind members that Australia's Biggest Morning Tea will be held in the Stranger's Lounge, not the Speaker's Garden, this morning from 10.30 a.m. I encourage everyone to drop by, support a worthy cause, and perhaps share a piece of cake and have a cup of tea. There will be a raffle and a bake-off competition with special guests—all to raise money for a very worthy cause, the Cancer Council.

Bills

LIBRARY AMENDMENT BILL 2019

Second Reading Speech

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (10:13): On behalf of Ms Gladys Berejiklian: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill was introduced in the other place on 29 May 2019 and is in the very same form. The second reading speech appears at pages three and four in the proof *Hansard* for that day. It is an honour and privilege to commend the Library Amendment Bill to the Parliament. I look forward to weeks of debate on this very special legislation.

Second Reading Debate

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (10:14): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Library Amendment Bill 2019. I note the Minister's contribution in the other place when introducing the bill. The objectives of the bill are listed as:

- (a) to identify legal deposit libraries and specify additional functions of those libraries,
- (b) to authorise the head librarian of a legal deposit library to direct the publisher of library material to deliver a copy of the material in the library or to make the material available for copying,
- (c) to authorise the head librarian of a legal deposit library to collect free of charge relevant library material that is made freely available by the publisher of the material,
- (d) to provide for the service of documents under the Library Act 1939 (the principal Act),
- (e) to repeal the Copyright Act 1879 and to make savings and transitional arrangements consequent on that repeal,
- (f) to make other minor amendments.

This bill is largely uncontroversial and Labor will support it. Legal deposit libraries play an important role in the preservation of our collective history and with respect to publications which have informed public debate, discussion and research. New South Wales is home to three legal deposit libraries: the State Library of New South Wales, the Parliamentary Library and the Library of the University of Sydney. Those libraries hold a valuable collection of works published in our State which will inform current and future generations about the nature and scope of public discussions. This bill seeks to update the legal deposit library process by extending their collections to include digital material which may be of benefit to the collection.

Members will be aware that these days much of our discussion and consumption of information occurs electronically and online and it will no doubt benefit future generations to be aware of this content. It is notable that the moves to include digital content in the legal deposit library system also prompt a rethink of the role of a publisher in an era when anyone with a mobile phone can publish content and have it disseminated very quickly. This legislation allows a head librarian or their delegate to identify material that is relevant to the collection and issue a legal deposit order to secure a copy of this material for future generations.

While some may think that this ephemeral online material will exist forever, it is certainly possible for files on servers to be deleted, or public access to these documents to be removed in the future, or for a digital platform to be removed, so inclusion of material in the legal deposit library system is a very welcome step. The bill also allows legal deposit libraries to collect library material if it has been made free of charge to members of the public. This serves to increase the amount of digital content able to be collected without the need to issue a legal deposit order. There is much online content that would be a valuable addition to the collection of the legal deposit library but the original publisher of the content is not readily identifiable. Members would be aware of the impact of the anonymity of the internet in many facets of life, but that anonymity of the publisher should not remove the collection of material in the legal deposit library system.

The bill also provides an opportunity to reflect on the changing nature of libraries more generally in our communities. Over recent years we have seen our local libraries adapt to the changing demands and interests of their communities. It is important that libraries continue to serve their communities as places at which to access information, conduct research and build local connections. In my own community of Port Stephens I commend to the House two volunteer-run libraries that serve their communities. In North Arm Cove, the North Arm Cove Community Centre's management committee runs a small library for this geographically isolated community. With only a few hundred residents, it is a beautiful community but access to services is limited—so they created their own library. The always-motivated residents took it on themselves to start and maintain this library service so that residents can share and access a collection of books. I note the efforts of the committee chair, Moira Hooper, and the secretary, Maureen Kelly, in their ongoing work to serve their local community.

A similar volunteer-led library operates in Lemon Tree Passage on the Tilligerry peninsula. While the Tilligerry Community Library is managed by Port Stephens Council's library service, volunteers are responsible for the day-to-day running of the library. The library operates two hours a day, six days a week, and is well used by local residents. Council reports that the service loans out over 1,000 items per month from its collection. The volunteer-run service has existed since 1982 and has been at its current premises since 1997. A special mention to volunteer coordinator, Marcia Lancaster, for all her efforts over the years at this wonderful service. This community library model is a good example of how councils have to find ways to keep costs low in delivering library services. The New South Wales Local Government Association's Renew Our Libraries campaign has highlighted the financial stress councils are under to deliver this important community service. A combination of rate pegging and cuts to New South Wales Government funding has reduced the ability of councils, particularly in regional and rural areas, to deliver the high quality public libraries that residents expect and deserve.

There are 360 public libraries across New South Wales and they do not have the resources of the three legal deposit libraries mentioned in this bill. These libraries received a \$5 million funding cut in 2018-19 and collectively these 360 libraries share just over \$20 million in funding each year. One of the policies Labor took to the recent election was to double the library subsidy councils receive from \$1.85 per capita to \$3.70 per capita. This doubling of library funding would have provided a much-needed boost to local libraries as they adapt their service to meet changing community needs.

I acknowledge the work of shadow Minister Peter Primrose on Labor policy as well as Local Government NSW President Linda Scott for working with a range of councils, both regional and metropolitan, to support the Renew Our Libraries campaign and for travelling across the State to ensure that people knew the value of the libraries that we were seeking to support. We await this year's budget to see what support libraries across New South Wales will be receiving from this Government so that they can continue their good work. In closing, I recognise the important work undertaken by librarians across this State in our schools, our legal deposit libraries and our community local libraries. Whilst the nature of their work has changed, the importance of what they do to inspire and support a love of reading and learning has never diminished. How we record and gather information,

opinion and commentary has changed markedly over recent decades, so Labor supports this bill which will ensure important digital content is captured in perpetuity.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (10:22): I refer to the Library Amendment Bill 2019. It is worth taking a moment to stop and contemplate the mammoth task facing those who seek to capture and hold the publications of our State: custodians of words, of thought, of incidents, of actions and perspectives. It is difficult enough to trace and manage paper publications, let alone those which exist only in the digital sphere. Yet this is where much of the action now takes place. Our laws have traditionally made it plain that this preservation obligation is to be shared with publishers of print; that is, many eyes from a range of perspectives and across industries are trained on the task.

The State Library of New South Wales, the Parliamentary Library, and the Library of the University of Sydney are the legal deposit libraries in New South Wales. Those libraries are tasked to collect the documentary heritage of New South Wales and preserve it for future generations through the legal deposit scheme in New South Wales. The Copyright Act 1879 currently requires that a copy of all books published in New South Wales be deposited by the publishers at the State Library. This includes newspapers, pamphlets, sheet music, maps, charts or plans. This ensures that published material in New South Wales is catalogued, accessible, and archived to record published works in New South Wales in perpetuity. This discipline is incomplete when it comes to purely digital publishing.

Our legal deposit libraries currently have no express authority to collect or require provision of electronic publications from New South Wales publishers, even if the electronic publication is significant to the history of the State. This is a gap which the Library Amendment Bill 2019 seeks to close. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 will amend the Library Act 1939 to give the New South Wales legal deposit libraries greater functions. This will enable these libraries to identify and collect any material that the head librarian of each library considers relevant, including electronic materials.

In addition, all books and printed materials that would ordinarily be deposited under the Copyright Act 1879 will continue to be required to be deposited through savings and transitional arrangements in the bill. The Copyright Act 1879 will also be repealed as it is an archaic Act that will no longer have any application. Importantly, the bill will bring New South Wales into alignment with the national legislation for the legal deposit of electronic publications and with similar schemes in other States and Territories. Our State's public libraries provide important services and educational and cultural experiences to communities across New South Wales.

Public libraries across New South Wales are experiencing continued growth in demand and recent figures compiled by the State Library show that there are over 35 million visits annually to libraries across the State. Over 41 million books are borrowed per year, there are 13.2 million visits to library websites and 11.4 million onsite internet bookings. Libraries continue to provide communities with access to quality information, with over 6.8 million information inquiries answered in public libraries per annum. Appropriate resourcing of the legal deposit libraries and other libraries across the State ensures that library collections can be made available on an equitable basis. The stronger position of our libraries means that this modernised legal deposit scheme will continue to be of great benefit to people across the State.

It should come as no surprise that the electorate of Albury welcomes this bill. Information remoteness remains an issue even for the city of Albury, located on the Hume Freeway between Sydney and Melbourne. We are acutely aware of the changing nature of media in our region. Media is contracting, media staff are being stretched to cover considerable geographical distances and the sense of historic context can be lost as journalists and reporters come and go. This pushes all of us—teachers, students, politicians—back into the realm of frontline researchers when seeking to evaluate current events in their longer term context for our particular towns, villages and cities. It is vital that we have a strong regime for collecting and storing in a user-friendly way the publishing history of our State, be it paper or electronic.

In August 2018 this Government announced a record \$60 million investment in public libraries across the State, the biggest single cash injection in their history. This investment will transform and modernise public libraries, especially those in regional areas. Every one of New South Wales' more than 370 public libraries will benefit from this investment. Part of this funding saw almost \$1.6 million to develop a statewide regional digitisation strategy and to help regional arts, screen and culture organisations digitise collections. Eleven projects were supported in this way, with funding provided under the Regional Cultural Fund. One of those projects is within my electorate. The Albury & District Historical Society was funded to enable digitisation of two sets of microfilmed local newspapers. These were the *Albury Banner*, covering editions from 1881 to 1896, and the *Border Morning Mail* for editions from 1938 to 1942. The digitisation would bring these important Albury records onto the National Library of Australia's search engine, Trove.

This is a vital moment to catch these newspapers from the past, bringing them into a searchable format and helping narrate a number of significant historical gaps in the recorded history of Albury and its region. We are certainly glad, indeed fortunate, to have seen a local, highly motivated organisation receive funding to take on this task so relevant to capturing these slices of understanding of border community history. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 is a timely piece of legislation for our State. It identifies and fixes a gap in information management that will serve our nation, our State and indeed the residents and businesses of the Albury electorate in a way that—quite literally—will not be forgotten. I thank the Minister for this bill. I support the bill.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (10:29): I am passionate about libraries and I was pleased to hear that Walt Secord, the shadow Minister for the Arts in the other place, is such an enthusiastic supporter of the Library Amendment Bill 2019. It is fair to say that it is probably the most enthusiastic support he has ever shown a piece of Government legislation—as far as I know. From about the age of nine years, I volunteered in my local library, covering books and shelving returns. Libraries are places of organisation, order, quiet, peace and a sanctuary for the mind.

Mr John Sidoti: Fifteen years ago.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I acknowledge the interjection; yes, it was 15 years ago. What special gifts we find in libraries, a wealth of information, wisdom, conceits and ideas—all to be found between the pages of books or so we used to imagine. My earliest memories of libraries were visits with my mum. They were places where adults hosted story times, puppet shows, and you could immerse yourself in amazing worlds of imagination. I still remember the vivid pictures, both real and imaginary, from my childhood favourite books, including *The Cherry Family*, *Dr Seuss* books, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Peter Rabbit*, *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*, *The Famous Five*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Watership Down*, *The Magic Pudding*, *Snugglypot and Cuddlepup* and the school readers that my mother had kept from her childhood in South Australia. But the books that we borrowed from libraries were like a special gift. Every week you could go there and immerse yourself in a new world of someone else's imagination. It was like borrowing the experiences of people all over the planet conjured up by an author who had lived a completely different life from you.

Growing up in Canberra, as a young adult, I was lucky to be able to go to the National Library of Australia and look up any reference I needed for my university studies. We had two hours to peruse the books, which made study much more focused, rather than borrowing a stack of books from the university library, taking them home and then probably never quite getting to open them. That quiet space in the National Library was so important to my academic success and it helped to allow all students fair access to texts that were on loan at our university library—sometimes for months at a time. Today, it is lovely to see my own daughter studying for her Higher School Certificate at our local library in Maitland where she has a quiet and distraction-free place.

Libraries today continue to give these gifts and so much more. They act as centres of culture. Maitland City Library's Look Who's Talking program has seen an eminent stream of guest speakers flowing through our community to talk about their books and their life experiences—from Bob Carr; Gareth Evans; Jane Caro; Tracey Spicer; our own crime writer, Barry Maitland; and the thought-provoking Michael Mohammed Ahmad, who visited recently. The cultural life of Maitland is enriched by this program which stimulates our intellectual life. In these modern times, libraries also provide important and much needed access to computers and internet for people who cannot access those facilities from their homes. Technology workshops are offered to assist people in understanding how to use library resources. Libraries offer research support, literacy and reading programs, outreach programs as well as book loans. They play such a central role in maintaining a collective archive of our shared history.

Libraries have always held far more than just books or newspapers. In the summer of 2001-02, the National Library of Australia in Canberra held the Treasures from the World's Great Libraries. The exhibition showcased treasures from libraries around the world, including original music scores, artworks, sculptures and manuscripts. The exhibition also exhibited items such as a letter from Mahatma Gandhi, papers from Eddie Mabo, Ptolemy's *Cosmographia* from 1478, Alexander Graham Bell's precursor to the telephone sketchings from 1878, early religious texts including a Dead Sea Scroll from c.250 BCE-65 CE and a Mamluk Qur'an from the early fourteenth century. What possibilities, what inspiration can be found in seeing these amazing historical items all together?

Last night, when preparing for this speech, I searched Google and found references to that particular exhibition. Nearly 20 years later, the items I remembered seeing in real life were still available in the digital environment at the National Library. Libraries collect the hidden history of our society and culture in a comprehensive and all-encompassing manner. Unlike the internet, which can be changed, or Facebook, which is filtered to reflect the things we want to see or which suit our particular views, libraries stand as a testament to our way of thinking, our knowledge, music, art, poetry, understanding of our planet and its boundaries as they have shifted and changed over time.

All members should support this bill because libraries are the cornerstone of education, information and knowledge and they should be complete. It is past time that we ensure the collection of our intellectual knowledge and history in a way that keeps pace with technological change. This legislation is crucial as it updates and modernises the legal deposit scheme in New South Wales, which is vital for historical and data collection purposes. The bill will empower our libraries to be places of learning, interest and enjoyment for future generations and to expand across the planet. I do not know if any members have ever visited Egypt but the Library of Alexandria is amazing. It has had a very important role in history and the digitisation of the library is also an important undertaking. People in Sydney can access the archives and collections of that library online. This amazing opportunity offered by technology can only help to improve relationships across the globe.

When we consider the way in which people today, particularly young people, read and experience literature, it is vital that libraries collect items that will become important to them. A friend of mine from Orange, Kelly Rimmer, is a best selling international author. Long before her books appeared in print she was published online in e-books. Her works, which are carefully researched, tell stories that are often difficult to hear. The way in which she developed her career was very innovative. She started on online platforms and is now going to another genre because she loves writing so much. It would be a shame if a famous Australian author such as Kelly did not have a full catalogue in our National Library collections.

The National Library trove has been important to me when researching for my work as a shadow Minister. I have used the collection to find books such as Marion Hosking's *Why doesn't she leave?: The story of a women's refuge*. This book is about the establishment of the first women's refuge in Taree in New South Wales. Today the Parliament of New South Wales digitises a lot of its information. *Hansard* is a great research tool. Looking back at the speeches of my predecessors, I often find that the themes have not changed much for my community in over 40 years. *Hansard* was useful for my research on the condolence motion for the Hon. Milton Morris. We need that sort of system.

Currently there is a legal requirement that all books be submitted to the legal deposit libraries in New South Wales: the State Library, the Parliamentary Library and the University of Sydney Library. There is also a requirement that the publication of any newspaper, pamphlet, sheet music, map, chart or plan is lodged with those bodies. That ensures an archive of publications for future generations and future researchers. The bill will allow for electronic publications to be stored in those deposits. At the moment in New South Wales publishers of digital or electronic material are not required to deposit that material. As a result our collection is fragmented and incomplete. The bill will bring New South Wales in line with other States and Territories.

The bill continues the requirement under the Copyright Act, through savings and transitional arrangements, for the delivery of book material to those deposit libraries. It extends the requirements of the Copyright Act to ensure that the collection and maintenance of publications, including electronic publications, is undertaken by legal deposit libraries. The most important issue here is resourcing. My concern with this legislation is whether the Government will properly resource the deposit libraries to undertake this work. The key issue is that the delivery of these items to libraries will require a receipt and someone will need to catalogue the information and store it. It will also mean that the deposit libraries are able to expand their activities to become collectors. My question to the Minister is: Who is going to pay for this? [*Extension of time*]

In April last year recurrent funding for libraries was only \$1.85 per capita and was not linked to the consumer price index [CPI]. Members opposite might remember Labor's detailed policy to double State funding for public libraries to \$3.70 per capita and, for the first time, to link it to the CPI. Labor also announced a library infrastructure grants fund of \$25 million and a hardship allowance of \$500,000 per year. What was the Government's response to that? In last year's budget the Liberal-Nationals Government slashed the already grossly inadequate library funding by a further 18 per cent.

The Labor Opposition joined with Local Government NSW, the Public Libraries Association and most of the councils in our State to condemn the cuts and campaigned under Renew Our Libraries for the cuts to be withdrawn. I pay special tribute to Shadow Minister for Local Government the Hon. Peter Primrose in the other place and Deputy Lord Mayor of City of Sydney Council Linda Scott for their amazing work. They travelled around the State on this issue and it started to hurt the Government. Two months later it came to the party with a way of going close to our commitments when it announced an increase to the Library Infrastructure Grants.

However, the Liberal-Nationals Government refused to match Labor's commitment on per capita funding, saying that it would increase it by only 25c annually. It also refused to link it to the consumer price index [CPI]. Labor was pleased that the Liberals and Nationals copied half of its policy. We will continue to promote our policy that per capita recurrent funding to run libraries, employ librarians and support staff is doubled and linked to CPI increases. Libraries need guaranteed recurrent funding because libraries need librarians. Now that the Government is giving them all this extra work, they need even more. My dear friend the member for Port Stephens came up with an easy way to explain the Government's policy. First, cut the funding to public

libraries by 18 per cent. Secondly, attack Labor's plan to double the funding. Thirdly, freak out and steal half of Labor's policy. Fourthly, claim credit and attack Labor some more. We need more to deliver a better library system in the State. It must be noted that essentially the bill will double the workload of archivists managing New South Wales legal deposit libraries.

For anyone who doubts it and thinks that electronic media is easy to organise, try organising your iTunes library. If they think it can be automated, press that little button and try to unscramble the egg that is your music collection. It is a hard task. Not only will the delivery of book material continue but it will also extend to electronic publications. Will the Government ensure that ample resources are allocated to the libraries? I would like to hear from the Minister how that is going to happen. Will the Government ensure enough staff to meet both streams of content? Will it provide training to ensure that those tasked with the additional responsibilities can meet them in a timely and stress-free manner? Will it provide adequate digital infrastructure—for example, archiving software and backup storage? I am passionately committed to this legislation being implemented. In the past few weeks we have heard this Government talk about how it will do things but the cost always comes back to the taxpayer. The Government is not upfront about costs when it talks about such programs. This is too important to do on the cheap. I hope the Minister will answer my questions. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (10:42): I am delighted to support the Library Amendment Bill 2019. My community has two wonderful local libraries in Mosman and North Sydney. I thank the managers of library services—Linda Horswell at Mosman and Rebecca Aukim at North Sydney. I have spent quite a bit of time in those libraries but a few months ago I had the great pleasure of opening the indoor garden reading zone at Mosman library. This Government contributed \$185,000 for its development. The library is not too far away from Mosman High School and the garden reading zone is a great facility for library users such as school students and members of our community. People running small businesses also use the library as a flexible working space. That is what our libraries have transitioned into. The bill addresses some of the other changes that our libraries and library services require.

We all know that the State Library of New South Wales is one of Australia's first public institutions. Its origins date back to 1826. Next door to Parliament House are the heritage-listed Mitchell Library, which is named after the book collector and benefactor David Scott Mitchell, and the Macquarie Room. The State Library is a major landmark, which has inspired generations of Sydney residents and visitors. The collection holds more than six million items. Members may know that there are eight collections alone on the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register.

The State Library is a vast repository for and keeper of our cultural and social memory, which informs our identity as individuals, as a State and as a nation. It holds in trust, for example, irreplaceable European descriptions of Sydney Harbour landscape and natural history, as well as significant documentation of the local Eora people and their interactions with the European arrivals. The collection spans material relating to the very first moments of the establishment of our colony—from the visit of Captain James Cook in the HMS *Endeavour* in 1770 to the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788—through to contemporary Sydney and our State today. It will hold our treasures and histories and cultural relics into the future. The State Library's collection makes it a natural home for researchers and academics, but equally important is that it is a welcoming safe haven for everybody.

This November is the eightieth anniversary of the Library Act 1939. That Act was a significant statement by the State Government that encouraged local councils to open and operate public libraries with assistance through the State Library. The New South Wales Parliament's Libraries Advisory Committee of 1939, which informed the Act, noted that "public library service is a necessity"; "without libraries the education of the citizen cannot be carried beyond the school or lecture room"; "research is essential to commerce and industry"; and "without libraries the citizen has no check on indoctrination or propaganda". Looking back at these words from 1939, these statements are profound. They suggest that libraries not only underpin our education system and business development, not only ensure our citizenry is informed, but also make sure that we have empowered individuals who can be informed to represent their interests through knowledge. That is what libraries still do today. Their essential purpose rings true in these statements 80 years later.

That landmark legislation led to the provision of free public library services for the people of New South Wales, which was enshrined into the law for the New South Wales Government to support public libraries, which we still do today. That is why the New South Wales Government last year announced an extra \$60 million in funding over four years from July 2019 to support public libraries across the State. Since the enactment of the Copyright Act in 1879, the State Library has taken responsibility for collecting and preserving printed material, providing an archive of New South Wales publishing.

Legal deposit is a significant method of acquisition for the State Library and represents approximately 25 per cent of new resources. Nearly half of Australian publishing output originates here in New South Wales. When the Copyright Act was passed in 1879 and for much of the twentieth century, books, newspapers and

journals were physical objects printed on paper. I am delighted that with the proposed Library Amendment Bill 2019, material that can be collected under legal deposit has been extended to include electronic materials. This will ensure the continuing relevance of the State Library's collection and that major events, cultural shifts and social movements today and tomorrow will be captured for those who come after us.

The Copyright Act 1879 requires only publishers of books and printed materials to submit a copy to the legal deposit libraries. This means that publishers of electronic publications in New South Wales are under no legal obligation to deposit their material in the legal deposit libraries. As well, the legal deposit libraries currently have no express authority to collect or require provision of electronic publications from New South Wales publishers, even if the electronic publication is significant to the history of the State. As a result, the collections of legal deposit libraries are quite fragmented and incomplete because electronic publications have become more frequent in the twenty-first century. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 will amend the Library Act 1939 to give New South Wales legal deposit libraries greater functions. It will enable libraries to identify and collect any material that the head librarian of each library considers relevant, including electronic materials.

In addition, all books and printed materials that would ordinarily be deposited under the Copyright Act 1879 will continue to be required to be deposited through savings and transitional arrangements in the bill. The Copyright Act 1879 will be repealed, as it is an archaic Act that will no longer have any application. The bill will bring New South Wales into alignment with national legislation for the legal deposit of electronic publications and with similar schemes in other States and Territories. I have spoken about my own local libraries and how important they are to cultural, educational and business elements in my local community. While those opposite often criticise the funding of libraries across the State, they neglect to mention the fact that we have made significant improvements and enhancements to library funding in New South Wales.

Our State's public libraries provide important services that the Government is committed to supporting. Public libraries across New South Wales are experiencing continued growth in demand, and recent figures compiled by the State Library show that libraries across the State are visited over 35 million times each year. That is why the Government has invested a record \$60 million into public libraries across New South Wales—the biggest single cash injection in their history. This investment is something that we on this side of the House can be proud of. It will help to transform and modernise our public libraries, just as last year's investment in Mosman Library did. It will have an especially large impact in regional areas. Every one of the State's 370 public libraries will benefit from this investment. It ensures appropriate resourcing of legal deposit libraries and other libraries across the State and also ensures that our library collections can be made available on an equitable basis.

Through our investment libraries will be made stronger and this will allow modern legal deposit schemes to continue to be of great benefit to people across the State. I am proud to support the Library Amendment Bill 2019. It is integral that we maintain libraries if we are to retain our cultural history and support our educational system. We all have fond memories of visiting libraries throughout our childhoods. I have spent a lot of time at my local library with my daughter and I will continue to do so, not only at Mosman Library's rhyme time but hopefully also as she advances through many years of joy, reading books and literature, learning about our past and investing in our future. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (10:50): I make a contribution on the Library Amendment Bill 2019. My colleagues from both sides of the House have spoken about the importance of libraries. I thought I would start with a quote from an online magazine, given that digital publications are affected by this legislation. This is an extract from *World Intellectual Property Organisation Magazine* [WIPO]. It is an article by Ben White, head of intellectual property at the British Library, and it is headed, "Guaranteeing Access to Knowledge: The Role of Libraries". In the introduction he states:

As gateways to knowledge and culture, libraries play a fundamental role in society. The resources and services they offer create opportunities for learning, support literacy and education, and help shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society. They also help ensure an authentic record of knowledge created and accumulated by past generations. In a world without libraries, it would be difficult to advance research and human knowledge or preserve the world's cumulative knowledge and heritage for future generations.

Mr White's words are pertinent not only to our consideration of the bill but also that libraries continue to have an important role in our communities and across society. A few years ago some claimed that libraries might have reached the end of their time because they had been replaced by digital publications. Instead, libraries across the State, the nation and the world are becoming more popular because they have expanded their role and the range of materials they lend out. They have become places where communities meet and where different organisations can get together and talk about themes that interest them.

Libraries are hosting book launches and, as the member for Albury said, libraries are hosting local historic societies as they chronicle what happens in their local area in digital form. Recently I was pleased to attend the launch of Wyong Family History Group's new set of publications, a book in three parts called *People of Wyong*.

The Wyong Family History Group has chronicled the history of all public servants who have worked in the Wyong area since its settlement. It was interesting to see that this knowledge was being preserved. I have offered to put a copy of those three books into every school in the electorate because I believe it is important for our children to have access to that information through their school libraries. I am a bit bias towards libraries because my wife is a trained teacher-librarian. She started her career as the librarian at Griffith East Public School, and it was at about that time that we met. So I know how important libraries are.

This legislation applies to legal deposit libraries—the New South Wales State Library, the Parliamentary Library and the University of Sydney library. The legislation covers all publications. Books, newspapers, music, maps and charts all have to be lodged with these bodies, and the bill brings New South Wales into line with other States by also including digital publications. More of us are accessing digital publications—whether it be through smartphones, devices or tablets—to do research, but we have to understand that that is all done through library facilities. We can find some of those things online because they are being archived in that way.

Other members have talked about the resources that are currently given to libraries, and the fact that we need to improve the amount of resources. One of the good things about an election—it is not the stress that we all go through—is that there is a contest of ideas where members from both sides put up different propositions. When the major parties match each other's commitments the community is the ultimate winner. In some ways politics is a game of making sure that we are putting forward ideas that both sides of politics can adhere to. That is what happened during the 2019 election campaign with respect library funding. I pay tribute to the Hon. Peter Primrose, who ran quite a lengthy campaign about library funding. I thank the Government for coming on board and supporting most of what was put forward because, at the end of the day, that money will help to improve library facilities in all of our communities. Our communities are the winners.

More money can always be put into libraries. Public institutions never have enough money to do the jobs they need to do. In my electorate, Tuggerah, Lake Haven and Toukley have public libraries. They would love to be able to provide more books and more resources to their communities. My electorate is a low socio-economic community so libraries play a very important role there. Often people do not have access to the internet at home. It has been driven home to me that a lot of government services are now going online. If people do not have the internet at home their access to services is limited, particularly when the number of physical places to access government services is in decline.

I use my parents as an example. They do not have access to the internet at home. That is partly because of the cost but partly through choice; they do not know how to operate it. In the past two months they both got mobile phones. That is progress. As they move towards their 80s they have finally got mobile phones, which makes it a little bit easier to contact them, but they do not have access to the internet. They often find it difficult when they are told to go online and do X, Y and Z, so they go to the local library. They are able to access services there. I remind everyone—this is a safety message—that if you go online at the local library you should log out properly so that the next person cannot access your account. My mum found that out through experience! It is necessary to have these facilities for people who do not have internet access at home.

A lot of people prefer to have a physical book because they can turn the pages and smell the age of it, et cetera. I was talking to a fellow the other day who said that the library was still a really important place for him because it represents a place where he can physically pick up and read magazines, books and other things. He visited a library regularly. As part of his retirement routine he would go to the library and read a newspaper—libraries provide all the newspapers—and then get stuck into reading a book. He did not borrow the books; he liked reading at the library. It is important that digital publications are chronicled and become part of the overall legal deposit system. It is important for our society that both online and physical publications are properly archived so that they can be accessed by future generations. I commend the bill. It is probably pertinent to note that the Library Amendment Bill was one of the first bills the Government brought forward in the last Parliament and it has done so again in this Parliament.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:00): I am honoured to speak in support of the Library Amendment Bill 2019. I am delighted that under the proposed Library Amendment Bill, material that can be collected under legal deposit has been extended to include electronic materials. This will ensure the continuing relevance of the State Library's collection and that major events, cultural shifts and social movements of today are captured for those who will come after us.

Yesterday the member for Mulgoa told the House that New South Wales deserves to have it all and that it can under a Liberal-Nationals Government. This Government is supporting our public libraries on an unprecedented level. In August 2018 this Government announced a record \$60 million investment into public libraries across the State—the biggest single cash injection ever into public libraries. This investment will transform and modernise the more than 370 public libraries across this great State. Investment in our local libraries is hugely important for all generations of our community. For example, our public libraries are places for mothers'

groups to connect, discussing their experiences as mothers while also forming important friendships. When my son James was born, my wife, Adla, used to take him to mothers' reading groups at both Penshurst and Oatley libraries. She still catches up with those mothers five years later.

Our public libraries are where the early development of reading skills and the identification of shapes, colours and words are formed through reading groups and child-focused groups. One of my favourite outings is taking James to Hurstville Library. Much like his mum, who is an English teacher, James is quite the reader, enjoying everything from the *Star Wars* children's books to my favourite, Dr Seuss, or his current favourite—which I am sure is also the favourite of our Minister for Health—*The Adventures of Captain Underpants*. Now in his first year of school, James' favourite day is library day when he can borrow a new book. When I get the chance to be at home I enjoy reading books to him or him reading to me. James also attends a series of after-school programs offered by our local libraries, which also run a range of school holiday programs for local students.

I am sure as James gets older he will enjoy the number of youth services offered by our local library network, including the Georges River Young Writers' Circle. This program meets once a month to share tips and to develop creative writing skills in a supportive environment. It is the building block for a creative mind and a place to develop one's skills in writing. If he does not attend that program he will most definitely attend the Code Club, which has a growing branch at Hurstville Library. The club encourages children to explore and develop their skills in coding.

I attended Kogarah library and Hurstville library in my school and university days and used their extensive facilities to aid my studies. It was a safe haven for peace and quiet from a usually loud household of two younger brothers. Recently I visited the local Kogarah branch following its recent refurbishment and, much like in my school and university days, the library was full of local students working together, getting that one step closer to achieving their aspirations of whichever degree they have chosen. My office staff frequently visit the local library to research our local area for my flashback Friday posts on Facebook. I always look forward to what they have found out about the local area. I know many of my constituents also look forward to what local historical fact and trip down memory lane we will post every Friday. It is impressive to see the way our area has changed, grown and improved. Even more inspiring are the local heroes and people of importance in the St George community that we learn about.

My family has recently used the facilities of the South Hurstville Library's family history search program, which is a great council-sponsored workshop that delves into the histories of families. I was pleased to find nothing too worrying in my family history and it was a great bonding experience with James, who learned of our diverse cultural backgrounds—my Egyptian-Maltese background and my wife Adla's rich cultural Lebanese background. I know from my many visits to Rotary clubs, Lions gatherings and Probus meetings how much the elderly in our community also enjoy frequenting our local libraries.

For example, the Hurstville Seniors Computer Club, which I have happily supported over the years, frequently visits Hurstville Library to host computer classes for seniors. As the member for Wyong mentioned, it is very important in today's society of ever-developing technologies that groups such as those ensure seniors are not left behind. Similar classes are offered at Oatley Library, where many locals go to learn and to connect and to then have tea and coffee, forming friendships afterwards. Computer literacy is very important for the elderly in my electorate and across New South Wales. They will often tell me their stories of how they can use Skype to contact their family members in regional New South Wales, interstate or overseas.

Increasingly, with changing and evolving technologies, the type of material that documents the history of New South Wales is no longer in print form. Over the past few decades publications have developed, from the traditional concept of hardcover books, newspapers and magazines to electronic publications such as online magazines, digital books and, more recently, blogs and social media posts. However, for those in our community who are less mobile, the Georges River library network offers a home library service where residents can request books—such as *The Adventures of Captain Underpants*—and have them delivered to them. This is a fantastic initiative that should be highly encouraged in all library networks.

For many of our migrant communities libraries act as a classroom in which to learn English and, more importantly, to connect with the community at large. English classes across my electorate are highly regarded and are often run from our local libraries, in particular at Kogarah and Hurstville. As well as English classes our local libraries host a range of culturally focused programs, including manga and anime drawing classes, guides to different religions and crafts sessions for elderly and cultural groups. For all those reasons and more, we are witnessing a continued demand for and the resulting growth of our public library system in New South Wales. Recent figures compiled by the State Library show that there are over 35 million visits annually to libraries across the State—I am sure many of those are by my son James.

More than 41 million books are borrowed each year, there are 13.2 million visits to library websites and 1.4 million onsite internet bookings. Libraries continue to provide communities with access to quality information, with more than 6.8 million information inquiries answered in public libraries per annum. That is why it is important to appropriate resourcing of the legal deposit libraries and other libraries across the State to ensure that library collections can be made available on an equitable basis. The stronger position of our libraries means that this modernised legal deposit scheme will continue to be of great benefit to people across the State. I support the bill.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (11:08): I speak in support of the Library Amendment Bill 2019. I was delighted and relieved to read the amendments and learn that electronic publications will be stored along with hard copy publications already held in legal deposit libraries in New South Wales. I had feared that given the Government's commitment to privatisation and over-development, I would find amendments seeking to do away with libraries entirely, perhaps even replacing them with stadiums. It is appropriate that as the member for Coogee I support the bill before the House. The Hon. Ernie Page was the greatly respected member for Coogee from 1981 to 2003 and Minister for Local Government from 1995 to 1999. He had a great commitment to libraries and opened the first public library in Waverley. He also secured funding for the considerable expansion of public libraries in New South Wales. I am proud to say that the Coogee electorate has two substantial libraries—Randwick City Library and Waverley Council Library—plus smaller libraries and an increasing number of street libraries.

Libraries offer much more than just access to free books to read, although that in itself is greatly valued. What is there not to like about vast collections of often expensive books which are available for reading at absolutely no cost? Our libraries offer so much more. They are warm, dry and quiet places to read your free newspaper, magazine or book. They are places to meet friends or write a letter. They have expert staff to assist your research. They are places for Higher School Certificate students to gather and study after school with their mates. They also offer free or low-cost activities such as writing classes, reading groups and often activities that have nothing at all to do with a library such as learning to make your own organic makeup, which is currently being offered at Waverley library.

The role and purpose of libraries is seemingly endless. They are wonderful community spaces. Libraries are also among the great historical institutions created by humans. The Royal Library of Ashurbanipal, the world's oldest known library, was founded sometime in seventh century BC for the "royal contemplation" of the Assyrian ruler. Located in Nineveh in modern-day Iraq, the site included a trove of 30,000 cuneiform tablets organised according to subject matter. The library of Alexandria, in Egypt, was the largest and most significant great library of the ancient world. The great libraries of the ancient world served as archives for empires, sanctuaries for sacred writings, and depositories of literature and chronicles. Travel guides debate the best libraries and the most beautiful libraries in the world.

Libraries often act as cultural gathering places, whether enshrining masterpieces or hosting present-day events. They bring out the bookworm in us all. Libraries have never been more important than they are today. They help guide generations to seek out information that is credible, authentic and useful. As we move more and more from hard sources to digital sources of information, one of our great challenges is to modify our traditional regulatory processes to adequately capture and manage that which is published electronically. If we consider for a moment how difficult it is in our personal lives to now store, manage and retrieve countless digital photographs compared to the ease with which older Australians find photographs they seek, we get some glimpse of the need for this legislation before us.

How many electronic publications have been already lost? We must consider this. Access to information is critical for fact- and science-based policymaking. As an academic and researcher, I know firsthand how important it is for us all to have access to digital publications so that we can critique and learn and understand the difference between fact and science as opposed to fiction. Facts and science, such as climate change. I support the amendment bill because it ensures that libraries will innovate for the modern world where technology has transformed the way we access information. I praise librarians everywhere. In a world where we are constantly barraged with information, a good librarian can show a person how to fish for information in a constantly growing sea. Without a librarian, a library is a building housing books. The writer, Seth Godin, describes a library "as [a] warehouse for books worth sharing", and a librarian as a Sherpa:

A librarian is a data hound, a guide, a sherpa and a teacher. The librarian is the interface between reams of data and the untrained but motivated user.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Hon. Peter Primrose and President of Local Government NSW Linda Scott for their great work and advocacy for libraries across New South Wales.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (11:14): I, too, support the Library Amendment Bill 2019. Ever since I was a young child I have loved libraries so I was particularly pleased to open and host a street library out the front of my office—we wheel it out every day. I love seeing how books get taken and different books turn up. It is a rapidly changing street library and well-utilised by our community. I thank everyone who puts a book back, particularly the anonymous person who drops off a box of books every now and then for the office, which we use to replenish the library. It is generous of them to do so and it is very much appreciated.

Today I am proud to support the bill introduced in the other place by the Hon. Don Harwin, MLC. It ensures that legal deposit libraries can have, and give access to, a complete collection of materials published in New South Wales. In this rapidly changing world the State Library of New South Wales, the New South Wales Parliamentary Library and the University of Sydney Library preserve a wealth of knowledge for current and future generations. Those institutions constitute the legal deposit libraries of New South Wales and as such have the unique responsibility of collecting materials published in this State. Legal deposit legislation outlined in the Copyright Act 1879 was introduced to ensure that material published in New South Wales is organised and archived, as well as accessible to the public. The legal deposit scheme recognises the value of preserving our history for public consumption, which is a value that remains relevant in 2019. Apart from preserving our State's history, the legal deposit scheme also helps to record our publishing output and achievements.

The collection of publications residing in New South Wales legal deposit libraries inform an understanding of our history and enrich our sense of identity. Furthermore, the accessibility of this information to the public demonstrates our democratic commitment to freedom of expression. Legal deposit libraries in New South Wales have impressive collections, which testify to the rich history of this great State. Unfortunately, those collections are incomplete. Under the legal deposit scheme stipulated in the Copyright Act 1879, publishers have an obligation to lodge their works with the State Library of New South Wales, the Parliamentary Library and the University of Sydney library.

However, the current legislation requires only print publications be provided to legal deposit libraries. Electronic publications therefore present a unique challenge to legal deposit libraries because the current legislation does not give them the authority to require electronic publications from New South Wales publishers. Consequently, our legal deposit libraries are prevented from adequately collecting and archiving all material published in this State. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 seeks to rectify this issue by expanding the ability of legal deposit libraries to acquire electronic media alongside print media. As technology has developed, so too have the ways information is dispensed.

With the rise of electronic publishing platforms such as Kindle, Lulu and Wattpad, it is appropriate that the New South Wales legal deposit legislation is expanded to incorporate electronic media. Our legislation must reflect the changes in communication occurring in our society. One of the intentions of the Library Amendment Bill 2019 is to amend the Library Act 1939 to provide legal deposit libraries with greater functions to accumulate library material deemed relevant by the head librarian. Through this amendment, electronic materials could also be collected by legal deposit libraries. New section 14A in part 3A defines a "legal deposit library" as the State Library of New South Wales, the Parliamentary Library and the library of the University of Sydney. In this new section, "library material" will be made to include electronic publications in its definition.

Legal deposit libraries are vested with the authority to identify, collect and maintain "relevant library material" in new section 14B in part 3A. The definition for "relevant library material" is given in new section 14A to mean "library material relevant to the collection of the library". Those are important and awaited changes to the Library Act 1939. It will empower legal deposit libraries to complete their collections, especially by collecting electronic media because they would be considered as library materials. It is worth noting that similar changes regarding the incorporation of electronic media into the orders of legal deposit libraries have already occurred in a number of States and Territories.

It is time for New South Wales to recognise that relevant publications are not limited to print media. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 outlines two methods for the collection of relevant library material by legal deposit libraries. The first method of collecting relevant library materials is outlined in new section 14C. New section 14C authorises the head librarian in a legal deposit library to serve a legal deposit order on a person who publishes library material in New South Wales. This legal deposit order will direct the publisher to deliver a copy of the material free of charge to the library or make the material available to the library free of charge so that a copy can be made.

Legal deposit orders can cover a host of materials specifying the library material, specifying a class of library materials or even specifying a library material not yet in existence. The flexibility of a legal deposit order delivers the head librarians of legal deposit libraries the agency to best collect publications in New South Wales. A publisher failing to comply with a legal deposit order could warrant a maximum penalty of 10 penalty units per library material that they fail to deposit. New section 14D outlines the second method a head librarian can use

to collect materials for the legal deposit library. It allows the head librarian to collect free of charge relevant library material if the material has been made freely available to members of the public by the publisher of the material.

This provision will greatly benefit head librarians in the collection of relevant library materials considering the quantity of material being published online. New section 14E is flexible as it allows the head librarian of a legal deposit library to delegate the power of the collection functions to any member of staff of the library. New section 14F outlines the way in which legal deposit orders are to be issued. As the relevant requirements will be covered by the Amended Library Act 1939 the bill will also repeal the Copyright Act 1879 No 20. The bill is urgently needed to modernise provisions regarding the legal deposit libraries. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 is essential to the preservation of the heritage and history of New South Wales.

The inclusion of electronic media into the definition of "library material" will better reflect the diversity and collections of New South Wales publications in legal deposit libraries. Transformative and important content is continually being posted online. For example, the *Your Liverpool* magazine is issued quarterly online. It is a publication valued by many in my electorate and across the Liverpool region as it keeps people up to date on upcoming events, news and local opportunities. Electronic media, particularly on the internet, has become an integral part of twenty-first century communication. Print media is not a sufficient representation of the range of published works in New South Wales today.

It is important that our legislation acknowledges the huge role of electronic media publications in our society and incorporates them into collections at our legal deposit libraries. The reforms proposed in the Library Amendment Bill 2019 will cater for a society increasingly dependent on electronic media. The legal deposit libraries of New South Wales each do invaluable work in preserving local documentary records for the benefit of current and future generations. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 is designed to support the great work they are already doing and to enhance the scope of their New South Wales publications collection. I again thank the Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Don Harwin, MLC, his staff and everyone who worked on the bill to modernise the system. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (11:22): I appreciate the opportunity to speak in debate on the Library Amendment Bill 2019 introduced by the Hon. Don Harwin, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts, and great champion of our State's libraries. The bill repeals the Copyright Act 1879 and amends the Library Act 1939 to update and modernise legal deposits in New South Wales. It is vital that our State maintain an archive of publications for future generations. Our legal deposit libraries are the State Library, the Parliamentary Library and the University of Sydney Library. They are currently mandated by law to receive or demand copies of relevant material but this mandate does not extend to electronic publications. An accurate record of today must include music, digital publications and the array of electronic media that make up our modern media offering. This is a simple but important bill to bring New South Wales practice in line with that of other States and Territories and ensure our head librarians are armed and able to collect items which they, the experts, define as relevant regardless of the format.

The Government is committed to supporting our State's libraries as places of knowledge, preservation, congregation and learning. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that they remain relevant and a core centre of society, especially in small country towns. Mid last year in the Cootamundra electorate letters to the editor of our local paper removed any doubt about what funding libraries means to the local community. Last year following the budget announcement, regional New South Wales communities showed an absolute groundswell of support for public libraries and I made it a priority to push for more funding support behind the scenes. I met with Minister Harwin last year to request an increase to our libraries per capita funding and, unsurprisingly, I found an extremely receptive and passionate advocate for those facilities.

This Government cares about the preservation of our history and the maintenance, growth and success of the 370 public libraries across the State. In August last year I was thrilled to share with my community the announcement of a record investment of an additional \$60 million—the biggest single cash injection—in public libraries. This historic investment is transforming the way public libraries deliver much-needed services, especially in regional areas, enhancing customer experience and convenience. It is delivering better access to collections, children's services, public IT, connectivity, events and programs. Opening hours are being extended, book collections are being expanded, English lessons are being provided, Higher School Certificate study help and classes are being provided as well as outreach programs for seniors. Among other initiatives it will also enable smaller libraries to expand and deliver mobile library services to remote locations.

In recognition of the evolving role of libraries as community hubs, Service NSW kiosks will be placed in more libraries on an opt-in basis with trained library staff, giving communities easier access to government services. The kiosks will help more people access important cost-of-living initiatives and services introduced by the Liberal-Nationals Government including green slip refunds and help finding a better deal on energy prices. I am happy to say that part of this \$60 million spend includes an increase to councils' annual library subsidy

funding of between 40 per cent and 50 per cent by 2022 to 2023. Under the new investment the per capita subsidy for public libraries will increase from \$1.85 per capita to \$2.85 per capita. It is the first time in more than 20 years that it has been increased. Labor proposes the provision of additional operational funding on a per capita basis, which would result in many libraries in smaller communities missing out. The Liberal-Nationals Government will provide more than \$2 million annually to boost funding for libraries in disadvantaged and remote communities. Those libraries will receive their fair share of funding.

Infrastructure grants of \$24 million will transform public libraries and ensure they grow with and support their communities. Have no doubt, it is the Coalition that is delivering for our State's libraries. In the Cootamundra electorate we are seeing the benefits of this investment. In December I announced \$53,650 from round two of the Government's \$100 million Regional Cultural Fund to bring the new youth space to life at Narrandera library. This was the second round of funding within a year for that project and demonstrates the Government's true commitment to Narrandera's wonderful library. In April 2018, under the Public Library Infrastructure grant program, \$200,000 was announced for Narrandera to construct areas for collaborative study and socialising, as well as a multifunctional area for group visits with an accessible toilet and entrance. The new grant of \$53,650 through round two of the Regional Cultural Fund will supply the technology and furnishings required to bring the space to life. This project combines two of my passions—our local libraries and improving the experiences and outcomes for youth across the Cootamundra electorate.

For 20 years the young adult fiction area of the library was just a few bays of books and a couch, but the Government's investment in this community will completely change the narrative. Construction began in February this year and manager of community development and library, Sue Killham, informs me that the project is now nearing lock-up stage, with external work underway. I cannot wait to check out the innovative ways that this new space will engage with our young people in Narrandera. The Cootamundra electorate will also be the site of an exciting new collaboration between our local public schools, council and the New South Wales Government. Planning is in the latter stages for a new cultural, community and education precinct in Young, combining the town and Young High School libraries into a collaborative, interdisciplinary shared facility to enhance cultural opportunities for the whole community.

Last year the project secured \$3 million through the Regional Cultural Fund, which comes on top of \$2 million from the New South Wales Government's Stronger Communities amalgamation funding and \$1.5 million through the council's long-term financial plan. It is an ambitious project. It has never been done before in the region and I believe it will truly be an exceptional facility for everyone in Young and surrounds to enjoy. The investment in our libraries in the Cootamundra electorate—the seat of small communities—is a demonstration of the Government's wider commitment to ensure that these places remain at the heart of our towns and villages. We are supporting libraries with record funding and incentivising our local councils to create spaces and experiences that respond to young and modern audiences. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 is an important part of this work, ensuring electronic publications can be stored in our State's legal deposit libraries and preserved for future generations. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (11:31): I am honoured to join my colleagues in this House to speak in debate on the Library Amendment Bill 2019 and I am honoured to stand beside the member for Port Stephens in this place to celebrate libraries across New South Wales and promote libraries in our communities. I grew up in the township of Toronto, in the Lake Macquarie council area, and have many memories of visiting the local library with my mum. I would take a bag of books from the library and those books were important to the development of my imagination and in forming my life and relationships. I still read books, and I thank the Parliamentary Library—every time I enter it with a pile of read books I leave with another pile of books to read. We form relationships with libraries as young children and these relationships are incredibly important. Library services continue to be important for our communities.

Libraries are so much more than books: They are community celebration hubs and spaces. I note that the public gallery is full of students and I suspect that library study spaces are important to many of them. Many students in my community do not have a quiet place at home in which to study. Public libraries are a really important space for them, especially as they move into their senior years—and I see many students nodding their heads. I know the great Spike Milligan Room in the Woy Woy Library is an important place for many students in my community. They can escape into the library study rooms in the days, weeks and months leading up to the Higher School Certificate exams. And later, as university students, they can find sacred spaces in libraries where they can put their heads in books.

Libraries are an important place for developing our imaginations and other low-cost activities. Libraries are community hubs and places for some homeless people to enjoy as a sanctuary of quiet in which to read the newspaper. They may not have monetary wealth, but libraries give them an opportunity to connect with others and be part of their communities. The bill before us today connects the State Library, the Parliamentary Library

and the University of Sydney Library, which are celebrated libraries in this State, as integral storage spaces of knowledge for future generations not just in the printed format but also through online information. As a result of this bill, libraries will be places to store this information in perpetuity.

I am not sure where the students in the public gallery are from, but it might surprise some of them to hear that Central Coast council libraries had more than one million visitors last year. I was shocked but thrilled to find out the number of visitors, because it shows how important libraries are to our communities. We have 13 library branches of which 12,000 locals are members. Following the amalgamation of our local councils, we now have one of the largest catalogues in the State, with 315,000 items available. I commend all our librarians and library staff for maintaining this collection. Libraries not only lend books but also have to keep up with the times and contain selections including books, DVDs, magazines, audiobooks, large-print books, graphic novels and CDs. There is something for everyone at our local libraries and I encourage everyone to visit them.

It has been 71 years since the first library opened on the Central Coast—ironically, after the amalgamation of the Erina and Woy Woy shire councils into the former Gosford shire. At the time, back in 1948, the library's collection consisted of 5,000 items. Today the collection has more than 300,000 items. Libraries have been forced to move with the times to continue to be relevant to local communities. It is therefore important that we continue to fund them. Today I celebrate the staff in our council libraries. Gosford Library is located almost at the heart of the city and acts as a community hub. It provides all sorts of resources to members of our community. Umina library is very welcoming facility, where we have gathered amongst the books for small community celebrations.

Woy Woy Library now has a beautiful courtyard, where I was very pleased to celebrate a book launch by a West Australian author and musician, who also played the guitar. A diverse cross-section of the community came together to enjoy this space and the celebration of literature in our community. Whilst those opposite talk about additional funding for libraries, in the future we expect the council to test the closure of the small Kariong Library, which is a most important facility. The test involves closing the library on Saturday mornings because of a lack of traffic to support library staff keeping it open.

Libraries today are far from the stuffy idea that people once had of them. There is not a lot of public realm space left in Australia. Libraries are community hubs and they bring together people. They offer a quiet refuge from the noisy world. People can visit libraries to learn or seek assistance. They are one of the few places people can go where they are not required to buy or listen to anything; they can just be. Libraries are the very essence of being uncontroversial, as is the bill before us today. The objects of the bill are:

- (a) to identify legal deposit libraries and specify additional functions of those libraries,
- (b) to authorise the head librarian of a legal deposit library to direct the publisher of library material to deliver a copy of the material in the library or to make the material available for copying,
- (c) to authorise the head librarian of a legal deposit library to collect free of charge relevant library material that is made freely available by the publisher of the material,
- (d) to provide for the service of documents under the Library Act 1939 (the principal Act),
- (e) to repeal the Copyright Act 1879 and to make savings and transitional arrangements consequent on that repeal,
- (f) to make other minor amendments.

"Legal deposit libraries" may be a term that people have not heard before, but they play a very important role in protecting our history. We currently have three deposit libraries in New South Wales: the State Library of New South Wales, which is right next door to this building; the Parliamentary Library, which is in this building; and the University of Sydney library. These important institutions hold works published in New South Wales, which will inform current and future generations about the nature and scope of public discussions. The bill seeks to update the legal deposit library process by extending the collections to include digital material, which may be of benefit to the collection.

Despite the often-quoted saying that if something is online it is there to see forever, that is not always true. We need to rethink how we deal with digital information in the twenty-first century. In the past two years alone, 90 per cent of the world's data was generated. Some 2.5 quintillion bytes of data will be created today at our current pace, and that rate is only accelerating. Despite this, files on servers can be deleted, future public access to documents may be denied or the digital platform may be abolished. The inclusion of these materials in the legal deposit library system is important to the work of this place. The bill also allows legal deposit libraries to collect library material if it has been offered free of charge to members of the public. This serves to increase the amount of digital content able to be collected without the need to issue a legal deposit order.

Labor loves local libraries and knows how important it is to preserve knowledge. At the last election Labor committed to doubling the library subsidy that councils receive, from \$1.85 to \$3.70. This would have

delivered a much-needed boost to local libraries as they adapt their services to meet changing community needs. Let us see whether this Government comes to the table and supports local libraries in the upcoming State budget. I commend the work of the Hon. Peter Primrose, who is a member of the Legislative Council, and his team who have worked tirelessly to promote and improve libraries across New South Wales.

The money provided by the Liberal-Nationals Government is not linked to the consumer price index. While Government members bragged about funding announcements in the lead-up to the last election, they failed to say that the Government cut recurrent funding to libraries by 5 per cent in last year's budget. I ask the students in the gallery to thank their school librarians. As a schoolteacher and also as a student, I know how hard our librarians work to give us the knowledge we need. I challenge the students not only to rely on online resources but also to sit down with their librarians, who are trained to provide so much more information and will equip them with so many skills. I see one teacher in the gallery nodding and smiling.

I encourage investment in libraries in order to celebrate Australian authors, many of whom take the risk to step off the edge and live their dream by becoming writers. Last night we celebrated a book written, printed and published by a former member of this House, Barry Collier, about when he was a parliamentarian and campaigning in elections. He sold his book to colleagues. Celebrating local authors is also part of investing in libraries.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: It has got to be a bestseller.

Ms LIESL TESCH: Indeed. Once again, I thank the parliamentary staff for all their work for members. Libraries are houses of knowledge and support. I support the Library Amendment Bill 2009 and emphasise the importance of capturing digital content in perpetuity.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (11:42): The Greens support the Library Amendment Bill 2019. The bill will expand the legal deposit library scheme, which requires copies of all written publications to be kept in New South Wales libraries, to requests for electronic material also. Legal deposit libraries will now be able to use their powers to obtain copies of electronic material in the same way they obtain printed material. We have heard from earlier speakers about the value of local libraries to community members. It is important to note this incredible concept as I do not know whether many members have an appreciation of the legal deposit library scheme, which I think is a wonderful idea.

Many years ago, before I became a member of this place, I was writing a PhD—which, I am sad to say, I failed to finish—on the need for a national theatre archive in Australia. At the time we were not capturing any live performances in any way in a national or a State archive. I explored whether, like the legal deposit library model requires the collection and storage of written publications and now electronic materials, our main stage and performance companies that put on live performances could provide recordings and photographic imagery for deposit in a theatre archive or library of some kind. We would then have a record of the ephemeral live performance space and theatre performances in our State and in our country.

It is worthwhile raising that matter in the context of this debate as the arts Minister has carriage of this bill and there is still no national theatre or performance archive in this country. New York has the Theatre on Film and Tape Archive, and The Netherlands and the United Kingdom have similar models. New South Wales could certainly take a lead in this area, given our creativity and the number of live performances that are staged in this State. New South Wales could lead the way by proposing a national theatre and performance archive to capture that creative work, using a model similar to legal deposit libraries and the legal deposit library scheme.

I will talk briefly about the need to support our libraries properly. While it is wonderful that this legislation will enable our deposit libraries to request electronic material, it is important to realise that our libraries are under-resourced. The Renew Our Libraries campaign, which I am sure many members in this place have been contacted about, highlights the need for increased funding for public libraries in New South Wales. Basically, there is a call to double the funding, index the contribution and enshrine that funding in law to ensure that we do not see the kinds of cuts that occurred in the 2018-19 State budget, when, according to Local Government NSW, there was an 18 per cent decrease in community library funding. That was an outrageous decrease, especially when we are talking about such a tiny amount of money proportional to the State budget.

The budget allocated \$23.5 million to libraries, which was down from \$28.8 million. This had a huge impact on our local community libraries. Members from both sides of the Chamber have talked about the value of local libraries to their communities. Even in the Newtown Library on Brown Street—which is a small local library supported by the City of Sydney—we see an incredible use of space. In Newtown many people live in shared houses and do not have the space for a quiet room in which to study—unless they sit on their bed in their bedroom. The library provides the computers and work spaces they need. Upstairs in the library, there is story time and rhyme time for the younger members of our community, and the connection between the parents with

young children who use the library is incredibly valuable. I have seen the same thing at Stanmore and Surry Hills libraries. It is crucial to recognise and respect the value of our community libraries.

The bill will provide another way to capture electronic publications in our libraries. I note that the Minister for Health and Medical Research is keen for me to talk more about rhyme time and story time. We should also value the people who work in our libraries. My daughter and I go to the library about once a week—I think she knows Abdul at Newtown Library better than she knows most other people on the street. This is because once we forgot our library card and it was very hard to tell a two-year-old that she could not take any library books home. Abdul kindly found a book that they were going to give away because it was no longer of any use and gave it to her to take home. Otherwise I am sure she would have put on a tantrum.

Those who work in community libraries are community-minded people who care about what they do. They help us to connect to other services and support, and share information with people who might not otherwise interact with council services, which is incredibly valuable to the community. I acknowledge this bill. But it is crucial that in passing it we not only make the necessary bureaucratic and legislative changes that we need to help libraries to move into the electronic age but also make sure that we provide the resources to do this. That is why we should absolutely support the Renew Our Libraries campaign, which is pushing for a doubling of government funding for libraries in this State.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (11:48): I acknowledge the presence of school students in the public gallery as we are debating a very important bill, the Library Amendment Bill 2019. I congratulate them on being here and wish them luck with their schooling and beyond. As the member for Canterbury, I am proud of our multicultural community and also proud that its members have access to our local library, the Campsie Library. I often visit the library because it is close to my office. On my visits I see quite spectacular things, such as a children's group, volunteers reading books to preschoolers, or refugees and other new Australians learning English. Elderly members of the community and many parents also visit the library. The library is a wonderful space where we can all come together. I urge the Government to provide additional funding in the upcoming budget for all State libraries. Libraries foster a sense of community because so many activities happen there.

I grew up in a migrant, working-class family and we had the basics of life. Books were not an essential; they were an extra. For my brother and I, going to the local library was vital. I still remember the beautiful books that I borrowed and knowing I was able to return them and borrow more. My parents had a limited income and could not afford to buy many things, yet I recall they purchased a set of encyclopaedias. Back then there was no internet and we did not have a lot in terms of technology. I remember my parents had to pay off the encyclopaedia set, and it took them months. Every time the travelling salesperson came to our house my mum would pay him \$5. Having our beautiful set of encyclopaedias was so special for us—we still have it. What was even more special was being able to borrow books from the library because it opened up our world. My parents were Greek and could not speak English well—particularly my mum—which made it difficult at times. Because I had to learn Greek, I borrowed Greek books from the library. My dad, an avid reader, would also borrow books—we were both learning at the same time.

The bill has many objects, one of which is identifying legal deposit libraries and specifying additional functions of those libraries. It will also authorise the head librarian of a legal deposit library to direct the publisher of library material to deliver a copy to the library or to make the material available for copying. I add my voice to debate on this bill because I know that libraries have changed and modernised. Recently I visited the State Library of New South Wales to launch the Greek Australian Archive, which is a program run in collaboration with the University of New South Wales and key Greek community representatives and leaders. The program will enable the families of Greek migrants who came to Australia in 1950 and 1960s to contribute to the archive and help our children and future generations understand the history of modern Australia from a Greek perspective.

I thank Walt Secord, shadow Minister for the Arts, and Peter Primrose, shadow Minister for Local Government and Communities, for their fantastic work on behalf of the people of New South Wales in pursuing additional funding for libraries. I urge the Government to provide more library funding. I thank the magnificent staff of all libraries across the State. Libraries are special and important places for people across New South Wales, especially for the regions and multicultural communities. They are places where people of all generations can find sanctuary and they provide areas for learning and sharing.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I welcome students attending the New South Wales Secondary School Leadership Program conducted by the Parliamentary Education Unit. The students have left the public gallery, but we thank them for attending.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (11:56): I support the Library Amendment Bill 2019. The Parliamentary Library is one of three libraries—along with the State Library of New South Wales and the University of Sydney library—that are legal deposit libraries in New South Wales. They collect material that

archive the history of our great State. The Copyright Act 1879 currently requires a copy of all books published in New South Wales to be deposited by publishers in the State Library. This includes newspapers, pamphlets, sheet music, maps, charts, and plans. However, over the past few years there has been a significant shift to digital mediums, whether that is in the form of podcasts, ebooks, blogs or the many other different types of electronic media. It is obvious that our publication landscape has changed, and will continue to change in our lifetimes.

The Copyright Act 1879 requires publishers of books and printed materials to submit copies to the legal deposit libraries. This means that publishers of electronic publications in New South Wales are under no legal obligation to deposit their material in the legal deposit libraries. Furthermore, the legal deposit libraries have no legal authority to compel publishers to provide content to the libraries. As a greater proportion of publications is now moving to a digital medium, the collection of the legal deposit libraries is no longer complete. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 will amend the Library Act 1939 to enable the New South Wales legal deposit libraries to identify and collect any material that their head librarians consider relevant, including electronic material. All printed materials and books that would ordinarily be deposited under the Copyright Act 1879 will still be required to be deposited through savings and transitional arrangements in the bill.

The Library Amendment Bill 2019 will also bring New South Wales into line with the national legislation for the legal deposit of electronic publications, and into line with other States and Territories. Fulfilling our commitment to reducing red tape, the Copyright Act 1879 will be repealed as it is an archaic Act that will have no further application. Our State public libraries provide an important service to our society. They fulfil educational as well as social and cultural roles. Just as a book can take you to another world, my favourite way of escaping in recent years has been podcasting. I have learnt more about history—from topics as varied as the First World War to Genghis Khan—from Dan Carlin's *Hardcore History* podcast than I ever did in any classroom. It is important to keep material such as this—and not just printed books—in our public libraries. To quote American poet Maya Angelou:

Information helps you to see that you're not alone. That there's somebody in Mississippi and somebody in Tokyo who all have wept, who've all longed and lost, who've all been happy. So the library helps you to see, not only that you are not alone, but that you're not really any different from everyone else.

Modern libraries are meeting places. They are places where people can connect with each other and with the wider world. Libraries often run classes, such as computer classes and technology classes, that build and strengthen our societal connections. There are 370 public libraries in New South Wales. It is a shame that the visiting students have left the Chamber because I would have liked them to know about our Government's record \$60 million injection—announced in August last year—which is the biggest cash injection in history. Over the coming years, libraries across the State will benefit from the Government's increased support.

The Government will lift the per capita funding by 54 per cent and every State library will benefit from this—even our own Coffs Harbour libraries, including the Harry Bailey Memorial Library in Duke Street, Coffs Harbour. The promise of the digital age is to make information more available. Unfortunately, I am old enough to remember when the internet was referred to as the information superhighway. The Library Amendment Bill 2019 will assist the legal deposit libraries to keep their collections in line with changing trends and technologies. The bill will ensure that all published material in New South Wales that the legal deposit libraries consider to be relevant will be accessible and archived for future generations. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (11:59): On behalf of Ms Gladys Berejiklian: In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Port Stephens, Albury, Maitland, North Sydney, Coogee, Oatley, Holsworthy, Cootamundra, Gosford, Newtown, Canterbury and Coffs Harbour for contributing to debate on this bill. As this House has discussed, our State's libraries play a vital role in our community through providing services, and education and cultural experiences to communities across New South Wales. The bill will modernise and strengthen the legal deposit scheme in New South Wales, which will ensure that our State's legal deposit libraries can continue to carry out their important function of collecting and maintaining our State's documentary heritage. The Library Amendment Bill will bring legal deposit in New South Wales into the twenty-first century, and into alignment with the national deposit scheme and legal deposit in other States and Territories.

I note that throughout the debate members opposite raised concerns about resourcing of libraries. The bill will have a negligible impact on the resourcing demands of the legal deposit libraries. The bill is structured to enable the head librarian or the delegate to determine what material is relevant for the collection of the library, which includes both print and electronic materials, and will enable each library to determine for itself within its existing resources what material should be collected. In addition, a coordinated approach between the State Library of New South Wales and the national deposit scheme—a collaboration between Australia's nine national, State and Territory libraries—will ease any burden placed on publishers and the legal deposit libraries. Much of the electronic material that will be collected is also freely available.

The Government is proud of the record \$60 million investment in our State public libraries, the biggest single cash injection in the history of New South Wales public libraries. The investment will benefit every one of the State's more than 370 public libraries in every electorate. Even in the regional electorate of Bega, it is making a real difference. Appropriately, resourcing to libraries provided by this Government will ensure that library collections, including the legal deposit collections, can be made available on an equitable basis. There is no doubt that the concerns raised by members opposite about funding are unwarranted and, in the context of this legislation, more political than based on the reality of what is happening across the State. On that basis it is pleasing to see this bill passed appropriately in this House, rather than taking three weeks to pass. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: On behalf of Ms Gladys Berejiklian: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2019

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

Governor

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Debate resumed from 30 May 2019.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (12:03): I continue my contribution to the debate on the address-in-reply to the Governor's speech and I pick up where I left off—this Government's refusal to implement the recommendations of David Tune's report into out-of-home care or the recommendations of the 2017 parliamentary inquiry into child protection. The David Tune report took Legislative Council intervention to be made public, but even then the Government refused to act. Instead, the portfolio of Family and Community Services has been demoted in the portfolio listings to the second most junior portfolio. When families and children are given so little focus by this Government it is clear where its priorities lie: They are neither with rural and regional New South Wales nor with the families and children who live there.

I have only a short time left, but I also note the decline in the availability of social housing, with waitlists now over 10 years in many areas. That does not point to a fresh approach; it points to a lack of concern for the most vulnerable in our State and an indifference to making the necessary investments in our communities to ensure that they are safe, healthy and productive and are living dignified lives. As we head into this new term of Parliament, I urge the Government to represent all of New South Wales, not just those areas where it sees political gain to be made.

The Hunter is the economic powerhouse of New South Wales. We deserve our fair share. I look forward to working with the Government to achieve greater economic fortune for everyone across New South Wales, especially in the Hunter. A good place to start would be removing the constraints on the creation of the container terminal at the Port of Newcastle. It will unlock economic opportunity across the Hunter and this great State. The Government has set itself five agenda items. Members on this side of the Chamber, including me, will be sure to hold them to account.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (12:09): When the Governor delivered her speech in the first session of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, Her Excellency spoke of the Government's plan for New South Wales and how it builds on "the vision, hard work and determination demonstrated during the Fifty-Fifth and Fifty-Sixth terms of Parliament." While I thank the Governor for her kind words, Government members are well aware that, despite eight years of great progress and accomplishment, there is much to do during this term to ensure that we continue to improve the lives of everyone in New South Wales.

As the member for Ku-ring-gai I acknowledge that I have the good fortune to represent, and live in, one of the most beautiful areas of the State, with heritage streetscapes, bushland surrounds, plentiful parklands and wide open spaces. It is nonetheless true that the residents of Ku-ring-gai demand, and are entitled to expect, that the Government will work as hard for them as it does for those who live in other parts of the State, and that it will

address the problems that they face with the same zeal and commitment that it demonstrates elsewhere. In that regard, the achievements of the past four years in Ku-ring-gai have, no doubt, filled my constituents with every confidence that the Government will continue to represent their interests and that the future for New South Wales is very bright indeed.

In 2020 we will see the completion of the \$3 billion NorthConnex project, the nine-kilometre twin tunnels that will link the M1 Pacific Motorway at Wahroonga in my electorate to the Hills M2 motorway at West Pennant Hills, enabling motorists and around 5,000 heavy vehicles per day to bypass 21 sets of traffic lights along Pennant Hills Road, and providing more reliable and safer travel conditions while also returning streets to local communities. The project will also help reduce traffic noise on Pennant Hills Road for nearby residents. It is truly a transformative project, which will ease congestion and boost the State and national economies by providing more reliable journeys and shorter travel times for the movement of freight. At the same time, the Government has completed new and extended clearways on the Pacific Highway between Pennant Hills Road, Wahroonga, and Mona Vale Road, Pymble, as part of its \$121 million Clearways Program, which aims to reduce congestion and delays on Sydney's roads.

The Government is also progressing plans for proposed improvements to the Pacific Highway as part of its \$300 million Urban Roads Pinch Point Program, which also has the objective of reducing congestion and improving travel times on Sydney's busiest corridors. The proposal is to widen the road to provide three continuous northbound lanes and maintain three continuous southbound lanes at a number of key intersections between Turramurra and Wahroonga. That would not only provide significant benefits for the 60,000 motorists who use the Pacific Highway every day, but also improve pedestrian safety by installing pedestrian refuges. In respect of transport, last year the Government spent \$800 million to upgrade the capacity of the T1 North Shore Line, which has resulted in an increase in the number of train services and provided better options for commuters.

In doing so, local public transport users were necessarily required to suffer some short-term pain, such as line closures, which are unavoidably inconvenient and inevitably require commuters to catch buses—which have less capacity and are subject to the road delays. Some users had to change their travel arrangements altogether. However, the work has resulted in services that are both more frequent and less full, particularly in the morning peak hours, and it has enabled passengers to transfer more regularly and efficiently from trains on the spectacular new Sydney Metro Northwest line to trains on the T1 North Shore line at Chatswood Station. In addition, planning is currently underway for accessibility upgrades to five railways stations in the Ku-ring-gai electorate: Wahroonga, Waitara, Pymble and Warrawee on the T1 North Shore Line and Normanhurst on the T9 Northern Line.

Through its Transport Access Program the Government has made a commitment to making public transport more modern, safe, integrated and accessible for those with a disability, those who are less mobile and those using a pram or carrying luggage. Under the Transport Access Program transport interchange facilities and a new 214-space commuter car park with five accessible parking spaces were delivered at Gordon only a few months after I was first elected to Parliament in 2015. At the time that \$23.3 million piece of transport infrastructure was one of the most significant expenditures on public transport in Ku-ring-gai since the railway line was extended to Gordon in the 1890s. It brought new bus stands, a bus drivers' amenities room, taxi zones, weather-protected waiting areas, improved signage, accessible pathways, a new pedestrian crossing, lift and stair access, improved lighting and CCTV cameras that have since made it easier for the disabled, the elderly, and parents with prams to catch public transport.

That same car park now hosts a trial of Opal Park and Ride, a program designed to provide more spaces at commuter car parks for customers who wish to travel on public transport—regardless of when they enter the car park. It provides those customers with up to 18 hours free parking when they tap on and tap off public transport with their Opal card, and it addresses the issue of as many as 46 per cent of commuter car parking spaces being used by people who do not then use public transport. The Opal Park and Ride trial will be expanded to other Ku-ring-gai commuter car parks in the future. It is a great example of the use of cutting-edge technology by the Government to improve the overall public transport experience.

In the case of Wahroonga Station's upgrade, the planning is well advanced: Community consultation with the local community took place late last year, the invitation to tender closed in February and the contract for the construction of a new lift, upgraded access pathways and ramps, a new accessible toilet, new kiss and ride zone, new accessible parking and improvements to CCTV and lighting to increase safety and security is expected to be awarded next month. For several years, residents of Waitara have been part of a strong campaign to secure lift access to Waitara Station, so they welcomed the Government's announcement in January that Waitara Station was earmarked for an upgrade.

The decision to proceed with all five stations is an outstanding outcome for Ku-ring-gai commuters and their quality of life. Those commuters will no doubt also benefit from the Government's announcement in March

that it will lower the Opal weekly travel cap from 1 July 2019 by about 20 per cent to \$50 for all train, bus, ferry and light rail customers. Thousands of people will save up to \$686 a year in addition to enjoying the other Opal benefits, namely the weekly travel reward, the Opal transfer discount, the \$2.50 gold Opal cap and the \$2.70 Sunday cap. They will also be able to travel on a new Waratah Series 2 train, featuring air conditioning with temperature control, high-definition customer information screens, internal and external CCTV cameras, customer help points, priority seating, wheelchair spaces and hearing loops for people with hearing aids. This year 24 of these trains will be introduced to the suburban network and another 17 will be deployed in 2020, making the network more reliable and more comfortable than ever before.

In 2015 stage one of the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital redevelopment was announced. The Government has delivered a \$121 million investment in clinical and support services facilities. In July 2018 the member for Hornsby and Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean, and I helped mark the commencement of stage two by turning the sod. Stage two will deliver a refurbished and expanded emergency department and a new clinical services building. The latter will house the intensive care and high dependency units, combined respiratory/cardiac and coronary care beds, a cardiac investigations unit, medical imaging and paediatrics. Stage two will cost about \$200 million. Minister Kean and I returned to the hospital in December last year to open a \$19.8 million multistorey car park that offers over 500 spaces for staff, visitors and the public.

The redevelopment of the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital together with the opening of the new Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest in 2018 are just two of the more than 100 new or upgraded hospitals that have been built in New South Wales in the past eight years or that are to be built with an \$8 billion investment of funds over four years. These new hospitals will ensure that our local health professionals have the best possible clinical equipment and emergency facilities to treat our community and train future health professionals. They will be complemented by a \$2.8 million investment that is anticipated to yield the following in the Northern Sydney Local Health District alone: 408 new nurses and midwives, including mental health and residential care nurses; 101 more doctors; 84 additional allied health staff, including pharmacists, social workers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and psychologists; and 96 more hospital support staff.

I have spoken a number of times in this House about how fortunate the electorate of Ku-ring-gai is to be a centre of outstanding public, Catholic and independent school education in New South Wales. As in other parts of the State, demand for places at our public schools has grown exponentially in recent years, but the growth has been matched by the Government's record funding for all three sectors. In 2018 Killara Public School underwent a \$6 million upgrade. This includes a new two-storey block with eight permanent future-focused learning spaces, and makes Killara Public School perfectly placed to meet the needs of many generations of local students. I note that the member for Pittwater is at the table. He accompanied me to the opening of that new school building. The upgrade also includes new amenities for students and a brand-new multipurpose sports court. As part of the project, seven existing demountable classrooms have been removed to make way for a new permanent school building and playground space.

Waitara Public School has received planning approval for a major redevelopment project that will include 37 new classrooms, a new hall, a canteen and an administrative area. It will enable the school to accommodate up to 1,000 students and meet the substantially increased enrolment demand in the local area. The Ku-ring-gai High School in North Turramurra business case has been approved, and a development application has been submitted for a new multipurpose hall and the refurbishment of 15 of the school's existing teaching spaces. When complete, the new hall will have an 800-seat capacity and will cater for a range of activities from sport and cultural events to school assemblies and performances, providing a valuable new asset for the school community. This is especially appropriate, given that Ku-ring-gai High School is a performing arts school.

More than 170 new and upgraded schools are being delivered as part of the Government's record \$6 billion investment in school infrastructure and—for the first time in the State's history—the school maintenance backlog will be wiped to zero by July 2020, ensuring students at over 2,200 public schools enjoy the best possible learning environments. Clearing this backlog is no mean achievement. Under the former Labor Government the backlog amounted to \$1 billion and a number of schools were falling embarrassingly into disrepair, including in my electorate of Ku-ring-gai. As at 30 June 2018 the maintenance backlog was \$4.3 million and the Government's investment of a further \$449 million will bring its total investment to nearly \$1.3 billion. In Ku-ring-gai 11 public schools and 4 high schools will benefit from the additional maintenance works, which will accelerate overdue work such as carpeting, roof repairs and painting.

The Government's commitment to delivering more useable and inclusive play spaces for the people of New South Wales has also been felt in Ku-ring-gai. The Government has contributed \$600,000 towards the planning, design and construction of an inclusive play space in Waitara Park, which was opened in April this year by the Mayor of Hornsby, the Hon. Philip Ruddock. I was very happy to accompany Mayor Ruddock at that opening. The play space includes two separate fenced playgrounds, exercise equipment, barbecue facilities, park

furniture and landscaping with new plants and trees. Most importantly, it will provide health and social benefits for the community, the value of which cannot be overestimated. I note that it was a well-attended opening, with a very enthusiastic community experiencing that new playground.

It is perhaps easier to put a number on the savings that families have enjoyed through the measures that the Government has introduced to help ease the cost of living. Ku-ring-gai residents are enthusiastic supporters of cheaper green slips as well as the \$100 Active Kids voucher and the Creative Kids vouchers, which have made sporting, recreational and artistic activities much more accessible. The news that a second Active Kids voucher will be available for the July to December period this year and that two Active Kids vouchers will be available for the entire 2020 calendar year has been met with universal approval.

If a family has three children who participate in two sports and a creative kids activity, that represents a saving of \$900 to that family, which is a great contribution towards the children's extracurricular activities. Prior to the election of the Coalition Government in 2011, the New South Wales Labor Government had operated a socio-economic model for the allocation of Community Building Partnership grants, pursuant to which Ku-ring-gai's allocation was only \$200,000 instead of the \$300,000 enjoyed by other electorates. That model was still in existence when I was elected as the member for Ku-ring-gai in 2015. [*Extension of time*]

Due to the Coalition Government's expert management of its budgets, over the past four years the Community Building Partnership allocation first increased to \$300,000 for all electorates and then last year it increased again to \$330,000. The schools, sports clubs and community groups that have benefited from those grants since 2015 are as follows: Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School received an expansion of its community kitchen; St Stephen's Anglican Church, Normanhurst, received a pre-school kitchenette and outside sinks and bubblers; West Pymble Public School received an outdoor learning environment; Hornsby Shire Historical Society received air conditioning, a wireless system and repairs to its heritage building; 1st East Wahroonga Scouts received a kitchen upgrade; and Easy Care Gardening received a fit-out of its new office premises.

As well, Ku-ring-gai Netball Association received a clubhouse upgrade; St Lucy's School received an improvement to its classroom acoustics; KU Wahroonga Pre-School received internal painting; Gordon West Public School received play equipment; Turramurra North Public School received a hall upgrade; Ku-ring-gai Meals on Wheels received a refrigeration upgrade; Ku-ring-gai Cubs Rugby League Club received a storage room upgrade; Turramurra Baptist Church received an infants' playground; Pymble Public School received a playground upgrade; West Pymble Football Club received team shelters and full-size goals; North Turramurra Guides received repairs to the deck floor and railing of its hall; Ku-ring-gai High School received an upgrade of the kitchen facilities in its hall; and St Matthew's Anglican Church West Pymble received a community playground.

Further, Life Education received a grant for the installation of a hydraulic wheelchair lift; Ku-ring-gai Hockey Centre received a grant to purchase an electronic scoreboard; Seventh Day Adventist Aged Care Wahroonga Estate received an off-leash dog park; Normanhurst Public School received a grant towards its infants' inclusive playground; Hornsby Girls' High School received a grant to install hybrid tennis, futsal courts and LED lights; Turramurra Bowling Club received a rejuvenated clubhouse exterior and community information board; Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra received a digital harpsichord; Beaumont Road Public School received shade over its playground asphalt; South Turramurra Girl Guides received trailers and a renovation of its storage area; Sunnyfield West Pymble received a covered outdoor area at a shared home, which I inspected recently; and St Andrew's Anglican Church Wahroonga received hearing loop repairs and a church hall roof replacement.

Also, 2nd Turramurra Scouts received a bathroom refurbishment; Gordon Golf Club received a renovation and repair of its function room; 1st Pymble Scouts received driveway and pathway upgrades; St Paul's Wahroonga received acoustics treatment to its memorial hall; Wahroonga Public School received an amphitheatre upgrade; the Girl Guides NSW Glengarry received a toilet block; 2HHH FM received new broadcast and studio equipment; Hornsby Ku-ring-gai PCYC received double glazing of its windows; Kissing Point Sports Club received a baseball and softball batting cage; Ku-ring-gai Amateur Swimming Club received an upgrade of its starting and diving blocks and backstroke ledges; Wahroonga Presbyterian Church received a refurbishment of the church and its toilet block; Killara Public School received a playground refurbishment; and Wahroonga Rugby Club received a grant for an electronic scoreboard. All those grants have been delivered in the past four years because this Government has its budget under control and is providing necessary infrastructure to local communities to make all of our citizens better off, not just a few.

The Governor noted that the Government's agenda is "to make a real and lasting difference for the people of New South Wales". The clear evidence in Ku-ring-gai is that it already has and that it is constantly looking for ways to do more. I look forward to four more years of growth, prosperity and success for New South Wales under this Government. The Government has delivered massive infrastructure projects for the people of New South

Wales. All levels of the community have received outstanding infrastructure, which is in stark contrast to the 16 years of the former Labor Government when it was never able to get its finances in order. The hard labour of those 16 years is still clear in the memories of the people of New South Wales. We will never forget how our public schools—one of which I was very fortunate to attend—had a \$1 billion backlog because of the inappropriate management of the budget by the former Labor Government.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:25): In supporting the motion, which acknowledges the commencement of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, I begin by thanking the people of The Entrance electorate. It is an honour to have been selected out of six candidates to represent their interests in this place. I will do all I can to further their interests, and to make the Central Coast a better and fairer place for them and their families. I also acknowledge and congratulate all the members elected to this place and wish them all the very best in their endeavours. The Governor's speech outlined the Government's program. At the beginning of her speech the Governor used words to the effect of "I am advised". That is a helpful reminder that the Governor in this State acts on the advice of the Government, that the Government is formed by the party or parties that hold the majority of seats in this place and that the Government is responsible to this place for its actions.

In its seats this Government has been marked down by the people of New South Wales. My party, the Australian Labor Party, was able to achieve an increase in the number of seats we hold in this House and to become the largest single party in this place. I welcome to the Chamber my colleagues the member for Coogee and the member for Lismore. The Liberal Party holds 35 seats. The Liberal Party, in coalition government with The Nationals, lost a bunch of seats and holds 13 seats in this place, with the crossbench holding nine seats in balance. This is not a Government in a strong position and it should act accordingly. That position is reflected on the Central Coast, which has five seats—the Government holds only one of them. The other seats are held by my colleagues and me.

I acknowledge my colleagues the member for Swansea, the member for Wyong and the member for Gosford. I enjoyed working with them in the last Parliament and I am looking forward to working with them in this Parliament. We have worked well together and we have been able to achieve much for the Central Coast from Opposition. One of the many things we were able to achieve together was working with Mingara Athletics Club to ensure that its athletics track was resurfaced. The track was due for renewal, but the club did not have enough money to do it. My colleagues agreed to pool Community Building Partnership money and they were able to contribute just under \$200,000 to Mingara Athletics Club towards that project. As a result of the interest we received for the renewal of the athletics track it was great to see the Government jump on board as well, and I acknowledge the work of the member for Terrigal in that regard.

The Government jumped in as well and put in some money to make sure that the upgrade to the track was fully funded. It was a great outcome for the community. It is really pleasing to me, because the track is in my electorate, to know that all schools on the Central Coast, most of which use the athletics track for their annual athletics carnival, can now go to a track that has a new surface of international standard. It is really a great outcome for the Central Coast. We have been able to achieve a lot in Opposition. I acknowledge the Central Coast Council that works closely with State members of Parliament, the councillors and the council staff, in particular, who cooperate with State members in the interests of the Central Coast.

In terms of election promises, the Governor's speech outlines the Government's program. During the election campaign a number of promises were made on the Central Coast. A bipartisan commitment was made to provide lifts at all four railway stations in my electorate—Ourimbah, Lisarow, Niagara Park and Narara—as well as Tuggerah railway station, which is a major railway station used by my constituents just outside my electorate. I acknowledge my community for getting behind my campaign for those upgrades. It is good to see the Minister for Transport and Roads back because if there was any Government member who increased my vote on the Central Coast, it was him. So I welcome him back.

The Minister finally came to the Central Coast to match our commitment for lifts at Tuggerah station. I do not think that would have occurred without the strong support that the community gave me in my campaign for the Tuggerah station lifts and I acknowledge all of my community for that. Now that we have got the promise, we are going to make sure that they get built sooner rather than later. The Minister can look forward to continuing to receive representations from myself and my community. They all love writing to him because they love his replies, which reflect his particular arrogance, and that is good for me at the end of the day. We will keep working until those lifts are built.

A bipartisan commitment was also made to continue upgrading the Pacific Highway through Lisarow from Ourimbah. I will continue to work with the community there to make sure that the upgrade is delivered in the best interests of the community. When the design was first put out for public exhibition, I noted to the Minister for Transport and Roads that it would take away the informal parking used by my community along the existing Old Pacific Highway alignment. I was told that the railway station would lose no parking as a result of that

upgrade, but I kept on the case. The Government finally acknowledged that the widening of the Pacific Highway at Lisarow would take away the informal parking that my community uses at the moment, which was not allowed for in the design. I am waiting now for a commitment from the Government that it will at least make sure that the existing capacity of parking at Lisarow station is maintained as part of this upgrade. We will not rest until we are assured that things will be at least as good as they are now. We expect better in this upgrade, but we will not accept a loss of parking at Lisarow station.

Both sides also committed to do more to improve the health of Tuggerah Lakes. The Government committed to setting up a committee to look at that, and I welcome that. Labor committed \$5 million. Of course, not being in government, we cannot deliver that, but I note that during the Federal campaign a bipartisan commitment of, I think, \$4.7 million was made to the health of Tuggerah Lakes. I look forward to working with all members on the Central Coast to improve the health of that estuary. In reply to the Governor's Speech, the Government committed to do more to address youth homelessness. It is right that it should. Homelessness has increased across the State and the country, and on the Central Coast. Between 2011 and 2016 homelessness increased on the Central Coast by 35 per cent, which is unacceptable. We have all the tools at hand in this place to do what is required to ensure that we can eradicate homelessness from this State. I will continue to work in this House and in the community to end homelessness and to do more to make housing more affordable and more secure for the people of the Central Coast and of New South Wales.

I turn now to the election campaign. I thank those who worked in support of my election. First, I thank my staff. I have had a fantastic electoral office staff over the past four years. The quality of our interactions with our constituents and what we have been able to do in assisting our constituents helps immeasurably in determining whether you are held in high regard by your community or not. All my staff are committed to making government work for our community. I want to mention them by name. My senior electoral officer is Catherine Wall. Peter Duggan was on my staff originally; now he has gone to the Australian Labor Party's head office. Marc Pooley began on my staff in the last Parliament; he has now gone back to university. Their places have been taken by Alfat Karnib and Dani Atherdon. Peyton Roberts-Garnsey is also on my staff. She took leave to coordinate my campaign. Peyton is a young woman who did a remarkable job organising the volunteers and the campaign structure, which was a great success. I thank Peyton, in particular. Unions supported me immeasurably.

I thank my union, the National Union of Workers, and Branch Secretary Martin Cartwright. I acknowledge also the work done by the nurses during the election campaign. They manned the early voting station every day during the two weeks of early voting. They argued their case to the best of their ability and I think their contribution assisted in the result we were able to achieve on the Central Coast. I thank the branches of the Australian Labor Party in my electorate: the Ourimbah-Narara Valley branch, the Tumby Umbi branch and The Entrance Bateau Bay branch. I thank their executives and all their members for their ongoing support and commitment to the Labor Party.

I acknowledge the people who worked on early voting—that two-week period was a grind. I was supported by a whole bunch of people who really did help ensure our vote was as good as it could be: Joshua Roberts; Dani Atherdon; Anne Sullivan; Kaleob Vickers; John Hawkins; Vicki Scott; Pam Gee; Allan Benson; Stephen McKee; Peyton Roberts-Garnsey; Jake Allen; my mum who helped a whole bunch; Margot Castles; Hannah Mercer; Ericha O'Reilly; Kevin Brennan; Stephen McKee; Michael Lee, the former Federal member for Dobell; Emma McBride, the current Federal member for Dobell, who was there almost every day; Lisa and John Fione; and Margaret Clifford. I thank them all. It was a bit of a slog, but it was well worth it at the end of the day.

I welcome the Governor to her new role. I also welcome her partner. I hope the Governor enjoys her position. I wish her all the very best. I repeat my commitment to work in the best interests of my constituency in the principles of social democracy and socialism which underlie my view of the world. I will do all I can to advance the interests of my community and make the Central Coast a better and fairer place for everybody.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (12:38): One of the highlights of my return to the Fifty-Seventh Parliament of New South Wales was its opening by the State's new Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley, AO, QC. As the Governor said at the opening, this Government put an agenda to the people of New South Wales upon which it was elected—namely, to deliver a strong economy, quality jobs and job security for workers of today and tomorrow; provide the highest quality education no matter where a person lives or what their circumstances may be; create well-connected communities and quality local environments; have government work better for the community by putting the customer at the centre of everything it does; and break the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage by fixing problems that have been in the too-hard basket for too long. The people of Heathcote have witnessed the results of this strong agenda in all areas.

The Government remains focused on ensuring that we have a strong economy to create new jobs, to build the infrastructure the community needs to make their lives easier and to continue to improve frontline services by employing more nurses, teachers and police. Because the Government has built a strong economy, we are creating

local jobs and supporting local small business; investing in important local community projects such as upgrading sporting and school facilities; building new roads and train lines to modernise the Sydney train network, which will allow for more services to reduce congestion; upgrading major roads and highways, including investing in pinch point projects; improving services, with more nurses and teachers, as well as new and upgraded facilities for local hospitals and schools; and helping families and those in need with cost-of-living pressures. The Government is leading a powerful transition towards a truly customer-centred public service—one designed to meet the needs of the people of New South Wales.

In 2013 the Government introduced Service NSW as a one-stop shop for vital services. The Government is committed to addressing the pressures of the cost of living faced by families. It has introduced more than 40 rebates and incentives, including the compulsory third party green slip refund, Toll Relief, the Active Kids program, the Creative Kids program and the Cost of Living Service. Service NSW continues to expand its footprint. In February this year 10 new service centres were announced, and four one-stop buses will be on the road for 46 weeks a year to service the 14 local government areas where Service NSW has no existing physical presence. My electorate of Engadine will host a new centre. That will add to the success of the Service NSW centre at Miranda, which opened in 2016. Recently the mobile service centre visited Helensburgh in my electorate and it was a great success. The Government will also invest more in schools to give all children in New South Wales the best start in life. High-quality education will be provided no matter where one lives or what one's circumstances may be.

I am pleased to announce that this Government is making the largest investment into public school infrastructure of any government in Australian history. We inherited a \$1 billion maintenance backlog liability from the previous Labor Government and we have worked hard to reduce it. In January it was announced—in my electorate—that the maintenance backlog at every school in New South Wales will be wiped out by July 2020. That unprecedented announcement will benefit every school in the State. New multipurpose school halls at Engadine High School and Stanwell Park Public School were announced in early March. The first round of funding from the \$500 million Cooler Classrooms program will benefit Engadine West Public School and Bundeena Public School. Over the next four years this Government will invest a record \$6 billion through our school building program to deliver more than 170 new or upgraded schools. I look forward to local schools benefitting from the additional 4,600 teachers announced early this year. That will bring the total number of full-time positions to nearly 11,000 new teachers since the Government was elected. This Government's investment in education highlights its commitment to ensuring that students experience the best possible learning environment.

We are also committed to fixing our roads and transport network to ease congestion and make it quicker for people to get to work and home again. The T4 Illawarra Line will be one of the first beneficiaries. It will receive \$880 million to deliver a state-of-the-art digital signal system under the More Trains, More Services program. In February new carriages and extra seats were announced for the South Coast Line and upgrades were completed at every train station in my electorate. Last year the first sod was turned for the \$173 million Heathcote Road upgrade. Shortly initial investigation work and community consultation for the bridge upgrade will be undertaken. Work has also been completed at the Heathcote Road intersections.

Stage one of the F6 extension is fully funded. For years this was neglected by the previous Government and many thought the project would never see the light of day. I am pleased that my Government has made this project a priority and is delivering for the people of Heathcote. The \$300 million Gateway to the South Pinch Point program is delivering projects across the shire, which will ease congestion and improve travel times and reliability. A number of projects have been completed and further projects are currently underway or scheduled to commence, including projects along the Princes Highway, Heathcote Road, New Illawarra Road and Alford's Point. The \$40 million Linden Street Intersection upgrade has been announced. We have delivered commuter carparks at Sutherland and Engadine train stations and recently announced an additional 210 commuter car spaces at Engadine train station.

Projects in New South Wales build on our passion for innovation. Our emerging strengths in areas such as financial and medical technology, research and development, robotics and information technology will help to secure our place as global leaders in the industries of the future. The Government has committed \$12.5 million towards a new nuclear medicine and technology precinct at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation [ANSTO] site. This announcement will accelerate medical and technological breakthroughs and generate 5,000 new jobs. The funding will be used to create a new world-class precinct for business, scientists and start-ups at the ANSTO site.

The ANSTO site is a world-leading nuclear research facility that is using groundbreaking technology to develop particle therapy, create new medical treatments for inoperable cancers and monitor the progression of diseases. The centrepiece of ANSTO's work is the Open Pool Australian Lightwater reactor, which is one of only

six nuclear reactors in the world that can produce commercial quantities of radioisotopes. The \$12.5 million in funding, which will be delivered over the next four years to create incubators for nuclear medicine and technology businesses, will give start-ups access to cutting-edge technology and some of the best science in Australia. It will help to establish a graduate institute, including 25 new scholarships for PhD students, and drive collaboration between start-ups, researchers and industry to grow advanced technology businesses in New South Wales.

A mainstay of our economy and education program for decades has been TAFE and the broader vocational education sector. It is one of my favourite subjects. It has provided high-quality training for many of the roles that our economy and community depend on. It now partners with schools to prepare high school students to transition seamlessly into the workforce. It supports people throughout their lives to get their first jobs or to retrain for a whole new career. The Government will continue to support this vital institution to provide the highest quality technical and further education, including building eight new campuses in rural and regional locations and delivering 100,000 free TAFE courses over the next four years. The Government is investing \$1.77 billion in TAFE to boost vocational education and training to deliver the skilled workforce of the future. This significant expenditure demonstrates the Government's commitment to the continued reform of TAFE. This investment in TAFE NSW is on top of the \$285 million announced in 2018 budget, which included 100,000 free apprenticeships.

My local TAFE, Loftus TAFE, has provided great opportunities for my constituents. Engadine TAFE student Victoria Padman was awarded with a silver medal in front of hundreds of her peers from across the country at the WorldSkills Australia 2018 National Championships closing ceremony in Sydney. Victoria Padman took out the prestigious award after competing in the beauty therapy category of Australia's largest skills competition, which was hosted at the International Convention Centre. Victoria Padman said, "It's a huge honour to have participated in the WorldSkills Australia 2018 National Championships. I hope this opportunity will allow me to showcase how vocational training can lead to successful employment and career opportunities. I hope the whole country gets behind Team Australia for WorldSkills 2019 like they do our sporting teams".

TAFE NSW students are in high demand because of the quality of their education and ability to hit the ground running with relevant and practical skills. I am thrilled to see local students from the public vocational education and training [VET] provider receive these accolades. The New South Wales Government is delivering on its vision for a strong and publicly owned VET provider through its One TAFE NSW reforms. TAFE NSW students winning these awards demonstrate what is on offer for students if they choose a VET-based education. I look forward to seeing even more TAFE NSW students recognised for their achievements in the future.

The people of New South Wales have one of the most reliable and accessible health systems in the world. Our doctors, nurses and other health professionals are the beating hearts and, of course, the brains behind our world-class health system. The Government is making sure that they have the health infrastructure they need to do their vital jobs by investing in upgrading and redeveloping hospitals and health facilities across our State. The New South Wales Government will invest \$81.5 million to deliver eight new operating theatres at Sutherland Hospital. This \$81.5 million investment will make a huge difference for patients in the Sutherland Shire, who will be able to have their surgery sooner and closer to home.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has a strong track record when it comes to delivering health infrastructure, having already built or upgraded more than 100 hospitals and other health facilities across the State. Having eight new state-of-the-art operating theatres and two new endoscopy suites will make a huge difference to patient care. This investment will greatly increase capacity for surgical treatment at Sutherland Hospital and create more than 800 jobs during construction. In addition to the infrastructure, the New South Wales Government is delivering more nurses, midwives and doctors. Over the next four years our local health district will also receive at least 773 new staff, including 116 doctors, 502 nurses and midwives, 96 allied health staff and 117 hospital support workers. The new investment comes on top of \$72 million already provided by the New South Wales Government to the Sutherland Hospital since 2014. [*Extension of time*]

The results of that investment are there to see, with just about every patient having their elective surgery on time—99.6 per cent compared with just 88.6 per cent under Labor. The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has recently completed the \$62.9 million Sutherland Hospital redevelopment, which included a new emergency department, additional inpatient beds and support spaces. Together with \$9.1 million previously spent on the new car park, this new investment brings the total commitment at Sutherland Hospital to \$153.5 million since 2014. Work on the eight new operating theatres will commence in 2020-21, with the project scheduled to be completed in 2022-23.

While New South Wales continues to boom, it is important that the protection of our environment is not forgotten by this Government. We will invest \$10 million to upgrade the track from Garie beach to Otford in the Royal National Park. This will provide a top-quality environmentally sustainable walking track, improvements to the climb over Thelma Bridge, a track through Palm Jungle and lookout vantage points above Werrong beach. A range of improvements have also been made to visitor facilities and infrastructure as well as

improving accessibility. We have almost completed the Grand Pacific Walk, which represents an investment of \$5.7 million by the Government in partnership with Wollongong City Council. Part of the walk, from the Royal National Park into the Illawarra, is a \$7.2 million improvement to the lookout at Bald Hill, where hang-gliders like to launch. Improvements to visitor facilities in the area will lead to a boom in tourism.

We are also investing in improvements to Otford Tunnel, which is almost three kilometres long. The tunnel was built in 1888 and has not been used for decades. It will be turned into a bike and walking track from Otford all the way to Stanwell Park without having to negotiate traffic. As a result of the introduction of the Return and Earn scheme, eligible drink container litter volumes have dropped by 44 per cent and now represents an all-time low of 47 per cent of the New South Wales litter volume stream. Many community groups in my electorate successfully use the Return and Earn scheme as a major fundraising activity. A few of the groups use this fantastic scheme to raise funds for hospitals and the treatment of patients. It is an innovative way of getting rid of plastic waste. Once again, I thank Her Excellency the Governor of New South Wales for her excellent speech.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (12:54): I congratulate Her Excellency the Governor of New South Wales on her appointment. I also congratulate all of my colleagues who were returned to this place, particularly those who are newly elected. I know they are here for the right reasons—to do the best they can for their communities. I thank the people of Campbelltown for returning me to this place. I feel humble in accepting the privilege they have given me; it is something that I will never take for granted. I have always believed that there is no greater compliment than when someone puts their faith and trust in you to represent their interests and needs, dreams and aspirations. Again, that is something that I will never take for granted.

As is the case for all communities across our State, the issues continue and I take this opportunity to go through some of the issues that my local communities are confronting. The Government was returned with a decreased majority, having lost a few seats in the election. I believe in mandates and that is why I will take the Government through the mandate of the people of Campbelltown. That mandate was not directed just at me. It was given in the hope that this Government, having been installed, will represent every electorate—every man, woman and child—in this State. Many schools in my electorate are full of fabulous teachers and amazing students, who inspire me every time I attend a school presentation.

In reality, however, visiting schools also brings to my attention the amount of maintenance work that needs to be done to our schools. Campbelltown is a growing community in a region with a population that is expected to exceed the population of Canberra. The Western Sydney Airport will, of course, lead to more growth. Bearing in mind these growth forecasts, we cannot overlook the need to fix the schools we have and plan and build the ones that we need for the future. Education is one of the most important parts of the social fabric that exists within society. We must ensure that children and students have what they need to get the education they require to prosper throughout their life.

Local roads continue to be congested. There is neither an appropriate level of road upgrading nor the provision of an adequate number of new roads in my electorate or in the Macarthur region. I make no apologies for continually referring to Appin Road, and I will continue to do so. Appin Road was originally a track that connected a town to a village, but it is now a major arterial road that connects two of the most prosperous and fastest-growing regions in this State—Macarthur, which is the gateway to south-west Sydney, and the beautiful Illawarra. The continued urban development and population increase in the south of Campbelltown in itself dictates that Appin Road needs to be upgraded to an adequate level, which is not happening at the moment. Appin Road has had some maintenance upgrades, which I appreciate, but I have not seen the level of commitment and major capital allocation that will ensure the upgrades are appropriate to meet the demands of people moving to the south.

The Hume Highway is to the west of Appin Road. We need a connection from Menangle Road to the Hume Highway. I do not forget my friends in the Camden electorate. I do not have blinkers on in relation to road network planning but I believe we need a holistic approach. We need Liz Kernohan Drive to be extended to connect to the Hume Highway and then the Hume Highway connected to Menangle Road. Ultimately it will provide another good opportunity to connect Menangle Road to Appin Road, which will take a lot of heavy vehicles off Appin Road. That proposal should be explored before millions of dollars are shovelled into an area where not so much will be needed after Menangle Road is connected to Appin Road. I have heard it suggested that only one ramp to the Hume Highway need be built, but there must be both a north ramp and a south ramp. There is no point in going halfway because it will cost more down the track and it will be pointless to do it at all.

In the northern part of my electorate, Gregory Hills Drive has been connected to Badgally Road, which is a fantastic piece of infrastructure and provides a northern connection to the city. We also saw upgrades to Eagle Vale Drive to the tune of around \$17 million, which was fantastic, but it has caused congestion at the Raby Road junction with the Hume Highway. That junction is inadequate for the growing population because commuters come from the Camden electorate into the Campbelltown electorate. We must ensure that there is a free flow of

traffic with the connection between Badgally Road and Gregory Hills Drive. Ultimately the Narellan Road interchange on and off ramps at Raby Road and Hume Highway need to be replicated to cope with the developing suburbs and to avoid congestion and repeating the mistakes of the past.

Many other local roads in my electorate also need attention. I remain adamant that we must connect Broughton Street and Badgally Road with an overpass at the Campbelltown railway station to provide the connectivity that the community has been calling for for a long time, particularly our emergency services. The timetables at Campbelltown railway station continue to be a disaster that disadvantages thousands of people every day. This morning I spoke with a resident of the Southern Highlands who travels by train to Campbelltown, changes at Campbelltown to go to Glenfield, and then changes at Glenfield to go to Liverpool. It can involve four or five changes to get to Parramatta. We once had a direct link from Campbelltown to Parramatta. If we are serious about providing connectivity, we need to connect our cities. If we want a three-city approach, we must ensure that they complement one another and their local economies and that people have the connections they require to get wherever they need to go.

Commuter car parking at Campbelltown station remains at crisis point. Parking spaces simply are not available after 6.45 a.m. Ultimately that causes car parking problems at Macarthur, Leumeah and Minto stations and into the electorate of my friend the member for Macquarie Fields. We must have a holistic approach to these matters. The good people of Camden also visit Campbelltown and use the commuter car park. In fact, more than 50 per cent of people who park at Campbelltown station live in the Camden electorate, and we welcome them. Campbelltown is a sophisticated and mature city that provides the appropriate infrastructure and resources, but it can only do that with the support of the Government.

It is madness that Campbelltown station does not have a multi-deck car park. I researched multi-deck car parks and put forward a proposal during the election campaign. A multi-deck car park can be connected to the station. Under one model I am aware of, a person who parks their car can pass a coffee shop and a long-day care centre to get to the station. Ultimately working mums and dads could avail themselves of those facilities and pick up their children after work on their way home. It is good, innovative policy that would provide people with the ease of movement, flexibility and convenience in their working lives which are so important. That would cost \$18 million and we anticipate it would provide well over 1,200 car parking spaces. Currently Campbelltown station has just over 600 car parking spaces, which is ridiculous for a metropolitan city that is in one of the fastest growing regions in our State.

We cannot overlook the planning instruments that are already in place where we have inappropriate development in certain areas of Campbelltown. I am certainly not anti-development but I am against bad development. Unfortunately some very bad development proposals have been put forward as a result of the changes to the planning laws installed by this Government. It is one thing to build a house, but it is a totally different matter to build a happy and sustainable community, which is where our focus should be. That will only happen with the political will of government.

In our planning we need to preserve not only our green space but also our very sensitive koala colony, which continues to face challenges and which sadly is diminishing. The sensitive areas to the south of Campbelltown are between the two rivers at Dharawal; that is where it is so important to have corridors in place. We have beautiful scenic hills as well as the Mount Annan botanic gardens where my electorate boundary falls. Providing corridors for our habitat and preserving our green space must be a priority in planning future cities and communities in Campbelltown.

One issue that deeply saddens me is the growing level of homelessness experienced by many people in Campbelltown. Sadly many of them are young people, and there are a number of reasons for that. I listened very closely to some of the contributions in the House yesterday and I was heartened to hear some plans that are being put in place but, quite frankly, a lot more needs to be done. What we have done has not worked and there needs to be a stepped change in relation to homelessness. We need to bust the social triangle that sadly leaves people without a home. Admittedly, there are a lot of people escaping violence at home and, without doubt, the issue of mental health can be a major influence. The mental health of people in the community of Campbelltown is in crisis and has been impacted by the lack of a psychologist since November last year—there are reports that the position had been vacant for as long as two years before that.

Mr Ben Pike from *The Sunday Telegraph* wrote a good article about the issues confronting one family in the local community. Their story is representative of the challenges that so many other families are facing. We need to pay attention to those challenges. These kids are sick and they need our help. There is no greater priority than making our sick kids better. We must make sure that mental health is given as great a priority as general health because it is so important.

I know many veterans in my community and I served with some of them, although I was not overseas with them. Many of those veterans have returned home to Australia and I have heard their stories and seen their challenges—they continue to disturb me greatly. If it is good enough for us to send men and women overseas to serve our country, then it is good enough for us to take care of them and their wounds when they come back. Their wounds are not always on the outside; sometimes they are not visible because they are on the inside. I commend those colleagues on all sides of the House who have raised this matter in this place before. I commend the member for Manly for his heartening contribution; it was delightful to hear. But he is not the only one; there are many more. *[Extension of time]*

The motor registry at Campbelltown was closed, along with those at Ingleburn and Narellan, and our Service NSW office was centralised at Gregory Hills. We know now that that had been the Government's plan since 2012. I will continue to push for a Service NSW office in Campbelltown because the increase in the urban population—and the demand that comes from new and existing residents—dictates that the community needs one. I acknowledge the new Minister, the member for Wollondilly. I had a short conversation with him and I am delighted that he is willing to talk to me about that issue. I welcome that opportunity but I must make clear that I will not give up on this matter. I will continue to pursue it because that is what the community expects. That community expectation is not just of me; it is expected of the Government and of everyone who comes into this House. I know that each and every member, regardless of their persuasion, would acknowledge the need for us to make all of the appropriate representations.

I hear many stories about people trying to get to Service NSW at Gregory Hills—to begin with, it does not have a dunny, which gets under everyone's skin—and the struggle that people with mobility issues and pensioners and others without access have in accessing the office. Gregory Hills is a wonderful suburb; it neighbours my electorate and the good people of Camden enjoy it. I have visited the Gregory Hills office of Service NSW and the staff are amazing and they do a great job. The Service NSW set-up is a good thing but we need one in Campbelltown because of the growth in population.

I will work with the Government and the Minister. I will work with anyone who will sit down and have a constructive conversation to ensure we get a Service NSW office in Campbelltown. The facility is not only for the people of Campbelltown, but also for the people of Wollondilly. My colleague the member for Wollondilly has indicated that the people in his community rely on Campbelltown for those shared services and that he will raise that matter with the Government. I welcome that. Elections are important—we get out and banter on—but ultimately when all the numbers have fallen, it is time to knuckle down and get on with the job. There is no more important job than working together to achieve good outcomes for our community.

As colleagues of mine on the other side of the House would know, I do not take any backward steps on these issues. I have no reservations about going in hard and I trust that members will respect my position. I congratulate all of my fellow candidates on a good, clean campaign that was issue based and concerned the matters that confront our community. The candidates are all decent people and they put the needs of our community first. The reality is that the good people of Campbelltown decided to return me to office so I can continue advocating on their behalf. I will do that for every man, woman and child without prejudice. I thank the people who helped during my campaign, the many volunteers, branch members and members of the community—some were not even Labor Party members. They contacted me on my phone or sent me a message through social media and I was truly humbled. I thank Dr Michael Freeland, the Federal member for Macarthur; Meg Oates; councillors and the mayor, George Bricevic; my wonderful and amazing staff, Mr Ben Chenowith—*[Time expired.]*

Business interrupted.

Community Recognition Statements

UNSW RUGBY CLUB LADIES DAY

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (13:15): On Saturday 1 June 2019 I joined the UNSW Rugby Club for their annual ladies day. While ladies day has traditionally been a day when players have been able to acknowledge and thank the women in their lives, it is now an opportunity to showcase the increasing number of extraordinary women who are playing rugby union. This great day is also used as an opportunity to raise money for a needy cause. This year the UNSW Rugby Club Ladies Day raised money for Bayside Women's Shelter, an organisation that provides a safe and secure space for domestic and family violence survivors in south-east Sydney. The shelter opened in December 2018 and is now sadly at capacity. The UNSW women's sevens team had a resounding victory, winning 28-7, while the second grade and Colts had strong victories as well. Unfortunately the teams in the first, third and fourth grades lost, but they were very close games. I congratulate the organisers of the event, the UNSW Rugby Club, as well as all of the sponsors of the club.

URUNGA DRAGON BOAT REGATTA

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:16): In May, at the Urunga Dragon Boat Regatta, the Great Lakes Pearl Dragons proved that hard work at regular training sessions pays off. A committed effort saw the women's team take out gold and the men's team tie for gold. The regatta was hosted by the Titivators Dragon Boat Club. Participating teams came from as far south as Woy Woy and as far north as Ballina to challenge each other in an 8.3-kilometre event along the Kalang River. The women added an additional win to their record when they completed a re-run of their second heat, following an appeal over an incident that occurred at the start of the race. However, the women were not deterred and went on to win their final event. The men combined with the Central Coast Sea Dragons and the Nambucca Dragons in the men's 10 sports event. The power put on the blade saw them make waves to draw level with the Ballina men's team and the race officials were unable to split the two teams as they crossed the finish line. I congratulate the Great Lakes Pearl Dragons on their double gold win and wish them all the best in future.

MASCOT RSL SUB-BRANCH ANNIVERSARY

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (13:17): On the evening of Saturday 27 April I was pleased to join the members of the Mascot RSL Sub-Branch and my parliamentary colleague Matt Thistlethwaite to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Mascot RSL Sub-Branch. The Mascot Branch of the Returned Services League was founded on 25 April 1919, making it one of the oldest branches of the RSL in New South Wales. Members were drawn from Mascot, Botany, Rosebery and the soldier settlement of Daceyville. The club started with just 10 members but grew to a membership of 1,700 after the Second World War, when it acquired its own premises on Botany Road, Mascot. The club operated from that location until its closure in 2011. Today, the sub-branch is ably led by its first female president, Pamela Richardson, and the secretary, Carolyn McMahon. The annual Mascot pre-Anzac Day march along Botany Road, which was organised by the sub-branch, continues to attract hundreds of people each year, with many young people participating. Congratulations to Mascot RSL on its 100th anniversary. Lest we forget.

NIELSEN PARK

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (13:18): Nielson Park in Vaucluse is a local gem enjoyed by so many in my community. I was pleased to play a part in ensuring it was heritage listed. On 30 March I was pleased to join with the Nielsen Park regulars for their neighbourhood celebration day dinner. Each morning the regulars get together for their daily swim and coffee. The group was brought together by Bruce Bland, a community leader and the vice-president of the very active Rose Bay Residents' Association. What started as a daily coffee catch-up has now grown to a group of over 100 people. On the evening 87 residents attended the dinner. Fish and chips was served—it was great. I congratulate this year's award winners. Mr Neville Israel won the "Never Give Up" award. He has a health issue but continues to turn up. Christina Puterman, a 96-year-old Holocaust survivor, won the "Nielsen Park Regular Doyenne" award. John and Jenny Gunton won the "Gastronomic Excellence" award. It is a wonderful group and the evening was an amazing show of community strength.

JOHN RIDLEY

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:19): A magnificent sundial and evolving perfect paths are all part of the perfumed joy of the Woy Woy Peninsula Community Garden. I commend John Ridley for his contribution. John is a regular volunteer who has been involved in the community garden since its first working bee in 2011—contributing to the building of pathways, the herb circle, the edging of the children's garden, the building of garden boat beds, weeding, watering and digging. John has also been a member of the Woy Woy Cricket Club—now known as the Southern Spirit—since the 1980s. He has been involved in coaching, management and the organisation of teams of all levels. He organised Woy Woy Cricket Club's eightieth reunion, bringing together cricketers over 100 years old to reflect on past seasons, and is our local turf wickets curator. John is a very worthy recipient of our NSW Seniors Local Achievement Award. I take my hat off to John and express my gratitude to him.

TERRIGAL SCHOOLS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:20): I acknowledge a number of schools in my electorate. Recently the Central Coast Council announced the Wiping Out Waste pilot program, which is a partnership between the council, the Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre and Cleanaway. Of the eight schools involved, seven are in my electorate: Wamberal Public School, Terrigal High School, Holy Cross Catholic School in Kincumber, Holgate Public School, Chertsey Primary School, Woodport Public School and Terrigal Public School. The program is all about helping schools reduce their landfill contributions and increase their resource recovery. Each school will set up a Wiping Out Waste committee to set goals, create action plans and implement waste reduction initiatives. These ideas are only possible when organisations and groups come together. I thank

the council, the Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre and Cleanaway, as well the seven schools, for getting involved. I look forward to seeing students across the Terrigal electorate taking practical and sensible measures to better protect our environment.

SAME WAVES

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:21): I pay special tribute to Cooks Hill Surf Club for a special program it runs called Same Waves. The program helps children with a disability enjoy a swim at the beach. For young disabled people, a swim at the beach—an activity enjoyed by just about everyone in Newcastle—can prove difficult. The Same Waves program at Cooks Hill Surf Club is there to help adventurous young people get out and enjoy the water. I mention Terry Cosgrove, John Mayo, Sue Hermens, Deb Sims and Annette Buller for all the hard work they put into the program, as well as all the surf club members who are involved purely to support the program. I thank the club for running the Same Waves program. It is a great hit with the kids and club members alike. I make special mention of Richard Hermens and the team at the club for the sterling work they do, which resulted in the club being awarded the 2018 Good Sports New South Wales Club of the Year.

DIANA JENKINS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:22): I thank Diana Jenkins for her contribution to the community of Manly and the support she has given vulnerable women across New South Wales. For the past 18 months Di has been the Business and Communications Manager of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter. Occasionally members in this place will meet someone who represents all that is good in our communities. For me, that person is Di Jenkins. The energy and enthusiasm with which she has supported the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter is impressive, to say the least. I hope that Di will now have more time to enjoy her wonderful family and indulge in her passion for writing. On behalf of my grateful community I thank Diana Jenkins.

ST MARK'S COPTIC CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:23): On 13 March 2019 I was honoured to host a reception in Parliament House for His Beatitude Anba Ibrahim Ishak, Patriarch to the Holy See of Alexandria of Saint Mark for the Coptic Catholics. The St Mark's Coptic Catholic Church committee gave a presentation on the journey that the community has undertaken in its migration to Australia and its members' struggles with identity without a permanent, dedicated church building of their own. It was great to listen to the teachings of the patriarch and learn of the history of the Coptic Catholics in Egypt and in their new home of Australia. His Beatitude was visiting Sydney for the opening of St Mark's Coptic Catholic Church in Prospect, which is the first Coptic Catholic Church built in Australia. On 16 March His Beatitude blessed and consecrated St Mark's. The consecration ceremony included readings, prayers, songs and blessings in both Arabic and English. I acknowledge Amir Salem, Father Andrawes Farag, Deacon Antoun Salama, Janet Salem, and Moheb Salama for their work and commitment to the Coptic Catholic community in Australia. May the Holy Mother bless their work.

WAGGA WAGGA VIGILS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (13:24): In March this year nearly 1,000 people gathered in Wagga Wagga for a candlelight vigil to commemorate the lives lost during the harrowing Christchurch massacre. The support from across the community was extraordinary. As I said during the vigil, it is impossible to make sense of these horrific events, but it is important we face them together in solidarity and with kindness and love. That sentiment was echoed in the home-made signs of children that read "God loves everyone" and "Don't judge a book by its cover". Just one month later, a second candlelight vigil was held at the Victory Memorial Gardens to commemorate the lives lost as a result of the gut-wrenching Sri Lankan bombings across Easter. I am proud to say that once again hundreds of members of our community attended. I acknowledge the Wagga Aus-Sri Lanka Cultural Association community, including President Anthony Perera; members of the Muslim community, including Dr Ata-Ur Rehman and Mariam Rehman of the Muslim Association Riverina Wagga Wagga; Wagga Wagga City Council; and the Multicultural Council of Wagga. May we continue to stand together in the face of such hatred and choose not revenge but love.

DAPHNE DUNNE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:25): With great sadness I inform the House of the passing of Daphne Dunne. Daphne stole the hearts of many not only in my local community, where she was a resident, but throughout our country and, perhaps most notably, in the royal family. Daphne spent a great deal of her life advocating for the women of the Australian Army and served as a corporal in the Second World War. At her memorial, which was hosted by Legacy, we spent a lot of time reflecting on her service to our country. She represented both her husband, Albert Crowne, and John Patrick Dunne—who were both veterans of our armed services—seeking to ensure their legacy was never overlooked. We must ensure that Daphne Dunne's legacy is

never overlooked either. Daphne made international headlines as a result of her fondness for the royal family and Prince Harry. I know the Duke and Duchess of Sussex also mourned her passing. I send my condolences to Daphne's family—particularly her daughter, Michelle. May she rest in peace.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:26): On Sunday 26 May 2019 I had the great pleasure of joining with our local community at Club Marconi to celebrate the seventy-third anniversary of the Italian Republic. There was plenty of traditional Italian food, wine, entertainment and, of course, classic cars. With so much to be proud of in both Italy and Australia, it is always a great pleasure to attend the Italian Republic Day celebrations. On the day thousands of people from far and wide showed up to enjoy many of the fine foods and activities while getting a taste of that magic Italian culture. It was great to see the legacy of so many remarkable Italian migrants acknowledged on the day, detailing their achievements and contributions to their local communities since making their new home here in Australia. I congratulate club president Vince Foti, the board of directors, the event staff and the volunteers for organising the festival. The attendance of so many community leaders and local, State and Federal government representatives illustrated and emphasised the respect the Italian community has earned throughout Australia.

PATRICK O'SULLIVAN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (13:27): I recognise Mr Patrick O'Sullivan of Hillston for his services to rural journalism. Pat has a very long history of serving his community. He moved to Hillston at the age of 12 when his father purchased the local paper, *The Hillston Spectator*. The newspaper was founded in 1889 and this year it celebrates its 129th birthday. In 1955 Pat became the editor of the paper at the age of 24. Some 64 years later Pat continues to produce the newspaper each week. Today the paper is known as *The Hillston-Ivanhoe Spectator*. It is printed each week by Pat's son in Griffith and is circulated throughout western New South Wales, bringing the local news to the region. In addition to his services to journalism, Pat is heavily involved in many other organisations throughout Carrathool shire. He has served on the Hillston Show committee for 40 years—11 of those as president—and has committee life membership. Pat has also been recognised for his service to the Hillston Golf Club and Carrathool Shire Council. [*Time expired.*]

SAWTELL GOLF CLUB

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (13:28): The Coffs Harbour electorate is blessed with many fine sports men and women who bring tremendous pride to their local communities on a daily basis. Today I pay tribute to a superb group of Sawtell Golf Club players who are at the top of their game and on top of the world. Cameron Pollard, Cara Reeves, Josh Ives, Lachlan Smith and Jordan Davis brought great credit to themselves and their chosen sport at the Meg-Star Group Macau Golf Masters tournament, which is run by the Special Olympics. Cameron Pollard sensationally claimed gold, winning the world tournament by eight shots. His clubmates Cara Reeves, Josh Ives and Lachlan Smith added to the club's achievement for Australia by claiming bronze. Jordan Davis brought plenty of loud cheers with his sterling silver performance. This fabulous five and their families have every right to be proud of their outstanding performances and the spotlight their success has shone on the Coffs Coast. I congratulate them on their medals haul. I also congratulate Sawtell Golf Club professional Brendan Barnes, who has brought out the best in each of them.

MAMBO WETLANDS

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:29): As I updated the House last night, my electorate received great news late last week about the Mambo Wetlands. After years of vigorous community campaigning since the Coalition Government sold the wetlands to a developer, six hectares of precious koala habitat at Salamander Bay will finally be returned to public ownership. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank and pay tribute to the many community organisations and local residents who fought so long and so hard to protect this land from development. I acknowledge the incredible contribution of the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands Conservation Group. The group led the campaign, organised the rallies and gathered more than 15,000 signatures on a petition which I presented to this Parliament. To Irene Jones and Kathy Brown and all the group's members and supporters, to all the hardworking volunteers at Port Stephens Koalas and to the members of the Mambo Wanda Wetlands, Reserves and Landcare Committee—particularly Margaret and Walter Lamond—congratulations and thank you. This outcome could not have been achieved without your hard work and determination over many years. On behalf of Port Stephens, I say thank you.

CLINTON LARKINGS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (13:30): Congratulations are in order to Clinton Larkings from Dubbo, who has been selected to represent Australia at the 2019 WorldSkills International Championship. This has been a dream of Clinton's. He is one of 40 people selected for the event to be held in Russia later this year.

The representative team, the Skilleroos, will compete against the best trainees and apprentices from 60 countries as they vie to become world champions in their chosen trade or skill area. Clinton, who works for Luke Cross Engineering and Rigging, won a gold medal in turning at the WorldSkills Australia National Championships last year to secure his place in the Skilleroos. His selection proves that Clinton is among the best in his industry and Dubbo is proud to have him representing Australia at the championships in August. Well done, Clinton, and best of luck.

JUNIOR LANDCARE GRANTS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:31): I am pleased to bring to the Parliament's attention that three primary schools in my electorate of Charlestown have been awarded Junior Landcare Grants. Congratulations go to St Joseph's Primary, Charlestown, which received \$1,000 for its kitchen garden; Charlestown East Public School, which received \$500 to help the Little Gardeners Are Big Learners program; and St Mary's Primary, Warners Bay, which received \$1,000 to establish its bush tucker garden. I hope to be able to visit each of those schools in the near future to see how the young students are getting their hands dirty and learning about the importance of Landcare. The Junior Landcare Grants program provides grants of up to \$1,000 and aims to inspire children to learn in a practical manner about sustainable food production, recycling and waste management and ways of enhancing native habitats. I encourage all schools to apply to help make our schools environmentally friendly and sustainable learning spaces.

BROOKE KING

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (13:32): I congratulate Brooke King, a student at Albury's James Fallon High School, who has been awarded a four-year education scholarship to assist in her studies. The scholarship, provided by the Harding Miller Education Foundation, is valued at \$20,000 and is designed to give academic support to young women in Australia by giving them access to better equipment, resources and support to enable them to reach their full educational potential. Ms King, who is one of just 85 recipients this year, intends studying towards becoming a marine biologist. The funding will assist her with school expenses, from high-speed internet to mentoring and career guidance. I wish Brooke King all the very best as she works towards her education goals.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (13:33): Palliative Care Week was from 19 to 25 May 2019. I speak today in support of the many patients and families who are dealing with a life-limiting illness and in recognition of the health professionals and volunteers who work to ensure that their lives are of the highest possible quality right to the end. I am the proud patron of Maitland's Volunteers for Palliative Care, which is a wonderful organisation that provides non-clinical palliative care support and respite for patients, carers and their families. I am also a strong supporter of Friends of Palliative Care, which aids those who provide services to terminally ill people and their families. Recently I was given the honour of opening the Friends of Palliative Care major fundraiser, the Annual Walkathon and Fun Run, at Maitland's historic Walka Water Works. I am passionate about palliative care because I am passionate about life. We should celebrate life but we should not fear discussing its end. As Palliative Care NSW noted during Palliative Care Week, when someone is dying there is only one chance to get it right. Thank you to those in Maitland who do.

SEVEN HILLS COMMUNITY CARE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:34): Last week I had the pleasure of attending the official opening of the Community Care facility in the Servants of Jesus church at Seven Hills. In 2017 I was happy to support Community Care's \$40,000 Community Building Partnership grant to renovate the current premises in order to aid more members of our local community who need a helping hand. Community Care provides the following services: weekly food and care parcels for families; electricity and gas vouchers; translation services and English language skills lessons for mums and kids; responsive advocacy for liaising with schools, energy providers and social services case workers; courtesy bus rides; annual school supplies packs; and morning teas to engage with the issues that matter most to the vulnerable. Community Care is a terrific organisation that offers vital services for the wider Seven Hills community. It is strongly supported by the U-Turn youth leaders, who also are doing a fantastic job.

ILLAWARRA RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (13:35): I thank the Illawarra Rural Fire Service [RFS] volunteers who have once again this season given up their time to protect residents of the Illawarra and beyond. I particularly thank those long-term volunteers who were awarded medals at a recent ceremony attended by myself, the member for Kiama and the Lord Mayor of Wollongong. Between the 24 volunteers who were recognised that night were more than 600 years of volunteer service to the RFS. The Mount Kembla brigade alone accounted for 435 of those

years. I grew up in Mount Kembla, near to where the fire station is today, and I am pleased that some of the people who I grew up with and have always remembered being central to the Mount Kembla RFS were recognised. They included John, Barbara, Mick and Tony Bourke; Chris, Narelle and Ben Jacobsen; Mark and Olivia Dobbins; Robert Hogno; Mark Davidson; Michael Beattie; Gareth Fleming; Ken Milner; and Paul Kiernan. Thank you for your hard work, dedication and effort over many, many years.

WINDSOR HIGH SCHOOL

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (13:36): I recognise Windsor High School's fiftieth anniversary, which was celebrated with a festival on 25 May. Former staff and students attended the welcome ceremony and children were able to enjoy rides and be entertained with performances from Cattai, Oakville and Pitt Town primary schools. Thanks to the stewardship of Principal Jennifer Hawken over the past four years, Windsor High School is now in the top ten most improved schools in the State. Principal Hawken's motto is "All students come first". Her dedication to striving for excellence is reflected in the staff and students. I believe it is important to praise and recognise the dedication and commitment of Principal Jennifer Hawken and the success of the students at Windsor High School. With such a team of educators and support staff leading the way, I am certain that the school will continue to grow and become an influential school of choice.

R2 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (13:37): I acknowledge the R2 Community Association, which is a community group that has recently formed in my electorate. The R2 Community Association was created by residents in the North West Priority Growth Area to advocate for better services in their communities, particularly the provision of more public transport. I have been proud to have a long association with members of the association, having worked with many of them to fight for more buses in the Elara estate in Marsden Park. It was a privilege to attend the formation meeting of the association on 21 May to discuss ways the community can work together to improve transport, community and public infrastructure. I say a big thankyou to all the members of the R2 Community Association. Thank you for inviting me as your local member to hear from residents. I say a big thankyou especially to my friend Nadia Lobovo for her continued advocacy in Elara.

MURRAY FARM PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (13:38): On Saturday 1 June in Carlingford I joined local family and friends, including City of Parramatta Councillor Andrew Jefferies, at Murray Farm Public School's celebration of its forty-seventh annual Cracker Carnival. The Cracker Carnival is the school's major fundraising event for the year and is organised by a dedicated and committed team of parents. In previous years the funds raised from the Cracker Carnival have helped purchase smart-boards and air conditioning for each classroom, laptops for the primary classes, iPads for the infant classes and the electronic sign for the front of the school, as well as upgrading the play equipment in the infants area. Without the Cracker Carnival, which celebrates Her Majesty's birthday, those extra facilities would not be available for our local students to use. Last year's Cracker Carnival was the school's most successful, raising \$52,000 and smashing the 2017 record. This year I am delighted to advise the House that we have raised \$79,000. I congratulate Cracker Carnival convener Belinda Turco, ably assisted by Marilyn Tran, on achieving this fantastic result. I also congratulate the dedicated team of parents whose efforts made it possible and everyone who came out to support this worthy cause.

RECREATION SPORTS AND AQUATICS CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:39): I acknowledge the Recreation Sports and Aquatics Club and congratulate it on its ongoing efforts in supporting young people and children with a disability and their families. The club provides a whole range of activities, recreational and sporting opportunities, within the Bankstown, Oatley, East Hills, Canterbury and Lakemba region. The club is supported by Bankstown Sports Club and Club Rivers and many businesses and organisations that provide sponsorship. I acknowledge President Bob Beer, Jenny Bombardieri, the longstanding chief executive officer, and the entire executive for their outstanding efforts in ensuring the Recreation Sports and Aquatics Club continues to be a successful organisation providing opportunities for all.

GARY PONTIFEX

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (13:40): I am pleased to honour and praise volunteer Gary Pontifex. Since the early 1990s Gary has been a dedicated volunteer at the Children's Hospital at Westmead. Each year Gary is a major organiser for Westmead's Bandaged Bear appeal, which raises much-needed funds to help care for over 80,000 sick kids. During March Gary was standing at train stations in the early hours of the morning and at shopping centres selling the famous bandaged bears. I presented Gary with the New South Wales Premier's

Volunteer Recognition award to recognise his 25-plus years of volunteering. Well done, Gary, and thank you for all that you have done in helping sick kids.

AMY WATSON

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (13:41): I congratulate Ms Amy Watson from my electorate on her recent success at the 2019 World Indoor Skydiving Championships, which were held in France last month. This novel sport involves flying inside a glass-walled vertical wind tunnel performing routines while balancing on a jet of fast-moving air. Amy, a 13-year-old from Dean Park, is currently the Australian Champion in both junior and open freestyle categories. She also had victories in the USA Open in 2017 and the European Wind Games in 2018. Following seven intense rounds of athleticism with the world's best indoor skydivers, Amy took out the Junior World Freestyle title. This is a great achievement for Amy and evidently shows her hard work and dedication to this sport. I wish her all the best as she returns to Australia to defend her dual titles at the Australian Open in August.

JUNEE RSL MEMORIAL PRESCHOOL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:42): I acknowledge the generosity and big hearts of the members of Junee RSL Memorial Preschool, who recently raised funds to help their four-year-old classmate Archer Brady, who has cystic fibrosis. Recently his 50 playmates participated in Crazy Hair Day to donate towards finding a cure. All of the educators at Junee RSL Memorial Preschool have completed CFSmart training to ensure they can respond to Archer's specific needs when at preschool. I applaud director Rebecca Hart for helping raise awareness and funds for this very tragic and limiting disease.

BALAR MALAR TAMIL SCHOOL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:42): Recently, I had the honour of attending the Balar Malar Tamil School in Ashfield with the member for Strathfield. Tamil is the longest-surviving classical language in the world. There are 74,000 Tamil-speaking people living in Australia—22,000 of them in New South Wales. The Balar Malar Tamil School was established in 1977 and was born from a small family gathering to discuss the need to teach Tamil to their children living in Australia. That family's eagerness to teach their children about their language and culture has now seen the Balar Malar Tamil language program established in seven schools in New South Wales, including at Ashfield Boys High School in my electorate. There are currently 35 students, aged between two and 12 years, studying there. The program is staffed by local parents who provide a wonderful educational and cultural connection for the students to their native language. I want to say thank you—nanri—to them again for inviting me to experience the amazing work they do showcasing the importance of bilingual education and the multicultural richness of the inner west of Sydney.

NOWRA ANGLICAN COLLEGE

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (13:43): I recently had the great pleasure of attending, together with my grandchildren, Nowra Anglican College's production of *Beauty and the Beast* at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre. I was incredibly impressed by the enormous talents demonstrated by everybody on the day. I had high hopes for the show, given the consistent ability of Nowra Anglican College [NAC] to bring to life a wide variety of musical theatre performances, and I was certainly not disappointed on this occasion.

NAC Principal Lorrae Sampson can be very proud of the school's incredible portrayal of this classic tale, thanks to the hard work of co-directors Laura Turner and Jane McIntosh and their fellow creative team. The cast shone. Led by Georgia Duncan, Max Kielly, Samuel Parker, James Nield, Benjamin Weir, Ethan Bardsley-Divina, Harrison Shepherd and Samantha Legzdin, they were supported by their fellow cast, orchestra and stage management teams. I also give special thanks to the South Coast Institute of Performing Arts, Nowra Players, Nowra Christian School, Albatross Musical Theatre Company, Kaoskottage Costume Hire, and South Coast Welding and Fabrication for their support of this fabulous production. Needless to say, my grandchildren loved the production. Congratulations to everyone involved in Nowra Anglican College's *Beauty and the Beast*.

DANCER SAGARIKA VENKAT

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (13:45): On the evening of 18 May I was honoured to attend the first solo classical Indian dance performance by the incredibly talented Sagarika Venkat at the Redgum Centre in Wentworthville. At only nine years old, Sagarika is years ahead of most of her peers. Usually even exceptionally talented performers do not perform solo shows until they are much older. Sagarika's mother and dance teacher, Manjula Viswanath, is the renowned artistic director of the Rasika Dance Academy where Sagarika has studied for many years and has performed in many group performances in a lead role. Sagarika's first solo performance, or salangai pooja, was flawless. All of those who watched it know that they had witnessed something special that

we will remember for years to come. She choreographed much of the dance herself and the audience was transfixed on this one little girl in the centre of the stage. Every step was perfect. Congratulations, Sagarika, you have a wonderful future ahead of you.

RESPECT THE SEA AND BE PLASTIC FREE INITIATIVE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (13:46): On World Environment Day I congratulate all those involved in the shire's Respect the Sea and be Plastic Free initiative. The initiative commenced in 2017 as a result of student representative council activity at Cronulla South Public School, led by teacher Tim Alimbakis, who now teaches at Grays Point Public School. The initiative has now spread to Cronulla South, Grays Point, Caringbah, Lilli Pilli, Miranda, Tharawal, Woronora River and Laguna Street schools. Each bag carries a universal logo, which was designed by Grays Point student Luka Ford. Luka won a local design competition, which attracted over 200 entries and was judged by me along with shire councillor Michael Forshaw, Sharks player Scott Sorensen and John Veage from the *St George & Sutherland Shire Leader*. On the flip side of the bag is each school's sponsors. There are around 3,000 reusable bags for sale currently circulating in the schools and around 50 sponsors. I congratulate all those involved. I also congratulate the Cronulla Chamber of Commerce and the Surf Life Foundation Cronulla for their active efforts in promoting this important initiative.

DRINKING WATER DONATIONS

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (13:47): Today I recognise a number of organisations and individuals who have dedicated their own time and resources to deliver drinking water to communities across regional New South Wales. Individuals such as Mal Highet, Wayne Cole, Greg Mohr, Carlton and Natalie Copke and Lanz Priestly and organisations such as Menindee Water Run and Dignity Water have stepped up to provide an invaluable service carting or distributing thousands of litres of water across the State to communities that need it most. Most of this is done in private vehicles, at personal expense and in the volunteers' own time.

Thanks also to those who have donated money or water to the cause. The volunteers embody the spirit of volunteering and the spirit of the Australian bush of helping your neighbour. For communities in the far reaches of my electorate, the delivery of water is a signal that there are people out there who still care. For some, just knowing that someone cares about them and their situation is enough to give them hope of better days ahead. To those carting water across this State, you are delivering a lifeline to communities and I salute you for the work that you are doing.

ROTARY CLUB OF PORT MACQUARIE WEST

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:47): I acknowledge the ingenious efforts by the Rotary Club of Port Macquarie West for investing in a heartwarming project that supports victims of landmines in Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka. It is becoming an annual event for the Rotary Club of Port Macquarie West, which once again held its Helping Hand project in March to support victims of landmines in underprivileged communities around the globe. During the working bee 10 prosthetic hands were made from scratch, using a comprehensive instruction manual that outlined, one by one, the fitting of each of the 37 pieces to complete the prosthesis.

Architects of the Helping Hands project Joan and Trevor Gilson coordinated a team of 26 dedicated Rotarians and volunteers to assemble a 37-piece prosthetic hand, with the aim to support ordinary people experiencing hardship with the opportunity to gain employment and to live independently. Joan quoted the alarming statistic that an estimated 384,000 people have suffered the debilitating effects of a landmine accident around the world, with an average of 2,000 accidents per month. Sadly, a large portion of them are children. I find it humbling to acknowledge the generosity and compassion of our amazing Rotarians, who are working together to bring opportunity and quality of life to the marginalised not just locally but internationally in order to create a fairer and more inclusive world.

SURF LIFE SAVING CLUBS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:49): I thank our surf lifesavers up and down the east coast of New South Wales and particularly in my electorate of Shellharbour. Warilla-Barrack Point Surf Life Saving Club and Shellharbour Surf Life Saving Club play a pivotal role in saving lives. I am very disappointed that the Government has withdrawn \$1.3 million in funding. That funding is needed to ensure that the clubs have the equipment and resources to continue to save lives. That action by the Government speaks volumes. I congratulate all of the men and women who volunteer their time every weekend. They undergo very difficult Bronze Medallion training to keep us safe not only during the summer months but also all through the year.

KATH GRIFFIN

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (13:50): Today I acknowledge a phenomenal woman who has been volunteering at Hornsby Hospital since 1979. Kath Griffin has spent every week of the past 40 years volunteering in the hairdressing salon and 20 years as a Meals on Wheels volunteer. Kath is known for her lovely smile and warm and gentle nature and is often seen in the corridors pushing the shop trolley around wards or cutting hair in the salon. She started volunteering in 1979 with her sister, rewinding bandages and folding nappies. She also assisted nurses by photocopying papers to help with their exams. She has since undertaken a number of roles throughout the hospital, from feeding babies to delivering meals. She recently celebrated her ninetieth birthday with her six children and 12 grandchildren. I am certain they are all proud of their mum and grandma. It takes a special person to give this length of service to an organisation like the community hospital. I say thank you, Kath, for every patient you have helped, every nurse you have assisted and every trolley you have pushed. You are an amazing woman and we owe you a great debt of gratitude.

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

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to Skye Leckie, OAM, guest of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services and member for Kiama, and the member for Sydney. I also welcome local high school leaders from Georges River College Peakhurst Campus; Georges River College Penshurst Girls Campus; Georges River College Oatley Senior Campus; Marist College, Penshurst; St Ursula's College, Kingsgrove; Bethany College; and St George Christian School, guests of the Assistant Speaker and member for Oatley. It was a pleasure to meet with the student leaders earlier today in the Jubilee Room. I acknowledge Thinzar Shunlei Yi in the gallery today, who is visiting Australia from Myanmar as a guest of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. We welcome you to the Chamber.

I also welcome the participants of the Introduction to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly Public Sector Seminar. I met with the participants this morning and I trust that they are finding today's proceedings useful and informative. I thank the Government Whip, the Deputy Opposition Whip, the member for Holsworthy and the member for Newtown for attending the seminar. We welcome you all to the Chamber.

*Announcements***STATE OF ORIGIN**

The SPEAKER: On behalf of the members of the House, I wish the New South Wales Rugby League team the best of luck for the State of Origin round 1 game tonight, as well as the New South Wales Women's Rugby League team for its upcoming State of Origin round 1 game on 21 June. Today I have given permission for scarves to be worn. I emphasise that permission has not been given in the Legislative Council because the last time that occurred it was handled inappropriately. I do not want to be placed in a situation of having to decline permission next time, so I ask members to be demure and respectful, while at the same time demonstrating their support for our State. If all members will turn towards our photographer, Chris Herbert, who is in the Speaker's gallery, he will take a photograph of all members in our blue scarves. Members who wish to have a copy of the photograph can contact my office. I warn the member for Tamworth not to misbehave.

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

The SPEAKER: This morning I hosted the Parliament's annual Australia's Biggest Morning Tea in the Strangers' Lounge. I thank everyone who attended and donated to help support those impacted by cancer. I am not sure that the former Speaker was present when I acknowledged her for initiating the event. I am pleased to continue the tradition set by the emeritus Speaker—or Minister, I should say. I congratulate all those who participated in the bake-off on their delicious contributions. I commend the winner of the professional category, Leni Dickenson-Esposito, and the winner of the amateur category, Lisa Andersen, for their amazing Japanese cheesecake and four-layered chocolate cake, respectively. We also drew the winners of the annual raffle, with the third prize awarded to Damien Smith; the second prize to the Attorney General, the member for Cronulla; and the first prize to Trish Marinozzi. We raised \$6,508 for the valuable work of Cancer Council NSW. A big thank you to all the volunteers, the catering staff, the Department of Parliamentary Services and all parliamentary colleagues. I also put on record my appreciation for Georgia Luk, who organised and coordinated the event. I thank Georgia.

*Members***REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS**

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: On behalf of Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that today the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade will answer questions in the absence of the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education.

[During the giving of notices of motions]

*Notices***PRESENTATION**

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

*Question Time***PERSONAL INFORMATION SECURITY**

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:29): My question is directed to the Premier. Did the Premier's chief of staff tell her that the story, which was later subject to a police complaint, involved records from a Government database that were disclosed without authorisation?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:29): The short answer to that question is no. I will repeat what I said yesterday and that is, as I have said previously, the former Leader of the Opposition requested a police investigation. In fact, he put that request in writing. A police investigation has subsequently occurred. A number of people were part of that police investigation. None of those people were my staff. Why do those opposite think that they are better placed than the police of this State to be informed in these matters? Why is it that they only become animated when it is all about them? What about caring for the people of New South Wales? We have had a State election and we have had a Federal election. Within a week the Federal Labor Party managed to sort out its leadership woes.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: At least they have a leader. After 72 days, instead of visiting community organisations, P&Cs, local stakeholders or constituents, Opposition members are visiting each other about their leadership debates. They are attending functions on the weekends and posting on Instagram or whatever else in support of either the member for Kogarah or the member for Strathfield. I heard something concerning about those opposite. We know they only become animated and excited when it is all about them and, boy, is it all about them at the moment. Unfortunately, I have heard that many members opposite—and this is the truth—are locking their doors to avoid being lobbied by either the member for Kogarah or the member for Strathfield. It is true. I say to those opposite that the people of New South Wales deserve an Opposition that can get its leadership act together.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am relieved that they have taken the member for Keira out of witness protection following the State election. He was nowhere to be seen. Whilst those opposite are attending candidates' debates amongst themselves and whilst they are lobbying their colleagues and unions for support, we are delivering schools, hospitals, roads and rail for the people of New South Wales. We will continue to do that. Opposition members can keep being animated about themselves; we are focusing on New South Wales.

SPORTING AND CULTURAL EVENTS

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (14:32): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government delivering the best sporting and cultural events for New South Wales?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:32): I thank the member for East Hills for her question.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Don't be insulting. I know how much the member for East Hills appreciates not only the schools, hospitals, roads and rail that we are building in regional communities, but also the sporting infrastructure and cultural institutions. We know that for a State to thrive, it needs good infrastructure across the board. Today is an important day for New South Wales. On occasion we come together in support of important causes and so on behalf of all members in this place I wish Freddy and the boys all the best this evening. Go the Blues! Do our

State proud. No matter what the outcome, we hope each player knows how proud we are that they are defending our State this evening. On a very proud day in April the sport Minister, the western Sydney Minister, the member for Parramatta and I were pleased to officially open the Parramatta Stadium. This is an example of what great sporting infrastructure provides for New South Wales. It was an amazing opportunity to see what the fan experience is like. I know that for all 29,000 people who witnessed the first Parramatta versus Wests Tigers game—

Mr David Elliott: We won.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Exactly. What a wonderful occasion it was to get that fan experience—perhaps not as good for the Wests Tigers fans as it was for the Parramatta fans, but, nonetheless, it was wonderful to see what happens when a government focused on important infrastructure carried the day. The new stadium is vital for hosting the English football team Leeds United, who will play the Western Sydney Wanderers on the ground next month. I am sure many of those opposite will sneak in—maybe in disguise, but they will turn up.

Mr Guy Zangari: I love the Wanderers.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Are you going to go to the game?

Mr Guy Zangari: I've paid for my ticket; I'll go.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Good on you. That's good. Let it be recorded that many of those opposite will be attending the game.

Mr Guy Zangari: I'm a foundation member, Gladys. I pay for my membership.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Some of your colleagues don't. In addition to the new stadium at Parramatta we are building a new stadium at Moore Park—the Sydney Football Stadium. We know it will make a huge and positive difference to future events in New South Wales. The ANZ Olympic Stadium will also receive an upgrade. During the election campaign those opposite made their position very clear on sporting infrastructure. Not only did they want to cancel metros and road projects, but they also wanted to cancel sporting infrastructure. Sadly, they did not have anything to offer the people of New South Wales apart from cancelling projects, and they still do not have anything—they have no policies, no vision and no leader. New South Wales is not well served by their efforts.

I know that deep down many of those opposite appreciate the importance of sports to communities and how important it is for us to encourage an active lifestyle and to attract events. We are not only securing the best sporting events, but also attracting the best cultural events to New South Wales. Two weeks ago I was very pleased to announce, with the tourism Minister and the arts Minister in the other place, that Sydney has been successful in bidding for *Hamilton*, the very famous musical that is breaking all types of records. The Victorian Premier worked very hard, as did other Premiers, to win this musical, but unfortunately it did not quite work out for him. It is interesting that at the time when all the States were bidding for *Hamilton*, the then arts spokesperson—who is currently also the health spokesperson, but not if the member for Strathfield becomes Leader of the Opposition because she has already said that she is replacing him—said, "What is happening with *Hamilton*? If this continues New South Wales will lose its crown as the cultural capital of Australia."

The arts spokesperson was baiting me and suggesting that if we did not win *Hamilton* somehow New South Wales would go backwards. He also said in October, "New South Wales could see the day when the Queensland or Victorian Premier announces they are getting the Broadway hit *Hamilton* while the New South Wales Premier meekly announces we are getting the umpteenth re-run of *Chicago*." What has he got against *Chicago*? But we have got *Hamilton*. This demonstrates that the Labor Party stands for nothing. Whilst he was baiting me and criticising me for not securing *Hamilton*—[*Extension of time*]

One would think the arts spokesperson would congratulate me given how much he baited me about not getting *Hamilton*, but after we got *Hamilton* he did not congratulate us. He said, "How many millions of dollars will be paid to the American producers for the rights?" He said that after baiting us for months and months about why we had not acquired *Hamilton* and how Victoria or Queensland was going to pip us at the post. It demonstrates that the Labor Party stands for nothing. Labor members will say and do anything to get a headline. Whilst those opposite focus on themselves, we are focusing on getting the best sporting and cultural events and on building the best infrastructure for New South Wales because that is what the people of this great State deserve.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (14:38): 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 regional jobs?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:39): I thank the member for his fantastic question about regional jobs. This week and last week the House heard me talk about the importance of a mining sector in regional New South Wales. The member for Upper Hunter represents a region where mining is a big part of that community and its local economy. Mining is also a big part of our State's prosperity. Last Thursday night I had the privilege and honour of attending the NSW Mining Industry and Suppliers Awards and annual dinner held at Parliament House. It was a fantastic night to see all the participants, the companies and the faces of the people behind the mining sector, which underpins our economy and, more importantly, underpins our regional communities.

I know that two weeks is a long time in politics but a lot has changed since the Federal election, particularly when it comes to mining being a dirty word. Even the Premier of Queensland has been able to rehome the black-throated finch quickly to get the Adani mine approved. It was good to see many members of the Labor Party from across the aisle at the dinner, sending a clear message to their Federal colleagues, who clearly do not recognise the importance of the mining sector for regional New South Wales. It was good to see our Labor colleagues supporting the mining sector. Members of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party were there, as were members of the Christian Democratic Party. Everyone but The Greens were there. But, as I said on the night, I think The Greens realised everybody was at the awards night so The Greens were locking themselves to the front gates of the mines to stop mining.

More importantly, before the gala dinner we were lucky to have the NSW Women in Mining awards. The perception of mining is changing. It has historically been seen as an industry dominated by men. But it is a changing world for the mining companies and the mining sector—it is almost changing faster than the technology that is being used in mining. I recognise and congratulate those companies that have put a focus on attracting more women into the sector, because women are a big part of the future of mining in New South Wales. Recently I had the privilege of visiting and going underground in Peabody's Wambo coalmine—a great company. It was an experience to go underground in a coalmine and I truly enjoyed it. It has given me an understanding of the risks involved and how important occupational health and safety is at mine sites. In New South Wales we put at the forefront the wellbeing and safety of those working in the mining sector.

Wambo coalmine has recently achieved a 20 per cent increase in applications for employment from women, which has helped Wambo to change its overall percentage of female participation to 25 per cent. Maddison Clarke from KRH Mining won the award for outstanding tradesperson, operator or technician. As a former Minister for Skills, I enjoy hearing those great success stories of employees in industries such as mining. It is the skill sets and the training that give people opportunities not only for jobs today but for the future. Maddison was a fantastic recipient. She is helping to spread the message to other young women through her Instagram account, with the user name "spanners.and.sparkles".

Brooke Lees was named the Exceptional Young Woman in New South Wales mining. In her acceptance speech she told how mining had literally changed her life. Having started a career as a journalist after graduating from university, she took a graduate role in mining in 2011, following in the footsteps of some of her family members. Since then she has not looked back. Brooke is now an organisational development specialist at Northparkes Mines and has managed a number of programs, including the "Make Your Mark" campaign in 2018, which showcased the benefits of mining careers.

Tim Witney was hailed as the gender diversity champion for his work with BHP's Mount Arthur coalmine. He actively mentors a number of young women at the mine, and since starting at the mine in 2017 Tim has helped to increase the Indigenous workforce to 13 per cent, has increased the female workforce to 28 per cent and has achieved a 100 per cent retention rate of female employees. He is a champion for diversity at BHP. There was hardly a dry eye in the house when Tim told the story of one woman he had mentored. [*Extension of time*]

She turned up one day to resign from her job because she was finding it difficult to find balance in her life while looking after her children. Tim refused to accept the resignation. Instead, because he valued her as an employee and a member of the team, he arranged flexible hours to suit her and her family. Those working in the mining industry are finding solutions to support families. In turn, they are supporting communities in regional New South Wales. They are offering great jobs in an important sector. The big award for the evening was announced at the dinner. Sarah Withell was named the Exceptional Woman in New South Wales Mining. She started her career as an environmental scientist in the Gulf of Carpentaria and has since gone on to become BHP's first female head of health, safety and environment and the first female member of the New South Wales Energy Coal Asset Leadership Team.

Sarah also played a pivotal role in maintaining community support for the Mt Arthur coalmine, which at the time was the largest approved coalmine in Australia. She was a trailblazer and in 2014 helped establish a dedicated room for parents at Mt Arthur. She is working with other mothers, as she has shown how flexible work can operate in practical terms and, of course, having a very supportive employer helps. It was an inspirational

night. I make it clear that members on this side of the House support mining in this State—be it coal or minerals—for the future. It is important that we remind the House of the importance of the mining sector, as it is an important sector for job prosperity in regional New South Wales. It underpins our communities. For every family member who loses a job in the regions, the chance of losing a teacher, a school closing or an emergency department closing is real. At this time of drought, which I will keep banging on about, those jobs are valuable. That is why today we celebrate mining in New South Wales.

PERSONAL INFORMATION SECURITY

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:46): My question is directed to the Premier. When the Premier became aware during February this year that private information was improperly used in a media story, what action was taken?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:46): Firstly, I say to the acting interim leader in the lower House that I do not appreciate the assumption in his question. Whatever it is, I do not appreciate it.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If only the member for Keira had fought hard for the people of New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I said previously, the former Leader of the Opposition asked for a police investigation. That occurred. The police conducted a thorough investigation, from what we understand. A number of people were part of that investigation. It has now concluded. The police released a statement yesterday saying that no further action would be taken. Based on that and given that the investigation had concluded, I said to the House yesterday that no-one from my office was part of the investigation and I reiterate that today. I say to those opposite: Please respect the process. The police looked into this matter and decided that no further action is warranted. The people of New South Wales should have confidence in a process. If we are talking about a police investigation versus allegations thrown across the Chamber by a leaderless Labor Party, I will back the NSW Police Force every day of the week.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (14:48): My question is addressed to the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales. How is the New South Wales Government supporting our farmers and regional communities? Can the Minister update the House on the latest drought conditions?

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (14:48): I thank the member for Cootamundra for her question. She is one of the hardest-working members of this House and I thank her for her staunch advocacy on behalf of farmers and rural communities across regional New South Wales in this very, very difficult time. Despite the fact that the drought may not be on the front pages of metropolitan papers or leading the nightly news bulletins in Sydney, I can report to the House and assure it that this is a very real and significant issue for communities across New South Wales. We still have over 97 per cent of the State in drought or suffering intense drought conditions, and every community is reeling and doing it tough.

The community of Walgett in the member for Barwon's electorate is doing it particularly tough. I regret to inform the House of a very sad development in Walgett today. At approximately 8.30 a.m. flames engulfed the local Independent Grocers of Australia [IGA] supermarket, with the building sustaining significant and irreparable damage. For members who are not aware, the township of Walgett is already on its knees. It is battling intense drought and its community relies almost exclusively on the agricultural sector. As the member for Barwon knows, the IGA is the only supermarket in town. It is the only place where people can get bread, milk and all the essentials of life because the nearest supermarket is 80 kilometres away. For many people who live in Walgett, 80 kilometres may as well be 800 or 8,000 kilometres because they do not have the means or the ability to get to the next supermarket. It is devastating news for that community and a real kick in the guts on top of the conditions that are gripping all parts of the State.

As the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, I have requested that the regional offices of the Department of Premier and Cabinet immediately get in touch with the council and the community to see how we can assist in establishing a temporary shop in the Walgett community, as happened in 2013. Just before question time I received an update indicating that it looks likely that a shop will be established at the school hall as an interim measure to ensure that supplies can be brought into the community so that people can continue to

get the basics they need in their local town. The Government will stand by that community and will work with the member for Barwon to make sure that no-one in Walgett is adversely affected by this extra blow it received today.

Across the State we have seen a write-down of almost \$3.4 billion in agricultural production since the drought began, which is about a 22 per cent reduction in value. Just a bit over one-fifth of the agricultural productivity of this State has been wiped as a result of the drought, which has had a devastating impact on many. Unsurprisingly, the hardest-hit industries have been those that rely on water. We have seen a 93 per cent reduction in rice production and almost half of cotton crops have been wiped out across New South Wales. That is to say nothing of the huge reduction in the beef and sheep herds and the impact across other sectors. It has gone beyond the farm gate and it is hurting every community. [*Extension of time*]

The impact is not only economic but also emotional. It is absolutely important that the Government continues to provide support for mental health, counselling and rural financial counselling. All of this was brought home to me on Friday when I received a letter from Angus Swailes, a year 6 student at Kingstown Public School. With the indulgence of the House I will read a section of the letter because it pretty much sums up the impact that this drought has had not only on families but also on children. We often do not think about the impact drought has on them also being on the land. Angus said:

I, first hand, have seen the impact the drought is having on farmers, one of those being my own father. He comes home late and leaves early, often working ... more than 12 hours a day. Drought is close to my heart for all the wrong reasons. It's not only the farmers that are doing it tough in this drought. The stock are feeling it too. They struggle to keep a full belly.

Sheep and cattle search around the bare, brown lands eager for juicy succulent patches of grass ... [They] aren't there at the moment. This means they have to be fed morning, and afternoon. They pursue the utes, tractors and trucks that carry the feed. Grandad says this ... drought is far worse than the [one in] 1965. Although the '65 drought was extreme, the current one is now heading into its third consecutive year and [it] is so widespread. Because of that, it is a lot more difficult to find feed and purchase it as well. Our feed comes from as far away as Western Australia ...

From WA it is shipped to Newcastle and then [trucked to our property]. Dad sometimes meets the truck [very late at night].

...

For straw it can cost as much as \$600 a tonne, but that's too expensive for us. We pay [about] \$430 a tonne for grain. We use about 20 tonne of grain a week with 40 tonne coming in one truck, as we use a whole truck [per fortnight].

It is very expensive. He continued:

Unfortunately there aren't exactly many solutions for the drought. It's not like we can make it rain. If we could, there would be no such thing as drought. Drought is a naturally occurring part of farming in Australia, and it is something we have to deal with. However it is extremely hard work and takes tireless commitment.

It hurts us all. It hurts farmers. He went on:

[As my dad says] - the rain will come, it is just a matter of time. We just need to hang in.

To Angus, his father and his family, I am sure every member of this House is thinking of you. The Government will stick by you now and well into the future to make sure that you and everyone else on the land are supported to survive this drought and, ultimately, to rebuild.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members to seek the call in a timely fashion.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (14:55): I direct my question to the Minister for Customer Service. Will the Minister inform the House on what date the information improperly obtained by his office was destroyed as per the instruction of the Commissioner of Revenue NSW?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:56): I thank the member for her question. Yesterday this House was informed that inquiries in relation to this matter have concluded. Given this development, I can now inform the House that at no stage was I contacted by the NSW Police Force or any other authority in relation to this matter. I refer to my previous answers.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (14:56): I direct my question to the Premier. Given the NSW Police Force investigation is complete, will the Premier direct the Minister for Customer Service or Revenue NSW to contact the individuals affected?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:57): I appreciate the question from the member for Cessnock and remind those opposite that the results of the investigation were made public yesterday. I respect the institution of the NSW Police Force. I respect the investigation they have undertaken and I respect

the conclusion they came to. I say to those opposite: Please also respect the process. If anyone has additional information or is not satisfied with what occurred, please refer it to another body. There are several bodies—

The SPEAKER: Order! A serious question has been asked and the Premier is giving a serious answer. She will be heard in silence.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to those opposite: If there is anyone who is not satisfied with the investigation undertaken by the NSW Police Force, has additional information or wishes to refer anything to any of a number of bodies who look at these matters, we welcome that.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question is whether the Premier—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is being incredibly relevant to the question. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to the member for Cessnock, given he asked the question, that perhaps he should be the first person to refer any information or grievance he has to another body. I say genuinely to those opposite: I wish they were as animated on issues impacting the people of New South Wales. I wish they were as animated when advocating for their rights because, for every day that they focus on themselves, the people of New South Wales are denied the right to a strong Opposition. Those opposite can continue to focus on themselves but we will deliver for the people of this great State.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (14:58): I address my question to the Minister for Transport and Roads. Will the Minister explain to the House how the Government is transforming the way people get around Sydney as part of the integrated transport network, and any other related matters?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:59): I thank the member for his question—a cracking question. I will come back to Crackers in a minute. How good is the metro? We have moved 760,000 people with 3,000 services in the first 11 days. People are saving hundreds of dollars on the cost of tolls and running expenses as they get out of their cars and onto public transport. We are getting great feedback in terms of travel time savings—half an hour here, there and everywhere—for those travelling in the corridor. It is pleasing to confirm the improvements to the M2. Anecdotally, we are starting to see a drop-off in traffic volume. I inform the House that in the first 11 days there has been an 18 per cent reduction in bus patronage on the M2 during the morning peak and 22 per cent during the afternoon peak. That is great news.

There are early signs of improved capacity on the Richmond line, which will be of interest to the member for Hawkesbury. We are seeing some local bus routes being well patronised as they feed into the metro. I am pleased to confirm that we have now had 2,000 people enjoy the benefits of on-demand transport as The Ponds and the north-west feed into the metro. We know the view of those opposite in relation to the project and on-demand transport. I was concerned to hear the shadow transport Minister say over the course of the weekend that the metro is "unsafe". I can only assume that the Labor Party wants me to shut it down. That is true to form: Those opposite know how to cancel projects and shut things down. The reality is that this project is transforming the north-west by transforming lives. It is quite telling that the community has sensed clearly that we are building on the north-west stage under the harbour and under the city and on to Sydenham and Bankstown. I know the member for Bankstown is fully supportive of that.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: You are giving us an inferior travel service, mate.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Do not call me "mate". It is unparliamentary and I am certainly not your friend—neither is anybody else on your side, just quietly. Who is smiling up there? It is the member for Rockdale. Another point about the metro project is that it is \$1 billion under budget and will now move through the city. You only need to walk down Martin Place to see a very big hole in the ground. I am pleased to report to the House that the progress of the tunnelling gives every indication it could be completed later this year. That is going to increase capacity on the City Circle in a way we have not seen since Bradfield built it. There will be 120 trains—and up to 200 trains—in the morning peak into the city. Just think of the effect that will have on the motorway network.

We are getting close to opening the first stage of the WestConnex project. We will open the first of four tunnels as part of that motorway project. There is an incredible amount of work happening across the city. The member for Riverstone asked about "related matters". I draw the distinction between the Government and those opposite in terms of transport policy. Under the shadow Minister, those opposite took four policies to the State election—that is one a year in the four years the Opposition had the opportunity to develop policy. I know the member for Strathfield sees herself as experienced in transport policy. I again draw to the attention of the House

that the policies Labor took to the last State election were all about cancellation: Cancelling tens of thousands of jobs associated with the metro. Labor did have some misfirings in relation to some policies. There was the free school transport policy that was undercosted by a factor of 35. It had the station access fee challenge. [*Extension of time*]

There was the station access fee policy, which was only out by \$1.5 billion. Those opposite wanted to cancel everything and they still want us to cancel the south-west metro. They announced that they were going to build Sydney Metro West quicker than the Government did, having announced it back in 1995 when they were last in government. I say to the member for Strathfield that that is super quick.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: How much money did they allocate to it?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: In terms of the money allocated, there was—

Mr Dominic Perrottet: PBO? None.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Yes, the Parliamentary Budget Office costing did not go forward. In relation to the member for Strathfield—the voice on transport for those opposite—you would think in four years as the shadow Minister for Transport she might have developed a bit of a relationship with the Rail, Tram and Bus Union [RTBU]. But guess what? In the leadership ballot the RTBU has decided not to support the shadow Minister for Transport. But we do know who has come out in support of the member for Strathfield, and that is the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union [CFMMEU]. She cannot say she is nobody's girl; she is now the girl of the CFMMEU. What favours will be returned as a result of the Labor leader being backed in by the CFMMEU? I feel sorry for the member for Kogarah, who cannot even get the butchers on his side.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

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

Mr Clayton Barr: Having spent the first six minutes of his answer on the issue of transport, the Minister has now strayed well away from the substance of the question. Mr Speaker, I ask you to bring him back to the question.

The SPEAKER: The Minister spent six minutes answering the question about transport and, as I have indicated previously, I am happy to entertain slight digressions.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The one thing that upsets the member for Strathfield is she cannot be elected by an N40 process because she has never contested a leadership ballot in the Labor Party. I will go into that further at a later stage because it involves the member for Newcastle. [*Time expired.*]

VISITOR ECONOMY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:06): My question is addressed to the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on its plan for tourism?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (15:06): I thank the member for North Shore for her question. I know how committed she is to growing jobs across New South Wales and she understands how critical the visitor economy is to achieving that goal. When we formed government we recognised the importance of the visitor economy to a growing New South Wales because it creates job opportunities both in Sydney and right across the State. We wanted to make sure that we would make up the ground lost after our long, dark 16 years in opposition. During that time we watched the visitor economy deteriorate in New South Wales, thanks to the Labor Government.

We have established a visitor economy action plan and set out a number of things that we want to do. Ultimately, we have set out to double the dollars spent by overnight visitors to \$36 billion by 2020. I report to the House that, according to the most recent visitor survey, we can now say that it is mission complete. We have reached the \$36 billion mark for international visitation and now we want to kick on to triple that figure from 2009 to \$55 billion by 2030. To do that we have to keep driving activity right across the State. In the past 12 months the latest surveys have shown what we have been able to achieve in supporting the visitor economy. Now one in 22 jobs in New South Wales is generated through the visitor economy, and 53 per cent of those jobs are in regional New South Wales.

In 2018 we received a record 38.9 million domestic and international overnight visitors, which was up 8.7 per cent. They stayed over 203 million nights—up 4.9 per cent—and they spent \$31.8 billion. Business visitors are also critical to the State's economy. Business visitors to New South Wales spend twice as much as leisure visitors. Work done by Business Events Sydney attracted 88 global meetings to New South Wales in the past

12 months, generating over \$200 million for the State's economy. Next week more than 400 business leaders from the World Forum for Foreign Direct Investment will gather in Sydney, generating value for our economy and developing networks across the globe to generate more investment for New South Wales.

We also have a strong focus on events. Over 778 events have been attracted to or retained in New South Wales since 2011, which is up more than 270 per cent on what was achieved by those opposite during 16 years in government. The big winners have been in regional New South Wales, where we have delivered 482 events. These iconic events include the Tamworth Country Music Festival, which keeps going from strength to strength; the Deni Ute Muster, which is also going from strength to strength; and the Parkes Elvis Festival. These events are growing, and attracting more and more people. In fact, we are coming up to the fiftieth anniversary of the moon landing and I encourage people to get out to Parkes on the weekend of 21 July to celebrate the dish and the moon landing anniversary.

There is the Ironman Australia festival at Port Macquarie and in the Snowy Mountains, if skiing is not your thing, this weekend registration opens for L'Etape Australia, which is a Tour de France event. We have locked in the IAAF World Cross Country Championships for Bathurst in 2021. In the Speaker's Garden we celebrated the month of June in the Southern Highlands, which is Pie Time. I encourage members to get to the Southern Highlands for that event. The member for Oxley talked about supporting regional New South Wales during this time of drought, and I encourage everyone to get onto visitnsw.com.au and look at the drives and road trips section. There are now 26 itineraries for road trips right around New South Wales.

I encourage everyone to get out and experience all the fantastic locations in regional New South Wales. Why not support regional communities by staying in a country pub to experience the wonderful culture in regional New South Wales and get a good understanding of what is happening across the regions? The Premier has talked about what we have done in relation to musical theatre, locking in the single biggest musical theatre event in the world, *Hamilton*. [Extension of time]

Hamilton is not just a fantastic stage show. We anticipate that hosting the Asia-Pacific launch of *Hamilton* in Sydney will generate more than \$84 million in visitor expenditure and over 350 new jobs. In the lead-up to the election we locked in Disney's *Frozen* the musical—another great example of us attracting the best possible events to New South Wales.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Sing it!

Mr STUART AYRES: I will go to *Hamilton* in the greatest city in the world before I go to *Frozen*. When it comes to events, nothing tops what this Government has done with Vivid. Vivid is now the largest festival of music, light and ideas anywhere in the Southern Hemisphere. Last year it attracted over 2.25 million visitors and generated \$173 million in visitor expenditure. This festival goes from strength to strength, with 185,000 international travel packages sold. Vivid is not just about delivering results in Sydney. Last year 33,000 people who came to Vivid kicked on and did a regional tour. That additional touring time generated over \$13 million in regional visitor expenditure, showing that Vivid is just as important to regional communities as it is to Sydney communities.

This year as part of Vivid Live we have partnered with the Royal Flying Doctor Service to bring out The Cure, who played at the Sydney Opera House. As part of Vivid Ideas, we have attracted people like Spike Lee. We have enjoyed the amazing floral art projected onto the sails of the Sydney Opera House. In Circular Quay more than 100 artists have developed 50 light installations. Vivid goes from strength to strength and is helping New South Wales to maintain its position as the number one visitor economy in Australia.

REDFERN STATION

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:13): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Roads. Given the fantastic news of the \$100 million accessibility upgrade at Redfern station to provide lifts for platforms one to 10, will the Minister commit to expanding the scope of the planned works to include lifts for platforms 11 and 12 so that we can finally tick off our list making Redfern station fully accessible? As the Government's election slogan said, "Let's get it done!"

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (15:14): I am making transport great again. I say to those opposite: That is how you ask a question. What a fantastic question. I am talking about \$100 million. It is as close to a compliment as we will get from the member for Newtown. There are substratum challenges at platforms 11 and 12 at Redfern. There is a preliminary investigation.

Dr Hugh McDermott: Time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Are you saying time? I will have time; they will have time out. There are some substratum challenges in relation to platforms 11 and 12 and some preliminary investigations are going

on. Redfern station is the sixth-busiest train station on the network. In 2015 we put a lift in to platforms six and seven at Redfern station, and we will provide six lifts that will make platforms one to 10 accessible. There is nothing more important that any government can do than ensure that people with disability, in particular, have access to transport. It is the biggest human rights barrier that exists in this regard. At the last State election this Government very proudly brought forward a plan to ensure that 68 additional stations are made accessible across the network. About 90 per cent of commuters now have access to accessible stations.

We are making sure that we provide access in many stations across the network. I want to single out Goulburn, East Hills and Dubbo as the types of places that we are also building on and great local members who do the right thing, like the member for Newtown. She sat down with transport staff and raised her concerns. We will continue to look at what we can do in terms of substratum. I remind the House that when we came to office only two stations a year were being upgraded. We inherited the City Circle, which did not have full lift access. The Minister for Transport at the time, now our wonderful Premier, ensured that that happened. We will continue to invest. We have a great program of 68 stations to come due to the great financial management of the Government.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ROUTINE OF BUSINESS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended at this sitting to postpone consideration of the motion of censure of the Minister for Customer Service, notice given this day by the member for Keira, until after the conclusion of the motion of condolence for the late Hon. Milton Morris.

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**.

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**.

Social Housing

Petition requesting that the Sirius building be retained and its social housing function be continued, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

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

Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre

Petition requesting the Government to reopen Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre and to invest funds to upgrade the centre, received from **Mr Greg Piper**.

*Business of the House***D-DAY ANNIVERSARY****Reordering**

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:19): I move:

That the general business notice of motion (general notice) given by me this day [D-day] have precedence on Thursday 6 June 2019.

My motion should be given precedence over other general business as it is vital that all members in this House reflect on the significance of 6 June 1944 to our nation's history. It is important as parliamentarians that, on behalf of our communities, we recognise and commemorate this date so it continues to be appreciated by generations to come. Seventy-five years ago 6 June became known as D-day: the target date on which a vast Allied military air and naval force began the long-awaited Allied invasion and liberation of Nazi-occupied Europe. World War II was into its fifth year and Australian soldiers, both men and women, were fighting for our freedom. The enormous significance of this period in our history and the sacrifice made resonates with all Australians.

In June 1994 German forces still occupied France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Balkans, Denmark, Norway, much of Italy and a large but ever-shrinking area of Europe. It was becoming clear that in order to defeat Germany the Allied troops would have to launch an amphibious campaign from Britain, landing on the coast of France. After months of strategic military planning, the D-day operations commenced with the largest invasion force in history sailing towards the shores of Normandy in France. What unfolded has become known as one of the defining events of World War II and the end of the German war machine.

Australia's contribution, and its sacrifice, is a little-known story in one of history's most dramatic events. Some 3,000 Australian soldiers played a part in this important victory, with our main contribution being in the air. Fourteen Australians are known to have been killed on D-day, being two members of the Royal Australian Navy and 12 members of the Royal Australian Air Force. Many other Australian airmen lost their lives in operations directly related to the invasion of France in the period leading up to 6 June 1944 and in the days that followed, as Allied air crew flew in support of ground troops now engaged in the bitter Normandy fighting.

It is imperative that this motion be given precedence tomorrow over all other general business. Three-quarters of a century on from 6 June 1944, we must honour at every opportunity those who fought and who continue to fight for our country. The legacy of those 3,000 Australian soldiers involved in the D-day campaign has been extended to every one of us, and it is only fitting that we commemorate this in the House 75 years on.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:22): My motion deserves precedence tomorrow because the Premier needs to be held to account for her pet project. The State Government has settled a year-long dispute with Acciona over the light rail project—a settlement that will cost taxpayers \$576 million in compensation. We are advised that this figure does not include legal fees incurred by the State Government in defending its position. The payout will cause the final cost of the light rail project to blow out to over \$3 billion—almost double the original price tag for the project predicted by the then transport Minister, Gladys Berejiklian, in 2012; a project about which former Liberal Premier Nick Greiner said "Do not build this; it will not work." But we are stuck with it now, and this Government must be held to account. Despite costing \$3 billion, there will be no time-saving benefits. Recently it was revealed that the project will aim for a maximum travel time of 40 minutes.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will resume their seats.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Currently, an express bus travelling the same route takes 20 minutes. So let us get this straight: \$3 billion will have been spent on the Premier's pet project for infrastructure that does not improve commuter travel times.

The SPEAKER: Members will resume their seats.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: A huge part of this time blowout has to do with the fact that the New South Wales Government is yet to achieve green-light priority, which would allow the light rail to induce changes of lights in order to avoid stopping at intersections. A report commissioned by Transport for NSW and undertaken by GTA Consultants in 2016 identified several junctions along the south-east route that will incur delays at traffic lights. This includes the intersection of Alison and Darley roads in my electorate.

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

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: The maximum figure of 40 minutes may be pushed out even further if the trams reduce their travelling speed as they approach certain intersections or if red light times need to be extended to accommodate an increase in road traffic. I repeat, \$3 billion dollars has been spent to disrupt local private lives. Residents along the path of the light rail have put up with construction next to their homes for up to three years.

Most recently, a group of constituents from Wansey Road in Randwick contacted me as they have independently recorded construction noise well in excess of the Rail Infrastructure Noise Guidelines. I have also been contacted by a young doctor from the Prince of Wales Hospital who is suffering a lack of sleep due to the construction work. If our medical professionals are forced to turn up to work tired because of excessive construction noise and it results in negative health outcomes, the blame will be on the New South Wales Government. This motion should be given priority because the Premier needs to be held to account for her \$3billion project; \$3billion splurged on a project that has destroyed our beautiful and historic Anzac Parade.

The SPEAKER: The previous two speakers have been seeking precedence for their motion to be reordered tomorrow. The House is not deciding priority at this stage.

The question is that the motion of the member for Manly have precedence on Thursday 6 June 2019.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Greg Warren: Don't do it, Al.

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

Motions Accorded Priority

NSW LABOR

Consideration

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:26): On the weekend a rank outsider Mexican boxer, Andy Ruiz Jr, defeated the favourite Anthony Joshua for the heavyweight boxing championship of the world. My motion should be accorded priority because this House needs to be updated on the state of our own lightweight political bout for the New South Wales Labor leadership between the member for Strathfield and the member for Kogarah. I can report to the House that there is great concern about this contest among the New South Wales unions and the broader Labor Party membership. They could be excused for thinking that they are not witnessing a Muhammad Ali rope-a-dope. Instead they are seeing a contest between a dope and a dope.

In the red corner we have the member for Strathfield and in the more red corner we have the member for Kogarah—well known for his connections with the Communist Party of China. The trade union concerns are well justified. Seventy-two days ago, when the Labor leadership became vacant and still has not been filled, the New South Wales electors who know both the contestants—their own constituents—gave a verdict on the battle between Strathfield and Kogarah. The verdict sent shivers through even the greatest true believer.

After four years of getting to know the member for Kogarah—in the more red corner—the voting of people in his electorate swung against him by 5.1 per cent. In 2011, after having lost the electorate of Newcastle, the Labor Party head office was so concerned about the member for Strathfield's performance—the fighter in the red corner—that it campaigned against her. In the 2019 election the member for Strathfield did not do much better than the member for Kogarah, recording a 1.9 per cent swing to her on primary votes. It is little wonder that the trade unions are not prepared to back either candidate.

It is time that the bell is rung on this lightweight contest so the Australian Labor Party rank and file can be put out of their misery as to the mediocrity of the contest. In a two-horse contest they have been told bizarrely that they must number both of the boxes "1" and "2". Instead, they need to be given a third option—"none of the above". The only person who seems to enjoy this contest is the member for Rockdale. The contest is shaping up to be a points decision with neither contestant in the bout landing a decisive blow.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Consideration

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (15:29): Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: I remind Opposition members that the member for Gosford is waiting to speak.

Ms LIESL TESCH: Today's motion for which I seek priority arises as the current Liberal-Nationals Government continues to abandon services for people with disabilities across this State. At least 3,000 National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] recipients from regional New South Wales will have to find new care providers because Australian Unity—the private provider the Government sold the NDIS rights to—has cut back on disability services and aged care in New South Wales. The cuts are a consequence of the financial pressures facing NDIS providers, and it is not the first organisation to fall. The Central Coast Disability Network in my community, as well as other organisations across the Hunter and regional New South Wales, have closed. I am told that other groups have been advised to relocate.

The flow-on effects to people with disabilities across New South Wales is massive. Staff of these organisations, as well as the families, communities and support networks of people with disabilities, will be severely impacted. At the same time this Government is failing to provide ongoing advocacy. People with disabilities are missing out in this State. If I was on a board of one of the organisations that are facing so much pressure, I would be fearful of continuing my role—as are many people in the sector. Privatisation offers no backstop to support vulnerable people in this State. The NDIS is a fantastic concept, but under this Government it is failing because of privatisation and it will cost the State considerably more. We support the bipartisan changing of group homes, but we are seeing deaths of people with disabilities because of a lack in care. A commissioner is to be appointed and we hope the person will be able to pick up the pieces because at the moment privatisation is resulting in gaps in the system.

In 2015, following the Government's sale to Australian Unity, home care service began to suffer. Organisations and individuals were missing out on services. My disabled friends would wake up expecting care, but under this privatised structure no carer would arrive. It is not fair to people with disabilities and workers in the sector who have to endure the pain of seeing their clients miss out because of a lack of care—and I thank the Public Service Association and the Nurses and Midwives' Association for looking after their workers. In the 2015 budget estimates the Hon. John Ajaka was asked, "What are the safeguards for those individuals who are clients and what are the service obligations?" The Minister replied, "Home care clients are being advised that their services will be unaffected by the transfer to Australian Unity ..." That is not the truth. I ask the Government to look out for people with disabilities. As we see corruption hit this sector, we need advocacy and we need ongoing care, not privatisation.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion of the member for Ku-ring-gai be accorded priority.

The House divided.

Ayes46
Noes44
Majority.....2

AYES

Anderson, Mr K	Ayres, Mr S	Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G	Bromhead, Mr S	Clancy, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K	Constance, Mr A	Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Coure, Mr M	Crouch, Mr A (teller)	Davies, Mrs T
Dominello, Mr V	Elliott, Mr D	Evans, Mr L.J.
Gibbons, Ms M	Griffin, Mr J	Gulaptis, Mr C
Hancock, Mrs S	Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A
Johnsen, Mr M	Kean, Mr M	Lindsay, Ms W
Marshall, Mr A	Pavey, Mrs M	Perrottet, Mr D
Petinos, Ms E	Preston, Ms R	Provest, Mr G
Roberts, Mr A	Saunders, Mr D	Sidgreaves, Mr P
Sidoti, Mr J	Singh, Mr G	Smith, Mr N
Speakman, Mr M	Stokes, Mr R	Taylor, Mr M
Toole, Mr P	Tuckerman, Mrs W	Upton, Ms G
Ward, Mr G	Williams, Mr R	Williams, Mrs L
Wilson, Ms F		

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J	Atalla, Mr E	Bali, Mr S
Barr, Mr C	Butler, Mr R	Car, Ms P
Catley, Ms Y	Chanthivong, Mr A	Cotsis, Ms S
Crakanthorp, Mr T	Daley, Mr M	Dalton, Mrs H
Donato, Mr P	Doyle, Ms T	Finn, Ms J
Greenwich, Mr A	Harris, Mr D	Harrison, Ms J
Haylen, Ms J	Hoenig, Mr R	Hornery, Ms S
Kamper, Mr S	Lalich, Mr N (teller)	Leong, Ms J
Lynch, Mr P	McDermott, Dr H	McGirr, Dr J
McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D	Mihailuk, Ms T
Minns, Mr C	O'Neill, Dr M	Park, Mr R
Parker, Mr J	Piper, Mr G	Saffin, Ms J

NOES

Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

PAIRS

Lee, Dr G

Dib, Mr J

Motion agreed to.**NSW LABOR****Priority**

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:39): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that 72 days after the New South Wales election, the Opposition does not have a leader, because they put Bill Shorten first.
- (2) Notes that major New South Wales unions have rejected both candidates for the leadership of the Opposition.
- (3) Notes that the Opposition is now more divided than ever before.
- (4) Calls on the Opposition to start putting the people of New South Wales first.

It is truly unprecedented for the leadership of the New South Wales Opposition to be vacant for 72 days, as those opposite have allowed. The meandering performance of the Opposition in this House since the State election is clearly a consequence of that. A vibrant democracy requires a vibrant opposition, but that is not what New South Wales has. As I have already pointed out, many major unions have decided to back neither candidate. Unlike its Federal colleagues, NSW Labor is deeply divided about who should be its leader. There have been a number of public declarations for each candidate from the parliamentary caucus.

As John Howard said, "Politics is all about numbers; mathematics does not lie." In the early rounds of this contest there are 17 declared supporters for the member for Strathfield on my count. They include the Hon. Adam Searle, the members representing the electorates of Londonderry, Campbelltown, Blacktown, Swansea, Wyong, Maitland, Port Stephens, Auburn, Liverpool, Granville, Blue Mountains, Coogee, Prospect and Charlestown, the Hon. Peter Primrose and the Hon. Anthony D'Adam. On the other hand, there are 13 declared positions for the member for Kogarah. They include the members representing the electorates of Fairfield, Summer Hill, Rockdale, Lakemba, Bankstown, Cabramatta, Mount Druitt, Heffron and Shellharbour, the Hon. Walt Secord, the Hon. Courtney Houssos, the Hon. Greg Donnelly and the Hon. Rose Jackson. That means 18 members of the caucus—the majority—have not declared support for anyone; they want none of the above.

It is a very interesting state of affairs when the majority of the Labor parliamentary caucus does not want either of them. Those numbers show the divisive nature and the horrible, divided Opposition in this State. Why would that not be the case, I ask rhetorically. What does the member for Kogarah really bring to the table? He was part of Labor's headquarters in 2011 as the Assistant General Secretary, when the Australian Labor Party recorded the greatest electoral loss in its history. He has had no life experience. His minimal parliamentary experience includes working for two Labor Ministers and a Premier during the previous failed Labor Government that comprised Eddie Obeid, Joe Tripodi, Ian Macdonald and the like. In his first major speech when he became a member of Parliament, the member for Kogarah trashed the trade union movement. He said that they were a thing of the past and that they should not dominate the Labor Party. He just turned his back on the union movement.

Therefore, it is not surprising that no major unions support either candidate. And so important is the member for Kogarah that he has been allocated the office of shadow Minister for Water, despite representing the Sydney electorate of Kogarah. On the other hand, we have the member for Strathfield. She did not really want to be Labor leader. She is standing for the position reluctantly. It has been forced on her by Kaila Murnain, the head of the Labor Party. Labor headquarters has lost two elections in New South Wales under her leadership, and yet she has said, "In my judgement", which is so outstanding, "the leadership should go to the member for Strathfield." That is the choice.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (15:45): I like the member for Ku-ring-gai. He blitzed the IQ test on the other side and was found to be too smart to go on the front bench. Today he should realise that when the

Whip gives you a motion to debate, you should check your details because it has actually been 74 days since the election. Obviously this motion was written a couple of days ago. To help out the member for Ku-ring-gai, I move an amendment to the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House notes that it is 74 days after the New South Wales election."

I move this amendment because the breaching of the data of hundreds of New South Wales residents is much more fundamental than the sick fascination that members opposite have with the democratic process. It is amazing how much time, energy and effort the other side is putting into watching a leadership contest. Do you know why they are doing that? Because they have never seen democracy before. They are like children seeing their first Christmas. They are so fascinated by it; they have never seen internal party democracy before. And do you know why? Because the last time they changed their leader, they did it in the dead of night while the main Opposition candidate was away overseas, tucked up in London asleep and waiting to get back.

Everyone else was on holidays, but where was Michael Photios? He was in the thick of it. All the lobbyists and the others who were pulling the strings made sure that Gladys Berejiklian became Premier. I do not quote former Prime Minister Tony Abbott too often. In fact, I think you will find this is the first time I have ever done it. Even former Prime Minister Tony Abbott told the ABC last year that lobbyists have too much control of the Liberal Party. I note that the member for Manly is smiling. He knows this. He was the happiest bloke on election night four weeks ago. The former Prime Minister went on to say:

If you are making money out of the people whose preselections you control or influence there is obviously a potential for corruption ...

We have heard a lot over the past few days and heard a lot of questions from members on this side of the House about what exactly happened with the data breach in which people's private information was leaked to a journalist. Nobody else in New South Wales has found out anything. We have not learned anything from members opposite or from the Minister responsible. We have not learned anything about what has been going on in the office of the Minister for Customer Service. The Premier clearly does not talk to her chief of staff because she does not know what is going on in her office. Despite the fact that the Premier allegedly controls everything and does all her homework, she apparently does not bother to check in with her chief of staff to find out what is going on—even when people's data is being handed out willy-nilly.

Government members are hiding behind the excuse that police could not find enough evidence to lay criminal charges. Just because the police could not lay charges, it does not mean something did not go horribly wrong; it does not mean that people do not have a case to answer. The Premier is like Donald Trump this week. She stood up in question time and said, "The police didn't find anything so I am exonerated." That is like Trump tweeting after the release of the Mueller report. Just because the police cannot find enough evidence to lay criminal charges and the Director of Public Prosecutions will not pursue a prosecution, it does not mean something is not crook. The member for Ku-ring-gai knows it. He is a legal professional, and he knows exactly what has been going on.

We need to know how much of the data of the constituents of Wollongong, Wyong, Macquarie Fields or Port Stephens has been leaked and when they will be told about it. That is the only question that needs to be answered by this House. That is the only question that needs to be answered by members opposite. It is not good enough to claim you have been exonerated just because a police investigation has ceased. It is time you fessed up to the people of New South Wales. It is time you put the people of New South Wales first. It is time you told them what data was leaked, when it was leaked and who has it now, because the people of New South Wales deserve it.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:50): It is with great pleasure that I support the member for Ku-ring-gai in this motion. It is wonderful to see members of the public in the gallery. If they look long and hard they will see a few Labor members sitting opposite me who are searching for a leader. Neither of the contenders for that position is in the Chamber at the moment. One of them is running away from the unions and the other one is down at the lifts strongarming people to her side.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members will remain seated while the debate is ongoing. It is unparliamentary for members to be moving around the Chamber while a member is speaking.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: There are no leadership contenders here. The motion states that the Labor Party has been without a leader for 72 days, but, correctly, the member for Wollongong said it was actually worse than that—it is 74 days. With all the fumbles that have been created by Labor members recently, they will struggle to get anyone of any worth or value whatsoever to lead the once great New South Wales Labor Party.

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

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: It is interesting that a number of Labor members have expressed certain opinions about what they should be doing and who they should be supporting, and all those sorts of things.

Mr Greg Warren: Not you.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: Don't worry. I do not get a vote.

Mr Paul Scully: Not in your party or ours.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: And I would never want one.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wollongong will resume his seat and remain silent.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: At least we have people worth voting for in our party.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Upper Hunter will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: I will say it again: At least we have people worth voting for in our party. Labor actually does have a great member over there—the member for Cessnock. He should be the leader. He has a personality, he has a brain, he can think and he can engage with people. When we look at the Labor Party's two contenders, we find that one of them comes from my electorate. She grew up in Gloucester. By the way, Jodi, your mum says to say g'day. Jodi's mum votes for me, which is a wonderful thing. She is a great supporter of The Nationals. While she must be very proud of her daughter, I am sure she harbours a great deal of disappointment knowing that Jodi is even in the Labor Party, let alone trying to lead the Labor Party. The member for Strathfield has gone to the dark side. There is absolutely no doubt about it. Having said that, there is hope for Jodi. Her mum is a wonderful lady with a very good brain. She must have a very good brain as she votes for me. I completely and utterly support this motion. I feel sorry for Labor Party members because they have two utterly unworthy candidates to vote for.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:54): Struth, how do I follow-up on that? Paralysis has set in with the sanctimonious drones opposite. They have nothing to talk about other than us. I will come back to that later on, but there is one thing for certain: They have no idea what they are talking about when they talk about us, but we know exactly what we are talking about when we talk about them. When they are going to roll someone over, Minister Stokes takes off to the other side of the world and we know that it is on—here we go, he is not here. How unbelievable are these guys? Liberal Party democracy? I refer to a fine editorial in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, in a report by James Robertson, where former Federal MP and media personality Ross Cameron copped a nearly five-year ban from the Liberal Party for making critical public comments about New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian—struth, I would get about 50 years! That is Liberal Party democracy right there. But it gets even better. As my colleague the member for Wollongong pointed out, Tony Abbott has said:

If you are making money out of the people whose preselections you control or influence there is obviously a potential for corruption.

I know many members on the other side are not fans of Alan Jones but I do not mind the bloke. Those opposite do not like him but he was right—he was bang on the money with his comments about Gladys Berejiklian replacing Mike Baird as was reported in, again, that fine editorial *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 20 January 2017. The editorial stated:

... Alan Jones said the Liberal Party's likely choice for the next NSW leader, Gladys Berejiklian, lacks the ability to be premier and accused her of being installed by party factions without a proper contest.

And that mob on the other side want to lecture us about democracy. They have absolutely no idea. They have no credibility in this place and they have no credibility in the democracies and communities right across this great State. The Premier did not back herself to win the vote; she could only do it once Minister Stokes had taken off to the other side of the globe. It is no wonder that they are so obsessed. I am very flattered with all this discussion about us and about the democratic principles of the great party, but they know that they cannot talk about themselves. They only need to look at the absolute disaster that is the light rail project where this week's cost blowout of another \$576 million brings the total cost now to more than \$2.7 billion. Look at the mess they have made of TAFE. Look at the emergency wards in our hospitals. The office of the Minister for Customer Service is also being investigated by the police. The member for Wollongong was right: We know what has gone on. If no charges are laid, it does not mean that nothing happened. We know it and they know it, so let us support the amendments and get this done.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:57): In reply: It is more with sorrow than anger that I speak in reply because out of the eight minutes allotted to the two speakers for the New South Wales Labor Party they were not able to utter one word in favour of either of their two leadership candidates. There was not one word of the great ways in which they would contribute to the State of New South Wales and not one word suggesting that they were not deeply divided. The member for Wollongong, who I had in my undeclared column, did not say

which candidate he supported—the red corner or the very red corner—and neither did the member for Campbelltown say that he did not support the member for Strathfield, as I had said originally. All the Opposition members could do was to talk about a unanimous election of the Liberal Party leader in 2017—their whole contribution was so 2017. The member for Wollongong's great contribution corrected the record.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is already on a call to order.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The Opposition was leaderless for two more days than I had said—a great and very penetrating observation by the member for Wollongong. He said we have never seen democracy. Obviously the Labor Opposition is still in denial about 23 March 2019 when there was a really big vote in New South Wales—it was called a democratic election. Guess what? You lost and we won.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I am sorry. They are in opposition and we are in government—that is what democracy is all about. We know all about democracy and, as the Liberal-Nationals Coalition has now won Federal and State elections within the space of months in 2019, I think we have a pretty good idea of how democracy works. Frankly, it is working pretty well for us at the moment, unlike the Opposition's idea of democracy, which has divided its team terribly. I read out the numbers: The "neither of the above" column amongst the Opposition's caucus has the greatest majority of support; and the member for Strathfield and the member for Kogarah cannot even get more than one-third of the support. That is a sad state for the once great Australian Labor Party. They are leaderless. They have been leaderless since the State election on 23 March. Whether that is 72 or 74 days, it is way too long and it is an insult to the voters of New South Wales. I commend my motion to the House.

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

The House divided.

Ayes45

Noes45

Majority.....0

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McDermott, Dr H
Mehan, Mr D
O'Neill, Dr M
Piper, Mr G
Smith, Ms T.F.
Ward, Mr G
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dalton, Mrs H
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
McGirr, Dr J
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Gibbons, Ms M
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D

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
O'Dea, Mr J
Petinos, Ms E

Barilaro, Mr J
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Preston, Ms R

NOES

Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G

Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Williams, Mr R

Saunders, Mr D
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Tuckerman, Mrs W
Wilson, Ms F

PAIRS

Dib, Mr J

Lee, Dr G

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will use my casting vote with the noes. Therefore, the motion on the amendment is lost.

Amendment negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the original motion as moved by the member for Ku-ring-gai be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes46
Noes44
Majority.....2

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
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D
Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Wilson, Ms F

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
O'Dea, Mr J
Petinos, Ms E
Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G

Barilaro, Mr J
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Preston, Ms R
Saunders, Mr D
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Tuckerman, Mrs W
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McDermott, Dr H
Mehan, Mr D
O'Neill, Dr M
Piper, Mr G
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dalton, Mrs H
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
McGirr, Dr J
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

PAIRS

Lee, Dr G

Dib, Mr J

Motion agreed to.*Condolences***DEATH OF THE HON. MILTON ARTHUR MORRIS, AO, FORMER MEMBER FOR MAITLAND
AND A FORMER MINISTER OF THE CROWN**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to family members of the late Hon. Milton Arthur Morris: his daughter, Colleen Gale, and her husband, Kevin Gale; his daughter, Margaret Livingstone, and her husband, Neil Livingstone; his son, John Morris, and his wife, Angela Nichols; and his daughter, Karen Morris, and her husband, Jonathan Toussaint. I acknowledge his grandchildren who are in the gallery: Raylee Davies, Simone Collins, Aaron Walter, Simon Livingstone, Sally Richards, Lee Walter, Benjamin Livingstone, Daniel Morris and Stephanie Thompson. We welcome you all to the Chamber today.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (16:19): I move:

That this House extends to the family the deep sympathy of members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained by the death on 27 February 2019 of the Hon. Milton Arthur Morris, AO, a former Minister of the Crown.

I welcome the members of Mr Morris' family here today and extend our deep gratitude that they are able to join us for this important condolence motion. I extend our condolences and appreciation of the contribution Mr Morris made to New South Wales, and the special contribution he made to the people of Maitland. I saw this firsthand on many occasions but especially at the celebration of his life in April. It was an outstanding day befitting someone of the stature of Mr Morris. In addition to his family members, I make mention of Milton's loyal staffer for 40 years, Kay Sharp, who I know would have loved to be here today if she were able to.

Born in 1924 to parents, Arthur Henry Morris and Janet Thomson, Milton attended Wickham Public School and Newcastle Junior High School. After leaving school, he joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1942 and then transferred to the Volunteer Defence Corps, where he served as an anti-aircraft gunner from 1942 until 1945. He was first a councillor on the Lower Hunter Shire Council. He then went on to serve as the Liberal member for Maitland from 1956 to 1980—a total of 24 years. During his time as a parliamentarian Milton was Minister for Transport from 1965 to 1975 and the Minister for Lands and Minister for Forests as well as the Minister for Decentralisation and Development between 1975 and 1976. And yet, despite all this, with trademark humility, Milton once described himself as "an ordinary person to whom God gave extraordinary opportunities". He would be too modest to say so himself but New South Wales and Australia are stronger for his life-long contribution.

After the Second World War, Milton turned the sacrifice and dedication to public service that he had displayed during wartime into a career in public life spanning from the 1950s to the 1980s and beyond. Drawn to the values of the Liberal Party, he joined the Tarro branch in 1954. As a Hunter Valley councillor and the member for Maitland for a remarkable nine consecutive terms and a stunning nine elections, Milton served this community with absolute distinction. It was no surprise when Premier Robert Askin appointed Milton as his Minister for Transport in 1965, a role he would hold for the next 10 years. He was the longest serving Minister for Transport in the history of New South Wales: a record that has never been broken—the current Minister for Transport and Roads only has six more years to go. As the son of a railway guard, Milton was destined for this role. He had a lifelong ambition to be part of the railways.

Word has it that a young Milton would sit on the grassy banks above the railway yard and watch wide-eyed as his father and other members of his family worked away. With a laugh, Milton once said that it took him "25 years to get a job on the railways—but [he] had to be Minister for Transport" for that to happen. While Milton also excelled in other portfolios, it was in Transport where he made his most profound and lasting impact during a period of reform across New South Wales—and we are still receiving the benefits of that period. When asked about his time as Minister for Transport he said, "I achieved the daydream of my youth to be Minister for Transport" and that "I threw my heart into it because it was something I loved"—a fact he shared with me on many occasions.

As Minister for Transport, Milton was responsible for introducing some of the road safety innovations that still play a critical role in saving lives such as the breathalyser, a radar to reduce speeding, compulsory seat belts and the establishment of the Traffic Accident Research Unit. I understand at that time New South Wales was the first jurisdiction to introduce the compulsory seat belts—something that has saved countless lives ever since. Under Milton's watch the State's death toll was halved, falling from 1,300 deaths in 1965 to about 700 a decade

later. That this was during a time when the number of cars registered in New South Wales rose from 750,000 to 2 million, makes his achievements all the more remarkable. Beyond road safety, Milton built on the legacy of Bradfield to expand the Sydney rail network, including initiating the construction of the Eastern Suburbs line and delivering a double-track railway bridge over the Georges River at Como.

But for all of his achievements as a Minister, Milton was first and foremost a local member, and the longest serving member for Maitland at that. It follows that we will always remember Milton as "Mr Maitland", a man of great integrity and one who was popular on all sides of politics. In this place it was often remarked that Milton was unfailingly friendly and polite, treating all members of Parliament equally, irrespective of their political persuasions, and as a Minister, he operated by a particular code of ethics. Milton embodied the spirit of civic responsibility with his commitment to improve lives and make a difference for people throughout New South Wales, but his achievements for New South Wales were always grounded in his love of his own community.

It says much about Milton's dedication to the Hunter region that, after retiring from politics, he served for 30 years as chair of Hunter Valley Training, an organisation supporting employment. He was chair in a period when more than 22,000 people received training in vital career skills. In his own words, this was one of the great privileges of his life. When the sad news of Milton's passing broke, social media, local radio and newspapers were flooded with tributes from people who knew him or who were helped by him in some way. Each and every one of those tributes was so richly deserved.

Few of us have contributed more to our community, our State and our nation than Milton Morris did, from the Second World War to the twenty-first century. Most importantly, of course, Milton was an amazing family man—a devout Christian, husband to Colleen for 67 years, a wonderful father and grandfather and a great friend to many. Much has been said and will be said, and rightly so, of Milton Morris's contribution to New South Wales, to his beloved community of Maitland and to the Liberal Party. He was a trailblazer and a true patriot in so many ways. But what I think made him exceptional was his humanity and his generosity. He was a true gentleman.

My friendship with Milton started about a decade ago when I was the shadow Minister for Transport and Milton kindly reached out to me to extend his much-appreciated pearls of wisdom. I was recently honoured to be asked to speak at his memorial service on 13 April. The service was a celebration of his life and his contribution to Maitland and to New South Wales. It was an amazing and uplifting send-off for such a humble man. I could tell from my early interactions with Milton that he was a person of strong character and strong conviction. He maintained a passion for public transport and for making New South Wales the best place it could be decades after he had retired from politics.

I looked up to him, as did many others, and admired the respect he showed everyone, irrespective of their politics or background. I appreciated the way he continued to support many of us in public life. His commitment to Maitland was outstanding. I was always so pleasantly surprised to see Milton attend community or media events when he knew that I, or one of my colleagues, was in town. I thoroughly enjoyed the correspondence I received from him during the past decade and I know many others did as well. I was relieved that, although Milton had mastered many things, thankfully email was not his preferred form of communication.

Always the true gentleman, during our decade of friendship I never saw him in anything other than a suit, although I know from family and friends that he was never afraid to roll up his sleeves and enjoy tending to the farm or work in the garden. I never heard him speak ill of anyone and I always knew him to be kind and thoughtful. When I heard earlier this year that Milton's health was in serious decline, I sent him a handwritten note, which I knew he would appreciate. Unfortunately, it arrived shortly after he passed; however, I am consoled by the fact that Milton knew how much I and many others respected and appreciated him, how much affection I and many others had for him and how proud he would feel of my Government's success at the recent State election. After all, he was part of the last Liberal Government that had successfully secured a third term in the 1970s.

Whilst I am saddened by his passing, I remain grateful for Milton's friendship and support. Milton continues to inspire me to do my best and to do it in a respectful way, as he did for so many others. He sacrificed much but was sustained by the knowledge that his contribution to public life had such a positive impact on the wellbeing of the citizens of our State, an impact still felt today and which will be felt for many generations to come. On behalf of the people of New South Wales, once again I offer my deepest condolences and appreciation to Milton's family and to everyone who knew, admired and loved this great man, this great Australian. To a mentor, a friend and a colleague we say thank you and rest in peace.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:29): On behalf of the Labor Opposition I pay our respects to Mr Milton Morris and pass on our sincere condolences to his family and friends. As the Premier said, Mr Morris is survived by his children Colleen, Margaret, John and Karen; 18 grandchildren; 46 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren—I have enough trouble having two children! We in the Opposition were deeply saddened to hear

of the passing of Milton, who was affectionately known as "Mr Maitland". Milton Morris was the elected Liberal member for Maitland from March 1956 to August 1980, an incredible achievement. I have been in this place for only eight years and I recognise his long service in representing his community and, more importantly, his achievement in being elected by his community many times, which says a lot about Mr Morris.

He was a councillor on the Lower Hunter Shire from 1954 to 1958. With the retirement of the incumbent member for Maitland, Walter Howarth, Mr Morris was preselected by the Liberal Party and won the seat at that election. He subsequently won re-election at a further nine elections. During his lengthy political career Mr Morris held various portfolios in the Askin, Lewis and Willis governments, including Minister for Transport from 1965 to 1975. No-one has served longer as the Minister for Transport in New South Wales than Mr Morris. The Premier, the current Minister for Transport and Roads and I know how difficult this portfolio is—I would say it is the toughest portfolio. Mr Morris served for a long time in this demanding portfolio, which says a lot about his determination and skill as well as his commitment to public office.

It is important that I recognise that Mr Morris was held in high esteem by both sides of politics. It is reported that he would answer a Labor question as politely as a Dorothy Dixier from his own side; I wish this politeness happened today. But in what is simply unheard of today, he ensured that local MPs got to announce projects in their patches, despite protests from his State colleagues. We have much to thank Mr Morris for including each life that has been saved due to wearing a seatbelt. It was during his time as Minister for Transport that he introduced mandatory seatbelt laws—what a reform, what a legacy. I am sure his family members are extremely proud each day they buckle up. It is an honour and a privilege to speak about him today.

The State's road toll fell from an incredible 1,300 deaths in 1965 to about 700 a decade later. Very few people have left public office having delivered a reform that made such an enormous difference to many lives. We have to ask: How many young people, elderly people, parents, family members and friends have been saved simply because of the device in our vehicles that we take for granted today? What is more incredible about the massive decline in the road toll is that, over the same period, the number of cars registered in New South Wales rose from 750,000 to 2 million. Mr Morris was also the politician who introduced the breathalyser and radar traps in New South Wales, again a decision that undoubtedly has saved countless lives.

Mr Morris was a popular figure and might have been Premier, but he did not want the job. Among a string of personal accolades, he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1988. His influence extended past his retirement from politics in 1980 when he shifted to education as Hunter Valley Training Company [HVTC] chairman for 30 years. When I was the shadow Minister for Education I visited the HVTC and it was world-class. No doubt it has become the organisation it is because of the input of Mr Morris. He will be remembered by many as a man of great integrity who was popular on all sides of politics. My colleagues will have much more to say on Mr Morris, in particular the member for Maitland. I know she held him in high esteem, as did so many Hunter members from all sides. Despite all he accomplished and the many lives he improved, this is undoubtedly a difficult time for Mr Morris' family. I acknowledge those family members who are in the gallery this afternoon.

Politics is tough on family members, and for him to have spent so much time in this place would have had an enormous impact on each of them. I know he is considered one of the true champions of this place. We have all felt his passing. We on this side of the Chamber could only hope to leave the sort of legacy that Mr Morris achieved. I offer to his family members my deep condolence and that of the entire New South Wales Opposition at this sad time. Thank you for sharing Mr Morris with all of us.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (16:35): I join with my colleagues in welcoming the family of the late Milton Morris and I echo the words of both the Premier and the acting Leader of the Opposition. When I first met Mr Morris it was very obvious to me that he had an incredible affinity with our Premier and no doubt had taken a lot of time to give insight into his time as transport Minister. If we look at the record of achievement of Mr Morris and what he delivered not only for road safety, which has been touched on, but also for our railways, there is no doubt that we owe him a debt of gratitude. In many ways this condolence motion is about thanking him for his commitment and service to the people of the State.

It is ironic that he was known as Mr Maitland and also Mr Road Safety. If we reflect on a person's ability to represent the Hunter for that length of time, given the very nature of the Hunter back then, the growth of industry, rail freight and the mining sector, we can see it was an extraordinary achievement for a Liberal. It is quite often said there are some jobs that are made for people and there are people who seem to be made for their jobs. If ever there were a person destined to become transport Minister it was Mr Morris. At 15 he applied for a job as a clerk at the railway office in Newcastle. But the teen was told the only position was as a porter. His father, who had also had a railway career, told his son he was better than that. His father's faith paid off in that regard when some 25 years later Mr Morris was at the pinnacle of transport in this State.

The Premier said I have six years to go. It is lucky Mr Morris did not have to put up with social media during those 10 years. We do not see a Minister in a portfolio for 10 years any more. We do not see politics like it used to be. That is because of not only the very nature of the community, which has changed, but also the incredible commitment travel times that were required to get from places like Maitland and Bega to represent their constituency in this place. It is not like that today.

I was interested to read that Mr Morris refused to ride in the luxurious Victorian-era ministerial carriage; he was out with the people. It is no wonder he won nine elections. Without doubt he was willing to ignore media and even ignore the advice of police in relation to a public rally. He was very much a community champion for actually turning up and speaking the mind of his community at that time. He was very popular. He should have gone on to become Premier, I have no doubt about that. I do disagree with him on this point. He said: "I am a very ordinary person, to which God gave extraordinary opportunities." He was a man of extraordinary talent. He was not an ordinary person in that sense.

His legacy is unbelievable. The last time we saw government build a new rail tunnel under the city was 50 years ago, thanks to him. It is very pleasing we are now doing that today. When I spoke to him he knew pretty much every element of what we were up to. He kept abreast of that not only in terms of the city but also more broadly beyond the city boundaries. I know his love of family and friends without doubt gave him incredible strength to be able to do the job that he did. He did change this State. He changed so many lives and he must never, ever be forgotten. May he rest in peace.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:41): It is with great sadness that I acknowledge the passing of the Hon. Milton Morris, pay tribute to his remarkable legacy, and pay my respects and offer my condolences to the 17 members of his family who are here today, and the many others in the community who I remember from the memorial service—I cannot guess the exact number. Milton passed away peacefully in his sleep on 26 February 2019. I remember calling Kay, my go-to in relation to Milton. She told me how many calls she had had in the last couple of days before he passed. She said it was almost like they all had heard the train whistle; people knew.

He was actually the first politician I met in Maitland. In fact, he was probably one of the first 10 or so people I met there. Shortly after I moved to Maitland we moved into a house that was right near the Donaldson coalmine that was starting up at that time. Milton Morris was part of the community consultation process. I think a lot of my views about living in a coalmining community came from Milton: understanding impacts and providing people with information; and ensuring that proper monitoring was in place so that it was a place for the good operation of mines in our community. Much has been, and will be, said about Milton in this place. We will reflect on his lengthy parliamentary career, his full-time service and his council service, but the landmark legislation that came into effect during his time as Minister for Transport is obviously well-trodden ground. His vision and tenacity saved lives in our community and our State and that is a proud record.

I also want to talk about his contribution as a man in our community, as the member for Maitland and as someone who was very much a man of his family and his faith. Milton first joined the Parliament in 1956 and retained the electorate of Maitland for a record term of 24 years. As I am four years in, I know that is a long legacy to look up to. During his tenure as a parliamentarian he was Minister for Transport for 10 years. I have to say Milton would challenge the current Minister for Transport on the speed of travelling to Sydney these days. I think he might say it was faster under him. There are still lots of people in the Hunter who have fond memories of that fast train to Sydney.

He is remembered as the Minister who halved the New South Wales road toll in a 10-year period while the number of registered motor vehicles more than doubled. He is remembered for introducing the compulsory wearing of seatbelts; bringing in the use of P-plates, helping our new learner drivers to be more confident on the road now that they were unmasked; introducing a licence point system; bringing in radar speed detection; and introducing the breathalyser. He is also remembered for allowing women to become bus drivers and for granting Maitland's first-ever female taxi driver, Una Farley, her licence. Milton saved lives but he also advocated for innovation and equality. It is a proud record for any transport Minister.

As mentioned, Milton had other portfolios. In 1975 he served as Minister for Lands and Forests and in 1976 as Minister for Decentralisation and Development. He was so effective as a Minister that in 1977 he received telephone calls from 12 of the 30 State Liberal Party members asking him to stand for the positions of leader or deputy leader of the State Parliamentary Liberal Party. I am sure he probably had an easier time than some of the current leadership contenders given it was not posted on social media. But Milton did not entertain the idea of being a leader or deputy leader for one reason: his commitment was to the people of Maitland and to his family.

The newspaper of record in his electorate, the *Maitland Mercury*, sought comment from Milton at that time. His response was clear, "The cold facts are that to be leader of the parliamentary party, I'd have to live in

Sydney and there would be considerably less appearances in our electorate than would suit me." Holding the Transport portfolio was a realisation of his childhood dream. Both sides of his family had strong links to the railway and it was somewhat inevitable that his career would lead him down that track. And in a way it did when Milton became the State's highest rail authority as the Minister. Milton's tenure as Minister for Transport is yet to be surpassed and, ultimately, it was his decision to step away from the portfolio. I am sure all of us in this place would love to have that opportunity.

The then New South Wales Opposition leader, John Mason, said that upon his election in 1978 he asked Milton to name his job in the shadow Cabinet. Milton, however, had reached the point in his career where he wanted to be free-ranging and not tied down by any specific responsibility. "His words of counsel and his advice are carefully weighted and heavily relied on," Mr Mason told the *Maitland Mercury*. He continued, "I don't know of any member whose words are more closely listened to." Part of the reason for this is that Milton was renowned for working with whomever he needed to work with in order to achieve the outcomes for his electorate and the State. In 2011 this was documented in the *Newcastle Herald's* feature article "A life of perpetual motion". I pay tribute to the journalist, Helen Gregory, who compiled such a comprehensive record of Milton's career. She wrote:

Morris ensured that local MPs announced any transport matters in their own electorates. He decided to let Labor Member for Newcastle and good friend Arthur Wade make the announcement about the installation of traffic lights at the Nineways in Broadmeadow. It was the first time traffic signals had been used to control the number of roads that converge at the site.

The Liberal Party and the local branch complained about the important announcement being left in the hands of a local member.

I can see the Minister smiling—it is not the same as the Victoria Street station but that is for another day. The article continued:

Then-Premier Robert Askin drew Morris aside after a cabinet meeting to inform him of the complaints.

Mr Morris said:

The day the Liberals win the Newcastle seat they will make the announcements, the local member in these days is supreme.

According to Mr Morris, Mr Askin replied:

"You did what I'd do", and nothing more was said of it.

Milton was truly a gentleman and showed true respect for our electorates, our communities and the people who elect us as MPs to this place. Kay Sharp, AM, who unfortunately cannot be here today, worked with Milton for more than four decades and remembers him as a man of praise, never cruelty. A lot of things get said in electorate offices behind closed doors but Kay said, "In 43 years I don't remember him ever saying anything unpleasant about anyone. Ever. But he had a great sense of humour and an infectious laugh."

Milton was justifiably proud of his ability to get things done without making enemies unnecessarily. Part of his success and enduring respect was fairness. He was known for treating members of Parliament equally, as representatives of their constituencies, irrespective of their political persuasions. In 1994 in the *Hunter Valley Weekend* he reflected, "One of the deteriorations and sad turns in politics today is the bitterness, rancour and personal attacks which are now resorted to in Parliament." He also said, "It's always a quest of how we can best get her or him personally if we can't attack their policies. I served under great Labor premiers, such as Cahill, Heffron and Renshaw, and they never attacked an opposition member on a personal basis, but on policies they could push you through the wringer."

Milton also recognised that while most politicians built resilience to personal criticism, their spouses and families suffered most. These days we often hear talk of new standards in public discourse and conduct. I believe Mr Morris set the standard. He never turned down an interview because he knew just how weak those words "The Minister refused to comment" could look. On that note I acknowledge the work of the *Maitland Mercury* and *Newcastle Herald* journalists who immortalised so much of Milton's life and career, and captured so many of his direct quotes through his generosity in speaking. Milton was something of a media darling, possibly due to his often-quoted line, which is a window to his humble nature, "I have never been misrepresented in the media, but there were times when I read in the morning paper what I wished I hadn't said the night before." I think we have all been there. That was his way. He was not one for shirking responsibility or blaming others. Milton was a communicator and a talker but also a listener. His way to hose down looming political trouble on the railways was to catch a train and talk to the passengers with a media pack along for the ride. That is true courage for a politician to do that.

Milton's political career ended in 1980 when he resigned from the Legislative Assembly to stand for the Federal seat of Lyne. Although Milton did not win that election, another door opened and it led to a 30-year chapter he later described as one of the greatest privileges in his life. In 1981 the Wran Labor Government set up a not-for-profit group training organisation called the Hunter Valley Training Company [HVTC] to create a skilled

workforce for the construction of Muswellbrook's Bayswater Power Station. HVTC was to provide vocational education and training for a six-year period.

In yet another example of how highly regarded Milton was by both sides of politics, the then Minister for Industrial Relations, Labor's Pat Hills, invited Milton to manage this new organisation. Milton's first response was to decline as he did not see himself fit to manage a company. But he and his loyal, long-time friend and colleague Kay Sharp struck a partnership. Milton accepted the position of inaugural chairman, and Kay accepted the role of general manager. He even knew how to pass the baton to someone he had mentored with such grace.

The HVTC was the first of its kind in Australia. It became the exemplar for the hundreds of training companies that now operate throughout Australia. Last night I spoke to some colleagues from the trade union movement and they remembered him too and the runaway success of HVTC. There are strong feelings for this man around our State and HVTC is still going strong to this day. Milton served as founding chairman for 30 years and became patron in 2011. During that time the organisation helped 22,000 young people get apprenticeships. They helped them do so much more. They gained skills for life and began going down a path towards lifelong employment. What better gift can we give to young people?

Kay, who worked alongside Milton for 43 years, first as his electorate officer and then at the Hunter Valley Training Company, recalls their legacy with pride. She said, "HVTC was to give young men and women from disadvantaged and high unemployment areas around the State the chance to get an apprenticeship." Kay described how Milton managed to combine his loves of steam and rail and offering opportunities to young people. She also said, "He had the 3801 steam engine completely restored. It took three years and 337 out-of-trade apprentices but he had it totally rebuilt. We even had to make the rivets. It taught those young people so much." What a legacy to our tourism industry that was. Kay said that in addition to Maitland's iconic 3801, the training company also restored the 3830 for the Powerhouse Museum, the *James Craig*, and the Fort Scratchley cannons. HVTC is still going strong. A couple of weeks ago I was there with the member for Port Stephens, my colleague Kate Washington, and the HVTC Chief Executive Officer, Sharon Smith. Milton's legacy lives on and it is very strong.

On a personal level, Milton was a man with an unwavering moral compass. He staunchly believed that God would provide the opportunities, but it was up to the individual to put the hard work in—and he did. During Milton's youth, work all but dried up for his father, Arthur. The family's home was repossessed and for a year they lived in a tent next to Sandgate Cemetery. Despite these tough times and his years of hard work, he described himself as someone who had been given extraordinary opportunities. A lifelong Methodist at heart, the story of the Good Samaritan compelled him through its challenge to go and do likewise.

His involvement in the church community spanned 46 years as superintendent of Mayfield Baptist Sunday School; 45 years as deacon of Mayfield Baptist Church; 49 years as chairman of Lewis House Hostel; and pastor of Thalaba Baptist Church from 1993 to 2014. He even drove the Sunday school bus, combining transport with his other great love. A bit like his political views, Milton was ecumenical. He was hailed as a great friend to St Peter's Anglican Church in East Maitland, where his memorial service was held, and the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. When I was first elected to this place, I remember Bishop Bill Wright telling me of the regular afternoon teas that he enjoyed with Milton.

Milton was an authorised minister of the Baptist Churches of New South Wales and a registered local preacher of the world Methodist church. His funeral was attended by a number of church leaders from different faiths. His passion for life and belief in God and others were his driving force. At one time he voiced his wish that his epitaph would state simply: "He has done what he could". What a humble, generous person! Milton was valued as a gracious and kind gentleman and certainly "did what he could". He was renowned for giving his time and knowledge and he did not hesitate to offer mentoring to those who came to him to learn. Milton's relationship with another Maitland legend, Peter Blackmore, OAM, is but one example. Mr Blackmore also served as the State member for Maitland in this place and led the city for 22 years as mayor. The two of them met for lunch on a regular basis to discuss the political state of play. Reflecting on Milton's death, Peter told the *Maitland Mercury*:

He was an outstanding man and I am proud to hold him up there as my mentor. I virtually fashioned my political career off Milton Morris.

I, too, am honoured to have counted Milton as a friend and mentor. I have greatly appreciated his kindness to me as a new member of Parliament. He was always ready for a chat when I met him at community events. He was so inclusive and warm. I remember visiting the Polish Association of Maitland for the fortieth birthday of the Polish Millennium Hall; Milton was there. He was an honorary member of the association and loved deeply by its members. I think it was one of the last official events that I attended with him but I have to say that it really inspired me with the strength of relationships that members of Parliament build with their local communities over

years. I enjoyed the chat I had with his daughter Karen at the time, looking back at her life as the child of a parliamentarian. I visited Milton after he moved back to Mayfield.

Kay Sharp, as loyal as ever, met me there and we all chatted for an hour or so about life in politics and those wonderful train trips to Sydney, which I think for him were a real highlight as he met other members from the Hunter on the way—they would all be Labor. We also talked about the friendships he made along the way. He was humble about the obvious affection with which he was regarded. While his memory was dimming slightly on that day, he was still clear on policy and the right way to do things. He still had very strong opinions on hot political topics. It was a wonderful and very pleasant conversation. A special moment from that day I remember was him telling Kay, "Write this down. We are going to write a letter to that man"—meaning the then Leader of the Opposition—"that we want her in Maitland". It may not have been a good thing for my career in the Labor Party in the current political cycle but who knows, such is the respect that members on this side of the House have for him. It was a really special moment for me and evidence of his generosity of spirit.

At his memorial service in Maitland, that generosity of spirit was on full display. There were so many different politicians from different political parties, including, of course, his dear friend Richard Face; the Premier—I thank her for coming; it meant a lot to our community—former Australian Democrat and Australian Labor Party MP Cheryl Kernot, who grew up in Maitland; former Greens Councillor Wendy White; Federal member for Paterson Meryl Swanson, who was married by Milton and would not forgive me if I did not say that; the current member for Port Stephens, Kate Washington and former member Bob Martin; former member for Maitland John Price; Peter Blackmore; and the current Mayor of Maitland as well as lots of councillors. All of us were there to honour Milton Morris because in some way Milton had such a great impact on our lives or had inspired us to stand for public office, to stand up for our communities and to try to improve our State or our nation.

While we are paying tribute to Milton today, it would be remiss of me if I did not thank Kay Sharp for her work. Milton really understood the importance of our electorate officers and the personal sacrifices they make as they work beside us in our roles as parliamentarians. They are so important to our work. They keep us in touch, help our constituents, smooth relationships, provide wise counsel and support, and help organise that balance between family life and work. Kay was Milton's ever-loyal deputy. In those days there was only ever one electorate secretary who did everything. Like Milton, Kay Sharp set the standard.

I remember Milton telling me how Kay and he would walk down from his office to the Maitland post office on the Friday of sitting weeks, just to reconnect with the people so they could see him and ask him a question or catch up. As they walked along Kay would remind him who people were and how he—or, in fact, Kay—had helped them. They had the kind of working partnership that can be so hard to find but one that is so precious once you do. The mutual respect, courtesy and calmness is something that has always impressed me. Milton's values and character were consistent in every facet of his life. He modelled them as a government Minister, a mentor, a pastor, a father and a husband. He was married to Colleen for 67 years, during which time they welcomed four children—Colleen, Margaret, John and Karen. Milton farewelled his dear wife in 2013 but their legacy lives on. Their descendants have fantastic family get-togethers, which Milton was always a part of. They knew Milton as a singer and a music lover, a veggie gardener and chook tender, a camper and a card player.

At times in his life he rode horses and herded cattle. He loved bodysurfing and every Boxing Day he and a good mate undertook a three-day trek from Stockton to Birubi, stopping to fish and swim along the way. He loved all things rail and all things steam. He was patron of Steamfest and there are many organisations that boasted him as their chief supporter. He was patron of the Mai-Wel Group, the Maitland Gilbert and Sullivan society, East Maitland RSL, the Sydney Tramway Museum and many more. Everyone loved Milton and we all miss him greatly. I thank his family and friends for coming to Parliament today to help us do the right thing in honouring his memory.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (17:01): The Hon. Milton Morris was a figure from my youth who seemed larger than life. He belonged to an era when politicians were greatly revered but was a person who had the common touch at the same time. I grew up in Newcastle and Mr Morris was the member for Maitland from the day I was born until I had almost completed year 11 at high school. Although the people of Maitland at that time thought—and they probably still do—that Newcastle and Maitland are worlds apart, Mr Morris was a figure of dominance in both places.

In fact, Mr Morris was the dominant Liberal politician in the Hunter during my youth, closely followed by the Liberal Legislative Council member, the Hon. Virginia Chadwick, who lived in our neighbourhood at the end of our street. In the Labor-dominated Hunter of those times, Liberal members of Parliament were not too thick on the ground. So Mr Morris was a Liberal colossus in our pro-Liberal household and the households of my friends, including Alderman of Newcastle Council, Cliff McDonald, who was the father of my best friend.

In a 2008 interview with the *Maitland Mercury*, it was noted that Mr Morris had the nickname of "Mr Maitland". My recollection of his nickname is slightly different. My older sister, Marianne, and others used to call Mr Morris "Milton the Monster". It was not a term of derision or abuse but one of affection. At the time, Milton the Monster was a cartoon figure that was very popular amongst children and adults. In the Australia of those days everybody of stature had a nickname. It was especially good to have a nickname with alliteration like Milton the Monster.

Mr Morris attended Wickham Public School, which could be viewed from the hill where I grew up, and then Newcastle Boys' Junior High School, which was on the hill and close to my childhood home. The high school had lessons in first to fourth form, or years 7 to 10 in today's language. You could not go to year 12 or matriculate to university from it. The school was still operating in my lifetime when I was at primary school. It was a kind of high school that no longer exists with an emphasis on technical education. The Newcastle Boys' Junior High School, which Mr Morris attended, is now the site of the Newcastle East Public School, which was established in 1816 and where I attended primary school, albeit at its former site on Bolton Street. Newcastle Boys' Junior High School no doubt prepared Mr Morris well for his life after school as a clerk in the wool stores in Newcastle and as an industrial officer at Stewarts and Lloyds tube mills, which was a specialist maker of steel industrial products.

At the age of 18, like so many of his generation, Milton Morris joined the armed services, where he served in the Navy and then the Volunteer Defence Corps from 1942 until 1945. After the war he worked as an industrial officer or, in modern terminology, an industrial relations specialist. Working for a steelworks like Stewarts and Lloyds, Mr Morris was engaged in negotiating with unions in their disputes with his employer. The 1950s, when Mr Morris was an industrial officer, were times of great industrial disputation, when the union movement was frequently dominated by trade union leaders who were also members of the Communist party. Those union leaders believed that anarchy would further the possibility of a proletariat-led communist revolution.

Those times would have strongly shaped Mr Morris's ideology as a Liberal. He believed that it was in the best interests of working people not to overturn the capitalist system, but to work within it. At the time, the Australian Labor Party had a policy of the nationalisation of all industries so that they would no longer be owned by capitalists and would instead be owned by the government. It is no coincidence that Mr Morris joined the Tarro branch of the Liberal Party in the same year that he concluded his Industrial Management Certificate. The certificate was the relevant qualification to be an industrial officer.

Mr Morris served as an alderman on the Lower Hunter Shire Council from 1954 to 1958 and when the incumbent member for Maitland retired—a man who had been deputy leader of the Liberal Party in the New South Wales Parliament—Mr Morris was preselected as the Liberal candidate for Maitland. He won the seat in the State election a staggering nine times—1956, 1959, 1962, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1973, 1976 and 1978. During his distinguished parliamentary career, Mr Morris was Minister for Transport from 13 May 1965 until 3 January 1975—almost 10 years. This was fitting, given that he was a working-class Liberal and the son of a railway guard. He also served as the Minister for Lands in 1975 and the Minister for Decentralisation and Development until 14 May 1976. A ministerial career of 11 years is a substantial contribution to this Parliament, the Government and the State of New South Wales.

Mr Morris has shown that Liberals can succeed politically in the traditional working-class industrial areas of the Hunter. The swings to the Liberal Party that we have seen in the Hunter at a State and Federal level over the last 10 years show that if local Liberals would only take a leaf out of the political playbook of Milton Morris, they might find great opportunities for the Liberal Party in Newcastle and the Hunter. In 1980 Mr Morris resigned from State Parliament to run as the Liberal candidate for the Federal division of Lyons, where in a three-cornered contest he was narrowly beaten by only 2.9 per cent by the National Country Party candidate. Thus, he failed to get the National Country Party's preferences to flow to him and could not beat Labor's candidate.

After serving in Parliament, Mr Morris continued his community service. He was chair of a not-for-profit company, the Hunter Valley Training Company, whose objective was to give young people apprenticeships and help them in their working life. He was honorary chair of Lewis House Apprentice Hostel in Mayfield, patron of the East Maitland sub-branch of the Returned and Services League, honorary prefect of the Hunter Christian School—formerly the Mayfield Christian Community School—and patron of the Mai-Wel Group and the Waratah Brass. In 1988 Mr Morris became an officer in the Order of Australia for his contribution to politics, youth and community. The following year he was awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta for his service to Poland and its people.

In 2016 Premier Gladys Berejiklian invited Coalition members to lunch with Mr Morris in the Strangers' Dining Room. I was privileged to join the Premier and other MPs meeting this political giant of the early Liberal Party and of my youth. I can honestly say I was a little starstruck. My impression of Mr Morris was of a warm, down-to-earth man who, in a humble way, very much appreciated the fuss that was being made of him. Few people who enter Parliament will ever make a contribution that rivals his. Mr Morris died peacefully in his sleep

in February this year. He was well into his 90s and his life was certainly well-lived. I give my condolences to the family of Milton Morris. They must have cherished the opportunity to know such a great man at close quarters. I am sure they miss him greatly. Vale the Great Lion of the Liberal Party in the Hunter, the Hon. Milton Morris. I thank him for his great public service.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (17:09): I am incredibly honoured and humbled to speak on the condolence motion for the Hon. Milton Morris, AO, also known as Mr Maitland. I start by acknowledging Mr Morris's family who are in the gallery today. I welcome his daughters Karen, Margaret and Colleen and their husbands. I also welcome Milton's son, John, and his wife who I am told has travelled from Tasmania to be here today. I also note the presence of Mr Morris's grandchildren, of whom there are too many to name. One of them is my electorate officer.

On this day 63 years ago, on the centenary year of the New South Wales Parliament in its current form, the Hon. Milton Morris stood in this place and gave his address in-reply to the Governor's Speech. This was Mr Morris's inaugural speech and in it he laid out his priorities as the member for Maitland. Interestingly enough, the speech focused predominantly on industrial relations. As an ex-union official, I was struck by the approach he espoused when he said:

Fear discipline is ineffective, and an undesirable element in management ... One should treat the employee as a human being instead of as a clock-number, and attend to the material needs of an employee by supplying recreational facilities, listening to the employee's grievances, and treat them sympathetically as a person interested in the advancement of the business; and, in turn, they will respond by giving their best efforts to the job, their loyalty and co-operation.

As an ex-manufacturer and the son of a railway guard, Mr Morris knew firsthand the plight of the worker. His ideology was not based on philosophers, books or the representatives before him, but on his own lived experience and the experiences of those he represented. It is evident, given the number of people who are speaking to this motion today, how truly admired Mr Morris was. There was a lot to admire about the man. Mr Morris served in the defence force, he had a long and successful political career—winning 10 elections as member for Maitland—and then became the founding chairman and director of the Hunter Valley Training Company, which is still going strong. His tenure there lasted 30 years.

Mr Morris went on to make revolutionary changes in New South Wales transport, as other speakers have already mentioned. He introduced mandatory seatbelts. I remember sitting in the back seat of the car as a child and having to put my seatbelt on. I would say, "Thank you, Mr Morris." He also introduced the use of L and P plates and the breathalyser. Most notably, Mr Morris's actions saved lives. In his 10 years as Minister for Transport the road toll dropped by about 600 deaths per year.

It has to be recognised that fundamentally Mr Morris was a man of the Hunter, for the Hunter. Throughout his life and before and after his political career he served his community above all. Local churches, community groups and individuals across our great region can attest to Mr Morris's generosity. The church at St Peters in which Mr Morris's memorial service was held has a stained glass window which he donated. His public service knew no limits, yet he remained humble. He described himself as a very ordinary person to which God gave extraordinary opportunities.

He also had a sense of humour. The member for Maitland spoke of his quote about being misrepresented in the media. In preparing for today, I spoke with the Hon. Peter Morris, who is no relation of Milton Morris. Peter Morris served as the Federal member for Shortland and as Labor's Minister for Transport. He told me of the joke that they shared. Mr Milton Morris would introduce Mr Peter Morris as his nephew and Peter would introduce Milton as his uncle, and so the joke continued for some years. Mr Morris was also well-known in politics as a man of integrity. As a Minister, Mr Morris's job often involved making announcements in electorates across New South Wales. It says a lot about the man when a number of speakers in this condolence motion have recognised him as being someone who invited the local member to be part of the announcement. In fact, he was notorious for ensuring that the local member, regardless of his or her political party, was invited to be present at his announcements.

I vividly remember the morning I learnt of Mr Morris's passing, and the overwhelming outpouring of tributes that flooded in from the community. I believe this was because Mr Morris had mastered the art of human interaction, which is an enviable skill for any public representative. Mr Morris has left a lasting legacy on the Hunter community and on this State's community. As a public representative of the Hunter, I, too, hope to carry on in Mr Morris's spirit. Vale Mr Maitland, the Hon. Milton Morris, AO.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:15): I also pay tribute to the Hon. Milton Morris, AO, who passed away earlier this year at the ripe old age of 94, just short of his 95th birthday. Milton Morris led a life of extraordinary service not only to the Maitland community but also to the greater community of New South Wales. As we have heard multiple times today, he is the State's longest serving transport Minister. He was —a great asset

for the State. He also was the longest serving member for Maitland and, as we have heard multiple times today, this earned him the title of "Mr Maitland".

As the *Newcastle Herald* noted in its front page article on 28 February 2019, as transport Minister Milton Morris oversaw the introduction of a huge number of road safety measures: compulsory seatbelts, radar speed traps, L and P plates, the use of breathalysers on New South Wales roads, and a number of other road safety measures that have saved hundreds and hundreds of lives in New South Wales. We now take those measures for granted as the status quo, but I am sure we all agree that they are absolutely essential in helping to save lives on our roads.

During his 10-year term as transport Minister, the State's road toll dropped by 600—from 1,300 in 1965 to approximately 700 a decade later. That is despite the number of vehicles registered in New South Wales tripling. Hundreds of people are with us today thanks to Mr Morris's contribution. As the Premier has said so eloquently, Milton Morris was also a giant of the New South Wales Parliament. He is well-known in this place for being an absolute gentleman. As other members have already noted, Mr Milton Morris was first elected to this place on 3 March 1956. He was subsequently re-elected eight times—in 1959, 1962, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1973, 1976 and 1978. It is a truly phenomenal record.

Throughout this time he served as Minister for Transport as part of six different ministries from 13 May 1965 to 3 January 1975. He also served as Minister for Land and Minister for Forests from 3 January 1975 to 30 June 1975, and as Minister for Decentralisation and Development from 23 January 1976 to 14 May 1976. Before that he was a councillor of the Lower Hunter Shire Council from 1954 to 1958. That adds up to 25 years of public service—a quarter of a century. This extraordinary length of time goes to show how remarkable his service was to the people of this great State. It is also interesting to note that Milton Morris was a Liberal fixture for a long time in the Labor heartland of the Hunter region.

As I noted earlier, Milton Morris became famously known as Mr Maitland, and there was good reason for that. I refer to the New South Wales Parliament's biography of Milton Morris to show his strong, lifelong connection to the Hunter region. Milton was educated at Wickham Public School and Newcastle Boys' Junior High School. He left school early to work following his parents' loss of their family home as a result of the Great Depression. He worked as a clerk in wool stores in Newcastle. He completed an industrial management certificate in 1954. He then worked as an industrial officer at Stewarts and Lloyds tube mills in Mayfield. At this point he was elected to council and soon after was elected to this place, commencing his enormous quarter of a century of service to the people of New South Wales. Following his departure from Parliament he was asked by the Minister for Industrial Relations at the time, the Hon. Pat Hills, to chair the Hunter Valley Training Company, which was a not-for-profit company. I believe he held that position for 30 years.

Unfortunately, having never personally had the opportunity to meet Mr Milton Morris, I rely on the enormous goodwill expressed towards him today by members on both sides of the House. As other members have already said, he was a very fine man and a giant in this place. I acknowledge his biggest supporters who are in the gallery today—his close family and friends. I thank them for giving us Milton Morris for New South Wales. I am grateful for this opportunity to speak in his memory. Vale Milton Morris, AO. May he rest in peace.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (17:20): Tonight I honour the service of the Hon. Milton Morris to this House and to our community over many decades. I acknowledge his family, who are here today, and the many who are not here today. The member for Maitland pointed out the number of descendants and family members present at the memorial service. He has many descendants and family members and he is obviously very much loved by them all. As shadow Minister for the Hunter, I show my respect to the man whose impact on the Hunter is significant and very important. Milton's service to his community pre-dated his entrance to this House. He served in the Royal Australian Navy and then in the Volunteer Defence Corps during World War II. In 1956 Mr Morris entered this House for the first time, having served two years as a councillor on the Lower Hunter Shire Council.

In an era of frequent changes in politics it is difficult to imagine the 24 years Milton spent in this House. The number of times that he was re-elected as a Liberal member for Maitland in the Labor heartland of the Hunter is unimaginable now. It is unimaginable in any electorate let alone in the environment in which he was operating, particularly during the turbulent times. His initial years in this place were during the Cahill, Heffron and Renshaw governments, at the later end of a Labor government which had been in power since 1941. While he was in office he experienced a turbulent time in New South Wales politics with the death of Premier Cahill, a rejected referendum to abolish the Legislative Council and the eventual loss of government for Labor in 1965.

Milton went on to serve in the Askin, Lewis and Willis governments, including as Minister for Lands, Minister for Forests, and Minister for Decentralisation and Development. As many members have said today, it was his decade as transport Minister from 1965 to 1975 for which he is best remembered, and he continues to

hold the record for the longest serving transport Minister in this place, which I do not see changing any time soon. Knowing the nature of the debates we have in this place now, I cannot imagine how difficult it would have been to see the introduction of mandatory seatbelt laws in New South Wales, it being the first State to take that step. With the difficult political environment, it could not have been a simple measure. But the introduction of this reform and many other safety reforms for our roads saw the number of road deaths halved while the number of cars on our roads more than doubled. Milton's legacy is saving lives and it does not get any more important than that.

It is remarkable to think that during those tumultuous times Milton remained in his role serving the good people of Maitland and the Hunter. There were Vietnam War protests and conflict within the Whitlam Federal Government and he withstood them all. After leaving Parliament in 1980 Milton held a number of roles in Maitland, one of which is another of his enduring legacies, as mentioned by my good friend the member for Maitland. He was Foundation Chairman, Director and Patron of the Hunter Valley Training Company [HVTC]. When HVTC was first established, the founders expected it to last five years and that it would train approximately 200 apprentices. Some 38 years later, HVTC has provided training and employment opportunities for more than 25,000 apprentices and trainees across nine locations in regional New South Wales. That is no mean feat, and a tremendous legacy.

Alongside the member for Maitland, I had the pleasure of visiting the HVTC whilst Milton was chair and again more recently. The ongoing contribution of the HVTC to the lives of young people is another of Milton's lasting legacies for which the Hunter community remains very grateful—as do many families who have benefited from its services. As a result of the HVTC and Milton's significant contribution, young people have been able to gain the skills they need to get a secure and rewarding job, and our economy has been bolstered by their productivity and services. Milton changed lives for the better, giving young people the opportunity to achieve their potential. It is another of his enduring legacies for which we in the Hunter and across New South Wales are very, very grateful.

Milton also served as a valued patron of the East Maitland RSL Sub-Branch, the Waratah Brass and disability provider the Mai-Wel Group, amongst many other groups as mentioned by the member for Maitland. He was deservedly recognised as an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1988 for his services to politics, youth and the community. I have not yet mentioned the obvious thing—that Milton sat on a different side of the political aisle from me and everyone else on this side of the House. But it is a reflection on him and the respectful way in which he served his entire community that all sides of politics grew to respect him for his work, both inside and outside this Chamber.

At Milton's memorial service there were hundreds of people from across the State from different faiths and from across the political spectrum, including serving and past State and Federal members and local government representatives—from the Premier to the current Labor Mayor of Maitland. The respect and love for Milton was evident in every aspect of the memorial proceedings: from the majestic sounds of the Waratah Brass band playing in St Peter's Cathedral to the angelic sounds of the choir, which comprised Milton's granddaughters and daughters—it was a very special moment for everyone present. As Mayor Loretta Baker pointed out on the day, it was fitting that the service was held on the weekend of the Hunter Valley Steamfest as Milton's beloved trains could be heard shrieking across the city of Maitland, paying tribute to the man who spent his life serving the city and the State. It was a remarkable service for a remarkable man.

I will end with one of my own memories of Mr Maitland. We were both attending the opening of a hand-hewn stone bridge on a private property just outside Maitland, in my electorate of Port Stephens. The bridge is called the "multi-faith bridge" because many of the stones that make up the bridge were sourced from places of worship from different faiths across different countries. The multi-faith bridge is the vision and work of Phillip Redman in honour of his late father, Max Redman, who was the Anglican canon at St Mary's in Maitland for 20 years. Max Redman and Milton had been good friends.

Joining us were Buddhist monks, a Catholic priest and representatives from the Jewish, Muslim and Hindu faiths, with Mr Maitland front and centre. Given the structure was designed to bridge the divide between people of different faiths and backgrounds and was built in honour of another man who had served the community of Maitland for many years, it was most fitting that Mr Maitland himself cut the ribbon on the bridge. Milton was a man who had the ability to bridge divides, showing respect to all, at all times. He was a man of humble origins, who gave most of his life in service to his community.

I offer my deepest condolences to his family, who I know are exceptionally proud of everything Milton achieved and contributed over his entire lifetime. He was a humble man of faith, integrity and humility and always a gentleman. Milton's enduring legacy to Maitland, the Hunter and New South Wales will never be forgotten. Rest in peace, Milton Morris—Mr Maitland.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (17:28): I also make a contribution on this motion and in doing so pass on my deepest condolences and sympathy to Milton Morris' family for their loss. I draw attention to the enormous contribution that the Hon. Morris Milton, AO, made to the people of New South Wales and, importantly, to the people of the Hunter region. We remember a man who not only was gentle and calm but also had great presence every time he entered a room. Few who have met Milton forget that experience. I first met Milton Morris when I was a journalist. I interviewed him regularly in his role as the great champion of the Hunter Valley Training Company. He was always eager to talk about the training company's work in building the skills of young people in the Hunter region.

He was available whenever I called him and he always greeted me with a genuine interest in how I was faring. I was 18 when I first met Milton Morris; I was naive and I was green but I was very, very enthusiastic. He was always encouraging and warm. If I wandered off script—as 18-year-olds cadets do—he would gently nudge me back to where I needed to go. If I asked the wrong question he would answer with the right answer so that when I was back at the studio and putting my story together I would indeed end up with a package that I could be very, very proud of.

Milton was born and raised in the Hunter and after serving in the Second World War sought to make a contribution to public life. He was elected by the people of Maitland in 1956 and served an historic 24 years as their local member. As we have heard in this House, he was so loved and respected by the community that he was bestowed the title of "Mr Maitland"—a title that speaks to not only the reverence, but also the affection that was felt towards him throughout the community. I acknowledge the member for Maitland, who spoke for more than 20 minutes. Even her long speech did not capture entirely his contribution to Maitland but it certainly showed the respect in which he was held by the community. He was known by everyone and everyone felt as though they knew him.

When I was elected as the member for Newcastle in 2007 he sent me a handwritten note congratulating me. Other people sent me things too, but they were perhaps not quite as friendly as Milton Morris. It showed me what a great man he was. As I said, I knew him from when I was 18 for some 20 years and he never, ever strayed from being polite and respectful. When I saw him at events he would always engage in discussions about the issues impacting the Hunter region. He would question me and, if I did not give the right answer, he would assume it was the right answer. When I was the member for Newcastle, and Minister for the Hunter, Milton always had a view and would share it respectfully, but with great vigour. He never stopped advocating for the people of Maitland and the Hunter Valley. The handwritten note he sent me when I became the member for Newcastle is still very much treasured.

As the shadow Minister for Transport, I also acknowledge Milton's contribution as Minister for Transport. Again, when I became a Minister, I received a handwritten note of congratulations. As I said, I still have both those notes and they are treasured very dearly. Milton Morris was known as a man who had a deep passion for trains—a passion that ran in his family. Of course, I acknowledge to the House that many people who live in Maitland have a passion for trains. His grandfather built trains in Newcastle and his father was a coal guard. So it was fitting that Milton carried on the family tradition in a different way, as the longest serving Minister for Transport in New South Wales.

When speaking of his time as Minister he said, "Ten years as Minister for Transport, I loved every minute of it". Milton's passion for transport translated into much-needed improvements to the transport system: He oversaw the construction of the Eastern Suburbs railway line and introduced double-deck trains. As we have heard, during those 10 years from 1965 to 1975—when he finished I was six years old—Milton also oversaw drastic changes in road safety at a time when the number of cars on New South Wales roads grew from 750,000 to two million. He oversaw the implementation of the breathalyser, radar speed traps and the compulsory use of seatbelts. It was for this reason that Milton was dubbed "Mr Road Safety"—another of his well-earned titles.

He was renowned for being media savvy; he did not shy away from the media, nor hide from criticism. I am eager to assure the House that in my time as a journalist I never criticised Milton Morris. He was known, of course, in this Chamber for his robust and fierce debating style. I acknowledge that he was a man of great character and decency, who worked with both sides of the House. He was first and foremost a man of integrity. Milton retired from politics but remained dedicated to serving the people of his community and in 1981 helped to establish the Hunter Valley Training Company, an organisation founded to help disadvantaged young people in the Hunter find an apprenticeship. During Milton's 30-year tenure the company helped 22,000 young people to receive the training and assistance they needed to enter the workforce. As a country girl and as someone who grew up in the Hunter and secured my first job in Newcastle, I am grateful for Milton's commitment to helping young people from the regions and equipping them for the future.

A fitting symbol of Milton's legacy and impact on the company is the name of its building in Rutherford: The Milton Morris Building. While that is a tangible reminder of Milton's impact on the Hunter region, he leaves

a much more important legacy. All over the Hunter, and indeed across New South Wales, thousands of lives have been shaped by Milton Morris, his love of the Hunter region and his understanding that skilling a young person in a trade is a life-changing gift. Milton Morris will be forever remembered as a champion for the Hunter and a champion for New South Wales. I feel very privileged indeed to have known Milton Morris during my early days as a journalist and later in my role as the member for Newcastle, and Minister for the Hunter. I thank him for his mentorship and friendship and for the contribution he made as a member of this Parliament. I feel truly blessed to have known him.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:35): I did not know the Hon. Milton Morris but I am aware of his record and impressive service to the people of New South Wales. He was a Minister in the Askin, Lewis and Willis governments and served as a Minister for Transport for 10 years, from 1965 to 1975. He was Minister for Transport when the annual road fatalities in this State had reached a record 1,300 people. To put that into perspective, the figure for 2018 is 354—which we regard as far too high. He introduced a number of then very controversial reforms that had a dramatic effect on road fatalities, and has the same dramatic effect over 40 years later. The introduction of the breathalyser and the offence of driving with a prescribed concentration of alcohol were reforms that received great criticism at the time, but they changed driver behaviour forever.

I recall my father complaining about Milton Morris and the compulsory wearing of seatbelts. Many of our neighbours did not have seatbelts in their cars and had to pay to have them installed. It had a dramatic effect on the road fatality rate. The introduction of radar to detect speeding impacted the way people drove their vehicles. Milton Morris also took on the motor vehicle manufacturers in this country who were producing the Ford Falcon GTHO, the Torana GTR XU1 and Valiant Charger to compete in the Bathurst 500 but offering them for general sale. He called them "road bullets", and his campaign led to those high-end "road bullets" ceasing to be manufactured.

All of us enter the political process to make a difference and we try hard every single day to do that, but very few people who serve in this House are responsible for saving thousands of lives. Thousands of people are alive or walking the streets or have been born because of the contribution made by the Hon. Milton Morris. I could not let this opportunity pass without recognising his considerable service and the importance of his role in the history of this State. I extend to his family my deepest condolences. He will never be forgotten and is part of the history of this State. Vale, Milton Morris.

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

Motion agreed to.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places as a mark of respect.

Announcements

DIVISIONS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh): For the clarification of the House, in accordance with practice and the earlier Speaker's clarification, during divisions the benches located in the back row of the Chamber are designated for members voting with the ayes along with the benches to the right of the Speaker. Those benches to the left of the Speaker, with the exception of the last row, are designated for members voting with the noes.

Documents

NSW CHILD DEATH REVIEW TEAM

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh): In accordance with section 34I of the Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993, I table the report of the NSW Child Death Review Team entitled *The role of child restraints and seatbelts in passenger deaths of children aged 0-12 years in NSW*, dated 5 June 2019. I order that the report be printed.

Motions

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Censure

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (17:41): I move:

That this House censure the Minister for Customer Service for:

- (1) Failing to protect the private information of hundreds of New South Wales citizens under his control, which was illegally leaked.
- (2) Ignoring an order from the Commissioner of Revenue NSW to delete a file containing this private information.
- (3) Failing to inform New South Wales citizens who have had their private information compromised in contravention of Government guidelines.
- (4) Exposing New South Wales taxpayers to financial damages claims from affected New South Wales citizens.
- (5) Allowing the misuse of ministerial staff and resources for party political purposes.
- (6) Refusing to answer questions in Parliament on these matters.

Earlier today the Premier talked about process. I am very glad when she talks about process. When you are a Minister of the Crown I imagine there are a few processes that you want to become familiar with. When you are in control of more data than any other Minister in the Government—arguably, more data than any other individual in New South Wales—I assume that one of the processes you would want to know is how to manage that data, how to secure that data and how to make sure that data is used for appropriate purposes. That would be a good process to get to know.

Say, as Minister, you get information that does not go to your department but comes from your department and into your office—you are responsible for your office—and in that information is contained the private details of speeding fines of many hundreds of New South Wales citizens. They have nothing to do with this place; they have no political cross to bear or political allegiances that we are aware of. As Minister, you get that information—and you are responsible for your staff and they are accountable to you, as you are accountable for protecting this data—you look at it, see a political opportunity and you think, "Wow! I really want to use this information."

When I started in this place in 2011 someone on the other side of the Chamber said to me, "The first question you should ask yourself is: Is it the right thing to do, not do you want to do it?" So let us talk this through. Information comes into the agency responsible for highly secure data. Someone in the Government sees a political opportunity and a decision needs to be made, "Do I breach legislation and, more importantly, potentially harm many citizens by releasing this information or do I do the right thing?" The story moves on and there is a little assistance from the head of the department, who says, "You should not have that information. Please delete that information". Now there is really only one choice: It is time to delete the information.

But no, that is not what happened. Instead, what happened under this Minister is absolutely shameful. What happened was not the leaking of a bureaucratic file note, a departmental speech or a bit of information that was seen as useful—"Geez, we could whack Daley with this". We play the same game and we understand this place. We get bashed up a lot more than the Government does; we are the Opposition. We get it. But that is not what occurred. What occurred was that hundreds of individuals in New South Wales—who are at home right now unaware of this—had their sensitive information leaked to a media outlet. That happened on the watch of a Minister of the Crown. But he is not just any Minister; he is the Minister for Customer Service. I reckon the use of the term "customer service" in relation to handing out sensitive information is a bit Orwellian.

But let us move on. This Minister went out of his way to turn a blind eye to illegal activity. The department knew it was wrong and the department reported it. The department did the right thing and it should have stopped there. But, no, it did not because those opposite were not concerned about doing the right thing; they were concerned about pursuing what they wanted. And what they wanted was to hurt the member for Maroubra. We understand that that is their role; the member for Maroubra understands it. But what we do not understand is why potentially hundreds of community members—people whom we are fortunate to represent in this place—tonight do not have a clue whether their information was handed over in some dodgy deal to try to launch an attack on the member for Maroubra. It is simply not good enough. This Minister, over the past few weeks—

Mrs Shelley Hancock: Take your medication.

Mr RYAN PARK: No, I will not take my medication. The member for South Coast should withdraw that comment.

Mrs Shelley Hancock: Why?

Mr RYAN PARK: Because it is foul. The responsibility of those who are elected as Ministers of the Crown goes beyond little political attacks. They are responsible for data that the men and women of this State give in confidence. At present anyone registering a vote under the My Community Project has to be a customer of Service NSW. Are we sure that community members who vote for worthy projects will not one day have their data picked up? One day the office could say, "Geez, let's look at what they voted for." Why not? If it gets the data, it might hand it over because now it knows it is okay to do so.

The other day the Premier talked about the standard you walk past being the standard you accept. But that is not so for those opposite: "What's the problem with a little bit of personal data going out the door? If we can attack Maroubra, who cares about the men and women of our electorates? Who cares if our own head of department says not to do it? We are above that; we don't operate like that. We are way above that." But do you know what? They are not above that, and this Parliament says they are not above that. Members on this side of the Chamber value the fact that we represent men and women whose data may have been breached. But today we heard that they are not even going to get an apology. This shows how much those opposite care about the people of New South Wales: They take their data, they leak their data, thinking they can use it for political purposes, and then not only do they find it amusing but they do not even apologise when they know they got it wrong. This is very, very wrong. Today I came across an advertisement for an unusual job.

Mr Nathaniel Smith: Did you apply?

Mr RYAN PARK: I will not apply for this job, because I reckon I would struggle to get it. The job is for a full-time senior policy adviser. In whose office do you reckon the job is? Every now and then the sun shines on the Opposition, and today is the day. Someone friendly on the other side of the Chamber dropped this advertisement on my desk—no names. I say to all those opposite that I appreciate the gesture. The person said I might want to look at this advertisement. I said, "No, no I like my job", but they urged me to take a careful look. The job is in the office of the Minister for Customer Service: "We are looking for a highly motivated and talented person—

Mr David Elliott: Well, that rules you out.

Mr RYAN PARK: Wait on; it could be you in a minute. It said, "We are looking for a highly motivated and talented person to fill the role of Senior Policy Adviser." Maybe that is Tom Green's role. Let us look at the skills the successful candidate has to have. They must have a good understanding of information and communications technology procurement—fair enough. The second criterion is interesting: They must have a good understanding of cybersecurity. I went on to the key capabilities, which are pretty reasonable. I thought, "This is interesting; they are quick. Tom was gone last week and they are advertising this week." Key capabilities include a strong work ethic, which would be a first for this Government, and ability to deliver on—wait for it—the Minister's priorities. I wonder what they are. The advertisement goes on to key responsibilities and the fourth dot point really got me interested: manage the workflow between the Minister's office and the department. I thank the Government for alerting me to this job advertisement.

This is a breach beyond any we have seen in recent years. I will remind members of what occurred. Men's and women's data was provided to this Minister. This data was then given to his office, mistakenly. The department, as it should, said, "Stop. Get rid of that information." That information was leaked. This is a Minister who is out of his depth. He has had weeks to answer the question, and the question is a very simple one. But the easiest question is this: Why, when you were asked by your head of department to delete a file did you ignore that advice? And did you then try to cover it up?

This is a Minister who has overseen an absolute fiasco. He now oversees more data than any of us would ever have the privilege of overseeing. We on this side of the Chamber say, "It's not good enough." We say on this side, "Let's get a Minister for Customer Service who values the customer." We want to work with a Minister who cares about the community of New South Wales. We want a Minister who, when he is given data, or she is given data, understands that that is a privilege to protect. We want a Minister who does their job and, Minister, that is not you.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (17:56): Can I set the record straight? In relation to the police inquiry, which has now concluded, today I confirm that I was never contacted by the police or any other authority in relation to this inquiry. I take due process very seriously and that is why I asked my staff to assist the police with their inquiry. I have been the subject of two weeks of questions from those opposite. I trust the police to do their job, which they have done, and they have concluded that there is no evidence to take the investigation further. My track record on the protection of privacy speaks for itself. That is why—

[Opposition members interjected.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is why I take very seriously and respect the role of the Information and Privacy Commission. There is no greater advocate for the protection of privacy in this Parliament than me. When setting up the NSW Data Analytics Centre in 2015 I ensured that the Privacy Commissioner was front and centre in the design of the legislation. The current Information Commissioner and the immediate past Privacy Commissioner, and the current Privacy Commissioner know well my passion and interest in the protection of privacy, for this is the bedrock upon which we can enable more open data and more transparency, and enable the

rights and freedoms that the people of New South Wales enjoy and should expect. Over the past four years I have met with the Information Commissioner and Privacy Commissioner on over 20 occasions, working closely with them on policy design and implementation. I have spoken at and attended various events hosted by the Information and Privacy Commission, including recently the annual Right to Know and Privacy Awareness Week events. I am regularly asked to give speeches—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is giving a detailed response to the motion moved by the acting Leader of the Opposition. The Minister deserves to be heard with respect, and in silence.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am regularly asked—

Ms Kate Washington: We were not listened to with respect and in silence.

The SPEAKER: I will start putting members on calls to order, and I will start with the member for Port Stephens. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am regularly asked to give speeches about data and privacy and do so with pride as this is an area of passion for me. Just allow me to outline some of the public statements I have made in relation to privacy. In August 2015 when I launched the Data Analytics Centre at the University of Technology Sydney Data Arena I set out nine key functions of the office, including the operation of a central register of Government datasets, the distribution of advice on data taxonomies and the privacy, cybersecurity and open data implications of sharing it. In September 2015 I spoke out against Vodafone for its unauthorised access of a Fairfax media journalist's phone records. On that occasion, amongst other things, I said:

Vodafone's failure to take appropriate action at the time of becoming aware of the breaches, to alert the police and individuals concerned, demonstrates the flagrant disregard for privacy by the organisation.

On 3 October 2017 I launched the Australian Computer Society Data Sharing White Paper. In respect of that event I made the following comments:

Not all data is created equal.

Yet opening up this data to be shared greatly increases the potential for better delivery of products and services, or for entirely new products and services to be created.

One of the key challenges, then, how we can create an environment for the sharing of data while retaining and protecting individual privacy ...

On 20 November 2018 I made the following comments in relation to the Australian Computing White Paper on Privacy in Data Sharing. I said:

One immutable truth of the digital age is that data of our citizens is being gathered, shared and analysed at a scale we've never seen before.

The ubiquity of social media, mobile applications, on-demand streaming services, online shopping and payment systems means that all businesses, old and new, have become both conduits and custodians of consumer data.

In most cases, we are relying on privacy laws which were written in an era long before the internet, e-commerce and social media were even contemplated. This means that as government leaders and policy makers, we are playing catch up, trying to keep pace with the changing paradigm.

On 18 April 2019 in an interview with InnovationAus I said the following:

We start from a position of privacy. Privacy is sacrosanct and there can be no compromise there. In fact, one of the great freedoms we enjoy in this country is that right to privacy. That is non-negotiable and goes side-by-side with [data] security.

I place on record that my interest in and passion for privacy, protection and data management is reflected by the number of times I have met with the information and privacy commissioners over the past four years. In fact, I have met with them over 20 times. In conclusion, I recently spoke at a Privacy Awareness Week event—

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I was invited, in fact, to speak at a Privacy Awareness Week event just recently where global data privacy expert Sheila FitzPatrick gave a presentation about how critical privacy is. In a nutshell she said you can build any structure you like—you can build a cathedral, any building, any structure, policy design you like—provided it is on three pillars: privacy, security and transparency. That has been front and centre of everything I have done here for the past 10 years. And you, every one of you opposite knows in your heart the person I am and knows in your heart—

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: We have a crucial opportunity to strengthen privacy protections for our citizens and respond to the rapidly evolving digital world in which we now live. I intend to use my position as the

Minister for Customer Service, with responsibility for information and privacy, to ensure that our State is the leader in the field when it comes to protection of privacy, including transparency of personal data storage and sharing by Government agencies.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (18:03): I cannot work out whether the acting interim temporary Leader of the Opposition is Dirty Harry, Dick Tracey or Sherlock Holmes. The reality is that those opposite think they are better than the police. That is what is up with this silly motion this afternoon. They think they have more information about this matter than the New South Wales police who have done the investigation, spoken to the people concerned, but didn't speak to the Minister. That is a bit lost on the Opposition this evening. All of sudden, guess what? Guess what? There is no case to answer. And the reality is—

[An Opposition member interjected.]

So we are going to attack the police? They are attacking the police. And the challenge to the acting interim Leader of the Opposition, who seems to be leading the charge, is that if you have the information that you claim you do, despite all the allegations, inferences and imputations that you have made in this place through your questions for the past two weeks, then go to the appropriate authorities. But we know why you are here debating this silly motion—we know why. I would just hate to think that if the Parliament had an MP who happened to maybe fail to disclose a pecuniary interest such as failure to disclose a home, a piece of infrastructure, to declare a property from which they might receive an income, to disclose a \$50,000 in-kind donation from a building developer, this member may have a Parliamentary Ethics Advisor look at this and say, "Maybe you shouldn't be asking questions about this particular piece of infrastructure because you might have a conflict of interest in it and it might be an issue." But no, guess what those opposite do with a member like that? They try to elect them as the Leader of the Opposition, which is what is going on with the member for Strathfield at this time.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: So do not come in here and start telling us about ethics and self-righteous nonsense—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr David Harris: It is Standing Order 73. The Minister has to do this by way of substantive motion. He is actually off the topic—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Hang on.

Mr David Harris: —which is about the Minister for Customer Service. You won't want to talk about that, mate. Talk about what we're here to talk about, instead of spreading your other rubbish.

The SPEAKER: I will hear further from the Leader of the House.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I keep getting called "mate" by those opposite. I am not your friend. As I said earlier, you are like the member for Bankstown: You have no friends on that side either. The point that I make is that you want to come into this place and start lecturing us about, ultimately, performance and you are about to elect a Leader of the Opposition who, I understand, actually has the numbers in caucus and the numbers in the party, now backed by the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union, to come in here and give us a lecture about the quality of performance.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wyong will cease interjecting.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: If you want to go back to the issue at hand—

The SPEAKER: I will place the member for Wyong on a call to order if he continues to interject.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I can go back to the initial Herald piece that started this and look at what was being reported on at the time. Let's go to the core of this. There is an MP's hotline available to members, but let's ring it to maybe get our wife out of the—

[Opposition members interjected.]

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: But there you go. We conveniently forget that point. Yep, yep, yep, yep. Cover up for your election campaign. Let's talk about the election campaign.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Let's talk about the election campaign and what went on there, because we should be debating what you guys did in relation to that campaign and the racism that we saw in the middle of

that campaign. The reality is the member for Blue Mountains sat there quietly in the pub with Adam Searle and said nothing about what the Leader of the Opposition did at the time. You want to talk about targeting a Minister who has an unblemished record, a Minister who has been delivering for this State, a Minister who has the confidence of the people of this State, a Minister who has the confidence of the Government of this State and you come in here with your dirty tactics through question time, and you all come in here with this dirty tactic.

We can debate the election. We can go back and debate the election and the performance of your Leader of the Opposition. And wasn't he great out there in Maroubra with his developer mates on the council out there? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Let's talk about all those donations for decisions. Look, I am like the member for Strathfield: I've never done anything wrong. For goodness sake, you want us to start debating the issue, let's go back to the election and look at what started this. Let's call a spade a spade. Your Leader of the Opposition was hopeless and we know your Leader of the Opposition will be hopeless for this term too. They cover up racism.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:08): The refusal by the Minister for Customer Service to explain to this House how confidential information and data of private citizens, including those details of the member for Maroubra and his wife, were released to the public is a failure of his obligation under the Westminster system. Irrespective of the nature of the issue, the traditions of this House under the Westminster system that go back 804 years require the Minister to be accountable to this House. In May of last year data was provided in error by Revenue NSW to the office of the Minister. In May of last year when the Minister's office sought some additional information, Revenue NSW advised the Minister's office that it contained some private data mixed with the other information he was entitled to and that that file should be destroyed.

In February the next year that file ended up in the hands of journalists from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which included, according to the article, records and details including the details of the member for Maroubra and his wife. For two weeks the Opposition has been asking the Minister to explain or the Premier to explain. It is the Minister's obligation. There is no point saying "the police" or there is no point saying "ICAC" because they are organs of the Executive Government. It is not for the Executive Government to ask questions of other organs of the Executive Government. It is for this House, and the Minister has just had 10 or 15 minutes again to explain how he, who is accountable to this House, allowed information—somehow or other—into the hands of the public.

Apart from his refusing to explain, the Premier has also refused to explain what she knew. It is not that the Premier does not know about it, because the member for Maroubra wrote to her. I have a copy of the letter dated 8 February 2019 in which the member for Maroubra, the then Leader of the Opposition, indicated his concerns about those breaches and to whom he referred them; he wanted the Premier to know about the investigations that had been undertaken. Despite those complaints by the member for Maroubra, in March of this year or April of this year the Premier recommended the appointment of the Minister for Customer Service, a Minister of the Crown, who is chiefly responsible for the data and the privacy of all the citizens in New South Wales. The reality of the situation is that the Government of New South Wales has to understand that it is accountable to this House for its conduct and its possession of information.

The Minister for Customer Service, when asked, has had every opportunity in accordance with his obligations as a Minister of the Crown, to disclose to this House—who are his judges—how he has handled that particular information. The Premier, when asked what her knowledge was, has deferred and diffused and attacked the Opposition; again has refused to say what she knew in relation to it. Do you think, at the height of an election campaign, when the then Leader of the Opposition alleges possible criminal conduct to the Premier of New South Wales, she would have ignored the letter? She would not have spoken to her ministerial colleagues and said, "Have we done anything wrong?" Do you think she would have done nothing? Do you think that they would have sat idly by with an allegation of impropriety? The reality of the situation is that we all have staff who, in the heat of an election campaign, might do the wrong thing. They all get excited—we have all seen it over years and decades.

[A Government member interjected.]

You would never go to Bega, so you wouldn't know what your electorate staff were doing. But the reality of the situation is that if something goes wrong, if one of our staff does something wrong, and you are asked in this House—the people's House, to whom you are accountable, under the Constitution—you would think at least you would say, "I've made inquiries. I've done this. I've done that. I don't know. I've checked with people". You would have said what you would have done because it is here that you are accountable. I am participating in this debate for no other reason than to say to the Minister for Customer Service: You have failed the Westminster system and you have failed your obligation as a Minister of the Crown.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (18:14): It is with great pleasure that I get to oppose this ridiculous motion, a motion about integrity. No-one has more integrity in this place than the Minister for Customer Service. Those opposite have rocked up here and have asked the Minister no less than 17 questions

and they have not landed a single blow. In fact, their limp, lethargic and impotent prosecution has been so bad that they have convinced the police to drop any investigation. The Labor Party comes in here and asks questions, a party that is rotten to its very core. You are a bunch of moral midgets. You are a party that promotes corruption, breeds corruption and is corruption. You have sat there for the past eight years and said that you have changed completely, that you are a very new Labor. Did Labor move a censure motion against Eddie Obeid?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did Labor move a censure motion against Milton Orkopoulos?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did Labor move a censure motion against Ian Macdonald?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did Labor move a censure motion against Tony Kelly?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did Labor move a censure motion against Michael Williamson?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did Labor move a censure motion against Craig Thomson and his credit card spending?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did Labor move a censure motion against Sam Dastyari, a traitor to this country, whom they now promote as a loyal servant to the New South Wales Labor Party? Did Labor move a censure motion against the grand wizard in the upper House Shaoquett Moselmane? No, they actually promoted him. Did Labor move a censure motion against a person who has actually been charged for breaching data, Jamie Clements?

Government members: No!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No! In fact Jamie Clements is now running the campaign of the member for Kogarah in their little election over there. For the past eight years those opposite have sat in this place and said, "It's a new Labor Party" but nothing has changed. Their last three leaders—the best three leaders they have had in this place—have all resigned in disgrace. Then there are the next two that were raised. The member for Blue Mountains represents everything that is wrong with the New South Wales Labor Party. The issues she raised concern the recent election campaign. What did we see on display in that racist video shot in the Blue Mountains? We saw the member for Blue Mountains silently smirking in the corner. As we on this side of the House know, the standard you walk by is the standard you accept.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. If the Treasurer wants to make personal reflections or imputations against anyone on this side of the House, he must do it by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order in relation to the member for Blue Mountains.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This motion goes to integrity. When it comes to the New South Wales Labor Party, they never display integrity behind closed doors; they will only do it when it suits their political purpose. They have done it every single time. They did it when Luke Foley resigned. Once he resigned, they all came out one by one and they condemned him. When Michael Daley resigned, what did they all do? They came out one by one and they condemned him. But they never do it when no-one is looking. The reality is, integrity is what you do when no-one else is watching. That is what we do on this side of the House.

When we look at their track record on corruption there is something very rotten at the heart of the New South Wales Labor Party. A fish rots from its head. We saw last December the ICAC raids on Sussex Street. What data did ICAC get from Sussex Street? How many brown paper bags were uncovered down in Sussex Street? I do not know but I guarantee that the people of New South Wales—every single one of them—are looking forward to the data that ICAC confiscated from Sussex Street in December last year. I believe that very soon we will have a very interesting conversation about the quality and the integrity of the people running the New South Wales Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will remain silent. I call the member for Lane Cove to order for the second time.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (18:20): I will take a slightly different tack to some of the other speakers, out of respect for the gravity of the situation at hand. I have been in this place for eight years and I think this is only the second censure motion I have participated in. I acknowledge the significance of what we are talking about. I do not think anyone on either side of this House can question whether or not this information leaked from a Government entity into a newspaper.

Mr Kevin Conolly: Actually, we don't know how it got there.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: Okay, everyone except for the member for Riverstone.

The SPEAKER: The member for Riverstone and the member for Baulkham Hills will remain silent.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: We might. There might be a case to lodge an argument about whether or not the information came directly from the Minister's office or from Revenue NSW, but the point is moot because both of them are within his auspice as a Minister. In both instances the responsibility lies with the Minister. I have participated in many debates with this Minister, who has repeatedly spoken about the purity and sanctity of privacy. In one of those debates he said:

... privacy is beyond politics. It is an absolutely enshrined right of the citizen.

What has happened here is that there has been a breach of privacy. In Cessnock, we would call that a stuff-up. There has been a stuff-up here. But under the Westminster system it comes back to the Minister responsible for every root, branch and element within the portfolio—every department and every employee. Information has gone from one of his departments, or one of his officers, or one of his teams into the public domain. That is what this censure motion is about. The member for Heffron was right in saying that we, as elected members of Parliament, face this Chamber to deal with our conduct and things that have happened on our watch. Fundamentally, that is what this censure motion is about today. Whether it is the privacy Act or whether it is the data sharing Act, there are pretty clear and specific instructions, directions and consequences, which include, under the privacy Act, up to two years in jail for a breach. That is an incredibly serious outcome, and none of us in this Chamber should take any of that with some sort of sporting theme that has been in this Chamber today, saying it is like barracking for the Maroons or the Blues tonight. This is not an opportunity to barrack; this is a responsibility to delve into the substance. That is what we should be doing.

Mr Alister Henskens: The police did. The police did, for goodness sake.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: One of the defences that has been put is that the police have investigated this particular matter.

Mr Alister Henskens: They have.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: It's a pretty good point.

Mr Brad Hazzard: You're saying once they've prosecuted Obeid, they have to be pretty good.

The SPEAKER: If Government members continue to interject I will start calling them to order.

Mr Brad Hazzard: One conviction, one acquittal.

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

Mr CLAYTON BARR: One of the limitations placed by the Privacy Act on police as they investigate matters relates to the ability to access, search, seize and interrogate mobile phones and computers. The Minister claims to have instructed his staff to cooperate. However, the Minister might want to address something else in his speech in reply at the end of this debate: Did his staff willingly make available their phones, phone records, computers, computer databases and email accounts? The police do not have the right under the warrant to access those things. So the police have got to a point where they are unable to lay charges, but they did not have access to all of the information because of the Privacy Act. This is an incredibly important motion; it does not require cheering from either side.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (18:25): In reply: It is unusual that the Minister does not want another 10 minutes to vent himself. We on this side have listened and observed during this debate. One of the things I have observed is that a certain member is missing from the Chamber—the member for Willoughby. She is not here. It is unusual that the member for Willoughby is not here.

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: This attack on the Premier is way outside the leave of the motion. The Premier of this State has far better things to do than listen to this rubbish.

The SPEAKER: The member for Keira has the call.

Mr RYAN PARK: Let us be clear, this motion is explicit. It states that we on this side believe the House should censure the Minister for Customer Service for:

- (1) Failing to protect the private information of hundreds of New South Wales citizens under his control which was illegally leaked.

Have they denied that? No. Is that factual? Yes.

- (2) Ignoring an order from the Commissioner of Revenue NSW to delete a file containing this private information.

Have they denied it? No. Is this accurate? Yes.

- (3) Failing to inform New South Wales citizens who have had their private information compromised in contravention of Government guidelines.

Have they denied it? No. Is this accurate? Yes.

- (4) Exposing New South Wales taxpayers to financial damages claims from affected New South Wales citizens.

Have they denied it? No. Is it accurate? Yes. And some of the first people who would claim damages, and would have every right to do so, would be Mr and Mrs Daley. Not the member for Maroubra; Mr and Mrs Daley.

- (5) Allowing the misuse of ministerial staff and resources for party political purposes.

Have they denied it? No. Is it factual? Yes. Last, but certainly not least, because we are now, as the Minister so eloquently put it, at 17 questions:

- (6) Refusing to answer questions in Parliament on these matters.

Have they denied it? No. Is it factual? Yes. I listened carefully to the Minister. I heard about speeches he has given and events he has attended. In my experience, those are things that Ministers generally do. I heard him speak in a sincere way and say that we know him. Do you know what? I thought I knew the member but this is not the type of behaviour that I would have expected of that member. This is not something that we would have expected from the Minister for Customer Service, so it has disappointed us greatly. But actions speak louder than words and, as the Premier is so fond of saying, "accountability is important". Today this House says: You are accountable. Minister, you are accountable for the collection and protection of that data, and to say if something goes wrong to minimise the damage.

Tonight, as we debate this motion, there are men and women possibly in every single electorate who have had their information handed over by the office of a Minister of the Crown. Not just any Minister—a Minister with the responsibility of protecting this information. It beggars belief, as the member for Heffron outlined, that this Minister would be appointed as Minister for Customer Service when his treatment of customers has been nothing short of appalling. We on this side prefer not to call the men and women of New South Wales customers. This is not a McDonald's. But if those opposite want to label them as customers, then I suggest they should treat them accordingly. This is a final opportunity for the Minister to come into this place and explain what he knew. Why has he allowed this to go on? Why he did not follow the advice on his departmental head? Why he has taken this long to explain himself?

We on this side of the House have the right to ask this of the Minister. We waited patiently while he talked about events he has attended and speeches he has given. We are not worried about his attendance at events or the speeches he has made. We are worried about the men and women in the electorates, whom we are fortunate enough to represent in this place, who have had their data breached by a Minister of the Crown, a Minister we hold responsible for the protection of that information. Earlier as this issue was explored, we raised the issue of the Minister's adviser. We asked, "Why did he resign?" This Minister has worked with that adviser for some time. He stood at that lectern and said something incredible.

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

Mr RYAN PARK: The Minister claims that a long-term staff member handed in his resignation and the Minister accepted it. No questions asked. Nothing to see here. Today was an opportunity for the Minister to clear this up. Today was an opportunity to clearly state why he went against the advice of his department, which had inadvertently sent him something he should not have had, and then corrected that mistake, in their view, by asking him to please delete the file.

Today as we sit here we do not even know if that file has been deleted. We do not know where that information is. Most importantly, as the former member for Maroubra has said to me over the past few weeks, this is not about Mr and Mrs Daley. It is about innocent victims in New South Wales who have had their private and sensitive information shared around this place for political gain by a Minister who is out of his depth. He has completely and utterly lost the respect of every single member in this House. Government members who want to defend a Minister who hands out the private information of citizens are absolutely disgraceful. I agree with the

Premier: This is about accountability. The standard we walk past is the standard we accept. I agree with the Premier. Today is a day of accountability.

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

The House divided.

Ayes37
Noes51
Majority..... 14

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
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

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
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

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, 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)

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Clancy, Mr J
Coure, Mr M
Davies, Mrs T
Elliott, Mr D
Greenwich, Mr A
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D
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)
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Kean, Mr M
McGirr, Dr J
Petinos, Ms E
Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Barilaro, Mr J
Butler, Mr R
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Dalton, Mrs H
Donato, Mr P
Gibbons, Ms M
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Piper, Mr G
Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

PAIRS

Daley, Mr M
Dib, Mr J

Conolly, Mr K
Lee, Dr G

Motion negatived.

Matter of Public Importance

BOWEL CANCER

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (18:43): Bowel Cancer is the second most common cancer and the second most common cause of cancer death in Australia and New South Wales. In 2015 there were 1,685 deaths from bowel cancer, accounting for about 12 per cent of all cancer deaths across New South Wales. The rate of bowel cancer deaths in New South Wales has decreased over the past 10 years. However, that rate could decrease even further if all people aged between 50 and 74 were to participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening

Program. Over 90 per cent of bowel cancers can be successfully treated if they are detected early. Earlier diagnosis also means that treatment can be less invasive.

Bowel cancer often develops without any early warning signs. The bowel, which is part of the gut, is made up of different sections, including the colon and the rectum. Bowel cancer is also referred to as colorectal cancer, colon cancer or rectal cancer, depending on the section of the bowel where the cancer starts. The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program uses a screening test called a faecal occult blood test. The test is used to collect samples of bowel motions, which are then analysed to detect tiny traces of blood that are invisible to the naked eye. The screening test cannot diagnose bowel cancer, but the results will indicate whether a further test is needed to rule it out. Bowel cancer screening involves testing for it in people who do not have any obvious symptoms of the disease. The aim is to find cancers early, when they are easier to treat and ultimately to cure.

Bowel Cancer Australia is a non-government charitable organisation dedicated to prevention, early diagnosis, research, treatment and care for everyone affected by bowel cancer. Bowel Cancer Australia is running Bowel Cancer Awareness Month in June, in which it is attempting to raise awareness of Australia's second-deadliest cancer. Throughout June, Bowel Cancer Australia is reminding eligible people—those aged between 50 and 74 years—to take advantage of the screening program's free blood test when it is sent to them every two years.

The New South Wales Government, through the Cancer Institute NSW, is implementing a bowel cancer screening campaign between January and June 2019. The campaign aims to raise awareness of bowel cancer and the importance of screening and to motivate eligible people to participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. In New South Wales too few eligible people participate in bowel cancer screening—only 38.2 per cent overall. Men have a lower participation rate than women, with 36.6 per cent of men and 39.8 per cent of women taking advantage of the free national program. We are keen to increase that number. Barriers to participating in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program include a lack of understanding about the purpose of screening, particularly for people who do not have symptoms; lack of confidence in completing the test kit; and embarrassment.

There are things everyone can do to reduce their risk of bowel cancer. They include quitting smoking if you are a smoker and not taking up smoking if you are a non-smoker; drinking alcohol in moderation, which will also help to reduce the risk of other cancers such as breast cancer and liver cancer; and maintaining a healthy body weight, eating healthily and being active. The most important thing for everyone aged between 50 and 74 is to participate in the screening program that is available. They will increasingly be made aware of it this month.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (18:47): Bowel Cancer Awareness Month is a four-word statement that says it all. It is about awareness, screening, detection, and saving lives. June is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month and it is timely to highlight and promote it as a matter of public importance in this place. I thank the member for Manly for introducing it for discussion. The theme of Bowel Cancer Awareness Month is "Help beat bowel cancer." The message is clear. Of course, this matter has the full support of all members—as it should, given the significance of the disease and its impact on individuals and their families. I shall outline some of the statistics regarding bowel cancer rates in New South Wales, the responses and treatments available and the advances made in combating the disease. I shall also speak for some local residents who are concerned about waiting times for colonoscopies. I acknowledge that most of my statistical information comes from the Cancer Institute NSW and I commend the institute for its seminal work.

Bowel cancer is common; it kills more people in New South Wales than prostate cancer, breast cancer or melanoma. In New South Wales one in 11 men and one in 15 women will be diagnosed with bowel cancer during their lifetime. Those are significant statistics. My mother is a survivor of bowel cancer and I know the impact that it has had on her and on the family. The most recent data show that in New South Wales 91 per cent of bowel cancers were found in people 50 years and over. Australia has one of the highest rates in the world. It can strike younger people—and they can be quite young—but the statistics tell the story. That is why the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program targets 50- to 74-year-olds for biennial screening. Of course, the screening is for people who have no symptoms; those with symptoms are urged to go to their general practitioner as soon as possible. Screening, though, aids detection—and detection can save lives. If detected early, bowel cancer can be successfully treated in more than 90 per cent of cases. The earlier the detection, the more lives saved and the less invasive the treatment.

The national program will have sent a free kit to all people 50 to 74 by 2020. It is a two-step process and a little bit messy, as poo matters are. That might be indelicate to say here, but it is not that indelicate. But the test is painless and it is free—or funded from our taxes, which is a good spend. We are told to reduce our risk of bowel cancer by eating a diet rich in vegetables, fruit, cereals and whole grains; maintaining a healthy weight; and being physically active. A lot of good work goes on in communities to do that. But I found it surprising that according to the Cancer Institute NSW—and I think the member for Manly said this as well—only 36 per cent of eligible

people in New South Wales take part in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. It is important that we discuss it and raise awareness, because that is a very low number.

I was president of BreastScreen NSW North Coast for many years and was actively involved. It was set up by Beth Trevan, a local woman who won Woman of the Year. She was the driving force that made it all happen. I came in a little bit later as president. Through that work I have some awareness about the incidence and impact of cancer, but I was surprised to read that figure of 36 per cent. Bowel cancer has not had as much publicity as some other cancers, which could be why people underestimate it. It behoves all of us as members to not only speak about it here but also get out and about in our electorates and make sure we raise awareness as much as we can. The Cancer Institute NSW says that we need to correct the gaps in awareness to significantly increase the number of people being screened and in turn reduce the number of people dying from the disease. That is what it is about.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:52): I thank the member for Manly for raising Bowel Cancer Awareness Month as the matter of public importance today. As the member for Lismore highlighted, the theme this June is "Help beat bowel cancer". As a health professional I am cognisant of the impact of bowel cancer. I have seen firsthand not only the damage it has done to those who are suffering but also the impact that it has on families. I also know that screening for bowel cancer saves lives, so it is important that we use this opportunity to spread that message. Every week in Australia 103 people die from bowel cancer. We can do better than that and we can do it through raising awareness, which is what June is all about. This month Bowel Cancer Australia will be working to raise awareness about bowel cancer, its risk factors and its symptoms, and to encourage people to participate in screening.

As has been mentioned, bowel screening involves testing for bowel cancer in people who do not have any obvious symptoms of the disease. Cancers that are found early are easier to treat and cure. If more people between the ages of 50 and 75 participate in bowel cancer screening by having a faecal occult blood test every two years, the proportion of cancers detected at the earliest, and therefore curable, stage will be dramatically increased. The Cancer Institute NSW has found that there are low levels of awareness about bowel cancer, that there are low levels of perceived susceptibility to bowel cancer and that there are low levels of knowledge about the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. Therefore, between January and June this year, the Cancer Institute NSW is implementing a bowel cancer screening campaign. It aims to motivate men and women aged between 50 and 74 to participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Campaign when they receive their free test kits in the mail.

According to the website, 103 Australians die from bowel cancer every week, and 36 of those are in New South Wales. If the rate of participation in the screening program could be increased to 60 per cent, approximately 25,000 lives could be saved between 2015 and 2040 in New South Wales alone. These people would also have less invasive, shorter courses of treatment because, in general, their cancer would be less advanced. Once again, I thank the member for Manly and the others who have participated in the discussion. It is really important for members to spread this message across the community.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:55): By leave: I speak on this matter of public importance, Bowel Cancer Awareness Month. I thank the member for Manly for bringing it to the attention of the House. Members know that I have had very close personal experiences with cancer, affecting both me and my family. It is very clear that when screening is done early the outcomes are much better in terms of mortality—survival rates increase a lot when there is early screening—and also in terms of the costs to those diagnosed, to the community and to the medical system.

The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program is an important part of prevention and early detection. People aged between 50 and 74 years are sent a free bowel screening test kit, which allows medical officers to do an immunochemical faecal occult blood test—iFOBT—which involves testing for blood in faecal samples. The test has made an enormous difference. In fact, in the electorate of Maitland, Rotarians have been very strong in putting the message out. One of those Rotarians, Russ Cooper, worked hard to disseminate the screening program and get the kits out to people. People who used the kits could undergo more precise tests if the initial screening indicated that they should.

Cancer touches everyone in our community. Most members attended the Cancer Council's morning tea this morning. We talk about this issue so much in our communities yet there still remains a fear about what will happen if we are diagnosed with cancer, how it will impact our lives and whether we will survive. I got the call about my diagnosis of cancer the day that one of my colleagues in this place died. My specialist rang me and then we got the news that Kathy Smith had passed away from cancer. As someone who has stood on that precipice I can tell you that in many cases it is possible to come through the experience and that there are more positive outcomes for those who undergo the early screening and detection. Even those who do not have such good diagnoses tend to have much longer lives and much better outcomes than in the past. It is all about prevention,

screening and early detection. I urge those listening to give some money to the Cancer Council and make sure when they hit the golden age of 50 they do the bowel screen.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (18:59): By leave: I thank the member for Manly for raising this issue. It is an issue that is significant right across the country. I thank the other members who have spoken on this matter this evening. It is pertinent that we speak about Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, particularly on this day when we have celebrated the Cancer Council's Biggest Morning Tea. I recognise the good work that the Cancer Council does. I also recognise all those involved in the journey of cancer—the carers, the supporters, the researchers and those diagnosed with cancer and their families. A good friend of mine was diagnosed with bowel cancer at the age of 40. It is important to remember that, whilst it is an age-related condition, it can affect younger people as well. Bowel cancer is prevalent. I believe it is the second most prevalent cancer—certainly much more prevalent than current awareness of it would indicate. We need to raise awareness of the condition.

People from a medical background would know that there is a limited amount that can be done for a lot of cancers. The really important message about bowel cancer is that there are steps you can take to reduce risk. The importance of a good diet, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and reduced alcohol consumption has been raised by other members. The other important aspect is early intervention. I cannot stress too much the importance of the faecal occult blood test. The member for Maitland called out the important work of Rotary clubs across the country in providing bowel cancer testing. Whilst it is really important to recognise the free testing that is now being provided, it is also important to recognise and thank the hardworking Rotary clubs, which have been bringing this to the fore over a number of years. We really need to take stock of bowel cancer and recognise the importance of this at this time. In doing so, I recognise and thank the Rotary clubs of Australia.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (19:01): In reply: I thank the members for Lismore, Port Macquarie, Maitland and Albury for their contributions to this matter of public importance. Bowel Cancer Awareness Month is designed to change the statistics and to increase awareness of the various tests and the importance of early intervention in this cancer. As the member for Albury has said, community groups do as much as they can to raise awareness and share the message but it is incumbent upon all members in this place to increase awareness of Bowel Cancer Awareness Month in June. I thank members for their contributions.

Private Members' Statements

JOHN BOOTH

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections) (19:02): Friends in this House and people of New South Wales, it is my honour today to announce my nomination for the 2019 NSW Government Community Service Award. We are fortunate in Lane Cove to be rich beyond measure with men and women willing to donate their time and energies for a greater cause. Members of the local State Emergency Service and Landcare branches, Meals on Wheels, Happy Hens, students raising funds for worthwhile causes and parents educating our youth are but a few I can name. However, today I would like us to focus on one individual in particular.

Napoleon's quip that "four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets" neatly condenses the effect John Booth and *The Weekly Times* have on our local representatives. As Booth's humble masthead surges into its ninety-eighth year, it is worth pausing to reflect on the indelible impact John has had on our beautiful electorate. John and *The Weekly Times* have never shied from a fight, waging war to defend historical buildings, schools and parks, fighting amalgamations and giving a voice to the silent communities who live amongst us. Politicians or individuals who were getting too big for their boots were quickly cut to size.

This did not endear John to some people. A couple of strong men made sure he knew of their displeasure. However, John outlasted them, attending the funerals of those old rivals to, in his words, "make sure they were in their coffins". He began the Ombudsman campaign which has gone on to serve many thousands across New South Wales. From 1964 until its official inception as a government institution, John was synonymous with providing locals with an avenue of appeal, a fair go. In fact, an amendment in a bill to prevent other groups from calling themselves "the Ombudsman" was affectionately called the "Booth amendment".

John's achievements are not limited to his work with *The Weekly Times*. Born at home on Blaxland Road in 1932—the same year as that other magnificent monument of Sydney, the Harbour Bridge—Boothy, his twin brother and sister grew up in Ryde when it was farms and dirt roads. He attended Ryde Public School and then went on to Sydney Technical High School. He says his best memory of school was the day he left. As a young man he was a copyboy at *The Daily Telegraph* when it was headed by Sir Frank Packer and then he had a cadetship in the country papers. This career was cut short when John's father sadly succumbed to old war wounds in 1952. He went back to his dad and mum's cake shop and, as we all know, bought the business from his mum in 1957.

In 1959 John decided to take a step into politics, joining Ryde Council. Soon after he achieved the fabled position of the mayor of Ryde. As one of his first moves he upped the rates. It is safe to say that that decision was highly unpopular. So unpopular were the rate increases the unions put a black ban on John and for some time he could not get a cold beer or his mail. However, this courageous political move gave the council the funds it needed to give Ryde the infrastructure it was crying out for. For the first time Ryde developed a town plan. Roads, sewers, drainage and a swimming centre quickly followed and large signs were erected around the suburb letting the community know the extra taxes were not going to waste. John bought land to be used as sports ovals and helped lay the groundwork for a green belt which now hosts Macquarie University. Interestingly, there was a campaign at the time opposed to the concept, as universities do not pay rates.

On behalf of a grateful community I thank you, John. Many hundreds of thousands of people across this State have benefited from your perseverance and vision. We are fortunate that you crossed our way. John's bold vision is the type of vision that drives our State and demonstrates the success of the New South Wales Government, the union of a booming economy, strategic planning and a government determined to improve the lives of its citizens. On behalf of my community, to John Booth and his partner, Ulrike, who is currently in Austria, we give grateful thanks for your leadership, vision and dedication to our community, which you have made so much stronger.

PARAMEDICS

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (19:07): Tonight I speak on an issue that has come to my attention from the hardworking paramedics in our community: the need for this Government to introduce a trial of body cameras for paramedics. Gerard Hayes and the Health Services Union have been advocating for this for some time. I am very grateful that the shadow Minister for Health in the other place, the Hon. Walt Secord, also supports the introduction of a trial of body cameras for paramedics. This call follows numerous attacks on Illawarra paramedics this year. One incident involved two female paramedics who went to the aid of a 53-year-old man who had crashed his mobility scooter. He allegedly became aggressive and struck one of the paramedics in the face.

In the work they do across our communities, paramedics risk their own health and wellbeing every day to attend to the health and wellbeing of others. With the growing ice epidemic that is the scourge of many of our communities, it is no longer acceptable—nor was it ever acceptable—that these hardworking women and men be treated like punching bags. Assaults deeply affect paramedics because they are already operating in a very stressful environment. This simply adds to their stress. Paramedics assist community members when they are most in need. The last thing they expect is to be assaulted.

The Health Services Union, under the leadership of Gerard Hayes, has asked for body cameras similar to those available to police here and overseas. The time has come for body cameras for paramedics to be trialled, given the growing drug problem that is an epidemic in many of our communities. Paramedics have enough to worry about trying to save people's lives in emergency situations. They are already under enough pressure and they are greatly stretched. They do not need to be worried or concerned with the need to protect themselves from an assault.

The New South Wales Government has a duty to protect paramedics on the job. The situation is not getting better, it is getting worse. The Labor Opposition is ready to work with the Government. Our shadow Minister has made that clear, I make that very clear and our community demands it. These hardworking women and men should be given the protection they need. We can make their already stressful job a little bit safer. We should all be supporting the use of this new technology to ensure that we help the people who help us.

TABULAM BRIDGE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:10): During the March State election I was approached by John Cousins, a Tabulam farmer, beef cattle grazer and wonderful community citizen, asking me if I would commit to help save the Tabulam Bridge. I considered it, as I know there is always an expense. During an election campaign it is easy to say yes, as a local candidate would want to do. After giving John a good hearing and doing some research I did say yes. There is an expense but an expense that I decided this community deserved. The people of Tabulam ask for very little.

There is one community but, like many areas that have what were once called missions, there are two communities within the larger community. Jubullum is across the bridge going west and is in the Tenterfield shire. The other parts of Tabulam are in the Kyogle shire. The Federal MP for Page, Mr Kevin Hogan, during the Federal election in May and post-election in an article published on 24 May in the *Northern Star*, also committed to working with State colleagues to "try and save this bridge". He said, "I will work with my State colleagues to try and make it happen. The heritage value of this is important." It clearly is important.

The bridge did have heritage listing but at some stage was de-listed. The local community is seeking its re-listing. The bridge divides the community and brings them together. It is the gateway between Kyogle and Tenterfield shires, both of which are within the electorate of Lismore. The new bridge under construction is going ahead. The old bridge that the community and I want to save is still in use. It is long, narrow and high and bridges the Clarence River. In 2015 in an ABC broadcast it was referred to as the Southern Hemisphere's longest single-span wooden bridge, spanning about 300 metres. It was built between 1899 and 1903. I know the bridge well. It is associated with a significant farming community and a significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

More recently Tabulam experienced devastating fires and many residents are still reeling from the impact. I am doing my best to help. Tabulam is also home to Harry Chauvel. His father, Charles Chauvel, was a major in a militia and raised his own unit called the Upper Clarence Light Horse. Harry was drafted into the unit at 21 years of age. It is quite a significant place. John Cousins, whom I spoke with this morning, said that the Office of Environment and Heritage had confirmed receipt of the community's submission. Late last year this came to the fore again. I will read onto the record excerpts from the submission. This was when the Aboriginal community from Jubullum and the surrounding area realised that they were going to lose something that had significant cultural and historical meaning to them.

John Cousins, a long-term Tabulam resident respected by the Aboriginal community, became the interface to relay their concerns and take action. He organised a petition with over 400 signatures, now over 800, from a small community and is seeking to have the petition re-presented. In the submission John Cousins highlights one of the points that Kevin Torrens, an elder, had raised that "95 per cent of the Aboriginal community had said they wanted to keep the bridge and everybody signed it." Kevin Torrens said, "under the bridge was used as a safe dry birthing area for our community." His grandmother, Nancy Robinson, was born under the bridge in 1905. Harry Mundine Walker, one of the petition signatories, was born under the bridge in 1940. Births under the bridge are something that has occurred for a period of at least 35 years. In the submission John Cousins said, "I was also surprised at how emotional many people were about the importance of the bridge and the need to have it kept." There is expense involved but this bridge is of cultural significance to all the local community. I will be doing everything I can to help save it.

ORANGE ELECTORATE SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (19:15): I bring to the attention of this House an exciting initiative of Orange City Council which is substantially supported by the Orange community and has the potential to significantly benefit the Orange district. The nearby city of Bathurst benefits from the world-famous Mount Panorama Motor Racing Circuit and the many events held there throughout the year whilst the city of Dubbo has the world-renowned Western Plains Zoo. Both the circuit and zoo are significant drawcards for tourism in their respective districts. Orange does not presently benefit from a sporting or tourist infrastructure of that scale or magnitude.

In response to significant growth in the popularity of mountain biking both internationally and within Australia, Orange City Council has proposed a project to develop tangible sporting and tourist infrastructure that would attract national and international visitation of up to 100,000 people per year. Orange City Council has proposed the Mount Canobolas Mountain Biking Trails. The project proposes 11 mountain bike trails, totalling 117 kilometres of single-track mountain bike terrain in certain locations on Mount Canobolas. Mount Canobolas is an extinct volcano with an elevation of 1,397 metres. Its summit overlooks the city of Orange. It is situated approximately 20 kilometres from Orange by road. Mount Canobolas is considered by international experts to possess the geographical attributes to establish a world-class mountain bike course that would have the potential to attract both national and international events. A concept plan has now been developed by World Trail Pty Limited.

The infrastructure that is planned for both the trail head at the park's entrance and the summit of the mountain to support riders and visitors includes barbecues, shelters, bike wash stations, an e-bike charging station, secure storage, parking, drinking water, toilets and showers and a tourist information centre at which trail maps and information can be obtained. The planned visitor centre will provide general information to visitors and facilitate business development opportunities and jobs for the Aboriginal community, such as mountain bike tours of culturally significant parts of the mountain, trail maintenance on behalf of the Orange City Council, bike hire and general maintenance. Benefits of this project include attracting investment, diversifying the local economy, creating jobs, growing the visitor economy, maintaining and enhancing liveability and attracting and retaining a skilled workforce.

The planned trails traverse a State conservation area which is managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. There is an element in our society who consider that protection of public lands is only achieved by locking it up and leaving it. This approach does nothing to protect our public lands; in fact, quite the opposite

occurs. When land has a value that people are willing to pay to obtain access, increased funding can be directed to the protection of the land through the improved management of native flora and fauna and the control of invasive weeds and introduced feral animal species, both of which unfortunately are flourishing at Mount Canobolas. Bushfire mitigation practices can be enhanced through increased funding and access to areas of the State and national parks via mountain bike and service trails.

There is significant community support for this project. However, the project requires the political and financial support of the New South Wales Government to facilitate planning, funding and coordination of various ministerial bodies to see this project realised as an iconic tourist and sporting venue. This project will put Orange on the national and international map as a further attraction to its fantastic food, wine and arts culture. I thank Orange City Council for its vision and initiative in developing this exciting concept, which has the potential to deliver enormously for the Orange community and surrounds. I invite the New South Wales Government to invest in this exciting and rewarding project.

WESTMEAD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (19:20): Westmead Public School is an outstanding school in my electorate and is also the biggest public primary school in New South Wales, with around 1,620 students. The student population does not include any out-of-area students. This is an exceptionally high-achieving school and has a great school community that I am proud to represent. However, the school no longer adequately fits into its grounds and demountable classrooms are taking over the playgrounds, the carparks and any vacant area. There are well over 20 demountable classrooms, including a double-storey one which has replaced the basketball court.

I recently supported the school's P&C receiving a \$70,000 grant for a covered outdoor learning area [COLA] for years 1 and 2. This is the students' designated outdoor play space as well as a learning area. There are around 500 students just in years 1 and 2. The COLA is enormous and it is fantastic, not least of all because every single COLA in the playground prevents more demountable classrooms overtaking the playground. Westmead desperately needs a second primary school.

Only this week the *Parramatta Advertiser* reported that Westmead Public School is being promoted in India. I have heard countless examples of families who are moving to Sydney from India actively seeking to live within the boundaries of this fantastic school. Westmead is a wonderful, welcoming community and one that values education. At the same time there has been a huge influx of new apartments. As a result, the student population has grown from around 900 seven to eight years ago to over 1,600 today. This is a great challenge but it is one we have to meet.

I have raised this issue many times. I am raising it again because with the State budget imminent I want to see action on a new school. The Government has been aware for seven to eight years of the sudden rapid growth of this school. It has reduced the boundaries of the local school area twice and has filled the playground with over 20 demountable classrooms but it has not done anything about a new school. Half the suburb of Westmead is now excluded from the Westmead Public School boundaries. The entire suburb north of the railway line is now directed to the O'Connell Street Public School in Parramatta, which for students involves a two kilometre walk across Parramatta Park or a good 30 minute drive on some of Sydney's most congested roads. People who live in units 100 to 150 metres from Westmead Public School have to walk two kilometres to school because they cannot enrol at Westmead.

Last year, prior to the budget, the Government announced a new school and during the election campaign the Liberal candidate for Granville, Tony Issa, repeatedly claimed the school had been delivered. Quite obviously it has not. For a school to be delivered it needs to exist. It needs a site and classrooms, not just a media release. In last year's budget all that was delivered was \$400,000 to investigate 12 identified future schools, including a second Westmead public school. Labor made a real commitment. I thank the shadow Minister for Education for committing \$50 million to a second Westmead public school and for visiting the school with me twice to see the challenges it faces. Today I call on the Government to urgently find a site for a new public primary school in Westmead and to start building as soon as possible.

In the other place the Hon. Mark Latham raised concerns about Westmead Public School doing away with prizes for students in kindergarten and years 1 and 2. He seems to think it reflects a lack of academic rigour at the school. Nothing could be further from the truth. If he is genuinely concerned about students at Westmead Public School he should join me in calling for a second public school in Westmead. The school's decision to no longer give prizes to K-2 students is considered by many education experts to be best practice. The focus in these most important formative years is on every child attaining skills, not competing. The focus is on personal growth. The teachers found that a focus on rewards was making students anxious and in consultation with parents they stopped them.

The school values the progress of all students and the school community is happy. This is a highly educated school community that values education. Westmead has the second highest percentage of residents with postgraduate qualifications in Australia. It is the home of the largest medical precinct in Australia and many of those highly skilled workers live nearby and send their children to Westmead Public School. I think they know better than Mr Latham about what a great school Westmead Public School is and certainly they are not voting with their feet to leave. Despite being the biggest, very squashy school in the State and not getting prize ribbons, they still have a huge enrolment challenge which only gets worse as more apartments are built nearby. Westmead Public School is a fantastic school. It is hugely popular. It is so popular we desperately need another one. I call on the new Minister for Education to make the students of Westmead a priority and construct a second public primary school in Westmead as soon as possible.

VETERAN RECOGNITION

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (19:24): As the Minister for Veterans I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on some local events that have been held in my electorate that recognise the contribution of local war veterans. In November of last year I joined my community at the Pavilion of Honour at Queen Elizabeth Park in Concord to commemorate Remembrance Day and the Centenary of Armistice. It was a great privilege to be part of the commemorations that honour those who have so selflessly served and fought for the freedom we have today. It is because of those very freedoms that have been bestowed upon us that we must always remember.

The War Memorial in Queen Elizabeth Park was fully refurbished last year and it is magnificent. This restoration ensures future generations of constituents will continue to have a place to pay their respects to Australia's servicemen and women. In this House, I would also like to recognise the Five Dock RSL Sub-Branch, who last year celebrated 100 years of the RSL Sub-Branch. They held a service at Five Dock War Memorial and it was another humbling experience to honour the fallen and to learn about the interesting history of local constituents in my electorate of Drummoyne that were casualties of the Second World War. I would like to personally thank Mr Gregory Maunsell of the Five Dock RSL Sub-Branch for the effort and time he has put into researching the history of servicemen and women from my local area that served in the Second World War. These veterans have been recognised on the honour roll at the war memorial in Five Dock Park. It has been so humbling to become educated about this local history. We are all better citizens for knowing about those who have come before us. So Gregory, thank you.

Among local casualties is the only female named on the Five Dock War Memorial, Jean Marie Allard of Mooculta Street, Five Dock, a member of the Australian Women's Army Service who died of illness in May 1943 and was accorded a full military funeral at Rookwood. One of two sets of brothers were the Fishers, Henry of Wymston Parade, Abbotsford, and James of Kings Road, Five Dock. Both in the RAAF, Henry died in a training flight crash in New South Wales in 1942 and James in a Wellington bomber over Italy in 1944. Five men lost their lives in Bomber Command over Germany. This includes the award winning pilot and Aviator Patron of the Sub-Branch James "Jimmy" Whitford who was recruited into the RAAF as a flight instructor but died in November 1939 when a wing on his Moth aeroplane collapsed. He was so popular locally that he had his own memorial fountain unveiled in Five Dock Park in 1941. At 19 years old Hector Gray of Murralong Avenue, Five Dock, was the youngest casualty from the area and he was killed in New Guinea in 1943 along with three other 19 year olds. The oldest frontline soldier was Leo McCarthy of Wareemba Street, Five Dock, who was 44 when he died in Sandakan.

The oldest at 58 was John Drake of Five Dock who was a decorated soldier from World War One who enlisted in the Royal Australian Army Pay Corps and died of illness in Sydney in 1944. As the Minister for Veterans, it is my honour to commemorate Australian servicemen and women. Last week, I was very proud to acknowledge and remember our Indigenous diggers who have served and sacrificed so much for Australia in every major conflict since the Boer War. I would like to thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans and Services Association and RSL NSW for hosting this important commemoration at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park and for inviting myself and the Premier to attend this special service. All of the deaths we commemorate are tragic. We must recognise the courage it takes to sacrifice one's life for the betterment of our country and continue to educate our future generations of the selfless service. Lest we forget.

GREATER TOUKLEY VISION

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (19:29): Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker. I have taken a few deep breaths and calmed down. I apologise for my venting.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): That is not necessary, but I thank you for the sentiment.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: Central Coast Council been undertaking a review of the operational management of town centres across the Central Coast, in particular Toukley and Greater Toukley Vision [GTV]. Following the review the council has decided to take over the coordination of town centre management functions, which includes asset management and maintenance—including cleaning, landscaping, security and graffiti removal from council assets—infrastructure delivery, contract management, place activation and event delivery. In some of those categories it is quite reasonable, but GTV has played a role whereby members of the businesses community pay a levy that is used locally to support event management, look after the area and employ someone local to take care of the town for the benefit of local businesses. There was always been a business chamber, but it is now non-existent while GTV has remained.

GTV has been responsible for things such as the Christmas tree, the Village Green, the pre-Australia Day celebrations at Canton Beach, car shows, festivals for food, and fun and water. All of those events are free so every single member of the community can participate, which is so important in that community. Therefore it is not unexpected that 3,000 people to 4,000 people turn up to enjoy the activities; they are low-cost and everyone can participate. I am worried that, even though the council will still give \$30,000 dollars to GTV, it will be for business development. wonder what that definition of "business development will be. I will continue to lobby the council, together with The federal member for Dobell, Emma McBride, to make sure that our town centres Wyong and Toukley are looked after.

One of the big problems with the amalgamation with Central Coast Council is that individuality of these villages is being lost and sucked into this big void of Central Coast Council. In some cases my community is missing out. I received an email response from the council indicating that it will form a relationship with the NSW Business Chamber and that \$120,000 will be made available to contract one of the business groups to provide regional upskilling, training and broader education links to industry information for local business, and directly support business with their social media et cetera. Council should not have to do this. We used to have the Central Coast Business Enterprise Centre—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Yes, remember those? I was on the board of one of those.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: The shadow Minister for Small Business is here. The Central Coast one was abolished and merged with Newcastle. We now have a mobile service once per week in the northern parts of my electorate, but that group used to serve the whole Central Coast. It was paid for by the State Government and it fulfilled all of those roles. Obviously the council now feels that it has to step into the void and prop up what was already working. The Central Coast Business Enterprise Centre was quite successful, it was quite popular. The staff were well networked across the whole community and people attended its functions. This Government saw fit, through the merger with the Hunter, to remove that service, which meant that the council had to move in to prop up that service.

I am concerned that our local town centres had been doing well and that now those roles may be undermined under this new regime. I have let the mayor and the general manager know, so I will be watching very closely. I feel very aggrieved that through the Government's action—it is almost cos-shifting—the council has to take up a role that the State Government is responsible for. Once again we see local councils propping up this Government—whether it be a waste levy or other things—with ratepayers' money.

NOWRA ANGLICAN COLLEGE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (19:34): On Sunday I attended Nowra Anglican College's latest musical performance of *Beauty and the Beast* at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre. The college's performance was a thrilling rework of Disney's 1991 film adaptation of the same name. Today I would like to acknowledge this performance's entire ensemble, recognising their significant contribution through creative management, costume design, set construction, crew, cast and orchestra. I would also like to thank the principal Lorrae Sampson, co-directors Laura Turner and Jane McIntosh, co-producer Leisa Ebdon and their successful group that ran this remarkable performance.

I list the many members of the ensemble in alphabetical order: Lucinda Adamson, Courtney Alcock, Gabrielle Allen, Chloe Anderson, Maggie Armstrong, Rebecca Bailey, Paige Baker, Austin Baker, Lacey Baker, Elisha Ball, Ethan Bardsley-Divina, Dan Bardsley-Divina, Malia Barrel, Harrison Baxter, Fergus Bell, Abby Bice, Madelyn Black, Brendon Bladen, Maya Bongarzone, Groove Brindley, Indigo Brindley, Michelle Brooke, Amelia Brown, Imogen Brown, Lachlan Brown, Samuel Brown, Jordan Brunswick, Juliet Carter, Kamille Carter, Niamh Carter, Brianna Cassisi, Archie Collison, Jack Contencin, Noah Corkett, Sienna Cosgrove, Abbey Crapp, Tyler Crawford, Summer Crealy, Ashlee Cummins, Georgia Dale, Samantha Dale, Margaret Davies, Ruby Davies, Alyssa Dille, Elena Domazar, Eva Douglass, Gordon Douglass, Lachlan Downing, Georgia Duncan and Charlotte Duncan.

Yasmine Duncan, Madeline Dunn, Lydia Duric, Ella Dyson, James Ebdon, Samuel Ebdon, Amy Edwards, Madeleine Edwards, Claire Ennis, Gwendolyn Eyland, Millicent Eyland, Lily Fellows, Samantha Fletcher, Sophie Fletcher, Martin Fortescue, Ellis Fuller, Lily Gallagher, Amaya Gasbarri, James Gillen, Tara Gilmour, Ingrid Gilmour, Arielle Gomez, Briannah Gorden, Ben Gordon, Laura Griffin, Caitlin Guthrie, Grace Guthrie, Georgia Hamaty, Isabella Harkness, Georgia Harris-Carter, William Hayward, Laura Heffill, Nina Heidke, Emily Hendry, Sayumi Hettige, Thevan Hettige, Ashleigh Hill, Jordan Hodalj, Tegan Hunt, Amelia Janezic, Isabella Janezic, Heidi Jervis, Cooper Jessep, Hannah Johns, Flynn Johnson, Gabrielle Johnson, Molly Johnson, Ria Johnson, Isabel Jung, Eleni Kalaitzis, Max Kielly, Harry Kielly and Michelle Kielly.

Brody King, Aleag Kourshounian, Patil Kourshounian, Liam Latsky, Mackenzie Lawrence, Ruby Lea, Amy Leach, Samantha Legzdin, Max Legzdin, Chelsea Leslie, Kiara Leslie, Ellie Luke, Calvin Ma, Matthew Mackenzie, Stella Maxted, Jorja McCoy, Rory McMahon, Brianna Mead, Summer Mead, Grace Middleton, Georgia Mitchell, Jemima Mitchell, Emma Moore, Leila Moore, Sarah Moore, Diedre Moxon, Jennifer Munn, Emily Munn, Georgia Murdoch, Niamh Murdoch, Makayla Murray, Manna Ng, James Nield, Evie Noonan, Hannah Nosavan, Brent Nowland, Charlize O'Toole, Samuel Parker, Sophia Parker, Rachel Parnell, James Paterson, Elizabeth Peabody, Matisse Pearce, Danielle Peck, Anna Pigott, Emily Pybus, Zoe Ray, Ethan Rebel, Ruby Reid, Lucinda Reilly, Anna Richter, Grace Rimmington, Vivienne Robinson and Ava Robinson.

Claudia De Rooy, Indy Roulstone, Evie Rowe, Josie Russell, Isabella Schilko, Lara Schroder-Watters, Tayla Seery, Nicholas Shaw, Elizabeth Shaw, Harrison Shepherd, Kian Shepherd, Astrid Shepherd, Gaveen De Silva, Eleanor Da Silva-Hicks, Liam Da Silva-Hicks, Daniel Sim, Jack Sim, Kate Sloane, Kasey Smyth, Kayla Snelling, Annamaria Spyrakis, Mia Stewart, Liana Taufao, Isabelle Thaler, Clare Thomas, Riley Timbs, Caleb Timbs, Breanna Todd-Wilson, Kayla Toole, Nell Trotter, Michael Turner, Alaska Turner, Isabella Vassallo, Brendon Vitiello, Scarlett Wakelin, Layla Wang, Charlotte Warner, Ella Webeck, Benjamin Weir, Karen Weir, Courtney Western, Kathleen Whitehead, Catherine Whitehouse, Emma Whitehouse, Richard Whitehouse, Sarah Whitehouse, Phoebe Williams, Philippa Winter, Harrison Wood, Darcy Woods and Ebony Zillesen. Congratulations once again to all of those involved in the performance.

I named them all because this was an amazing performance; one of the best that I have seen from Nowra Anglican College. Around half of the senior school invested efforts in the production, so I wanted to put all of their names on the record because they deserve to be recognised for those efforts. I have no doubt that Max and Georgia, in particular, who played the leads and were exceptional, will have very long and successful careers on the stage. I know that all members support musical theatre and amateur musical theatre, but this was far from amateur. It was an outstanding performance and they should all be very proud of their efforts.

JOBS GROWTH

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (19:39): During the election campaign I was shocked by the number of people to whom I spoke who were being exploited at work. In one instance a young man was telling me of his hopes to restructure a loan to avoid bankruptcy, but more concerning was his story of his mother whose 40-hour-a-week job had turned into a 70-hour-a-week job with no extra pay. It is a pattern I have seen before—namely, older women whose hours grow and grow with no subsequent increase in income. It is exploitation writ large, and I hope these employers do not sleep soundly at night.

Despite my entreaties to take up his case—as this was a highly questionable action under the Fair Work Act—he said they could not do anything because the family was so in debt that if his mother missed one day of work they would go under. I would like to say this is an isolated case but, unfortunately, it is not. At the other end of the spectrum were those I ran into who, day after day, were trying to find work. Although under contract, they were receiving one or two days a week but were finding it difficult to find more work. Swimming under crippling debt and living marginally on what income they could obtain from highly casualised work, their struggle was also a similar story.

These are often the stories of those who are amongst the homeless figures in our local electorates; having a go but not getting one. The 2019 OECD employment outlook figures for Australia reinforces this problem. In Australia 25 per cent of our workers are casual, and of whom over half report having no guaranteed hours. Among OECD countries Australia has one of the highest shares, with 13 per cent of employees working in short, part-time jobs, which is defined as working one to 19 hours per week. Even though Australia was not hard-hit by the financial crisis, it has had one of the largest increases in under-employment across OECD countries since 2007.

About 36 per cent of Australian jobs face a significant or high risk of automation, which means a sizeable share of adults will need to upskill or retrain to meet the needs of future jobs. It is young workers, particularly women and those without tertiary education, who face the most significant risks. Since 2006 the probability of low-paid employment has increased for young people in Australia with medium- and high-level education. This increase was larger than the OECD average. More concerning is that retraining and adult learning is not getting

to those who need it the most, despite its importance to help people maintain and upgrade their skills throughout their working lives.

Whilst Australia has a higher than average share of adults participating in job-related adult learning, 48.5 per cent, the number of low-skilled adults in job-related adult learning drops to only 23 per cent which, at 42 percentage points lower than the participation rate for high-skilled adults, is a poor outcome. Those who need the training most train the least. I am a big fan of Keynesian economics. I enjoy the spectacle of Liberal-Nationals Government members on the other side of the Chamber giving us a good dose of Keynesianism every other day of the week. However, the Government's fiscal multiplier effect is somewhat questionable based on the business cases it has presented. The short-term sugar hit from its current infrastructure projects driving the short-term employment market will not overcome the long-term problems about to hit our economy in the headwinds of what looks like an oncoming market downturn, even with the price rise of iron ore. This may require a bit more Keynesian thought outside infrastructure alone, particularly around wage growth.

More and more people in Sydney are paying the price for Sydney's lopsided growth. The Government has shown a lack of care about the people who inhabit this city, particularly those in the electorate of Auburn. Linked as it is to the global market, Sydney needs more than a sugar hit to ensure that those on the tipping point are not left behind. Greater casualisation, under-employment and automation are areas this Government must get a handle on with some cohesive action, particularly for the low-skilled. It might also want to think about a few legislative changes and protections to help those being exploited at work. Given the sheer number of such people that I ran into during the State election campaign, expansion of the New South Wales workplace inspectors should be considered. Legislation to criminalise wage theft should also be on this Government's agenda. Failure to make change will only compound the significant problems in the electorate of Auburn, which go hand in hand with unemployment, under-employment and homelessness. They must be addressed.

SYDNEY NORTH REGION SCOUTS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (19:43): Scouting was established in Australia in 1908, over a century ago, and in 1914 the New South Wales section of the Australian Boy Scouts Association was formed. Since then Scouts Australia, as the governing organisation is now known, has experienced periods of both popularity and decline but it is currently in a growth phase. This is a time when many are seeking a greater sense of community and a break from the pressures of school and modern living. The scouting movement today has around 66,000 members and continues to demonstrate its relevance to the needs of young people.

This is undoubtedly true in the Ku-ring-gai electorate where seven Scout groups are thriving under the umbrella of Sydney North Region Scouts. They include the 1st East Wahroonga, 1st Gordon, 1st Pymble, 1st Turramurra, 2nd Turramurra, West Pymble and Normanhurst Scout groups. Several of these Scout groups have long and illustrious histories. First Gordon Scouts were established in 1916, the same year that Lord Baden Powell started Cubs in the United Kingdom. The group was formed by the Reverend Arnold Connolly, the rector of St John's Church at Gordon and meetings were held for many years in the parish hall.

The present Scout hall in Cawarra Place, Gordon, was built in 1961 after the wooden hall that was originally constructed on that site was destroyed by fire in 1959. The Normanhurst Scout Group first began meeting in the early 1930s in the Presbyterian Church hall in Buckingham Avenue, now the Uniting Church. In 1942, the group moved to Normanhurst Public School and was renamed 1st Normanhurst. However, after making too many holes in the walls, the group was asked to leave and it moved to St Stephen's Church hall in the early 1950s with Padre Alan Batt as the group leader.

In or around 2001, 1st Normanhurst, 2nd Normanhurst and 3rd Thornleigh Scout groups—the latter two of which had formed after 1st Normanhurst's numbers had swelled in the 1960s—combined to form one group, which is today's Normanhurst Scout Group. The 1st Turramurra Scout Group traces its origins back to 1920 and 1st Pymble has been a strong presence in the local community since 1954. These Scout groups are very important contributors to the social fabric of Ku-ring-gai. Scouts Australia aims to encourage the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of young people to enable them to take a constructive place in society as responsible citizens. Our local groups play a significant role in forming a socially cohesive community.

Just as importantly they provide a lot of fun, challenges and adventure. Cubs and Scouts both learn a wide variety of games, leadership skills and outdoor skills and Ku-ring-gai's natural surrounds provide the perfect environment for bushwalking. I recently paid a visit to the 2nd Turramurra Scout Group on their annual day and learned that group has a tradition of billycart racing in addition to honing the initiative and the camp-craft of its members. What was also noticeable about 2nd Turramurra is the longevity of some of the Scout leaders, the number of former Scouts who have returned to serve in a leadership capacity and the parents who continue to make substantial contributions to the group after their children have moved on.

Scout groups not only make a positive impact on their members, they also have a direct effect on their communities. Every year Scouts and their leaders contribute many hours as volunteers including time shared with the area's aged community, assisting with Clean Up Australia Day and Harmony Day or by planting trees for environmental and social benefits. The North Region Scouts in Ku-ring-gai this year assumed the organisation and conduct of the Anzac Day services in West Pymble, Wahroonga and Turramurra that had previously been hosted by our local National Servicemen's Association representatives. They did an outstanding job and will no doubt continue to do so for many years to ensure that appropriate respect is given to one of Australia's most important days.

Scouting is also proudly inclusive. In that regard it encourages the integration of children with special needs—physical and mental disabilities or medical conditions—into regular Scout groups. Based just outside my electorate in Lindfield, but with members who live in Ku-ring-gai, is 1st Cromehurst Scout Group. It is a special needs group that provides the full scouting experience and assists in the transition of youth to mainstream scouting. The objective of Ku-ring-gai's Scout groups is to promote self-reliance, leadership and a desire for self-learning in our young people and that provides me with strong motivation to assist them whenever I can.

I am very pleased that over the last four years I have been able to facilitate grants through the Community Building Partnership program to: The 1st East Wahroonga Scouts that enabled them to undertake an upgrade of the kitchen in their hall; the 2nd Turramurra Scouts to fund the refurbishment of the bathroom in their hall; and, to the 1st Pymble Scouts that contributed to the cost of an upgrade to the driveway and pathway outside their hall. I commend all of the Scout groups in Ku-ring-gai for encouraging the holistic development of young people and preparing them to be both better citizens and effective leaders. When I visit the Scout groups and Cub groups in my electorate I am impressed by the confidence and personal leadership qualities that these young men and women have.

OLD WORLDS-NEW BEGINNINGS EXHIBITION

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (19:48): I thank the member for Ku-ring-gai for his heartfelt contribution on the condolence motion earlier today. I spoke a few weeks ago at the opening of the *Old Worlds-New Beginnings* exhibition in Maitland. The exhibition acknowledges and commemorates the first displaced people fleeing the horrors of post-World War Two Europe and their arrival 70 years ago at the Greta migrant camp. There were 100,000 people representing 18 nationalities who made new lives in Australia. The exhibition was proudly curated by the Maitland Regional Museum, with the Australian Clothing Museum holding a fashion parade, and supported by Brough House.

The exhibition acknowledges the important impact these migrants had on our community. These immigrants enriched our nation, and our region particularly, through sharing their cultures, skills and diversity. Migration changes all of us. My roots stem from my great-great-great-great-great-grandfather who came to Australia in the 1840s after the Battle of Waterloo. My life has been impacted by more recent immigrants such as those who sought asylum at Greta. Many of us in this place have parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles and siblings who came from a different country, culture and faith.

As a small girl I remember my grandmother, who lived in Goulburn, talking to me about the "new Australians", as she liked to call them, who arrived post-World War Two. For her it was a positive experience. She told me stories of friendships that lasted a lifetime and impactful relationships in her life that often began with someone walking down a street, seeing a neighbour in their yard and starting a conversation by pointing to a plant in the yard. This would lead to an exchange through sign language that usually ended in the kitchen with them cooking the rhubarb, spinach, squash or some other plant.

Women in those times forged friendships that lasted lifetimes. They were completely cross-cultural, from the most basic language, culture, cuisine, history and shared experiences. As a young woman I had a strong sense of social justice that was fostered by the conversations with my grandmother. I remember in the 1970s watching television ads about Kampuchean child refugees and being horrified. It had such an impact on me. It was the first social justice campaign I ever saw in my life. Those refugees were children just like me but without food in their horribly distended bellies—it had a lifelong impact on me.

At the age of 21 I felt privileged to work in the immigration department. For some time I worked in an area called "refugee law" reading current stories about refugees and classifying them. I have to say that reading what those people experienced was one of the most terrible experiences in my life. At that time asylum seekers from China were travelling in boats through our northern seas. Their stories were not dissimilar to those of people who came in boats across the sea to the Greta immigration camp—but what a different reception they got. After that I worked in social justice coordination. It impacted me and gave me a different view of the terrible, but fashionable, debate in this country about numbers of people and boats—but not about people, their lives and their families.

The reality of migration, particularly from war zones, and the trauma and torture those people have experienced, gives them a lifelong sense of loss, pain and grief. It also gives them hope, resilience and a sense of sacrifice and contribution that allows them to be productive members of their new nation. Greta camp housed 9,000 people at a time. The people living at Greta were not living in luxury. They overcame many problems in order to live and flourish in Australia. That is the overwhelming gift that the Greta migrants gave to Maitland. They were among the two million people who formed part of the post-war migration programs. They had to remain for two years working at any job the government gave them.

The Greta camp was the second largest post-World War Two migrant camp. It was basic accommodation and people were far from home, many of them mourning the loss of their homeland and separation from their families. Despite this they came, they stayed and they gave in abundance. These are the gifts that everyone who comes to this country gives us. We are enriched on every level by the contribution that every migrant and every refugee or person seeking safety and help gives back to this country. I salute all our migrants and refugees and thank them for their contribution to this nation.

FERAL RED DEER

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:54): I highlight to the House today a problematic environmental issue that is threatening the south-east region of my electorate and has the potential to devastate native landscapes and threaten farming operations. Between 2009 and 2016 the population of wild deer in the Gundagai region has expanded, a small part of a worrying statewide trend that has seen numbers soar by 60 per cent across the State, according to the Invasive Species Council. The increase in the feral red deer species population has meant these animals are in disproportionate numbers, causing tens of thousands of dollars in damage to personal possessions and properties, with severe environmental impacts on native vegetation, lakes and waterways being recorded across the State.

In other electorates, the impact of wild deer is devastating. In the Cootamundra electorate, it is important we act now to control this feral pest and I call on the Government to consider ways to ensure landholders can more effectively manage deer. These huge animals damage sensitive Australian flora and fauna, in many areas decimating the work of our hardworking Landcare groups. They put lives at risk when they encroach on the State's roads and railways. As someone who spends a lot of time on the road, it has been concerning to witness their numbers increase in the highlands of my electorate.

Deer are declared as a game animal in New South Wales under schedule 3, part 1 of the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002. Hunters need to acquire a licence to hunt deer on public or private land. New South Wales police and the NSW Department of Primary Industries retain regulatory oversight of hunting activities. Last year the New South Wales Government responded to increasing numbers and damage by lifting seasonal deer-hunting regulations to help licensed hunters assist farmers manage deer numbers. Our farmers, the environment and the community are impacted by deer through competition for grazing, fence damage, vehicle collisions and damage to native vegetation. These impacts are heightened with current drought conditions persisting across the State. Throughout the ongoing drought, deer have been reported to be competing for scarce fodder with livestock and native animals like kangaroos.

While this move was welcome, I believe we need to go further. Deer remain legally classified as a game animal. If the current population is left uncontrolled and is not declassified we could see further vehicle accidents and, sadly, the potential loss of life or severe injury as drivers attempt to evade this species on our rural and regional roads. Within the Local Land Services' [LLS] Riverina Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan of 2018 to 2023, wild deer east of the Hume Highway are identified as a priority pest species, with the objectives identified as being to contain the spread of populations east of the Hume Highway, reduce the impacts of deer on agricultural production and reduce the impacts on threatened species and ecological communities. However, the plan itself identifies the limitations on the management of this ever-expanding problem population and advocates for all the Riverina region local government areas [LGAs] to have the restriction for control in the game Act removed.

Currently parts of the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002 are suspended for Snowy Valleys Council local government area. However, this plan aims to have this suspension extended to cover all the Riverina LGAs to allow for greater control efforts by land managers and assist with small-scale eradication in areas where deer numbers and their distribution have expanded or they previously did not exist. It is paramount that we continue to remain on the front foot to ensure deer numbers do not overwhelmingly increase. That is why I believe the appropriate course of action is for the New South Wales Government to continue to investigate available measures to ensure landholders can effectively manage deer on their properties.

One of the impediments to the current classification of wild deer is that landholders do not have the ability to euthanise wild deer themselves and therefore have a limited capacity to reduce and control deer numbers

on their properties. Consequently, the species continues to grow and thrive on our farms and reserves. We need to put a stop to the swell of wild deer populations across the State as soon as possible, and that involves legally enabling the experts to do the work they already know must be done. I stress that it is vital that we continue to resource LLS and local councils to appropriately coordinate our responses with the best scientific studies to effectively eradicate the wild deer population, which I strongly advocate for in the best interests of the people I represent in the Cootamundra electorate.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:59 until
Thursday 6 June at 10:00.**