



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 6 June 2019

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 6 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.]

Governor

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Debate resumed from 5 June 2019.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (10:12): I have only two minutes remaining to contribute to the debate. Yesterday I did not have the chance to thank all the community groups that support so many people in so many ways. I take the opportunity now to thank Campbelltown Rotary, the Lions and Lifeline Macarthur, among so many others. To name them all would require 15 minutes and I am sure that even if he could Mr Speaker would not grant me that indulgence. The Governor's speech was embracing. A portion of the speech praised the Government and I will give credit where credit is due, there were some worthy elements—but more were not worthy of credit. I have to be frank about that.

What is important is that we stand up and fight for the people in our communities. The Governor said that we need to start putting the people in our community first and not the politics of our parties. It is people who matter. The purpose of each member in this place is to pursue prosperity for every man, woman and child. Our purpose in this place is to improve their wellbeing, their livelihoods and their prosperity, not to play politics. I am a very proud Labor man and have been and always will be, and that is an important factor. The people I am privileged to serve are most important to me. The people and the pursuit of their prosperity is the basis for everything we do, say and contribute in this House. I congratulate my community and I am proud to serve them in this place.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (10:14): It is a privilege to speak in debate to the address-in-reply to the Governor's speech. I commence by thanking Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley, AO, QC, Governor of New South Wales, for her speech outlining the Government's continued commitment to the people of this great State. The North Shore local community is proud that another daughter of the electorate has taken up the mantle of Governor of New South Wales but are disappointed she has left the community to live on this side of the harbour. The Governor follows in the footsteps of another Mosman resident, Dame Marie Bashir, AD, CVO. I thank my local community. It is a privilege to be in this place as the member for North Shore. *[Quorum called for.]*

[The bells having been rung and a quorum having formed, business resumed.]

It is a pleasure that so many of my colleagues have joined me to hear my address-in-reply speech. I thank the Governor for her contribution and I thank my North Shore community. In my inaugural speech in this place two years ago I said:

Above all, I am here to serve the people of North Shore, who have honoured me with their mandate, imposed upon me the great responsibility to represent them and on whose behalf I will work tirelessly.

I have spent the intervening two years working tirelessly with and for my community. I am grateful that they have put their trust in me once again with a mandate to continue working and delivering for the people of the North Shore. I will work closely with the Berejiklian Government and the Premier herself to do that. As Her Excellency remarked:

You have the privilege of representing the people of this great State in this, the oldest Parliament of Australia. I believe there is no greater privilege than representing one's community and making a positive and real improvement to the lives of people in our communities. As Her Excellency pointed out, we must do all we can to ensure that we lead our communities with integrity and passion. Her Excellency's speech outlined the Berejiklian Government's election commitments to the people of New South Wales including maintaining a strong economy, helping businesses to create jobs, ensuring we take the pressure off families by helping ease the cost of living and delivering better services, investing in public transport infrastructure to ensure that our roads are less congested, investing record

amounts in health so that our communities have access to high-quality medical care and investing more in our schools to give all children in New South Wales the best possible start in life.

These commitments are only possible under a Liberal-Nationals government with strong leadership. First, I congratulate the Premier, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian. She is in a neighbouring electorate and as such we share a community, and people in my electorate are grateful to have a local as Premier. I also congratulate the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet; the Deputy Premier, the Hon. John Barilaro; and the Deputy Leader of The Nationals, the Hon. Paul Toole. I look forward to working with this strong and exceptional Liberal-Nationals leadership team, who will ensure that we keep delivering for the people of New South Wales. Not only did Premier Gladys Berejiklian lead our Government to victory in the recent State election but in doing so she became the first female elected as Premier of New South Wales. I know this milestone resonates throughout our community. I am particularly proud of what she has achieved and look forward to continuing to work closely with her over the next four years.

The Governor noted in her speech that New South Wales is on track to deliver consecutive budget surpluses over the next four years. New South Wales currently leads the nation on key economic indicators including our record low unemployment rates. Under this strong economic management New South Wales is experiencing unprecedented investment in transport, education and health. This has resulted in a record \$89.7 billion program for New South Wales, ensuring our Government is able to continue delivering thousands of new jobs. This investment is not restricted to our metropolitan areas, like my community; regional New South Wales is also receiving record investment thanks to the Liberal-Nationals Government.

During the recent State election our Government put to the people of New South Wales our plan to take the pressure off. One area where this could not be more evident is our public transport network. Our Government has delivered train station upgrades across the network including in my electorate of North Shore. We know that public transport is for everyone and Wollstonecraft station will soon have two lifts installed to ensure accessibility. As part of a \$2 billion statewide program to improve transport access we will be looking at all of the facilities at the station to make sure that our less mobile customers, including those with a disability, those with limited mobility, parents with prams and travellers with luggage, can all easily access public transport services.

Our record level of transport infrastructure investment is delivering significant public transport improvements for local communities. I was thrilled to see the Premier and the Minister for Transport and Roads commence services on the new Sydney Metro Northwest rail line. My community and I especially look forward to these services coming to North Sydney when the Crows Nest and Victoria Cross stations are opened. I thank the Premier and the Minister for Transport and Roads for their continued commitment to ensuring that the people in my electorate of North Shore and of New South Wales have the best public transport available.

Government investment in ferry services has also seen improvement—and, frankly, there is no better way to commute to the city while enjoying beautiful Sydney Harbour. That is why I was pleased to announce with the Minister for Transport and Roads that we are introducing extra services for North Shore customers at Milsons Point, McMahon's Point, Mosman Bay and Taronga Zoo wharves on the brand-new emerald-class ferries. We are upgrading more local wharves at Taronga Zoo, South Mosman and North Sydney to make them fully accessible for all customers, including those with a disability, the elderly and parents and carers with prams. This is a government that continues to deliver. We know that only the New South Wales Liberals would commit to building the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link. I acknowledge the former Minister for Roads, Melinda Pavey, for the work she did in introducing this groundbreaking project for my community. She ensured this project moved forward and it is now commencing the environmental impact statement phase.

This project was a key component of my by-election campaign and I am pleased that early stages of consultation on the design have concluded. The project team is working on the infrastructure approvals process stage. In the 2018-19 budget, under the stewardship of Minister Pavey, we funded all works—over \$500 million—to get the project shovel-ready. This includes geotechnical assessments, property acquisitions and early works to deliver this project. This project will dramatically decrease travel times for commuters, ensuring that more time is spent with friends and family, rather than on our roads. Members know that the Military Road corridor is one of the most congested roads in Sydney.

As the Governor mentioned in her speech, this Government is putting the customer at the centre of everything it does. In 2013 this Government introduced Service NSW as a one-stop shop for almost 850 vital services. I know every community, including mine, loves this service although we do not have a local shopfront. That is why I was pleased to announce with the Minister for Customer Service the introduction of a Service NSW shopfront to the North Sydney CBD, one of the busiest commercial centres in our State. Having a Service NSW centre ensures that residents have easy access to services such as getting a birth certificate, a Seniors Card, a driver licence or a vehicle registration renewal. This will also ensure that our community has easy access to the rebates

on offer to ease the cost of living, in order to take the pressure off. I look forward to continuing to work with Minister Dominello in delivering this vital service for North Sydney and the electorate of North Shore.

Our Government is focused on providing the children of New South Wales with the best possible start in life. We have invested a record \$6.5 billion in education. Hundreds of North Shore families will benefit from this Government's record investment in education, with major upgrades to our local schools. Mosman High School and Neutral Bay Public School are receiving upgrades to school facilities, with early planning to give students additional permanent facilities and also to increase capacity. Early planning upgrades for North Sydney Demonstration School have also started. This investment will provide new facilities to allow the students to continue to excel and thrive. I know that parents, teachers and the school community have long championed this investment and I am proud that the Berejiklian Government is ensuring kids in the North Shore electorate will get the best start in life.

I thank the Minister for Education, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, in the other place, who joined me at Neutral Bay Public School, her first school visit following her appointment as Minister. Jillian Skinner, the former member for North Shore, joined us. She has been a champion for the school for decades, even preceding her time in this place. I pay tribute to the school community, to Jillian Skinner and to the Minister for upgrades to this school. The New South Wales Government has also committed \$500 million for the Cooler Classrooms Program, ensuring that more air conditioning is provided in more classrooms. This program is having an impact on two schools in my electorate, Cammeray High School and North Sydney Girls High School.

Our Government is focused on easing the cost-of-living pressure on families, which will include access to before- and after-school care. The New South Wales Government will invest \$120 million to open new and expanded before- and after-school care facilities at public primary schools by 2021 to make care more convenient and affordable and take the pressure off families. In my community we have a high number of professional couples and individuals raising families and the issue of before- and after-school care is often raised with me as parents try to juggle family responsibilities, work commitments and care requirements. Schools come under a lot of pressure to provide before- and after-school care facilities. As a young mother I am learning about the pressure to juggle work and family, and the need for more places. I am proud of our policy to provide more before- and after-school care places. I am also proud that we have committed to ensure that every public primary school student in New South Wales will have access to before- and after-school care under this Government.

Recently the Premier and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, along with Her Excellency the Governor, welcomed class 337 to the NSW Police Force. I thank the North Shore Local Area Command for everything the police do to keep our community safe. I look forward to welcoming the four new probationary constables, out of a total of 261, who have been allocated to my electorate alongside Superintendent Allan Sicard. I am encouraged that the New South Wales police services will continue to do their duty of keeping our communities safe. Police men and women across our State put their personal safety on the line to ensure that our local communities are safe and protected. I am proud to be part of a government that ensures police men and women continue to deliver time and again. I am proud to be part of a government that recognises this incredible work and is investing accordingly to allow officers to continue this daunting task. [*Extension of time*]

I now move to the task of the election campaign in the electorate of North Shore. I thank all the individuals who put together the detailed and rigorous campaign activity across the State and, in particular, those involved in the campaign in my electorate. Following the by-election we had only two years to campaign and it took a lot of effort and resources. On a personal note, having a six-week-old baby at the start of the election campaign meant that we required a lot more people to chip in a lot more effort. In particular, I start by thanking my staff who, while not involved in campaigning, for the past two years have worked in my electorate office and served my community so well. My community are incredibly proud of them and grateful for their support. People were happy once again to put their trust in me and in this team to deliver for them. I start by thanking them as we could not do our jobs without our staff in our electorates taking care of our communities, supporting them and providing them with the services they need when we are out and about or in Parliament. I thank them.

I also thank my State Electorate Conference [SEC]. When it comes to the local branches in my community, our SEC works tirelessly to ensure that our community is represented. My president, Simon Moore, and treasurer Jo Howe worked tirelessly—particularly Jo—and I could not thank them more. I also acknowledge each of the branches in my conference: Waverton-Wollstonecraft branch president Yvette Walsh and team; North Sydney branch and president Jason Li; Kirribilli branch and president Ted Wziontek; Neutral Bay branch and president Simon Moore; Cremorne Point branch and president Marilyn Cameron; Mosman West branch and president Ben Taylor; Clifton Gardens branch and president Geoff Underwood; Mosman branch and president David McLean; Mosman Young Liberals branch and president Lachlan Finch; and Balmoral branch and president Ross Freeman, whom some will know from his time as the member for Coogee.

In my local community a number of people went an extra mile during the campaign. In North Sydney we had two weeks of pre-poll, which was run and manned incredibly effectively by Greg Blayney. The Mosman pre-poll was run by John Devane. I thank them both. I also thank the Federal member for North Sydney, Trent Zimmerman, who supported me on a number of days during pre-poll and also on election day. I thank Councillor Jilly Gibson, the Mayor of North Sydney, for her support throughout the past two years and for her advice—she always gives very frank and fearless advice. I thank her for continuing to support me during the campaign.

I also thank Mary Blayney, who ran the booth manning on election day—which members will know is incredibly complex. Mary, alongside Jo Howe, made sure that all our booths were well manned, with great teams working together. They were all fed and watered and had all the resources they needed, including sunscreen and so on. It was no mean feat and logistically a huge effort, so I thank Mary for doing that. I also thank my family. As I mentioned, having little Eleanor just six weeks before the campaign started meant that my family chipped in a lot more than usual. They helped on election day, as they always have. But my mum, Leslie Henry, my sisters Alexia Greaves and Christiana Casuscelli, spent quite a bit of time at my home taking care of my baby during the day so that I could be out and about campaigning. I would come home, feed the baby and then continue campaigning. Without their support I would not have been able to work so hard on this campaign. I am already forever grateful to them as my family, but I am particularly grateful for their support during this campaign.

I know that the people of North Shore returned us as a government and me as their local member because of the commitments that we delivered for them and the commitments that we have made for the next term. They know that we can be trusted to deliver on our promises, that we listen, that we care about their needs and that we will make sure we always put our community first—which I have done to date. One of the biggest and best commitments, in my opinion, that this Government has delivered is the B-Line bus service. This is a game changer for the northern beaches and the North Shore along the Military Road corridor. The infrastructure and the new buses—people love the B-Line buses—are a great new piece of kit that this Government has invested in. The route is fantastic and, while constructing the infrastructure took quite a bit of effort and had some impacts—as it usually does—the service is wonderful for our community.

We have also seen the delivery of two new local schools, Anzac Park Public School and Cammeray Girls High School Junior Campus. The commitment was made and delivery began before my time, and I congratulate Jillian Skinner on that. Cammeray Girls High School Senior Campus opened just this year. Some \$10 million has been committed to our national park and investment in Sydney Harbour National Park to deliver the Middle Head master plan, which includes walkways and public amenities. This is an important investment to preserve and protect our environment, our Indigenous heritage and the military fortification work and to open up our national park to the community. My local community cares deeply about our environment and wants that investment, and I am very proud to deliver it, along with then Minister Gabrielle Upton. The Government also invested in preserving Wendy's Secret Garden and heritage-listed Brett Whiteley's house and the curtilage around Lavender Bay.

One of the great joys I had during the election campaign was confirming with my Waverton and Wollstonecraft communities that we were introducing dampeners along the railway track. Members may or may not know that the 1½ kilometres of railway track between Waverton and Wollstonecraft stations have one of the steepest bends in the country. This creates a lot of wheel squeal and hugely impacts people's lives. The noise can be as loud as 100 decibels—one could not imagine living next to that. While the railway line has been there for well over 100 years, the frequency of services has increased significantly. I know that the dampeners trial will make a difference to the lives of residents, and I commit to keep working to address the impact of track noise.

The Government, through Minister Pavey, also secured the removal of the lease licence on Berrys Bay. This is a beautiful area that has been locked away from community access for about a decade because of deals done by those opposite. We removed that lease licence and will return it to community ownership. We have also committed to acquire 1 Henry Lawson Avenue, McMahons Point, and return it to public parkland. It is an honour to speak to this motion. I thank Her Excellency and her husband, Dennis Wilson, for their commitment and service to our State. I look forward to working with the Berejiklian Government to achieve the commitments my colleagues and I have made to ensure we meet our goals for the people of North Shore and across New South Wales.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (10:35): Often speeches are notable for what they include. We all remember some of the great lines of some of the speeches that changed the world. They have often challenged us to set new global, national or personal goals. They have had a profound impact on the way we view an issue or debate. We even recall speeches from family members, friends and teachers that have stuck with us over time. But other speeches are noticeable for what they leave out: the topics they gloss over or the detail that is excluded, either intentionally or unintentionally. The Governor's Speech was quite good and well written by the

Government—I note that the Governor did not write this speech herself—but it lacked a few key details. The Government chose to exclude some items and include others. What was left unsaid also went unsaid during the election campaign.

In particular, I refer to the Premier's commitment as reported in *The Australian* newspaper on 13 April 2019—20-odd days after election day—to cut public service jobs. But the Premier, who prides herself on doing her homework, was not across the detail when she sent shockwaves through the public sector by announcing job cuts that no mention was made of during the election campaign. A whole range of issues had been explored for several months—because with fixed four-year terms we all know when the election will be held—but there was no mention of public service job cuts in either the items disclosed through the Parliamentary Budget Office costing process or in general debate. But on 13 April in *The Australian* the Premier is reported as saying:

I haven't put a number on it....

referring to the job cuts. The Premier went on to say:

But in the back office there will be significant changes.

The next day in *The Sydney Morning Herald* the Premier used a slightly different tone when referring to jobs, noting, "Jobs are fundamental." In the Governor's Speech, Her Excellency, on behalf of the Government, noted:

Job creation will continue to be at the heart of the government's agenda.

I guess it is for everyone except those who are involved in public service "back office" activities. One wonders what types of back-office activities will be put at risk with the further hollowing out of the public service when it comes to contract management and procurement. Will it be the people who keep to account the contractors who are undertaking repairs to and maintenance of social housing properties? Will it be those who are involved in the planning and development of new ideas and who undertake regulatory reviews and assist in the development of market design—a key element of the way we go forward as an economy and a community?

Will it be those who undertake functions that support frontline public servants and help them deliver a more effective service to the people of New South Wales? Will it be those who keep our data secure and the protections in place as the expansion of data collection continues? When it comes to the workers the Government has in its sights, I guess they cannot have it all—unlike what the Premier suggested. There are very real implications if the wrong back-office public sector roles are slashed even further. In the past few days we have seen that poor contract management and project planning have led to a further spend on the CBD and South East Light Rail. Thousands of people are frustrated that the centre of Sydney is looking more like a construction zone every day.

Fundamental aspects of the project include not only the detailed work in proposing the idea—and there are questions about that—but also the project management and project and contract design. A \$1.6 billion project has turned into an almost \$3 billion project. I have said numerous times that you can spend a dollar only once, and that is particularly the case when it is the taxpayers' dollar. So an additional \$1 billion needs to be spent on the CBD and South East Light Rail, and other investments and projects have to be kicked farther down the road.

I wonder how many other blowouts in projected budgets or poor procurement decisions that will cost taxpayers billions might come about as a result of cutting the wrong people from the public sector. I wonder how many other projects will be pushed further out. We know that once you have made a budget blowout mistake you cannot spend the money again and you have to push other projects into the future. I will find it difficult to provide Wollongong residents with any adequate explanation as to why we have to put up with slower trains and why people will still have to climb 72 stairs to get to the local station.

Debate interrupted.

Bills

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER AMENDMENT BILL 2019

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Ryan Park, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (10:43): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2019. The bill is critical because in their inaugural speeches members on both sides of the Chamber have talked about wanting to do

positive things in their community, such as delivering a new piece of infrastructure or a better service, advocating on behalf of those most in need or simply making sure that their community gets its fair share. The bill allows all of us to participate in that process. Why should good policy be limited only to the Executive? I listened carefully to the inaugural speeches and I am confident that all members, including those on the crossbench, have ideas and proposals that are worth examining, exploring and considering. But doing so requires proper funding. Fiscal management is critical to the delivery of the services and infrastructure that the people of New South Wales expect from their State Government. You cannot deliver unless you are fiscally responsible.

The bill will put in place a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office—not one that opens in September and closes in May or June after an election. If the Government says that is all there is to it then it is implying that no Opposition backbencher has a clue about anything and only the Executive can develop and put forward policy proposals. I ask members: How many of them have worked on a policy, an initiative or a piece of infrastructure? Would members like the opportunity to take it to an independent Parliamentary Budget Office before taking it to caucus, the Cabinet or the Shadow Cabinet to allow the budget office to give them some idea about the costs and implications involved? That is good policy development; that is what should be in place.

This is not some revolutionary idea. In fact, the Parliamentary Budget Office is a permanent part of our Federal Parliament, in place around the clock and throughout the parliamentary term. It also has a permanent place in the Victorian Parliament, thanks to the fantastic work of Daniel Andrews and Tim Pallas. The Victorian Labor Government introduced a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office to allow every member of Parliament to participate in the development of well-thought-out and, most importantly, costed proposals to be considered by the Shadow Cabinet or Cabinet for further implementation.

This legislation is important for all members because all of us in this place deserve to have the resources we need to ensure that the policies we develop are sound and funded appropriately. In 2010, under the leadership of Kristina Keneally, Labor introduced a similar bill. But something disastrous happened in 2013: The Government decided that it no longer needed the full-time services of the Parliamentary Budget Office. That is simply shameful. It is disrespectful to members of this place and, most importantly, it is disrespectful to those who believe strongly in the sound development of policy proposals, which involves undertaking detailed costings.

At this point I acknowledge the current Parliamentary Budget Officer, Stephen Bartos, and his team. As Shadow Treasurer perhaps I, more than most, worked closely with him and his team over a sustained period in the lead-up to the last election. Labor had an enormous amount of policies; no other Opposition put forward as many policies as we did during that election campaign. From day one, they were fully costed and completely independent. On the Monday when Government members thought our costings would not add up, it gave me an enormous amount of joy—which only nerds like me can get—when Mr Bartos and his team gave our proposals a clean bill of health. The Treasurer had a tough day—it is a shame there was a bit of news around at the time.

It was a tough day for the Treasurer because he had been running around this place saying, "They will not add up." But our figures did add up. Mr Bartos and his team did a stellar job. Our team of caucus and shadow Cabinet members provided Mr Bartos with the most comprehensive policy offering any Opposition has ever provided to an independent Parliamentary Budget Office in this place. That is something my team should be very proud of and something that each of those women and men contributed to. But on the other side of the Chamber that is not the case, because the last thing they want is for anyone on the backbenches—like you, Wollondilly—to get ahead of themselves and to think their role in here may be to have an idea. It is an idea-free zone over there, mate. You try and get something up to your Cabinet. I will enjoy watching it from afar. Wollondilly, this bill is for you.

Ms Melanie Gibbons: You are obviously directing those comments through the Chair.

Mr RYAN PARK: I reach out, Madam Acting Speaker—

Ms Melanie Gibbons: She is the Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr RYAN PARK: I am sorry, titles have never been my thing. I reach out to you, Wollondilly; the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2019 is for you. I think the member for Coffs Harbour is sitting next to you. Is that right?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery a group of year 11 students who are attending the Young Women's Leadership Seminar conducted by Parliamentary Education.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (10:52): This is for you, Coffs Harbour, because—I am sure you have it somewhere—there is an idea ticking away in that brain, ticking away within The Nationals. The only problem with The Nationals is you have to pay for it; but let us say that idea is there. How would you get that idea costed?

You are not allowed anywhere near Treasury. You are banned from that. How would you get it costed? This is an opportunity for you to put forward a policy and have it developed, costed and assessed. The Parliamentary Budget Officer would be available to you—your own person—to assess your fantastic idea, such as banning daylight saving. That is one of yours, is it not?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The shadow Treasurer will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr RYAN PARK: A proposal like that from The Nationals—a well thought out, considered proposal—to have various timelines in the one State would no doubt have cost implications. The Parliamentary Budget Officer could assess the economic impacts of banning daylight saving and how much it would cost. Madam Temporary Speaker, imagine if we had this in place—

Ms Melanie Gibbons: Her title is Madam Deputy Speaker. For goodness sake! Show a little leadership in front of the young women's leadership group.

Mr RYAN PARK: I am not on the ticket. Imagine if the bill's provisions had been in place before light rail was implemented. Would that not have been good? Would Greiner not have loved it? Mr Bartos, as the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and his team would have had the opportunity to assess that highly successful project—a project that continues to deliver enormous economic benefits. It is thoroughly costed—and the year 11 students in the gallery may appreciate this, particularly those who are studying business studies. So much so that in the past week we have given their parents' money, taxpayers' money—but do not panic, it is not too much; it is only \$500 million-odd extra—to a firm to continue to do a job that was initially going to cost half the final amount. What will soon be delivered just down the road is a light rail system with two huge benefits: double the cost and only 12 months behind schedule.

Imagine if we had had a Parliamentary Budget Officer. That person may have said, "Hang on a minute; some things may not add up. Those things under the ground—those little things called "utilities"—that you may or may not be aware of could cost a large amount of money." That is why we need a Parliamentary Budget Officer. Opposition members definitely need a Parliamentary Budget Officer because—and this is embarrassing for the Government—our team had many more policies than the Government at the last election. Even more embarrassing is that Dom has approximately 800 public servants in Treasury—give or take a few hundred whom he may or may not be cutting. Our team has about four or five staff. So the resources are slightly different.

It is interesting that on the Monday when the Treasurer thought our team would be in a lot of trouble with its costings we actually did better than those opposite. Wait for it: Not only did we have more proposals and policies but also—and this is a random point—they were affordable. We could deliver them and pay for them. That is because our team used the Parliamentary Budget Office, an independent statutory authority that sits separate to the Executive and is able to take thorough and well thought out Opposition proposals and the occasional thought bubble from the Government, and cost them both. That is what we need. Each time a member delivers their inaugural speech they talk about changing this, improving that, delivering this, researching that and advocating for this, but it stops there. Unless they are in the Executive there is little opportunity for members of Parliament to take forward thoughtful, well-considered policy proposals. That is why we need this office.

There are similar offices in Canberra and in Victoria, yet the largest State with the oldest Parliament does not have a permanent Parliamentary Budget Office for caucus or members of Parliament to utilise. That is what this bill is all about. It will not cost a lot of money to set up the office, but it is very important. Our team utilised the Parliamentary Budget Office and we were guided by its input. We did not always agree with that input and we had one or two challenging discussions with the office. We had the occasional disagreement and the occasional conference. But, most importantly, we worked through that process: The budget office understood what we were trying to achieve and we understood the cost implications. I speak to all members in the House today, but especially to my friends on the other side. The member for Oatley is a good example, because he is very close to Cabinet.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Why isn't he in there though?

Mr RYAN PARK: He can see the door. Remember the door? The member for Oatley can see it and he is trying to get in, but it has "closed" written on it. But do you know the worst thing for him? That newfound member of the Australian Labor Party, the member for Kiama, got there in front of him. This gentleman here, the member for Oatley, is really close. I am sure that he has a lot of good ideas, but he just cannot get there—the member for Kiama just pushed him out. I am sure that the Parliamentary Budget Officer would be happy to sit down with him to work through his fantastic proposals. This is for the member for Oatley, for the member for Holsworthy, for all of us who believe in good policy and for all of us who believe that we are here to make effective policy and to make it work. I look forward to support from the other side of the House. Thanks are not necessary and I do not expect them.

I say to the Opposition, "Well done on an outstanding contribution to the Parliamentary Budget Office and the policies that we took to the 2019 election. Well done for ensuring that those policies were well thought out, appropriately costed and could be implemented easily. Well done not only on behalf of this place, but also on behalf of every New South Wales citizen who expects their members of Parliament to be policy strong, policy pure and policy proper and, most importantly, to develop policies that are effectively costed." This is a bill for this place and it should be supported by everyone who believes in good public policy.

Debate adjourned.

FAIR TRADING AMENDMENT (CASH LOAN MACHINES) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 30 May 2019.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (11:02): I support the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. I congratulate the shadow Minister on bringing this bill forward. It is an important bill for a couple of reasons. I share an electorate border with the member for Swansea and we know that many of our communities are doing it tough. Unfortunately, they find it very difficult to make ends meet and they are vulnerable to being preyed upon by companies that provide short-term loans at very, very high interest rates, which get people into even bigger trouble.

Payday lenders can have comparison interest rates of between 112 per cent and 407 per cent. That means if you want to buy a fridge that is worth \$1,000 and you obtain a loan from a payday lender, you end up paying them back \$4,000. People who use payday lenders have very low incomes or have no income at all and are on benefits. Those people are trying to make ends meet, but when they have an emergency, unfortunately, they are forced to access these loans and pay far above what they are able to pay. We know from financial counsellors that the whole industry needs reform. It is a very big worry that these machines operate in vulnerable communities.

I have read a lot of media reports about companies saying that they are not targeting low-income communities, but are putting these machines where they are needed. But when you look at the suburbs in which they are located you start to scratch your head and wonder whether that is true. One of the companies, CashnGo, advertises that "Our disruptive technology allows us to provide an outcome in seconds." A banking royal commission has just been held and there has been a crackdown on lending because loans were being given out to people who cannot afford them, but at the same time we have cash loan machines in low-income communities that advertise, "Use our machine because it will only take you a second. You'll get your money and you'll be right."

I noted that the advertising on one machine read, "Fuss-free cash. Cash loans only a few steps away." These companies are saying to people, "This money is really easy to get. Come and get it and you can go and buy what you need. You can fix your problems in the short term", but they do not mention that you will pay interest rates at massive levels or that the penalties for not paying are excessive and that it is a roadmap to disaster for many people. Members on the other side of the House have said that this is a Federal responsibility and that we should not be concerned about it in this Parliament. But I am concerned because after I heard those claims last week I did a bit of research. I found that the Federal legislation was first released in August 2015 and that from then until the time of the article I read, which was written a couple of years ago, four Federal Ministers over the course of 1,046 days had carriage of that legislation, but nothing had happened.

One person who has said it is important that we crack down on this issue is Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack, who had seen an 800 per cent mark-up on a loan, which he described as "incredible". He pledged to have the legislation delivered by the end of 2017. That was two years ago, yet still this legislation has not been before the Federal Parliament. An exposure draft of the legislation was released in 2017, but it struck problems because members of the Federal Liberal-Nationals Coalition slowed it down due to concerns about it getting through Parliament. In March that year Labor then put the Coalition's own legislation to the Parliament but not a single Coalition MP supported it after internal pressure from a group that Labor called the "Parliamentary Friends of Payday Lending".

Labor's finance spokesman at the time, Jim Chalmers, who is now the shadow Treasurer, accused the Government of "abandoning the most vulnerable people in our community". Despite that, the New South Wales Government wants us to sit back and wait for the Federal Government to take action. The Federal Government has had the draft legislation all this time, although it promised it was an emergency and that it would have the legislation in by 2017. It is now 2019, yet still this legislation has not seen the light of day. I have serious reservations, with the Parliamentary Friends of Payday Lending operating on the Government benches federally, that we will never see proper legislation to scrutinise this industry properly. At least if you go into the office of one of those payday lenders—and I do not advocate that because they are not good places—you have to stand in

front of someone and produce identification. But cash loan machines are sitting in tobacconist shops and you can walk in, provide some identification and, as their advertising states, have the money in seconds.

Desperate people in desperate times are accessing these loans and getting themselves into serious, serious problems. I am not sure if anyone on the Government benches has ever had the sheriff come and knock on the door or has ever been in a situation where a family member is so desperate—and I talk about this from personal experience—because they have only half the amount of money they need to pay the mortgage and therefore risk losing their house, that they go to the poker machines to try to win the other half, but lose the lot. In that environment, some people going through really tough times—turning up to the local neighbourhood centre to get food and clothes, and being unable to pay the bills—become homeless. Into that environment companies have introduced cash machines, which advertise a quick, easy fix to get funds.

As members of this place, on behalf of our communities, we have a responsibility to pass this legislation. We have a responsibility to pass this legislation now and to try to make a difference, or wait for a Federal Government that is clearly not interested in cracking down on this industry. It was dragged kicking and screaming to the banking royal commission because it did not want to get its mates into trouble. Once it got there and all the information came out, the Federal Government said, "These banks are terrible." Yet it allows the payday loan industry to operate, which is far worse than the banks—and that is saying a lot.

The Federal Government is dragging the chain in terms of doing anything about it, yet the other day Government members stood in this place telling us that this legislation was inappropriate, that it is not our responsibility, and that there are constitutional issues. Well, it is our responsibility. When the Federal Government will not act we have to look at our own legislation to see what we can do to tighten up the guidelines to make sure this predatory behaviour does not occur. We are elected by the members of our communities to do a job, not to throw our hands in the air and say, "It's not our problem. It's too hard". That is not what we are elected to do. I congratulate the shadow Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation on introducing this legislation and highlighting that it is such a problem. I will say again, this is an industry—*[Time expired.]*

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (11:12): I make a contribution to the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. Firstly, I thank my colleague the member for Swansea for bringing this important private member's bill to the House. I acknowledge the contributions of all my colleagues who will speak on this bill. This bill is simple and unambiguous in prohibiting the installation of cash machines, which prey on the financial vulnerability of people in our local communities who are already in difficult financial situations. It is about consumer protection. In one sense, it is no different from other market prohibitions of consumer goods that Parliament believes require market regulation. Instant cash loan machines are not a financial lifeline: They are a lure to a financial debt trap, which only exacerbates the problems of borrowers who already have limited means to repay the amount lent.

In 2006 Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus won the Nobel Prize for his work on the use of microcredit and microfinance to alleviate poverty and support entrepreneurial initiatives, especially for people in poor rural communities, in particular women. I do not think he was envisaging instant cash loan machines targeting vulnerable Australians with lower credit loan amounts, which lead them into debt traps with interest rates of 100 per cent to 400 per cent, and loan establishment fees of up to 20 per cent. This is certainly a perverse extension of his work and produces the exact opposite effect: making people poorer by preying on their vulnerabilities. It is no coincidence that the first tranche of instant cash flow machines has targeted people in lower socio-economic areas and are located in financially disadvantaged communities.

This targeting is predatory behaviour and shows the imbalance of market power between the buyer and the seller of credit. It is a sad fact that my electorate office is approached on a weekly basis by constituents in dire financial situations. Requests for referrals to community organisations, which can provide emergency relief, financial counselling or food packages, are all too common. Those constituents are the very people the predatory cash machines are targeting—residents desperate to put food on the table or keep the electricity running during winter. This bill is aimed at preventing a problem from getting bigger and protecting consumers who are misled about accessing cheap, easy money with nothing to worry about in terms of interest repayments.

Like all things too good to be true, instant cash loan machines providing fast, easy cash are too good to be true. Regulation and legislation of economic transactions are about creating a fairer marketplace and ensuring that there is a better balance of market power between buyer and seller. In a situation where it is obvious that the seller can have or has greater market power than the buyer, the Parliament has a role, a responsibility and an obligation to create a more efficient and fairer marketplace. That is why we have price regulations on certain industries and anti-monopoly, anti-cartel and anti-competitive pricing legislation. This bill is merely an extension of the principle of fair market transactions and aims to minimise predatory behaviour of sellers who have substantial advantages over their targeted consumers.

The idea that we should treat this as a purely caveat emptor transaction neglects the specific market factors contained in this transaction. In this situation there is an obvious market imbalance, and to neglect these facts and allow the problem to grow in the future is to abrogate our responsibility to our communities. You do not resolve a potential problem by allowing it to fester unimpeded. There are consequences for those who are led into taking an easy cash loan without any proper credit assessment of their ability to service that loan, their financial income or obligations. It takes advantage of those who are already disadvantaged. This is the lowest of low-doc loans available for those with limited choices.

This is an unfair transaction in an unfair marketplace with an imbalance of market power between the credit buyer and the credit seller. You do not improve a person's financial situation by making them more vulnerable and allowing them to be lured into a debt trap for which they have very few avenues—if any—to escape. Market efficiency and fairness do not improve when we do nothing. Any accusations that this bill is nanny state legislation neglect the facts and circumstances of this particular market transaction. This bill, like many other bills that have passed through this Parliament, is aimed at consumer protection, not community paternalism. The Parliament enacts consumer protection laws all the time to protect the broader public interest. There is a broader public interest for consumer protection in prohibiting cash loan machines. I thank the member for Swansea for tabling this bill and commend it to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (11:18): I speak to the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. I note there are nine instant cash loan machines in New South Wales operated by payday lender, CashnGo. Three machines are located on the Central Coast, including one in my electorate. These machines look like automatic teller machines that dispense cash on bank withdrawals; however they operate as payday lenders. They offer small amount credit contracts and pay the amount almost instantly. CashnGo promises an outcome in seconds. The machines require minimal identification and bank details for users to receive an instant cash loan, and the loan repayment is then direct debited from the user's bank account. There is minimal input in regard to the customer's living expenses. Fees for these loans include a 20 per cent establishment fee, a 4 per cent monthly fee and \$6 daily fee for late payments.

First time employed customers can access up to \$600, Centrelink benefit customers can apply for up to \$300 and existing customers can access more than that. The payday lenders use sophisticated software to detect when users receive payments and then direct debits in line with these payments from the customer's bank account. The Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, the member for Tamworth, has described these machines as usury, and that is a serious allegation. It has biblical connotations of evil and injustice, and you would think it warranted a serious response. But what is the Minister's response? He says there is not much we can do about it here. He says that he will go to Canberra to talk to Ministers from other States about the matter and try to work out a solution. That is not good enough. How long will that take? And why has this Government done nothing to address this serious issue up until now?

I am not opposed to small amount credit. My constituents are not vulnerable, as some would have it. Their circumstances are the result of the way we have organised society. We are all of us vulnerable at times in our lives, for a variety of reasons, and we should not be paternalistic. My constituents simply deserve a fair go. However, there is a reason the providers of these machines have chosen my electorate and others on the Central Coast for their product. Large numbers of low-income people reside in my electorate and on the Central Coast. Low-income people are being targeted—people who would otherwise be denied credit. Low-income people have little capacity to absorb financial shocks. Payday lenders prey upon these consumers in poor financial circumstances, offering small amount credit contracts that can trap low-income earners in a cycle of debt. Payday lenders have comparison rates of between 112 per cent and 407 per cent.

My constituents should not be targeted by this unfairness simply because banks choose to deny some of them credit. Reform is needed and we cannot wait on a conservative Commonwealth Government, which has sat on a review of this industry since 2015. That review made a number of recommendations, including imposing caps on repayments and, among other things, limiting the amount of the loan to 10 per cent of the consumer's net income. But the Commonwealth has done nothing in that regard. This House should not be swayed by our learned friend, the member for Ku-Ring-Gai, who suggests there is nothing we can do in this place. He cites the Constitution, but that is nonsense. We have already done work in this House in this State, to restrict the location of automatic teller machines in gaming areas in clubs and pubs using the Gaming Machines Act 2001. The same principle applies.

The Government has admitted there is a problem. We know the Commonwealth has refused to act since 2015, and the likelihood of it doing anything is minimal at best. I thank the shadow Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, the member for Swansea, for bringing the bill on and commend her work. I stand with my colleagues in supporting this bill. My constituents expect us to act on this problem. We can force the issue with

this bill, which will remove usury from a major shopping centre in my electorate. I commend the bill to the House and ask all members to support it.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (11:23): I make a contribution to the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019, a bill which will prohibit cash loan machines from being installed or kept on any premises. I thank the shadow Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation and member for Swansea for bringing the bill to this place. I say thank you because one of these insidious machines is located at the main shopping complex in the most disadvantaged suburb in my electorate—in fact, one of the most disadvantaged suburbs in the whole State.

Cash loan machines operate similarly to an ATM, but the money is loaned and the fees are exorbitant. These machines prey on low-income earners and trap them in vicious debt cycles. Like payday loans, these machines avoid national credit laws and cannot take into account the financial circumstances of customers, locking people into loans with unreasonably high fees. The people who use these machines are people who cannot afford to pay back the debt. These machines offer anywhere from \$50 to \$1,000 and only require ID, bank details and a phone number to get approved, thus eliminating face-to-face contact and ignoring the financial circumstances of users.

It is clear that payday loans are a real danger to low-paid people. We often hear this from charities that provide financial support to unemployed and low-paid people—organisations like Samaritans, Vinnies and the Salvos. The stories of how the lives of struggling people have been affected have often been in the media. In the absence of action from its Federal counterpart, it is clear that the New South Wales Government must act to minimise the harmful effects of the predatory high-interest cash loan machines. The Berejiklian and Morrison Liberal-Nationals governments can no longer sit by and do nothing whilst the most disadvantaged people have their lives destroyed by bad credit.

This bill gives the Government an opportunity to show that it is willing to take action to get rid of these predatory machines and their operators in this State. I note that in his speech the Minister indicated that he was deeply concerned about payday lending. I was very pleased to hear him say that there should be a national response and that he has already written to the Federal Government calling on it to get on with it. We on this side agree there should be a national response, but I note that the Federal Government commissioned the review of small amount credit contract laws in 2015. That review released its recommendations in April 2016. The Federal Government then released draft legislation back in October 2017, but it is yet to do anything with that draft legislation. It is now nearly two years later and there is no action from the Federal Government about payday lenders.

Clearly, we in this place need to take action in the absence of action from the Federal Liberal-Nationals Government. Yet the Minister saying we should not do anything about cash lending machines because we are waiting on the Federal Government to do something is simply a case of him and his Liberal-Nationals Government colleagues preferring to sit on their collective hands and let vulnerable people continue to be ripped off. Banning cash loan machines is a way in which New South Wales can take action against an insidious form of payday lending. We have the power and the authority to do so. We should act.

If the Government does not agree to this bill, yet, as it says, is truly concerned about payday lending, then clearly the only reason it will not support this bill is that it is not a Government bill. Yet again it is up to Labor to take up the fight to protect people who are struggling financially and who are at a low ebb. I have been reluctant to speak publicly about cash loan machines because I do not want to increase the awareness of their existence, but today is our chance to finally get rid of these machines once and for all. I cannot stress how important this bill is to my constituents. I ask that Government members and crossbench members vote to support it.

I will now talk about the demographics of the area in which a cash loan machine is located in my electorate. The *Dropping Off The Edge* report by Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia consistently identifies, across a number of years, the postcode of the suburb Windale as being one of the most disadvantaged in New South Wales, based on 21 different indicators of socio-economic status. The people who live here are absolutely salt of the earth, beautiful people. There is a strong sense of community held by the people who live in postcode 2306. The local schools are rightly very proud of the education they provide. Most people who live there will do their grocery shopping in the shopping centre where this cash loan machine is located.

In Windale, 79 per cent of homes are rented, 64 per cent of residents live in public housing, and only 14 per cent of residents are high school graduates. The median individual income is \$340 per week. To think that someone living on \$340 per week would be able to pay back a \$1,000 loan with an interest rate between 112 per cent and 407 per cent is simply outrageous. Not to mention the additional fees, which include a 20 per cent establishment fee, a 4 per cent monthly fee and daily fees of \$6 for late payments up to 43 days. If you do

the math, someone could potentially pay \$258 in late fees alone for a \$1,000 loan. The payday loan industry must be regulated, and regulated quickly. I am vehemently opposed to these machines. I strongly urge all members to act in the best interests of our most vulnerable constituents and support this legislation. Come on, members of the Liberal-Nationals Government, vote with us. Show that you all have a heart and that you actually care, as the Minister says you do. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (11:30): I speak in support of the Fair Trading (Cash Loan Machine) Bill 2019. This bill will prohibit cash loan machines from being installed or kept on any premises in New South Wales. I take the opportunity to congratulate my colleague the shadow Minister for innovation and better regulation and member for Swansea for bringing this important bill to the House. Currently these cash machines are being used to approve what is technically a "small amount credit contract" between the user, the machine and a credit provider. This enables the withdrawal of cash under the contract. When I said it is technically "a small amount" I did so as a reminder that while the amounts may seem low, and perhaps even trivial amounts of money for many, the withdrawal can quickly become a crippling debt for people who do not have the means to pay it back.

The business model behind these products, to my mind, is unethical and the design features chosen to lure people to use them are absolutely insidious. Across New South Wales and the country advocacy groups, which help people at the financial crisis end of these many sorry tales, are deeply concerned about these products. In February this year Federal Labor introduced a bill to minimise the harms of payday lending products. We on this side of the House are so concerned about this issue that we are calling for an outright ban on a particular form of this type of financial product—the instant cash machine loan product. Before I talk about the specifics of these products and their placement, I take a moment to reflect on a phenomenon in the USA that the world both observed and suffered from. It is one that we should learn from. The acronym NINJA stands for "no income, no job, and no assets". That was the slang term used to describe the type of loans, in this case mortgage loans, that United States credit lenders extended to hundreds of thousands of people. Those lenders made little or no attempt to verify the applicants' ability to repay the loans. Indeed, that type of loan was very common prior to the 2008 financial crisis, and what came to pass is now a fact of history.

In so many cases the people who took out the loans had little or no capacity to repay them; they were NINJAs—no income, no assets, and no jobs. There was a massive amount of defaulting on loans. People crushed by debt and falling house prices simply abandoned their homes. Not long after that I visited the United States. I saw many boarded up abandoned homes where people had said, "You can have it back. It is not worth the money I owe on it". What an awful situation. It is so important for people to own a home. It was a social, financial and emotional disaster in the United States and that disaster rippled throughout the world. Thankfully our banking system was stronger, and we had the stewardship of the then Federal Labor Government to insulate us from the crisis that swallowed so many national economies.

Most Australians take pride in our country being more financially sound than the United States. We take pride in our safety nets such as the social security and Medicare systems. I think most Australians would be very disturbed to learn that State and Federal governments have stood by and let "instant debt" machines take hold in some of the most vulnerable communities in the State. Most people in New South Wales would ask why the State Government has allowed the machines to be installed anywhere, let alone in the lowest socio-economic communities.

I often stand in this place and demand that my electorate of Lakemba receives its fair share of services. Today I stand in this place happy to report that the Lakemba electorate has thankfully missed out on having one of these debt machines installed in the town centre. What a relief. I say that because of the regular number of requests I receive—as do members on both sides of the House—from individuals seeking assistance because they have found themselves in a difficult situation. We deal with people who are sometimes in desperate circumstances. I imagine that many people who take out what they think is a small loan believe they will be able to pay it back. But, as the member for Charlestown said, before they know it they have racked up a major debt. We are setting people up for failure if we allow them to take on more debt than they can afford. We have a responsibility to make sure that does not happen.

My colleague the member for The Entrance has some of these machines in his electorate. These cash loan machines are located at Berkley, Cessnock, Mount Hutton, Minto, Raymond Terrace, San Remo, Woy Woy and Wyoming. People are struggling financially in those places, yet machines are allowed to be installed there. It has been promoted as "helping people out". It does not help people out. If that was the motivation, surely we could find another way to help them out. You do not install a machine that creates a contract where, when you cannot pay it back, you are charged exorbitant rates and penalised. It is easy to think of \$50 here, \$20 or \$100 there, but over time it tallies up and before you know it a \$1,000 loan costs \$250 in interest—loan sharking at its very best. These are targeted low socio-economic areas and we must assist those communities in the best way possible. What

is being done to create jobs for low-income earners? What are we doing to assist them with the pressures of the cost of living?

Sometimes people's electricity, gas, rent or mortgage bills all come simultaneously and they need a little bit of extra money. It would be easy to create a so-called "temporary contract" but before they know it, they could have accumulated a debt without the capacity to pay it back. My colleagues who have payday cash machines in their electorates have stories of real-life experiences. The product design, the technology and even the name of the product have been carefully planned. These cash machines are described as "leases" to avoid caps on the costs under the national credit laws. These loans may seem low; they are anything but that. Remember when we had to go to the bank? In fact, I went to the bank yesterday to withdraw money for Eid al-Fitr—which is why I was not here—because part of the custom is to give money to kids in lieu of presents. I loved it when my dad went to the bank and got crisp notes when I was a kid. The teller was surprised at my request. She said, "You can use the ATM," and I said, "I want to use the bank facility." I did not want to go to the ATM.

It reminded me of the time I applied for a home loan well over 20 years ago—we are still paying it off, but that is another story. I made an appointment, took all of my paperwork, wore my best suit, brushed my hair and did everything I could to convince the bank manager that as a teacher I had a pretty good job, and so did my wife, and that we would be responsible borrowers. The bank put us through the ringer, and I am glad they did because we did not borrow more than we could afford. Those days are gone. It is important with certain types of credit for there to be face-to-face interaction, to ensure that the situation does not occur when money is easy to get on credit. It may be convenient to apply for a loan over the phone, but if we are setting people up to fail then members in this place have failed. That is the gist of my major concern.

It is not a stretch of the imagination to think that people who operate these machines are perfectly happy to sign up people who cannot afford to make their repayments. That is the real concern. The business model is based on customers racking up excessive interest payments because, although some lenders might be nice, they are operating these machines to make money. Unfortunately, in doing so, they take advantage of the most vulnerable people, many of whom are in a desperate situation and looking for a small amount of money. The next thing they know, they have racked up a massive debt that they may not be able to pay back or they have to go without in order to pay back. It becomes a downward spiral—you borrow \$100 and you quickly owe \$120. You then have to borrow a little bit more to pay back the \$120 and it becomes a continuous stretch.

We often talk about cost-of-living pressures and we know that many of our constituents struggle with those pressures. We also know that those constituents cannot afford to get into a debt spiral. The recent royal commission into financial services noted the problems with inappropriate financial advice and what that advice can do to families. Some say that these machines are a valuable service for people from low socio-economic communities, but I encourage those people to think about the crux of the problem. Unaffordable housing, cost-of-living pressures and entrenched poverty are the root causes of financial struggles. We need to address the root causes. Let us not trick ourselves into believing that facilitating ways for private lenders to make money out of poor people is somehow noble. It is not at all noble. I am deeply concerned about the predatory practices of the operators of these machines and the broader business philosophy that seeks to trap the most vulnerable in our communities into damaging cycles of debt.

I support this bill to outlaw predatory cash loan machines across New South Wales and to protect the most vulnerable in our communities. I congratulate the Labor Party on bringing forward this legislation. I congratulate the member for Swansea, as shadow Minister, on taking up this fight. I note the contributions of all members to this debate. We have a role to play in looking after the most vulnerable in our communities, and we need to make sure that we do play that role. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:41): On behalf of The Greens I speak to the Fair Trading Amendment (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. I indicate that The Greens support this bill. We believe the bill, which seeks to prohibit cash loan machines from being installed or kept on any premises, has merit. This debate is reminiscent of the debate about poker machines, which are designed to encourage addictive behaviour and therefore fleece users. Owners of cash loan machines do not seek to place those machines in high-income communities. Why is that? Because these owners seek out people with low levels of financial literacy and high levels of need.

My electorate of Balmain has some of the most wealthy areas in Sydney alongside some of the lowest-income areas in Sydney. I know that purveyors of these cash loan machines will not install them in Birchgrove or Balmain; they always seek to install the machines in low-income communities, as was the case with poker machines. No-one is desperate to put poker machines in Birchgrove or Balmain, but they place them in low-income communities because these machines are designed to offer hope, which attracts people on lower incomes. The addictive nature of poker machines encourages people to play the pokies, and that will be the case for cash loan machines as well.

Successive governments have failed to address this issue. A lot of work has been done on attempting to address this issue, particularly by the Federal Government in its review of small account credit contracts, which was undertaken in 2015. This review led to a lot of positive recommendations. We think those recommendations are valid and our colleagues in the Federal Parliament also supported them. However, we are still waiting for any changes as a result of the review. In 2017, as others have mentioned, draft legislation was developed, but it is yet to be introduced to the House. In the meantime, every day people are being exploited by these cash loan machines.

One company's website, in the section designed to calculate what the customer would owe following taking out a loan, indicated that if a customer borrowed \$600, they would require a minimum weekly income of \$827 and the person would be required to pay back \$744 over three weeks, which includes \$144 in fees. These machines are not about providing financial options and products; they are about providing poor-quality, inferior products that gouge customers in low-income communities where people have low levels of financial literacy and high needs. These people need to cover their costs of living. They struggle to pay their bills for essentials such as rent and often are in precarious financial positions. These machines simply exploit those situations.

The Greens support banning these machines at the same time as investing in those communities so nobody is forced to turn to these exploitative schemes. One of the great needs in a range of communities is the need to increase financial literacy. On the one hand the Federal Government, through some of its programs, is working to increase financial literacy, while on the other hand it allows the operation of these machines, which are sneaky in the way they charge fees and potentially trap people into an overly onerous cycle of debt.

Members who contributed to this debate have indicated where these machines are placed, in particular in tobacconists in low socio-economic areas. They offer loans of between \$500 and \$1,000, with the limit increasing each time a user accesses a machine. We know that these machines offer products that are poor quality and predatory in nature. The Government should and can act to address the placement of these machines. One member opposite, a former barrister, said that under the Australian Constitution, which we know is raised as the last vestige of a legitimate argument, we cannot influence the operation of these machines. As we know, we limited the availability of ATMs in gaming facilities. This State has successfully addressed that almost identical issue and should address the availability of cash loan machines.

I respect the fact that the Government has said that it needs to talk to the Federal Government to make sure that there is a nationally harmonised scheme. However, we can only wait so long. I believe that it is important that the Government acts soon. Quite frankly, I am disappointed that when meritorious legislation is brought forward, the government of the day does not support it if it is introduced by the Opposition. Those opposite have said, "It's a Labor bill, so we're not going to support it," or "You Greens put it forward, so we're not going to support it." We think this legislation is a good idea, but it takes a long time for us to get any legislation on the *Business Paper*. This attitude is a real disappointment. We should have the opportunity to welcome a good idea from members opposite, even if legislation has to be amended or needs to be circulated for consultation. We should grab good ideas and use them where we can.

In the case of the bill before us today, it is clear that these cash loan machines and their egregiously high fees are designed to exploit the most vulnerable in our communities in a callous and deceptive way. The key point made by the member for Lakemba is that we need to invest in essential public services and build secure, well-paid jobs across New South Wales and, in particular, look at areas where there is socio-economic disadvantage. This is a point that we all need to acknowledge, because we need to look at how we can aid, assist, support and nourish these communities, rather than allowing the operators of these exploitative machines to place their machines in vulnerable communities. It is really disturbing that the Government seemingly is unable to act.

I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Swansea. I also acknowledge the Financial Counsellors' Association of NSW—people who work on the front line—and in particular Graham Smith. I congratulate the people who work in that sector, because they have to deal with the everyday reality of exploitation and the financial collapse of many individuals and households. I thank them for raising the issues surrounding these machines and I thank the member for Swansea for bringing forward this important legislation. I predict that while currently these machines are placed in metropolitan electorates, soon they will be placed in rural and regional New South Wales, because these are low-income communities. They will be the next target of these operations.

We have heard members of the Liberal and Nationals parties saying, "We're not going to do anything about it now." Members of The Nationals, in particular, need to be incredibly vigilant, because these machines will be placed in their electorates as operators seek to exploit vulnerable and low-income people, especially those with low levels of financial literacy. Such people think that they can press a few buttons on an ATM and get out \$500. They do not realise that this loan can lead to their credit profile being destroyed and their lives being destroyed by the predatory practices and excessive fees of cash loan machine operators. I encourage members representing low-income people in their electorates to change their attitude to these machines. A lot of members

of the Liberal Party, who do not represent people on low incomes, will not be worried because their electorates are not affected. But I warn some members of The Nationals and the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party that these machines will be coming to their electorates.

We know that these cash loan machines are profit-making machines for companies that are looking for areas of low financial literacy in vulnerable communities. These machines will not be put at Birchgrove or East Balmain in my electorate, but they will be in rural and regional New South Wales where they will seek to make a quid out of those vulnerable communities. It is not because the people in those communities are stupid or need the hand of the State to guide them; it is because when people are under financial pressure they have no alternatives. When there are no alternatives they will turn to poor-quality products like these machines out of need and because of an inability to access other forms of credit.

We have heard that the low level of financial literacy and education in many of these communities will mean people are more vulnerable to these types of exploitative practices. I thank the member for Swansea for introducing this bill and acknowledge all members who have contributed to this debate. The Greens will do our level best to support approaches to reduce predatory behaviour, especially in relation to incredibly poor-value financial products. I commend the bill to the House and encourage the Government to take action in that regard.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (11:58): In reply: I thank all members who have contributed to debate on the Fair Trading (Cash Loan Machines) Bill 2019. I reiterate what the member for Balmain said: We really need to think about supporting this important legislation for the good of the people of New South Wales. Members from both sides have acknowledged that the operators of these machines are unscrupulous and that they target the most vulnerable in our community, yet not all members will support this sensible legislation to remove that unscrupulous behaviour because of politics. Frankly, that is very sad. It is also a sad way to start my speech in reply.

Many members in this Chamber understand exactly what we are facing and we are in lock step agreement that something needs to be done. However, the Government does not intend to do anything in this place; instead it will seek assistance from our Federal counterparts. In 2015 the Federal Government conducted a review and, although legislation has been sitting on the table for two years, it has not taken any action. The Federal Government has no appetite to fix the unscrupulous behaviour that is occurring in New South Wales. We now have that opportunity, but this Government is not taking advantage of it. The member for Ku-ring-gai likened the introduction of this bill to a scene from *The Castle*—he suggested it was unconstitutional. I wonder if he spoke to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, who is present in the Chamber, before he made those comments? In his contribution the Minister said:

The New South Wales Government already prohibits or restricts these types of machines in locations associated with problem borrowing: at hotels, clubs and within casino boundaries.

If the machines can be prohibited in those environments, then they can also be prohibited from my electorate and from all the other electorates in which they are located. We should do the right thing. In particular, I thank all members from Labor electorates who have contributed to this debate. The member for Wallsend said:

The community has reached out and said this is what they desperately need, particularly for people in the more working-class areas like Wallsend.

The member for Wallsend and the member for Wollongong understand how desperate their communities are. The member for Wollongong said:

What is the business model? The business model is ripping people off. Let us make no bones about it. My community wants them gone.

That is exactly what all communities across the board want. The member for Balmain was spot-on when he said these machines will be not only in the nine Labor electorates but also in regional areas. So The Nationals should support this legislation in spades. I thank also the members representing the electorates of Lake Macquarie, Gosford, Wyong, Macquarie Fields, The Entrance, Charlestown, Lakemba and Balmain for their very worthwhile contributions. It is galling that the Government knows these payday loan operators are treating people in New South Wales with contempt and it is hiding behind a shroud of weak arguments. The Minister said:

The Opposition intends that this bill will protect vulnerable members of our community from unscrupulous credit contracts. Unfortunately, this could not be further from reality.

The Minister seems to think that somehow the bill condones using cash loan machines, but it is absurd to think that it does anything other than condemn the machines. The Minister's attitude is that we should leave it to our Federal counterparts, who have been sitting on their hands about this matter for far too long. As I said, the Federal Government recognised this problem in 2015 and it has done nothing about making good, quality law reforms to address the problem. In March 2016 an independent review found that payday loans were being inappropriately handed to people of low income and that vulnerable Australians were being trapped in cycles of debt. Two years

later the Federal Government reviewed them, but it has done absolutely nothing to implement these sensible law reforms. It is absurd that the Berejiklian Government does not want to do anything about them either. I bring to the attention of the House the comments of Mr David Littleproud, a member of The Nationals, reported in SBS News online:

The Opposition is pushing the Government to speed up the introduction of new restrictions on payday loans and rent-to-buy schemes designed to protect consumers.

He defends the rent-to-buy business because he owns one—he is actually part of the problem. That Federal member of Parliament is supporting his own interests. He said that he is a proud business owner. He also said:

I am proud to say I ... provide a service for those that are less fortunate than you and that can't afford to buy a fridge or a TV.

I would not be proud to charge people four times the amount of the product they purchased in the first place! It is well known that those people in Canberra, who we are waiting on to introduce legislation to remove this unscrupulous behaviour from our community, have incredible lobbyists both outside and inside the Parliament—the parliamentary friends of payday loans. I will not be holding my breath waiting for the Federal Coalition Government to do anything to remove this unscrupulous behaviour, as well as dodgy payday loans, from our communities in New South Wales. This bill presents an opportunity for members of this House to do it today. But those opposite have squibbed because of their own interests and those of their mates in Canberra. It is absolutely shocking. I am surprised that this Government has gone down that path. I sincerely believe that we can do things in this place and we have seen that happen in the past.

Mr Kevin Anderson: And we will.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I note the interjection of the Minister. In that case, I commend this bill to the House. Let us see if he will.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

Ayes43

Noes46

Majority.....3

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Donato, Mr P
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McDermott, Dr H
Mehan, Mr D
O'Neill, Dr M
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dalton, Mrs H
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McGirr, Dr J
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Saffin, Ms J
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

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

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

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

NOES

Perrottet, Mr D
 Provost, Mr G
 Sidgreaves, Mr P
 Smith, Mr N
 Taylor, Mr M
 Upton, Ms G
 Williams, Mrs L

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

Preston, Ms R
 Saunders, Mr D
 Singh, Mr G
 Stokes, Mr R
 Tuckerman, Mrs W
 Williams, Mr R

PAIRS

Kamper, Mr S

Lee, Dr G

Motion negatived.

*Motions***D-DAY ANNIVERSARY**

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:07): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the World War II D-day landings on 6 June 2019.
- (2) Recognises the D-day landings were the biggest seaborne invasion in military history.
- (3) Notes the victory of Allied troops as a turning point in World War II.
- (4) Pays tribute to the courageous Australian men and women whose bravery has contributed to the freedom Australian citizens enjoy today.

I thank the House for the opportunity today to speak on the important matter of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the D-day landings. The anniversary is special for a dwindling group of people—those who were there at the time. Yet, with the advancements in bringing colour to black-and-white photos and the re-engineering of old film, we now have more information about, and insight into, this campaign than ever before, allowing a select few who have served and who are still with us to tell their stories, aided by never-before-seen imagery. I note that two of those individuals reside on the northern beaches. Dennis Hensman, who lives in Narrabeen, was just 19 when he landed at Gold Beach on 6 June 1944. He was among the first soldiers to leave their landing craft that morning and make their way up the beach under heavy fire. The now 94-year-old enlisted with the United Kingdom's Royal Marines aged just 17 and after D-day he was sent to Le Havre to help the Canadians take the French port city.

I also acknowledge Len Mills, who was 22 at the time. He was in Bomber Command and was tasked with bombing German marshalling yards on D-day to stop reinforcements from reaching the Allies on the beaches. He went on to fly 34 missions with Bomber Command and now lives on the northern beaches in Narrabeen. In an operation codenamed Neptune, the Allied liberation of western Europe began with a series of landings on 6 June 1944, now known as D-day. The "D" stood for "day" and resulted from the practice of ordering events on operational planning timelines. The days prior to the first day of an operation were listed as D-minus and the days after were listed as D-plus. Director of the Australian War Memorial Brendan Nelson put it best when he said:

The battle of Normandy was described by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill as "much the greatest thing ... ever attempted". The battle matters because it was fought for bigger ideals. Australia stood united against Hitler's murderous and criminal regime.

By the time Operation Neptune was declared at the end of 30 June, 850,279 troops, 148,803 vehicles and over half a million tonnes of supplies had landed on five separate beachheads, which had been linked together. However, by this time bad weather and the increasingly well-coordinated German resistance had sapped the momentum of the Allied drive inland, in which Australians played a key role. The resistance was bogged down about 30 kilometres from the beachheads. Much hard fighting would ensue before the larger objectives of Operation Overlord were attained. Some 3,300 Australian servicemen and servicewomen contributed to Operation Overlord. On D-day 13 Australians were killed. Two were members of the Royal Australian Navy and 11 were members of the Royal Australian Air Force. Australia's contribution and sacrifice is a little-known story in one of history's most dramatic events. The fighting in Europe continued for another eight months, but D-day was a major campaign for Australian military forces.

Today Allied countries around the world are participating in D-day commemorations. Earlier this morning 16 world leaders gathered in Portsmouth to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of history's

largest combined land, air and naval operation. Leaders from every country that fought on D-day have joined the Queen, the Prince of Wales and Prime Minister of Australia Scott Morrison for commemorations in the United Kingdom. Other world leaders attending include French President Emmanuel Macron, President Donald Trump, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and leaders from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Holland and Slovakia. A joint statement by 16 countries pledging to avoid a repeat of the unimaginable horrors of conflict was issued today. The Queen said that veterans of D-day demonstrated "more than courage and endurance, showing unconquerable resolve". She quoted a broadcast made by her father, King George VI, at the time of the massive operation that signalled the end of Nazi power in Western Europe. He stated:

The fate of the world depended on their success. Many of them would never return, and the heroism, courage and sacrifice of those who lost their lives will never be forgotten.

The Queen thanked the veterans with "humility and pleasure on behalf of the entire country, indeed the whole free world". Many stories of note exist as a result of the largest seaborne invasion in history. One of particular interest to members in this place may be that the Allies had originally planned for D-day to take place on 5 June, but low tides and good weather were vital to get hundreds of thousands of troops onto the beaches of France. Low tides were easy to predict, but getting the weather right as well was another matter. Low cloud would not allow any air cover and rough seas would sink landing craft. D-day could have been one of the biggest disasters in military history, were it not for the decisions of a Scottish weatherman and data from a Royal Air Force [RAF] squadron based on a small island off Scotland's west coast. In the south of England, days before the proposed invasion date, at the heart of the Allied supreme command was Group Captain James Stagg.

Mr David Elliott: James Martin.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: James Martin Stagg. I thank the Minister. Using data from Tiree and other squadrons, he convinced General Eisenhower to delay the landings by one day. Group Captain James Martin Stagg was a chief meteorological adviser who persuaded Eisenhower to change the date of the Allied invasion. He not only predicted a storm on 5 June 1944, but also made the vital forecast that the weather would break for long enough the following day. Some of the data that helped inform Stagg's decisions came from a little-known RAF squadron operating in Tiree. The 518 Squadron flew dangerous missions from Scotland's west coast hundreds of miles out into the Atlantic in all weather to take meteorological readings. I conclude with the words that General Eisenhower said to troops before the invasion in the hope that his comments will deliver a stark reminder of the enormity of the undertaking and as a reminder to each of us in this place that we should be grateful that events took the path that they did. He said:

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely ... I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory! Good luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (12:15): I join other members to speak on this motion to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of D-day. Australia's involvement in Operation Overlord was limited because by June 1944 most Australian service men and women were engaged in the South West Pacific Theatre helping to oppose the Japanese. It is estimated that about 3,000 Australians took part in D-day. Most of them were Australian airmen serving in the Royal Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force squadrons that took part in the assaults and operations associated with the invasion. Those air crews were involved in transport and glider towing squadrons which delivered the airborne troops on D-day, in fighter and fighter-bomber squadrons which operated directly over the beaches, and in heavy bomber squadrons which dropped thousands of tonnes of bombs in support of the landing. Some 500 Australian sailors served on Royal Navy vessels, from battleships and corvettes to motor torpedo boats and landing craft.

Today I focus on the role of the merchant seamen who took part in that operation. I was reminded this morning by the member for Swansea that one in eight merchant seamen died in the theatres of war. Often their contribution is not as acknowledged as those who fought directly, but without those merchant seamen we could not have moved important industries, equipment, arms and other things around during those conflicts. I came across an account by Geoff Maidment. He served on the *Isle of Guernsey*, which was a designated landing ship for infantry. He was involved in transporting Canadian troops across the English Channel to France. That day it was one of hundreds of ships that crossed the channel heading for the Normandy coast. I quote from his account of that day:

Almost immediately after we embarked Canadian soldiers. The weather was anything but good and within hours most of them were a bright shade of green.

Came 6 June and we were steaming after the mine sweepers in front of the biggest convoy you could ever imagine. Looking astern, I thought if we do get the hammer we could walk back to the shore over the ships.

As we neared the Normandy coast, the shelling was getting heavier and heavier and several ships were hit. The Canadian piper on the boat deck showed what true grit is all about and never faltered.

At this time we were so busy getting our LCAs [Landing Craft Assault] ready for lowering, and, as if there wasn't enough noise going on, HMS Rodney decided to join the fray—her 16 inch guns firing over the top of us.

The noise and flame was indescribable. You could literally see the fortifications ashore disintegrating. It was worth putting up with the inconvenience to see it.

By now there was German shore fire all around us and, we were to learn later, mortar fire as well. The old man shouted down to me to find the chipy and cut away our barrage balloons as the Germans were using it as a marker to drop their barrage on us.

The chipy and I were preparing to sever the cable when this young, fresh-faced naval lieutenant asked us what we thought we were doing. The chipy replied in true nautical vernacular "[Fuck] off".

"Good idea," I thought to myself, not being greedy. "Let someone else have their share of the shore barrage." As I stood there the bosun said to me, "What's the matter with your leg?" Looking down I could see blood seeping through my trouser leg. He went on to say:

Only a nick, but if I had been a Yank it would have been Purple Heart stuff.

Once my leg had been bandaged the bosun told me to stop swinging the lead and get back up on deck. By now several ships had been hit, some on the beach. About then our LCAs started to return. Three out of six. The other three were blown up on hedgehog mines. Some good hardy men were lost that day.

Hearing the accounts of people who were involved in the battle brings home what was happening at the time. We can never fully understand what it was like to be on the deck of that merchant ship as the soldiers were unloaded and sent towards the shore when all those things were going on around them. Hearing about the role that merchant seaman played in the landings is important to our understanding of what went on.

As I have said in the House on many occasions when we remember those men and women who lost their lives during conflicts, those battles were literally world-changing. I know that this morning other members will speak more in detail about the battle. What struck me was that all the accounts that I read described how it was the biggest fleet in history that had ever undertaken a landing on an enemy shore. The Allies had kept the invasion secret from the Germans by a range of means. They built whole towns with fake tanks and planes to make it look like they were going to land at the port at Calais, and they put out false radio messages to try to trick the Germans. But at the end of the day, as the member for Manly said, they were probably aided by bad weather on 5 June which delayed the landings until 6 June, and that may have saved many lives.

The landings were the start of that final push to beat the German forces and Australians were involved through the whole campaign. I pay tribute to all the Australian service men and women who fought not only in the European theatre of war but also across the Pacific and in other places. I thank them for their service and acknowledge that the life we live today is due to the sacrifices they made. Lest we forget.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (12:22):

I make a modest contribution to this motion, which commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the D-day landings on 6 June 1944—a battle that was known as Operation Overlord and was part of Operation Neptune. As a Parliament, we should acknowledge a very famous observation that was made on the morning of 6 June 1944 by the chief of staff of General Montgomery, Major-General Freddie de Guingand, who was in the Allied land forces headquarters. He started D-day by saying:

My God, I wish we had 9th Australian Division with us this morning, don't you?

It was clear towards the end of the war that the reputation of the Australian Imperial Force as fighting men—those who had served in northern Africa as the Rats of Tobruk and those who had given themselves great glory in the fields of Kokoda and the South West Pacific Theatre—had certainly surpassed all others. I also acknowledge the debates that occurred in this very Chamber in the days following the D-day landings on 6 June 1944. In preparation for my comments this morning I went through *Hansard* from that time to see what our parliamentary forefathers in the Legislative Assembly faced as those very brave soldiers were landing on the shores of Omaha Beach.

In the debates I noticed some very familiar as well as unique debates that happened in this Chamber 75 years ago. Women teachers was a major issue—a subject close to your heart, Madam Temporary Speaker—because so many of the soldiers serving in the 2nd AIF had come from the teaching fraternity. Many of them, because of their education, had quickly risen into the officer ranks and were serving as platoon commanders, squadron commanders and with the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Australian Air Force. Women teachers was going to be a new phenomenon for the education fraternity in New South Wales and Parliament had to address that and accept that it would require some amendments to legislation. I recommend that members read that debate.

With some sadness I inform the House that an acknowledgement was made that many members of this Chamber were absent because they were on military service. I believe it is quite some time since a member has been absent due to military service. Brigadier (Ret) the Hon. Brian Pezzutti was the last member of Parliament to

take leave to undertake military service when he served in Rwanda with United Nations peacekeeping missions in the 1990s. At the time of the D-day landings this House was debating the coal shortage—a familiar issue and close to the hearts of many MPs in this place—because coal was being used to service and fuel our ships. In the days following D-day in 1944, *Hansard* records that the House was debating the drought. I make the observation that the more things change the more they stay the same. But let us hope that never again do we see the sort of command that our military forces saw on the Normandy shores on that day.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:26): I support this motion, which commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the D-day landings on 6 June 1944. D-day was an international effort—more than two million service men and women were based in the United Kingdom to support the landings. The landings were undertaken by approximately 132,000 soldiers who were drawn from across the globe—mainly from America, Great Britain and Canada, but also from Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, The Netherlands, France, Greece, New Zealand, Norway, Rhodesia and Poland. They landed on the Normandy beaches that morning, opening up the vital second front that was absolutely necessary to the prosecution of the war effort and the ultimate defeat of fascism in Europe.

People argue about Australia's contribution to the landings. Approximately 3,000 Australians were directly involved in operations on that day. We should remember that the United Kingdom was the base for thousands of Australian servicemen during World War II and that more than 15,000 Australians serving in the Royal Air Force and in squadrons of the Royal Australian Air Force were based in the United Kingdom. Casualty rates of members of the Royal Australian Air Force during their service in World War II were highest during the month of June 1944 due to the D-day operations.

The D-day landings and the efforts of the Allies in World War II also remind us that the defeat of fascism in Europe and in Asia was an international effort. A few weeks after the D-day landings, Operation Bagration began on the Eastern Front. More than two million Red Army soldiers began their advance, which would end in May 1945 with the planting of the Red Army flag on the top of the Reichstag building in Berlin. In the east, Japanese fascism was resisted from 1937 by the Chinese people and the war would continue there until September 1945.

D-day was certainly an important moment during World War II, but it was one of many such moments leading to the eventual defeat of fascism in both the East and the West. I also pay tribute, on behalf of my constituents, to the Australian men and women whose service on that day 75 years ago contributed to the defeat of fascism in the world. All of us in this place should recall their service in the cause of freedom when we deliberate in the interests of the people of New South Wales, and we should consider whether we have made the very best use of those freedoms in building a better and fairer world for all our citizens.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (12:30): I support the motion moved by the member for Manly that this House recognise the significance of 6 June 1944, and what this date means for our nation 75 years on. Today we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of D-day and the beginning of the liberation of France. In the early hours of Tuesday 6 June 1944, Allied airborne troops began dropping behind enemy lines on the French coast. Their job was to blow up bridges, sabotage railway lines and take other measures to prevent the enemy from rushing reinforcements to the invasion beaches. As dawn broke, they were followed by craft carrying men, vehicles and equipment while thousands of British, Canadian and American troops landed on the beaches of Normandy. At the same time, Allied aircraft bombarded the fortifications along the Channel coast and naval guns opened fire in the largest combined naval, air and land assault that history has ever seen.

This combined assault was a long time in the making. Limited planning for an Allied invasion of Europe began soon after the evacuation of Dunkirk in 1940. However, it was not until December 1943 that a command team led by American General Dwight D. Eisenhower was formed to plan the combined naval, air and land operation. The assault included a cunning deception plan, codenamed Operation Fortitude, which convinced Germany that the Normandy invasion was a feint and that the main Allied landings would come later in the Pas-de-Calais. Much intelligence was gathered about German defences and the movement of German troops by resistance fighters who risked their lives. New weapons and techniques were developed, such as specialised armoured vehicles, landing craft and even floating harbours. To build up resources for the invasion, British factories increased production so that during the first half of 1944 approximately nine million tonnes of supplies and equipment crossed the Atlantic from North America to Britain.

The ports and harbours of south and south-western Britain were flooded with ships of all sizes and shapes from the Allied navies. Allied servicemen began to arrive in Britain in secret to take part in the landings. By 1944, over two million troops from over 12 countries were in Britain in preparation for the invasion. These included American, British, Canadian, Australian, Belgian, Czech, Dutch, French, Greek, New Zealand, Norwegian, Rhodesian and Polish troops providing naval, air and ground support. By the night of 6 July 1944, around

156,000 Allied troops had arrived in Normandy at five designated beaches, codenamed Utah and Omaha on the American side, Gold and Sword for the British and Juno for the Canadians. Despite challenging weather and fierce German defences, including a 2,400-mile defensive wall, 6.5 million mines, thousands of concrete bunkers and pillboxes, and tens of thousands of tank ditches, by nightfall the Allies had secured a foothold along the French coast which would allow them to begin their advance into France.

Today we remember the incredible ingenuity, fortitude and courage demonstrated during the battle for France, but we also reflect on the huge and devastating loss of life suffered. Therefore, it is right to honour the memory of those who fought for peace in one of the decisive moments of the Second World War. It is right to honour the engineering and ingenuity that enabled that offensive. It is also important to hold 6 June as a symbol of the importance of peace, liberty and reconciliation. Lest we forget.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (12:34): I also pay tribute to those who fought in Normandy on D-day and to all Australian soldiers who served during the Second World War. It was, of course, a horrendous war, wiping out millions and millions of people. The Battle of Normandy was a particularly brutal one. I would like to pay respect, in particular, to those who served in the Royal Australian Air Force because they made a significant difference to the outcome of the Second World War. Over 215,000 men and women served between 1939 and 1945 and 9,870 air force personnel lost their lives. Over 55 per cent of those deaths occurred in the air in the war against Germany over Europe—a remarkably large figure. Many died young and quickly. The pilots who went up suffered a high rate of attrition.

The Royal Australian Air Force was formed in 1921. On 26 May 2018, we celebrated its birthday at the Cenotaph. In two years' time, the air force will celebrate its centenary. That centenary year will be an important year for Parliament. I also pay tribute to the 3,000 women who served as part of the Special Operations Executive that was established by Winston Churchill. Dozens of them were parachuted into France in advance of D-day to help the French Resistance to sabotage Nazi infrastructure. Women were chosen for this task because young men would have been very obvious, arousing suspicion as to why they were not serving in the war. The women of the Special Operations Executive would have to have been some of the bravest people who served in the Second World War.

It was a very dangerous task to go into the front lines to undermine the Nazis in expectation of the arrival of the Allied forces. They were often young women who were 19 or in their twenties. They spoke French and were British and Canadian, and some of them lost their lives. Many of them were never recognised after the war. It is important to recognise those women and the large number of men and women in the French Resistance who fought bravely. The French were so grateful to the Allied forces for coming to their rescue because there was no chance of them ever getting out from under the grip of the Nazis in France without the Allies. They recognised that that would not have happened. Unfortunately, it is believed that around 20,000 civilian lives were lost in the D-day battle. The lives of a whole generation of men, including many men from this Parliament, were never the same after the Second World War. We pay our respects to them.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:37): By leave: On 6 June 1944, 75 years ago to this day, 156,115 troops—including 3,000 Australians—marched ashore at Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword beaches. Airborne troops numbered 23,400—the largest airborne troop movement the world had ever seen. In addition to that, there were 73,000 Americans, 67,000 British and 21,000 Canadians. On 6 June 1944, 6,939 vessels crossed the English Channel to launch the largest amphibious assault the world has ever seen and, hopefully, will ever see. The operation was commanded by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who became the thirty-fourth President of the United States of America. He was ably supported by the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Arthur Tedder.

Bernard Montgomery commanded the ground forces, the air command was under Trafford Leigh-Mallory and the naval command was under the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Bertram Ramsay. So many things combined to make this invasion a success. It was part of Operation Overlord, which was the invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe to help bring World War II to an end. It is not commonly known that as early as 1942, the British Broadcasting Corporation launched a bogus appeal for photographs and postcards from the coast of Europe, from Norway to the Pyrenees, as a way of gathering intelligence on suitable landing beaches. This is how Normandy was selected.

Millions of photographs ended up being sent to the War Office and, with the help of the French Resistance and air reconnaissance, military bosses were able to target the best landing spots for D-day. Obviously the Allies put a lot of effort into trying to convince the German forces that the invasion was going to be near Calais, not in Normandy. The invention of phantom field armies based in Kent as part of the D-day deception plan was named Operation Fortitude, and of course it was incredibly successful. They built dummy equipment, including inflatable tanks, and parachuted dummies. Double agents were used to release controlled leaks of misinformation which led

the Germans to believe the Allies were going to invade via the Pas-de-Calais and Norway. The Germans took the bait and so much of the success of D-day was as a result of that incredibly well-run intelligence organisation.

Weather watching played an enormous role in D-day. As was mentioned earlier by the member for Manly, who is in the Chamber and who brought this outstanding motion to this place, the original date was 5 June, but it ended up being delayed by 24 hours because of bad weather. It was Group Captain James Martin Stagg who made that vital forecast and persuaded General Eisenhower to change the date to 6 June. The Germans were caught napping. Hitler himself was actually asleep when the D-day invasion began and the Nazi leaders did not wake Hitler to tell him that the invasion had started. It is interesting that so many events took place that could have changed the course of history, but 6 June was a success. Unfortunately, 10,000 troops lost their lives on that very first day, but their bravery helped create the freedom that we know, and their bravery lives on.

I also note that Gordon Fisher—the father of somebody in this Parliament, Rebecca Cartwright, the Whip's Executive Assistant—was a Royal Marine, part of 30 Assault Unit, Special Intelligence Unit, which arrived on Juno Beach. We thank Gordon Fisher for his contribution. What is even more interesting is that his commanding officer was Ian Fleming, the writer of the James Bond novels, so to Bec's dad we say thank you, and to all the troops that took part in the D-day landing we say thank you for your sacrifice.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (12:41): By leave: I thank the member for Manly for bringing this motion to the House today. On this day 75 years ago, Allied forces landed on the beaches of northern France in what was officially known as Operation Overlord. We have come to know this day as D-day. The Second World War had been ravaging huge swathes of Europe. The Germans had set their sights on invading the United Kingdom with the intention of occupying London and ending the war in Europe. It had become clear that, to defeat Germany, the Allies would have to launch an amphibious assault from Britain, landing on the coast of northern France.

And so it was, on 6 June 1944, thousands of Allied paratroopers began landing inland of the invasion beaches. Their mission was to secure the Allied flanks and stop the Germans getting to the beaches when the landing began. Supporting this invasion by parachute, Bomber Command conducted precision attacks on 10 German coastal artillery batteries near the beaches where Allied troops were to land. Each battery was targeted by approximately 100 heavy bombers, many of them crewed by Australians. All four Australian heavy bomber squadrons took part in the operation: numbers 460, 463, 466 and 467. On this most hazardous of missions, no Royal Australian Air Force [RAAF] bombers were lost.

Many Australian aircrew posted to British units also participated. Some 15 per cent of the 1,136 Bomber Command aircraft taking part were either part of RAAF squadrons or were flown by Australians. Other Australians flew diversionary bombing missions in other parts of France, while others dropped dummy paratrooper figures to fool the Germans. On the English Channel some 500 Australian sailors served in Royal Navy vessels, while a dozen Australian soldiers were attached to British army formations to gain experience in preparation for similar operations in the Pacific.

So began the final push which would eventually lead to the end of the war in Europe. First came a short flight from a base in southern England to the coast of France—a relatively calm period before the fierce response from enemy air defences. At that moment each man knew that his life was in his mates' hands: the machine gunner depending on the pilot to fly to the best of his ability; in turn, the pilot depending on the navigator to make sure they arrived on target at precisely the correct time; the navigator focused on his maps and depending on the machine gunner to defend their aircraft—each man utterly reliant on his mates in the aircraft to keep him alive, to make sure they all returned to the base in England and, eventually, home to Australia.

The Anzac spirit which was forged some three decades earlier was now quite literally in full flight above the most critical operation of the Second World War. Approximately 3,000 Australian military personnel and merchant seamen participated in the operation; 14 Australian lives were lost. We give thanks for their bravery and for their willingness to face death day after day, not knowing if each day would be their last. We acknowledge each of their contributions to protecting the freedoms we enjoy today and we remember all those who left this wide brown land to take part in a war thousands of kilometres away, but never came back. D-day is now 75 years ago. Many of those who saw action that day are no longer with us. Age has caught up with them and, inevitably, has overtaken them. But their contribution will forever remain with us. Today we thank them for what they have given to us and we will be forever in their debt.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Members are more than welcome to seek leave to speak in this debate, but I remind them that there are a number of notices of motions on the agenda in this time slot.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (12:45): By leave: I add my voice to the many reflecting the importance of recognising the significance of today's anniversary of D-day. Seventy-five years ago, on 6 June

1944, the largest invasion flotilla in history hit the Normandy beaches. The massive invasion force was opposed by German troops who had clear fields of fire on heavily defended and mined beaches. The attack was supported in no small measure by around 3,300 Australians in the air and on the sea at a time when, as has been mentioned, as a nation we were fighting hard against Japan in our own part of the world.

The main Australian contribution was to the British Royal Air Force in the skies over the beaches. Australian aircrew served in transport and glider towing squadrons, which helped to deliver airborne troops on D-day, and the force comprised 2,800 members of the Royal Australian Air Force, about 500 members of the Royal Australian Navy and around 13 officers of the Australian Imperial Force who fought alongside their British counterparts. A total of 14 Australians were killed on this day—two members of the Royal Australian Navy and 12 from the RAAF—but the total number of Australians killed in the wider Normandy campaign, which lasted until the end of August, was much higher. By 1 July 1944 there were about 14,000 Australian airmen in Britain and, as casualties mounted throughout the Normandy campaign, more and more of these men replaced the heavy losses sustained in operational squadrons. During the Normandy campaign 1,117 Australians were killed and were buried in cemeteries or listed on memorials across Western Europe and Britain.

We know that this effort involved many different nations and I want to reflect on something slightly different today. As I walked up Martin Place to come here, I came across a single bagpiper who was doing his bit to remind the busy commuters about today's important anniversary. It was a really fitting way to reflect on this day at the start of my day—and having the name Dugald may hint a bit at my Scottish heritage. The haunting sounds of the bagpipes reminded me of the story of Bill Millin, who was a British army piper who played his bagpipes on Sword Beach during D-day while under enemy fire.

There are plenty of prominent World War II heroes and veterans who fought on the field of battle and lived to tell the tale, but the story of Bill Millin is slightly unusual. The story goes that German soldiers apparently did not shoot him because they thought he was crazy. The War Office had actually banned war pipers at that time because the casualties from the Great War were very high. The enemy had noticed how pipers boosted morale, so they were actually being targeted. Despite the ban, his commander, Lord Lovat, defied the rule and commanded the 21-year-old to be a piper on the battlefield. He played *Road to the Isles* when his landing craft took off for the Normandy beaches and another soldier relayed the pipes over the loudhailer. Troops from the other boats could hear the music, and they cheered and threw their helmets in the air. It helped to provide the sort of motivation that was needed.

As they got to the beach he was playing *Highland Laddie* while pacing through the freezing waters towards what seemed like almost certain death. Soldiers around him were being shot even before they made it to the beach. The bagpipes did as was hoped and provided the soldiers with a morale boost and many waved and cheered as they moved along the beach. After the long and gruesome battle the piper managed to talk to some of the captured German soldiers and inquired why they had not shot him. They basically said they thought he had gone off his head. He was seen only with bagpipes walking directly into the line of fire and they thought it would be a waste of bullets.

Millin certainly defied any sense of reason when he set foot on the beach with only his bagpipes and a knife. It was that bravery which helped inspire those around him to keep going. It would not have been possible without his commander, Lord Lovat, breaking the rules and ordering a piper in the group. Either way, the piper certainly added to the overall success of the D-day landings, and I was reminded of that this morning. Bill Millin died at the age of 88 in 2010. I join fellow members in paying tribute to all Australian service men and women who served in Europe and across the Pacific.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:50): By leave: I thank the member for Manly for bringing this motion to the House today. On behalf of my electorate I acknowledge the seventy-fifth anniversary of D-day. In doing so I will reflect on a couple of points: First, the young Australian men serving on D-day who included 2,800 airmen, 500 sailors, and a small number of soldiers—of whom 12 or 13 died. Secondly, I draw attention to the average age of the men flying in 453 Squadron—it was 23. They came from a variety of backgrounds including university students, farmhands and boilermakers. In recognising those who served on D-day I hark back to the words of the member for Baulkham Hills, who mentioned other theatres of war. I acknowledge the service personnel elsewhere in Europe, the Mediterranean and the Pacific theatres of war. I acknowledge the civilians in London and south-east England who were facing V-2 rockets at the time.

I draw attention to the impact of Australian service personnel serving in Fighter Command and, importantly, Bomber Command. We cannot dare to consider what it was like to fly across the dark skies of Europe facing death and overcoming fear in order to do a job. It is important to focus on the service personnel of D-day and just as important to draw attention to the leadership. Dwight D. Eisenhower is someone we should recognise for his leadership as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force. He went on to serve his country as the thirty-fourth President of the United States of America. He was involved with civil rights and sent troops

to enforce desegregation at Little Rock Central High School, and he signed the Civil Rights Act 1957 into law. This House should take a moment to reflect on this man who was a great leader of the twentieth century and who deserves recognition. As we recognise the seventy-fifth anniversary of D-day I remind the House of the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in his address to the nation at the bookend of his presidential career. He stated:

We pray that peoples of all faiths, all races, all nations, may have their great human needs satisfied; that those now denied opportunity shall come to enjoy it to the full; that all who yearn for freedom may experience its spiritual blessings; that those who have freedom will understand, also, its heavy responsibilities; that all who are insensitive to the needs of others will learn charity; that the scourges of poverty, disease and ignorance will be made to disappear from the earth, and that, in the goodness of time, all peoples will come to live together in a peace guaranteed by the binding force of mutual respect and love.

We recognise today the sacrifice of those people on D-day and that of the personnel who served in other theatres of war. We also recognise the words of President Eisenhower and his call for peace in our land.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (12:53): By leave: As one of the few members of this Parliament whose paternal grandparents, father, aunt and several uncles were in Europe under German occupation 75 years ago I take the opportunity to honour those who began their liberation: They are the brave men and women who participated in the liberating forces that landed at Normandy. My uncle Gerard was a political prisoner in a German concentration camp and did not survive the brutal cruelty of the Nazis who subjected him to a death march from Hamburg to Ravensbrück concentration camp. While I was a Rotary foundation scholar in Canada in the 1980s I met many Canadian World War II veterans, some of whom had participated on D-day. My Rotary mentor, Bill Dale, QC, is no longer with us. He said he always regretted that the tank he commanded had a mechanical fault which prevented him from landing 75 years ago on the beaches of Normandy. He did get his chance to serve in Europe after the landing.

The Canadian Rotarians who served in the Second World War spoke fondly of Australian soldiers, especially pilots, they had met during the war. The goodwill amongst the Allied soldiers towards each other, and especially the Commonwealth soldiers, had a strong impact upon me. D-day was an incredible international exercise of men and women from all different countries risking, and in some cases giving, their lives to free people from countries other than their own. My father was many kilometres away from the beaches of Normandy in the Netherlands, but he quickly found out about the battle. A German soldier in the Wehrmacht occupying 's-Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands, where my father lived, said somewhat happily to him, "We will all be going home soon, the Allies have landed in France." That indicated to my father that many German soldiers were reluctant participants in the war.

I mention also the father of an American friend of mine, Kevin Conneely, who had a significant rank in the tank corps of the American army. He is no longer with us, but 75 years ago he was a classic Irish Roman Catholic Midwest young man who did extraordinary things to fight for freedom on D-day and in Europe generally. The obvious bond between United States servicemen and Australian servicemen of his generation had a real impact on me. I have spoken about matters told to me by three people who were in Europe 75 years ago: my father, Bill Dale and Mr Conneely.

I note one other historical figure who should be remembered and that is Winston Churchill. He, more than any other person, was responsible for the commencement of freedom for Europe 75 years ago. Apparently the Allied High Command had to almost physically restrain the British Prime Minister from landing on the beach himself 75 years ago. In the Boer War and the First World War Winston Churchill was frequently on the front line risking his life. Although Mr Churchill, as he was then, was not allowed to land with the forces at Normandy, he was on those beaches within days of the landing. Mr Churchill played a significant role and is responsible for saving many millions of lives. It is appropriate that we honour this significant moment in history, the loss of life and the casualties incurred by those brave men and women who took part in this liberating force.

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (12:58): By leave: I thank the member for Manly for moving this motion. It is important to recognise the symbolism of this event in history, the liberation of Europe by the Allies. The event was a long time coming and one that the Russian forces begged and pleaded for for over three years following the German move against the Russians earlier in the war. Stalin begged Churchill and Roosevelt for a second front. One was opened in North Africa and eventually the Allies moved into Italy, but this was the main effort. It was the largest amphibious liberation in the history of humanity. The logistical enterprise, combined with the valour and courage of the forces, took the Allies years to accomplish. A large part of the story of D-day involves subterfuge.

The Allied commander most feared by the Germans was Patton. The Germans were convinced that Patton himself would lead the D-day liberation of Europe. The Allies set up a false army at a different crossing in the English Channel, hoping to fool the Nazis into believing the D-day liberation would not take place in Normandy, which it did. Ronald Reagan might not be one of my political heroes, but he was an amazing orator. He gave a speech on the fortieth anniversary of D-day at Pointe du Hoc in Normandy at a gathering attended by world

leaders. The speech was written by Peggy Noonan, Reagan's lead speechwriter. She is the author of an amazing book, which I recommend, entitled *What I Saw at the Revolution*. The moving speech was about the valour and courage of the D-day troops. Reagan said:

... the Rangers pulled themselves over the top, and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs, they began to seize back the continent of Europe. Two hundred and twenty-five came here. After two days of fighting, only 90 could still bear arms.

Behind me is a memorial that symbolizes the Ranger daggers that were thrust into the top of these cliffs. And before me are the men who put them there.

These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent. These are the heroes who helped end a war.

Gentlemen, I look at you and I think of the words of Stephen Spender's poem. You are men who in your "lives fought for life ... and left the vivid air signed with your honor."

I think I know what you may be thinking right now—thinking "we were just part of a bigger effort; everyone was brave that day." Well, everyone was. Do you remember the story of Bill Millin of the 51st Highlanders? Forty years ago today, British troops were pinned down near a bridge, waiting desperately for help. Suddenly, they heard the sound of bagpipes, and some thought they were dreaming. Well, they weren't. They looked up and saw Bill Millin with his bagpipes, leading the reinforcements and ignoring the smack of the bullets into the ground around him.

Vivid scenes from an important day in world history. We should honour those who fought and pay tribute to their valour and their courage.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (13:02): By leave: There are many notable moments in the history of the world. For those of us who enjoy the freedoms and liberties of a Western democracy, there can be no more significant or poignant moment than the landings at Normandy. Today, exactly 75 years ago, the Allies invaded Normandy as part of what was known as Operation Neptune. It was the largest seaborne invasion in history. The operation began the liberation of German-occupied France from the horrors of Nazi control and laid the foundations of an Allied victory on the Western Front. It was a significant turning point in World War II.

The landings had been planned for more than two years by the highest levels of the governments of President Roosevelt and of Prime Minister Churchill. The depth of planning for the landings included the feint of another landing further down the coast to persuade the enemy to believe the landings would be in a different place, which ultimately had some effect. Despite all the planning, the landings had to be delayed by 24 hours because of bad weather. Twenty-four thousand British and Canadian troops landed just after midnight, while other Allied infantry and armoured divisions began landing on the coast of France at 6.30 a.m. In total, almost 160,000 troops crossed the English Channel on D-day. There was a targeted 50-kilometre stretch of the Normandy coast where men landed at five different locations, in some cases under heavy fire. Allied casualties were at least 10,000, with over 4,000 confirmed dead. No fewer than 3,000 Australian soldiers also contributed to the Normandy effort.

As the grandson of a British migrant who was a member of the Royal Navy during World War I, who migrated to this country prior to World War II and who transferred to the Royal Australian Navy, I pay tribute to my grandfather, Cecil St Clair Williams. He saw action, most importantly serving on board the HMAS *Australia* during the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1942. This battle was another notable moment in ensuring that Western democracies enjoy the freedoms we have today. The Battle of the Coral Sea was the largest air-sea battle of its kind. It was the first time that aircraft launched from ships in the ocean to fight in the air. The battle repelled the Japanese invasion of this country. This was another important moment in the history of the world, and it certainly changed the course of history. I am proud to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of people who fought for their countries, some of whom paid the ultimate sacrifice. I commend the brave men and women who participated in both world wars. They came from this country and from countries around the world and fought to allow us to live the free lives we have today.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:06): By leave: I welcome this motion moved by my good colleague the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and Veterans, and member for Manly, who is a scholar of military history. The motion acknowledges and expresses our gratitude for the sacrifices made by those who participated in the D-day landings, which occurred 75 years ago today. In the early hours of Tuesday 6 June 1944, British and American paratroopers landed in the fields of Normandy. At dawn, thousands of British, Canadian and American troops landed on the beaches. This day, 6 June 1944, became 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.

I focus on the important role played by the execution of the Allies' Operation Bodyguard, which contributed significantly to the tactical success of Operation Overlord—the name given to the D-day landings. Operation Bodyguard was the plan to deceive the Germans into believing the Normandy landings were themselves a diversion for a larger attack in northern France. Operation Bodyguard achieved this deception in three ways: first, it made Pas-de-Calais appear to be the main landing target; secondly, it masked the actual date and time of

the invasion of Normandy; and, thirdly, it occupied German reinforcements in Pas-de-Calais and delayed them from assisting at Normandy for a number of weeks.

Planning for Operation Bodyguard commenced in July 1943 and was formally approved in December of that year, seven months before it was executed on 6 June 1944. Operation Bodyguard initially comprised the formation of a story—or false narrative—which included fictional field armies, fake operations and false "leaked" information. The Operation Bodyguard deceptions were implemented in several ways—namely, through using double agents, radio traffic and visual deception. Double agents were used to send back misleading and false information about Allied plans. It was revealed through the decryption of German radio transmissions at Bletchley Park, in the Allies' Operation Ultra, that the German High Command actually believed the Operation Bodyguard deceptions and incorporated this information in its own order of battle. We also know it was deceived because the plan worked.

If Operation Bodyguard sounds highly confusing, that is because it was confusing, but it helped to ensure the success of the D-day landings. Operation Bodyguard has been dubbed "the single biggest hoax of the war" and was essential in ensuring that the Allies were able to build a beachhead in June 1944 and ultimately win the war in Europe. I reaffirm our acknowledgement of and gratitude for the sacrifices made by all those involved in the D-day landings, which occurred 75 years ago today. I support the motion brought before the House by the member for Manly, and commend him for his efforts.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (13:09): By leave: I speak to the motion about the seventy-fifth anniversary of the D-day landings, also known as the Normandy landings. On 6 June 1944, Allied forces launched a combined naval, air and land assault on German forces on the coast of northern France. Codenamed Operation Overlord, it was the largest military naval, air and land operation ever attempted and marked the start of the campaign to liberate Nazi-occupied north-west Europe. The military term "D-day" refers to the first day of an operation.

After more than a year of planning, it involved the simultaneous landings of tens of thousands of troops on five separate beaches in Normandy—codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. Over 18,000 Allied paratroopers were dropped into the invasion area to provide tactical support for infantry divisions. Expecting an invasion, the German military leaders believed the initial attacks were only a diversionary tactic. This element of surprise helped the British troops establish a foothold along the coast, to then begin their advance into France. The importance of D-day was critical in establishing a bridgehead for additional offensives further inland.

British factories began increasing production well in advance to build up resources for the invasion, and approximately nine million tonnes of supplies and equipment crossed the Atlantic from North America to Britain in early 1944. In addition to shared resources, the Allies also needed to overcome political, cultural and personal tensions to ensure the utmost discipline and cooperation between troops. By 1944, over two million troops from more than 12 countries were in Britain in preparation for the invasion. The Allies consisted primarily of American, British and Canadian troops, but also there was also Australian, Belgian, Czech, Dutch, French, Greek, New Zealand, Norwegian, Rhodesian and Polish naval, air or ground support. Up to 7,000 ships and landing craft were involved in the operation, delivering a total of 156,000 men and 10,000 vehicles.

Australians played a small but important role in the large Allied forces that participated in D-day. Approximately 3,200 Australians took part in the D-day landings on 6 June 1944. Five hundred members of the Royal Australian Navy served on attachment with the Royal Navy and a small number of soldiers served on the ground with the British Army. But Australia's main contribution came in the air, with approximately 1,000 airmen flying with the Royal Australian Air Force and a further 1,800 operating on attachment to the Royal Air Force. We often pause to remember the Australians who fought for our country but D-day gives us the opportunity to remember all Allied forces who fought alongside each other in one of the greatest ever joint military efforts. As our international leaders gather in England to commemorate D-day, we have the opportunity to remember those who fought and lost their lives defending the freedoms we enjoy today. I thank the member for Manly for bringing this very important motion before the House. I wholeheartedly support it.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:13): In reply: I thank the member for Wyong; the member Baulkham Hills, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services; the member for The Entrance; the member for Drummoine, the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans; the member for Auburn; the member for Terrigal; the member for Cootamundra; the member for Dubbo; the member for Albury; the member for Ku-ring-gai; the member for Kogarah; the member for Castle Hill; the member for Seven Hills; and the member for Miranda for their contributions to this motion. Referred to as the longest day—and with good reason—D-day serves as a stark reminder that hopefully never again will we see the horrors of such a war. This is an opportunity for us to take stock, to reflect, to give thanks and, importantly, not to celebrate but to commemorate what occurred 75 years ago. In that vein, I specifically mention Dennis Hensman and Len Mills, who landed on Gold Beach and,

after 34 missions and both participating in D-day, now live on the northern beaches. I commend the motion to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

MOORE PARK

Debate resumed from 30 May 2019.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (13:14): The Government's Minister for Planning and Public Spaces is charged with expanding parks and green spaces. I hope this marks a new approach to managing Moore Park, which has been treated with contempt in the past. The Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust's recurrent funding was cut and Moore Park has not received any real investment in 30 years. Moore Park land is being lost to the light rail for the track, stops, substations, pedestrian bridge, portals, operations control centre and drivers' facility. Grasslands were previously removed for the Tibby Cotter bridge—which is rarely used by cyclists or pedestrians—and for the busway, SupaCentre and Eastern Distributor. The \$4.5 million compensation for the Eastern Distributor never achieved its purpose to remove event car parking from Moore Park.

The Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG] trust has long seen Moore Park as its property: It attempted land grabs in 2010 and 2015. Many believe Sydney Football Stadium was purposely run down because building on Moore Park was planned. While the SCG trust is instead rebuilding the stadium on its own land, Moore Park remains at risk from this unpopular project and protections are needed. The new stadium will be much bigger and will be directly adjacent to Moore Park and Kippax Lake. With the entrance on the border, crowds entering and exiting the stadium could relegate Moore Park to a mere extension of SCG lands. The SCG trust has already asked for pedestrian paths and wayfinding through Moore Park to connect the stadium with the light rail stop and Tibby Cotter bridge. This means paving over soft grass surfaces. There is a risk that touted "fan zones" will extend into the parklands.

The old stadium was designed to respond to its environmentally sensitive location. The seating bowl was sunk to reduce the scale and visual impact on the heritage and parkland setting. The building envelope of the new stadium is far more dominating on the landscape. At its highest point, the new stadium will be seven metres above the highest point of the old stadium, making it more visually intrusive on the parklands—Infrastructure NSW refers to a "monumental entry experience". Outlooks and views will be dominated by a bulky structure. Morning shadows on Moore Park will affect amenity and the natural environment. A 30-metre long media screen on the side of the stadium adjacent to Kippax Lake will cause significant audiovisual disturbance, including to bird species around Kippax Lake. The entrance of up to six metres of stairs facing the parklands will add further noise and disturbance from patrons.

Presentations to the Community Consultative Committee show event parking on Moore Park continuing in the long term, unashamedly disregarding the Moore Park Master Plan 2040 objective to permanently remove on-grass parking. The light rail projections see only 2 per cent of car users moving to light rail, with most patronage made up of existing bus users. I share community concern that the trust is working behind the scenes to undermine the master plan's parking goals. A condition of consent requires the project to identify ways to contribute positively towards and support the principles, moves, opportunities and strategies within the master plan. Complying with this condition must involve replacing on-grass car parking with integrated ticketing.

The stadium project is adding pressure to remove film-related restrictions on the Entertainment Quarter, which is part of Moore Park. When the showgrounds were relocated, the community accepted that the area would be used for film purposes and it must not become an elite sports precinct. SCG offices and the gym demolished in the stadium redevelopment have already moved in, after the Government changed the rules to overcome planning breaches and community opposition. A project-specific State environmental planning policy made the development compliant after a development application was lodged. This is known as spot rezoning—a poor planning approach considered open to corruption and undue influence.

The Entertainment Quarter provides a rare opportunity to expand public recreation space in line with the Government's public places policy. Space for community recreation is in low supply and high demand, and this should drive planning decisions for the precinct—not the leaseholders' profits or the SCG's empire visions. The community will watch closely and oppose any creep into the important parts of Moore Park. Demolition and construction works pose short-term but significant risks to the parklands' sensitive ecosystem, which has already suffered from loss of old-growth trees for the light rail. Kippax Lake is directly adjacent to the work zone and it supports important wildlife, including native birds—last year five baby cygnets were born there. Moore Park trees provide habitat for native animals like possums, lizards and bats. Noise, dust and vibrations could impact seriously on their health and breeding.

Maximum noise levels for demolition and construction have been set at 75 decibels, based on the ambient noise levels of Moore Park Road, with no consideration of the impact on wildlife. The passive recreation standard of 65 decibels should be adopted. The purpose of the disgraceful Alexandria to Moore Park connector project appears to be to bring customers from the St Peters WestConnex Interchange to the new stadium. Road widening will remove over 100 trees and sacrifice more land. The erosion of Moore Park must end. New funds are needed in Moore Park to restore grasslands plant vegetation and landscape for passive recreation and in the Entertainment Quarter for community sport. Our health and wellbeing rely on green open spaces and we must protect the parklands from alienation due to the Government's new stadium redevelopment and invest in Moore Park for its public open space and recreation services. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:20): I speak in favour of the motion of the member for Sydney. I share his passion for public open spaces. I thank the member for highlighting that public space is the absolute priority for the New South Wales Government—so much so that the Premier has created a new Public Spaces ministry alongside the Planning ministry. The dual roles are at the heart of Government because we know that access to green and open space is crucial for everyone's health, wellbeing and community spirit. We want to create great places for people and, when considering development applications, we will continue to consider the impacts of proposals on public space. We are focused on ensuring that we respect public spaces that our communities treasure.

Of course, Moore Park has been one of the prized open spaces of this land even before colonisation, when the first Australians hunted kangaroos in its low-lying scrubby flora and made their track to La Perouse along what is now Anzac Parade. Moore Park has been the recreational heartbeat of Sydney since the mid-1800s. It has belonged to the people of this great State since 1811, when Governor Lachlan Macquarie proclaimed 490 acres as the Sydney Common. As far as our Government is concerned, it will always belong to the people. It is one of New South Wales' and Australia's most culturally significant parks, steeped in history.

The area now known as Moore Park has hosted the British Army, Sydney's first Zoological Gardens and the Royal Agricultural Society showground, and it was the site of the Australian Golf Club's first course in 1882. It has hosted sports—including the first polo match played in Australia, in 1874—fairs and concerts. Families assembled at Kippax Lake to farewell soldiers going off to World War I. To Sydneysiders, Moore Park is something of a sacred place, for more reasons than just that final Steve Waugh century or John Sattler leading the Rabbitohs to glory in 1970—not that I am a fan of the Rabbitohs. Moore Park remains a place for everyone, providing numerous ongoing benefits for our community. It is a place to play, relax, be entertained, gather and create memories.

This Government knows that nobody should impinge upon Moore Park, so I am happy to inform the member for Sydney that there is no encroachment on Moore Park as a result of the redevelopment of Sydney Football Stadium. The stadium redevelopment will enhance Moore Park, and this is central to the conditions of consent of the Department of Planning for the concept approval. The conditions ensure that redevelopment will bring benefits to Moore Park, including better connectivity with the city and surrounding suburbs; the long-term removal of event parking from the area—frankly, the Moore Park 1 and 2 car parks next to the stadium were a blight of bitumen that will be better utilised as public space—and, of course, improved facilities. The redevelopment of Sydney Football Stadium will happen in concert with the Government's plans to enhance Moore Park.

The community is crying out for the open space across Moore Park to be rejuvenated, and that is exactly what our Government is going to do. To be fair, over the past 50 years or so Moore Park could be described as being the poor cousin to neighbouring Centennial Park. The northern end of the park, between the stadia and South Dowling Street, is where a Doug Walters six once rolled only metres short of Kippax Lake, but it is now merely a scrappy bike path and occasional car park. Our Government has an exciting, comprehensive master plan for the future of Moore Park—something the park has not had in 150 years. Our Moore Park 2040 master plan provides the blueprint for this community-owned asset for the next 20-plus years. Members might recall that at one point a plan was floated for the new stadium at Moore Park to be built on the current open green space at Kippax Lake. That was clearly unacceptable to the community, and the New South Wales Government ruled it out in 2015.

Our long-term plan ruled out any new stadium across Moore Park East, Kippax Lake or the historic fig trees that surround the lake. As a result, all plans for the new Sydney Football Stadium footprint are confined entirely within the lands of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust and outside the boundaries of the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust. The 2040 master plan will also provide more trees and further greening of the park—250 new trees have already been planted. Last year on Moore Park's historic built space our Government unveiled the exciting future for two of Sydney's loved entertainment venues: the Hordern Pavilion and the Royal Hall of Industries. The community wanted the Hordern saved for live music, and that is exactly

what happened. A \$65 million revitalisation ensures that the historic buildings will live on as a world-class entertainment, sporting and community precinct. A multimillion-dollar investment to rejuvenate Moore Park's Tramway Oval is almost complete. The project has removed concrete to reduce traffic congestion, improve public transport access and community access, and return more green space to Moore Park.

Much more is still to come. When the light rail opens, our Government will remove on-grass parking for sporting events from Moore Park East. That is a key benefit of our investment in transport and sporting infrastructure in the area and our commitment to greater heritage conservation. We also plan to invest in new and enhanced facilities for high-performance and community sport. The Government plans to improve access for cyclists and pedestrians, with 10 kilometres of new and enhanced pathways. It is aiming for greater provision for passive recreation, with an 11 per cent increase in space for passive recreational activities. The New South Wales Government, the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust and I are in agreement with the motion of the member for Sydney and with the wishes of the wider community. Moore Park has always belonged to the people, and we will continue to protect and enhance this community asset for Moore Park's next 150 years and beyond.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (13:26): I support the motion of the member for Sydney because Moore Park and Centennial Park have been under considerable threat for quite some time. Since the Centennial Park community was redistributed to my electorate from that of the member for Sydney, I have been involved with the member and the Lord Mayor of Sydney, with support from the member for Newtown, in trying to hold off encroachments by the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust and the Government into Moore Park—an area of expanded population. One of my very first acts as the local member was to join with those members and the Lord Mayor of Sydney to stop an underground car park planned for Moore Park and convention centres being developed in the open space. Fortunately, somebody leaked the underground car park plans and we were able to take preventative action.

I have spoken in the House before about the Albert "Tibby" Cotter Bridge—which the Auditor-General highlighted involved expenditure of something like \$30 million—and asked who would build a bridge in a location of that type that nobody would use. In reality, the bridge was supposed to service the underground car park. So the bridge is there—\$35 million in Government funding—but there is no underground park.

Ms Gabrielle Upton: How do you know that?

Mr RON HOENIG: Didn't they show you the plans? Somebody certainly showed me and the member for Sydney what the intention was in respect of Moore Park. Fortunately, the then Minister for the Environment, the member for Cronulla, pulled the rug from underneath the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust and ensured that it would not proceed on land under his control. Next there was an attempt by the Sydney Cricket Ground trust to rebuild Allianz Stadium on Kippax Lake in Moore Park. Again with the support of the member for Sydney and the Lord Mayor of Sydney, that project was stopped in its tracks by the then Minister for the Environment and then Premier Mike Baird. Shortly after that, I asked the then Minister for Sport for a briefing about the plans for the Sydney Cricket Ground trust. The Minister indicated graciously that I could have such a briefing but said that the Government did not have any plans because all the money was going into Homebush and Parramatta stadium. Only after a change of Premier did the Government's policy change, and a decision was made about Allianz Stadium.

I continue to get briefings from the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust. I am grateful to Tony Shepherd, the trust and the trust employees. I received an undertaking from the Chairman of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust that, in redeveloping Allianz Stadium, the trust will not intrude into the land holdings of the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust. To this point that undertaking has been adhered to. I also received assurances that my local community would be consulted. The Sydney Cricket Ground trust made a development application, which it did not have to do under its Act, to ensure public scrutiny of the application. But the threats will continue, and it is right and proper for this House to carry the motion moved by the member for Sydney.

Debate interrupted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): 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 members of the Davidson State Electorate Conference, whom I hosted for lunch in the Speaker's dining room and garden today. I appreciate their ongoing support; my colleagues can blame them for me being here—along with a few others. I welcome former colleague Richard

Clews, his wife, Lorraine Clews, and Wayne Macnamara, who are also my guests in the gallery. I welcome Jennifer and Barron Cagle, who are visiting Sydney from the United States of America—guests of the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections and member for Lane Cove. I welcome to the gallery the winners and highly commended women who were recognised today at the Minister's Women in Local Government Awards 2019—guests of the Minister for Local Government and member for South Coast. I had the privilege of attending part of those proceedings this morning, which also recognised Roslyn Harrison from my own Northern Beaches Council. I congratulate the Minister and all involved on a very successful event.

I acknowledge Paul Mastronardi and Ronda Knighton from Dunlea Centre—Australia's original Boys' Town—who are guests of the Deputy Government Whip and member for Heathcote. I acknowledge the year 11 legal studies students and teachers from St Mary's Catholic College, Gateshead, who are guests of the member for Charlestown. Finally, I welcome the year 11 legal studies students and teachers from Tweed River High School, who are guests of the member for Tweed—the 100 per cent member.

Commemorations

D-DAY ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER (14:20): I will now make a statement on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the D-Day landings. I commend members who spoke on that topic earlier today. The following anniversary statement relates to the D-Day landings:

From the deck it was still too dark to see the shore, but we could make out an endless line of ships to right and left and, high above us, the metal wings of the aircraft shining in the sun. As it grew lighter, the big guns of the fleet began to fire over us. I had heard nothing like those huge shells. It was as if trains flew through the air.

So wrote Major Henry "Jo" Gullett, later a member of the House of Representatives, in his memoir about the moments before the Allied landings on the coast of Normandy, which took place on this day seventy-five years ago. The D-Day landings were the largest seaborne invasion in history and a watershed in the course of World War II. With most Australian forces engaged against the Japanese in the Pacific, relatively few Australian personnel were involved in the D-Day landings. Their contributions, however, were diverse and crucial. Over 2,000 Australian airmen flew bombing sorties over the beaches or transported airborne troops across the French coast, and at least 500 Australian sailors and soldiers took part in British operations—gaining experience ahead of amphibious operations planned for the Pacific. Dozens of Australian women, meanwhile, were among the transport corps and medical units that came ashore in support of the infantry.

Fourteen Australians died during the D-Day landings. Two were sailors; 12 were airmen. Among them were 28-year-old Pilot Officer Roland Ward from Coogee and 22-year-old Flight Sergeant Malcolm Burgess from Vacluse. The pair were aboard an Avro Lancaster four-engine bomber targeting Saint-Pierre-du-Mont in support of the American landings at nearby Omaha Beach. Ward was the pilot; Burgess was the tail gunner. Their aircraft was hit by flak and caught fire. Only one member of their crew was able to bail out of the stricken plane. Ward and Burgess are buried alongside one another in the British Commonwealth war cemetery in Bayeux, France. Lest we forget.

Announcements

JENNIFER LAMONT RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER: I take this opportunity to farewell Jennifer Lamont, a long-serving member of staff in the Table Office. Jenny retires after more than 32 years of service to the Legislative Assembly. Jenny started her career in the New South Wales public service in 1978 as a secretary in the Industrial Resources Branch of the Cabinet Secretariat in the Premier's Department. In 1983 she joined the staff of the Legislative Assembly, as a secondee from the Premier's Department, to be the stenographer for the then newly appointed Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety—now known as the Staysafe Committee. Over the years, Jenny has held various roles in the department, and has become the department's expert on tabled papers. She has demonstrated a strong dedication to assisting the House and its members in the discharge of their duties. Jenny will be missed by her colleagues and members, as she has been an integral part of the team that provides services directly to this House. On behalf of all members, and all the staff, I take this opportunity to wish Jenny all the best in her retirement.

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.

*Question Time***PERSONAL INFORMATION SECURITY**

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:25): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Does the Minister believe that two years' imprisonment for corrupt use of personal information by public sector officials is sufficient?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:26): I thank the member for this question. That is the current law of the land. No law is a set-and-forget law. Obviously every law needs to be reviewed in the current climate. It is the law of the land and, yes, until it is reviewed, sure.

COST OF LIVING

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government delivering for New South Wales by easing cost-of-living pressures for households?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:26): I thank the member for Goulburn for the question. I note that it is her absolute priority to support families and households in the Goulburn community. In fact, just before the election, she and I visited a household in her community and talked about the impact on household bills of gas and electricity, which spurred on the Government to make sure that we are providing relief not only when it comes to electricity bills but also for gas bills. I am pleased to provide an update to the House on these important matters to demonstrate that these savings are being felt far and wide.

Government members know that, no matter how well the New South Wales Government is doing, no matter how strong the New South Wales budget is, and no matter how well the Government is managing the fiscal environment, families and households do it tough, especially in regional New South Wales in light of the very sustained drought. Today I affirm my Government's commitment to putting downward pressure on household bills to make sure that at every turn, at every opportunity, we put citizens first and reduce their costs. I would like to outline some of the amazing success that the Government has already had with the electricity rebates people are receiving and to outline a new initiative regarding our gas bills.

I thank the Minister for Customer Service and the Minister for Energy and Environment for their leadership in this regard. I also thank the Treasurer for making the funds available so that the policy can be implemented. I stress that New South Wales is the only State that provides a service like the Energy Switch program for citizens. Citizens can go online or go inside a Service NSW centre, provide their invoice details and save, in the case of electricity bills, on average \$425 per year—nothing to sneeze at.

Mr Clayton Barr: Why don't you just reregulate the price of electricity?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Cessnock appears to have a problem with a reduced cost of living. What he is suggesting would put prices up. I was keen to see which regions or areas in New South Wales had the largest savings. The hardworking member for Mulgoa would be pleased that the average household saving in Mulgoa through the Energy Switch program is \$612 a year. The member for The Entrance should be interested to know that households in his electorate are saving \$580 on average a year. I am sure members from regional areas would be interested in what is happening in Dubbo. Dubbo households on average are saving \$540 on their bills. In Ryde the average saving is \$424 a year, and in Port Macquarie and Wagga Wagga it is \$340 a year. These are savings occurring not just in the cities but in our regions, which is extremely important.

On Sunday I was very pleased to join the Ahuja family at their Lane Cove home with the Minister for Energy and Environment. The Government has announced a Gas Switch program. Households across the State who use gas can now apply through Service NSW and get savings. That program is now live, but in the pilot phase the Government estimated that \$270 a year would be saved on gas bills as well as electricity bills. However, this family in Lane Cove were very switched on. Mr Ahuja got online and he realised that he will save \$425 this year on gas alone. Whilst our estimate was that the average saving would be \$270, Mr Ahuja is saving \$425 for his family. I contrast that with the policy of those opposite. Unfortunately during the election campaign the Opposition was not interested in putting downward pressure on household budgets. The Opposition wanted to put up taxes. Those opposite wanted to tax farm vehicles when that is the most significant—

Mr Clayton Barr: That's not true.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is true. They wanted to do that in the middle of a drought.

Mr Clayton Barr: You can't just stand here and lie.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In fact, when questions were posed to those opposite about whether farm vehicles were part of a tax regime, the response was that the shadow Treasurer would respond but he never did. He never got back to anyone.

Mr Ryan Park: How is your FESL going?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Those opposite are very touchy on this issue. [*Extension of time*]

The Energy Switch and the Gas Switch are on top of other Government initiatives to reduce household costs, such as the Active Kids voucher. The Opposition opposed us doubling the Active Kids voucher; I do not know why. I do not think the Opposition supported the Creative Kids voucher, either. The Government has introduced a myriad of savings measures for households. I want to assure the community that if there are savings to be had we will find them and we will help you access them.

I thank members opposite for one particular saving, because I hear that the electricity bill for the Parliament has reduced because those opposite cannot wait to switch the lights off and get out of here. They do not want to be lobbied by the member for Kogarah or the member for Strathfield. We hear that they are switching off the lights, which is saving us in energy costs. They are switching off their phones, which is saving on phone bills. So, whilst those opposite will always put up taxes and put up the cost of living in New South Wales they are supporting this place. We say to the good people of New South Wales that while Opposition members are focused on themselves—they are focused on doing the numbers—Government members are focused on the families of New South Wales.

PERSONAL INFORMATION SECURITY

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (14:33): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Will the Minister guarantee that none of my constituents had their personal information leaked in a data file that Revenue NSW asked your office to destroy?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:33): I thank the member for his question. Revenue NSW informed the Privacy Commissioner of the breach. They got advice from the Privacy Commissioner and they are implementing that advice.

PACIFIC HIGHWAY

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (14:33): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on its plan to upgrade our major regional roads?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:34): I thank the member for Clarence for his question, and undoubtedly the electorate of Clarence is reaping the benefits of the investment that the New South Wales Government is making into one of the largest road infrastructure projects happening in Australia. The upgrade of the Pacific Highway is fast approaching completion with works now focused on the stretch between Woolgoolga and Ballina. This is a project that will take 2½ hours off travel time from Hexham to the Queensland border and will deliver a dramatically safer journey. Already there has been a 50 per cent reduction in fatal crashes.

The Pacific Highway is a key connector between New South Wales and Queensland. It is also a key connector between the territories of the New South Wales Blues and the Queensland Maroons. I raise this, because like many in this House, I enjoy the State of Origin series—although maybe not the outcome of last night's game. I found it hard to pay attention or even concentrate on the game because I was so distracted by another great sporting contest happening in the State of New South Wales—that is, the sporting contest that is happening on the other side of the Chamber. The member for Keira is the stand-in skipper. He has been running at the ball, play after play, for the last few weeks. You have to feel for him a little bit because he has been out there on his own.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129, relevance.

The SPEAKER: I will give the Minister some leeway, but I remind him of what happened on the last occasion.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I return to the Pacific Highway—80 per cent of the 657 kilometres of the Pacific Highway between Hexham and the border is now a four-lane divided road and the remaining sections are under construction or being prepared for major work to be completed in 2020—and that is not far away. Who knows, by 2020 we might see an Opposition leader on the other side of this Chamber. The member for Keira as the stand-in skipper has absolutely no support from any of those front rowers on that side of the House.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129, relevance.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that the Minister is being relevant to the question.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Then we have the member for Strathfield and the member for Kogarah. They are too busy to have a run at us because they are tackling their own players.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. If the member intends to take the same point of order, I do not want to hear it. The Minister has had all of 10 seconds to continue his answer. If it is a different point of order I am happy to hear it.

Mr Paul Lynch: My point of order is under Standing Order 59, tedious repetition.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has the call.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: If you were watching last night, you should have been watching the footwork of James Tedesco, because that is how some of you are getting back to your rooms at the moment without remaining unscathed by tackling the others. What happened at Suncorp Stadium last night is nothing compared to what is happening on level 10 in this Parliament. The Pacific Highway upgrade is creating a safer and faster route up the coast. It is creating thousands of jobs. In the first half of 2018 the Pacific Highway upgrade generated on average around 3,300 direct and 10,000 indirect jobs for local and relocated workers. Many of these workers have relocated to the North Coast to work on this historic project, bringing their families with them. These workers are not just creating a better road through these communities, they are very much a part of them now. Many of them have children at local schools, and almost half of them have joined a club, a team or an association. They have made these parts of the North Coast their home.

Almost half of those working on the Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade have also worked on other sections of the Pacific Highway. Many will be working on the project until its completion. It is great to know that many of them plan to remain living on the North Coast once the project is completed. Isn't that a great outcome for those communities! The Pacific Highway upgrade is just one of the major roads that this Government is investing in. Across the State we are putting money into key connectors such as the Newell Highway, which is the freight backbone of New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

In the Far West we are sealing the Silver City and Cobb highways; there are major upgrades for the Princes Highway; and of course we have big plans for the Great Western Highway, which will deliver a faster and safer route over the mountains. The Labor Party might have barely made it out of the locker room this week, but I tell you what, we on this side of the House will continue to deliver for the people of New South Wales.

MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (14:40): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Did the Minister declare any conflict of interest to the Minister for Local Government, the Premier or Cabinet, before securing a \$2.35 million grant after lobbying from his cousin, Roy Maggio, and without following the Government guidelines?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:41): I have at all times complied with my obligations of disclosure. In relation to that particular advocacy, Councillor Maggio is not my mum, my dad, my grandfather, my grandmother, my cousin, my uncle, my aunt, or my second cousin, but I think he might be my third cousin. Not only that—

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the members for Londonderry and Macquarie Fields to order for the first time.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Not only that, at some point he was threatening to run against me.

[*A member interjected.*]

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: My fourth cousin, Morris Iemma, had the audacity to be the leader of the Labor Party at one point—and Premier of this State.

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I think he is my fourth cousin; he could be my fifth—I do not know.

[*A member interjected.*]

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I think the Deputy Premier is a distant cousin.

[A Government member interjected.]

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: We are definitely not sisters. I do not apologise at all for advocating and obtaining funds for my community. I am pleased to report that the local government in Ryde—whose Labor leader also ran against me—unanimously passed a notice of motion thanking me for providing the funds to the local community. I am happy to talk about my advocacy for my local community day in and day out. It is my job to fight for my community, to try to get money. Yes, I was quite public in my pronouncements that part of the money—\$400,000, I think—went to a skateboard park in Meadowbank. I think Ryde council put about \$2.1 million into it. Roy Maggio, to his credit, was always advocating for this. I think it should be called the Ryde Outdoor Youth Space—Roy's Place—because that is what the kids call it. I have no problem in saying—

Mr Paul Toole: Skating?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No, I do have a problem skating. I do not have any problem advocating for my community. In fact, I am proud of it. In terms of the question, I repeat that I have made all relevant disclosures. I have nothing to worry about on that front.

WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (14:45): My question is addressed to the Minister for Local Government. How is the New South Wales Government delivering for women in local Government?

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (14:45): I thank the member for Hawkesbury and congratulate her on her wonderful win in the electorate of Hawkesbury. What a resounding win. She is the first ever female member for Hawkesbury and, I dare say, the best member that the Hawkesbury has ever had.

Mr Stephen Kamper: I agree with that. He would have lost if he'd run again.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: We should all note—

Mr Stephen Kamper: Lucky you changed candidates.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Why do you hate women, member for Rockdale?

Mr Stephen Kamper: I don't. I said, "Lucky you changed candidates."

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Do not interject on what I am about to say.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will direct her comments through the Chair .

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Order! Why does he hate women? On a serious note, the member for Hawkesbury has been a councillor for 10 years and currently is, and was a deputy mayor. A number of members in this place began their careers in local government and I congratulate all of them.

Mr Anthony Roberts: Name them.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I will name them. The member for Bankstown had a fantastic career in local government. The member for Charlestown was also Mayor of Charlestown, I understand. The member for Goulburn, who is here, had a fantastic career in local government as well. The member for Granville was in local government also. Congratulations. The member for Holsworthy was in local government; the member for Londonderry was in local government also. The member for Mulgoa, congratulations. The member for Summer Hill, I think, was the youngest ever counsellor or mayor elected. Member for Summer Hill?

Ms Jo Haylen: In a council you have now abolished.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Not me, member for Summer Hill. But you were? You were the youngest member, so congratulations to you also. I also congratulate the member for Wallsend and also current councillors the member for Coogee and the member for Hawkesbury. I know that all of them understand the challenges that are faced in a political career in local government, in State Government or in Federal Government.

Mr Stephen Kamper: What have you got against men?

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I am talking to women, not to you.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. I have been rather patient with him.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I am not interested in what you have to say. Most people would know that I began my career in this place following a career in local government for 17 years. But we all recognise as women that good workplaces, like this workplace can be, are the result of gender diversity and gender equality. This morning I was really pleased to recognise women in local government from all over the State who have made fantastic contributions to their communities. I include the blokes here as well and say thank you to so many of you who came to that ceremony this morning along with your deputy mayors, councillors, general managers, diesel mechanics, women depo managers—unbelievable careers—some of whom have joined us in the gallery this afternoon. I thank you for continuing in this place.

Well done to Reena Jethi, the first Indian-born councillor elected to The Hills Shire Council. She is an inspiration to women from non-English speaking backgrounds, encouraging them to not only speak up about issues, but also showing them that a political career is achievable. Well done to you, Reena. It was a delight to meet you. Carmel Krogh, who is joining us this afternoon, received a special award this morning. Congratulations to you. She was the first female civic engineering graduate at the University of Technology Sydney and was a director at Shoalhaven Water, in my part of the world and in the member for Kiama's part of the world. We know how talented you are. Also in the gallery we have Alissa Jones from the City of Newcastle, who, in 2008, was appointed council's first female chief financial officer. Well done. Fantastic. Also to Morven Cameron. Are you still here? Stand up. She is the first female General Manager of Lake Macquarie City Council. A brilliant achievement. Is Belinda Koytz still here? Yes. She introduced flexible working conditions for mothers, trainees and older women at City of Canada Bay Council. [*Extension of time*]

Phyllis Miller, OAM—hello Phyllis—introduced flexible working conditions for mothers. She was first elected to Forbes Shire Council in 1995 and is now serving her third term as mayor. Well done to you, Phyllis. There were so many incredible women this morning that it was a humbling experience just reading out some of the descriptions of their achievements. They cannot all be with us today, but there was a huge group of women and men—their male supporters, partners and people who have supported them along the way. The other remarks that I made this morning were that we are doing quite well as far as gender diversity in local councils is concerned. We have more local councillors and we have more mayors. But the problem we are now experiencing is that fewer women are deciding to run for local government. That is a serious issue for us and it is an issue that I want to address. I want to reboot the conversation about gender participation in local government and why fewer women are prepared to stand for election.

I will form a group of interested women and interested key stakeholders, and we will talk about some of the barriers, just like the barriers in this place, but the barriers at a local government level that stop women wanting to run for local government. If we can encourage more women there, we will have more women here and we will have more women at the Federal level as well. I hope that we can all join together—all the women here—to share ideas on how we encourage more women to participate at the local government level and put up their hand to represent their communities. Because what a rewarding career it is, but challenging, especially if you have children. Some of the mums here have little children and it is very challenging. But we can overcome it. We will do it. I will reboot the conversation and reset some of the standards now and increase the number of women at all levels of government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (14:52): My question is directed to the Minister for Local Government. Will the Minister review the circumstances surrounding the provision of \$2.35 million of taxpayer money from a local government grant program without proper process?

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (14:53): I just gave you a bit of praise there, member for Granville. Are you asking me about the processes for grants to Ryde council? Was that your question? And you are asking me about proper processes? Let me say from the start that the New South Wales Government continues to support local councils. We will do that. We have invested \$9 billion into local councils since 2011 and we will continue to invest in local government. That record funding includes \$2.35 million provided to the City of Ryde council in 2018 under the Stronger Communities Fund. We have all heard of that fund, I presume. As the Minister was describing earlier, that funding went to projects like Meadowbank Oval, Anzac Park at West Ryde, the skate park at Ryde Outdoor Youth Space, a new basketball court and running track at Morrison Bay Park and a new barbecue at Santa Rosa Park in Ryde. Is there anything wrong with those projects? No. Do you want to know about the processes?

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat. I note that Government members are eating into the Minister's time and not into the time of the member for Strathfield.

Ms Jodi McKay: If I am going to do something this week I draw to your attention—

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

Ms Jodi McKay: The Minister should direct her comments through the Speaker to show respect to the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I will direct my comments through the Chair. I apologise. If the other side does not know about the funding agreement I will tell them about it. The funding agreement is between Ryde City Council and the Office of Local Government. If anybody on the other side of the House wants to criticise the Office of Local Government they should see me outside. I will continue to say this to you—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I am answering the question.

Ms Jodi McKay: Once again, the Minister should direct her comments through the Chair and not across the table.

The SPEAKER: The Minister realises that.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I am aware that all proper processes have been followed in awarding this funding. Most importantly, the Office of Local Government's grant processes have included each year's audit by the Audit Office of New South Wales. The same processes have been followed this year as in previous financial years, with no issues raised about the processes for providing grants. They are the processes we have followed and they are the processes that are always followed. No issues have been discovered with these grants by the Office of Local Government. Everything has been above board. Please get out of the sewer.

STATE ECONOMY

Ms ELANI PETINOS (Miranda) (14:57): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How is the New South Wales Government securing our economic future and growing the economy, and are there any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:57): I begin my answer by saying I am very concerned. Just before question time the great journalist Lisa Visentin published an article saying, "People are feeling pressured": fight for NSW Labor leadership getting 'ugly'. The article stated:

... one MP said "There's a very heightened sense of emotion in the building."

I am feeling that. The article went on to state:

Phones are switched off, doors are locked—

I have had to lock my door as well—

no-one is around for the social calls—

as fun as I am sure their company is. Are you two okay? I think the member for Mount Druitt and the member for Cooee are far enough apart.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am just concerned. Are you okay?

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Clayton Barr: It is a minute into the time, but the Treasurer has not gone anywhere near the question that he was asked. And I am okay; thanks, Dom.

The SPEAKER: I am sure that shortly the Treasurer will move to more substantive matters.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I will—I am providing counselling. The national accounts, as you would have read, were released yesterday and they obviously demonstrated some of the challenges facing the Australian economy. One of the things that remains the case is that New South Wales continues to drive the nation. New South Wales growth continues to be above the national average where demand is increasing by only 1.6 per cent year. Public final demand was a star performer in the March quarter, contributing 0.3 percentage points out of the 0.4 quarterly State final demand growth and 1.5 percentage points out of the through the year result of 2.1 per cent. That backs in our public investment in infrastructure in New South Wales, adding about a half a percentage point to our economic growth each year, \$90 billion of infrastructure over the next four years

and significant jobs growth off the back of that. What has made this investment possible, when we see other States not in a position to do that, has been our focus on asset recycling—a policy that those opposite oppose as we see the asset base of our State continue to grow through our asset recycling approach. Yesterday I visited an interesting website called chrissminns.org.

Mr Chris Minns: You've got a lot of time on your hands.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yes, plenty of time. You make time for the things that matter. He is running on new leadership and new ideas. I am no financial wizard, so I thought I would visit Mr Minns' website to see what he has to say. He has a whole section on his new ideas for the economy. His first new idea—

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is being relevant. He is tying his comments to Treasury and economic policy. I will accept his answer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: His first idea was no more privatisation—that is not new. Foley had it, Daley had it, Park tried it, and it did not work. His second idea was to get rid of the public sector wage cut. Are you still running on that? Still on the site? That was another policy Labor brought to the election.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: If it is not on relevance I will take the member's point of order. If it is, the Treasurer is being relevant.

Ms Kate Washington: It is relevance.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat.

Ms Kate Washington: There is no way that this is in any way related to the question.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. The Treasurer will continue.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The shadow Treasurer brought that policy to the election campaign; it was going to cost \$7 billion over the forward estimates, and create more regional jobs and jobs for youth. As many of The Nationals members will know, we are creating more jobs in regional New South Wales than in all of the regions across this country combined. The youth unemployment rate in New South Wales is the lowest it has ever been on record. He also wants to transition New South Wales to a low-carbon economy—Bill Shorten just tried the same thing. Once again there is no economic modelling or cost to that policy and we saw how Bill went. We see how that will impact the communities of Cessnock, Swansea, Charlestown and Newcastle. The member for Upper Hunter, particularly, knows very well the importance of a mining industry to the Hunter Valley and its impact on economic growth and jobs growth off the back of that policy. [*Extension of time*]

It is no wonder that the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union is lining up behind the member for Strathfield—the cocaine union, as we see this morning.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129 and also Standing Order 73. I draw your attention to what the Treasurer has said.

The SPEAKER: I will hear further from the Treasurer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I just read it in the paper. The reality is that it is under this Government that we have turned around the fate of New South Wales—from the worst-performing economy to the strongest-performing economy. That is not only good for New South Wales, but, importantly, it is also important for our country, because if New South Wales goes well Australia goes well. Earlier today guess what I came across? It is a ballot paper. I got my own little golden ticket right here. What do I do?

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

I did not know you two did a preference deal. Who should we support? The member for Kogarah?

Government members: No.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Or the member for Strathfield?

Government members: Yes.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: So Jodi has it. I will put it in the ballot box.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: I refer to former Speaker Rozzoli's ruling in 1993 regarding the use of props. They are disorderly in the House and they cannot be recorded by Hansard. I ask that the use of them stops.

The SPEAKER: I direct Hansard not to make any reference to the prop that appears in the Chamber. If that prop is used further I will direct its removal from the Chamber.

[Government members interjected.]

The SPEAKER: For clarification—and this can now be recorded in *Hansard*, if that was the Deputy Premier's point—the prop that was used by the Treasurer is a cardboard box, which I expect the member for Lane Cove will not use if he is asked a question subsequently.

DARLING RIVER

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (15:06): My question is directed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Toorale National Park, located at the junction of the Warrego and Darling rivers in western New South Wales, is currently inundated with floodwater from recent rain in Queensland. However, this water is prevented from flowing down the river system because of levy banks. When will the Minister facilitate the release of this water to give the drought-stricken towns and communities along the Darling River access to water they so desperately need?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:06): I thank the member for Murray for her question. It is great to get a question on policy from someone in this House. The issue of drought and the availability of water is one of great importance to communities right across the State.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. This is a very serious question to which the Minister is giving a decent answer. The Minister's answer will be heard in silence.

Mr MATT KEAN: I acknowledge the member for Murray's community and how tough they are doing it at the moment. I also acknowledge the great work and advocacy of the Minister for Water, Property and Housing on behalf of communities across New South Wales and her focus on supporting those affected by drought. I am aware that the Minister has visited communities in Broken Hill and Bourke recently. These communities are very much front of mind, and the Minister has been proactive in advocating with me on their behalf.

For the benefit of the House, rainfall in south-west Queensland and in northern New South Wales resulted in a significant flow in the Warrego River in late April, early May this year. This flow is passing through the Toorale National Park and State conservation area to the Darling River. Toorale is at the junction of the Warrego and Darling Rivers in far west New South Wales and includes a significant section of the Warrego River, which originates in south-west Queensland. Previously, the property was operated as an agricultural enterprise that included irrigation from the Warrego and Darling rivers. In 2008 Toorale Station was purchased by the New South Wales and Commonwealth governments. The land was then reserved as a national park and State conservation area. I am advised that as water has flowed downriver action has been taken to maximise the flow through Toorale to the Darling River and to downstream communities, consistent with historic practice.

This has been achieved by using the existing water infrastructure to allow water to pass through and move downstream. In addition, the Government has secured a \$9 million Commonwealth funding grant for a two-stage plan for the removal and modification of infrastructure on Toorale. This will allow an even higher proportion of flows to pass through to the Darling River in future. The Commonwealth funding includes a condition that appropriate environmental and cultural heritage assessments must be undertaken. I have asked that these assessments be completed as soon as possible. The first stage of these works is expected to commence by September or October 2019. These works will remove the Peebles Dam embankment across the lower reach of the Warrego River and repair the Homestead Dam. The result of this will be to reduce the flow of water into Ross Billabong.

An environmental assessment has been publically exhibited and is currently being assessed. Tendering for the works is expected to occur in June or July and, as I previously mentioned, assuming there is no further rainfall and the river recedes, works will commence in September or October. Stage two will progress modifications to Boera, Booka and Homestead Dam, including capacity to pass flows through to Boera to allow a greater proportion to flow into the Darling river. The challenge with this work is that significant Aboriginal artefacts have been identified, which are believed to be in excess of 50,000 years old. These stage two works are scheduled for 2020. I want these works to be progressed as quickly as possible, consistent with our obligations to the Commonwealth. But I say to the member for Murray: I am disappointed that this has not occurred sooner.

I have asked the Office for Environment and Heritage to consider if any immediate works might be possible to facilitate the current flow into the Darling River. I was advised that the option of removing a small

pipe on Peebles Dam was considered, but would have required a full environmental assessment due to the high likelihood of significant mobilisation of sediment within the watercourse and the potential to increase the risk of dam failure. The option of pumping water from Peebles Dam was also considered, but my advice was that it would make only a negligible contribution to the volume of flow passing through Peebles Dam.

As at 3 June 2019 it is estimated that 29 gigalitres has flowed into Boera Dam on Toorale, of which approximately 23 gigalitres, or 80 per cent, has already passed to the Warrego River downstream. The balance of approximately 6 gigalitres—20 per cent—remains in Boera Dam on the western floodplain, or in Ross Billabong. It is expected that some of the water currently still on Toorale will pass to the lower Warrego and Darling River over the next one to two weeks, including water draining from the floodplain and Ross Billabong. Approximately 18.3 gigalitres has now passed Louth and 8.6 gigalitres has passed Tilpa on the Darling River. WaterNSW is forecasting that four to seven gigalitres will arrive at Wilcannia in the week commencing 3 June 2019, near the bottom of the Darling River. [*Extension of time*]

I thank the member for Murray for her question. I will wrap it up by saying that I am more than happy to keep her and the member for Barwon, who is also affected by this, updated in the coming weeks on this important project and its progresses. The Government will continue to support drought-affected communities across New South Wales. The Deputy Premier and the Minister for Water, Property and Housing are absolutely focused on supporting our drought-affected communities. We will leave no stone unturned to ensure that they are supported in this very difficult time. In my role as the Minister for Energy and Environment I will work closely with them and with communities represented by the member for Murray to ensure that we do everything possible to support them in these difficult times.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (15:12): My question is addressed to the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections. How is the New South Wales Government delivering on its plan for enhanced community safety?

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections) (15:13): I thank the member for Albury for his question, because I know how much he values the safety of his community in the Albury electorate. Since taking on this portfolio, I have not taken a backward step in keeping the people of New South Wales as safe as possible. This week I had the privilege of announcing just one of these measures with arguably the solar system's, if not the universe's, best treasurer. This measure provides that all serious sex offenders on parole will now be subject to 24/7 global positioning system tracking and enhanced supervision. Because on this side of the House we do not just talk the talk, but we walk the walk. And we walk the walk to the tune—this week—of an extra \$21 million in funding to deliver this very important community safety device.

This is to be invested in an expanded External and Electronic Monitoring Group with additional staff and equipment, as well as extra community corrections officers. I am pleased to inform the House that this investment will ensure that all serious sex offenders are under stringent supervision when they are released on parole, with their movements tracked around the clock. The tough new approach to supervision of high-risk sex offenders on parole will ensure that community safety remains a top priority of this Government. I am pleased to inform the House that this investment will ensure that all serious sex offenders are under stringent supervision when they are released on parole, with their movements tracked around the clock. The tough new approach to supervision of high-risk sex offenders on parole will ensure that community safety remains a top priority of this Government.

I also take this opportunity to inform the House of our Government's efforts to reduce recidivism. One recent initiative that I am proud to be part of is our digital services and tablets in prisons. In 2017 Corrective Services initiated, under the former Minister, a procurement activity for the provision of offender digital services. This includes digital handsets, tablets for eBrief and wireless telephony for Goulburn high-risk management inmates, with a completion date of December 2019. An estimated 575 tablets like this one, will be rolled out in Goulburn shortly. I will hold it up briefly. It is not a prop; it is just an example. I refer to it—the eBrief

The SPEAKER: Duly noted.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: There is precedent now! Right now inmate review of their legal papers before court appearances, or eBriefs, is the primary reason for that rollout. Obviously there are some important factors to be considered regarding the deployment of such services to inmates. These include, but are not limited to, security, cost and useability. The purpose is that inmates can be productive and put their time to good, positive use, instead of the promotion and enabling of negative behaviours. This initiative goes a long way to reducing recidivism. Without referring to—well I refer to it but I do not have it here, but based on the precedent—the ballot box over there, can I say it is good to be back with the fifth question this week. Let's be honest, it has been a rather

flat week. In fact, a flat three weeks—same questions, one answer, correct answer, same questions. It has also been very much a dull week for the Opposition. But I am happy to inform the House about a request for information that came to me this week. On Tuesday the Treasurer, arguably the universe's best treasurer—

Mr Paul Lynch: The Minister is misleading the House.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: No, we are leading up to the budget—just work with me on this one. The Treasurer asked me through the House about the eligibility of those Australian Labor Party [ALP] members who are currently confined to be able to vote. I know it is confusing, but when I say "confined" I mean those in our correctional facilities, not the ALP members opposite confined to no leader, confined to a lack of policy and confined to opposition for another four years by way of a continued detention order by the people of New South Wales. I have confirmed that eligible Labor members who are incarcerated in New South Wales correctional facilities are eligible to vote in the upcoming leadership ballot. Let me make it quite clear, I have no intention of spending a cent of taxpayers' money on facilitating this but, thankfully, there is no shortage of Labor members in prison who can act as returning officers. So the ballot box that is by no means a prop—

[A Government member interjected.]

In fact, I have the ballot box for the New South Wales Labor jail branch, which will be sent to those jails very shortly. I have also organised for the highly complicated how-to-vote pamphlets to be distributed so no-one gets the one and two vote wrong. *[Extension of time]*

Seriously, I have just come to terms with the preferential moves on this. Antony Green is going to go berko on that. I am led to believe, and I am happy to say, that the member for Strathfield has already sent a box of how-to-vote pamphlets to my office for distribution. In a kind act of generosity, the member for Kogarah has also offered to scrutineer the ballot box as soon as it returns.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order. My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister has now spent half of his question time answering in a way that is entirely irrelevant to the question he was asked.

The SPEAKER: The clock has been stopped. I will make a ruling of sorts. The Minister has endeavoured to make his comments relevant to Corrective Services, which, albeit a tenuous link, is at least a link. I will also make a ruling, which is setting a precedent, that for the last question on a Thursday I will show greater leniency. If there is general relevance, in the spirit of the House, I will allow a little bit more discretion.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: We will agree to that as long as it is Robbo!

The SPEAKER: The Minister has the call. But the question has to be in good taste.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: Very wise call. I thank the member for Kogarah. He will get the ballot box—I have the key, which I will drop under the mat as usual—for him to scrutineer. It has been detected that a great number of Labor membership forms were posted to Corrections inmates in the last month, with the return address being somewhere in Strathfield—I will come back to the House on that. But it is certainly unclear who the jail branch of the ALP is backing for this leadership ballot. In fact, you have to be careful in Labor elections because people do not always vote for their friends. When you are handing out poisoned chalices like the Labor leadership, you might actually be inclined to vote for your worst enemy.

I always keep saying it is a bit like an upper House preselection—it is more of a punishment than a reward. However, we only seem to have heard from one of the leadership contenders this week. When I used to sit down at the other end of the bench I would watch the member for Kogarah sitting over there, quietly thinking, dreaming of all the ways he would revolutionise the New South Wales division of the Labor Party, and staring intently into space. I used to think: Wow, you have to watch him. Always watch the quiet ones. Always watch the ones who think more than they talk. On behalf of this Government, can I reassure the House that community safety will continue to be a major priority—along with props—of this Government.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: APPROPRIATION BILL AND COGNATE BILLS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended:

- (1) On Tuesday 18 June 2019 to:
 - (a) provide for the following routine of business prior to 2.15 p.m:
 - (i) at 12 noon, the Speaker takes the chair;

- (ii) introduction and second reading speech on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills; and
 - (iii) the Speaker to leave the Chair until 2.15 p.m.
- (b) permit the giving of general business notices of motions (general notices) at the conclusion of the consideration of the motion accorded priority.
- (2) On Thursday 20 June 2019 to:
 - (a) interrupt the business before the House at 11.00 a.m. to permit the Acting Interim Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly to speak on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills; and
 - (b) permit the consideration of general business notices of motions (general notices) to continue until 2.00 p.m.

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

MidCoast Council Administrative Offices

Petition requesting an inquiry into MidCoast Council's proposal to centralise its administrative offices to Biripi Way, Taree, received from **Mr Stephen Bromhead**.

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

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

Route 389 Bus Services

Petition requesting more reliable 389 bus services, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Pedestrian Safety at West Street and Railway Terrace, Petersham

Petition requesting improved pedestrian safety at West Street and Railway Terrace, Petersham, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Sydney Metro Pitt Street Over-station Developments

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

Affordable Housing

Petition requesting that 15 per cent of all new residential developments be set aside for affordable housing, that councils be permitted to levy developers for affordable housing, that inner-city housing stock sales be halted and that the wholesale conversion of residential homes into short-term holiday lets be banned without zoning changes, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Beekeeping Industry

Petition calling on the Government to support amateur beekeepers by abandoning hive registration fees and allocating more resources to assist amateur and commercial apiarists to maintain a disease-free and sustainable hive network, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Matter of Public Importance

SETTE GIUGNO 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (15:24): Sette Giugno is recognised as the day when Maltese nationalism first surfaced during the British colonial period and the move towards independence and self-government began. Sette Giugno commemorates events from 7 June 1919 when, following a series of riots in Malta, British troops fired into the crowd killing four people and injuring 50. This led to increased resistance and support for the political parties that had challenged the British presence on the island. Last weekend, I was privileged to join the Maltese Community Council of NSW and members of Australia's Maltese community to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Sette Giugno at the Maltese bicentennial monument at Civic Park, Pendle Hill. Britain assisted the Maltese to expel Napoleonic French troops and in 1802 the Treaty of Amiens resolved that Malta would return to

the Order of St John. But many Maltese did not want to return to their former rulers and requested to remain under British protection. Malta became a part of the British Empire and a strategic stronghold in the region.

In the aftermath of World War I the cost of living on the island escalated and the Maltese colonial government failed to provide adequate supplies of food. There were also widespread concerns about profiteering as prices rose much faster than wages. On 7 June 1919 the Malta National Assembly met in Valetta, with some pressing for self-government. A crowd of thousands grew in support outside, with some demonstrators tearing down British flags and rioting. A British soldier panicked and shots were fired into the unarmed crowd killing four and injuring 50. To this day the four men who were killed are recognised for their sacrifice. They were: Lorenzo Dyer from Vittoriosa; Giuseppe Bajada from Gozo; Emanuele Attard from Sliema; and, Carmelo Abela from Valletta. In 1921, following Sette Giugno, the British Government accepted the need for change, which led to a new constitution and elections for the first Maltese president. His Excellency, President George Vella, sent a message to the Maltese Community Council on the occasion of the 100th anniversary. I share part of that message:

I join you in commemorating the uprising of 1919 and the subsequent development of Malta's political and social journey to our self-government, independence and freedom from colonial rule. The uprisings of Sette Giugno and the subsequent tragic deaths are now part of our shared history. We continue to maintain this yearly appointment primarily to salute the memory and the bravery of the people who sacrificed their lives and the many others who were injured in the summer of 1919. Secondly this appointment shows that we never forget the injustices and the hardships experienced by our forefathers in the early 20th century. Therefore on this day we celebrate the debt of these victims but also the first dawning lights of a free and independent Malta. It is indeed admirable that the Maltese community in NSW celebrates the shared anniversary and maintains a vibrant connection with Malta's historical roots. Furthermore, I am pleased to observe that you continue to provide the Maltese community with a unifying network aimed to promote Maltese culture, language, history and traditions.

The Maltese community in New South Wales, and in my electorate in particular, has made a huge contribution to modern multicultural Australia. Sette Giugno is an important commemoration for all of us. Many of the early residents of Greystanes were from Malta, and Greystanes still has a large Maltese-Australian community and identity. Every year Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Greystanes hosts a Maltese-style festa based on feast day celebrations in Malta.

Maltese Australians have a long and proud history in Australia. In 1810 the first Malta-born people arrived in Australia as convicts, which was followed in 1838 by the first free settler. In 1883 the first organised migrant group arrived, with 61 Maltese labourers recruited to work on the sugar plantations in Queensland. In 1948 Maltese were offered assisted migrant passage to Australia and by 1954 in excess of 10,000 Maltese had settled in Australia—many of whom chose to make western Sydney their home. At the time of the 1981 census, 57,000 Malta-born people were living in Australia and at the time of the 2016 census there were 175,000 people of Maltese descent living in Australia.

In 1988, as part of Australia's bicentenary, the Maltese monument was unveiled in Pendle Hill to recognise the history of Maltese migration to Australia, and in 2019 we commemorate together the 100th anniversary of Sette Giugno. Many of those people of Maltese descent are well known to members in this place, including the Hon. Mark Buttigieg, a newly elected member in the other place, and former member for Riverstone, John Aquilina. I also recognise the work of the Maltese Community Council of NSW, which is based in my electorate. They are ably represented by president Emanuel Camilleri, secretary Miriam Friggieri and others. The council, a non-profit organisation, provides social, cultural, recreational and welfare support to the Maltese community across New South Wales. It is an umbrella organisation for 11 affiliated Maltese associations and aims to preserve and promote Maltese identity, culture, heritage and language. I thank the council for the invitation to join them to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Sette Giugno and for their ongoing work across New South Wales.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:29): I am thankful for the opportunity to speak on this matter of public importance. The 100th anniversary of Sette Giugno is a bittersweet occasion for the members of the Maltese community in New South Wales and across Australia. On that Saturday 100 years ago four young men lost their lives, but they did not die in vain. This tragedy led, in part, to Malta's birth as an independent modern nation. The events of that day in 1919, as well as the siege of Malta that was to come some years later during World War II, have shown the world that the Maltese are a resilient people. Sette Giugno, which means the seventh of June in Italian, is a Maltese national holiday to commemorate the insurrection of 1919. The Maltese regard the four fallen men as heroes and their national day as 7 June.

Malta, which had been under British rule for about 200 years, generally had a peaceful existence. But attitudes changed after World War I, as the war disrupted sea trade and caused the price of grain, flour, and bread to rise sharply. Tensions over this situation and the British rule spurred a series of riots. Indeed, it was during a riot on 7 June 1919, in the capital of Valletta, that the British troops lost their discipline and fired into the protesting crowd. This tragedy resulted in greater self-rule for Malta, and independence finally came in 1964. His Majesty King George VI was so impressed by the grit and perseverance shown during the siege of Malta in World

War II that he awarded the entire population the George Cross. Penned by a letter of his own hand, His Majesty wrote to the Governor of Malta saying:

To honour her brave people I award the George Cross to the Island Fortress of Malta to bear witness to a heroism and devotion that will long be famous in history.

In New South Wales we have seen that Maltese resilience and grit firsthand. We have also been enriched and benefitted from the contribution of the Maltese people to our State. As the member for Granville noted, the 2016 census recorded that more than 170,000 people of Maltese ancestry call New South Wales and Australia their home. Many have made their homes in Pendle Hill—known as "Little Malta" to some—and the area has thrived thanks to their contribution to this great multicultural society. They also contribute to the Australian culture and economy in a range of fields, including business, primary production working the land, in the trades, politics, journalism, entertainment and the arts.

These men and women who migrated to New South Wales from their island home in the middle of the Mediterranean brought with them another important quality—a friendly and accepting spirit—and across the various communities in New South Wales they have made strong and enduring friendships. This has contributed to the strength of our nation. I am proud to be a member of a government committed to community harmony and social cohesion. A government that takes pride in the diversity of our religious and ancestral backgrounds, and allows everyone to participate in all aspects of public and community life free from persecution. The effects of the riot of 7 June 1919 were many, and we are fortunate that in New South Wales we have Maltese people who know the price of independence and self-determination. May we always remember the events of that day. I thank the member for Granville for bringing this important matter to the attention of the House.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:33): I am pleased to join the discussion on the 100th anniversary of the uprising of the Maltese people. On 7 June 1919 blood was shed by five martyrs and more than 50 other unarmed civilians were gunned down by the British army. On that day in 1919, after many centuries of peace and harmony, the people of Malta had had enough. The First World War had finished and the British and Allied forces had slowly withdrawn from Europe following bloodshed throughout France and the Continent. But Malta had not experienced bloodshed. The Maltese people had been a strategic part of the war effort, providing shipping, manpower and resources to the Allies as well as protecting the Mediterranean. However, by June 1919 the people of Malta were starving. Thousands of working families had no food on the table because thousands of shipyards and other businesses had gone bankrupt and workers had lost their jobs.

The response from the British administration of the time was to make life even harder for the Maltese people. At first people gathered to discuss ways of putting food on the tables by getting decent jobs and working conditions. As a result of the hardship, a movement seeking independence then grew in the streets of Malta as well as true representation for the Maltese people as part of the British Empire. There had always been strong links between Malta and the Continent, especially Italy. There had been upheaval in Italy at the same time. In Italy fascism was on the rise, but the Maltese were seeking their freedom and democracy. They wanted their communities to be represented and to have a decent lifestyle and to bring up their families in a peaceful environment.

On 7 June 1919 the Maltese people gathered in the cities of Malta outside British outposts to demand independence from Britain. Sadly, the response of the ill-disciplined rabble force of British soldiers and sailors was to gun down civilians. I acknowledge the men who were killed on the day: Lorenzo Dyer, Giuseppe Bajada, Emanuele Attard and Carmelo Abela. They paid the ultimate price for the independence of the people of Malta and they are remembered every year by a national holiday in Malta. In the electorates of Prospect and Granville members of the Maltese community come together at Civic Park in Pendle Hill to remember these martyrs and those who fought for independence. In 1964 Malta was declared a republic. It remains within the Commonwealth as an independent and sovereign nation. I live in Greystanes and my neighbours are Maltese who came to Australia many years ago. They have made this nation of Australia a greater place by sharing their heritage and sharing their culture with us. I acknowledge 7 June as Sette Giugno and I look forward to continuing to commemorate this important day.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (15:37): In reply: I thank the member for Manly and the member for Prospect for helping us to remember Sette Giugno. Sette Giugno is remembered today as the first political act by the Maltese population that came from their own spontaneous will. This important day is remembered also in New South Wales. The member for Manly referred to the siege of Malta as well as Sette Giugno in forming modern, independent Malta. He also spoke of the awarding of the George Cross to all Maltese people, a huge recognition of the contribution by Malta during World War II. The member for Prospect noted Malta's contribution to the war effort during World War I. Despite this effort, by 1919 Malta was struggling to feed its population and for democracy. The member also mentioned the discipline of the British troops, which led to men losing their lives in protests.

Sette Giugno has grown in importance for Maltese people both within Malta and around the world in recent decades. While the suffering endured by the people of Malta in the aftermath of World War I led to Sette Giugno and the movement towards self-determination, the contribution made by the Maltese during World War II completed their journey. After World War II and the awarding of the George Cross to the entire population of Malta, the movement for greater self-determination grew and Malta became fully independent in 1964. On 7 June 1986 the Sette Giugno monument was inaugurated at St George Square in Valetta. In 1989 the Maltese Parliament declared the day to be one of the country's five national days, with the first official remembrance happening in 1989.

I can thank the Maltese Community Council both for the invitation to join the Maltese people to commemorate 100th anniversary of Sette Giugno and for their ongoing work across New South Wales. I have attended that commemoration four times now and I come to know many members of the Maltese community, as I am sure the member for Prospect has, through our work with the Maltese Community Council. I appreciate the significance this event holds in the history of Malta and the history of Maltese Australians. It was wonderful to be part of such a large commemoration on this significant anniversary. I also commend the Minister for Multiculturalism, John Sidoti, for attending the commemoration. I look forward to joining the Maltese Community Council at future commemorations for many years to come on this most significant of days.

Community Recognition Statements

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE VOLUNTEERS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:40): On the Central Coast we have one of Australia's highest ratios of volunteers to the population. This was certainly on show at last Friday's Volunteering Central Coast award presentation at The Art House, Wyong. Crystal Russom from Coast FM community radio station won the Young Volunteer of the Year award, closely followed by Ethan Shadbolt-Connors from Kincumber Neighbourhood Centre, who is also a student at Kincumber High School in my electorate and I have had the pleasure of meeting on a number of occasions. I had the honour of presenting the Corporate Volunteer of the Year category. I am particularly proud of the winner, Mitre 10 at Kincumber, a fantastic local family-owned business. Bendigo Bank at Kincumber was highly commended. Sanitarium was also a finalist in this category. Many members in this House know Sanitarium, which is famous for making food products like Weet-Bix and Up&Go's. This company is based on the Central Coast and provides hundreds of local jobs. I also congratulate two constituents of mine who received awards: John Zappia, for his work with Coast Shelter; and Jim Long, for his work with Kincumber Neighbourhood Centre.

MAURITIAN INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (15:41): I recognise the Mauritian community in Australia and in Sydney. In particular, I acknowledge the community's recent celebration of independence. This year the event was held on Sunday 17 March at Blamfield Oval, Ashcroft—coincidentally only several minutes from my home. I acknowledge the three organisations responsible for organising the event: Preston Sport and Recreation Club, the Australian Mauritian Association and the Chinese Circle in Sydney. The venue was the home field and club house of the Prestons Soccer Club, and it was the club's secretary, Brunessa De Francesco, who liaised with me about my attendance. I also acknowledge the Prestons Club President Sam Carter and Danielle Marchand from the Australian Medical Association. The event also featured an address from the Honorary Consul of Mauritius, Roseline Yardin. Independence Day celebrates the obtaining of independence from the British Empire by Mauritius. It also celebrates its subsequent decision to become a republic. As I said at the event, this was a noble decision, which I hope Australia will one day emulate.

JILL COLEBOURN

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:42): With the cold days and nights of winter now upon us, it is timely for me to acknowledge the achievements of Wahroonga's Jill Colebourn, who earlier this year became the first Australian woman in 20 years to qualify for the Biathlon World Cup. This was a goal that the former Abbotsleigh student set for herself eight years ago, and it is both an important and an impressive step on the path to the Beijing Winter Olympic Games in 2022. Biathlon is the most watched winter sport in Europe. Jill Colebourn competed on the European circuit from December 2018, with the goal of accruing under 150 points for World Cup qualification. But she was able to do much better than that, scoring an impressive total of 137.56 points to secure both a place in the World Cup and an invitation to the World Championships in Ostersund, Sweden. In March she competed in both the 7.5 kilometre sprint and the 15 kilometre individual biathlon in Ostersund, finishing ninetieth in the former and eighty-seventh in the latter. It capped off an outstanding 12 months for Jill, who had to overcome the disappointment of achieving personal qualification for the 2018 Winter Olympics but missing the Games because Australia, as a nation, failed to qualify.

ST CHARLES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:43): I wish to inform the House that I had the pleasure of attending the St Charles Primary School Waverley Mother's Day and carers breakfast and mass. It was a beautiful community celebration to acknowledge the important role mums and carers play in our community, and all that they do. The parent-volunteers should be commended for their array of sweet treats on hand, and I was particularly impressed with the creative photo booths set up for selfies. I acknowledge Mr Paul Croker, the principal; Mrs Leanne Quinn, the religious education coordinator; Mrs Mary Westall, the family educator and Father Bernie Thomas and all the St. Charles staff members for their efforts in coordinating such a beautiful celebration for the community.

TRIBUTE TO MALCOLM NICKLIN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:44): It was with great sadness I heard of the passing of Malcolm Nicklin. Malcolm devoted his life to service, celebrating 51 years as member of North Sydney Rotary Club last year. He joined the club in 1968 and became secretary during 1972 and 1973, and finally president throughout 1982. In celebrating his 50 years of service, I note that in his professional life Malcolm was a coordinating civil engineer on the Sydney Opera House project between 1959 and 1967, and in the past granted us some brilliant insights into the intricacy and triumph of the building process. Malcolm lived a life of service and I join the entire North Shore community in thanking him for his extremely significant contributions. I extend my sincere condolences to Malcolm's children as well as the rest of his family and friends. Rest in peace Malcolm Nicklin.

FRANK AND DORA DI FILIPPO SIXTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (15:45): I celebrate the sixtieth wedding anniversary of Frank and Dora Di Filippo. Frank and Dora immigrated to Australia from Tunisia, North Africa, in 1964 after hearing that Australia was in need of boilermakers, which is Frank's profession. The voyage took over a month to reach Melbourne. The Di Filippo's travelled with their first child John, who was 2½ years old, and Dora was pregnant with their second child Danny during the voyage. Frank found work at the Wyangala Dam in 1964 until 1968, before moving to work at the Copeton Dam in Inverell, where their daughter Cecilia was born.

In 1970 the Di Filippas moved to Cobar so Frank could take up work at CSA mine that was in desperate need of boilermakers. They bought a house in Cobar and have lived there ever since. They raised their three children there and now have nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Frank and Dora's story is just one of many families who have chosen to make a life in regional New South Wales and have been able to thrive. Frank and Dora love living in the outback and feel very fortunate to have built a life in Australia. I congratulate Frank and Dora on their anniversary.

CHISHOLM CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (15:46): It is my pleasure to update the House on my attendance on 31 May at Chisholm Catholic Primary School, Bligh Park, in which mass was conducted in honour of the school's twenty-fifth anniversary. I take this opportunity to recognise the great work the staff at this school have done and continue to do in promoting lifelong learning and improving the learning outcomes of all their students. Named after the humanitarian Caroline Chisholm, Chisholm Catholic Primary School was established in 1994. The school's motto is Faith, Family, Future. The school values reflect on the person and life of Jesus Christ in their words and actions. I was fortunate to be seated at mass with the first P&C President Kevin Conolly, MP, member for Riverstone; and current P&C President Amy Hague. On special occasions, ancestors of Caroline Chisholm have been able to attend the school and I was pleased to see Professor Don Chisholm, AO, on this occasion. I commend Chisholm Catholic Primary School on a successful 25 years and wish them continued success.

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND BIPHOBIA

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:47): On Friday 17 May 2019 the Blue Mountains celebrated 10 years of International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia [IDAHOT]. The convenor of Pink Mountains, Mr Jonathan Llewellyn, and Blue Mountains Young Citizen of the Year, Mr Adisen Wright, told their stories to 250 supporters who gathered to celebrate the event. Raising the rainbow flag for IDAHOT is a reminder to us all of the importance of the need to respect and value diversity in our community to ensure all people—especially young people—feel safe and included in society. I acknowledge the speakers, organising committee and Blue Mountains City Council for their efforts in eradicating prejudice and discrimination against LGBTIQ people in our community. I thank the many school students, their parents, teachers and supportive school principals who attended this year for standing strong in the name of solidarity and tolerance.

RAY NOLAN

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:48): I recognise Ray Nolan who recently retired after 50 years as a solicitor in Dubbo. Ray was admitted to practice by the Supreme Court of New South Wales on 6 June 1969 and moved to Dubbo with his wife, Maureen, that same month. The couple soon became immersed in Dubbo life. Ray joined Rotary, was part of the committee of Dubbo CYMS Rugby League Club and president of the Turf Club for eight years. He served as solicitor to western division and Group 11 rugby league, and the Dubbo Show Society. He even spent a term on Dubbo City Council. Ray is still on the board of Meals on Wheels and Macquarie Homestay. Maureen passed away almost 11 years ago, but Ray has said he owes almost everything to her amazing support. The couple had three daughters who Ray is very proud of. I congratulate Ray. I hope he enjoys his retirement.

TELANGANA FORMATION DAY CELEBRATIONS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:49): On 1 June 2019, I joined the Telugu community at the Australian Telangana Forum's Telangana Formation Day celebrations. The objective of the Australian Telangana Forum is to promote and support Telugu culture and encourage children to participate in social and cultural events. Telangana Formation Day is a celebration and acknowledgement of the successful movement for a separate Telangana State within India, as demanded by the Telugu people. The Telugu people received statehood on 2 June 2014 after years of strikes, protests, suicides and disturbances to public life. Through speeches, songs and dance, the community communicated their struggle for statehood and the celebrations of their freedom. I acknowledge president, Pradeep Thedla; general secretary, Kishore Reddy Panthula; and treasurer, Goverdhan Reddy Muddam for organising this successful and vibrant celebration. Long live Telangana.

D-DAY ANNIVERSARY

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:50): As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the D-day landings, I wish to recognise Sawtell World War II veteran Ross Kingston, who is today commemorating the anniversary in Normandy. As a young naval seaman, Ross manned a British vessel off the coast of France on that historic day. This week he is one of 300 veterans commemorating the campaign as the guest of the Royal British Legion on the Voyage of Remembrance. Born in Cardiff, Wales, in 1924 Ross answered the call to arms and enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1943. After basic training, he was posted to Portsmouth on 4 May 1944 and joined the crew of the HMS *Bulolo*. Honoured for his involvement in Operation Neptune, Ross was later awarded the French Legion of Honour medal. Speaking about his time on board HMS *Bulolo*, Ross said the ship was visited by King George VI and British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill. Ross now lives in Boambee Gardens Estate, where he met his sweetheart, Betty Young. "Settling in Australia was the best thing I ever did", he said. I thank Ross for his service.

JESS COLLINS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (15:51): Redhead surf life saver Jess Collins was left paralysed in 2018 after she broke her neck in a freak surfing accident. The member for Newcastle and I have spoken about Jess in this place previously. At the time Jess was devastated to be informed that she would never walk again. However, thanks to modern science, this week Jess was able to stand for the first time in just over a year. Jess has been taking part in a University of Newcastle study and was able to stand with the assistance of a robotic standing frame, or an exoskeleton. It is hoped that continued use of this machine will increase bone density and muscle tone, which is a real issue for people with a spinal injury. There is still a lot of research being completed in regards to exoskeletons, but I look forward to seeing what the future holds for this technology and for Jess.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:52): I recognise our outstanding new State Emergency Service volunteers for joining the NSW State Emergency Service [SES] Port Macquarie Unit in April. Newly appointed volunteers Jarryd Ailing, Rob Holley, Debby Scar, Mary Kersley, Victor Martin, Michelle Kingston, Susan Shaw and Craig Cannon will take on the front line of emergency assistance in the Port Macquarie-Hastings region to ensure our communities are supported in times of danger and distress. The SES Port Macquarie Unit are quite often our first responders to a life-threatening emergency in our community, battling the harshest of conditions from natural disasters, road crash rescue, industrial rescue and land and water searches. They also provide community engagement support and domestic animal rescues when the call for assistance is taken. New recruit Rod Holley, aged 73, conveyed his overall enthusiasm in donating his spare time in helping the community and will not rule out abseiling and advanced abseiling in the event he is required to attend a rescue. Founded in 1955, the NSW SES Port Macquarie Unit has attended a number of emergency situations, proudly providing 24-hour, seven-day-a-week service to people in need.

SOLDIERS BEACH SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:53): I recognise the great work of Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club in my electorate and name some special people who have distinguished themselves over the season. I have been a patrolling member since 2007 and I am very proud of our team at Soldiers Beach. The beach has had tens of thousands visitors in the past season and, most importantly, zero fatalities as volunteers worked tirelessly to keep beachgoers safe. This year many of the standouts were recognised at a recent presentation night for their performance, including rookie and junior competitor of the year Mary Williamson, boat rower of the year Victoria Coppen, competitor of the year Craig Ray, associate member of the year Edissa Viray, the Greg Martin award recipient Leanne Justine, patrol person of the year Shana Doughney, and club person of the year John "Ollie" Tomba—a very popular choice. We also recognised two life members—Mick Crowe and Shaun Ford. Surf life saving clubs across Australia provide a fantastic service as does Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

WATTLE GROVE PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE SPOTLIGHT DANCE FESTIVAL

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:54): I congratulate years 1 to 2 and years 3 to 6 dance groups from Wattle Grove Public School on being accepted to perform in the In The Spotlight Dance Festival, which is a wonderful opportunity for public school students from the Metropolitan and Regional South directorates to showcase their talents. The performances showcased at the In The Spotlight Dance Festival must incorporate the dance syllabus into their choreography, reflecting the practicality of the students' learning. The festival encourages students to strive for excellence in their performances. Perfecting a dance routine takes weeks of practice and develops a conscientious character. Additionally, participation in dance festivals can strengthen bonds between peers and encourage resilience through healthy competition. I thank the teachers for giving their time to assist the students of Wattle Grove Public School and the parents who provide their support for their families. I thank everyone involved.

EAST MAITLAND RSL SUB-BRANCH

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:55): I recognise four members of the East Maitland RSL Sub-Branch who have recorded 50 years of membership. Bruce Lauder, who was born in Maitland, served as an engineer with 1st Field Squadron in North Borneo and South Vietnam. Bruce was one of the first Australians to enter the Cu Chi Tunnels, which housed the headquarters of the Viet Cong. Peter Harvey served with the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, in Borneo and is a past president of the East Maitland RSL Sub-Branch. Tony Mulquiney was a national serviceman who served as an infantryman with the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, in South Vietnam. Recently Tony's unit was awarded a Unit Citation for Gallantry. Ian Durhan was a national serviceman who served as an engineer with the 17th Construction Squadron in South Vietnam. Ian is also a past president of the Ganmian RSL Sub-Branch and a life member of the league. The contributions represent a lifetime commitment to the RSL, as was noted this week by RSL State President James Brown and former State President Keith Hall. I, too, acknowledge their achievements and thank them for their service.

KALINYA GARDENS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (15:56): I inform the House that Kalinya Gardens has won the 2019 Business of the Year Award for the Wollondilly Shire. The high-end accommodation and function venue, comprising two luxury colonial homesteads, is situated on five acres of heritage-listed, picturesque land in beautiful Bargo. A successful business in its own right, Kalinya Gardens also helps to attract tourists to some of the lesser known parts of the Wollondilly Shire on the edge of the Southern Highlands. The business owners, Christopher and Amanda Barnes, have taken great care to ensure a relaxing and peaceful environment, perfect for an escape from the city. The property also boasts a large, heated swimming pool, a tennis court and some friendly animals. A retreat for the whole family, this hidden gem is well deserving of receiving the top award.

TRIBUTE TO KERRIE REEDER

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (15:57): With a great amount of sadness I inform the House of the passing of my friend Kerrie Reeder, who was the general manager of the Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce until 2017. Kerrie was a vibrant member of our community and a fierce advocate for the city of Penrith. As general manager, she oversaw a period of immense change for the chamber between her tenure from 2014 to 2017. She was renowned for her passion for local businesses, youth unemployment and particularly for her support of local charities and those in need. Kerrie was also the communications manager at Sydney Markets for more than a decade. Kerrie was a kind and generous soul and she will be missed dearly. My condolences go to Kerrie's family, friends, the board of the Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce and those who worked with her. Vale, Kerrie.

GOULBURN LOCOMOTIVE ROUNDHOUSE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (15:58): The Goulburn Locomotive Roundhouse is managed and preserved by the Goulburn Loco Roundhouse Preservation Society. The roundhouse, now run as the Goulburn Rail Heritage Centre, is a museum open to the public with a large collection of rolling stock and various exhibits, as well as privately owned locomotives and carriages. On Saturday 25 May and Sunday 26 May, the Goulburn community celebrated 150 years of rail coming to the first inland city. Held over two days, including a ball on Saturday night, the event was led by Mr Terence Carpenter and was a huge success. Well done to everyone for a fantastic event, which saw over 1,000 attendees to the Goulburn Rail Heritage Centre over the two days. New South Wales Governor Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley, Mr Dennis Wilson, Mayor Bob Kirk and I were lucky to be part of the official ceremonies.

According to the kids, the highlight was the arrival of the Governor's party by the heritage steam locomotive. It was great to see the tracks lined with intrigued onlookers. I thank a few of the core organisers: Mr David Johnson, Linda Cooper, Terence Carpenter, the Rotary Club of Goulburn, the Goulburn City Lions Club, a local group known as History Goulburn and all the members of the Goulburn Loco Roundhouse Preservation Society. It was an amazing team effort.

SCOUT AIDAN ROWE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (15:59): On Sunday I was delighted to join the Greater Western Sydney Region Scouts for their annual general meeting and, more importantly, the presentation of the Queen's Scout Award to Aidan Rowe, whose scouting journey began in November 2012 when he joined 1st Greystanes Scout Group and completed challenge after challenge. In 2017 he went on to join the 1st/2nd Merrylands Venturer Unit. Aidan took on new challenges and many roles in Venturers and has become a strong leader. His experience and good nature is relied upon on in many Venturer activities. He has also participated in two Australian Scout Jamborees, including one in which he was a junior service leader. He also went to Australian Venture. Aidan impressed many with his preparations for the Queen's Scout award, including achieving his service badge for helping his previous troop at 1st Greystanes, his outdoors badge for participating in canoeing and rock-related activities and his Queen's Scout expressions badge for performing in the musical *Annie*. Aidan is amazing and focused. Everyone is proud of him and he is worthy of the Queen's Scout Award. I congratulate Aidan.

DIAMOND BAY BOWLING CLUB

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (16:00): I am lucky to have many outstanding bowling clubs in my local area and the Diamond Bay Bowling Club is one of them. On 24 May I visited the club to hand over a \$10,000 New South Wales Government Community Building Partnership grant. The funding had gone towards the purchase and installation of a new solar panel system that is expected to halve the club's energy costs and reduce its environmental footprint. I first visited the club in 2011 when I presented it with a \$10,000 cheque for new shade cloths on the bowling greens. They then received a \$2,000 Local Sports Grant to help expand its membership. I thank president Stephen Cohen and director Tom Cowan as well as the women's bowling club members: the wonderful Zelda Goldberg, Eva Streichler and Elizabeth Green. They invited me and showed me delicious cakes, tea and coffee—what a spread! Members of the Kings and Queens Sydney Bridge Club, which calls the bowling club its home, were also there. About 70 locals, including Susan Cullen, Peter Strauss and Aidan Dorrell, were competing in a serious game of bridge. I commend their work.

ILLAWARRA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUBS

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:01): Over the last patrolling season more than 8,000 members of the 17 surf lifesaving clubs in the Illawarra branch area performed 214 rescues and took more than 6,000 preventative actions. They provided first aid on more than 380 occasions and took care of nearly 220,000 visitors to patrolled beaches on Sundays and public holidays alone. On behalf of the community and the visitors to Wollongong whom they kept safe, I congratulate and thank our volunteer surf lifesavers for their hours of effort. On Saturday night my colleague the member for Keira, Councillor Janice Kershaw and I jointly celebrated the successful season of my own club, Bellambi Surf Life Saving Club. This year is significant for my club as it celebrates its 110th anniversary. I recognise the recipients of the perpetual club trophy awards who distinguished themselves this season. They include Nikki Taylor, Brody Robertson, Tegan Robertson, Jackie Percy and Chad McNamara. I also recognise club captain Adam Smithers who took out the Hank Van Stuivenberg sensational snaps photo competition, named after a great life member of the club.

MIRROOL SILO KICK COMMITTEE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:02): I congratulate the Mirrool community and Silo Kick Committee for another successful event, raising \$20,000 for Can Assist Temora, Can Assist Ardlethan, Riding for the Disabled, the Rebecca Baker trust and FightMND. Since 1992 the silo kick has been held on the second

Saturday in October and draws hundreds of supporters from surrounding communities to little Mirrool. Recently the donation from last year's event was distributed to the charities. I cannot wait to watch the kicking of a footy over the 30-metre-high grain silos in five months. I thank committee secretary Jenny Fisher and all organisers for their hard work and for growing this beautiful little community and its event year after year.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:03): On Saturday 1 June 2019 some 550 guests gathered at the Sofitel Wentworth Sydney for the Italian National Ball to celebrate Italian Republic Day. Co.As.It. hosted the ball under the auspices of the Italian Embassy in Canberra and the Consulate of Sydney. This year's ball focused on raising community awareness of cancer while also raising vital funds for the 10,000 Italian Roses Project. This project aims to assist Italian-Australian women who are seeking medical assistance and support while combating breast cancer. Italian Republic Day is officially 2 June, which marks the establishment of the Italian Republic in 1946 when the great referendum was held to end the constitutional monarchy. Congratulations to Co.As.It President Mr Lorenzo Fazzini, CEO Mr Thomas Camporeale, organising committee members and volunteers for hosting another incredibly successful event. It was a pleasure to join family, friends, community leaders and parliamentary colleagues, including: Anthony Albanese, MP; John Sidoti, MP; Italian Senator Francesco Giacobbe; the Hon. Nicola Caré; the Hon. Mick Veitch, MLC; Senator Raff Ciccone; local mayors and councillors.

JAMIE PLUNKETT

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:05): I offer my congratulations to Jamie Plunkett, who recently competed in the Arafura Games in Darwin. Jamie excelled at this event, claiming nine medals in total. She claimed gold in the 100 metre butterfly; silver in the 100 metre backstroke, 50 metre breaststroke, 200 metre individual medley, 50 metre backstroke and 50 metre butterfly; bronze in the 50 metre freestyle, 200 metre freestyle and 100 metre breaststroke. She also finished fourth place in the 100 metre freestyle. I wish Jamie every success at the upcoming New South Wales All Schools Championships in Sydney where she will represent Grafton High School and with her sport in the future.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:05): On 26 May 2019 I had the pleasure of attending the Italian Republic Day celebrations with fellow parliamentary colleagues and foreign state dignitaries at Club Marconi. The celebration serves as an important reminder of how fortunate we are to live in such a multicultural and diverse country where everyone has the opportunity to immerse themselves in the many different cultures that make up the modern identity of Australia. There was plenty of food, rides and performances on display. I was particularly pleased to see such a great turnout of young people from all parts of New South Wales who immersed themselves in the celebrations.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE BUSINESS CHAMBER

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (16:06): I congratulate the Sutherland Shire Business Chamber on being awarded Best Local Chamber at the New South Wales Business Chamber 1029 Sydney Metro Regional Business Awards. Businesses located right across Sydney's south, east, inner west and north participated in the awards. This is a great accolade for the Sutherland Shire Business Chamber. I congratulate President Joanne Ryan, Vice-President Michael Zacharia, Secretary Mark Hooper, Treasurer Brendan Lucas, and committee members David Querzoli, Karen Johnston, Hima Gupta and Paul Sheaffe. The Sutherland Shire Business Chamber was the result of a formal merger last year of various local chambers who previously operated under a memorandum of understanding. I congratulate the chamber and I wish it well as it continues to be a strong voice for businesses in the Shire.

SOUTH WEST NEPALESE COMMUNITY

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (16:07): I take this opportunity to recognise the South West Nepalese community's contribution to our local area. I was delighted to attend the organisation's recent event on health awareness at Minto. There are few more important public policy issues than health and the wellbeing of our community. Raising awareness and providing information to community members is an important part of promoting preventative health. The medical presenters covered a wide range of topics, including physical, oral and mental health. I take this opportunity to recognise the organisers for hosting such an important community function. I commend Devendra and the South West Nepalese executive for a job well done. A well-organised and well-attended event does not happen by accident, but rather through the continued efforts and dedication of people in our local community. I look forward to attending future events and working with the South West Nepalese community to make our community a better place.

NEUTRAL BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:08): I commend Neutral Bay Public School for recently organising a commemorative service to honour the service and sacrifice of our Anzacs and the generations of Australian men and women who have served in wars, conflicts and peace operations over the past 100 years. I acknowledge that this year's service was especially significant, as it marked 100 years since the unveiling of the school's honour board. It was unveiled in 1919 and honours 402 ex-students from Neutral Bay Public School who saw active service in World War I, 46 of whom never returned. I took the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, from the other place to the school. We visited this remarkable honour board, which is still intact. I thank Principal Judy Goodsell for organising the event and I thank the year 6 students for assisting. I thank Corporal Shane Healey for sharing the story of his ceremonial uniform and the medals he wears and for his service in the Australian Army from 1995 to 2018. Lest we forget.

FEARLESS WARRIOR PROJECT

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:09): I offer sincere gratitude to Ange Nilsson who has worked tirelessly to develop The Outpost, an emerging organisation that supports women escaping domestic violence in our community. The passion and energy of those who have been driving The Outpost since day one means it is destined for success. The Outpost's Fearless Warrior Project will change lives in our community. The project is full of innovative ideas and possibilities that are now linking dedicated positive providers with concrete programs for developing women's self-esteem, confidence and independence. Ange's personal experience is embedded in the programs that offer solutions and build competencies. I congratulate Ange and her team on their efforts and wish The Outpost a fabulous life as another great organisation growing the strength of our fabulous community.

Private Members' Statements

LIVERPOOL ELECTORATE OVERDEVELOPMENT

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:10): I advise the House of concerns held by constituents of mine concerning the consequences of overdevelopment in our area. I recently met with two constituents, Samantha Stratford and Kaye Neale. Those two constituents live in blocks of units whose address is Atkinson Street, Liverpool, and which is accessed off Atkinson Street. It is adjacent to a number of unit blocks in Riverpark Drive. They are long-term residents of this location. As Ms Stratford put it, she has seen many things come and go and she has seen many things change in Liverpool.

A most recent change has caused her and her neighbours considerable difficulties. Opposite her block of units, on the southern side of Atkinson Street and extending down Shepherd Street, is a new multistorey housing development called The Paper Mill. This development has resulted in what my constituents describe as major issues regarding parking and access in Atkinson Street. Atkinson Street terminates at the eastern end, a few metres from the access to my constituents' units. They only have one way to get out of their premises, which is to head west on Atkinson Street and then into Shepherd Street. The massive new development means that on-street parking is now totally inadequate. Moreover, the comparative narrowness of Atkinson Street makes it difficult to negotiate the street and there are a series of related problems. Cars now park right at the end of Atkinson Street, causing problems with visibility for people entering Shepherd Street. Cars also park extremely close to the access to the units, which causes problems for residents such as my constituents when they are attempting to see traffic.

The parking restrictions imposed by Liverpool council have not helped. My constituents have approached Liverpool Council, but the best that staff have offered them is a "wait and see" effort. This is one example of the rampant and excessive overdevelopment in the Liverpool CBD which has led to multistorey residential developments that substantially increase parking demand and disadvantage pre-existing residents. Those problems are aggravated by design flaws such that vehicular access to the existing units on the northern side of Atkinson Street is directly opposite the entrance to underground parking at The Paper Mill. Residents of those units are often left waiting, sitting in their cars for ages, as people block the street while trying to access The Paper Mill. The door allowing access to underground parking takes some time to be raised. There is little distance between the gate and Atkinson Street itself, so if more than one car is waiting to enter The Paper Mill, a queue will form which not only blocks Atkinson Street but also blocks access to the road from the units on the northern side of the street opposite The Paper Mill—that is, my constituents' units.

Removalists naturally and frequently need to unload their trucks as new residents move in. Drivers and removalists have told my constituents that they often cannot access parking spaces at The Paper Mill. Instead, they just block off Atkinson Street whenever it suits them to unload furniture and the like. To make it worse, they sometimes park directly in the access to the units of my constituents. This access works by way of automatic gates which have now had to be repaired twice because of the activities of such removalists driving their trucks.

The limited involvement of the council in those issues is at best curious. It has recently installed parking restrictions in this part of Atkinson Street—that is, east of the intersection with Shepherd Street. On the northern side, which is my constituents' side, the restriction on the signs indicate 4.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday. On the southern side, it indicates parking restrictions from Monday and Thursday from 4.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. We guess that this was to assist garbage trucks. There is no explanation about the variance of times. One assumes it is a mistake because the signs stipulates restrictions on different days but similar times for different sides of the street.

Those parking problems obviously could have been foreseen. Indeed, at Ms Neale's request I made written representations to council in 2016 concerning, among other things, the traffic implications of the proposed development of The Paper Mill. This did not provoke much response. The problem will only get worse in the future. My constituents tell me that they understand about one-third of the units have been occupied thus far. When more are occupied, the problem will obviously worsen.

Council should also turn its mind to the broader planning catastrophe that is this part of Liverpool. There is only one access point to the whole residential area, to Riverpark Drive, the paper mill and other developments nearby—the continuation of Shepherd Street under very old railway bridge, which allows only one lane either way and leads into Speed Street. That is quite inadequate to service the already significant and dramatically increasing population in the area and a great deal more thought should go into the planning. Additionally, a restaurant is planned for the paper mill and is due to open in a month or so. That will obviously increase traffic and the need for parking.

Footpaths damaged during construction still have not been restored and trucks and vehicles from the new building stop almost randomly, blocking Atkinson Street. Liverpool council should concentrate on these problems. A simply wait and see strategy will not cut it. Another issue that should be given serious consideration is a resident access pass so that local residents have exclusive use of on-street parking in Atkinson Street off Shepherd Street and of significant stretches of Shepherd Street. The situation in Atkinson Street is quite serious and should be treated as such by the council.

MOSMAN YOUTH ART PRIZE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:15): Recently I had the great privilege of attending the Mosman Youth Art Prize, which is an annual exhibition organised by Mosman council featuring the diverse talents of young, aspiring and emerging artists aged between 12 and 21 years old. The exhibition generates a leading showcase of emerging young talent and has launched the careers of many successful artists such as the 2018 winner and Archibald Prize finalist, Natasha Walsh, sculptor Alex Seton and interdisciplinary artist JD Reforma. It is a popular competition with close to 400 entries annually and these young artists use a variety of mediums including painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, video, photography and ceramics to win more than \$13,000 in cash prizes, scholarships and art prizes. The prize was initiated in 1988 by Mosman local and internationally renowned artist Ken Done, AM. Ken has been a great supporter of art locally, particularly of the Mosman Art Gallery.

Ken attended the National Art School in East Sydney and went on to commence a highly successful career as an art director and designer in New York, London and Sydney. At the age of 40 he decided to leave the industry and devote himself to painting full-time. Since then his works have been shown in the Archibald, Sulman, Wynne, Blake and Dobell prizes. Today Ken is a patron of the Mosman Youth Art Prize, and it was wonderful to see him and his wife at the exhibition again this year where he was handing out awards. I know that the young artists were incredibly encouraged by his view of their artwork. This year we had the pleasure of welcoming the multidisciplinary artist Liam Benson as the judge. Since graduating from the University of Western Sydney in 2002 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, Liam has developed a prolific range of performance art and exhibitions. He did a fantastic job of judging the art prize and we thank him for his attendance.

Working alongside Mosman council and Mosman Art Gallery were some of the sponsors and I thank them for their generous support, including the Ken Done Gallery, Fourth Village Providore and the Julian Ashton Art School. I also acknowledge the kind support of the Australian Watercolour Institute, Friends of Mosman Art Gallery, Mosman Art Society/Art Smart and the Rotary Club of Mosman. Also in attendance were some of the councillors on Mosman council, including Libby Moline, who hosted the awards.

I acknowledge the winners and place getters of the Mosman Youth Art Prize for 2019. In the junior category I acknowledge the winner, Gloria Han; in second place, Kate Zhong; third place, Tiarn Garland; and highly commended, Samantha Klein. In the senior category I acknowledge in first place Marium El-hajj; second place, Tamsyn Turner; third place, Zhiqing Liu; and highly commended, Phyllis Chan. In the tertiary category I acknowledge in first place, James Baldwin; second place, Emily Francis; third place, Laura Hayley; and highly commended, Marine Anoshian.

The Friends of the Gallery Encouragement Award went to Rachel Gong in the junior category, Huw Bradshaw in the senior category and Emily Francis in the tertiary category—another prize for her. The Mosman Art Society/Art Smart Encouragement Award went to Max Gregg; the Australian Watercolour Institute Encouragement Award went to Maya Cook; the Julian Ashton Art School Full Scholarship, a very generous prize and award, went to Micah Lihachov; and the Julian Ashton Art School Summer Scholarship went to Jenna Caspar.

I congratulate all the winners and place getters and, of course, the sponsors and supporters. The Mosman Art Prize is also coming up shortly. Mosman Art Gallery makes a significant investment in our local cultural vibrancy and particularly in our local students. The students' ability to learn and grow and participate in such an event gives them the opportunity to develop their skills. Very few artists have an opportunity to have their work exhibited in Mosman Art Gallery, which, in my view and that of many people, is the leading regional art gallery. Having their work so beautifully exhibited in this gallery is a wonderful opportunity for these young artists; they gain a lot of confidence and inspiration to continue to invest in their art from the success that they have in these awards. I look forward to next year's competition exhibition to see what fantastic pieces of work are delivered by the talented and expressive young artists in my electorate and across the community.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:19): I bring to the attention of all members the fantastic work this Government is doing to create employment opportunities in regional New South Wales. I am personally extremely excited about the jobs that are being created in my own electorate by the construction of a purpose-built rail maintenance facility in Dubbo to service our new regional rail fleet. The \$2.8 billion regional rail fleet project will include the building of the maintenance facility in Dubbo and will replace the existing XPT, Xplorer and Endeavour trains, some of which are now more than 30 years old. In their place will be a modern fleet that will completely change the experience of rail travel in regional New South Wales.

We need to support and boost our regional economies, so it makes sense to ensure that this project is delivered and supported by our regional communities. The new fleet will be maintained in Dubbo and around 200 jobs will be created during the construction phase. Another 60 new jobs will be created during the final train fit-out phase and about 50 permanent jobs will be provided when it opens, including a number of apprenticeships and traineeships. This project will open the door to brand-new opportunities for local businesses and suppliers, as well as create meaningful, long-term and skilled jobs in our regional communities. I am not the only one who is excited.

Last week more than 120 people attended our industry briefings, led by Momentum Trains, all keen to gain a better understanding of the opportunities that this project will create for local businesses and local suppliers. The briefing for Aboriginal businesses had 59 attendees, including HIHaT Aboriginal Corporation, a service that mentors and supports Indigenous job seekers up to and beyond starting their employment; Building Kinnections, a group of government and non-government employees working together to provide pathways to support Aboriginal people with disability in western New South Wales; the Regional Enterprise Development Institute Ltd [REDIE], a provider of services to Aboriginal communities, which aims to continually improve the social fabric and living standards of those in our State's west; Coregas, which supplies industrial, medical and specialty gases in quantities from single cylinders to bulk liquid tanks; and Benson Fencing, a local, Dubbo fencing business, which was founded in 1970. Also at the briefings were the NSW Aboriginal Lands Council, the Australian Rail Track Corporation, and the list goes on.

At the general business briefing more than 70 businesses were represented. In fact, it was difficult to determine the exact number of attendees at the second briefing because many attendees of the first session stayed on to learn even more about this amazing project. Those businesses included Supply Nation, a non-profit organisation founded in 2009, which aims to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector through the promotion of supplier diversity; MAAS, a locally run plant hire, civil construction and quarrying company; Skillset, a not-for-profit organisation that provides sustainable and innovative partnerships to generate employment; Anderson Recruitment, a specialist in recruitment and labour hire services across all sectors for major Australian companies; Sureway, an employment agency that provides both employment and training services; Hanson Construction, a supplier of concrete and aggregates; Spinifex, a recruiting company for both permanent and temporary roles; and Cleanaway, a waste management company. Also there were representatives from TAFE, the Department of Education and even Dubbo College Senior Campus, Dubbo's local public high school, which was keen to learn about the amazing opportunities this project can provide for our children.

All of those businesses and many more attended the briefings to learn more about the project because they want to be involved. They know how big a coup this project is for Dubbo and how important it is for the future growth of the region. The time frame for the project is not years, not even months, it is only weeks. Planning and design activities are progressing and investigations at the site of the maintenance facility in Dubbo are set to start very soon. The new fleet itself will comprise 117 new carriages to form 10 regional intercity trains, nine short

regional trains and 10 long regional trains. Passengers will travel in comfort with all of the facilities expected of modern transport. There will be more-comfortable seats, improved accessibility and, of course, charging points for electronic devices.

As this program rolls out I will encourage people to have a say and let us know what they need, what they want and how the train and bus interconnectivity can help change their life. That is a really important part of making this an overall service that will work for you. This will be a life-changer and it is all happening in our part of regional New South Wales. The final commissioning works on the new fleet will also be done in Dubbo, ahead of the new trains progressively rolling out on the tracks from 2022-23. Best of all, the new fleet will be maintained in Dubbo, which is a fantastic investment in the Dubbo region and so important right now while we live through the devastating drought. Many people across the electorate are affected by drought. Those on the land and the many thousands more in support sectors who rely on them are doing it extremely tough. That is why investment in the regions, like this rail maintenance facility, and investment in the future of our rural communities is more important than ever.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:24): I congratulate the member for Dubbo for standing up for his electorate and emphasising the importance of the New South Wales Government's investment in his community. It is one of the many regional communities benefiting from the sound and strong financial management of this Government, which is enabling us to do those kinds of things right across New South Wales. As he quite rightly pointed out, at a time of severe drought when agriculture is suffering, it is most important these other investments are supporting those communities. I commend the member for his contribution.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE MAYORAL DEBUTANTE CHARITY BALL

Ms ELANI PETINOS (Miranda) (16:25): I recognise Sutherland Shire Council for holding its annual Mayoral Debutante Charity Ball to support this year's partner, St George & Sutherland Medical Research Foundation [SSMRF]. The night was one of glitz and glamour, attended by over 300 guests at the Sutherland Entertainment Centre on 25 May 2019. The charity ball is now in its forty-third year. Year on year, the council never fails to impress and wow the audience with its program line-up. I would like to thank my friend the Mayor of Sutherland Shire, Councillor Carmelo Pesce, and his team for working tirelessly over the past few months to put on such a great show and contribute to a great cause.

Debutantes and their partners from nine Sutherland Shire high schools and community groups danced the night away to raise much-needed funds for their chosen charity. Last year, with the help of local businesses and corporate support, over \$22,000 was raised for the Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation, which provides critical support for children and families affected by mental illness. This year, all funds raised go toward the St George & Sutherland Medical Research Foundation. Established in 2007, the foundation offers medical research grant funding to assist doctors and other health professionals in conducting medical research at Sutherland and St George hospitals with the aim of providing and improving care and outcomes for patients and the wider community. I acknowledge Ms Jacqui Stratford, the CEO of the St George & Sutherland Medical Research Foundation, and board member Madeline Tynan, who have been instrumental in executing the foundation's strategic and fundraising plans.

SSMRF's philosophy prioritises promising new research and emerging researchers to secure funding for projects that make a substantive difference to our community. The aim of this year's charity ball was to raise between \$20,000 and \$50,000 for vital seed funding to support the next generation of researchers. Investing in research in local hospitals can help save and improve the lives of many, and encourages the very best and brightest to remain in the medical profession to continue research projects that have positive and wide-ranging impacts within our society.

I also acknowledge Tracie Junghans, Fundraising and Events Manager at SSMRF, for working closely with the council to ensure that the night was a success. I thank the executive and medical board members of the organisation for their vision and commitment to invest in and drive innovation within the medical health field: Chair, John Edmonds; Deputy Chair, Paul O'Sullivan; Treasurer, Bruce Spaul; Secretary, Greg Davis; and Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee, Ian Cook. I thank the medical board members: Peter Gonski, Kate Moore and George Skowronski. I also thank the community and business board members: Tim Daley, Emad El-Omar, Michael Grimm, Leisa Rathborne, Peter Ridley, Madeline Tynan, Brett Wright and Cathy Yunken.

I acknowledge the outstanding students from my electorate who selflessly volunteered their time to participate in the mayoral ball and raise money for SSMRF. From GyMEA Technology High School: Sarah Graham and Max Price; Georgia Brownhill and Blake Shearsby; Kyra Upton and Marcus Doty; Caitlin Clancy and Ashleigh Magaya; Ashleigh Mason and Joel Hollingdale. From the Jannali High School: Ebony Gould and Matthew Woo; Georgia Cherrie and Roy Munro; Abby Paterson and Luke Turner; and Jordan Madeghe. I thank the debutantes and their partners from GyMEA Technology High School and The Jannali High School for their

dedication and for giving back to our community. I also note the commitment of principals Peter Marsh and Rick Coleman to this fantastic local event.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the debutantes and their partners from Civic Disability Services, which is a not-for-profit organisation founded in the 1950s by a group of parents living in the Sutherland Shire caring for children with disability. Today the organisation has grown to provide whole-of-life services for more than 500 people with intellectual disabilities and mental health conditions across Sydney and regional areas. The staff at Civic Disability Services are well known for their compassionate approach to community services, and provide person-centred active support to enable clients to reach their full potential, achieve their goals and participate in the wider community.

I acknowledge and thank the beautiful debutantes and their partners who came together to support this wonderful cause: Laura Davies and David Sorenson; Emily Davis and David O'Connor; Tammie Dengate and John Ockwell; and Monica Prsa and Brad Balderson. I also congratulate the happy couple, Monica and Brad, on their recent engagement and wish them all the very best for married life. Once again, I thank and congratulate all those involved in putting on such a wonderful mayoral debutante ball, and I look forward to celebrating yet another one next year.

Business interrupted.

Petitions

MYUNA BAY SPORT AND RECREATION CENTRE

Discussion

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome our guests to the gallery this afternoon for the discussion on the petition.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (16:30): On 29 March 2019, the day the Premier announced her new Cabinet and only days before the Government would come out of caretaker mode, the New South Wales Office of Sport, in a morning raid, directed that the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre close and that all visitors and staff be off-site by 6.00 p.m. Some of those affected are with us today in the gallery, and they are still very upset by pretty much everything about this decision. I thank those community members for coming. Matt Miller, the CEO of the New South Wales Office of Sport, made the decision. The action and the way it was done was breathtaking in its arrogance, and extremely audacious, given that a new government and Minister—who is with us today—were only days away.

Students from Bathurst were bundled out and an international waterskiing tournament that was to run over the weekend was cancelled. Some 200 people associated with that event were blindsided, and the local Myuna Bay Waterski Club was left without a venue. While not a consideration, it was ironic and poignant that at almost the same time as the contingent from New Zealand, which included residents of Christchurch, was being treated so outrageously, the Premier was in Christchurch supporting our New Zealand friends following the devastating and senseless mass shootings.

The action was taken on the basis of a risk assessment prepared by Origin Energy on the Eraring Power Station dam wall. There was no immediate threat to anyone. That non-peer-reviewed report stated that if a major earthquake were to occur, the power station's ash dam wall may be breached and could therefore threaten life at the sport and recreation centre. Origin Energy based its assessment on a 5.7-magnitude seismic event. To try to get a handle on what that means, Geoscience Australia says the likelihood of a 5.9-magnitude event within a 100 kilometre radius of Eraring is one in 5,000 years or greater. In fact, not a low risk but an extremely low risk. Mr Miller took an action that upturned the lives of employees who were, in my opinion, treated disgracefully. Full-time and permanent employees would be looked after with special leave provided and redeployment to other centres where possible, while longstanding, loyal and well-used casual staff were largely just collateral damage; a few weeks of pay, and then they were on their own. That is not good enough.

The decision shocked those already at the centre. In the case of waterskiers from around the State and New Zealand, it cost them significant time and money. Thousands of school students, in particular, who were booked in for the year were left disappointed. Frank Calabria is the CEO of Origin Energy, and therefore does not escape criticism. Origin Energy was hung out to dry when, on the day of the closure, it released a media statement thanking the New South Wales Office of Sport for acting expediently on its request to close the centre. Wow! I have to say I am pretty sure Origin Energy expected a public statement—that was never to arrive—from the New South Wales Office of Sport owing up to this. Origin Energy had forecast to me some months earlier that it may need to look at relocating the tennis courts and swimming pool, but there was no indication that the so-called "nuclear" option was on the table.

Indeed, there was no further contact with my office, even though we had always had a good relationship. There was no contact with Lake Macquarie City Council about the potential impact on the council park and no contact—or limited contact—with Roads and Maritime Services about the main road. There was no discussion with the Eraring Power Station Community Consultative Committee, which is a bit ironic, and no reference to anyone about the devastation that would be done to the lake itself if such a loss of ash occurred. For the record, during the time Origin Energy was considering the risk to the integrity of this wall it had an application before the Department of Planning to increase the ash holding capacity of the dam. I suggested to both Mr Calabria and Mr Miller that, amongst other things, they owed the community and those affected an apology for the handling of this matter.

The Minister is here and I recognise this blindsided him. After all, even the head of the Department of Premier and Cabinet was not advised that this was happening. We are, however, looking to you, Minister, for the right result for our community and for your staff, and that means not lightly acceding to Origin Energy's request to mitigate its risk at the expense of a greatly loved community asset. I agree with the Minister's decision to have the matter considered by the NSW Dams Safety Committee and in the end we should accept their advice. Hopefully that will see the Myuna Bay centre reopened. If not, the way in which this was planned and executed by the Office of Sport and Origin Energy will remain a disgrace and should stand as an example of arrogance toward and disrespect of government process and of staff and community. I thank the nearly 20,000 people who have signed the petition calling for the centre to be reopened, for Origin Energy to be required to take action on its site to protect off-site assets, including the lake, and for the Government to invest in further upgrades to the centre. Minister, it is over to you.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans)
(16:35): I am pleased to speak on the petition this afternoon regarding Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre. I thank the member for Lake Macquarie for bringing the petition to the House, with 20,000-plus signatures. I also acknowledge in *Hansard* my appreciation for the considerate, patient and respectful way the member has cooperated with me over the past few months despite the frustration and anger it has caused for people in his electorate and beyond. Politics can often be an ugly game but it is people like the member for Lake Macquarie who can remind us all of why we came into these jobs. In saying that, I acknowledge those visitors in the gallery who have travelled from a considerable distance to be here today.

As the member for Lake Macquarie said, a decision was made by the Office of Sport in March to close the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre. This decision was made after the Office of Sport received formal advice from Origin Energy during the caretaker period about the potential safety risks posed to the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre should the stability of the Eraring Power Station's ash dam wall be compromised. As soon as I was sworn in as Minister and made aware of the issue, I spoke with the member straight away to get an understanding of the matter at hand. Since then we have worked side by side to reach the right outcome for the community he represents.

From the outset, I have met with affected parties, including Origin Energy, to better understand the issues surrounding the closure. On 3 May I spent the day with the local member in Lake Macquarie where I met a number of locals and affected stakeholders and listened to their concerns, including some who are here today. I thank those locals for making the time to meet with me. The impact of this decision on the local community is not lost on this Government. Not only is the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre a recreational hub for community groups and schools but it is also an employer and source of livelihood for its locals. It is understandable that the community and the local member have many concerns with the decision. I also understand some people have concerns about the technical advice that was provided to the Government in the lead-up to this decision.

This Government wants to ensure it has the most well-informed, expert and independent advice before any permanent decisions are made about Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre's future. This is why I announced that an independent review of the technical reports that informed the decision to close the centre would be undertaken. No further decisions will be made until the review is finalised. I reiterate that this review will be totally independent, by an expert body that has credibility in the industry. This includes a number of engineers and a number of consultants in the industry who are extremely qualified to give the best advice.

We have requested the NSW Dams Safety Committee, the regulator of dam safety in New South Wales, to lead this review. It is responsible for developing and implementing regulation for effective dam safety management to protect life, property and the environment from dam failures. The NSW Dams Safety Committee is constituted by the Parliament under legislation to ensure that dams are safe in New South Wales. This means that owners of dams need to comply with the policies, procedures and directions of the NSW Dams Safety Committee. The committee has a long history of implementing dams regulation for over 40 years and is the industry leader in Australia. It is led by a team of highly qualified engineers who are well placed to lead the review.

I want to be sure this is a thorough process and the review is not rushed. I believe this is what the community would expect.

There are some critical steps that need to be followed to ensure a thorough review so understandably it will take a number of weeks to be finalised. I give my assurance to the House, and to the local community, that the review will be totally independent and will guide any future decisions made. Once again, I give the local member, all those visitors in the gallery and the people of the Lake Macquarie electorate my assurance that the NSW Government is working to get a good outcome here.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:40): That was an interesting response from the Minister for Sport who I know does have a commitment to reopening this camp. Certainly, the genesis of this decision-making does not rest with the current Minister for Sport but for him to say that he is sending it to an independent body, to the NSW Dams Safety Committee, which is the body that was supposed to be doing the report in the first place, raises the question: Why are you sending it to them now? The five-year review report is done under the Dam Safety Act 2015 and the Dams Safety Committee is the body that, under the Act, is charged with making any decisions about whether a dam is a risk. In fact sections 8 and 15 of the Act give the NSW Dams Safety Committee the authority to make a decision about the safety of a dam. There has been no explanation about why the NSW Dams Safety Committee at no point had any hand in this process.

Origin Energy said to me that they informed the former Minister for Sport's office—it is not in his ministerial diary so I am only taking them at their word—and that they spoke to him in November and he referred them to the Office of Sport. At some stage someone should have been referring them to the NSW Dams Safety Committee, for whom they were actually writing the report. There is a natural scepticism about the actions here because sport and recreation camps, as members who have been in this Parliament for some time will be aware, have been subject to privatisation and Origin Energy have provided me with a document that says:

The recreation centre was identified as a risk during the acquisition process. The NSW Treasury approached the Department of Sport with an offer to buy, however the Office of Sport did not agree.

So the reality is when Origin Energy purchased this site they always wanted the sport and recreation camp. In fact, at the time at the of the purchase, they had the NSW Treasury approach the Office of Sport to buy it. There is huge scepticism that this same Office of Sport, when the issue of dam safety came out, has independently taken a decision and closed the sport and recreation camp. This is without any referral to the government agency that is empowered to ask questions and, by law, to receive answers. It is empowered to hold inquiries and, by law, to seize documents to decide on the safety of the dam. None of that has happened since November when the Government was made aware of this. The sport and recreation camp was closed—*[Time expired]*

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:44): I am happy to speak to this petition regarding the closure of Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre. I acknowledge the visitors in the public gallery. I am the member for Terrigal, a regional member, and I acknowledge the time you have given up today and the sacrifice you have made to be here. The closure of Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre does not directly affect my community on the Central Coast. However, my electorate shares many similarities with that of the member for Lake Macquarie. It is a regional coastal community—a great place to live, work, play and enjoy recreation. Some schools and youth groups based in my electorate use the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre for camps, and its closure with little warning affected them.

As this closure occurred during the caretaker period of government before the State election, the first I heard of it was from the local Central Coast radio station. The closure resonated with me because I know the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre is valued highly by the surrounding community. As I have said, hundreds of schools, sporting teams and community groups use Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre each year. It is also a valuable source of local employment. It is frightening to think the safety of people using the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre could be at risk. As Origin Energy has advised, should the stability of the Eraring Power Station's ash dam wall be compromised then using the centre would be extremely dangerous.

As a member of Parliament, I regard community safety as the number one priority and it is unsettling to think the safety of people using the centre could have been compromised. It is too big a risk to take. It is understandable that the sudden closure is a shock to the residents of Lake Macquarie, especially those employed at the centre. I assure the member for Lake Macquarie and the visitors in the gallery that the Liberal-Nationals Government regards the safety of the community as its highest priority. I commend the Minister and his team for working hard alongside the outstanding member for Lake Macquarie to address this matter.

I commend the member for Lake Macquarie for bringing this issue to the attention of the Government and the Minister in an appropriate, sensible and measured way. I have full confidence that the steps taken by the Minister for an independent review are in the best interests of everyone, including the Lake Macquarie community. I assure those in the gallery that the review as outlined by the Minister will be totally independent. I acknowledge

the hard work of my parliamentary colleague the member for Lake Macquarie in obtaining a 20,000 signatures on the petition. It shows how strongly he and his community feel about this issue. I look forward to hearing the results of that independent review.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:46): By leave: A number of my constituents have used the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre camp over the years; it is a well-used local camp. So I feel compelled to contribute to the discussion on this valuable petition. I make particular comment about the inquiry. It is wonderful—and important—that an inquiry is to be held but I would like the Minister to explain why the inquiry is not public. Under the Dams Safety Act 2015, the inquiry announced by the Minister should be held in public. Section 38 of the Dams Safety Act is specific as to what should happen with the inquiry: first, it should be held in public; and, secondly, there are notice requirements. Has section 38 of the Dams Safety Act been complied with in this case? This matter is of concern to members of the community. The Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre is an appreciated and well-loved facility in the area. People want to know why it has closed, and my constituents and I would like to understand why the inquiry will not be held in public.

Private Members' Statements

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:49): Today I bring the attention of the House to the number of women who continue to die at the hands of men. On 18 May, Gihan Kerollos had walked just metres from the doors of Prince of Wales Hospital and onto Easy Street, Randwick, in my electorate, when her husband murdered her. At the beginning of March, Sydney-based dentist Preethi Reddy was found murdered and stuffed in a suitcase. She had been stabbed multiple times. Since the start of 2019, 10 women have been killed at the hands of a current or former partner and New South Wales has the highest rate of domestic violence of all the States and Territories.

On average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner; from the age of 15, one in four women has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner; and intimate partner violence is a leading contributor to illness, disability and premature death for women aged 18 to 44. Indeed, figures released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show that hospitalisations due to domestic, family and sexual violence are also increasing. How many more women are going to be killed or put into hospital due to domestic, family or sexual violence before the Government decides to take real action on this issue? Importantly, where can women go to be safe? We know the vital role that refuges and safe houses play for women escaping violent homes. They offer support, safety and services that women may otherwise not be able to access.

Across New South Wales the Going Home Staying Home reforms destroyed as many as 90 women's refuges and related women-specific services. This is unacceptable. Due to the changes that were ushered in with the Going Home Staying Home reforms, there are no fully government funded women-specific services in the following districts: Murrumbidgee, northern Sydney, southern Sydney, Far West New South Wales and southern New South Wales. The failure of this Government's tendering agreements saw some women's shelters across Sydney, and across New South Wales more broadly, not included in new government funding agreements. Of the 60 other providers awarded tenders by the Government, including homeless shelters and other multi-client groups, there is no way of knowing how well equipped these services are to support women and children leaving abusive homes.

The Government was forced to put in Domestic Violence Response Enhancement funding when it became obvious how woeful the funding was as a result of its disastrous reforms and how patchy the after-hours response was. Even today, while the Federal Government has approved an extension of this funding, there are services that are uncertain about whether the State Government will pass the funding on to them. I know that the shadow Minister for the prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault has raised this issue with the Minister, but we should not be making vital, life-saving services beg for funding year on year. It is so inefficient.

There is no accountability or evaluation of performance for domestic violence shelters to ensure that they provide appropriate care to victims and survivors. There is a chaotic and fragmented funding model for services that fully funds some shelters and partially funds others while some are not funded at all. It is ridiculous that the Government thought merging these services would mean victim survivors of domestic violence were better protected. Homelessness, mental health issues, drug issues and domestic violence all need different, specific kinds of interventions. Lumping all these vulnerable people together in the same space is detrimental to everyone involved.

Merging the services does not increase the number of shelters or increase resources. Instead it spreads resources even more sparsely across service providers and diminishes the quality of care these vulnerable people are offered. Research has indicated time and time again that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are disproportionately affected by domestic violence. Reported rates of domestic violence are six times higher for

Aboriginal women than non-Aboriginal women. The rates of hospitalisation due to violence are almost double for Aboriginal women compared with non-Aboriginal women. Removing culturally safe and specific services is a serious blow to a minority that is disproportionately affected by domestic violence in New South Wales. It is unacceptable that the Liberal-Nationals Government is allowing this to occur.

The epidemic of violence against women will not be stopped by inaction and poorly executed government policy. If the Liberal Government truly took domestic violence seriously the tender process would not have occurred as it did. Women's health and safety are at risk. If the Liberal Government does not reconsider the Going Home Staying Home reforms that have changed women's shelters for the worse and take action to address its own mismanagement then New South Wales will continue to see incredibly high rates of domestic violence that will end in the needless deaths of Australian women.

STARS OF THE HASTINGS DANCE FOR CANCER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:54): The 2019 Stars of the Hastings Dance for Cancer in Port Macquarie raises funds each year for the Cancer Council to deliver essential services for people living with cancer. Local celebrities from the Port Macquarie-Hastings community took to the stage on 5 April at Rydges for the annual Dance for Cancer to raise funds for people affected by a cancer diagnosis. This year an astounding \$100,000 was donated through the efforts of our local stars, with all funds going to the Cancer Council to be used for research, prevention and support for local families impacted by the disease.

Hip-hopping to victory, the judge's choice award went to Belinda and her partner, Elouise, who joined the competition at the last minute to dazzle the judges with their creative dance routine in front of a packed crowd at Rydges. The pair's efforts convinced the community to donate \$10,000 to the cause—an extraordinary effort—following one month of training for the event. Putting on their dance shoes and winning the people's choice award was Vanessa Lawrence, from Style Vibe, and her partner, Kate Maggs from All Stars Studios, who enthralled the audience with an Egyptian-style jazz, infused with a hip-hop routine. The night continued to produce highlights, with Ross Cargill from Men at Work jumping spontaneously to his feet to inject a further \$1,200 into the overall total, bringing entire donations to \$100,000.

Stars of the Hastings Dance for Cancer is a locally coordinated group in Port Macquarie, headed by Louise Beaumont from FOCUS. The group's aim is to support ordinary people who have been diagnosed with cancer. The dedicated team of volunteers run an annual dance, with known representatives within the community, to shake the purses and empty the pockets of people to raise funds for the Cancer Council. The night consists of 10 high-profile business people who team up with professional dancers to perform a stunning, captivating and often humorous routine to reach their funding target.

Based on a similar model from Coffs Harbour, the volunteers, led by Louise, put together a gala night at Rydges with an expert panel to rate the stars' performances and bestow a judges' choice award on the night. An additional accolade—the people's choice award—is voted by the audience, creating that little extra excitement and anticipation for the event's proceedings. During the evening Lach Falvey, from Falvey Kay Lawyers, was named the most successful fundraiser for the 2019 Stars of the Hastings, with a massive \$14,000 raised for the kitty, demonstrating that hard work and commitment to a cause you believe in can achieve amazing results.

I acknowledge the other contestants who danced their way around the Dance for Cancer: Amy Davis from Port Macquarie Roller Derby league and partner Rommley Brady, teacher of dancing at Movement Studios; Alfred Portenschlager from Port Macquarie State Emergency Service unit and partner Evonne Asher, teacher at Extravalance studios; Ian Ross, principal of Hastings Secondary College Westport Campus, with partner Galina Turker, dancing instructor in Latin street dance and salsa; Kiel Bigeni from Men at Work and partner Mandy Davidson from Mandy Davidson Dance Fitness and Wellness; Lach Falvey from Falvey Kay Lawyers and partner Janelle Catana from the Drella Company; Natalie Junge from High Tea on Hastings and partner Amy Henson, Principal of Extravalance Studios in Port Macquarie and Wauchope; Richard Baker, hospitality professional, and partner Makenzie Dobson, dancing instructor at self-owned dance studio; and Shelley Lang from Essential Energy with partner Anika Smith, dancing instructor.

It is a sad statistic that 830 people from across the Hastings in my electorate are diagnosed with cancer each year. I commend Louise Beaumont from FOCUS and her marvellous team of volunteers, who dedicate their time and energy to raise vital funds for cancer research in the hope that one day we will find a cure. I sincerely thank Louise for giving me the opportunity to enter the very first Hastings Dancing with the Stars. It was a memorable occasion and it was humbling to know that we were contributing to an amazing local cause. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience to team up with professional dancers to learn a routine. My routine was the charleston, and I had an amazing night. I did not come last—in fact, my two year 12 partners, who are both experienced dancers, made me look really good and we ended up coming second. I am very proud of our achievements and, most importantly, proud that we could contribute to this wonderful community cause.

STORMWATER HARVESTING

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:59): Before the member for Port Macquarie leaves the Chamber I must congratulate her on mastering the Charleston. I had the opportunity to attend the Northern Beaches Cancer Council Dancing with the Stars event. I know the dance routines are difficult and so I congratulate the member on her participation. I did not take part because I was a judge. More than half the world's population lives in metropolitan centres. Of course, the built environment of a city is very different from that of rural and natural areas. When it rains over a rural landscape much of the rainwater sinks into the ground or evaporates. Ultimately, that rainwater is put to good use. A different scenario happens with rainwater and stormwater in an urban environment. In the context of our current drought—which is affecting most of New South Wales, with water restrictions likely to last for at least three months—and with an eye to the future, I believe we should encourage innovative and pragmatic thinking about how we in New South Wales harvest or re-use rainwater and stormwater run-off.

It is important to understand the difference between rainwater and stormwater. Stormwater is rainwater that has run off an urban trafficable surface, such as a roads, footpaths, car parks, gardens or urban vegetated open space. This is not the same as rainwater, which is collected only from rooves. In metropolitan regions of Greater Sydney and the Central Coast about 130 schemes currently harvest, treat and re-use stormwater to replace drinking water. But, with advances in technology, I believe we can do better. Generally these schemes are operated by metropolitan councils, community organisations or private entities such as golf clubs or by private water utilities. The water is predominately used to irrigate public open spaces like sports fields, parks and gardens. Of note, highly treated stormwater can also be used for toilet flushing, firefighting and in cooling towers.

Most of the existing schemes were designed many years ago to provide drought resilience and to support amenity in local areas. Since then, technology to capture, harvest and re-use rainwater and stormwater run-off has improved. The water quality of stormwater is highly variable depending on the catchment and the last time it rained. It needs to be treated before being re-used. Potential non-potable uses for stormwater include: agricultural uses, such as for horticulture, trees or wood lots, pasture or fodder, dairy pasture, lucerne, flowers, orchards, nurseries, vegetables, viticulture, hydroponics and turf farms; fire-control uses, including for controlling fires, testing and maintenance of fire-control systems, and training facilities for firefighting; various municipal uses, such as roadmaking, dust control and street cleaning; residential and commercial property uses within buildings, such as toilet flushing, and for garden watering, car washing, water features and systems—things that many in our communities would use water for—and utility washing; and industrial and commercial uses, such as for cooling water, process water and wash-down water. All these activities use a lot of water.

Funding for some of these stormwater-harvesting schemes has occurred via the Climate Change Fund. However, the efficacy and costs of stormwater systems vary depending on: rainfall; stable demand for the water and, if possible, water demands that are not rainfall dependent, such as toilet flushing and cooling towers; costs of transport and storage; whether it is designed to deliver multiple benefits, such as flood mitigation or pollution reduction; and whether it is located in a brownfield or greenfield development. There are some best-practice examples, such as Willoughby city council, which collects stormwater in a specially constructed detention basin under the town centre's Concourse complex. This both mitigates the flood risk and provides highly treated water for use in toilets and cooling towers.

Green Square stormwater recycling is a joint venture between Sydney Water and the City of Sydney council and is operated by a private utility, Green Square Water. The stormwater is treated and then used to establish and maintain the gardens and for toilet flushing, washing machines and in cooling towers in the development. Stormwater and rainwater harvesting will not solve all our water issues; however, investments in expanding our capabilities and smart planning can dramatically enhance our ability to have a more resilient and sustainable water supply.

It also presents an opportunity for the city or urban environment to improve our role and support for those in regional New South Wales. I know that the Minister for Water, Property and Housing, the Minister for Energy and Environment, and his predecessor, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier—who is in the Chamber—along with the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces are considering practicable measures to conserve water and ensure that planning takes into account the importance of stormwater capture and rainwater harvesting, which is something we should all support.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT JAMES LEE HAWKE, AC, A FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:04): Today I acknowledge a great Australian, a man who had an impact on the electorate of Prospect and basically on every electorate in Australia: Robert Hawke. On 16 May 2019 we lost a great Australian. The Government under his leadership had an impact on the population

of the electorate of Prospect and of western Sydney. The number one impact was Fairfield Hospital. In 1988 during the Hawke Prime Ministership Fairfield Hospital was moved to Prairiewood to provide a local hospital for thousands of people in my electorate. The introduction of Medicare reforms and the Medicare health scheme also had a massive impact on my electorate, as did the establishment of TAFE at Wetherill Park. As Prime Minister—and without doubt as a new type of Australian Labor leader—Robert Hawke did many things for the electorate of Prospect and throughout western Sydney.

Robert Hawke had a massive impact on Australia. He was new type of Labor leader—well educated, with many years' experience at the industrial coalface as President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. Hawke had also held the national presidency of the Australian Labor Party [ALP] throughout the 1970s before accepting preselection for a Federal parliamentary electorate. Hawke spoke like a working-class Australian, he passionately enjoyed sport, and mixed easily with all classes of people. He was loved in western Sydney. Hawke's arrival in Federal Parliament transformed politics as he came with a belief—verified by the opinion polls—that he was a certain election winner. His authority lay not with the ALP, the Federal Parliament or even the trade unions that he had led, but with the electorate.

Hawke's career and personality captured a broad social base. Hawke was a scholar and a trade unionist, an early crusader against the White Australia Policy, a supporter of multiculturalism, a hero of the underdog but respected by business leaders, a sports fanatic but with a charm that appealed to women voters and a leader whose image fused strength with the common touch. To his ALP and trade union colleagues, he was the perfect blend of all things Australian and all the things people hoped would one day be so. He had been not just a bright student, but a Rhodes scholar; not just a drinker, but the holder of a world record at Oxford for downing the largest amount of beer in the shortest time; and not just popular with the boys, but also very appealing to the girls.

He was without doubt an extraordinary Australian whom most ordinary Australians would either love to have been, or at least would love to count among their friends. Hawke's sustained popularity was an important ingredient in the 1983 election victory. As Prime Minister, his electorate approval ratings were astoundingly high. Hawke changed so much of Australia. When I look at the Prospect electorate I see one of the largest industrial bases—manufacturing, logistics, and import and export companies—in the Southern Hemisphere. As Prime Minister, Bob Hawke opened up our markets and helped Australia to embrace Asia, which had a huge impact on the electorate of Prospect. Tens of thousands of jobs were created in Prospect's industrial base and throughout the country by capturing the Asian market and refusing to accept the last vestiges of the White Australia Policy. Hawke floated the dollar. He made sure that our focus was in Asia rather than on tired old Europe.

Bob Hawke took Australians along with him on the great new globalisation adventure. The investment and the jobs that he brought to Prospect and to neighbouring suburbs had a massive impact. I doubt we will ever see a man like Bob Hawke again—certainly not a leader—and perhaps for good reason: Some parts of his personality should not be repeated. But he led in many things. I believe he was our greatest peacetime Prime Minister and I do not think we will see his like again. Vale, Bob Hawke. You will be truly missed.

BONDI ICEBERGS CLUB

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (17:09): Every year, members of my local Bondi Icebergs Club gather to open the winter swim season. I have had the pleasure of officiating at the ceremony over the past few years and this year I was lucky to do so again. So on Sunday 5 May 2019 hundreds of club members and locals braved the wind and rain to celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of the winter swim season. Bondi Icebergs is Australia's oldest winter swimming club. Members have made it their tradition to support a charity throughout each year and give back to the community. This year's charities included Rainbow Club, the R U OK? foundation and the Nelune Foundation.

The Rainbow Club was founded by Rob Siddons, OAM, MBE. It is an amazing not-for-profit organisation that provides swimming lessons to children with disabilities, encouraging them to swim, enjoy themselves and stay safe in the water. There are 22 clubs across the State, including one in my electorate: the Bondi Rainbow Club on Brighton Avenue in Bondi. All lessons are personal and individualised, led by qualified swimming teachers. Learning to swim can be a daunting experience, so the work the club does in providing safe and welcoming swimming environments is so valuable. I think it is fitting that the Icebergs support this work.

The R U OK? foundation is a long-term partner with Bondi Icebergs. Maryanne Larkin and her late husband, Gavin Larkin, founded the organisation that is committed to suicide prevention. The wonderful Maryanne, as she is, was there on the day with her family. She attends the event each year and, together with Icebergs, promotes camaraderie and community supports through swimming activities. The Nelune Foundation is another wonderful organisation that helps children, adults and their families to cope with the impact of cancer by providing emotional support and practical care. The foundation was co-founded in 2001 by two friends,

Nelune Rajapakse, AM, and Anna Guillan, AM, who are both incredibly strong women who serve our State and our nation well.

This year at the winter swim opener Lucy Rose sang a beautiful rendition of the Australian anthem to start the event. Lucy is a member of the Bondi Icecubes. The Icecubes are the largest junior winter swimming club in Australia and the fifth-largest of all winter swimming clubs. They are based at Icebergs. After the anthem there was the traditional ice ceremony, where club members pick up a block of solid ice, line up around the perimeter of the Icebergs swimming pool and jump in. Of course, before the big jump there is a countdown. This year it was led by the club's oldest life member, Les Crane. Following this, the winter season kicked off with the first heat of club races.

It was truly a wonderful day and community event—very cold but still enjoyable. I thank Bondi Icebergs patron Geoff Carr, President Ben Dullard, Vice-President Noel O'Dwyer, Captain Ben Morrissey and general manager Kerrie Brien for hosting the amazing event, and for inviting me. Thanks also to the board of directors, including John Nurmi, Nicki Vinni Combe, Rebecca Piercy, Jane Lloyd, Nick Fitzgerald and Vijay Jootna, for helping make the club what it is today. Also in attendance was the former head of the Bondi Chamber of Commerce, Mary Anne Cronin, Waverley Councillor Leon Goltsman and the now member for Wentworth, Dave Sharma.

I commend Icebergs members for their commitment to swimming, for building a strong community and for maintaining their health through regular exercise—even against the elements. Their club plays such a big role in my local community and nationally because of the pre-eminence of what they do and their position on the world-famous Bondi Beach. They build the social lives of my local community members. In doing so, they create a place of good physical and mental health not only for the local community but also for anyone who visits the Bondi Icebergs Club. I commend my private member's statement to the House.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:14): I compliment the member for Vacluse for her ongoing support of many community activities. I could not help but speak in support of the Rainbow Club, the Bondi Icebergs and the R U OK? Foundation, which is very important in suicide prevention. The only thing I would like to add is that coming from Tweed, throwing ice blocks into the pool and jumping in is a bit different. I applaud the member for her ongoing efforts, and her understanding and compassion in looking after those community groups. It is part of our role in this place, but it warms my heart to see the member for Vacluse doing that.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:15): As members on both sides of the House know, homelessness is a major issue. We see it here in Sydney. It does not matter which electorate I visit, I see people sleeping rough— young and old, families, young mothers and young children. As we know, the weather is very inclement out there. I am pleased to announce that the Liberal-Nationals Government is taking some positive steps to help solve this problem, particularly in the Tweed. In February former Minister Pru Goward announced various initiatives in the Tweed. One of them was the establishment of just on 50 units, 30 per cent of which will be reserved for social housing and 10 per cent for affordable housing. Is that enough? No. Homelessness is a major issue in my town.

I applaud the Minister, Gareth Ward, for announcing just on \$5.1 million over the next three years for an outreach program, which will enable the Government to put a helping hand on somebody's shoulder. A lot of people sleeping rough find it intimidating to queue up at Centrelink or at shopfronts. This model has been rolled out in New South Wales for the second time. Many members will understand the issues that the people camping in the tents at Martin Place face. I am pleased to have been advised that just on 97 per cent of them now have full-time accommodation, which is an enormous thing. Homelessness is an unusual and difficult issue. Is there a silver bullet to fix it? I do not think so.

Often people are homeless for a variety of reasons, including addictions to legal drugs or alcohol and illicit drugs, as we see in our local areas. It is depressing. The new initiative will achieve many things within my electorate. One of the features of outreach is that it is a jointly led multidisciplinary team including Family and Community Services [FACS], Housing and NGO support workers to provide comprehensive outreach, case management and support from the street through to post-crisis support; dedicated FACS and Housing officers with authority and independence to apply flexibility and offer housing solutions to those clients who are eligible; a service strategy to ensure culturally appropriate service delivery to Aboriginal people sleeping rough; and a memorandum of understanding between key agencies and partners for referral.

Unfortunately last night just over the border in Coolangatta a homeless person was severely bashed, which is deplorable. There have been a number of requests from my electorate to do more. Therefore tonight I am pleased to announce \$5.1 million funding for the program. Occasionally on either a Friday night or Saturday night I do a shift in a police car in my local area from 6.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m., which has given me the opportunity to see

and the ability to understand what happens in my local streets at 3.00 a.m., 4.00 a.m. or 5.00 a.m. Unfortunately I have witnessed not only domestic violence and fatal car accidents, but also people living rough on the streets and its affect on them. For many years I have been lobbying hard for change.

I applaud the Minister for this initiative, but we can do a lot more. Most Thursdays when Parliament sits, I volunteer at Matthew Talbot, which is a great organisation run by St Vincent de Paul. Just on 330 people who sleep rough can sleep in that facility. Initially I was concerned walking down the streets around Martin Place, looking at homeless people. I must admit, I did cross the street once or twice. Now I know those people; I know them by their first name. It is all about self-respect and giving them self-esteem. I think this Government is doing a great job. Should we do more to look after the homeless in our streets? Absolutely.

FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE IRAQI COMMUNITY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:20): I acknowledge and pay tribute to the tremendous contributions of the broader Iraqi community that has settled in and made Fairfield its new home since the early waves of migration, starting in the 1980s. As one of the most culturally diverse communities in Australia, Fairfield is home to many Iraqi-born people, with a diverse mixture of Arabic, Assyrian, Chaldean, Kurdish, Armenian, Mandaean and Yazidi backgrounds. The groups are all intrinsically diverse in religion including Christians—both Catholic and Orthodox—Mandeans and Muslims. We have a vast cultural mix, which places Fairfield at the epicentre of multiculturalism in south-west Sydney. The Iraqi community plays an integral role in supporting and promoting multicultural values and inclusion throughout our great city.

The Iraqi community have been pioneers of many industries and have played a pivotal role in shaping the Fairfield we know and love today. I am incredibly thankful that I have had the honour and privilege of working alongside them and representing them locally and here in Parliament. Throughout the year members of the Iraqi community host numerous events, which are great contributors to the economy and the promotion of Iraqi culture, heritage and faiths, while highlighting the importance of local community initiatives and services. Recent events include the Assyrian new year celebrations at the Fairfield Showground, the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum Biggest Morning Tea, the ordination of Mandaean Clergyman of Perstons Mendee, the Assyrian Democratic Movement's celebration of its fortieth anniversary, cultural and heritage exhibitions hosted by the Assyrian cultural and heritage association, Chaldean Flag Day, community concerts and the grand opening of the new Chaldean League of NSW's office and community centre in Mount Druitt, which will offer a great array of services to Iraqis from far and wide. I say well done to them.

I have also had the great pleasure of hosting Iraqi parliamentarians who visited the electorate to engage with the local community. They learnt about the tremendous contributions of the Iraqi people here in Australia. Additionally, recently I was interviewed by Alyasiry Ahmed of Iraqi TV who wanted to showcase how Australian parliamentarians interact and engage with their local community, while highlighting the great efforts of local Iraqi community leaders in the area. I must admit that it was truly humbling to have received so many greetings and kind offers of support and congratulations upon my recent re-election as the member for Fairfield.

Fairfield is incredibly lucky to have so many talented, passionate and dedicated leaders who stand up for their community's needs and concerns while advocating for better services, support and infrastructure. Shining examples of such leadership include His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia of the Holy Apostolic Assyrian Church of the East, His Grace Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel of the Good Shepherd Church in Wakeley and Archbishop Amel Shamon Nona of the Chaldean Catholic Church. The wonderful religious leaders work with parishioners to provide outreach and support services for the homeless, and those in need throughout the wider community.

The sentiments are echoed by the efforts of the Association of Iraqi Academics in Australia and New Zealand and the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum Committee, which continues to motivate, guide and emphasise the importance of education and persisting with studies throughout the broader Iraqi community. They understand the importance of getting a quality education and the value it adds not only to your own future, but also to the community as a whole. Other fine examples include the Assyrian Democratic Movement's Sydney branch, the Assyrian Australian National Federation, the Chaldean League Australia, Chaldean Youth Union, the Assyrian Aid Society and the Assyrian Universal Alliance, which collectively drives the promotion and conservation of culture and heritage throughout our community while advocating for social cohesion and harmony for all.

These are just a few examples of the foundations and forces that have driven Fairfield's Iraqi community forward and will continue to drive it for many years to come. I also thank and commend the numerous Iraqi associations, community groups, businesses and advocacy groups for their tireless support and promotion of the importance of culturally diverse communities while providing much-needed support and outreach services to the greater Fairfield community. Fairfield is truly a great place where everyone is welcomed without prejudice and

this is, in part, thanks to the Iraqi community. Together, we will continue to grow, evolve and build upon our strong foundations as we strive to make Fairfield a better place for us all.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (17:25): For too many years, domestic violence and family violence have been a curse on our communities. Across Australia one in three women above the age of 15 will experience at least one incident of violence from a current or former partner. Wagga Wagga is no exception. According to reports, an average of 25 domestic violence incidents present to Wagga Wagga police each week. That does not include incidents in surrounding towns across the region. In August last year statewide data showed the rate of domestic violence across Wagga Wagga was 29 per cent above the State average, with an increase of 40 per cent across five years. This week *The Daily Advertiser* published an article identifying the legal battles that victims of domestic violence face every week. According to that article, police referred 1,095 cases to Wagga Wagga Family Support Services for domestic and family violence across just five months this year.

It is simply disgraceful that, according to the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, these appallingly high numbers have either increased or remained stable year after year. So how do we as a community begin to stem this scourge? Wagga Wagga has amazing not-for-profit groups, organisations and individuals doing incredible work to protect victims, prosecute perpetrators and prevent future incidents of violence. I am pleased to report that we have gone one step further with a pilot project titled the DV Project: 2650, which is aimed at preventing domestic violence. Auspiced by the Wagga Women's Health Centre in partnership with Wagga Wagga City Council and funded by the State Government's Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund, the project takes a multifaceted, whole community approach to the prevention of domestic violence across the city, focusing on the root cause of the problem—gender inequality. Just last night Wagga Wagga's the DV Project: 2650 held a public forum titled "My Story. Our Story," at the Civic Theatre in Wagga Wagga. This event discussed actionable steps to address the rate of domestic violence across the city. It was partly funded by Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network through the Australian Government's Primary Health Network program.

I thank special guest and veteran journalist Ray Martin and the evening's panellists: Wagga Women's Health Centre Vice President Genevieve Fleming, School Liaison Police Officer Senior Constable Troy Fisher and NRL Respect Community Manager Steve Meredith, who facilitated the community conversation that followed. I also commend the tireless efforts of the Riverina police district officers as well as the social and health workers across various communities who, despite being faced with difficult and often complex emotional circumstances, put heart and soul into helping the women and children impacted by acts of physical, sexual, financial, emotional and psychological abuse.

I particularly acknowledge Wagga Wagga Family Support Services for providing aid to women and children experiencing domestic violence through its pilot case management program. Last financial year, these government-funded case workers helped more than 1,000 women access immediate support services, linking them to housing, legal aid, victim-related services, and financial counselling, just to name a few. When Wagga Wagga Family Support Services expressed fear over continuation of the program funding come July this year, I took its concern directly to the Government. As a result, I was pleased this week to inform director Jenna Roberts the Government had committed to supporting the program for another year. An evaluation of the service will also be undertaken during this 12-month period. I thank the New South Wales Premier, and the Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for their prompt action, and for their ongoing commitment and work in this critical space.

In addition, I also acknowledge the Government for its decision to become a member of Our Watch, the organisation pushing for the prevention of violence against women and children nationwide. While I note the wonderful and heart-warming work being done across my electorate—as well as the commitment of nationwide and statewide bodies—we can do more. It is simply not good enough for the domestic violence plague to increase or even remain unchanged. There is a strong link between inequality, disrespect and domestic violence. We must address the gender divide and social norms that foster sexism, misogyny and prejudice. The victim blaming, the stigma around reporting of abuse and the head-in-the-sand attitude that this is not a problem or that this is a problem to be kept behind closed doors have to change. Finally, I implore my fellow members of Parliament to lead the way. Change starts when we check our own attitudes towards women and afford all women full and equal respect.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS PIE TIME

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (17:30): The beautiful Southern Highlands are part of my electorate, and at this time of the year the temperature gets a little cool. What better way to stay warm than to have a good old Aussie pie? As part of a major tourism initiative Destination Southern Highlands, in conjunction with Destination NSW, has put together a month-long event named Pie Time. This event showcases the incredible

variety of pies and pastries, sweets and wines available in the Southern Highlands. There is even a pie trail that you can follow to sample the many varieties that are on offer. There have been some great campaigns in the past, from winning the America's Cup to Hoges's, "Put another shrimp on the barbie," but Pie Time is a campaign that takes the humble pie to a new level.

Pie Time is a month-long event climaxing at the Pie Fest, to be held at the Bong Bong Picnic Racecourse on 29 June. There are too many activities to mention here, but I encourage members to visit pietime.com.au to see the full range. I had the pleasure of launching this event in the Speaker's Garden last week. Members seemed to enjoy the festive fare from the Southern Highlands. Indeed, the member for Upper Hunter, a self-confessed expert on pies, gave it his full tick of approval—as did many other members. I thank Graeme Day from 2ST, who was the master of ceremonies at the launch. The exhibitors at the event were Gumnut Patisserie, Heatherbrae Pies, Stones Patisserie and, yes, the iconic Robertson Pie Shop was front and centre.

Mr Stephen Kamper: I love them.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: They are beautiful. I have to show my bias—the massaman beef curry pie from Gumnut Patisserie is my favourite, although my office staff have a strong preference for the camembert, brie and leek pie from the Robertson Pie Shop. The pie trail takes in all of these venues as well as so many others in the Highlands, so come down to my electorate and experience Pie Time. From Hill Top in the north to Bundanoon in the south, there are 26 stops on the pie trail. We even have many low-calorie pies on the pie trail, so pie enthusiasts can taste at each stop.

The fast-evolving wine region of the Southern Highlands provided liquid refreshment at the launch. Winemakers such as Mark Bourne from Cuttaway Hill Wines and Natalie Dare from Centennial Vineyards, Bowral, are part of the emerging group that are putting Southern Highlands wines on the map. Wingecarribee Shire councillors and staff were key to driving this event. Steve Rosa, the pie man from Destination Southern Highlands, who wore his understated pie-vis outfit at the launch, set the tone for a great campaign. Tina Hansen-Jones, an artist from Paint Pinot, provided the creative side of the event.

I had the pleasure of attending the Best Pie awards presentation on Saturday 1 June at Mittagong RSL. Despite the temptation to sample the variety of sweet pastries on offer from Gumnut Patisserie, I managed to come away vowing to do a little more exercise the next day. This has the added value of helping me to be in better shape for my next Golden Oldies rugby match with the Bowral Blacks. I congratulate winners on the night, especially the winner of overall Best Pie from Heatherbrae Pies. Cody Brown from Heatherbrae said he was over the moon to have won this award.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Well deserved.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: Excellent. I lay on the table for the benefit of members a full list of the winners and a pie trail map so that members can follow the trail. As I indicated in my inaugural speech, the Southern Highlands is a major tourist destination and events such as this are just an example of the innovation in this region to attract more tourists. The event is a major economic boost to the region, and provides local businesses and attractions with additional patronage. The event is also good for local jobs and the creation of additional employment opportunities. Tourism to the region was estimated to be worth in the order of \$296 million in the year ended December 2018. I congratulate all concerned with this event and I acknowledge the great work done by Destination NSW.

I thank in particular Jenna Campbell and her staff for their participation in the launch of the event. I also thank my office staff Zoe McInerney and Jennifer Martin, who coordinated arrangements with all of those involved with the launch—they did a great job. I thank the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney for his participation at the launch. I note that in recent times the parliamentary friends of various groups have held a number of meetings. In the near future I will initiate a Parliamentary Friends of Pies and, judging by the attendance of members who enjoyed the pies at the launch last week, there should be no shortage of takers. After experiencing Pie Time, participants will find that eating a pie will never be the same again. The Wollondilly electorate could well become the pie-eating capital of Australia. Once again I thank everyone. Keep enjoying those pies.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I thank the member and commend puddings to him as well. I think he should consider that.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:35): I commend the member for Wollondilly for his private member's statement. He seems to undertake his responsibilities as the local member with gusto. He is a shining example of a pie connoisseur, in all its forms. He is an excellent example of someone who is very proud of his local area and is a proud supporter of all small businesses in all their forms. I commend the member for his support

for the Southern Highlands. On behalf of all of those in the House I thank him for an excellent day in the Speaker's Garden.

ST GEORGE HOSPITAL

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:35): I speak on my favourite subject, St George Hospital. Perhaps my proudest achievement over the past eight years of this Government is its record spend on health infrastructure, and front-line health services and staff. I have made it my mission as the member for Oatley to campaign and advocate for much-needed upgrades and redevelopment of St George Hospital. This Government is ensuring that communities throughout New South Wales have access to first-class health facilities, with state-of-the-art maternity and birthing facilities, newborn care and paediatrics being delivered as part of this redevelopment. I have confidence in St George Hospital. My son, James, was born at St George Hospital five years ago. My wife and I are currently expecting our second child later this year. Everyone in the St George region can be proud of the hospital.

The New South Wales Government's record \$8.4 billion statewide health infrastructure building boom, as well as the nearly \$10 billion invested since 2011, is only possible due to our strong economic management. In addition, a record 16,000 front-line staff have been delivered since 2011, an extra 8,300 front-line hospital staff are being recruited and another 100 new and upgraded hospitals and other health facilities are being built in addition to the 100 already delivered. One of my first priorities as the member for Oatley was the reopening and refurbishment of the hydrotherapy pool at St George Hospital. Over 13 months the pool underwent significant refurbishment to provide important services to patients with a wide range of acute and chronic conditions. That was the result of an investment of \$145,000 by the Government, together with additional funding and support from the Lions clubs of Hurstville, Kogarah and Rockdale.

St George Hospital is now up to stage three of its redevelopment, totalling more than \$700 million worth of investment, including a new acute services building, a birthing suite, emergency department and additional parking. This redevelopment began with stage one in 2014, when the \$41 million new emergency department was opened, together with the improved hydrotherapy pool. That is in addition to stage two of the redevelopment, with the seven-storey acute services building that now includes a new intensive care department, new operating theatres, more inpatient beds, cardiac catheter laboratories, a sterilising service department and a new helipad, as well as additional parking.

While our hospital was forgotten for 16 years under Labor, it has not been forgotten by this Government. This year I welcomed 106 new doctors to the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, who were part of the new interns starting across the State. Forty-three of those new doctors were for St George Hospital, with the remainder going to nearby health services around our area, such as Sutherland Hospital. Furthermore, in 2018 the Kogarah Ambulance Superstation, part of the New South Wales Government's record \$150 million ambulance infrastructure boom, was officially opened and delivers exceptional emergency care. This superstation delivers the modern infrastructure paramedics need to deliver emergency medical care to patients in the Kogarah, Rockdale and Oatley electorates in the St George community. It is great to witness our local paramedics being supported by a dedicated team that cleans and restocks its vehicles, maximising the time for paramedics to undertake clinical care on the road. This was followed by the first paramedic response point at Mortdale.

More recently I had the opportunity to announce the newly awarded tender for the state-of-the-art \$11.5 million birthing suite and refurbished operating theatres at St George Hospital. The former acute services ward will be the location of the new birthing unit, which will host fit-for-purpose birthing rooms including water immersion facilities. This followed the Premier's announcement earlier this year of an additional \$385 million of funding for stage three of the hospital's redevelopment, which will create a new precinct including an ambulatory care unit, outpatient and day surgery services, a new day rehabilitation unit, increased subacute inpatient beds and a hub for community health and home-based services. The works will also include the refurbishment of existing operating theatres in the hospital. I look forward to keeping the House up to date on any further developments surrounding St George Hospital.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:41): National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day was marked on 1 May. On that day, in my electorate of Maitland, I joined representatives of Carrie's Place Domestic Violence and Homelessness Services, members of our community, and family members and loved ones of those who have been killed as a result of domestic violence. We gathered at the Seat of Remembrance, which was kindly installed by the Maitland City Council on the banks of the Hunter River, and laid roses in memory of those we have lost. The damning figures released today by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research show that the Government's failure to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault continues.

In the two years to March 2019 domestic assaults in New South Wales increased by 6 per cent; indecent assaults and other sexual offences increased by 5.8 per cent; stalking, intimidation and harassment increased by 3.5 per cent; and breaches of apprehended violence orders increased by 9.6 per cent. Those are terrible statistics. The remaining 14 categories of crime remained stable. Some of the increases of domestic violence in particular regions are staggering: a 44 per cent increase in Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury, a 33 per cent increase in Sutherland, a 26 per cent increase in the Far West and Orana, and a 21 per cent increase in outer south-west Sydney. These statistics should give us all pause for thought. The Government has been completely ineffective in stopping domestic and sexual violence and it must adjust its approach to provide more informal supports to save lives. This data is particularly concerning in light of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare *Report into domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*, released earlier this week, which concluded:

Between 2014-15 and 2016-17, the rate of hospitalisation of women assaulted by a spouse or partner has risen by 23% from 31 to 38 hospitalisations per 100,000 population. We are hopeful that perhaps this increase in reporting is about women feeling more comfortable in reporting abuse, but this is really about the severity of domestic family violence and the crisis that we are experiencing now. So far, according to Destroy the Joint's Counting Dead Women Project, a heartbreaking project, 21 women in Australia have died as a result of domestic violence this year alone, and of those, 11—over half—were from this State. The Premier's only State priority in relation to preventing domestic violence is reducing domestic violence reoffending; reducing recidivism. Like all the Government's other targets to reduce recidivism, it appears not only has it failed to meet this target but also the figures have gone backwards, with breaches of apprehended violence orders increasing by 9.6 per cent. The Berejiklian Government's only response to this crisis was to join Our Watch—which was good—after three years of lobbying by Labor and key stakeholders. However, although being a part of the ongoing national conversation is vital, it is not enough on its own. Labor took an historic package of \$158 million to the March election to help end domestic, family and sexual violence. The Government made no additional commitments to the portfolio.

Since being returned to power, the Premier has axed the portfolio of the prevention of sexual assault, even after it took the Government three years to draft a strategy. It placed the Prevention of Domestic Violence portfolio in the Attorney General's Justice Cluster—away from Family and Community Services, where informal supports that are so necessary to keep women and children safe can be provided. Because of this move, this year we will again have incomplete reporting on the achievements in the domestic violence portfolio and on the commitment of finances. What better way to hide the lack of spending and the lack of outcomes under this Government! Because of the lack of a truly whole-of-government approach to preventing domestic violence and sexual assault, and because the portfolio has been placed directly within the control of the Premier—ensuring reporting and budget statements are coordinated by her own department—this Government will continue to fail to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence in New South Wales. It is incumbent on all of us in this place to do all we can to stop the killing, to stop the hospitalisation, to stop the trauma. That is what the Opposition will continue to do.

PITTWATER ELECTORATE ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (17:46): Pittwater contains one of the richest and most diverse environments in the world. It has a greater variety of plants and animals across its 175 square kilometres than all of north-west Europe. It is the only place on the planet where five bodies of water intersect—the Hawkesbury and Cowan Creek to the west, the Pittwater to the south, Brisbane Water to the north and the Pacific Ocean in the east. It is full of impossible rock formations whose colour changes with the time and season, and whose sylvan hills house one of the greatest concentrations of Indigenous cultural heritage on the globe. Of course, all of this natural bounty is an inheritance from the Aboriginal peoples who first settled this drowned river valley after the last ice age, and who inhabited Pittwater, owned Pittwater, and sustained Pittwater for many thousands of years. Pittwater's villages and hamlets all rest on land owned by Aboriginal people, which was taken, subdivided, sold and granted without their consent.

It is important to note exactly how much was taken from the Aboriginal people of Pittwater, right from the earliest contact with the British. In March 1788 Governor Phillip and a party of Royal Marines visited Pittwater and were warmly welcomed by the local Aboriginal people, who, from contemporary accounts, enjoyed a high standard of living from the plentiful marine life and well stocked hunting lands. However, within 18 months the majority of the Indigenous residents of Pittwater were killed by European disease—likely smallpox. The extent of the plague was so extreme that even the name of the local Eora people has become shrouded in history, although the name Guringai is commonly used today. It is tragic that so much rich collected memory, history, knowledge and culture was lost in those early years.

Nonetheless, despite so much adversity, Pittwater's Aboriginal people have endured. Today, Neil Evers, a Newport local whose Aboriginality was hidden from him as a child for fear that he might be taken from his family, is proud to provide a welcome to Guringai country. So many other Pittwater locals have been instrumental in uncovering and celebrating the extraordinary history, legacy and future of Pittwater's Aboriginal community,

and I am indebted to Geoff Searle, Roger Sayers, Nan Bosler, OAM, and John Ogden for helping me develop a richer understanding of Pittwater's original Saltwater peoples.

Under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council has been empowered to claim back unalienated Crown land as recognition and recompense for what was taken, making them one of the largest landowners in Pittwater today. Sadly, much of the residual Crown land that remained to be claimed was of little commercial value, either through inaccessibility, natural hazard risk or environmental significance, frustrating a key object of the land rights Act, to enable economic empowerment for local Aboriginal people. This has resulted in poor planning outcomes, where land has been rezoned unwisely, or in planning blight, where the wider social, cultural, environment and economic values of land cannot be unlocked.

In this context, I acknowledge the continuing great work of Nathan Moran from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, who has worked tirelessly to protect, restore and find effective, sustainable uses for Aboriginal lands on the northern beaches. Our contemporary system of apportioning rights to property in land, and of determining uses of land, is all built upon a great historical injustice, and that injustice itself is founded upon an extraordinary ignorance and arrogance: the legal doctrine of *terra nullius*—that Australia's First Peoples had no concept of land ownership and held no rights to the land they had sustained for more than 60,000 years. What makes the injustice so profound is that Aboriginal people have an extraordinarily rich relationship with land.

In fact, as Dr Ed Wensing from the National Centre for Indigenous Studies explains, Aboriginal people have the oldest continuing system of land tenure in the world. Unlike Western conceptions of property in land that are based around subdivision and separation—of land uses, of people from nature—and which reduce land relations to concepts of control and exclusion, Aboriginal conceptions of property blend people and land together. So much can be learned from Aboriginal understandings of land and our relationship to it, particularly as Sydney becomes larger and denser, and as we live more connected and less atomistic lives. It is worth noting on World Environment Day that our biodiversity does not respect cadastral boundaries.

Although neoliberal conceptions of private property and the right to exclude have been foundational in enabling the accumulation of capital and economic development, all of us have a sense of ownership of our community—irrespective of whose name might be ascribed on a certificate of title. So much of our land is held in common. In Pittwater, for example, we have Barrenjoey High School and Mona Vale Hospital and even our natural strips and road reserves. We therefore have a shared interest, and opportunity, in using all of our land resources—such as the submerged land in the waters of Pittwater—to achieve better social, economic and environmental outcomes for everyone. As Aldo Leopold once wrote, "We abuse land because we treat it as a commodity belonging to us." Once we understand land as part of a community to which we all belong, we are on a path to treat it with reverence and respect.

HOMELESSNESS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:51): Ask the people who are sleeping rough in Gosford and Woy Woy tonight, or anyone sleeping rough in New South Wales, what they could do with some of the money from that light rail blowout of \$2.7 billion or the Sydney stadium knockdown of \$2 billion and they will tell you that it could be used to invest in a roof over their heads. Homelessness is on the rise in our community of Gosford and other communities across New South Wales. It is tough when you sit in this place and know that these numbers are very heavily impacted by Government policy and a lack of support resources. I commend the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services and congratulate him on his new job. The claim that we can halve homelessness by 2025 astounds me. It seems unambitious. This Government has seen the employment of people with disabilities decrease from 4.7 per cent to 2.9 per cent, and another unambitious target is to increase the employment rate to former levels by 2025.

The halving of homelessness is another unambitious target that allows numbers to increase by neglecting the area. It allows numbers of people with disabilities to slip from the public sector and into unemployment. Homelessness has increased by 70 per cent since this Government came to power. So, yes, let us work on this decrease to 50 per cent—but how high does it have to be to decrease to 50 per cent? In the Gosford electorate we are feeling the lack of services. The Premier and the mayor of the City of Sydney city blitz their inner-city homeless folk, and the member for Tweed brags that 97 per cent of those people are now housed—or, rather, fantastic services concentrated in the city have succeeded in pushing the non-compliant homeless up the train line to the Central Coast and into other communities outside the city centre.

In our community, where private rental costs are rising and youth unemployment is way higher than the State average, we see a massive gap between the location of the homeless and of specialist homelessness services. Today I call out the lack of services to support people sleeping rough in my electorate. There is a need for additional outreach services on the peninsula. We need someone in the Gosford electorate linking our rough sleepers to service providers; we do not want to hear the ongoing stories from the homeless about how they have

no chances so why would they bother trying to secure housing, to detox, to secure rehabilitation or to see a GP, let alone access more complex health services, especially mental health services.

Jamie cannot even get in to see a GP for a script to fix his mental health issues. What happens then? Laurie was sleeping rough and he had a massive hernia. He could not get to see a GP but we now have that sorted. Laurie has had an operation and is back at work, so he has an income. Mel completed detox and was good for a week. Mel now is committed to detox and to rehab. It is absolutely impossible to line up detox and rehab, and those who have already had one chance are put at the bottom of a list that is so long that we cannot even begin to imagine it. Where is the mental health support for the young lady who is pregnant and sleeping rough on Woy Woy oval? Why should our local council have to put up a fence so that the behaviour of some people sleeping rough does not impact our local soccer club? Why should the local member of Parliament have to harass the police to increase patrols to protect young soccer coaches, who can no longer coach by themselves? The numbers in the local soccer club have diminished because there are needles on the ground. How embarrassing! I thank the local police for their support.

Today I share the story of Kim and Luke. Two years ago they were sleeping rough and now, through absolute perseverance and hand-holding, they are housed in Gosford. It was a long journey, led by the dignity, perseverance and sheer determination of Kim, and a pretty dogged commitment by Housing NSW to pursue a positive outcome. I also send a shout-out to Coast Shelter, which for 26 years has provided accommodation every night for over 200 men, women, families and young people on the coast. Thanks to Catherine, Jo and Nikki on the peninsula. Catherine at Mary Mac's Place does an amazing job supplying meals, food, showers and clothes and washing facilities. Jo looks after our over-55s—she is my go-to lady if I know of an older person in desperate circumstances. Nikki at St Vincent de Paul offers services to our community with next to nothing. They do an amazing job.

So does our Regional Youth Support Service, which uses the Rent Choice Youth program to help our young people into housing and training. Tonight I encourage people from my electorate and a long way beyond—I am sure the member for Wyong will join us, and maybe the member for Cessnock as well—to come to the Million Star sleep-out, which is a one-night sleep-out at Camp Breakaway to raise money for Coast Shelter. But it should not be up to charities. There has been a rail cost blowout of \$2.7 billion and the knocking down of a stadium. I encourage the members of the Liberal Government to leave the city and invest in regional New South Wales.

WYONG ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (17:56): We are approaching the 2019-20 State budget, so tonight I will give the Treasurer some advice on where he might like to spend some money in the Wyong electorate. I start by pointing out that before the 2015 election the Liberal Party held a 4.6 per cent margin in my electorate and after the 2015 election Labor held an 8.7 per cent margin—about a 12.3 per cent swing to Labor. After the last election we added a further 3.7 per cent. That took the margin to 12.4 per cent, which is a 17 per cent turnaround from when the Liberals held the electorate of Wyong. I am comfortable in saying that the people of Wyong are confident that I am representing them and their interests.

First on my list for the Treasurer is the Wyong Town Centre project. We are not asking for the full amount of that project—it is estimated to cost \$245 million and will take several years to complete—but for at least \$20 million in this year's budget to get the work started. Planning for this project started in 2009. But in 2019, and \$27 million later, nothing has happened. We have not had a shovel in the ground. The NRMA has indicated that it is the number one priority on the Central Coast for road projects. It has been there for a long time. It is time to get started. So the first priority is \$20 million-plus for that project. Second on the list is to build lifts at Tuggerah railway station. The Government finally came on board, but that was after Labor had allocated money to build those lifts and started digging holes in the ground. The Liberals got elected, they took the money away. Finally, at the last election, they joined with the Labor Party, the member for The Entrance and myself, and committed to building lifts at Tuggerah railway station. So our number two priority is the \$5 million to get that project not just started but finished.

The third priority on the list is very important. In the 2015 election the Government committed \$200 million to upgrade Wyong Hospital. It then tried to privatise the hospital, which we fought off. Over the last four years \$23 million has been allocated to getting that project started. Now we need the rest of that money to get that hospital project well and truly underway but we need an additional \$30 million-plus to do what was promised in 2015. Obviously, the cost of the project has gone up but there is no extra money. That means the hospital staff are having to shrink the size of rooms. We also face the prospect that the radiography department will go from its current 10 beds to eight beds in the redevelopment. Work that one out! They spend all that extra money and they shrink the rooms—that is not good. We need the \$30 million-plus, as well as the \$200 million

originally promised. The fourth thing on the list is funds to progress the new primary school at Warnervale. That school was announced with great fanfare in 2017-18. Has it started?

Ms Liesl Tesch: No.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: No, it has not started. They have sort of selected a site and gone through the process of picking a name for it, but they have not allocated any funds to start building it. Number five on the list is money for the air conditioning of our schools and solar projects, which the Government promised across all of our local schools. There is also a range of other local funding for roads et cetera. We are asking the Government to start delivering on what it has promised so that in four years' time we are not looking back and saying that this project or that project has not started because not enough money was allocated to get the projects done. We cannot wait another four years for this to happen. It should be in this budget.

FILIPINO AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (18:01): Since I have had the privilege of being the member for Riverstone I have represented members of the Filipino-Australian community, who are quite numerous in the local government area of Blacktown, as well as in other parts of Sydney and New South Wales. At this time of year I have the privilege of attending a number of events to celebrate the declaration of Filipino independence back in 1898. As some members may be aware, the Philippines was formerly, for about 300 years, a colony of Spain. It then spent a period of time under the domination of the United States and, for a brief period in World War II, under Japan. It finally achieved full independence after World War II, but the first declaration of independence that Filipinos celebrate occurred in 1898, at a time when there was a war between Spain and the USA. Its origin was in the Americas but it involved colonies of Spain such as the Philippines.

The American fleet defeated the Spanish at the Battle of Manila Bay in 1898 and the Filipino people, who had been agitating for independence, and who had developed a movement called the Katipunan to work towards independence, had their own anthem and their own flag, then took the opportunity to declare their independence. There was a ceremony in June of 1898, which has since been celebrated every year on 12 June, when that declaration was made. General Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed the sovereignty and independence of the Philippine islands from Spanish colonisation at that time. The Filipino people did not have an easy path to independence. Australians can take our democracy and freedom somewhat for granted because of the smoother path that we have enjoyed in this country. Our process to Federation and full independence was achieved at the ballot box. It was achieved through progressive legislation and through evolution of institutions which Britain bequeathed to us.

In the Philippines independence was achieved through war and sacrifice, with heroes losing their lives for the cause of Filipino independence. There was suffering but fortunately that ended in 1946, when full independence was achieved. That struggle is remembered by my constituents and others of Filipino Australian heritage each year in June. It is my privilege to attend events such as that hosted by the Philippine Community Council of New South Wales that celebrate the day, more than 100 years ago, when the flag was first flown, the anthem first sung and the declaration of independence first made. The troubles, journeys and difficulties that have occurred since then are built on that foundation of pride and a spirit of independence, resilience and strength. They worked towards the goal of self-determination and the right, as an independent people, to run their own country.

I congratulate those who have travelled to this country to become Australian citizens and take advantage of the opportunities it provides. They have brought with them that spirit of independence, a commitment to democracy, a commitment to human rights and the celebration of betterment for the whole community. I thank them for becoming part of my community in the electorate of Riverstone and the broader New South Wales community. They have enriched our area through a passion for family and community, strength of faith, independence and a sense of right. When I interact with the Filipino Australian community it becomes obvious that there is a willingness to serve and volunteer with charities, service groups and endeavours in their communities. They are not backward in coming forward, and make themselves part of the community and contribute to it. I congratulate them on the occasion of the anniversary of Filipino independence and thank them for their contribution.

HUNTER COALMINING

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (18:06): I begin my speech by taking the unusual step of recognising the contribution made by the member for Riverstone. I do that because he said in the Chamber that this place should be about inspiration, hope, positivity, connectedness, reality and recognising the wonderful. Tonight I speak about the fearmongering and scare campaigns that have been launched in my community regarding coal. We are all elected to this place to offer our communities truth, honesty, transparency, inspiration, hope and reality as to what the future looks like. Sadly, during the two recent election campaigns, in my area of

the Hunter Valley—Cessnock and the middle and Upper Hunter; an area traditionally known as "the coalfields"—the Coalition Government took the opportunity to misquote Labor's talk of "transitioning from coal" as Labor "hates coal". Nothing could be further from the truth.

Irrespective of your political colours, in the coming decades coal is going to be a part of our economic reality—as it has been for the past 200 years. Coalmining started in the Hunter Valley, and the Hunter Valley may be one of the last places in Australia where it continues to exist—that is the reality. The scaremongering amongst people whose livelihoods depend on coal does no justice to the State and Federal Parliaments. It does no justice to this Chamber. I sometimes sit in the Chamber and listen to comments made by members with deep roots in the coal community—if Hansard could insert sarcasm that would be appreciated. The member for Willoughby and the member for Epping talk about coal as if it is in their backyards.

I place on record the fundamental answer I give when people in my community ask, "Clayton, does Labor support coal or not?" The reality is that 80 per cent of the coal that comes out of the Hunter Valley, where the people in my community work, goes offshore. It is about international demand. The reality is that members in this Chamber cannot control international demand. Over the past four to five years several hundred brand-new coal-fired power stations have been built offshore in the south-east Asian market—in Korea, Japan, China and India—that have an appetite for coal from the Hunter. Why do they want coal from the Hunter? It is because it is the most efficient coal to burn. You require less kilograms of Hunter coal to achieve the same energy output and electricity supply compared with dirty brown coal.

The normal lifespan of a new coal-fired power station is in the vicinity of 35, 45 or 50 years. That means new coal-fired power stations built in recent years will require coal fuel for the next 40 or 50 years. By that time I will be in the vicinity of 80 or 90 years old—or I might be in the ground pushing up daisies. That is my answer to the community. Is coal going to die in the Hunter in the next five, 10 or 30 years? It is highly unlikely. There may be an unpredictable, seismic shift in the offshore appetite for coal from the Hunter, but that is something we cannot control.

What we can control in New South Wales and throughout the Hunter is the message we send to the coalmining communities. First, in the short term—over the next decade or two or three decades—their careers, lives and futures are assured. Secondly, at some stage down the track coalmining will end, as did car manufacturing and steel manufacturing in Australia. There are jobs on farms that no longer exist because of mechanisation. Certainly if autonomous vehicles are perfected some truck-driving jobs in coalmines will disappear. We have to talk responsibly about transition. Please stop the scaremongering. [*Time expired.*]

NEWTOWN ELECTORATE YOUTH

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:11): Young people are watching with their jaws on the floor as people in this place and in our Federal Parliament wilfully and recklessly gamble with the future of our species and planet in the name of more profits for the already rich. Make no mistake, if we do not act to avert the climate crisis we are facing an end to life on earth as we know it—and it is the young people who will face the burden of the consequences. For decades, successive Liberal and Labor governments have failed to address the challenges and priorities of young people in the Newtown electorate and beyond. One issue is the growing housing affordability and security crisis. Young people suffer because governments have failed to deal with these problems. The burden is heaviest for queer and gender-diverse young people, who face further discrimination every step of the way.

In February I met with Yfoundations in Redfern and heard directly from Simon, a young person who had been kicked out of home and struggled through years of instability and homelessness because of the critical lack of housing and services. Simon's experience is not the exception for young people; it is the rule. LGBTIQ young people around the State are struggling. More and more young people are being told that they are not free to be who they are; that they are nothing more than a political stunt and their identities have been invented in a bizarre attempt to silence older conservatives. We may like to believe the dark old days of young people facing violence and discrimination as a result of their expression of self are over, but there are still people in this place—in this Chamber and in the other place—explaining to young people that their identities and experiences are a joke. The people elected to Parliament refuse to recognise the need for reforms to protect young LGBTIQ people from harm and ignore the well-documented crisis for trans and gender-diverse people in New South Wales. They need to look again. For all those young people I stand here on behalf of The Greens and say that we hear you. We value your experiences and your opinions. They are welcome in this place, in the other place and in these halls. We are elected to represent them as we represent all people in New South Wales.

On conservative estimates there are 48,000 trans people living in New South Wales, and yet they are not included in health strategies, services or programs that are delivered in this State, as shown in recent research from ACON, which is located in the electorate of Newtown. Also in the electorate of Newtown we have incredible

services in the Gender Centre and in Twenty10. Both of these organisations exist on a shoestring, but they do incredible work to support young people and their families through some of the most challenging and difficult periods of their lives. Right now those organisations are struggling to meet the costs of paying basic wages to their committed staff and to provide the funds to pay for adequate premises to keep delivering services.

Meanwhile, in the context of widespread stigma, discrimination and marginalisation, research suggests that trans and gender-diverse people are four times more likely to be diagnosed with depression. In a recent survey 70 per cent of respondents reported that they had been subjected to discrimination and one in six had experienced physical abuse because of their gender identity. Almost half of them had attempted suicide and that is not okay. It is important that people who use their platforms in public life to try to advocate hatred around young gender-diverse and queer people in our community realise that their hate speech has real-world effects. Their hate speech can cause people to take their own lives and cause genuine harm to individuals.

I say in this place that The Greens will continue to work strongly for properly funded trans and gender-diverse services for research, advocacy and health programs. The Greens will work to remove provisions in the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act that blatantly ignore trans and gender-diverse rights and experiences. We will work for a whole-of-government approach to stamp out bi-phobic, homophobic and transphobic bullying and discrimination in schools, workplaces and service provisions in New South Wales. We are committed to overhauling the Anti-Discrimination Act in this State to properly protect queer communities and to eradicate so-called gay conversion therapy. We need to stop the hatred and discrimination inflicted on young LGBTIQ+ people in our communities and start acting like the responsible adults they need us to be.

ACT FOR PEACE RATION CHALLENGE

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (18:16): I acknowledge the efforts of students at Bonnyrigg High School who are taking part in the Act for Peace Ration Challenge. Act for Peace is an international humanitarian aid organisation that was founded in 1948. Its first action as an organisation was observed through its commitment to aiding refugees and those who were internally displaced during World War II by sending food and other provisions to help. We often take our way of life for granted in Australia, with our lush parks and calm seas, but many refugees will never have the opportunity that we Australians are born into. Without key organisations like Act for Peace, the horrible conditions and circumstances to which refugees are subjected would not be widely exposed as is the case today. In saying so, we need to do more to promote the importance of ensuring that refugees are looked after when they are at their lowest point in life.

The Ration Challenge is a global challenge that puts ordinary people in the shoes of refugees. I am pleased that local students are taking up the challenge not only to raise awareness but also to put their feet in the shoes of their family members who migrated to Australia many years ago. Over the past four years, over 40,000 people have taken the challenge and have raised over \$10 million, which is enough to feed over 37,000 refugees for an entire year. Students receive rice, lentils, dried chickpeas, tinned sardines, tinned kidney beans and vegetable oil in their first ration box. As they raise more money, they will receive more items such as sugar, fruit and milk. The challenge, of course, mimics the circumstances which refugees are faced with when attaining these ration packs.

I congratulate Vivian Wong, Cassandra Thai, Sylvia Tran, Peter Youkhana, Samuel Lee, Joanne Vu, Schantee Ma, Andy Le, Edwin Truong, Gerardo Girardi, Yasmine Ahmed, Tholleana To, Roupen Karamanoukian, Zack Younes, Ashlyn Hubble, Zack Younes, Chuong Do, Jennifer Vu and Jessica Carevo of Bonnyrigg High School on taking up this challenge. This challenge is not to be taken lightly. It reflects the important work that elected Parliamentarians have to do in supporting our culturally and linguistically diverse communities through philanthropic causes such as the Ration Challenge. I wish those students as well as the individuals all over the world who are taking part in this challenge every success in completing it. I speak on behalf of members on both sides of the House when I say that we are proud of them all for their efforts.

NSW POLICE FORCE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:20): It is an honour to serve as the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice. Those portfolio areas are of particular interest to me, having served in the NSW Police Force for over 22 years in both law enforcement and prosecution roles. As Parliamentary Secretary I look forward to working closely with the Attorney General, the Hon. Mark Speakman, SC, MP; the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. David Elliott, MP; and the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, the Hon. Anthony Roberts, MP. In this role I intend to be a supportive voice on behalf of members on both sides of the House for the incredibly important work being done by the men and women in the NSW Police Force who serve our communities. Members in this place are fortunate and grateful to all those men and women in blue who serve our respective communities. We rely upon them to keep us safe and we recognise they are the unsung heroes of our State.

I also hope to be a voice for those in our community who have served in the NSW Police Force and for those families who have lost a mum or a dad, a son or a daughter or anyone else in the line of duty. All those who have served and those who have been affected by service in the force are members of the wider police family and they too deserve our thanks and support. This month I was fortunate enough to attend the Parramatta Police Area Command's awards presentation ceremony held at Lachlan's Old Government House at Parramatta. A few of those, among many distinguished award winners, deserve a special mention.

Detective Sergeant Michael Burton and Sergeants Stephen Taylor and Timothy Turnbull received the National Police Service Medal and the National Medal. Sergeant Achala Abdullah received the National Police Service Medal, the National Medal and the New South Wales Police Medal. Inspector Karen Ritchie received her fourth clasp on her New South Wales Police Medal and Senior Constables Cindy Desmond and Kirstyn Monnock received the third clasps on their New South Wales Police Medals. This was a truly special morning and I thank Parramatta Police Area Commander Julie Boon for her hard work in cultivating such great policing talent in her local area command.

It is exciting for the police officers stationed at Wentworthville Police Station to have their existing demountable building replaced by a new building to be commenced later this year. The New South Wales Government is investing \$2.1 million in my electorate of Seven Hills to replace Wentworthville Police Station. This is part of the New South Wales Government's investment in delivering new and upgraded police stations across the State to ensure our local police have the facilities, equipment and technology they need to protect and serve our communities.

Earlier this month, the Governor, the Premier, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Commissioner for Police Mick Fuller attended the attestation ceremony of Class 337 at the New South Wales Police Force Academy in Goulburn. There, 261 students completed their training and study and became probationary constables of the NSW Police Force. The graduates' probationary period is a whole year. During this time, three probationary members will serve at Blacktown Police Station, two will serve at Parramatta Police Station and the new Wentworthville Police Station—upon its completion—and four will serve at the recently built Riverstone Police Station.

I am proud to support this Government, which is committed to supporting our police. Since 2011 approximately 1,000 officers have been added to the ranks of the NSW Police Force. Last year the Government announced more than \$583 million over four years to deliver 1,500 new frontline police—the biggest single increase in police numbers in 30 years. The Government is also investing \$19.6 million to deliver almost 11,000 new light armour vests for police officers across the State. Those vests provide the best possible ballistic and stab protection available and will allow for more mobile and agile policing across our cities and country areas of our State.

The Government is also supporting the NSW Police Force of today with a plan called "the police force of tomorrow". This includes investing \$100 million in the Policing for Tomorrow Fund to futureproof the NSW Police Force, ensuring that officers have access to the latest and most innovative ways to prevent and respond to crime. Having served in the NSW Police Force I am very proud to comment on the great work being done by police men and women, and I know all members of this House commend them for it.

TRIBUTE TO MILTON MORRIS, AO, FORMER MEMBER FOR MAITLAND AND A FORMER MINISTER OF THE CROWN

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:25): One of the first things we do when we get in a car either as a driver or passenger is put on our seatbelts. It is a simple task, one which we all take for granted not only in New South Wales but also across Australia and, indeed, the world. It has saved hundreds of thousands of lives, maybe many more. What greater legacy can we attribute to the late Milton Morris, a former member for Maitland, and Officer in the Order of Australia? As Minister for Transport, Milton took a keen interest in the benefits of compulsory use of seatbelts and ordered a report from what was then the Traffic Accident Research Unit. This report formed the basis of a campaign to back legislation, which resulted in Australia being the first country in the world to make the wearing of seatbelts a legal obligation.

Milton's tenure as Minister for Transport lasted from 1965 to 1975—a record which stands to this day. Known affectionately as Mr Road Safety, he not only introduced the wearing of seatbelts into our daily lives but also introduced the use of breathalysers. Within eight hours of the first test on the streets of Sydney in 1968, 41 drivers out of 46 drivers tested were found to be above the legal limit of 0.08 per cent. What was once a widespread problem is now far less so, although the ongoing campaign of Towards Zero reminds us all that there is still work to be done. The diligence of the NSW Police Force, coupled with the greatly increased community awareness of the enormous dangers of drink-driving, are yet another legacy which Milton left for us. He knew the

huge cost of drink-driving. He knew that something had to be done to tackle this scourge and protect those who were all too often the innocent victims.

Mr Road Safety left an indelible mark on our daily lives. Safe driving affects all of us who use roads—drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists. It is thanks to Milton's passion, hard work and dedication to the transport portfolio that we have all benefited each day. Under Milton's watch, the State road toll fell from 1,300 deaths in 1965 to about 700 a decade later, while the number of cars registered in New South Wales rose from 750,000 to two million. As I mentioned, Milton was known as "Mr Road Safety" but closer to home he was known as "Mr Maitland". From 1956 to 1980 he was the indefatigable advocate of his Hunter Valley electorate. His was a familiar face not only at community or school events—such was Milton's popularity with younger members of the community that he was referred to as "Uncle Milton"—but also to those who saw him walking from his electorate office to collect the mail. Milton made a point of doing this everyday administrative task just so that he could talk to his constituents and learn what he needed to know as their elected representative.

He was an ordinary man doing extraordinary things so that others might benefit. Milton had the ability to combine talking eloquently at the highest levels of government with the humility to make himself approachable to everybody he met while out and about. He eschewed the comfortable surrounds of a ministerial rail carriage while travelling, instead preferring to use the more humble mail trains. When there was political dissatisfaction on the railways, Milton could be found riding with the passengers and talking to them, letting them know that the New South Wales Government was listening. Not all this involvement with trains was a chore for this son of a railway guard. He became patron of the Maitland Historical Railway Society. So great was his popularity that he might have even become Premier but he did not want the job. All he wanted was to be Minister for Transport.

Once his parliamentary career came to a close, Milton then took on a role which enabled him to continue his dedication to helping others. He became chairman of the not-for-profit Hunter Valley Training Company and was still going in to the office on his ninetieth birthday. For three decades he ensured that young people who were looking for apprenticeships were found suitable positions. Milton was a man of great integrity, a man whose popularity crossed the political divide and a man who was happy to share his time and energy helping others. In 1988 he received his Order of Australia honour and a year later the Polish Government bestowed upon him its highest Order of Chivalry, the Polonia Restituta, for his service to Poland and its people. He was also a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and, yes, a great-great-grandfather. As we bow our heads in honour of this great parliamentarian, we extend our condolences to Milton's family.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I thank the member for Cootamundra for her private member's statement about Milton Morris, who I considered to be a friend. I acknowledge that he was a man of great morals. He was the epitome of a gentleman and we could benefit from taking a leaf out of his book.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:31
until Tuesday 18 June at 12:00.**