



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament  
First Session**

**Wednesday, 31 July 2019**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Wednesday, 31 July 2019**

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

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

*[Notices of motions given.]*

## *Announcements*

### **MEMBERS SEEKING THE CALL**

**The SPEAKER:** I remind members to make clear that they are seeking the call in accordance with Standing Order 55. Members should rise from their seat, and clearly and audibly call on the Speaker if they wish to seek the call. Should members be unable to stand because of illness or disability, members can seek the call clearly and audibly when seated, corresponding with Standing Order 56. I observe that some members are standing and expecting the call without actively and audibly seeking it.

## *Members*

### **MINISTER FOR SPORT, MULTICULTURALISM, SENIORS AND VETERANS**

**The SPEAKER:** I acknowledge, with the Minister's consent, the birthday of Minister Sidoti. I congratulate the Minister on his big day.

## *Bills*

### **PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019**

#### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 30 July 2019.**

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (10:13):** I make a contribution to the second reading debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The New South Wales Government is continuing to work to improve the planning system, which is so crucial to the future of communities and amenity of life of the people of New South Wales. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 is the cornerstone of that planning system. Prior to 2017 the Planning Act had been amended more than 150 times and had expanded from its initial 137 pages to 300 pages. In 2017 this Government passed the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017. It marked the most comprehensive overhaul to the New South Wales planning framework since 1979, when the original Act was passed. The 2017 amending Act built on the Government's agenda to cut red tape and provided for a faster and more flexible planning system for government and the communities we represent. The restructuring of the Act into 10 parts, which are now comparatively easily navigated by updated and coherent section numbering, helped to streamline and modernise the planning system.

Before this Government introduced the 2017 amending Act, the planning Act had become disjointed and jumbled by the many piecemeal amendments that had been made to it. As a local government councillor for 13 years before coming to this place, I experienced those changes frequently occurring when time after time councils had to adapt to and understand another change, another tack, and perhaps overcome another layer of regulatory red tape. I understand the intention of governments is to solve problems, address issues and tweak the system to improve it. But making constant little changes to an Act that had been introduced long ago meant that it became cumbersome and difficult to navigate and sometimes contradictory objectives seemed to be at work in different parts of the Act. It is a challenge to navigate such a big system, keep it on track and reconcile so many competing interests in a complex area. That is why the Act has now become 300 pages long.

There is no doubt that the 2017 amending Act has resulted in a clearer and more navigable planning system for the people of New South Wales. I cannot claim that it is perfect and it probably never will be. It is an ongoing challenge to do as well as we can to meet the needs of the community. This bill completes the work of the 2017 amending Act and ensures that the new numbering and modernised structure of the planning Act is correctly reflected throughout the planning system. Some of the changes are very much machinery changes to reflect the structural change that has happened in the Act and they flow on to other parts of the system to ensure that they are properly referred to and represented in other instruments. In particular, the bill will make consequential amendments to the State's local environmental plans so that any references to the planning Act reflect the updated numbering.

There are over 120 local government areas in New South Wales. Local environmental plans are at the centre of planning for those areas and provide the framework that inform local residents as to how their land and land in their neighbourhoods can be used. Local environmental plans are the main planning tool that shapes communities and ensures development is located and scaled appropriately. That is why it is essential that the plans are up to date and that references to other legislation are accurate and current. It seems everybody has had the experience of moving into a neighbourhood with a particular character, living there for a while and expecting that the character will remain. But change being the one constant in life, there will be a proposal for a development that will change the character of the district. The planning instrument is the way in which such proposals and plans are assessed and dealt with. It is critical that the plans are as clear and as fair as can be and that they are updated to reflect the will of the community at the time. It is an ongoing challenge.

Change is the one constant in our lives. While it is an understandable expectation of people that a district will retain its character, the reality is that life moves on. Changes in technology, population and demography will have an impact on land use in our districts. Naturally people have their own aspirations about how they want to use their land but it may not concur or coincide with the expectations of other residents in the neighbourhood. It is important that these instruments are capable of providing a framework in which those competing interests can be resolved in an impartial and predictable way. Predictability is an important part of the system. People who are going to invest in developments—whether of a domestic scale on their own property or of a much larger scale—have the right to know what the rules are before they invest their money.

Before they go to the trouble and time to conduct lots of expensive studies and investigations, before they commit their dollars to contracts, they should have a reasonable understanding of what is permissible and a pathway to complying with that. Once they reach the end of the pathway, they should have an expectation that, if they put something up that is permissible, their development will be approved. Enabling that predictable, orderly pathway to development is an important element of our system. Predictability that the approved development is within the character of the planning instrument is also important for those in the neighbourhood. Approved development should not be outside that envelope without community consultation to approve such a change.

The bill will make those sorts of consequential amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation and other instruments that flow from the main Act. The amendments will ensure that the regulation speaks about the planning Act and that readers can easily navigate between the instruments. The amendments in the bill are not major, but they are important. They will continue to improve the clarity and accessibility of the planning system for the people of New South Wales. In 2017 I commended the Government for taking on this challenging and difficult task. As we recall, various attempts had been made to improve the planning system and those improvements were not always easily resolved.

It is important that we continue to modernise, to update and to try to find a pathway to predictability and certainty for people so that everybody can have a reasonable expectation about what the planning system will deliver, how it will deliver it and what one needs to do in order to plan a development within the guidelines. I think this is a useful and important bill. Although it is not radical in foreshadowing any great change or news, it is an important step in the process of delivering a predictable outcome for the people of New South Wales. Therefore, I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (10:22):** I take this opportunity to wish the sports Minister all the very best on his birthday. He and I go back many, many years. Had the Minister been in Haberfield, I would have shouted today. The Opposition does not oppose the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 and neither do I, as I am bound by the Opposition's decision. When I read the Minister's second reading speech, I found it breathtaking. I cannot understand why a Minister of his calibre could not help himself but to demonstrate hubris in his second reading speech. A second reading speech is absolutely vital, under the Interpretation Act, for courts to interpret legislation. Ministers have to be extremely cautious in their selection of words in second reading speeches. I invite the attention of the House to Minister Stokes' observations on 16 June 2019 when he said:

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017 marked the most extensive changes to the planning framework since the introduction of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 more than 40 years ago. I note the presence in the Chamber of the then planning Minister who introduced those changes in 2017 and I commend his great work ...

The Minister went on to say:

The bill will also build on the good work of the 2017 changes ...

I have to say that for a Minister with a PhD in planning law to make that observation is just a demonstration of hubris. I wonder whether the New South Wales disease is infecting everybody in this Parliament. It will not take long to quote the second reading speech of then the Minister for Planning on the 2017 bill. He said on 15 November that year:

... the second reading speech appears at pages 70 to 73 of the proof *Hansard* for that day. I commend the bill to the House.

That was the then Minister's contribution to debate on the 2017 amendment bill in this House. I went to the *Hansard* of the other place. I suggest members will find extraordinary the contribution that the Hon. Scot MacDonald made on 18 October 2017. He said:

Under the leadership of the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government, we have stripped out the redundant elements and are returning to a clear, useable framework that meets the needs of government, industry and the community.

The bill adds three new objects.

The third object was to "promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings". I ask Government members: How is that going for you? The Hon. Scot MacDonald also stated:

Building quality was also included to ensure building safety is at the forefront of all of our minds following the horrific Grenfell Tower fire. In response, we are introducing a new object to "promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants". A clear building object recognises the important role of building regulations in providing for public safety and the safety, health and wellbeing of a building's occupants and users.

I again ask Government members: How is that going for you? How has that been going for the government of the day over the past two years with building after building showing defects, including new buildings constructed under consents authorised by the 2017 amendment Act? The reality of the situation is that a Minister of the standing of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces adopting the 2017 legislation in such an effusive way is extraordinary. There are significant problems in the building industry that go back generations. Two years ago a Government member pranced up and down in the other Chamber to claim credit for new legislation that was going to fix buildings and ensure that they were safe. In this place the Minister's contribution was only one line.

The reality of the situation is that there is an industry in crisis and it is causing significant problems with people's confidence in that industry. But who holds the government of the day to account? Does the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces think that every member of this House does not read the bills and the second reading speeches? Does anyone in this House think they do not know what is in it? Is there something wrong with the body politic of this State when Ministers can make ridiculous statements in the House and not be held to account? What is going on in the democratic fabric of this State?

The other issue I will raise in respect of the bill relates to the content of schedule 5.3, in which it is proposed to amend by legislation the Sydney Local Environmental Plan (Green Square Town Centre—Stage 2) 2013. That is not the normal way in which to amend a local environmental plan. The Government has gone through the process of having its department go through this local environmental plan clause by clause, word by word. But the fact of the matter is that the Government has ignored the fundamental objects and aims of that local environmental plan, which has imposed upon Green Square an absolute crisis. I have told this House repeatedly when I have called for moratoriums on population expansion and on development—even recently when calling for revocations of consent in respect of it—that the 2016 Census revealed that 38,000 people resided within the Waterloo-Beaconsfield, statistical area level 2, which encompasses the suburbs of Waterloo, Zetland, Rosebery, Beaconsfield.

That is essentially what we call "Green Square", where 38,000 people fit into just 3.5 square kilometres. Green Square and Mascot railway stations cannot accommodate passengers on the platform. They are being corralled by station staff at the mezzanine level before they can proceed to the platform. Buses cannot accommodate all the people or even move along Joynton Avenue. It is proposed that an additional 23,000 people be added to that area. If that were the case the population density of that area would be higher than any part of Manhattan or of London. It is crisis in the making. Blocks of units are appearing and being built on every street corner like weeds on what was formerly employment-generating land. If this proceeds then the aims of the Sydney Local Environmental Plan (Green Square Town Centre—Stage 2) 2013 should also be amended because they are not being complied with. For instance, part 1, clause 1.2 (2) (c) states:

- (c) to deliver environmental planning outcomes and benefits to the public and owners of land within the Green Square Town Centre ...

I would like to know where that benefit is—

- (f) to ensure that the public domain of the Green Square Town Centre is fronted by high-quality buildings having a scale and alignment that both define and contribute positively to the amenity of the public spaces—

There are virtually no public spaces with the council is despite to try to find some. But the absolute classic is—

- (g) to maximise the use of public transport, walking and cycling by integrating land uses, access to public transport and services and the provision of on-site parking.

There is no on-site parking. [*Extension of time*]

If the Government had read the Sydney Local Environmental Plan (Green Square Town Centre—Stage 2) 2013 clause by clause, word by word, comma by comma, full stop by full stop, one would have thought it would



also have looked at its aims and the planning failures associated with it. Legislative environmental plan amendments are normally initiated by the local authority but in this case the Government is asking the Parliament to legislate changes. The impact on the densities of Green Square extends far beyond the responsibility of the City of Sydney Council. The State provides for people transport, health services and schooling. We will never catch up on that infrastructure if the population is doubled.

Government members should not pretend that this bill is not significant and make arrogant assertions in a second reading debate about how good it is. A simple tracing of the second reading debate shows they are still struggling to find a solution to the building problems they proclaimed to be solving in 2017. Recently on my social media site I included an absolute classic from *Yes, Prime Minister*—it reflected discussion that has been taking place in the media about the crisis in the building industry. Sir Humphrey walks into the Prime Minister's office and the Prime Minister says, "I've got to do something about the crisis in the city." Sir Humphrey says, "Well, Prime Minister, what are you going to do?" The Prime Minister says, "I'm going to appoint someone." Sir Humphrey says, "How long have you considered doing that?" The Prime Minister says, "Since this morning when I read the papers." Sir Humphrey says, "And how long did you weigh and consider what you were going to do?" The Prime Minister says, "Since this morning when I read the papers."

If the Government thinks that by either introducing a bill that does nothing in two years or just appointing somebody it is going to fix the crisis, it has got another thing coming. The background of the planning Minister is such that he understands planning. Everybody keeps talking about the 40-year-old Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 that needs reform. There is actually nothing wrong with the objectives of the Act; since its enactment it has been mangled by the Parliament as it has tried to achieve political objectives or facilitate particular individual development applications without scrutiny. The Minister knows, as do I, that planning reform needs to go back to basics. The Parliament just needs to remove many of the amendments since its introduction that serve no purpose. Somebody with the Minister's background and knowledge should not come into this House, praise the work of 2017 and thank the responsible Minister for his tremendous effort when it clearly was not.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (10:36):** I contribute to debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. This bill will complete work started by the Crown Land Management Act 2016. It will also make amendments to the New South Wales planning system that are consequential to this legislation. The Crown Land Management Act 2016 came into effect on 1 July 2018. The Act repealed the Crown Lands Act 1989 and introduced a clearer, modernised statute to effectively govern Crown land in New South Wales—one of our State's most valuable resources. The Act ensures that Crown lands will continue to afford significant social, economic, environmental and cultural heritage benefits to our community.

As a result of this Act coming into force consequential amendments are now required to be made to a range of environmental planning instruments. Local environmental plans and State environmental policies are an integral part of the New South Wales planning system. These instruments underpin the planning Act and accompanying regulation to build the framework of the planning system of our State. It is vital that these instruments are accurate and contain up-to-date references to other legislation to ensure the smooth operation and efficiency of our planning system. Schedule 1.3 [15] [20] [22] and [23] to this bill will amend the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006 to reflect the repeal of the Crown Lands Act 1989 and its replacement by the Crown Land Management Act 2016. Similarly schedules 3, 5 and 6 to the bill replace all references to the now repealed Crown Lands Act 1989 with the Crown Land Management Act 2016 in various local environmental planning instruments. The bill will also remove references to the Western Lands Commissioner to reflect the abolition of this role by the Crown Land Management Act 2016.

The bill will improve the efficiency and clarity of the planning system for the people of New South Wales through ensuring that these planning instruments contain updated and accurate references to legislation. I commend the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces not only for introducing this bill but also for the changes that he is instituting across the planning system. The Minister's approach to planning reflects my own community's approach to planning. He is reintroducing to the planning system the principles of community-led planning. One of the big announcements he has made is the intention to work to reduce spot rezonings, which take away the opportunity for the community to have a say throughout the strategic planning process. This will give back a voice to communities in the planning process. In my own community the Local Strategic Planning Statement—the new process proposed by this Minister—is currently underway in the Mosman Council area; it will soon be underway within North Sydney Council.

These planning statements are an opportunity for local communities, through councils, to have a say about the 20-year vision they wish to see for their communities. This vision reflects their approach to heritage, character, local identity, open spaces and the height and density of developments. All those issues are raised with me quite regularly as a member of Parliament. During my regular constituent meetings on weekends across my electorate, one of the most regularly raised items are questions about specific developments or opinions more

broadly about development happening in our area and whether or not that reflects the interests and views of residents. We also hear a lot about ensuring supporting infrastructure, services and facilities if we are looking at increasing density within our community.

I live in quite a dense community—probably half of my constituents live in apartments in dense housing—but significant developments are occurring across my electorate. It is right for us to consider whether or not we have appropriate schools, hospitals and sporting facilities, and whether our roads, rail and buses can handle an increase in population that comes from increased density of new developments. Unfortunately, that is not always taken into account when it comes to spot rezoning. The principle of strategic planning enshrines the need to reflect community interests. All the elements of our planning system should enable our communities to function well not only by keeping the character and vibrancy that we richly enjoy in a dense area like the North Shore but also by having the services, infrastructure and facilities to ensure that we continue to enjoy our community, including those who would like to join us and move in to new developments.

Residents in my electorate regularly raise concerns about public space. I want to reflect on the Minister's appointment as the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Even though I live in a dense part of Sydney, being surrounded on three sides by Sydney Harbour is a great joy. A number of foreshore areas and public open spaces exist along the harbour. An election commitment I made earlier this year was returning 1 Henry Lawson Avenue at McMahons Point into public hands. Those who have been to McMahons Point would know that a beautiful reserve at Blues Point overlooks Sydney Harbour, which has a wonderful view of the Harbour Bridge. If the council lets you in, the view can particularly be enjoyed on New Year's Eve. An old disused boat shed exists at 1 Henry Lawson Avenue. Over a number of years the property owners put forward a development application to try to build a residential property at that location. The application was rejected, as it should have been, by the council and then by higher levels of the planning system and the courts.

My commitment during the election campaign followed a concerted community campaign which has been ongoing for many years, particularly by the Lavender Bay precinct, to acquire the land and return it to public ownership, expanding Blues Point Reserve. I joined the campaign in 2017 as the member for North Shore. I made the commitment with the then Minister for Planning and it has been taken up with gusto by Rob Stokes, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Work and negotiations are underway for the acquisition of that land. I have also been working with the former Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, Matt Kean, who had carriage of the clifftop park at Milsons Point.

Luna Park previously owned this parcel of land. It was purchased and acquired by this Government under my predecessor, Jillian Skinner, to turn it into an expanded clifftop park at Milsons Point. For those who know, it is next to Harry's Park and overlooks Luna Park. Significant work is underway in creating a beautiful park that reflects the heritage values of the site. Some footings of the old, original homes are reflected in the design of the boardwalks and the balconies that previously existed are now a lookout space. I have been told that it will soon be open to the community. This Government has made a wonderful investment of several millions of dollars in acquiring the space from a private owner and creating a space for public use. Being in an incredibly dense area of Milsons Point, it increases the opportunity for our residents to access public open space and enjoy the outdoors and our harbour.

I have also been working with residents of Waverton on the Waverton Bowling Club, which is another piece of Crown land. Unfortunately this club did not survive as a commercial entity and last year closed its doors and went into liquidation. I have been speaking with community members and representatives and through Crown lands this Government has provided a licence to the council to spend about six months exploring opportunities that it thinks would work on this location. I am also meeting with other organisations, including the Waverton Hub, to talk about what would be the best use of this space to ensure that it reflects community interests and community needs. Crown lands provide those opportunities to ensure that we are best investing in what our community expects.

As is the case with Waverton Bowling Club, there is often an expectation to have active and passive community space to ensure that recreation can continue to occur. I support and commend the bill to the House. I commend the Minister for Planning on the way in which he is approaching planning in this State and in my community of North Shore. He is ensuring that communities have a voice that reflect the interests and desires of people who wish to protect and preserve their identity and character. I thank the Minister for his custodianship of that policy and his strategic approach to our planning system.

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (10:45):** I make a contribution to debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The aims and objectives of the bill are to make minor amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, the Land and Environment Court Act and other pieces of legislation. I believe the bill presents a wasted opportunity. This Government was elected in 2011 promising to return planning to the

people of New South Wales. Instead, it has done the opposite. In reforming the planning system, it has taken away every opportunity for our community to have a say on development applications and planning on a wider scale.

The most egregious and appalling example of this is the way planning proposals are treated. Labor went to the 2019 election campaigning that if a planning proposal was rejected by a local council then the Department of Planning could not further pursue the matter. Perhaps the local council would take on the views of its local community. I believe that the way in which planning proposals are considered is even more flawed. When it comes to council, there is no obligation for it to consult the community. The council is obliged to consider the planning proposal in great detail, to accept it, reject it or make amendments. It is then submitted to the Department of Planning for its consideration and advertised as a mandatory requirement.

In 2012 during my time on council, there was only one planning proposal in Westmead that was advertised prior to it being sent to the Department of Planning. I pushed very strongly for there to be consultation with both ward councillors—one Labor and one Liberal. After the 2012 council elections the Liberal majority of the council considered that consultation should be done away with all together and that we would not consult with our community prior to any planning proposals being submitted to the Department of Planning. Since the new City of Parramatta council has been elected, I have been inundated with complaints about planning proposals and the way they are treated by that council. It is incredibly inconsistent. For example, one applicant had their proposal for an increase in height and density rejected on the basis that it was in close proximity to a significant heritage building in the centre of Parramatta. Yet between their property and the heritage-listed building, a much taller and wider building was approved.

That negative decision was later reversed, but the initial decisions had a lot more to do with Liberal Party internal politics than with the merits of the applications. It was disgusting, and the wider community was very disappointed. There was a case on Marion Street in Harris Park where a planning proposal was approved that delisted heritage items not on the site itself but on adjoining sites. There was no consultation—even with the owners of the affected properties—about whether the heritage items should be delisted. The matter caused such great concern that the City of Parramatta's planning powers for that particular site were removed. The current council made all sorts of bizarre decisions about planning proposals. It has settled down now and is becoming a lot less peculiar, but it was a matter of huge concern to a large number of people within the community and is something that I still get a lot of complaints about from time to time.

Communities should be consulted on planning proposals from the outset. The way that planning proposals are considered is flawed. There needs to be a new way to deal with non-conforming applications that is far more consultative. Of course we need a mechanism to change the designated land use of a particular parcel of land, but the way it is done at the moment with planning proposals is wrong. As the member for Heffron mentioned, the bill also does nothing to fix the current crisis in building. He made a very strong contribution to this debate and is very aware of the issues involved as he represents Green Square. In my electorate, where a lot of units have gone up, people have experienced a number of problems with units bought off the plan.

One problem is that what is advertised and sold to people is often very different from what is built. Developers should not be allowed to advertise features such as soundproofing unless they are in the approved plans, and if they are in the approved plans they should be installed. Many people living in units facing the Wentworthville railway line would not have bought their unit if they had not been told that soundproof glass would be installed. It was not installed. The fact that that can happen reflects the problems with a whole range of legislation. This bill could start to fix those problems, but it fails to address a range of issues with the planning system. Government members should not be congratulating themselves on everything they have done in planning because planning in Sydney is a basket case.

This bill was an opportunity to fix at least some of the problems, but the Government has not taken it. Whilst I support the amendments and objects of the bill, I am very disappointed that it is not being used to address the widespread problems within the planning system in New South Wales. The member for Heffron was right in his comments about the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The original objects of the Act are still very valid. It was a very good Act, but it has been distorted and made less effective over the years by amendments made at different times for different purposes.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** What about Labor's part 3A? Corrupt and rotten.

**Ms JULIA FINN:** And the planning proposals do not do that?

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** If you're backing Labor's part 3A and what Eddie Obeid did, that is appalling.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** Order! The Minister will allow the member to continue. She will be heard in silence.

**Ms JULIA FINN:** I am not, but if you are backing the planning proposals as they stand now, if you are backing the way that planning is considered by the City of Parramatta and if you are backing the random method of choosing what buildings are built based on the merits of the developer rather than the building, then we should not even be having this discussion. Decisions are being made in a very random way that has nothing to do with planning merits, and it is disgraceful.

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (10:53):** I commend Temporary Speaker Wilson for her contribution to this debate and her comments on what is happening in her local area, particularly with the parks around Milsons Point. It is a pleasure to speak to the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, which has been introduced to the House by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. I commend him for his carriage of the Planning portfolio. As this House is well aware, the Minister is knowledgeable in the area of planning. He is very approachable and consultative, and has great vision and strategy when it comes to that portfolio. I commend him not only for this amending bill but also for his actions in his portfolio. I recall first coming into contact with the Minister many years ago, when he was the Minister for the Environment, regarding a planning proposal at Northmead in my electorate of Seven Hills. That matter involved potential rezoning of an area that was held in high regard by local residents, and it was pleasing to have a Minister of the Crown come to listen to their concerns in his capacity as environment Minister.

The bill amends the Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979. As many members have said this morning, planning is a difficult and complex area of responsibility that is shared by State and local governments across the great State of New South Wales. The complex planning process juggles competing interests and deals with the future as well as the present. I commend the councils in my electorate—City of Parramatta Council, The Hills Shire Council and Blacktown City Council—for their consultative approach to planning processes. They take their planning responsibilities and consultative actions very seriously. The purpose of the bill is to make minor consequential amendments to legislation and other instruments in the Planning portfolio. The amendments are non-contentious and do not propose any new policy for the New South Wales planning system.

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017 made the most extensive changes to the planning framework since its inception with the Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The 2017 amending Act provided a faster and more flexible planning system for government and the broader public through reorganising, revising and simplifying the Environment Planning and Assessment Act. Since the commencement of the amending Act, some consequential and minor miscellaneous issues have been identified across planning legislation; this bill presents an opportunity to address those issues and further improve the operation of the planning system. The bill also presents an opportunity to make consequential amendments to environmental planning instruments following the commencement of other legislation. I will talk in particular about the bill's amendments to the standard instrument order.

As the member for Seven Hills, it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill makes a number of miscellaneous amendments to the Act as well as other instruments. The amendments are aimed at improving the efficiency of the planning system and continue the good work in the Government's previous Act. The Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006 is one such instrument made under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The standard instrument order was gazetted on 31 March 2006 and prescribes a standard form and content for all principal local government environmental plans across the 120-plus local government areas in New South Wales. The standard instrument order is the overarching instrument that helps guide planning decisions for local governments. It allows councils to regulate the ways in which all private and public land in their local government area may be used and protected through zoning and development controls.

Section 3.20 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 is the source of the Governor's power to make the standard instrument order and amendments to it. The bill amends section 3.20 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to include additional provisions that will allow the standard instrument order to operate more efficiently. These provisions provide that the requirements or guidance as to the form or content of an environmental planning instrument that adopts the mandatory provisions of the standard instrument may be included in a standard instrument order. The amendments also provide that the requirements and guidance may be in the form of directions and that they continue to apply to the standard local environmental plan after the plan is made.

The bill also permits a standard instrument order to authorise minor consequential amendments to a standard local environmental plan when amendments to the order are automatically incorporated into the plan. The authorised minor consequential amendments consist of things such as the addition or removal of punctuation to avoid incorrect punctuation in the environmental planning instrument, the renumbering of a provision in the environmental planning instrument to avoid a duplication in numbering or incorrect numbering and minor amendments of a kind prescribed by the regulations.

Those amendments, like the other amendments proposed by the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, are not major but will improve the operation and efficiency of the planning system in New South Wales. Residents of New South Wales consider the planning system to be important to them. The constituents of my electorate frequently raise planning issues with me. Opinions always differ amongst members of the community, but it is heartening to know that the planning system in this State is on the right track in the hands of the planning Minister and provides a good, solid policy framework for all New South Wales residents.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (11:01):** I speak on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I acknowledge that the Opposition has indicated its support for the bill and a number of members have indicated concerns raised by their communities. There is no doubt that planning issues were front of mind in many communities across New South Wales in the lead-up to the State election. New South Wales residents, particularly in parts of western Sydney, have many concerns about the State's planning system. I will not go through all the proposed amendments because they are not controversial. The bill makes a number of changes to various planning instruments, to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and to the Crown Land Management Act the effect of which is to clean up the 2017 legislative changes. It is clear that the Minister has decided to make his mark with this particular legislation. Back in May 2019 I was excited when I read an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* reporting that the Minister said, and, to be fair, I quote:

My ambition, and it is a way off, but my ambition is a future where spot rezoning doesn't have a role.

I thought it was exciting to hear that from the new Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. The article also noted the Minister's suggestion that no legislative changes would be required for that to take place. I was shadow Minister for Planning when the planning Minister addressed this Chamber. At that time I thought, "Fantastic, the Minister has changed his mind. He realises that legislative changes are needed to ensure that we end developer-led spot rezoning in New South Wales." Sadly, the legislation before us does not, in any way, shape or form, do anything to end what is, in effect, destroying the character and neighbourhoods of many of our communities; developers are able to ignore local environmental plans and ignore the chief instrument that councils and communities rely upon in determining what developments can take place in their neighbourhoods. It is a missed opportunity on the part of the newly minted Minister. He long coveted this role, which he had held previously, and this could have been a wonderful opportunity to end one of the biggest concerns for our communities. Back in 2014 the Minister recognised that spot rezoning was a problem. He said in a private member's statement:

Spot rezonings have long been the bane of planning processes. More than anything else, they erode public confidence in planning.

Sadly, this is a missed opportunity for the Minister and the Government to amend the legislation and rectify "the bane of the planning processes" which "erode public confidence in planning". I am delighted to hear that the shadow Minister for planning, the Hon. Adam Searle, has indicated that the New South Wales Opposition will put forward amendments to that effect in the other House. Prior to the election Labor made it very clear that if it were elected it would end developer-led spot rezoning—what are now called pre-gateway or rezoning reviews. There are lots of snazzy names for this process but, in the end, it is developer-led spot rezoning.

This is undoubtedly impacting communities. I went from electorate to electorate in the months leading up to the election and planning issues were constantly raised with me. Groups, organisations and residents also wrote to me, so I have no doubt that there is real concern about a planning system that permits developers to dictate the controls that are put in place. Why have a local environmental plan [LEP]? Why have councils go through a process where they spend months consulting with communities, businesses, residents and developers to determine the best instrument to rely upon in planning their neighbourhoods for the future, when developers are allowed, in effect, to sideline councils and push through the developments they want, irrespective of what the community has relied upon in a LEP?

I suggest to the Minister that there is still an opportunity to change this legislation because it is still being debated. I know the Minister is a little bit busy—he might be at the gym, although it is not yet 12 o'clock—and that he has a bit on his mind. There is an opportunity for him, at the end of this debate, to foreshadow some amendments or to foreshadow that he will introduce a new bill to end developer-led spot rezoning in New South Wales. That would show that he stands by his words in this House in 2014 and his words said to *The Sydney Morning Herald* earlier this year.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** Have you actually read the bill?

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK:** I note that the Minister for Health and Medical Research, the former planning Minister, is in the Chamber.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The Minister will remain silent and allow the member to contribute to the debate.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK:** I still remember the former planning Minister going up against the former Leader of the Opposition, the then shadow Minister Luke Foley. I remember the long debate over the amendments to the Environment Protection Authority [EPA] legislation and the other legislation he tried to bring in during his time as Minister. In the end that went nowhere. It was obvious why he was removed from the planning portfolio. I still remember the chaos in this Chamber and in the other place when dealing with your contribution to planning.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** You supported those part 3As, didn't you, in your own electorate?

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK:** No, I never have. In fact, I am delighted the Minister wants to make a contribution during my contribution to this debate because I have raised many concerns about developer-led planning. I have raised many concerns about some of the planning proposals that I think the department, the Minister and other authorities should have a closer look at. I strongly opposed the amalgamation of my council with Canterbury for many obvious reasons—one being the ICAC inquiry into Canterbury. I encourage the Minister to read the transcript from those hearings. It may explain some of my concerns as to why I did not want my council, Bankstown, to be forcibly merged with Canterbury.

Sadly though, this Government has long shown its disrespect for local government—it has again failed to stop developer-led spot rezoning and continues to allow circumstances in which councils and communities are sidelined from the process. In effect, at any time the council could reject a planning proposal and the developer could then say, "Ninety days have passed. We don't care what the council thinks. We don't care what the community thinks. We'll go straight to the department and get our proposal tapped through." While I expect that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces might have good intentions, he might not be there in a reshuffle. *[Extension of time]*

In fairness to Minister Stokes—I have welcomed his return to the portfolio—I respect that there will be some hope while he is Minister. I hope he understands that this process could worsen in the future and that it could be revived under a different Minister. Should he not put those protections in place, communities and councils will be subject to the fear that their local environmental plan will be ignored. It is imperative that the Minister not miss this vital opportunity. He has the opportunity to foreshadow amendments to his legislation when he gives his speech in reply or to back his own words from May when he said he wanted to end spot rezoning.

The Minister does not want a future with spot rezoning and I share those thoughts. The best way to do that is to ensure that we make amendments to section 3.32 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act—that is where the pre-gateway process is discussed. We could add a new section that prohibits a Minister from being able to permit a rezoning review that is led by a developer that ignores the council. There are opportunities to amend this legislation with a very simple change to that section. I would support the amendment and I have no doubt the Opposition would support it. We on this side advocated strongly on this issue in the lead-up to the election. We made it very clear.

I acknowledge the then leader, Michael Daley, and former shadow Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. He was firmly of the view that communities need confidence in the planning system. They need assurance that the LEPs that councils put in place after extensive community consultation—that meant something to the community—would be the instrument developers would rely upon when making their applications so that people would not have to worry that a high-rise, or flats of three or four storeys would be built all of a sudden in their street, in a zone that normally would permit only two storeys. These are the sorts of concerns that were raised with me in places such as Telopea, Seven Hills and Oatley.

These concerns have been regularly raised in Liberal-held electorates—in their backyards. People feel that the planning system is all about developers and does not support communities. This is an opportunity. Sadly, I do not believe the Minister will make amendments. I am confident that our shadow Minister for Planning and Better Living in the other place will propose amendments to the bill and I hope there is support for those amendments. The Labor Party will continue to advocate for the end of developer-led spot rezoning. It has to stop. It has caused a great deal of angst in New South Wales communities. There must be confidence in the planning system and the only way to do that is through legislative change.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** I welcome students from Chifley College Senior Campus to the gallery today to observe the Legislative Assembly in action. We are currently considering the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (11:15):** As the member for Hawkesbury and as a councillor in local government for 11 years it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. Much has been said in this debate about the good work done by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017 and the continuation of that work through the bill we are debating today. I will talk more about another achievement of the 2017 amending Act: improved community participation

and new tools rolled out in local communities across New South Wales. The first of these is the new community participation plans established by the 2017 amending Act. These plans explain how and when planning authorities will engage the community in plan making and development decisions.

Community participation plans will be based on new community participation principles that are now enshrined in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. They aim for a proactive and transparent approach to engagement and include principles such as recognising the community's right to be informed about planning matters that affect it, providing information in plain accessible language and providing the community with opportunities for early participation in strategic planning. The new provisions also gather the minimum requirement for community consultation into one place, such as minimum exhibition periods for different planning decisions. The plans will need to adopt these minimum requirements and go further by committing to further actions to engage with the community. Community participation plans will need to be completed by the end of the year. Councils in my electorate are working hard to meet this deadline.

The department has prepared its own plan for development decisions that it is responsible for. It has consulted about this draft plan broadly and I understand it is currently readying for launch. To close the consultation loop, decision-makers will be required to prepare a statement of reasons for their decisions. This will help community members see how their views have been taken into account and understand the rationale behind decisions. If, on some occasions, they do not agree with the outcome, it is important that they can understand the process. This statement of reasons will then need to be considered as part of any proposal to modify the development down the track. The bill builds on the important work of the 2017 amending Act and the enhanced community participation measures that it introduced. I commend this bill to the House.

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (11:18):** I will speak briefly to the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, which follows on from legislation passed by the Parliament in 2017 and makes a number of amendments to further clarify and streamline the functions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Land and Environment Court Act 1979. These amendments include ensuring that the numbering and the structure of the Act are consistent with other legislation, allowing minor editorial changes without requiring a further order, clearing up inconsistencies with the public exhibition of environmental impact statements for government activities carried out without planning approval, making the assessment pathway time frame for State infrastructure assessment consistent with State significant development in relation to staged proposals, updating the Act to reflect the introduction of the Crown Land Management Act 2019 and amending environmental planning instruments in accordance with standard local environmental plans.

The amendment that provides that an occupation certificate may be issued for a partially completed building is a particularly interesting provision, given the recent revelations in regard to the building industry and building standards within this State. It is important to note that in the past eight months no fewer than three major residential towers have been evacuated and effectively abandoned due to significant structural and other defects. Apartments at Gadigal Avenue in Zetland were abandoned eight months ago following extensive fire safety and water defects. On 14 June 2019 Mascot Towers was evacuated following widespread cracking in the car park and in many apartments. Residents were left stranded. Some had to move to a makeshift shelter in Town Hall; others had to pay exorbitant prices for hotels or other accommodation to meet the needs of their families. Residents are concerned that each day the value of their property plummets further and further.

Having forked out upwards of a million dollars to buy a home in the first place and looking down the barrel of extraordinary strata repayments to repair damage, can anyone feel safe in the knowledge that their investment will hold its value? This is an anxiety that is being felt in every new building across the city. On Christmas Eve last year owners and tenants of apartments in the \$170 million Opal Tower were forced to flee the building due to safety concerns. Rather than celebrating Christmas with their families, residents were forced to sleep in their cars and were afraid for their belongings, their savings and their financial futures. In launching their multimillion-dollar class action lawsuit against the New South Wales Government in the Supreme Court, the residents' claim states that "Opal Tower was not reasonably fit for occupation".

Understandably, a number of inner west residents in my community have contacted my office to raise concerns about their own buildings or to lament the lack of building standards as they see multistorey developments sprouting up around them, thanks to the Government allowing development to run rampant through our suburbs. In fact, a recent pilot study conducted by Deakin and Griffith universities revealed a staggering 95 per cent of new buildings in New South Wales had at least one defect, with every building having on average 16 defects. These are shocking figures that were revealed in this recent study.

We must not forget that the current debate around building standards takes place against a backdrop of thousands of buildings potentially in need of redress due to fire-prone cladding. I note that the Victorian Government has announced a comprehensive \$600 million package to deal with the combustible cladding issue. The New South Wales Government has not announced a similar type of package in response to this crisis.

Dr Laura Crommelin at the University of New South Wales City Futures Research Centre notes that Sydney is likely to be the epicentre of a building crisis, given the strength of our recent real estate boom. She said:

We've very much embraced this high-density development model without necessarily having both a workforce and the regulatory system in place that's equipped to manage it properly.

We have seen an unprecedented property boom in New South Wales. Communities across the State, including mine in the inner west, are seeing developers run roughshod over their suburbs. This Government has turned New South Wales into a developers' paradise. High-rise development is being forced on communities through poorly planned priority precincts, changes to strata laws have allowed apartments to be sold out from underneath unwilling owners and our local councils—which often are one of the last obstacles to developers who are planning a development that is not wanted by our communities—have been amalgamated. To make matters worse, we now know that the developments we see across our suburbs may pose a risk to the occupants within them. It is not good enough. The community is deeply concerned that the Government is not doing enough to protect their properties and our suburbs.

In response to the recent evacuations the Premier offered \$3 million in interest-free loans to the affected Mascot Towers residents and has announced a package she hopes will stem a looming crisis within the industry. The package includes developing a new compliance regime, enforcing the standards set out in the Building Code of Australia; registering all building practitioners; introducing a new industry-wide principle of duty of care; and appointing a building commissioner to regulate all aspects of the New South Wales building industry. Sadly, the Government has not provided enough detail on the role of the commissioner, there is no clear time frame for the appointment of the commissioner and no associated funding was to be found in the budget handed down last month. Given the extent of this issue and the widespread media coverage of the Opal Tower evacuation eight months ago, clearly the Government has been caught out unprepared.

The bill also represents a lost opportunity in relation to the critical issue of spot rezoning in the planning space. Spot rezoning, which was introduced in 2012, allows developers to override local environmental plans and get approval from the Minister, or one of the Minister's delegates, when a local council knocks back a proposal. Spot rezoning, also known as a pre-gateway or rezoning review, was introduced by the Liberal-Nationals Government as a developer-friendly backdoor for these processes. It has been a blight on our planning system ever since and is responsible for some of the worst development in my inner west community and across the State. Almost all of the contentious developments that have occurred in my part of Sydney over the past seven years have been a result of spot rezoning. Currently 10 significant spot rezonings are on the books with the Inner West Council. They include 2,600 apartments along Carrington Road, Marrickville—a proposal that has no community support and has generated widespread rallies and opposition.

Labor took a principled and ambitious policy plan to ban spot rezoning to the last election. I was heartened to hear that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Hon. Rob Stokes, was planning to junk the contentious provision. I am impressed that his ambition mirrors ours on this side of the House. He said, "My ambition, and it is a way off, but my ambition is a future where spot rezoning doesn't have a role." The good news for the Minister is that he does not have to wait—he has support from the Opposition to realise his ambition. There is clear support within the Parliament to end spot rezoning and to rebalance the relationship between development and communities in New South Wales. Obviously there has been a battle of wills within the Government but on this side of the House we are ready to see the Minister's ambition realised. The community wants it done. We must end spot rezoning, which is resulting in poorly designed and potentially dangerous buildings that will be there for 50, 60, 70 years. These types of development are diminishing our city. It must change. Overall, I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (11:27):** As the member for Camden, a current Camden councillor—for seven years, I might add—and a former mayor, I am delighted to speak in support of the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill picks up on the good work of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Bill 2017. One of the key features of the 2017 bill was the focus on strategic planning to better protect community values and guide growth and development. The Government recognises that strategic planning is a critical part of a good planning system; it tells the stories of communities. Since the 2017 bill was introduced all councils across New South Wales have been consulting with their communities to develop local strategic planning statements. In my electorate both Camden and Liverpool councils already have draft local strategic planning statements on exhibition.

Before the planning statement went on exhibition in Camden—where I am a councillor, as I said—an enormous amount of community consultation was had, above and beyond what was required and what would typically have been done. That consultation really benefited the people of Camden, and that can be seen in the local strategic planning statement. Local strategic planning statements set out the 20-year vision for land use in local government areas. They will identify the special character and values that are to be preserved in a local area



and how change will be managed into the future. The local heritage of Camden goes back to 1859. It is very important to preserve items of special character and to capture them in a document that specifies exactly what the community wants.

The statements will shape how development controls in the local environmental plan will evolve over time to meet the community's needs. The statements must identify the planning priorities for an area and explain how they are to be delivered. They must also show how councils will monitor and report on how the priorities are being implemented. The statements will be plain English documents that allow the community to engage with planning for the future of their area. Councils in Greater Sydney are required to have a final version of their local strategic planning statement in place by 31 March 2020. Camden Council—with the help of State government funding to accelerate the local environmental plan review—will well and truly meet that target. Regional councils will be required to have their statements in place shortly after 1 July 2020. Importantly, the local environmental plan will continue to be the main tool that local governments use to deliver their community's plan.

The bill makes a number of minor and consequential amendments to a standard instrument order—the instrument that prescribes the form and content for a local environmental plan. The bill also makes consequential amendments to a range of local environmental plans throughout New South Wales. The purpose of the amendments is to ensure that the instruments are up to date and reflect broader changes to the planning system so that it can continue to operate efficiently and be clear and easy to navigate. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:32):** On behalf of The Greens I address the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. In particular, I acknowledge the work that has gone into the bill. I recognise that a great deal of the bill is uncontroversial and it includes a range of miscellaneous issues that have been identified. But we have heard from members about the terrible omissions from the bill. Considering the dire straits of our planning system and property developments in New South Wales, it is clear that this is a lost opportunity. That can be seen in so many places. Whether it is about environmental standards with the woefully inadequate Building Sustainability Index [BASIX], government intervention in planning decisions in local council communities, the incredible lack of infrastructure support to meet increased development across our communities, design issues or private certification, so much needs to be done to improve our planning system.

I will give members one insight into that. My electorate covers the Inner West Council. I served for 12 years on Leichhardt Municipal Council and was the mayor. We saw the beginning of this process under the worst elements of the former Labor Government, who introduced part 3A and gave the Minister the right pull any planning decision from the control of the local council and let the Minister decide. That was a disgrace. It has been disowned by Labor, as it should have been. It was used as a rallying point by former Premier Barry O'Farrell in the run-up to his election in 2011. Now the use of State significant precincts, State significant developments and unsolicited proposals means that local environmental plans and strategic planning statements are irrelevant, as the member for Camden raised. They are thrown out the window and are not used in a thoughtful way, as one or two areas might be defined in this.

The City of Sydney, which is part of the electorate I represent, now has State planning controls on more than 274 hectares of land. We are not talking about Yass or Goulburn—we are talking about the city of Sydney. It shows exactly how degraded the planning system is when communities develop planning systems with their local council—they go through processes and consult to come up with the planning standards that they want implemented—and then the Government says, "No. Hang on, in this area we are going to make the decision and take it out of your hands. To hell with all the planning controls that the community has developed; we will make the decision." The Government can make the decision for something as small as a multi-user facility on the harbour in my electorate or something as significant as the redevelopment of Waterloo.

We have seen the City of Sydney and other councils stand up against this process that effectively excludes the community from the decision-making. These decisions lack transparency, and they are one of the reasons for the lack of faith in the planning process. When councils say, "Here are our planning standards and our controls that we want to apply to this development", and it then becomes a State significant development, an unsolicited bid or a State significant precinct, confidence in the system is undermined. These are the issues that the Minister needs to be grappling with. Dealing with consequential amendments is fine, but undermining confidence in the planning system through this process—which basically provides a tick for the big end of town and developers—is a major problem. Locals who want to put a dormer window in at their property have to comply with council planning laws, but major developers like Lendlease or Multiplex can get a State significant development approval or a State significant precinct declaration and get planning permission for developments way in excess of what is allowed under local controls.

Interestingly, one of the very few times that a development has been opposed is The Star casino proposal. The developer used a loophole in the now repealed State planning system to request a radical change to a development approval for a 10-storey building. The original development approval was for a 10-storey hotel and

residential tower and the amended development proposal would have increased the height control on that site from the existing 28 metres to 237 metres. I think the City of Sydney is probably the leading council in Australia in terms of development, but in spite of all the work it had done—noting that the Central Sydney Planning Committee has approved billions of dollars worth of development—the casino's owner displayed blatant disregard for the planning framework. The framework controls were developed through extensive community consultation and represent the view of the community. If that development had been given the go-ahead it would have impacted surrounding areas, overshadowed the public domain and changed the way Pyrmont works. Those are the planning issues that the Minister needs to grapple with.

The Minister also needs to grapple with the issue of investment in infrastructure. I recently wrote to the Minister concerning Parramatta council's 2017 estimation of a local public infrastructure shortfall of \$230 million. If you look at the Parramatta skyline, you will see that it is full of multimillion dollar high-rise profit boxes. Developers have walked away with millions and millions of dollars but the community has been left short by almost a quarter of a billion dollars in important infrastructure. Why is that? There is no special infrastructure contribution [SIC] in Parramatta, even though the administrator of the amalgamated council introduced a levy to try to fund developments. At the time the developers countered by saying that the State Government would introduce a SIC to fund infrastructure developments. The State Government never introduced a SIC, and so there is a massive shortfall in local public infrastructure.

Then we come to the cheer squad for the development industry, Urban Taskforce. Does anyone take it seriously anymore? It argued for so long to reduce regulation despite buildings falling down and cracking and people being excluded from their properties. The arguments that group is putting forward are once again undermining confidence in the planning system. I turn to the BASIX, which the Minister should be addressing in legislation before the House. BASIX is a positive development that seeks to improve the environmental performance of buildings. But now it has turned into a glorified certification process. It needs to be updated and it needs to be focused on ecological outcomes, rather than getting a certificate. BASIX does not deal with so many of the new technologies that now are available. I urge the Minister to consider reviewing BASIX to make it meet to modern standards.

I turn now to address the issue of private certification. It was the former Labor Government that privatised the certification system so Labor bears some responsibility for much of what has happened. The situation now is that a developer finds a certifier and pays that certifier to certify their development. From my experience on a local council, members of the council knew the certifiers who basically would pass anything and they also knew those who were tough. The developers build relationships with certifiers. Developers are paying certifiers' wages. Our community expects that those certifiers will follow every single rule whereas the developer is pressuring them to approve the development—the very developer who is paying the certifiers' bills. That is an incredible conflict of interest. The Greens believe that the certification process should not be privatised. To ensure that certification is done correctly and in a professional manner, it should reside where the task originally was placed—with local government.

Debate on this legislation gives Parliament an incredible opportunity to address the design question. Many people know that population density is important and in many places high-density development should be supported. We know it is important for high-density development to be done properly to improve communities and to ensure that people are not stuck in their cars, and that the development includes walkable spaces. A major problem is where the multi-unit developments meet the street. I invite the Minister to go down Canterbury Road and many places in Parramatta to see the incredible dislocation between the street and the buildings. There are whole streets full of garbage bins, fire services and driveways. That type of development does not create walkable streets or livable communities; rather, it is the antithesis of building good neighbourhoods.

Part of the problem is that specific planning controls are needed. Whereas it might be good for one developer to have a driveway, garbage bins and fire services at the front of the development facing the street; having 12 developments on a road that has exactly the same design destroys the amenity of the street. There are many places with that type of development where there are no street trees and no grass. All we can see are the services on the street undermining good quality neighbourhoods. So much needs to be done in the planning area and the new Minister has a fantastic opportunity to amend legislation to ensure that infrastructure in our communities is properly funded and that appropriate and good quality development is provided. I live in a three-bedroom house on 147 square metres of land, which is considered to be quite a large block.

The community in which I live is a Victorian-age subdivision in the suburb of Rozelle, which is a dense subdivision—in those communities density can be done well. We can still have multi-unit developments in specific areas but one of the things I noticed recently as a member of a parliamentary inquiry examining the release of new housing lots was that we have miles and miles of 800, 1,100 and 1,200 square metre properties that lock people into car dependence. New South Wales has some of the largest homes in the world. The houses occupy the

land from boundary to boundary, are entirely air-conditioned and incredibly environmentally unsustainable, with very few trees and almost no walkable land. We know what people like: They like walkable communities and communities where people can work closely together. I hope the Minister will take the matters I have mentioned on board and I look forward to him addressing those issues.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I welcome to the gallery students from the University of Technology Sydney who are attending for the induction relating to internship at Parliament. I hope they find the debate on planning of interest.

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (11:43):** It gives me great pleasure to support the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I am pleased that the member who preceded me in this debate mentioned the Yass Valley. The Yass Valley in the Southern Tablelands is a beautiful place in which to live and visit. It is rich in heritage, culture, food and wines. I am proud to be the local member for that area. Yass has a strong connection to early rural Australia, with agriculture continuing to serve as the pillar of the community. But the business sector is growing and tourism is booming as Yass Valley's historical buildings, its modern food and wine and its thriving arts culture bring in tourists from the rest of the State, country and globe. Yass Valley benefits from sharing its border with our nation's capital, giving its residents the unique opportunity to work and learn in Canberra whilst living in a rural setting. The towns of Yass and Murrumbateman are expected to support the majority of the local government area's growth in the future while the neighbouring villages retain their small village charm and feel.

From Binalong to Wee Jasper, Yass Valley is made up of eight diverse communities that want and need different things. Our local environmental plans are the cornerstone of our councils' local planning. They provide the framework that tells residents, developers, and businesses what should go where and how our land should be used. Local environmental plans are the main planning tool that shape communities and ensure that development is located and scaled appropriately. They should reflect the community's wishes. Local environmental plans are not and should not be treated as static documents that sit on the shelf. They need to be maintained and updated to keep up with legislation and to keep up with the wishes of our community. They should be accurate, modern and current. That is why Yass Valley's local environmental plan is being updated through this bill—to ensure it is up to date and that references to other legislation are accurate and current.

Local environmental plans can be clunky and hard to follow for those of us who do not have planning degrees. They can be full of confusing clauses and schedules, and perplexing provisions and divisions. That is why this Government is working with local councils to plan more strategically and in closer collaboration with communities. So while we are taking the opportunity to update Yass Valley's local environmental plan through this bill, anyone should be able to pick up a document and easily understand what to expect in a given area. Strategic planning is so important to the future of our communities. It will help us ensure that the right development is in the right area and is supported by the right infrastructure. Local residents, businesses and councils know their areas best. They know what makes their area unique and what needs to be maintained as their communities grow and change.

This Government is providing councils with the tools and support to create their own local strategic planning statements. Yass Valley's Local Strategic Planning Statement will build on the groundwork already laid out through the creation of the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan. It will set out the 20-year vision for the area of the council and the community for its eight distinct towns and villages. It will clearly spell out what the community wants, loves and expects for its area and how that can be delivered through planning controls. It will also set out what development is planned, expected and needed and what infrastructure will be required. It will help government make decisions about where to put future schools, hospitals and transport—this will ensure they are located where most needed. Most importantly, it will provide more certainty for everyone involved, reduce the need for spot rezoning and ensure that communities are not caught by surprise.

The planning system is not meant to surprise us; it should not shock us. The planning system should be simple, explanatory and strategic. It should also be current and modern. The amendments in this bill will not transform Yass Valley's Local Environmental Plan. They are minor in nature. They are not visionary or groundbreaking, nor do they represent any community desire. These amendments will ensure consistency and accuracy with existing legislation, but they represent something greater to me. They represent one step, albeit minor, in this Government's path to improving the planning system to ensure clarity, consistency and certainty for the people of New South Wales—and the community of Yass. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (11:48:14):** I support the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I thank the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces for bringing this bill to the House. The bill seeks to continue modernising our planning system, which we started with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017. It will help to ensure that the new numbering and modernised structure of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 is correctly reflected throughout the New South Wales planning system. It will also seek to provide for the continuous improvement of the operation of the planning

system by both making some minor amendments to and building upon the 2017 framework. The bill offers a chance to make significant amendments to the environmental planning instruments, which are essential following the instigation of other associated legislation. This includes the Crown Land Management Act 2016 and the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Amendment (Primary Production and Rural Development) Order 2019.

The bill clarifies how standardised planning instruments operate by authorising guidance and direction in the terms of the standard instrument and allowing editorial changes—such as punctuation errors—to be dealt with more efficiently; confirms that occupation certificates are available for partially completed buildings, consistent with industry practice and in response to stakeholders' calls for greater clarity; clarifies that a concept approval for a State significant infrastructure project can be followed by only one stage of development, aligning with existing concept development application provisions for State significant development; removes an inconsistency regarding the minimum number of days for public exhibition of environmental impact statements; and updates cross-references in environmental planning instruments consequential on the commencement of the Crown Land Management Act 2016 and the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Amendment (Primary Production and Rural Development) Order 2019.

A growing population requires efficient, up-to-date planning legislation to ensure that infrastructure and urban services can be developed in pace with housing developments. In the five years between June 2012 and June 2017 almost 36,000 new dwellings were completed in the central city district, with the majority of development being along public transport corridors. The fact that just under one-third—11,200—of those dwellings were in the Blacktown area illustrates how rapid this change has been. This rapid growth demonstrates why we need efficient local environmental plans [LEPs] and local strategic planning statements [LSPSs]. The local strategic planning statements are a long-term vision for local communities. They were introduced in March 2018 under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to ensure that local planning priorities meet the community's needs and deliver key State and regional planning objectives.

The LSPS sets out a 20-year vision for local land use, outlining how future growth and change will be managed, how shared community values will be maintained and enhanced and how to preserve special characteristics that contribute to local identity. The State Government is working with local councils to ensure that each of them develop their draft LSPS in line with key dates to be endorsed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. It is important to note that an LSPS will inform changes to planning controls in LEPs. Local environmental plans shape our local communities. They inform how local residents can use their land and the land in their neighbourhoods. They ensure developments are of a reasonable scale and located appropriately in our communities. They ensure that development is compatible with the character of surrounding areas and that it does not overwhelm our local communities. They also ensure diversity in housing and land use, from mixed-use residential to industrial and retail.

I note that Liverpool City Council is finally taking the opportunity to update its local environmental plan after calls from me and many community members concerned with overdevelopment across the local government area. Unfortunately the last LEP was created by the Labor-appointed administrator of the council with little to no community consultation. I cannot find anyone in the area who remembers being consulted. I think the consultation amounted to an ad in the local paper. There were no letterbox drops or any information telling locals what could happen to their area. Many residents who have lived there for 35 to 40 years are upset to see buildings going up and the character of their area changing.

Council has dragged its heels on the issue. It has put local residents, particularly those around the Moorebank area, in a situation where they cannot park in their own streets, privacy has been decimated and communities are being destroyed. I believe that had a strong, community-backed and strategic LEP been put in place previously we might not be seeing inappropriate high-density developments occurring in single-dwelling and family-oriented suburbs such as Holsworthy, Casula and Moorebank. Although I wish it had come sooner, I look forward to seeing a better LEP for our region and sincerely hope that council addresses the density concerns of residents, particularly across the eastern part of Liverpool. To that end, I know the State Government has given the council some funds to help expedite the much-needed process. The bill also provides an amendment to section 5.8 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 that allows for the removal of an inconsistency regarding the minimum number of days for public exhibition of environmental impact statements for government activities carried out without planning approval.

Under section 5.8, a minimum period of 30 days currently applies for the exhibition of environmental impact statements. That is inconsistent with the 28-day minimum period provided for in schedule 1, which was inserted into the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 by the 2017 amending Act and which contains all community participation requirements, including those relating to public exhibition. Importantly, the bill places a large focus on ensuring that community participation principles are utilised when councils are creating

community participation plans. The principles provide a practical and clear approach to engagement and will be included in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The principles include recognising the community's right to be informed about planning matters that affect it, providing information in plain, accessible language and providing the community with opportunities to participate early in strategic planning. How wonderful that will be for my local Liverpool community.

The bill also allows for the collation of the minimum requirements for community consultation to be provided in one place, such as the requirements for minimum exhibition periods for differing planning decisions. The community participation plans will need to adopt the minimum requirements and, if a council wishes, it can commit to further actions to engage with the community. Community participation plans will need to be completed by the end of the year. The bill is essential in simplifying the planning process and ensuring that the modernisation and efficiencies introduced in the 2017 amending Act are accurately referenced. It will ensure that references to the planning Act are consistent with other legislation, so development consents granted under the LEP are not invalidated because the numbering does not match up in relation to inserted clauses.

The safe passage of the bill will mean fewer developmental delays due to administrative conflict in legislation references and more efficient interactions with the planning system. The amendments in the bill are not major but they are very important in ensuring that the planning system is clearer and far more efficient and accessible for our local communities and for the people of New South Wales. I again thank the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, his staff and the department for the work they have done in bringing the bill to this place. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (11:57):** It gives me great pleasure to speak on behalf of the Government in debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. These important changes support the new primary production and rural development planning framework. At the outset I commend Minister Stokes and congratulate him on his appointment as planning Minister for New South Wales. I have had the pleasure of working with the Minister on many projects in the portfolios that he has held, whether it be education or planning. He is a good friend of the Central Coast and it is always a pleasure to have him visit on a regular basis.

I acknowledge the contributions from my Government colleagues representing the electorates of Wollondilly, North Shore, Riverstone, Seven Hills, Hawkesbury, Camden and Goulburn. I also acknowledge my very good friend the member for Tweed and the fantastic contribution from the member for Holsworthy. It goes to show how important the amendments are. We often take for granted the amendments that are made to Acts in this place. I commend the Minister for introducing this amendment bill. As the member for Terrigal, it is a great pleasure to speak in support of the bill.

Primary production is one of the largest industries in New South Wales and is a significant contributor to the State and national economies. We heard the Deputy Premier speak at length yesterday about the importance of primary production in regional New South Wales and we know that it has been tough for a lot of farmers. I note the member for Tweed is in the Chamber. I have had the pleasure of visiting his electorate; it is a lovely place. But we often hear about the green drought, and appearances can be quite deceptive when you are driving around the regions. I recently had the privilege of travelling south to Kiama. It is beautiful countryside but it is also important to be aware that what we see is not always the real situation.

Before 28 February 2019 the planning framework was disjointed and often very confusing—much like the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 before its amendment in 2017. I note that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has entered the Chamber. As I said before, we have had the privilege of working together in his various portfolios. I congratulate him on his appointment as planning Minister; I think no-one is better suited to take over the portfolio. Like a tractor held together by duct tape and string, the planning requirements for primary production and rural land use were scattered across a range of planning instruments. This made it confusing and meant that our regional landowners had to navigate at least five different State environmental planning policies. That is not ideal for anybody. These are primary producers who should be able to focus on delivering their product and getting it to market.

Primary producers previously had to consult the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006, ministerial directions and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 to work out the relevant requirements for their development. That is a very convoluted and complicated array of different instruments to have to navigate when realistically they should be able to do the job easily and swiftly and get back to the business of delivering produce and meeting their farming requirements. The new primary production and rural development framework removed unnecessary regulation and brought together the requirements in an elegant and modern way—much like this Minister, who is elegant and modern. It did this in several ways. First, it replaced four of the five existing agricultural State environmental planning policies with the rationally organised and simplified Primary Production and Rural Development State Environmental Planning Policy.

Secondly, it updated the standard instrument to modernise definitions to reflect contemporary practices and emerging innovations in the industry and incorporate a range of new land uses and development controls for aquaculture, rural subdivision and artificial water bodies of a certain size in environmentally sensitive areas into local environmental plans. Thirdly, it updated the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 to declare certain artificial water bodies near poultry farms as designated developments and clarify other designated development requirements for the keeping and breeding of horses. Those three factors are now being streamlined under this Minister and this amendment. That is a great outcome for primary producers and those living on the land in regional and rural areas, including the Central Coast. There are many primary producers on the Central Coast, especially on the plateau around Mangrove Mountain, and these assessments will make it a lot easier for them.

To support the new primary production and rural development framework, the bill also updates the standard instrument to include the new land uses introduced by the primary production and rural development package. The bill also makes it clear that aquaculture must be permitted with development consent in the SP1 Special Activities zone, continuing longstanding and important arrangements for this type of development. These changes are not major but are in line with the policy intent of the changes that were made to the framework when it was updated earlier this year. The new primary production and rural development framework is part of this Liberal-Nationals Government's commitment to make the planning system transparent and easy to use. It should be clear and straight forward so that hardworking primary producers in our community can get on with their jobs and spend as little time as possible navigating the planning system.

I commend the Minister for putting this amendment in place. Bills pass through this House on a regular basis and it is great to have a proactive planning Minister and team who are looking at ways to cut red tape and streamline the bureaucracy so that people on the land—who get up before dawn to get on with their job as primary producers in our community—can focus on their real work: delivering primary produce across New South Wales, whether it be to the Tweed, Central Coast, South Coast or Bega. These changes are an added bonus for the people of regional New South Wales. As I said earlier—and the Deputy Premier spoke about this yesterday in question time—our primary producers have been struggling through no fault of their own.

Whilst we wish them well and wish that we were able to make rain for them, they are doing it tough. Anything this Government can do to streamline that service, make it a little easier for them and take a bit of stress out of the process is a good thing. To some this may seem like a minor amendment, but for people navigating the system it is a godsend. It creates an easier and more streamlined process. Once again, this bill is a credit to the Minister and the Planning team. I acknowledge Jonathon Schipp and Kieran Hayden, who played a major part in drafting this amendment. They are the unsung heroes behind the scenes who work constructively with stakeholders on the Government's behalf. I acknowledge also the contribution of Tom Loomes, who has sat in the adviser's area for the entire debate on this bill.

It was a team effort, led by a very good Minister who is absolutely resolute to deliver better reforms and outcomes around the planning instruments in this State. As I said earlier, he is always welcome on the Central Coast. His reform is streamlining the process and making it a lot easier. I thank Jonathon, Kieran and Tom for their work, and I thank the Minister for being in the Chamber for this debate. It is an important issue. Whilst it might seem minor to some, it has major benefits for many people in regional New South Wales, from the Tweed to the South Coast, the Central Coast and everywhere in between. Primary producers will thank the Minister for streamlining this service. I commend the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 to the House.

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (12:06):** In reply: I speak in reply to debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I begin by thanking the long list of members who contributed to debate on the bill, including members representing the electorates of Port Stephens, Wollondilly, Wyong, Riverstone, Heffron, North Shore, Granville, Seven Hills, Bankstown, Hawkesbury, Summer Hill, Camden, Balmain, Goulburn, Holsworthy and, last but certainly not least, Terrigal. It is no surprise that so many members sought to participate in this debate as land-use planning and strategic planning affect all our communities and outline what the future opportunities in our communities will be. It is a critical issue for everyone across the State.

The bill seeks to achieve a balance between the interests of private property, broader public interests and the important ideal of securing genuine public participation through the mediation of conflicts over land and its uses, all in pursuit of the goal of sustainable and ecologically sustainable development as it is defined in New South Wales. I thank all those members for their thoughtful contributions to the debate. I will now address some of the matters raised during the debate. I note the presence of the member for Port Stephens in the Chamber and thank her for her contribution. She led the debate on this bill for the Opposition. I acknowledge she indicated the Opposition will not oppose the bill and that its contents are largely uncontroversial. I furiously agree with that assessment of the bill. I assure the member and the House that the department briefed Local Government NSW

on the contents of the bill and continues to liaise with the organisation on changes to planning legislation that will affect councils.

I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Wollondilly. He mentioned that the bill will continue the work of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Staged Development Applications) Act 2017 and ensure that the assessment pathway for State significant infrastructure is consistent with the assessment pathway for State significant development. That is part of the way that we are streamlining and rationalising the planning law and making sure that it is consistent and easier to understand. The bill will confirm the policy of the State Government that a concept development application for State significant infrastructure can be followed by a single application for the entire development site.

The member mentioned the importance of local character in the beautiful electorate of Wollondilly—one of the peri-urban council areas in New South Wales—much of which is undergoing some change. He also mentioned the importance of ensuring that local planning controls and instruments point to the contemporary legislation and regulation in order to make the planning system as efficient as possible. The member spoke about his appreciation and understanding of the importance of the various environments that his community comprises. Wollondilly is at the crux of some of the land use conflicts in this State and the member does an amazing job representing the concerns of his community and mediating some of those conflicts that come along from time to time.

I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Wyong—another peri-urban part of New South Wales—who affirmed that the Opposition will not oppose the bill. I thank him for his advocacy for his community, especially with regard to spot rezonings and the application of the affordable housing State environmental planning policy introduced in 2009. As I have recently said, spot rezonings often result in communities being caught by surprise by ad hoc decisions on new developments. I think all members can agree that a better way forward is to change the culture and replace spot rezonings in an orderly fashion with proper strategic planning. Councils are currently setting the strategic direction for their areas, and through this process the need for spot rezonings will naturally diminish. That is certainly the future to which we aspire. I look forward to hearing soon from the member for Wyong about issues in his electorate. I understand my staff have already reached out to the member to see how our office can help with the large number of interesting issues in the Wyong local government area and electorate.

I thank the member for Riverstone for his contribution, in which he rightly pointed out that the amendments proposed by the bill are not major but they are important. The consequential amendments to local environmental plans and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 will improve the clarity and accessibility of the planning system for everyone who uses it. They will allow users to easily navigate between planning instruments and the parent Act and will make sure that those planning instruments are as consistent as possible in the use of provisions. I thank the member for Heffron for his contribution. The member has considerable experience in local government and a passionate interest and great experience in planning. However, there were a number of gaps in his comments. The member talked about building standards; while that is a very important issue for the State, this is a planning bill. Those comments are perhaps left for debate on a bill relating to building standards, which is an area that is capably led by the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation.

The member also talked about amendments that this bill makes to the Sydney Local Environmental Plan (Green Square Town Centre—Stage 2) 2013. Perhaps he did not read the amendments closely; they are purely consequential on the commencement of other legislation—including, for example, the Crown Land Management Act 2016. They simply ensure that the references to legislation are correct. As for the member's concern about population increase in the area and the effect on transport, that issue will be addressed by the Waterloo metro. It is a critical piece of infrastructure that the member should recognise is happening. I thank the member for North Shore for her contribution to today's debate. As she so eloquently raised, the bill will complete the work of the Crown Land Management Act 2016 by making consequential amendments to a range of environmental planning instruments.

Obviously there are close linkages between the Crown Land Management Act and planning legislation. That will ensure that environmental planning instruments contain updated and accurate references back to the Crown Land Management Act 2016, which will improve the efficiency and clarity of the planning system for the people of New South Wales. I thank the member for Granville for her contribution to the debate. I note the member is concerned about community participation in the planning process, and I accept the premise of her concern. Obviously, we are all concerned to ensure that the community is thoroughly involved in making and understanding the decisions that will influence their opportunities in the future.

The 2017 amending Act to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 that this Government introduced had a clear focus on community participation and returning powers back to the people of New South Wales. For example, it established community participation plans which returned powers to the community and

explained how and when planning authorities will engage the community in plan-making and development decisions. It also established the need for local strategic planning statements which are centred around community participation and set out the 20-year vision for land use in the local government area. As the member for Seven Hills raised, this bill makes necessary changes to the standard instrument. Section 3.20 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act contains the power that allows the Governor to make the standing instrument order and amendments to it. As the member pointed out, this bill amends section 3.20 to include additional provisions that will allow the standard instrument order to operate more efficiently.

I thank the member for Bankstown for her significant contribution as the former shadow Minister for planning, even though it took some time for her to get to the content of the bill. Nevertheless I reiterate that spot rezonings can catch communities by surprise and that strategic planning and the community-led measures that this Government has put in place can deal with that issue; whether that is the community participation plan inserted in the Act as a result of the 2017 amending Act or whether it is the local strategic planning statements that are being developed right now. As I mentioned, councils are currently setting the strategic direction for their areas. Through this process, the need for spot rezonings will naturally diminish in an orderly way. It is important to recognise that one of the key objectives of the planning system is to ensure an orderly process exists for allocating interests in the use of land over time.

I thank the member for Hawkesbury for her contribution to the debate. As the member pointed out, community participation in the planning process is critical to a good, efficient and community-led planning system. The member has extensive experience with planning issues in the Hawkesbury going back many years. In line with her comments, the bill will align minimum exhibition periods for different community consultation mechanisms, which is important in providing a consistent planning framework. The bill builds on the important work of the 2017 amending Act and enhances community participation measures introduced in that legislation.

The member for Summer Hill is in the Chamber today, and I thank her for her contribution. The member raised important issues with respect to building standards, as did the member for Heffron. As a result of the Lambert inquiry, those issues are the responsibility of the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, who is working hard on them and doing an excellent job. I thank the member for Camden for his contribution. The member has lengthy experience in local government and is in a good position to understand the workings and practical implications of planning and its intersection with local government. The member raised the importance of the work of the 2017 amending Act in establishing the need for councils and communities to work together to put in place local strategic planning statements. Local environmental plans will continue to be the principal tool that local governments use to deliver the communities' plans. This bill makes minor amendments to local environmental plans [LEPs] to improve their efficiency.

The member for Balmain is passionate about a whole series of planning issues. He provided a great commentary, particularly on the importance of good design in the planning system. I note that the recently amended Environmental Planning and Assessment Act introduced an objective of good design so that design will take a much more central role in the way we shape communities. I thank the member for Balmain for his support and ask him to take note of the work that the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is now doing to put design at the centre of planning for communities. The member for Goulburn provided a great contribution, particularly with respect to the township of Yass in her electorate. The Southern Highlands and beyond is a particularly beautiful part of New South Wales, and while the adjustments in this bill to the Yass LEP are minor in nature, they are important in achieving consistency and efficiency of the planning system. They appropriately set out how local heritage can be identified and protected.

The member for Holsworthy made a valid contribution with regard to the Blacktown Local Environmental Plan, and I thank her for her contribution. Blacktown is a burgeoning area that is undergoing significant change as one of the hubs in Sydney's west. This bill is essential to simplify the planning process, and to ensure the modernisation and efficiencies introduced in the 2017 amending Act are accurately referenced. As members would be aware, the bill is about ensuring that references to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and other legislation are consistent across the instrument.

I conclude this part of my speech by thanking the member for Terrigal for his contribution. He had a particular focus on the changes to primary production and the treatment of primary production in the planning system. Primary production is critical to our State's productivity, sustainability and the social cohesion of diverse communities. The member validly pointed out that this Government will do anything it can to assist our farmers. He pointed out that permissive planning frameworks to support primary production could not be more important, particularly in times of drought. He focused particularly on aquaculture issues, which have been important for his coastal electorate, and will be in the future.

I thank all members for their compelling and thoughtful contributions to the debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017 marked



one of the most extensive changes to the planning framework and law since the introduction of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, more than four decades ago. This bill builds on the important work undertaken in 2017 and continues to tidy up the Act as well as other pieces of legislation and instruments that point to the Act. A number of members have spoken about the need to prevent surprises in the New South Wales planning system, and I understand that the Opposition will move amendments in the other place to limit these surprises that it says will occur by way of spot rezoning.

As planning Minister I am pleased to hear this bipartisan support for strong strategic planning; I believe we need a strong and steady hand to bring certainty to our communities. When this Government introduced the Greater Sydney Commission legislation in 2015 it made an important step towards a strategic planning system. As Minister with responsibility for planning at the time, I was happy to work with the Opposition to ensure that we secured bipartisan commitment to long-term reform because it is important to recognise that, despite the ebb and flow of political fortune in this place, planning stretches out over decades. The processes we agree upon and the strategic vision we set for our community take many decades to come to actuality so it is important, wherever possible, for us to act in a consistent and bipartisan fashion.

I look forward to working with the Opposition again to move even closer to a proactive, principle-based planning framework. The new local strategic planning statements will help to move toward this vision of a future that many members here are looking forward to. But we also must be careful to not act hastily or reactively. We must instead move decisively and systematically to an even more strategic planning system. As I have mentioned, the objectives of the planning Act are quite clear in relation to the obligation to ensure that we have an orderly system for the use of land and natural resources in this State, so we need to be very careful when considering a significant change from a pattern of reaction that has developed over several decades toward facilitating spot rezonings as the way to get things done. To move that decisively toward a strategic planning system will take a little time and it needs to be done in an orderly and systematic way—certainly not an ad hoc or sudden way.

Since the commencement of the 2017 amending Act some consequential and minor miscellaneous issues were identified across the planning system and this bill seeks to amend those. It will reflect the new numbering and a modernised structure of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 that is properly reflected across the New South Wales planning system, legislation and instruments. In order to keep our legislation modern and current, bills like the one being debated here will be necessary from time to time to tidy up not only the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 but all affiliated, cognate and associated legislation, planning instruments and regulation within the planning system and across the Planning, Industry and Environment cluster more broadly.

In conclusion, as the member for Terrigal did, I too note the contribution of Jonathon Schipp and Kieran Hayden on behalf of the department. I am very fortunate to have a department that is filled with people with considerable expertise. Lawyers within the planning department are some of the finest lawyers I have ever had the opportunity to work with. Frankly, we need them in the planning system because there is a lot of complexity in the dynamic and changing nature of developments being proposed across the State and the implications that they can have for many years to come. I am very grateful to Jonathon and Kieran, and the teams who have worked alongside them in the planning department. I am also very appreciative of all members who have contributed to the debate. As the member for Terrigal did, I also commend my ministerial staff—in particular, Tom Loomes, who has played such an important role in listening to the contributions and responding to members on both sides of this Chamber. I commend this bill to the House.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

### Third Reading

**Mr ROB STOKES:** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### Visitors

### VISITORS

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I recognise in the gallery the mayor of Ku-ring-gai Council, Jennifer Anderson; the deputy mayor of Willoughby City Council, Judith Rutherford; and their respective general managers and deputy general managers. Welcome.

*Budget***BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2019-2020****Debate resumed from 30 July 2019.**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:29):** I make a contribution to the take-note debate on the Budget Estimates and Related Papers 2019-2020. As I said on budget day, this budget shows that New South Wales is in a strong position. It is a budget for regional New South Wales; it brings home the bacon for people living in regional and country New South Wales. This budget shows that we are the party of the workers and families. This Government delivers on its election commitments. With our surpluses, we have an increased infrastructure spend of \$93 billion. Last term the budget spend was \$80 billion and in the first term of this Government it has been about \$70 billion. That is well over \$200 billion in infrastructure spend by this Government.

The Treasury spokesman for the Labor Party in his speech in this debate said that \$70 billion of community assets had been sold and asked, "Where has the money gone?" Any way you look at it, the Government has spent more money than the leased assets created. The Government has generated funding for new infrastructure through recycling old and tired assets. The supply of material for and construction of that infrastructure build creates jobs, which has led to economic growth.

I will highlight some of the exceptional parts of this budget, the first being financial management. It is only through good financial management that the Government has been able to increase infrastructure spend, create jobs and reduce unemployment to the lowest level in the recorded history of the State. This budget has a surplus of \$3.9 billion with a net credit sitting in the bank of \$9.8 billion. I note that the net worth of the State under Labor was \$160 billion. Through the infrastructure spend to date and what will be spent over the next four years to 2022 the net worth is \$311 billion. That is outstanding. The State has kept its triple-A credit rating and growth is at 2.9 per cent. A business conditions survey shows that confidence is high with jobs growing by 506,000 and a low unemployment rate of 4.9 per cent.

As to the national economy, New South Wales makes a significant contribution and is the engine room of Australia. This State is propping up the rest of Australia. When we came into office New South Wales was the poorest performing State in Australia. Now we are the premier State and we are leading the charge with the creation of jobs and the lowest unemployment figures. Every financial and economic indicator shows that New South Wales is outperforming the rest of Australia. This Government has created over 500,000 jobs in New South Wales and we are committed to creating a further 250,000 jobs over the next four years. I will refer later to the many jobs that have been created in regional New South Wales, notwithstanding the State being in the grip of the worst drought on record. Without water, farmers cannot grow crops or produce stock. As a result they do not generate an income to spend with local businesses, which causes those businesses to suffer. Notwithstanding that circumstance, the Government is still generating jobs in regional New South Wales. Imagine the state of the economy but for the drought.

As I said earlier, we are the party of families. The Government has been instrumental in compulsory third party insurance refunds averaging \$124 per year and has increased energy rebates by up to 20 per cent. The Active Kids voucher, which the Government introduced last year, is a huge success. Families across New South Wales told us that their children play summer and winter sports. So this year the Government introduced a second Active Kids voucher valued at \$100, totalling \$200 per child per year. Further, the Government introduced this year the Creative Kids voucher valued at \$100 per child. For a family with two children that means \$600 per year going into the family's budget to be used for children's sporting and creative activities.

Service NSW is providing a cost-of-living advisory service, offering about 40 discounts to families and people on low incomes. Many people do not know that they can go to Service NSW to receive cost-of-living advice. They can take in their electricity bill, green slip and other bills and get advice on making savings. When I visited Service NSW in Taree there was a couple who received advice and saved just over \$200 a year. They were very happy about that. Another couple saved over \$1,200 per year. Just about anyone can take advantage of this service to obtain relief. Under this Government, caravan registration has been reduced by 40 per cent. That is important to people in my electorate.

**Mr Stuart Ayres:** The grey nomads.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD:** The grey nomads. When the town of Bulahdelah in my electorate was bypassed by the Pacific Highway upgrade about three years ago local businesses were very concerned. The Government and the council assisted the town by upgrading the main street and public toilets and providing free camping at a grey nomads mobile park, with picnic shelters and a jetty overlooking the fantastic Plough Inn. This has been the saving of the town. Many people take advantage of the free camping and then cross over the bridge

into town to visit the shops and have a coffee. A dump point or pump out is at Bulahdelah Showground on the other side of the bridge. The caravanners have to go through the main street to take advantage of that facility, so they stop for lunch and buy food at the IGA grocery store. It has been fantastic for the town.

The 40 per cent reduction in the caravan registration also means that more people can afford to go on grey nomad trips and stay in places like Bulahdelah and Wingham. Wingham also has a free parking area at Riverside park. The Wingham Advancement Group has erected a box for grey nomads and others who stay at the park to deposit receipts showing they have shopped in the main street or at the shopping centre. Not everybody does it but the receipts have added up to about \$100,000 a year. That is \$100,000 a year going into the economy of Wingham. Improving the economy means more job opportunities for people, which helps to further stimulate the economy in Wingham. That is the result of the caravan registration discount which encourages people to buy a caravan and go on these trips.

I have spoken about the Creative Kids and Active Kids vouchers. There are incentives to help families, including a parents package and the extension of preschool subsidies to three-year-olds as part of the Early Childhood portfolio budget. We know that the younger a person is when their education starts, the better their outcomes later in life. The budget is also helping young people get ahead through providing 100,000 free apprenticeships, which is needed because of the school shortages in some areas. That will encourage young people to take up apprenticeships. Some people believe that the only way to get ahead is to go to university; however, that is certainly not the case. TAFE and apprenticeships are fantastic ways to get ahead and get a good job. People then have opportunities to start their own business or extend their education.

The budget also focuses on health, education and transport. It delivers another 950 nurses and midwives, 700 paramedics, 883 teachers and 100 more police. That is part of our overall promise of 8,000 health workers over the next four years. Some 5,000 of those will be nurses, and 3,700 of those will be in regional New South Wales. The Government is delivering on that election promise. New South Wales is the place to do business. The Government is lifting the payroll tax threshold from \$750,000 to \$1 million, which Labor did not support. It shows that we are the party for the worker. We are giving businesses the opportunity to employ more people. Members opposite are opposed to that. They want higher taxes on businesses so that businesses cannot reinvest or employ more people. The increased payroll tax threshold means that 5,000 more small businesses will pay no payroll tax. That is absolutely fantastic.

The Government is also looking to make real changes and give real opportunities to Aboriginal communities. For example, the Clontarf Academies will receive \$3.75 million for an additional 1,000 student places in the Clontarf Foundation program. Last week I had a meeting with the northern region Clontarf CEO about the academies in the Myall Lakes electorate and the opportunities to expand them. The program came from Western Australia and proved successful there. It is now in a number of centres around New South Wales and is about re-engaging Aboriginal boys through football. In Western Australia it is obviously through Australian rules football, but in New South Wales it is through rugby league. The Clontarf Academy at Chatham High School in my electorate started at the beginning of last year and has been an outstanding success. It is a partnership between the Clontarf Foundation, the New South Wales Government, the Federal Government and the local community. It ensures that every boy who goes through school is re-engaged with education and when they finish year 12 they are guaranteed a job. That is done is through engagement with local businesses and local opportunities. The four-way partnership makes it so successful.

In the budget there is also \$2.8 million for Aboriginal languages. When I visit schools the acknowledgement of country is often given by the young students in their language. The Youth Koori Court in Sydney is receiving further funding. There is \$10 million for two new impact investing opportunities to improve homelessness and Aboriginal employment outcomes. The Aboriginal Housing Strategy will receive \$33.1 million. I will talk about that later when I turn to what is in the budget for the Myall Lakes electorate. Because the State is in such a strong financial position we can deliver services and social services. It is not just about having a good economy for the sake of having a good economy; it is about helping real people with real problems.

In this budget Adoption Services will receive \$59.1 million for 100 additional caseworkers for child protection and for investment in open adoptions. Some \$44.1 million is provided to support victims of domestic violence and reduce reoffending, \$61.7 million is provided for reducing homelessness and \$55 million is provided to create an environment that supports and engages workers in mental health facilities. In the budget \$3.2 million is provided to support the transition to the full NDIS and \$39.2 million is provided for replacement and refurbishment of PCYC clubs across the State.

Taree PCYC in my electorate plays an important role. The internationally recognised Gymaroos train there and it runs a number of other programs, including what I will call a street beat—for want of another name—where they go out in the evening to look for young people to bring to the PCYC where they can be looked after. It also runs the Manning-Great Lakes Traffic Offenders Program that attempts to change the behaviour of

people referred to it by the courts for traffic matters including drink driving and the like. It has been very successful in the Myall Lakes electorate and has reduced the rate of recidivism of traffic offenders. [*Extension of time*]

Over the next four years approximately \$93 billion will be spent on infrastructure. That is a record amount and is on top of the budget for the previous four years of about \$84 billion. The year before that it was about \$70 billion. What is in the budget for regional New South Wales? The drought package is worth \$1.8 billion and the Regional Growth Fund is worth \$1.7 billion. The drought package will be a targeted support. Since the budget was handed down Leader of The Nationals John Barilaro has visited regional communities and arranged for the fast-tracking of projects. Not only are the farmers doing it tough; the businesses in the local towns are doing it tough as well. Fast-tracking infrastructure and other projects would mean that local businesses have to supply these projects and local workers would have to build them, which in turn would stimulate the economy because those local businesses and workers are not getting the usual income from the farms due to the drought.

The package is aimed at boosting drought resilience and drought preparedness. We will get through this drought—it will rain, but we do not know when. We are one day closer to the drought breaking, just as we are one day closer to the next drought. Part of the package is helping those affected to prepare for what comes after the current drought breaks. The Farm Innovation Fund has an added \$350 million to support low-interest loans and capital improvements to build drought resistance and preparedness, which brings the total available in that fund to \$1 billion. In the drought assistance package, funding of \$2.6 million has been allocated to water reform in the Murray-Darling Basin. There is also a State contribution of \$1.5 million, or \$13 million over four years, to rehabilitate high-priority free-flowing bores and drains in the Great Artesian Basin to enhance reliability of water supply and to reduce the impact of drought.

There is \$185 million to continue existing drought assistance programs, including \$70 million for transport rebates for fodder, stock and water; \$50 million for one-year relief from Local Land Services annual rates; \$30 million to waive fixed charges for water licence holders; \$15 million to provide emergency water carting to secure town water supplies as part of the Government's drought assistance program; \$10 million in the Farm Innovation Fund loan interest relief; a \$170 million reserve for a special purpose drought infrastructure package to undertake water security measures including a new groundwater supply at Dubbo, augmenting supply to Coonabarabran and construction of a new supply at Nyngan; and \$8.3 million to improve access to and delivery of mental health services in rural and remote communities. Improving mental health services is really important because a lot of people on the farms and in the surrounding towns who are affected by a drought like this, where there seems to be no end to it, are really doing it tough. Ordinarily they would not have mental health issues but in times of drought they might be affected. So they really need support, counselling and help, which this budget is providing.

The budget also provides \$5.2 million in funding to support preschool children of families facing hardship because of the drought and \$314.7 million in Restart funding over four years to over 120 regional water infrastructure projects, which are underway. The budget allocates \$527.1 million to improve regional communities' access to dependable, clean and safe water supplies and sewerage services. The estimated cost of the Keepit Dam upgrade project is \$113.1 million. There is also \$1.7 billion in the Regional Growth Fund to improve local facilities and grow local economies in regional New South Wales, with over \$1 billion committed to more than 1,350 projects over the past two years.

In the 2019-20 financial year the fund will continue to focus on regional New South Wales, with more infrastructure projects already in the pipeline. There is new funding of \$113 million in the 2019-20 financial year for the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund to be spent on priority areas, including \$90 million—or \$400 million over four years—for the Regional Digital Connectivity program; \$20 million to continue to investigate and plan for future Special Activation Precincts; and \$3 million to progress sites identified in the international airfreight pre-feasibility study to improve connectivity to regional New South Wales.

The Government will also spend \$32 million over three years to investigate the augmentation of the Wyangala Dam as part of a \$650 million commitment. There is \$22.9 million as part of the \$50 million investment to upgrade food and fibre research stations across our regions, including in Port Stephens, Cowra, Tamworth, Orange, Wagga Wagga and Trangie. That is just a glimpse of some of the projects happening in regional New South Wales. I turn now to what is in the budget for Myall Lakes, which is really good news. Some \$394,000 has been allocated to improve the roads at the Cabarita mission at Forster as part of the total allocation of \$788,000 for the Aboriginal Housing Office.

At the Old Bar Public School, a \$9 million allocation is delivering construction of eight new classrooms. On election day this year I was standing at the front of the school near the school gates handing out how-to-vote cards to people who were coming into the school to vote. It just so happened that on election day all the workers were on site at the school building the new two-storey complex comprising eight classrooms, new amenities and open learning areas. As people walked towards me the Labor Party candidate said, "Schools and hospitals before

stadiums!". As I was handing out how-to-vote cards I said, "We're building them!" and I pointed to the school where there was jackhammering and drilling underway. People responded with winks and laughter because they knew that the Taree hospital is undergoing an upgrade worth \$40 million and an additional \$100 million has been committed for a further stage of redevelopment.

The budget allocates \$1 million for the Tuncurry slipway. Stage one of the upgrade of the Manning Hospital has cost \$20 million. Stage one part B—costing an additional \$20 million—is currently underway, with a further \$100 million in funding for the hospital. On election day the Labor Party candidate, who was accompanied by the then shadow Minister for Health, said, "\$100 million for the Manning Base Hospital." The \$100 million referred to included the \$40 million already spent, which meant that the Labor allocation would have been \$60 million for the full redevelopment of that hospital.

The master building plan refers to three stages of the hospital's upgrade: stage one is under construction; the Government has announced \$100 million for stage two, which makes a subtotal of \$140 million; and stage three construction is yet to begin. When the Labor candidate was asked about the discrepancy in his figures his reply was, "We'll match whatever Steve Bromhead says." The Labor Party spokesman matched it at \$140 million for the full redevelopment but still did not understand—because it is a three-stage project, there is still another stage to fund. When the Labor candidate was asked about that he said, "That's just a glossy document. That doesn't mean anything." He was referring to the redevelopment master plan.

It is fantastic that the budget allocates \$350,000 for upgrading of the Cedar Party Creek bridge. A new bridge will be built at Wingham and if there is a new bridge there will also be a new pool. In other words, there will be no bridge without a new pool and there will be no new pool without a new bridge. The budget papers show that planning is underway for a new hospital in Forster-Tuncurry. For the northern gateway freight transport hub north of Cundletown, which the business community has been talking about for several years, \$15 million has been allocated. For the Tuncurry golf course, which is a championship grade golf course, \$3 million has been allocated for upgrading the course's amenities. When the amenities are improved, a number of tournaments will be able to be held and will attract golfers and tourists to the Tuncurry area. In 2020 the mid-term amateur championships will be held at the Tuncurry championship golf course.

In 2021 the New South Wales women's open will be held. More than 100 international golfers will participate and thousands of people will attend. In 2022 the men's and women's seniors golf tournaments will be held and they are expected to attract thousands of people to Tuncurry. I have mentioned just some of the improvements in the Myall Lakes electorate made possible by State budget allocations. For upgrading local roads, on top of last year's budget allocation, an additional \$100 million has been allocated. To place that in context, in the Federal election Labor announced a budget allocation of \$500 million for upgrading roads in the entire State of Queensland, whereas the New South Wales Government has allocated \$100 million for roads in just one local council area.

### **Debate adjourned.**

### *Community Recognition Statements*

#### **ALLAN HUTCHERSON**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:59):** I inform the House of the generous spirit in our community to assist farmers in need in other parts of New South Wales. Mayers Flat property owner Allan Hutcherson owns Freshwater Brands, which is a company manufacturing body care products. He was fencing his essential oil plantation when a contractor pointed out there was an abundance of feed. Mr Hutcherson heard Aussie Helpers on the radio talking about buying fodder from all over Australia for drought-affected farmers and transporting it to New South Wales and Queensland. Mr Hutcherson has subsequently donated more than 560 round silage bales from the 80 hectare property. Allan's generosity has spurred on two of his neighbours who are also donating fodder. I congratulate Allan Hutcherson on urging anyone in our local area who has grass in their paddocks to step up and get in contact with Aussie Helpers.

#### **LISMORE RED CROSS TEA ROOMS**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (13:00):** On Friday 5 July 2019 the Lismore Red Cross Tea Rooms celebrated its sixtieth anniversary. The premises were purchased in 1959 and the Lismore tea rooms have been a part of the community since its establishment. Located at 132 Keen Street, Lismore, they are one of the very few tea rooms still operating in Australia. The tea rooms serve no fuss, affordable and delicious food, including traditional—or some may say old-fashioned—handmade sandwiches, cakes and loose leaf tea, which is my kind of food. In 2017 the tea rooms were badly damaged by flood during Cyclone Debbie. With the generous support of the community they eventually re-opened six months after the flood. I congratulate president Rhonda Moule,

secretary Gay McEwan, treasurer Sue Pringle, vice-president Lynn Felsch and Norma Blume on running the tea rooms. The tea rooms continue to serve the community today due to support from volunteers.

#### **VAUCLUSE ELECTORATE RSL SUB- BRANCHES**

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (13:01):** On 15 June 2019 Rose Bay RSL Sub-Branch celebrated its 100th anniversary. It was great to acknowledge this milestone at Club Rose Bay with members and supporters. I warmly commended sub-branch president Lee Stockley and secretary Rosemary Stockley, OAM, who do an amazing job for such an active sub-branch. On 4 July 2019 I visited the Double Bay War Memorial at Steyne Park, also on its 100th birthday, to announce a \$7,000 New South Wales Government grant for an upgrade. I was joined by North Bondi RSL Sub-Branch President Rob De Graaf; Rose Bay RSL Sub-Branch Secretary Rosemary Stockley, OAM, and President Lee Stockley; and Woollahra Council Deputy Mayor Mary-Lou Jarvis. Our local RSLs, sub-branches and memorials are an important part of our community and I will continue to strongly support them.

#### **A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:02):** I cannot applaud enough the fantastic new initiative launched by the Illawarra Women's Health Centre earlier this month. A Little Bird Told Me is a beautiful discreet card featuring a gorgeous intricate bird on the front with crucial domestic violence contacts on the back. This aptly named card is now adorning the counters of hairdressers, chemists and doctors' surgeries throughout the Shellharbour region. Two out of five women experience domestic and family violence and this card contains vital and potentially lifesaving contact information of local domestic violence support services in an unobtrusive way. I make a special mention of Anthea Stead, the local artist whose work features on the front of this little card, as well as the Illawarra Yacht Club and the Oak Flats Bowling Club whose grants made this project a reality.

#### **SCHOOLS TREE DAY**

#### **NATIONAL TREE DAY**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:03):** Recently I had the pleasure of taking part in Schools Tree Day at Bert Oldfield Public School in Seven Hills. I commend all the students, mums and dads and carers who participated in the program. Schools Tree Day allows local schools to involve and educate students, teachers and the community about their local environments. It also encourages students to get involved in National Tree Day events hosted by their local community groups or councils. National Tree Day is sponsored by Planet Ark and Toyota, who have done a great job in reaching out and working with schools in my council areas, particularly in the Seven Hills electorate. All three local government areas across Seven Hills held events for National Tree Day including Blacktown City Council, The Hills Shire Council and City of Parramatta Council. In particular, I thank the City of Parramatta Council for its National Tree Day event at Third Settlement Reserve across from Winston Hills and Old Toongabbie. It is the third and final instalment of the three-year project at Third Settlement Reserve which has resulted in 10,000 native flora planted in that area.

#### **RANDWICK GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL AND RANDWICK BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (13:04):** I congratulate Randwick Girls' and Randwick Boys' high schools on their production *Masterpiece*, a celebration of artistry and creative genius. Almost 250 students from years 7 to 12 as well as alumni paid homage to some of the great literary, cinematic, artistic and creative masterpieces through a dazzling performance of song, dance and drama. I thank and congratulate all the parents, grandparents, friends and families who worked tirelessly to help build sets and construct costumes for this production. These students were amazing, which makes it so hard for me to pick any single performance as my favourite. Was it *Star Wars*, *The Wild Swans*, *Hamilton*, *Aladdin* or *The Boy from Oz*? I simply can't pick! Finally, congratulations and thank you to the P&Cs, as well as Lucy Andre and Lance Raskall for supporting these amazing students' artistic endeavours.

#### **SOPHIE BROADBENT**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (13:05):** I congratulate Ms Sophie Broadbent from Wingecarribee Shire Council on being awarded "highly commended" under the Traineeships or Apprenticeships—Rural or Regional Council category at the recent 2019 Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government. Sophie originally commenced at Wingecarribee Shire Council as a contractor in the Planning and Development Business Support Unit. However, her talent was quickly recognised by senior management and she was approached to enter into a traineeship within the accredited certification industry, which she welcomed and accepted. Over the past 18 months Sophie has developed knowledge of planning and building matters equal to her peers and is considered an essential member of her team. I congratulate Sophie on her acknowledgement and

thank Wingecarribee Shire Council for training, mentoring and nurturing our future generations—training from within the organisation and within our community.

#### **TRIBUTE TO ROBERT STONE**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:06):** I report the sad passing of Robert Stone, a much-loved and respected member of the Australian Labor Party. Bob was a mainstay of the ALP in the inner west for as long as I can remember. Bob loved people and he loved the Labor Party. He served as the president of the Marrickville Central branch for over a decade and mentored and supported countless Labor activists, including teaching frostbitten young Labor volunteers how to set up Marrickville Town Hall at four o'clock on very cold, wintry election mornings. Bob was always a willing participant in policy debates and discussions about the future of our party and our movement. He thrived on hearing differing views. We did not always agree, but Bob was a good listener. Bob rarely changed his mind, but always heard you out and was very respectful. When we argued with Bob you could tell two things: He loved the cut and thrust of politics and he loved being a part of his community. Vale, Bob. You will be sorely missed.

#### **BOYS TO THE BUSH**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (13:07):** Boys to the Bush was established in 2017 by Adam DeMamiel, Richard Leahy and Tim Sanson to give disengaged boys life skills and real-life experiences. They do this by facilitating camps that to date have catered for over 250 participants. The team at Boys to the Bush believes that it is easier to build a strong boy than repair a broken man. Camps are run by Adam, Richard and Tim in the Albury electorate at a farm near Howlong. Whilst at these camps participants are provided with a safe and fun environment where boys can be boys while learning new skills. This gives them the opportunity to interact with men outside their inner circles, which is incredibly beneficial for these disengaged youth. Adam, Richard, Tim and the rest of the team at Boys to the Bush are helping our boys to be better citizens. I commend them for their excellent work.

#### **OLD GUILDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:08):** On 1 July 2019 I joined the Old Guildford Public School community to celebrate 150 proud years of shaping young minds through quality education in our local community. Established on 1 July 1869 Old Guildford Public School began as a provisional school with just eighteen students. As the local population grew, the new Old Guildford Public School was built in 1876 with more than 60 students enrolled before the school was officially opened in 1877 by Sir John Lackey, MP. One hundred and fifty years later the achievements of Old Guildford Public School stand as a true testament to more than a century of proud contributions to educational excellence in our local area. Congratulations to Old Guildford Public School and to all current, and former students and staff on this wonderful achievement.

#### **GOOLOONG LOG CABIN HALL ESKY BALL**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:09):** I congratulate the hardworking committee members of the Gooloogong Log Cabin Hall Esky Ball, who unveiled incredible work on a stunning piece of history at the recent Esky ball. The cabin was built in 1937 to house workers from the anticipated Lachlan River irrigation project and is one of only two of its kind in Australia. Renovations funded with \$334,500 from the Stronger Country Communities Fund Round One are coming along incredibly well. Well done to the ball committee, all the volunteers who worked on the event and the community of Gooloogong for its passionate support of this much-loved venue. I thank them all for making me feel welcome every time I visit. I look forward to going back soon.

#### **PORT STEPHENS HEARING LOSS CAMPAIGN**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:09):** I congratulate Cochlear Australia and the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children on embarking on a pilot hearing loss campaign in Port Stephens, encouraging local residents to get their hearing tested. The campaign has been a partnership with Cochlear Australia connecting at a grassroots level with local community groups such as Hawks Nest Bridge Club. It has been a stunning success, raising awareness within my community about the importance of hearing health, getting one's hearing tested and understanding treatment options. Significantly, it has resulted in an increase in the number of people getting a hearing test and accessing treatment.

We know that hearing loss can have a profound impact on people's lives, increasing isolation, reducing participation in all aspects of life and disconnecting with loved ones. One in two Port Stephens residents, particularly our older residents, experiences hearing loss. I thank Cochlear Australia and the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children for the important campaign, which has helped locals improve their quality of life by switching the world around them back on.

### BONNY HILLS RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:10):** I share a good news story in my electorate that reflects compassion and thoughtfulness in abundance by members of our local rural fire service [RFS] in Bonny Hills, who went above and beyond their call of duty on Thursday 4 July to replace a television damaged by fire. On a recent call-out the Bonny Hills Rural Fire Brigade attended to Ms Marie Bennett, who was awoken by smoke at 1.00 a.m. to find her television short-circuiting. She called her local RFS, who came instantly and saved her from a potentially life-threatening emergency. In rural and regional communities our volunteer fire service personnel are often the first responders to dangerous situations. They provide 24/7 support to a variety of emergency responses that often involve bush, grass, vehicle and structural fires and call-outs from a number of community agencies requesting assistance.

Bonny Hills Rural Fire Brigade was founded in 1977 and comprises approximately 60 members who are often acknowledged as the local heroes of the town—and rightly so. After the scene the team sent out word to the community quickly, requesting donations to buy a new television for Marie. True to their word, they were on her doorstep shortly after, delivering not just one but two televisions to the sheer excitement of Ms Bennett. I thank Captain Glenn Dunn and his amazing team for their outstanding service.

### ANNE-MARIA SLATTERY, OAM

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (13:12):** I recognise the retirement of Ms Anne-Maria Slattery, OAM, from the presidency of the Botany Historical Trust, a position she has held for the past seven years. Throughout her life Ms Slattery has devoted considerable effort to her passion: the recognition and preservation of Botany Bay's local history. The trust has provided important advice to the former Botany Bay City Council and now Bayside Council on heritage matters, particularly development applications concerning heritage buildings, as well as street and park names.

In recent years it has overseen the installation of commemorative name plaques across the city, recognising the history and service of the many locals who served the country in war. Ms Slattery guided the trust through a challenging period subsequent to the merger of Botany Bay City with Rockdale City councils. She has preserved the functions and significance of the trust with aplomb. Previously she has been recognised by the nation for her service to the community and local government. I congratulate her on her retirement and commend her service to the House.

### COASTCANCARE

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:13):** Today is the last day of July, which also means it is my last day of Dry July! This month I have been avoiding alcohol to raise funds from Central Coast Local Health District's CoastCanCare, which supports local cancer patients by connecting them and providing information and tools to help them cope with the diagnosis, different treatments and side effects. I have met program coordinator Tia Covi on numerous occasions. At a meeting of the Rotary Club of Kincumber she asked me to participate in Dry July. She has been able to assist people in our community with respite and other programs. CoastCanCare performs valuable work for patients and their families at a difficult time, and I cannot thank it enough. During the Federal election campaign our local cancer treatment services were also boosted when the Liberal Government announced \$3.5 million for an additional linear accelerator. The money has already been delivered in the New South Wales budget. Dry July is a fantastic initiative, and I congratulate CoastCanCare on its outstanding work for our community on the Central Coast.

### BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS FOOTBALL CLUB MACEDONIAN FESTIVAL

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:14):** On Sunday 28 July I had the pleasure of attending the Bankstown City Lions Football Club Macedonian Festival held at Jensen Park in my electorate, together with my husband, Councillor Alex Kuskoff, and our children. It was the council's first ever Macedonian Festival and it was fantastic to see the community participating and experiencing the Macedonian culture firsthand. The festival included performances from local dance groups and musicians, and showcased some amazing Macedonian food and businesses. I acknowledge the hard work of the Bankstown City Lions Football Club committee executive, including President Zac Gulevski, Secretary Tony Stefanovski, Treasurer George Mladenov, Kris Mladenov and all the volunteers who through their efforts ensured that the day was a great success. I also acknowledge the council, Bankstown City Unity Bank and the many other sponsors of the festival.

### ST PETER'S PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION 175TH ANNIVERSARY

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:15):** On Sunday 30 June I attended the 175th anniversary service of St Peter's Presbyterian congregation in North Sydney. The celebration commemorated a New South Wales Government land grant on the harbour's north side for a Presbyterian church, manse and school in 1844.



With the church's focus on education, it was particularly appropriate that the first Presbyterian building north of the harbour was the weatherboard St Peter's School, where early church services were also held.

The service was truly special, with some beautiful hymns and readings by various attendees, all in celebration of 175 years of Presbyterian faith on the North Shore. I obtained a copy of a wonderful book on the history of Presbyterians in North Sydney—congratulations to Alex Jones for compiling that. We were fortunate to be joined by His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, AC, DSC (Ret'd)—now the Governor-General—my Federal colleague and member for North Sydney Trent Zimmerman, and the Reverend Kamal Weerakoon. I thank leaders John Buchanan and Steven Pym, the Cantorion Sydney Choir, male voice choir, and the Chinese Christian Bilingual Church Choir.

#### **TIEN HAU TEMPLE MAZU PARADE**

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (13:16):** Today I acknowledge the Tien Hau Temple's Mazu Parade celebrated on Sunday 30 June at 8.00 a.m. by Cabramatta constituents within the Indochinese temple community. The celebration was held at Freedom Plaza in Cabramatta and consisted of a procession that started at the Canley Vale temple and came to a close at Freedom Plaza in Cabramatta. Mazu is a Chinese sea goddess who lived from 960 AD to 987 AD and is now believed to be a powerful and benevolent queen of heaven by the Indochinese community. The parade was a vibrant, family-oriented event that involved lion dancing and dancers carrying parasols, with many in attendance wearing unique traditional clothing. A Mazu idol was carried at the head of the parade as her believers followed behind in the procession. I take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge Mr Henry Wu, president of the Tien Hau Temple, for inviting me and for organising this wonderful event.

#### **ROB STEWART**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (13:17):** I congratulate my friend Rob Stewart from the Shoalhaven Heads Native Botanic Gardens, who was recently announced as the ABC Illawarra Volunteer of the Week. For the past 12 years, Rob has been volunteering his time to help build and maintain the Shoalhaven Botanic Gardens, along with the late Roger Tilley—who was a great friend to many, including me, in the Shoalhaven Heads community and who sadly passed away last year. There are a number of rare and exotic plants to see, along with a bush tucker garden where you can pick your own Davidson's plum.

I was very pleased to help start the arboretum—as it was known then—during my time as a councillor and later as deputy mayor of Shoalhaven. In fact, I remember attending the official opening with the former mayor of Shoalhaven, the Hon. Paul Green. During my time as member for Kiama, I have been fortunate to secure a number of grants from the New South Wales Government for different projects, including the Princes Highway tourist sign. Congratulations to Rob Stewart on his many years of hard work. This recognition is well deserved and I know that he will continue to do great things for our local community.

#### **HARRIET MITCHELL**

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (13:18):** One of the best things I get to do in this job is visit incredible people in the community when they reach milestone birthdays. Today I recognise an incredible woman I met recently, Harriet Mitchell, whom I visited to wish a happy ninety-fifth birthday. It was lovely to meet Harriet and her husband, Fred. They told me the story of their life together, coming from Scotland to Australia and settling in St Marys. It was such an honour to listen to the story of how they found love with each other and to gain insights into the secrets of their very long lives. I hope the Parliament will forgive me when I tell the story Fred told me of how he still wakes up every morning, looks at his wife and says, "I'm bloody happy you're here". Harriet and Fred are truly the perfect examples of undying love and give me hope that romance still does exist. Happy ninety-fifth birthday, Harriet.

#### **PANANIA FAMILY CLINIC**

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (13:19):** On Saturday 15 June I had the pleasure of attending the launch of the Panania Family Clinic at Anderson Avenue, Panania. The clinic has serviced the local community for more than 18 years. As a result of a merger of the Revesby and Panania clinics, the Panania Family Clinic has now been purchased by Dr Seham Fahmy. Dr Fahmy has worked in the surgery for more than a decade and has now taken the brave step of becoming a small business owner by purchasing the practice. She will continue to deliver high-quality healthcare services to the community and ensure that there is no reduction in medical services in the local area.

Dr Fahmy is committed to her profession and to keeping the practice in Panania to service its residents and the surrounding communities. The practice services approximately 130 patients a week and is an integral part of the Panania community. It was wonderful to see many of her patients and community members at the opening

of the wonderful practice, manning the barbeque, taking photographs, delivering cakes and showing Dr Fahmy their support. I wish her all the very best with her new business, Panania Family Clinic, and ensuring the wellbeing of Panania families and residents.

#### **NAIDOC AND KIKUPA TOUCH FOOTY DAY**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (13:20):** Local polities from across the political divide joined forces with local media personalities and sporting heroes to support the Glen Centre at the NAIDOC and Kikupa Touch Footy Day 2019. Our bipartisan polities team was captained by me, with team members including staff of Taylor Martin, MLC; Lucy Wicks, MP; NBN television personality Skaie Hull; Indigenous business owner and activist Cheree Toka; former NRL star Michael Buettnier; and racing car driver Luke King. We gave it our best, and although we may not have won the competition—or even a single match—we will be back next year for a great day out. Our jerseys were designed by Bundarra and proved to be very popular on the day. I thank the Glen Centre for again organising this great day to support the great work of the rehab centre.

#### **TARLO MIDDLE ARM LANDCARE GROUP**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (13:21):** The Tarlo Middle Arm Landcare Group currently manages four sites covering the Sooley, Bumana and Tarlo catchments and surrounding areas, including the Rhyanna Rest project, the Tarlo River project on Taralga Road, the Holloways Road project and the native plant nursery at Middle Arm Hall. The amazing efforts and many hours spent by these volunteers are quite significant. I congratulate all those involved. I was pleased to hear the group has been nominated for the Department of Planning and Industry Crown Land Manager Excellence Award at the 2019 NSW/ACT Regional Achievement and Community Awards. Well done to Richard Officer, Stephen Chapman, Lynette Miller, John Kowalenko, Bill Wilkes, Barbara O'Neill, Leslie Farrier, Wendy Chapman, Louise Kowalenko, Margaret Wilkes, Mark O'Neill, Jeff Holdsworth, David Sinclair and Juliet Mullins. Their efforts are to be congratulated.

#### **ANNIE MILLER**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:22):** As today is the day we celebrate Scottish women having special birthdays, I congratulate Annie Miller on turning 100 on 24 July. Last Thursday I had the pleasure of joining Annie and her family and friends for a morning tea to celebrate her milestone birthday. Annie was born in Dundee, Scotland, and lived in a small town near St Andrews Beach Golf Course. Sadly, her father passed away before she was born, but she still carries a small postage stamp-sized photo of him. The family left Scotland in 1927 and sailed to Australia, where they joined relatives in Cessnock. In 1947 Annie married Bill Miller, a coalminer, and they had two children, Gail and Bruce. The family settled in Lake Macquarie and spent holidays in Forster, enjoying fishing and prawning. The family relayed a wonderful story of Annie hooking a Volkswagen Beetle when her cast went astray while fishing from their boat. Annie is a beautiful woman and I thank her family for including me in her wonderful celebration.

#### **ORANGE SKY MOBILE LAUNDRY SERVICE**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (13:23):** The first free mobile laundry service van, "Sudsy", was made by 19-year-old Orange Sky co-founders Nic and Lucas for people living on the street. It took the boys three days and three sets of working washing machines and dryers to get the van functioning. Now 28 Orange Sky vans hit the roads of Sydney each day. This year the Sudsy challenge is to raise funds and awareness for the 116,000 people who are experiencing homelessness in Australia. Teachers from Banks Public School in St Clair have taken up the challenge and will wear the same set of clothes for three days without washing them to raise funds and teach their students that homelessness does not discriminate and can happen to anyone at any time. I acknowledge teachers Sam Grisedale, Kim Dunne, Katrina King, Mel Snape and Jane Lalor and principal Denis Morgan for taking part in the Sudsy challenge. I trust the students will learn valuable and important lessons.

#### **MAITLAND FOOTBALL CLUB**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (13:24):** Get out! Tonight Maitland will come to life with what is being touted as the biggest football event the city has ever seen. My town's top-flight football club, the mighty Maitland Magpies, will fly high on the pitch at Maitland No. 1 Sportsground. Our city has the honour of hosting the A-League Round of 32 clash against the Central Coast Mariners. I thank Maitland City Council for its support for this event. It was a fantastic achievement for our team to get to this stage, with an absolute nailbiter of a game against Broadmeadow. Congratulations to the Maggies. Sadly for my dear colleagues from Gosford, Wyong and The Entrance, the Maitland Magpies are now in fine form, fresh from a 3-2 win against Lake Macquarie, and will no doubt be buoyed by the expected crowd of more than 3,000. While I wish both teams well, I hope that No. 1 Sportsground is a sea of black and white tonight and that the Maitland Magpies fly high and come away with a win. Go the Maggies!

### CENTRAL WEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (13:25):** Today I recognise the achievements of students at the Central West Leadership Academy—a school doing things slightly differently in the Dubbo electorate. Earlier this year at Knox Grammar School, the academy achieved some outstanding results in the da Vinci Decathlon State finals against 80 teams from across the State. Year 7 students placed eighth overall in the State finals and second in ideation, second in general knowledge, sixth in engineering and eighth in code-breaking. I congratulate Noah Randell, Finn Randell, Nicola Millar, Xavier Johnston, Hebe Backus, Lili Sargeant, Alexi Whittle and Carrigan Baker on their results. The year 6 team placed seventh in ideation. On the first day of term 3, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning Sarah Mitchell and I visited principal Mandi Randell and the students at their new home. I commend the students for their hard work and encourage them to continue to reach for the stars.

### ADAMSTOWN ROSEBUD FOOTBALL CLUB

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (13:26):** Today I congratulate the Adamstown Rosebud Football Club on 130 years of outstanding service to the Newcastle football and wider community. Formed in 1889, the club is one of the oldest in Australia and boasts 31 first division premierships and 28 Australian Internationals. Such a legacy would not be possible without the tireless work of volunteers, to whom I express my utmost thanks. From coaching teams to running a canteen—like so many community sports clubs—their dedication and generosity of time is valued. Anytime the Rosebuds take the pitch, not only are you in for a great match, but also you will see a wonderful display of sportsmanship and skill that does our city proud. Once again, I congratulate the Adamstown Rosebud Football Club on its 130th anniversary. Here's to 130 more.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** I also congratulate the Adamstown Rosebud Football Club and I thank the member for Newcastle for mentioning it. I particularly congratulate Kerrie Conquest, who is a brilliant volunteer from Adamstown.

### CLARENCE VALLEY BMX CLUB

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:27):** I offer my congratulations to members of the Clarence Valley BMX Club who competed at the BMX National Championships held earlier this year in Shepparton. Tahlia Marsh won the 15-16 Cruiser Girls division. It was her first BMX National Championships win and she only just missed out on winning the 16 Girls BMX title as well. Glen Swain won the 30-34 Cruiser Men title and was second in the 30-34 Men title. Kelly Lewis came second in the 35-39 Cruiser and BMX titles. It is a terrific sport. I congratulate them all on their wonderful achievements and I wish them continued success into the future.

### CROATIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:28):** On 29 June 2019 at the King Tomislav Croatian Club, I had the pleasure of celebrating the national day of the Republic of Croatia with the united Croatian clubs of New South Wales, the Croatian Australian Community Council and our local western Sydney Croatian community. It was an honour to be involved in commemorating Croatia's independence and celebrating the country's unique history with vibrant speeches, songs and dancing, along with excellent food. From the original nineteenth-century Croatian settlers who found work in the Victorian goldfields to the rejuvenating wave of postwar immigration and our modern multicultural society, the Croatian community continues to make a valuable contribution to the Australian way of life. I acknowledge the attendance of Ivica Glasnovic, Consul-General of Croatia, and congratulate President of the Croatian Australian Community Council Tony Beuk and Damir Temic on organising such a fantastic event.

### CARINGBAH UNITING CHURCH

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (13:29):** On the weekend I joined around 150 past and present members of the congregation at Caringbah Uniting Church to celebrate the centenary of its Christian witness in the Sutherland Shire. The church opened in July 1919 as the Caringbah Methodist Church and has made a significant broader contribution to the Caringbah community with numerous programs to provide for those needing a helping hand. For example, it has operated an early learning centre that helps local families and the Caringbah Craft Centre that provided an opportunity for people with disability to work alongside volunteers to make a variety of toys and therapeutic items like bed blocks and chair raisers. I congratulate Reverend Hyun Keun Lee on his leadership of Caringbah Uniting Church and thank him for his service to the local community.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** Members are reminded that 30 minutes is allocated for community recognition statements. We are going over 30 minutes for the member for Ballina and the member for Hawkesbury; I am not forgetting you.

#### **TINA COTRONEO**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (13:30):** I have been sitting here for 40 minutes, Madam Temporary Speaker.

I acknowledge the incredible work of Ms Tina Cotroneo, manager of Ballina Post Office, who was recently awarded the inaugural Isaac Nicholas Postal Manager of the Year award. The Ballina Post Office team nominated Ms Cotroneo—one of hundreds of nominations from around the State—and she represented New South Wales for the award. Australia Post's Executive General Manager Community and Consumer, Nicole Sheffield, said the team described Ms Cotroneo as "knowledgeable, patient, hardworking, resourceful, understanding and special". Ms Sheffield also said, "A champion of great customer service, Tina goes above and beyond to help customers so they leave happy and satisfied, with a particular focus on being a champion for small business." I thank Tina for her efforts in making Ballina Post Office an outstanding service provider for our community, and I commend her to the House.

#### **WINDSOR BOWLING AND SPORTS CLUB**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (13:31):** Madam Temporary Speaker, thank you for your indulgence in allowing me to speak this afternoon. On 10 May 2019 I attended the Windsor Bowling and Sports Club. Last year Eddie Dries, chairman of the club, applied for funding under the Local Sport Grant Program to improve the club's lighting in order to play lawn bowls at night. The grant was approved. I am pleased to say the Berejiklian Government provided \$20,000 towards this project. On 10 May 2019 the completion of the project was celebrated with a special opening night where bowls was played under the new lights.

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

#### *Members*

#### **MEMBER FOR EAST HILLS**

**The SPEAKER:** Earlier today I acknowledged—with his consent—that it was the birthday of the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans John Sidoti. I trump that by saying that there is an even more significant birthday today—that is, the birthday of Wendy Lindsay, the member for East Hills. I mention both of those occasions by consent.

#### *Visitors*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to the mayor of Temora Shire Council, Rick Firman, and the general manager, Gary Lavelle, guests of The Nationals Whip, the member for Cootamundra. I also welcome to the Chamber residents from Lake Macquarie electorate, who are in the gallery as guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. There is also a group of social work students from Western Sydney University, and a Probus group with Cindy Dobbin.

#### *Rulings*

#### **SOLICITING INTERJECTIONS**

**The SPEAKER (14:18:50):** On Wednesday 19 June 2019 the member for Liverpool sought a ruling from me as to whether it was disorderly for a member to encourage interjections. He also wrote to me on 23 June on the same matter, which has further prompted this formal and considered ruling. Having considered the matter, I am of the view that it is generally disorderly for any member who has the call to encourage other members to interject. While members can ask rhetorical questions within an address, it is generally out of order to continually ask a series of questions that attempts to solicit or encourage answers by way of interjections.

*[Interjection]*

I remind the Minister for Health and Medical Research that I have not finished. I ask for silence while I deliver this ruling. While I would accept that there is a distinction between the member who uses their call to actively seek interjections and the member whose speaking time is interrupted against their will, all interjections are technically disorderly and so to solicit them is also technically disorderly. Indeed, as Standing Order 52 states:

When a Member is speaking other Members shall not converse or make any noise or disturbance.

Technically most of you are out of order every day. It is evident that soliciting interjections is not new. A search of *Hansard* provides examples of it being used as a tactic by both sides over the years. In 1990, for example, Speaker Rozzoli ruled that the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Carr, should not challenge the Government benches to answer his questions when they had no right to respond. In 2010 Speaker Torbay upheld a point of order that Premier Keneally should not lead other members to interject. More recently in 2012 Speaker Hancock requested that the then Minister for Planning not incite Opposition members and in 2014 asked the then Minister for Family and Community Services to refrain from canvassing answers from other members, as this encouraged disorderly conduct.

Members will see from these examples that my general view is consistent with those held by my predecessors in the chair. However, I am sure that none of you wants me to become too pedantic or heavy-handed in applying the standing orders. I do not wish to unduly dampen the creative freedom that Ministers demonstrate in answering questions with an engaging and interesting style. I do not always pull up interjections, depending on their nature, extent and context. Likewise, I will not pull up relatively innocuous examples of soliciting interjections, especially when no objection is made and no extreme behaviour disrupts the House. The House can function well with a limited level of interjection, but let us all try to be sensible and respectful. While behaviour that solicits repeated and loud communal interjections might reasonably be objected to, it might also sometimes be seen as part of the rigour and theatre of question time. As your Speaker I will always endeavour to uphold order in this place, but I make one final important observation: This House works best when it effectively self-regulates.

### *Question Time*

#### **BUILDING STANDARDS**

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:28):** I direct a question to the Premier. In eight years this Government has had six fair trading Ministers while there have been three reviews and over a dozen reports commissioned into building regulations. Yesterday the Premier revealed that home owners will be forced to wait until the end of the year for legislation. Will the Premier inform the House why she will not act now?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:29):** I acknowledge the question asked by the new Leader of the Opposition. I also acknowledge that, as history has shown, Labor has created the mess that we have to clean up.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The private certification process that has come under scrutiny in recent times was actually developed, announced and implemented by the Labor Party in 1998. If anybody thinks the Labor Party has changed in New South Wales, I refer them to the ICAC press release this morning about ongoing concerns with its operations. The issues raised in relation to buildings are serious. We know that residents are suffering and that residents in a number of units have been displaced because of defects in their apartments. But if anybody thinks that this is an issue that has arisen yesterday or is simple to solve, they are kidding themselves.

Exhibit A is that Labor introduced the private certification process in 1998. Exhibit B is what the new Deputy Leader of the Opposition said on radio in relation to Mascot Towers. When I heard her comments I was aghast. On the radio she accused the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government of causing the building defects when, in fact, the building was approved by Botany council when Labor was in government. The Opposition forgets to acknowledge that Mascot Towers was built in 2009—two years before we were even in government. The Opposition spokesperson at the time—I am not sure if she is still the spokesperson—got on the radio and said, "None of this cutting red tape here and cutting red tape there to save a few bucks, because, at the end of the day, it is their fault that that building was built." In fact, it was built when the Opposition was in government.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** That is not what that says. Why don't you read it properly? Table it.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It is on the public record. You said it on radio. Anyone can look it up.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Are you denying you said that?

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** You're being mendacious.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** First they make a stupid comment and then they cannot admit that they made it on the public record. I will leave the facts to speak for themselves. Notwithstanding Labor's hypocrisy on the issue, it does not take away from the fact that these are serious issues that our Government is dealing with. I thank the former Minister for Fair Trading—I am pleased that we will be announcing the imminent appointment

of a building commissioner in New South Wales. The new building commissioner will oversee the legislation that the Government is introducing in this session of Parliament. Of course, we hope that legislation will be implemented as soon as possible. It is subject to debate in this place. I hope the Labor Opposition will support it in this House and the other place. I also hope they will contribute to public debate on this, because a lot of the mopping up that we are doing is because of the system that we inherited that they left behind.

This does not take away from the concerns that many residents have, but I stress that this is a small number of residents when one considers the large number of buildings throughout New South Wales. The Government knows that it is important to ensure not only that those residents have certainty into the future but also that everybody living in strata, whether previously or in the future, has confidence that our Government is making sure that everybody involved in the building process is subject to and adheres to the strictest laws of the land. That is something that we will do. Again, this question highlights the hypocrisy of members opposite. It highlights their incompetence and it demonstrates—especially given the press release from ICAC today—that Labor in New South Wales has not changed, it is incapable of changing and the people of New South Wales know it.

### **COST OF LIVING**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (14:34):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Government's cost-of-living measures are supporting families, and are there any alternatives?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:34):** I thank the member for Goulburn for her question because I know that she and every member of this House, regardless of where we sit in the Chamber, knows that there are growing pressures on families and individuals in managing the household budget. We are very conscious of that and it is why we work hard to have a strong budget position to be able to give back to the community. During the election campaign I was pleased to join the member in Goulburn to announce that, in addition to the Energy Switch program, our Government had launched the Gas Switch program. We know that many families across the State rely heavily on gas for their energy source, especially in rural and regional areas. The program has proven successful. It was implemented on 1 July and a number of families have benefitted already. I am pleased to say that families and households can now access 70 cost-of-living measures or rebates across a range of areas.

To date we have returned about \$1 billion worth of cost-of-living measures to the community. This year alone we will rack up about \$1 billion of community savings through these measures that are principally provided through Service NSW—that great entity that is now being emulated by other jurisdictions not just in Australia but also overseas. We now have cost-of-living specialists, who can be found through Service NSW centres. Mobile vans are also available to provide support to people who live in regional or remote communities who might not have a Service NSW centre near them. Many residents rely on the online and phone services that allow them to access more than 800 or so transactions through the one portal. We think having such a high number of services available through a single government portal is a first not only in Australia but anywhere around the world.

I am pleased to say that through our cost-of-living program there has already been over 1.2 million transactions—representing 1.2 million times that families and households have benefited from savings across a range of areas. Examples include the Active Kids voucher, which we have doubled so parents can apply for it twice a year. We must remember that the Opposition opposed the Active Kids voucher. I still cannot get my head around why. By 30 June this year 1.3 million vouchers had been provided to families, saving them \$130 million. In addition to the budget providing household relief, a positive consequence of the Active Kids program is that it has ensured that over half a million children have more active lifestyles. Sporting groups are also benefiting because the program is providing a valuable source of funding to them through parents being more involved in those activities. Our cost-of-living measures also include the Creative Kids voucher because we want every child to have the best opportunities no matter their circumstances. For some families the voucher is allowing them to ensure that their children can have opportunities they may not have otherwise had.

I am pleased to say that the reduction in the weekly Opal cap is also saving residents across the State hundreds of dollars. We want to encourage people to catch public transport. I know that the member for Penrith is pleased that someone who uses the Opal card from Penrith to Town Hall every day will be saving in excess of \$560 a year. I know that the member for Seven Hills encourages public transport use in his community. People in his electorate could also save more than \$560 a year. The member for Terrigal is pleased that people travelling from the Central Coast could save more than \$680 a year. Ferry commuters all through the inner west could save in excess of \$600 a year. The Toll Relief program is also proving to be extremely popular. I am pleased to update the House that more than 140,000 people are eligible for free registration and a number of residents have taken that up. In fact, there have been over 79,000 claims, with the average free rego saving being around \$425. That is huge. A lot of people no longer have the stress of worrying about their car rego.

These savings are not just for people in our major cities. Some of the case studies I have presented have included people such as a retired older couple from Dubbo—and I know the member for Dubbo is pleased about this—who care for their grandchildren and whose household is saving in excess of \$2,000 because of the Government's cost-of-living measures. I am sure the member for Parramatta is interested to know that in his electorate a mum named Sally, who has three children, has said that she is saving in excess of \$2,000 a year. *[Extension of time]*

What makes me feel very proud about these measures is, notwithstanding how well the New South Wales economy is doing and our budget position is, we understand that families across the State do it tough. They may not always say they do it tough, but we know they do. That is why we are providing these opportunities to reduce their cost of living pressures. This is in stark contrast to those opposite who during the election campaign could not bring themselves to support these initiatives and, worse still, outlined a very comprehensive tax program—more taxes to push up the cost of living pressures. Why the Opposition wanted to cancel the Government's payroll tax cuts to small businesses is beyond us. Small businesses are the backbone of our communities and in regional areas and cities they provide jobs and keep food on the table for so many households, yet those opposite wanted to cancel payroll tax for small businesses. We are talking about small operations.

They also wanted to introduce the new car tax. They could not explain it, but that did not stop them from trying to tax people. It was going to affect farm vehicles and so-called luxury vehicles that people rely on to carry out their businesses. The Opposition wanted to cancel stamp duty cuts, introduce a new levy on retirement villages and introduce a parking tax, a boat tax and a strata tax. There was not an area which was going to escape their taxation. No wonder the people of New South Wales rejected that proposition. On this side of the House we are demonstrating not just our empathy by our actions; we are providing reductions through our cost of living measures. Those opposite want to tax people. They have no idea how to deliver the savings that families in this great State rely on.

#### **BUILDING STANDARDS**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:41):** My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. The distinguished former Secretary of the New South Wales Treasury, Michael Lambert, put forward more than 100 recommendations to improve building standards in New South Wales, 12 of which should have been acted on six months after his final report was delivered almost four years ago. To date, exactly how many recommendations has the Government adopted?

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:41):** I will update the House on where we are with reforming the building and construction industry in New South Wales. A significant body of work is being undertaken by this Government. In the Shergold Weir report 24 recommendations were put forward and we are making great inroads in addressing those recommendations. That is notwithstanding the Lambert report prior to that and the recommendations of the 2002 Joint Select Committee on the Quality of Buildings, which was some time ago. It is interesting to note that in 2019, on the back of the 2002 report, the Labor Government did not undertake any reform whatsoever—apart from privatising certifiers, which has got us to the condition we are in today.

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** We are working to get quality, accountability and transparency back into the construction industry in New South Wales. Part of the Shergold Weir report looked at implementing a building commissioner to restore confidence in the sector and to ensure quality, accountability and transparency. We know the industry wants confidence back. It is calling to lift standards for those mums and dads, wherever they may live—whether in a three-bedroom house on a 500 square metre block or the 24th floor of an apartment building. That is the great Australian dream and we want to ensure that, regardless of where they live, it is a reality for mums and dads. We have made substantial progress in the reform of the State's building and construction sector to protect consumers and to ensure that construction follows the best practice, is safe and sustainable. Part of what we are doing is ensuring a duty of care. Whoever has their fingerprints on an architectural plan or drawing for the final build must understand that we will ensure that the plan looks like the building. We have found over time that variations are not being declared, so we will ensure that variations to plans are declared. We will ensure that the final building looks like the plan. We will ensure that fire protection systems are as they are meant to be and are properly designed.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: Mr Speaker, the question was very clear—

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

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** It is relevance, Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being very relevant.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** We are making great inroads into the 24 recommendations in the Shergold Weir report. We are very pleased to announce that progress is being made on appointing a building commissioner, who will have the compliance and enforcement capability to put confidence back into the construction sector right across this great State. We know that standards need to be lifted, and that is what we are on track to do. Following discussions at the Building Ministers' Forum, the *Building Confidence: Improving the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement systems for the building and construction industry across Australia* report was released. I can say that over 160 submissions were submitted on the back of that report. All of these submissions were aimed at lifting standards across the building and construction sector—accountability, transparency and quality. We aim to lift standards and we have made substantial progress. The Government's election commitment was to appoint a building commissioner.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: It is Standing Order 129. It was a specific question about the Lambert review and recommendations that have been implemented.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being very relevant.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the Lambert report, while the questioner asked about the Shergold Weir report. They have no idea about the building and construction industry in this State. When they were in power they let it go to rack and ruin. We will fix it.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister has completed his answer. Do you still want to take a point of order?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** I do because I want to correct the *Hansard*. The question related specifically—

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It is taken under Standing Order 129. The question related specifically to the Lambert report.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister has completed his answer.

#### BUSH SUMMIT 2019

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (14:47):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and the Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Will the Minister please update the House on his attendance at the Bush Summit, held in the capital of western New South Wales, and outline how the Government will address issues raised as well as any drought-related matters?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:47):** I thank the member for Dubbo, who is a great local member fighting for his electorate—an electorate that is doing it tough, as are many other electorates in regional New South Wales because of the impact of drought. I acknowledge in the public gallery the mayor of Temora, the great Rick Firman, who is one of the great mayors of this great State. He is also known as "Winks" and it is great to see him here. He represents a great part of the world, with Temora being part of the electorate of Cootamundra. The Bush Summit was held in Dubbo a few weeks ago. I attended the summit along with the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Scott Morrison, and the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Michael McCormack.

Those opposite may not find drought and the issues affecting the bush important, but we on this side of the House are interested in these issues. I acknowledge the great work of *The Daily Telegraph* in reporting on the bush summit. *The Daily Telegraph* is not run by politicians and often summits, forums and round tables are delivered by bureaucrats and attended by politicians so they are seen as talk fests. However, *The Daily Telegraph* offered an opportunity to run a forum with everything that affects regional communities on the table. It meant that those who attended the forum had an opportunity to talk about the things that are impacting regional communities and some of the issues they are facing.

More importantly, it also gave an opportunity to discuss the opportunities going forward. *The Daily Telegraph* should be acknowledged for its work. Sydneysiders do not know the real impact of the drought because, like many members of this House, they do not live in the regions or travel through the regions. For many Sydneysiders, column by column, the reporting by *The Daily Telegraph* enlightens them and people in other metropolitan areas about the plight of regional New South Wales. *The Daily Telegraph* should be acknowledged for that—how many times can I say "*The Daily Telegraph*"?

The most important part about the forum was that it was not just a talkfest. It was a great opportunity to engage with stakeholders to talk about the issues. At the end of the forum, a 13-point action plan was tabled



covering matters important to the stakeholders who were in the room. It is important to update the House on the progress of those 13 items for action. As the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, I am proud to say that with the support of the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government, and the Premier and Treasurer, action is being taken to address many of those 13 items. Over the next couple of weeks I will respond to that 13-point action plan to show how the New South Wales Government is dealing not only with the drought in regional areas but also with opportunities for investment while acknowledging some of the hardships currently being endured. I will never ever talk down the prosperity and opportunity of regional areas.

The Government will not talk the State out of markets for food and fibre and will not talk down regional New South Wales, which is still a fantastic place for tourists to visit. Our cafes, restaurants, pubs, hotels and businesses are still open for business. Our campaign over the winter period had the slogan, "Don't go to Bali. Go to Bathurst. Come to regional New South Wales because we are open for business." But the elephant in the room is the shortage of water. The impact of the drought has spread further than affecting only farmers. The lack of rainfall is restricting farmers' abilities to feed their stock. No rainfall and no inflows into our rivers and our dams is becoming a real concern and a serious issue for regional areas of New South Wales.

A number of regional communities face the reality of running out of water. Guyra could have run out of water in 40 days but it will not because of the foresight and immediate investment of \$13 million by the New South Wales Government in a short-term infrastructure pipeline from Malpas Dam to Guyra. That water will be brought online and on time to ensure that the Guyra community does not run out of water. But other communities face the challenges caused by a shortage of water. At the Bush Summit 2019 there was no question that water was at the heart of every item that was discussed. In the 2019 election the Government committed \$1.4 billion to water security. When the Government sold its share in Snowy Hydro, it committed to spending every cent of \$4.2 million—all of it—in regional areas of New South Wales. The Government said that its number one priority would be short-term and medium-term investment in water security for the long haul and having the guts to build long-term infrastructure, such as dams and pipelines. In the current term of government, we must see bulldozers on the ground. [*Extension of time*]

Some members in this Parliament who adopt ideological positions will stand against the Government building dams, raising dam walls and building pipelines. That is no different to when the Labor Party opposed construction of the 270-kilometre pipeline to Broken Hill that cost \$470 million. That pipeline has now brought water security to the people of Broken Hill. During my visit to Broken Hill two weeks ago, the council's general manager, councillors and members of the community were thankful for the Liberal-Nationals Government sticking to its guns, despite a lot of political pressure from Labor members not to proceed. Far from hiding behind business plans, this Government got on with the job. Another issue affecting regional New South Wales that was made clear at the forum was the right to farm.

Recently mung bean protesters from elite Sydney suburbs trespassed on private property and harassed farmers and families in the name of both veganism and the prevention of cruelty to animals. To my mind, they are engaging in domestic terrorism. They are terrorising families, farmers and businesses. I acknowledge the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, the Hon. Adam Marshall, who on 1 August will introduce new laws with new penalties to deal with trespass on farms. Fast-tracking regional projects lies at the heart of the Government's actions. The budget states that \$170 million will be spent on fast-tracking regional infrastructure projects to support businesses, subcontractors and suppliers. This Government is well on the way towards doing that.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** It is bad news for the Treasurer. Since the budget was handed down we have spent almost \$96 million on dozens of new projects in regional New South Wales delivering local infrastructure to support local businesses and local jobs for the local economies. It is clear that the Liberal-Nationals Government will stand with our regional communities today and in the future as we endure one of the toughest droughts on record.

#### **BUILDING COMMISSIONER**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:54):** My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. In February the Minister finally adopted Labor's policy of appointing a building commissioner—

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

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** In February the Minister finally adopted Labor's policy of appointing a building commissioner.

**The SPEAKER:** If Government members do not come to order they will be placed on calls to order.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** In February the Minister finally adopted Labor's policy of appointing a building commissioner and told a recent Building Ministers' Forum that it would happen by the end of this month. Minister, that is today. Where is the building commissioner?

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:55):** I thank the member for Swansea for her question. Today is Wednesday 31 July—the month is not over yet. I remind the Opposition member of what this Government has been doing in this space to look after those who have been hurting over the past few months as a result of the Opal building, the Mascot building and many others. It has been working very hard.

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** We want to ensure that we implement the Shergold Weir recommendations, one of which was to have someone sit over the top of the regulatory regime in relation to compliance and enforcement to assist the construction industry to lift its standards so that there is quality, accountability and transparency.

**The SPEAKER:** I warn the member for Londonderry and the member for Swansea that they will be placed on a second call to order if they continue to interject.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** I assure the House that this Government has been working solidly and has cast the net wide to get the right person for the right job to look after and assist the building and construction industry to achieve quality, accountability and transparency. The process of appointing a building commissioner is progressing well. It is imminent. I note again it is 31 July. This Government will assist the building and construction industry to get on with the job of restoring confidence in the industry—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. We know the Minister advertised the job on 15 July. The Government promised the building commissioner by today. Where is the building commissioner?

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** We have been doing a great job of working hard and casting the net wide. I can advise that work has been happening in appointing the right person as a building commissioner to fix up the mess left by those opposite and to put certainty back in the market.

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** We need to restore confidence in the sector. The comments from members opposite are not helping mums and dads who want confidence in the sector. They are driving away investment. We want cranes in the sky. We want investment in New South Wales. We want to ensure that there is confidence in the industry.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question is not about the Minister's friendship with developers. It relates to the building commissioner and when that commissioner will be appointed.

**The SPEAKER:** I observe that the question did ask for a specific date. However, the Minister is being relevant.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** May I say that I am not being investigated by ICAC at this point in time. What the Government is investigating is appointing a building commissioner.

*[Opposition members interjected.]*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The next member who interjects will be called to order.

*[An Opposition member interjected.]*

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** I will update the House as to what the building commissioner will do. Practitioners involved in designing buildings will be required to submit plans to the commissioner, who will have the regulatory oversight in compliance and enforcement. We do not want a bench warmer. We do not want to slide someone into the position as members opposite have done in the past, when retired members would suddenly get cushy jobs on boards, sit there for the rest of their lives and do absolutely nothing. We want our building commissioner to declare the plans—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister has 12 seconds left—

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. The Minister has the call.

*[An Opposition member interjected.]*

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** And the building commissioner is—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** I am sorry, I have run out of time.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister's time has expired. Does the member for Swansea still wish to take a point of order?

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** I was not taking a point of order; I was seeking further information. Since the Minister could not answer the question in five minutes I wished to give him two more minutes.

**The SPEAKER:** An additional two minutes is granted if the Minister wants it. The Minister has declined.

### TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:01):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering vital transport infrastructure for New South Wales, and are there any threats?

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will not start the clock until I have heard the point of order.

**Mr Greg Warren:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 128 (3) (a). The final part of the question asked for an expression of opinion and is clearly designed to incite debate. Mr Speaker, you began this question time in an honourable and appropriate way, requesting that members be sensible—and you have the Opposition's support in that. Clearly that is not the case for members opposite. I ask that the question be reworded to remove the final element, which is clearly intended to create debate.

**The SPEAKER:** I rule the question in order. I acknowledge that there is scope for the question to incite debate, but the question could well be quite appropriate in asking whether there are any threats. I will listen to the Minister's answer, but the question is in order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (15:02):** I encourage those opposite to listen very carefully to what I am about to say. The question relates to infrastructure and threats to infrastructure in this State. I will make a point in relation to three shadow infrastructure Ministers in a moment. One thing I will point out is that the Government has been getting on with the job. I thank the member for Seven Hills for his question. Only 2½ weeks ago it was great to join the Premier, the member for Parramatta, the member for Mulgoa and the member for Penrith in opening the M4 East tunnel. Removing 22 sets of traffic lights in that part of Sydney has had a significant effect on the motorway as well as the surrounding road network. It is great to confirm that the additional capacity is leading to improved travel times. Travel speed on Parramatta Road between Concord and Ashfield has improved, with drivers travelling about 10 kilometres per hour faster in each peak direction; this will continue to increase over coming weeks.

We have seen the enormous benefit of having the tunnel open. I think I heard a member say earlier that they love it. Well, the community loves it; it is changing lives. Those travelling in from the city's west are getting an enormous benefit from 10,000 trucks being removed from Parramatta Road. The reduction in vehicles per day through this part of the city and over the next 10 years will continue to transform those communities. Pleasingly, this is only the beginning for the WestConnex project, with the M5 East opening next year. We are getting on with building the M4-M5 link, which is a part of that. I spoke about threats. Earlier today it was concerning to see a statement by the Independent Commission Against Corruption about a six-week public inquiry into the Labor Party.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The ICAC inquiry has absolutely nothing to do with transport. I ask that the Minister be drawn back to the leave of the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I am happy to hear further from the Minister as to the relevance of his remarks. I expect he will link them to the question.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** One observation about the inquiry is that it is big trouble in little China, let me tell members opposite. There is no doubt when three shadow Ministers involved in infrastructure attended that function in 2015—which is the subject of the inquiry—there is a threat in relation to delivery.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Ironically, one of the shadow Ministers is about to come to the lectern—Lynda Voltz, who is in charge of sporting infrastructure.

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

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. If the Minister wishes to cast aspersions on Opposition members, he should do so by way of substantive motion.

**The SPEAKER:** I am aware of that standing order. The Minister has not transgressed it at this stage. I will hear further from the Minister.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The fact is that three shadow Ministers in infrastructure were at the 2015 function: Voltz, Haylen and Minns. The big question for the Leader of the Opposition today is whether she has satisfied herself in relation to those shadow Ministers.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Greg Warren:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. I refer to your—

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear no further from the member for Campbelltown; I have just ruled on the matter.

**Mr Greg Warren:** But clearly there is an imputation and improper motive by the Minister—

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The question is whether the Leader of the Opposition has satisfied herself about the three shadow Ministers, but I also ask her to explain the engagement she has had with the Chinese Friends of Labor—in particular, the involvement of Jamie Clements, whom she was close to in 2015.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73.

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

**Mr Greg Warren:** I know you have ruled on the matter but the Minister is naming people who are not in this place and cannot defend themselves. It is not substantiated; it is an improper motive. I ask you to call the Minister to order and draw him back to the leave of the question with no improper motive. We flagged this earlier with Standing Order 128 (3) (a). Mr Speaker, you spoke about relevance then. The Minister is now treating you, the House and every member in this place with contempt.

**The SPEAKER:** I will clarify what Standing Order 73 says.

**Mr Greg Warren:** I can read it to you if you want; I have it here.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the second time. The member will resume his seat. Standing Order 73 states:

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

That is an important protection in terms of improper motives and personal reflections. Yesterday I made it clear that political criticism of itself, whether it be of a political party or even mentioning a member, does not automatically transgress Standing Order 73. The Minister has not transgressed Standing Order 73 to date. I am aware of that standing order. If the Minister transgresses it and a point of order is taken, I will rule accordingly. Anytime somebody's name is mentioned in a negative sense, it does not mean that Standing Order 73 is transgressed. I am happy to hear further from the member for Campbelltown in a sensible way and to give a further ruling on Standing Order 73. I will not give that in detail now—I will liaise with the Clerk's office to clarify the matter—but I believe that the standing order is being misconstrued. I am happy to hear further from the Minister.

**Mr Greg Warren:** I appreciate your consideration and your discretion, Mr Speaker. However, very clearly the Minister is making imputations and personal reflections, which he should not be doing under Standing Order 73. He is naming people who have been mentioned in media reports who have no association with this question. He was direct and premeditated in naming them, which I raised on the point of order under Standing

Order 128 (3) (a). The Minister is clearly and deliberately trying to disgrace their characters. He is putting people's names on the record in this place, under privilege, for reasons that are not for the purpose of the question, nor the answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you. I will be conscious of the points the member has made in listening further to the Minister. However, at this stage, I do not believe that he has breached a standing order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** What are they worried about? The Leader of the Opposition is busily, to quote Boris Johnson, trying to reprogram herself. On 1 July she said to *The Australian* that she wants to rebuild trust and move the party on from the Obeid and Tripodi era. How well is that going today? Six weeks down at the ICAC. As Leader of the House I do not have 36 pairs to give.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I will entertain the member's point of order because I understand the point that he is trying to make. Is it something further to what I said 15 minutes ago?

**Mr Greg Warren:** I refer to Standing Order 59. If the Minister continues, I will move that he no longer be heard.

**The SPEAKER:** Are you moving that?

**Mr Greg Warren:** I refer to Standing Order 59.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not uphold that point of order. The Minister will continue.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I will. The point out of this is that we have a culture in respect of rebuilding trust in the Labor Party, which has led to another six weeks down at ICAC with the New South Wales Labor Party. We are entitled to ensure as Ministers we have appropriate shadow Ministers—

**Mr Mark Taylor:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. The Minister's answer is completely irrelevant to the question he was asked.

**The SPEAKER:** I note that the member for Seven Hills did get to his feet before the time for the answer expired. I will take his request in a moment; I will rule on the point of order first. The Minister has endeavoured to link these comments in relation to three shadow Ministers who are responsible for infrastructure. In the context of the question, albeit with only limited relevance, under the current standing orders the answer is sufficiently relevant. It is an area that I think is open to reform in question time, as members of the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee would be aware. I will not rule out of order what the Minister said. I am happy to hear further from the member for Keira.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Mr Speaker, you said at the beginning that the two minutes extra is a discretionary two minutes. The Minister is being completely irrelevant. The member for Seven Hills will ask for an additional two minutes when the Minister has been irrelevant for five minutes.

**Mr Mark Taylor:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am seeking an extension of time for the Minister.

**The SPEAKER:** I grant the Minister an additional two minutes, but I ask him to make his answer more relevant than it has been for the last minute.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I am being very careful. I am making the point. There are Ministers in this place who have everything to do with infrastructure. Why is it that three infrastructure shadow Ministers were attending Chinese functions in 2015? I am making sure that the Leader of the Opposition, who needs to give confidence given that they are now in crisis mode on day two back in this place, is open and transparent in relation to this issue. As she confirmed, any of these colleagues are going to be tied up in something a little bit different than the parliamentary proceedings for the next couple of months. The bottom line is we should be entitled as infrastructure Ministers to be able to continue to deliver—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. This is completely irrelevant. I am a former shadow Minister for transport. I would really like to hear what the Government has planned. I draw your attention to the question that was asked and the answer that the Minister is giving. Respectfully, I refer to Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** I ask the Minister to be make his answer more relevant to the question. If he does not, I will ask him to sit down.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I thank the shadow Minister for Multiculturalism for the point she just made. The reality is that on day two the Labor Party still does not understand how to be a good opposition in respect of accountability. It goes to integrity, and the reality is that there is no integrity in the Labor Party. If the Labor Party was a company that was trading shares the shares would be suspended and frozen, an administrator would be appointed and the assets would be wound up. The bottom line is that those opposite are part of a corrupt machine—

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Point of order—

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

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** My point of order relates to either Standing Order 73 or Standing Order 129. If the Minister is not breaching Standing Order 129 then he is breaching Standing Order 73 because he is very clearly imputing improper motives.

**The SPEAKER:** I acknowledge the point of order. I also note that the member's time has expired. I think that has saved us all.

### PARRAMATTA LIGHT RAIL

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (15:15):** My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Roads—

**The SPEAKER:** Government members will cease interjecting.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** Given that businesses and residents are complaining of uncertainty, will the Minister guarantee that stage two of Parramatta Light Rail will be a continuous, unbroken light rail service linking Sydney Olympic Park to stage one of the project?

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (15:15):** I was pleased that as part of the reshuffle the Labor Party has had to appoint four shadow Ministers to one Minister. I congratulate the member for Kogarah on his elevation from water to transport. To the shadow Minister's credit, he has been a bit complimentary of the Government about the metro and WestConnex. I like that. For four years I had a different shadow Minister and we know what happened there. I thank the shadow Minister for being positive in the role—

**Mr Chris Minns:** Point of order—

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I just gave you credit—what are you doing?

**Mr Chris Minns:** I ask the Minister to withdraw that statement.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, are you willing to withdraw that statement?

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** No. I am happy to be nice to the good shadow Minister because he is being positive about the Government. That is what all shadow Ministers should start doing. If the member for Bankstown had been a bit nicer about the Government she would still be on the front bench because that is where the member for Kogarah is. We are getting on with the job of building the Parramatta Light Rail—and I do thank the good member for this Dorothy Dixier question. There is no doubt that as the Government builds infrastructure, particularly in central Sydney and in and around Parramatta—with the great Geoff Lee leading the charge—we are very focused on delivering Parramatta Light Rail. In fact, construction is now underway. That is great news.

We are going to continue to invest in metro. How good is the Sydney Metro West? The metro between the city and Parramatta, which goes out to Westmead and through Sydney Olympic Park, is an incredible and massive game changer. It is interesting to note a couple of people who have been out on stage two, including David Borger—the great Liberal that he is. He might have written this question for Chris Minns—he did! On that note, this Government has always said it would deliver great infrastructure. This year there are metros opening and WestConnex tunnels opening. Yesterday morning I stood at Circular Quay with a brand spanking new tram—Is someone talking to Greg outside at the moment? What is going on? Where has Greg gone? Greg is upstairs pulling weeds out of the garden, but that is alright. Could someone get back to me on where Greg is?

### WATER SECURITY

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (15:19):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering on water security, and are there any alternatives?

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (15:19):** I thank the member for Cootamundra for her question. I appreciate her daily calls on the update of progress on Wyangala

Dam. We are progressing and getting those business cases ready. I acknowledge the best-dressed mayor in the west in Rick Firman, Mayor of Temora. I thank him for being here and supporting his community.

**The SPEAKER:** I note that Government members are wasting the Minister's time.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** New South Wales is in the worst drought on record. While it is biting hardest in the northern basin, it is also very tough in the Central West and southern basin. Unfortunately, signals are pointing to the drought continuing and worsening. It is worse than the Millennium Drought, which prompted the creation of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority [MDBA] and changes to ensure that we secured more water for the environment. Acidification of South Australia's Lower Lakes was a key issue driving the creation of the MDBA. Going into the ministerial council meeting in Canberra on Sunday, my main concern is that despite all of our hard work—

*[An Opposition member interjected.]*

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** You may groan; it shows how silly you are.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! This is not a response to interject on.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** The member for Port Stephens shows her ignorance. Our communities have given 30 per cent of allocations back to the environment to ensure that the Lower Lakes were kept watered and that we fixed some of the over-allocations. Our community should be proud of that work, but my concern is that the Lower Lakes will still turn dry because of the drought. I will bring to the ministerial council meeting the concern that all of our work will potentially result in the Lower Lakes going dry because we have not returned them to their natural state. We need to look at removing the barrages and ensuring that salt water can return to where it once was. That is the commitment I will take to the ministerial council meeting. I will also ensure that the goal of 80,000 megalitres going across the South Australian border can actually be met. That is what the Murray-Darling Basin Plan provides for.

Since before December we have been asking for proof that the water actually reaches South Australia. I have yet to see evidence that the water can actually make it across the border with the challenges we have in the system. The main Murray River storages—the Hume and Dartmouth dams—will give members an idea of how severe the drought is. The member for Albury knows them well; we were there together a couple of weeks ago with the Deputy Premier. The long-term average in storage in the Murray system is around 6,000 gigalitres—the same capacity as 12 Sydney harbours. At this time last year, the storages contained around 5,000 gigalitres—around 10 Sydney harbours. In the past 12 months they have contained 3,500 gigalitres—only seven Sydney harbours. That water is shared across New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

At the other end of the system, almost 2,000 gigalitres is stored in the Lower Lakes—more than half of what we have to share between us in our upstream storages, which shows the lack of balance in our system because of this severe and terrible drought. We should also remember that many of our rivers—mostly in the west, as well as tributaries and creeks—would be running dry at this time if not for the water we have collected into storages to ensure we have bounties for our towns, communities, stock and domestic use, as well as farmers and the productive sector. When the MDBA was created, we were told that localism and adaptive management had been wired into the plan's DNA. *[Extension of time]*

We were told that when we have drought, the system would reflect drought, and that has led to the concern, contention and anger we have seen in our communities. The river flooding at the Barmah Choke during a drought this winter has concerned our communities to the point of affecting mental health, destroying families, destroying marriages and destroying people and their lives. We need to adapt the Murray-Darling Basin Plan to ensure it responds to the needs of our communities in this once-in-a-lifetime drought. That is the message I will be taking to the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council meeting. I have spoken with the Victorian Minister who shares many of our concerns because Victorian communities are concerned. I will act appropriately; I will not be a person who is just looking for a headline when I go into the process on the weekend. For the first time ever, I will release the agenda before the ministerial council meeting so our communities can see what is being discussed. We did sign up to rules—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Murray should be careful.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** We did sign up to an arrangement, but the most important thing is that when we signed up we were told we could be adaptive and respond to people and communities in need and to situations as they occur. That is my commitment to the people, irrigators and communities across New South Wales. I will work collaboratively and openly; I will share information and take suggestions from the communities we represent and put them back into the process. That is my commitment to ensure the health and wellbeing of New South Wales farmers and regional communities.

### SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (15:26):** My question is directed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Given the Minister's recent remarks in the media about developing a comprehensive plastics policy and the fact that New South Wales is the second-highest waste producer per capita in the world, what is his timeline for delivering this policy and how can communities contribute to that policy?

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:27):** Isn't it good to get a sensible question in this place? That is a great question from a great member. It is such a great question it might as well be a Dorothy Dixier. As the member for Ballina knows, no government in the history of this State has done more to reduce the impact of plastic litter than the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Coalition Government. I am just getting so excited about the impact we are having on plastic reduction in this State. Members should not take my word that we are doing a great job in reducing litter in New South Wales; they should take the word of one of the country's greatest environmentalists—Jeff Angel from the Boomerang Alliance. Conveniently, I have a press release here from Jeff Angel relevant to this question. Mr Angel states:

... NSW has got it right with a world class scheme that will continue to deliver environmental, social and economic gains for years to come. While the Labor Party virtue-signals about reducing plastic waste in our environment, the Coalition delivers with the most comprehensive litter reduction scheme in the nation's history.

What can I say? The proof is in the pudding. We have seen a 37 per cent reduction in the volume of plastic litter since we introduced the scheme 19 months ago. That is a huge win for our environment: Over 2 billion cans, bottles and plastic containers have been collected that are not going into our lakes, waterways, bushland or parkland. It is a huge win for our environment. It is a win not just for our environment but also for groups around New South Wales—schools, church groups and community organisations. More than \$44,000 has been raised to do important community work in New South Wales, so this is a great result for our environment and for our community. I remind the member for Ballina that it is also a great result for our economy.

The Government is having a huge impact on the environment but Government members know that there is more to do. The Government is developing a comprehensive plastics strategy to deal with the issue of plastic waste in New South Wales—not just plastic containers but other plastics as well. Plastic is having a devastating effect on our environment. It is predicted that by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans. That is clearly unacceptable. A recent study by the University of Newcastle found that people were ingesting over 2,000 bits of plastic every week—the equivalent of a credit card going into our systems every single week.

In addition, research predicts that plastic ingestion will affect 99 per cent of the world's seabird species by 2050 and it is estimated that plastic kills more than 100 million marine animals every year. The member for Ballina and everyone on this side of the House know that this is clearly unacceptable. That is why the Government will be developing a comprehensive plastics plan to deal with this issue in New South Wales. For the member for Ballina's benefit, I remind the House that work on that plan is underway. It is a big body of work. I welcome the member for Ballina's interest in this topic and ask her to participate in the community consultation, which I hope will begin this year. Those working on the plan will consult broadly with affected stakeholders and the whole community. The Government wants to make sure that we get this right, not just for the environment but for future generations.

I thank the member for Ballina for her interest in this important topic. This topic needs to be addressed for the benefit of our environment so that we can ensure that the planet we hand over to our kids is in a better state than when we found it. Addressing the issue of plastics—whether they be single-use plastics or other forms of plastic—is one way to do that. As I said, the work of developing this strategy is currently underway. My hope is that we will be able to begin consultation this year. I welcome the input of members of all electorates, including those in the electorate of the member for Ballina. It is great to see a member of The Greens who is actually interested in the environment. I have been looking at the threatened species list of New South Wales and I note that environmentalists in The Greens are on that list. I look forward to working with the member for Ballina and reading her press release supporting the Government's direction immediately after question time.

### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:32):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is supporting families and communities across this State? Is the Minister aware of any alternative policies?

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (15:32):** I thank the outstanding member for Manly for his question. As evidenced by the swing towards him of 8.7 per cent in the primary vote, he is an outstanding member who is doing a great job. He cares for the vulnerable. I thank the member for Manly for hosting a foster carers' forum in his electorate last week, which I had the great



privilege of attending. I met foster carers there from across his electorate and heard from them about their concerns.

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

**Mr GARETH WARD:** The fact that the member organised that forum as part of my first visit goes directly to the heart of the sorts of concerns the member for Manly has. I am very proud of the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government and its record on improving social outcomes for all members of our society. This is evidenced by the ambitious targets set by the Premier's Priorities to protect our most vulnerable children from risk of significant harm and to increase permanency for children in out-of-home care.

The 2015 *Independent Review of Out of Home Care in New South Wales*, known as the Tune review, found that the service system for vulnerable children and families is too focused on crisis and statutory interventions. It said that we need fences at the top of the cliff rather than ambulances at the bottom. We know that we can do better and that we must move service systems away from being crisis driven to systems where the needs of children and families are at the centre of service delivery and at the heart of government. We know that the Government needs to prioritise early intervention, and that is exactly what this Government is doing.

In response to the Tune review I recently released the landmark report *Forecasting Future Outcomes: Stronger Communities Investment Unit—2018 Insights Report*. The report provides New South Wales with critical evidence to help build a service system that prevents harm, intervenes early and focuses particularly on those with the greatest need. It provides the New South Wales Government with an unprecedented opportunity to create an evidence base, one that meaningfully informs future social investment priorities to deliver the greatest social policy returns to the citizens of our great State. The report draws from the most comprehensive dataset ever put together by any Australian government—a multi-agency dataset that brought together a high level of data to provide these outcomes.

The data of over three million children and young people in New South Wales aged under 25 from across New South Wales government agencies has been brought together to form this human services dataset. The data provides us with a unique window into a range of human services that individuals and their families have engaged with throughout their childhood and early adult lives. The children and young people born in New South Wales and aged under 25 were forecasted to cost the New South Wales Government \$108 billion for key human services up to the age of 40. But what was fascinating is that the estimated future cost of New South Wales services is highly concentrated in the most vulnerable children and young people, with just 7 per cent of these vulnerable children and young people making up an estimated future cost to key human services at a staggering rate of \$54 billion—I repeat, just 7 per cent of vulnerable children and young people costing \$54 billion.

Knowing what these groups look like means that we can design, co-design and direct services and support to those who benefit most. Six key vulnerable groups which will have high service and support needs into the future and which are most at risk of poor social outcomes can be identified by this report. It will not surprise members that the two most vulnerable groups have been prioritised for cross-government investment to address their vulnerabilities. The first is children and young people affected by mental illness and the second is vulnerable young people aged between nought and five.

We have established a whole-of-government New South Wales stronger communities investments unit which has an ambitious multi-agency investment agenda to build a smarter, more connected service system in New South Wales. I was delighted to recently meet the former Prime Minister of New Zealand who commenced the social investments model, which has been supported, embraced and continued by the Ardern Government. The investment unit is spearheading a future system that is more child and family focused, easier to navigate and able to bring together services from across government agencies. The findings of this report underpin this ambitious agenda and guide the stronger communities investment unit to focus on getting the service system right for those two vulnerable groups.

The Government has not been waiting on the release of this report to act. In fact the Government has invested \$90 million over four years into two internationally tried and tested evidence-based programs: multi-systemic therapy [MST] for child abuse and neglect, and functional family therapy [FFT] for child wellbeing. These programs are being delivered in over 15 priority locations across the State, where over 1,800 families have been accepted into the programs since August 2017. This translates to at least 6,000 siblings and other family members receiving benefits from this service. [*Extension of time*]

These programs are the first in New South Wales to deliver an in-home therapeutic service for the whole family which focuses on treating underlying causes of trauma, harm and concerning behaviours. The primary goals of MST and FFT are to reduce the number of children entering out-of-home care and to increase the number of children exiting out-of-home care. I am pleased to inform members that to date 640 families, including

160 Aboriginal families, have completed the programs. Preliminary data reveals that of the families who have completed either of these programs only 2 per cent have entered care. This has contributed to New South Wales achieving a reduction in entries into care for the two years from 2015-16 by 44 per cent and by 42 per cent for Aboriginal children.

These early results are encouraging but there is certainly more work to do. This Government will learn from the results and leave no stone unturned to ensure that it protects the most vulnerable. I was also asked about alternative policies. If there were some I would comment on them but I am going to have a go anyway. I was recently asked a question by a member of the press gallery: "Who was the fourteenth longest serving Labor leader?" We scratched our heads and had a look around and we finally found a photo. After 99 days, here it is in my hand with all the policies included on the back. It polls really well.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order—

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

**Mr GARETH WARD:** Watch out, Sussex Street will be on the phone. The numbers are good.

**The SPEAKER:** I will take one point of order, from the member for Port Stephens.

**Ms Kate Washington:** There is a standard rule that props are disorderly at all times.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** The Chair was propping you up for 99 days, wasn't it? That's what was propping you up.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Now the Minister is just being offensive. Perhaps it is time for you to pull him into line.

**The SPEAKER:** I observe that the member for Kiama has wasted his own time and his time has now expired.

#### *Petitions*

#### **PETITIONS RECEIVED**

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the following petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

##### **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**.

##### **Barwon-Darling River System**

Petition calling on the Government to conduct a special commission of inquiry into the Barwon-Darling river system and to address the health of the river system, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

##### **Canterbury Hospital**

Petition requesting the Government to invest additional money into Canterbury Hospital, received from **Ms Sophie Cotsis**.

##### **Finley War Memorial Hall School of Arts**

Petition calling on the Government to preserve the Finley War Memorial Hall School of Arts complex, received from **Ms Helen Dalton**.

##### **Foster Care Services**

Petition calling on the Government to restore foster care services to Family and Community Services or to make it a condition of funding that agencies not discriminate against prospective LGBTIQ foster parents, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

#### *Business of the House*

#### **REORDERING OF GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:41):** I move:

That the general business notice of motion (general notice) given by me this day [Northern Beaches Hospital] have precedence on Thursday 1 August 2019.

I will outline what privatisation of hospitals looks like and what this Government and this Minister have described as "teething problems" in relation to Northern Beaches Hospital. When you open a hospital you would not think that there would be a shortage of basic medical supplies such as slings, bandages and insulin. That happened at Northern Beaches Hospital. You would not think that you would get a chief executive officer and senior medical staff including doctors and nurses resigning en masse, but that is what happened under privatisation at Northern Beaches Hospital. When a hospital is opened you would not think it would have an inadequate blood bank with insufficient supplies, but that is what happened with privatisation under this Government. So early after a hospital opened you would not think that doctors and junior doctors would be complaining about inadequate supervision. In one instance a young doctor in the emergency department was responsible for an incredible 60 patients. That is what privatisation of hospitals means under this Government, and these are supposedly teething problems.

Let us go through what the Minister describes as "teething problems". On 31 May this year a cancer patient had the wrong side of their colon removed due to an error in a pathology report supplied by a privately contracted laboratory. On 20 November 2018, within hours of the hospital opening, anaesthesiologists held a crisis meeting and threatened to cancel all elective surgeries over patient safety concerns. On 17 November 2018 doctors threatened to withhold treatment from private patients to force the Government to address the critical understaffing and lack of proper processes and procedures. This is a hospital in crisis. This is a health system in crisis. This is a Government in crisis.

These are not teething problems. This is a Government that is putting the lives of men and women, particularly those accessing this hospital, at risk. This is not the Labor Party saying it. These are medical professionals, staff specialists, doctors, nurses and health workers coming to the Opposition, the trade union, the public and the media, saying, "This is a crisis in the northern beaches". Privatisation under this mob is failing. This is the mob that tried to come here and privatise five hospitals without any consultation with the communities. It was only a massive community campaign that saved those hospitals. We are very proud that Labor will never, ever privatise our public hospitals.

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....39

Noes .....50

Majority.....11

#### AYES

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

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

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

#### NOES

Anderson, Mr K  
Berejiklian, Ms G  
Clancy, Mr J  
Cooke, Ms S (teller)  
Dalton, Mrs H  
Donato, Mr P  
Gibbons, Ms M  
Hancock, Mrs S  
Johnsen, Mr M

Ayres, Mr S  
Bromhead, Mr S  
Conolly, Mr K  
Coure, Mr M  
Davies, Mrs T  
Elliott, Mr D  
Griffin, Mr J  
Hazzard, Mr B  
Kean, Mr M

Barilaro, Mr J  
Butler, Mr R  
Constance, Mr A  
Crouch, Mr A (teller)  
Dominello, Mr V  
Evans, Mr L.J.  
Gulaptis, Mr C  
Henskens, Mr A  
Lee, Dr G

## NOES

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

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

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

**Motion negatived.**

## REORDERING OF GENERAL BUSINESS

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:45:1):** I move:

That the general business notion of motion (general notice) given by me this day [Police and Firefighter Numbers] have precedence on Thursday 1 August 2019.

My motion should be reordered for debate tomorrow because community safety should always be the priority for this Government and everybody in this Chamber. Reordering this motion will give all members the chance to acknowledge and thank those heroes who look after us all, whether it be personnel who protect our families from those who would do us harm or those who battle blazes that threaten whole communities. Over the winter recess we made a number of record announcements, because only a Liberal-Nationals Coalition can ensure that community safety remains a top priority.

On 2 July the Premier and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services announced that 450 new police officers will hit the beat this financial year as part of the Government's record investment of \$583 million over the next four years to introduce 1,500 new police officers—the largest increase in police numbers in more than 30 years. As part of that increase, the Government has committed over the next four years to ensuring that every police area command and police district has a dedicated child protection officer and elder abuse prevention officer. On 19 July I represented the Minister and the Government in welcoming 16 new firefighters to Fire and Rescue NSW at their graduation ceremony in Orchard Hills. It was a poignant reminder of the life-saving work done by Fire and Rescue NSW. With over 6,780 firefighters, officers from Fire and Rescue NSW respond to emergency calls in areas covering 90 per cent of the State's population and are often the first emergency service to arrive at an incident to provide life-saving intervention.

On 24 July the Minister opened the new world-class Rural Fire Service Training Academy at Dubbo and one of the State's first co-located State Emergency Services and Volunteer Rescue Association operational facilities. I know that the state-of-the-art facility will go a long way in helping to provide more training for those members. The Minister also toured the site of the new NSW Police Active Armed Offender training facility and opened the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation learning symposium. In addition, the Liverpool SES recently moved into its brand-new premises. As recently as Monday the Government opened a new police station on the South Coast while announcing additional police in Wollondilly.

While members opposite spent their winter holiday quarrelling among themselves and feigning concern for special interest groups, this Government took the month to show support for emergency services, to show support for the police and to show its steadfast commitment to community safety. Government members believe that our firefighters and police officers should be supported. I am grateful for everything they do and I urge members to vote for the reordering of my motion.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

*Motions Accorded Priority***NSW LABOR****Consideration**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:56):** My motion should be accorded priority because, in the words of Sir Elton John and Bernie Taupin, "sorry seems to be the hardest word". NSW Labor has engaged in reprehensible behaviour by lodging an entirely scurrilous complaint against the ICAC investigation into allegations of illegal political donations to NSW Labor involving the Chinese Friends of Labor and the possible

foreign influence in the New South Wales electoral process. It is quite clear that the Chinese Friends of Labor really should have been called the Labor Friends of the People's Republic of China.

That Labor complaint has now been dismissed by Bruce McClintock, SC, the independent Inspector of ICAC, which now provides the New South Wales Leader of the Opposition with a great opportunity. She can disassociate herself from the corrupt Labor Government that she was a Minister in from 2008 to 2011. No State Liberal MP has ever been found corrupt by the ICAC. But by contrast Labor has a sorry history of corruption and lawlessness. ALP members of Parliament found corrupt as MPs by ICAC include Eddie Obeid, Ian Macdonald, Tony Kelly, Joe Tripodi, Angela D'Amore and Karyn Paluzzano. Prison time has been served by former Labor MPs Obeid, Macdonald, "Buckets" Rex Jackson and Milton Orkopoulos. Paluzzano was sentenced to home detention following a guilty plea for falsely claiming parliamentary allowances.

In light of that history one would think that the ALP would want to cooperate with ICAC in its investigations. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Rather than cooperate with the ICAC investigations, NSW Labor complained to the Inspector of ICAC that ICAC did what any investigator does and executed a search warrant to obtain information. This motion calls on the Leader of the Opposition to once and for all say that the ALP is not beyond the law. She should denounce the ALP complaints against ICAC and simply say sorry. She should instruct ALP MPs and the ALP machinery to cooperate fully with ICAC. She would then help to shine a light on any further corrupt conduct by the ALP. Now is a great opportunity for the member for Strathfield. She just has to say one word to ICAC—sorry. That would let the world know that New South Wales Labor was wrong to attack the ICAC instead of cooperating with its investigation.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind Opposition members that a number of them are already on two calls to order as a result of their behaviour during question time.

## BUILDING STANDARDS

### Consideration

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (15:59):** We have a crisis in the construction of buildings in Sydney. We have a weak Premier who, quite frankly, has failed to show leadership in addressing this issue. As I said yesterday in this place, we have a plethora of problems that have emerged because of this Government. I mentioned yesterday the stadium issue and the fact that this Government went to the election on a lie. Today I stand here on behalf of the tens of thousands of people who live in apartments right across this city. I ask the Premier to take action and to show leadership, because these people have been forgotten by this Government. This is not a new issue. In 2015 we had the Lambert report. We have had the Shergold Weir report—in fact, we have counted more than a dozen reports that this Government has commissioned, but until now it has done nothing.

Last year the Government released a discussion paper that has led to no action. We asked today about the appointment of a building commissioner and we were told that the appointment is imminent. On 26 July we were told that the appointment was just a few weeks away and then we were told it would happen by the end of the month. Today is the last day of the month and still nothing has been done to appoint a commissioner. Yesterday the Premier, for the first time, revealed that legislation will be coming before this House at the end of the year. That was not the promise of this Government. I give a commitment that we will take a bipartisan approach to solving this issue, but to do that those opposite have to do something. Right now, we have had nothing from this Government.

It is important that the Premier show leadership on this critical issue. To do that, she has to put aside the chaos in her party room. She has to stand up for the tens of thousands of people who live in apartments right across the city. She has to say, "I know that there is a problem and we are solving it today." Instead, she has said that the Government has let the industry go largely unregulated because of its developer mates. What we say to the Premier today is that we will stand with her to solve this issue, but she must show leadership. She has to appoint a building commissioner right now and properly resource the office of the building commissioner. She must fund the office and give it powers to solve this issue and support the tens of thousands of people in apartment buildings across this State. We demand the Premier takes action today. [*Time expired.*]

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

**The House divided.**

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| Ayes .....    | 47 |
| Noes .....    | 39 |
| Majority..... | 8  |

## AYES

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

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

Barilaro, Mr J  
Clancy, Mr J  
Cooke, Ms S (teller)  
Davies, Mrs T  
Evans, Mr L.J.  
Gulaptis, Mr C  
Henskens, Mr A  
Lee, Dr G  
O'Dea, Mr J  
Petinos, Ms E  
Roberts, Mr A  
Sidoti, Mr J  
Speakman, Mr M  
Toole, Mr P  
Ward, Mr G

## NOES

Aitchison, Ms J  
Barr, Mr C  
Catley, Ms Y  
Crakanthorp, Mr T  
Dib, Mr J  
Finn, Ms J  
Haylen, Ms J  
Kamper, Mr S  
McDermott, Dr H  
Mihailuk, Ms T  
Park, Mr R  
Tesch, Ms L  
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E  
Butler, Mr R  
Chanthivong, Mr A  
Daley, Mr M  
Donato, Mr P  
Harris, Mr D  
Hoenig, Mr R  
Lalich, Mr N  
McKay, Ms J  
Minns, Mr C  
Saffin, Ms J  
Voltz, Ms L  
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Bali, Mr S  
Car, Ms P  
Cotsis, Ms S  
Dalton, Mrs H  
Doyle, Ms T  
Harrison, Ms J  
Hornery, Ms S  
Lynch, Mr P  
Mehan, Mr D (teller)  
O'Neill, Dr M  
Scully, Mr P  
Warren, Mr G  
Zangari, Mr G

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

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:10):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that an August public inquiry has been announced by the Independent Commission Against Corruption into NSW Labor.
- (2) Notes the Independent Commission Against Corruption inspector's report dismissing NSW Labor's complaint against the Independent Commission Against Corruption.
- (3) Notes that the Independent Commission Against Corruption referred to assertions in NSW Labor's complaint as entirely scurrilous.
- (4) Calls on the Leader of the Opposition to apologise to the Independent Commission Against Corruption on behalf of NSW Labor.

It was a very sorry state of affairs when we learned this morning from the Independent Commission Against Corruption that, commencing on 26 August 2019, there will be a six-week public hearing that will rip the scab off the dodgy relationship between the New South Wales Labor Party and illegal donations to it. It is extraordinary how these matters came to the public's attention. It is a classic case of an own goal by the New South Wales Labor Party. The party wrote a letter complaining about the execution of a search warrant on the premises of the New South Wales Labor Party.

**Ms Anna Watson:** You lot wanted to get rid of ICAC.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Shellharbour will either resume her seat or leave the Chamber.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** In completely overblown language, Labor asserted that ICAC engaged in conduct that it said might amount to maladministration—an extraordinary allegation. That allegation was met with the response from ICAC that the assertion of any maladministration by ICAC was entirely scurrilous. ICAC was fulfilling its statutory obligation to investigate matters that were in its possession. According to the report by the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Bruce McClintock, SC, the investigation that is being undertaken by ICAC into NSW Labor will investigate false statements in electoral declarations and investigate schemes to circumvent donation restrictions and other offences involving failure to keep records. This is a major ICAC investigation into NSW Labor. As is clear from the inspector's report, it will also involve possible foreign influence in New South Wales electoral processes.

The investigation would appear to be centred around, in particular, a March 2015 Chinese Friends of Labor dinner. I have a photograph in my possession that was taken at the dinner, and it must be said that it will be very difficult for any member of the New South Wales Labor Party to speak to this motion without potentially compromising their probable evidence before ICAC. This photograph is not a police line-up so I may wrongly identify some of the people. The photograph shows that the Hon. Adam Searle was in attendance, as was the failed New South Wales leader aspirant, the member for Kogarah—someone whom I should refer to as the shadow Opposition leader, the reserve or the next Opposition leader, probably in about 18 months. The member for Summer Hill, the member for Bankstown, the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane, MLC, and the member for Heffron—unless I am identifying him wrongly in the photograph—were also there.

The Labor mayor of Ryde, Jerome Laxale, was there. Former upper House member the Hon. Ernest Wong was there. The former New South Wales Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, was there, as well as the almost Australian Prime Minister Bill Shorten—he will have to retract those comments he made to the Terminator—and Chris Bowen, the former shadow Treasurer. The event was full of Labor MPs, past and present. It is certainly going to be a very interesting investigation. Also within the sights of ICAC is Jonathan Yee, whom, according to other photographs I have, is clearly well known to the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Strathfield. So we have both aspirants for the Labor leadership clearly implicated with people who are of interest to ICAC. That justifies this motion being before the House.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Canterbury that she is on one call to order. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the second time.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:15):** Upon the election of the Coalition Government, the Premier promised that new parliamentary standards will apply here in the bearpit. This is the new standard: lowering yourself to try to run this sort of stuff as a matter of priority.

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

**Mr RON HOENIG:** Are those opposite trying to hide the state of the building industry? Are they trying to hide the Minister for Customer Service's problems? What is it they are trying to hide when they run this rubbish? They have got the member for Ku-ring-gai to run it—a highly respected silk, somebody highly regarded as a legal professional. The only reason that he is not on the front bench is he passed the intelligence test, and they have got him to run this nonsense.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Kiama that he is on two calls to order.

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I have a list, prepared by the Parliamentary Research Service, of 36 members of the Coalition Government who, since its election, have been guilty of impropriety. I am not going to read them out.

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

**Mr RON HOENIG:** In the paper today there are women complaining about staffers of Liberal Party members of Parliament; women who have allegedly been sexually assaulted or abused. But I will not refer to that. I will refer to this matter, which is properly before the Independent Commission Against Corruption. But how dare the member for Ku-ring-gai suggest that NSW Labor or Country Labor are not permitted under section 57C of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988 to raise something with the inspector. Everybody has the right to raise a matter. How dare an eminent silk complain that a matter has been raised. The other issue I want to put fairly and squarely before the House is that many of these issues were not really known until the inspector reported. When the inspector did report, he indicated what ICAC was investigating. It is not just investigating a series of alleged breaches of electoral funding law. There is something very serious that it is investigating. It is:

c) of significant public interest, given its context in connection with possible foreign influence in NSW electoral processes.

That is an extremely serious assertion that must be investigated properly and not politicised. There is no greater attack on our democracy than the risk of foreign influence. Where the member for Ku-ring-gai and the Government have been completely irresponsible is that the organisation that could possibly be subject to foreign influence is also an organisation that is extremely important to this nation and this State. That matter needs to be handled properly and delicately. It is not appropriate that it be used for political purposes. Quite frankly, it is in the economic interests of neither the State—and the Premier knows that—nor Australia for this provincial Parliament to deal with those issues at this time.

Somebody who is subject to a search warrant and who also gets a notice to produce, issued at a similar time, has a right to complain to the Inspector of the ICAC because they are not to know what is in the affidavit that caused the search warrant to be issued. ICAC says it was for operational purposes. Is that because the commission was concerned that the records would be destroyed? The inspector's report states that the raid was relatively unproductive because the documents were off-site and had to be produced or will be produced by a notice of production. Secondly, whilst investigators are not subject to political timings, the mere timing of these sorts of things can interfere with an election, just as foreign investments can in a political party. [*Time expired.*]

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:20):** Surprise, surprise! Day two of the new Labor leadership and what do we have? We have the stench of old Labor and corruption of the incorruptible new leadership of Jodi McKay and the Labor Party. Labor is always reaching into its grubby past. The member for Heffron said that we need to tread very cautiously with the Independent Commission Against Corruption investigations, that they are very serious matters and that we should allow ICAC to execute investigations appropriately, but Government members say bring it on—bring on that ICAC investigation and bring on the hearings that Labor members were trying to hide. Labor claims these are serious allegations but it will not front up and face them legitimately. Labor tried to hide and cast aspersions on some of our crucial institutions, the Electoral Commission and ICAC; what Labor members said was an affront to ICAC.

We call on Labor to make an apology. A leopard does not change its spots: As much as Labor tries to hide from the corruption of its past, it continues to this day. For four years the new Labor leader sat in the Cabinet of the most corrupt government in the history of New South Wales. The state of the New South Wales Labor Party today is no better than it was in the bad old days of Eddie Obeid. We have the new squeaky-clean poster child of Labor in Jodi McKay, but who was sitting next to the accused Jonathan Yee during the election campaign? Looking over his shoulder is Jodi McKay. The member for Heffron referred to serious allegations, but should we not consider the role of ICAC and appreciate the investigation it is undertaking, rather than try to whitewash it, shut it down and complain about having any scrutiny over Labor headquarters? It is not surprising because the Opposition has a boss lady-installed leadership. The member for Strathfield was installed by the head office in Newcastle.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the first time.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** The member for Strathfield has been installed a second time in Strathfield and installed a third time as Leader of the Opposition by boss lady. I do not see many people defending the Leader of the Opposition because I do not think they wanted her in the job. I think they were compelled to appoint her.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the second time.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** The Leader of the Opposition is a lapdog of Labor head office. Members opposite tried to protect their head office from the incredibly important scrutiny of ICAC. The Leader of the Opposition should apologise or resign.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:24):** What an entertaining motion accorded priority this is to come from the Liberal Party. We all know that Robert Menzies was the godfather of the Federal Liberal Party. The godfather of the New South Wales Liberal Party was Robert Askin—a bit of corruption from the very basis. Let us think about this. So far the Liberals have lost two Premiers from ICAC, so it must be time for another Premier to go down, surely. I doubt very much it will be the current Premier—she is far too smart and too good with her memory to forget about grange and gifts like that, so it will probably be the next one. Looking at the papers today, we know it will not be Rob Stokes—*The Daily Telegraph* is not supporting him. It will be either the Treasurer or the member for Bega. After watching the member for Bega do his numbers since Sunday, it will not be him either. Dom, it looks like it is going to be you!

Let us be honest. To sit in this Chamber and attack the Labor Party about corruption is absolutely hilarious when we look at what has happened since 2011 in the New South Wales Liberal Party. The member for Heffron will not mention all the names, but I have the list here. Thirteen of them have been pulled before ICAC and have either left this House or have been referred to DPP for prosecution. Hartcher, Baumann, McCloy, Owen, Thomson



and Williams—all found to have acted with the intention of evading the election funding laws. Baumann, Di Girolamo, Palmer and Webber—all acted with the intention of evading election and funding laws around the disclosure of public donations. Bassett knowingly solicited a political donation from a property developer. Then we have Brooks, Cornwall, Koelma and Saddington—all breaches of section 87—

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Point of order—

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** There are no points of order during a motion accorded priority. Sit down, you fool.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Kiama will resume his seat. Points of order are not permitted during priority debate.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Excuse me, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is only when you are establishing priority, it is not during priority.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Kiama will resume his seat.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Madam Deputy Speaker—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Kiama that he is already on three calls to order.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** If anyone should be apologising, it is the Liberal Party for slashing one third of the budget from ICAC: it took \$7 million from ICAC's budget, cut jobs, restructured and then basically sacked the commissioner, Megan Latham, because she was saying what it did not want to hear. Let us be honest: two Ministers are sitting in this Government that should be before ICAC. One of them is the Minister for Customer Service for his data breaches of Revenue NSW files of hundreds of New South Wales citizens. I refer also to water theft by irrigators that was supported by The Nationals in New South Wales. I refer to one person who has stood in the ICAC witness box: Jodi McKay. It said that she is honest, open and principled. That is what we have got. *[Time expired.]*

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:27):** In reply: I speak more in sorrow than in anger. On this motion accorded priority, the Labor Party put forward a distinguished criminal barrister in the member for Heffron and a law PhD in the member for Prospect, but neither of them really had anything to say. I was a little bit fearful during the address of the member for Heffron because I thought he complained too much. I had this little feeling that he may have been involved in the completely misconceived challenge to the search warrant given the way that he tried to defend it, saying that it was perfectly reasonable to challenge it. I named him as I thought he was in the photograph of other members of Parliament. He did not deny it.

**Mr Dominic Perrottet:** Who was that?

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** The member for Heffron. He did not deny it. I will take his failure to deny it to mean that he was in attendance in the March 2015 Chinese Friends of Labor dinner, which possibly means he could be a witness in the ICAC inquiry. He made the extraordinary assertion that the raid was completely unproductive. How would he have known? How does he know what ICAC was looking for? That seems to be what can only be described as an extraordinary assertion. The contribution from the member for Prospect was very ordinary, to put it at its highest.

The best he could do in his contribution was talk about Robert Menzies founding the Liberal Party and three former New South Wales Premiers. He spoke about the current leadership of the Liberal Party. He was unable to identify any Liberal MP who has ever been found guilty of corruption by ICAC in New South Wales, compared with the seven Labor MPs that I mentioned, who were all found guilty of corruption by ICAC. Of those MPs, four or five have served prison time, including one who is serving time for sexual misconduct on a minor. It was a very pedestrian performance. I compliment the member for North Shore on her contribution. She was absolutely right: The stench of corruption has not been taken out of NSW Labor. *[Time expired.]*

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....52  
Noes .....36  
Majority.....16

AYES

Anderson, Mr K  
Berejiklian, Ms G

Ayres, Mr S  
Bromhead, Mr S

Barilaro, Mr J  
Clancy, Mr J

## AYES

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

## NOES

|                   |                       |                      |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Aitchison, Ms J   | Atalla, Mr E          | Bali, Mr S           |
| Barr, Mr C        | Car, Ms P             | Catley, Ms Y         |
| Chanthivong, Mr A | Cotsis, Ms S          | Crakanthorp, Mr T    |
| Daley, Mr M       | Dib, Mr J             | Doyle, Ms T          |
| Finn, Ms J        | Harris, Mr D          | Harrison, Ms J       |
| Haylen, Ms J      | Hoenig, Mr R          | Hornery, Ms S        |
| Kamper, Mr S      | Lalich, Mr N          | Lynch, Mr P          |
| McDermott, Dr H   | McKay, Ms J           | Mehan, Mr D (teller) |
| Mihailuk, Ms T    | Minns, Mr C           | O'Neill, Dr M        |
| Park, Mr R        | Saffin, Ms J          | Scully, Mr P         |
| Tesch, Ms L       | Voltz, Ms L           | Warren, Mr G         |
| Washington, Ms K  | Watson, Ms A (teller) | Zangari, Mr G        |

**Motion agreed to.***Condolences***WILLIAM PETER COLEMAN, AO, A FORMER MINISTER OF THE CROWN**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a warm welcome to members of the family of William Peter Coleman, AO, including his daughter Tanya Costello and her husband, the Hon. Peter Costello, AC; his daughter Dr Ursula Dubosarsky and her husband, Avi Dubosarsky; and his son, Dr William Coleman. I welcome Mr Coleman's grandchildren to the Chamber, including Simon Coleman and his friend Florence Fermanis; Leo Coleman and his friend Claudia Lee Harper; and Bruno Dubosarsky and his partner, Stephanie Ryan. I acknowledge Mr Coleman's friends, including Father Paul Stenhouse, Rosemary Margaret Buckley and Douglas John Buckley, John Forbes Buckley, Paul Delprat and Dr Susan Gaston, as well as Professor James Franklin and Dr Irene Franklin. We welcome them all to the Chamber.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (16:38):** I move:

That this House extends to the family the deep sympathy of members of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained by the death on 31 March 2019 of William Peter Coleman, AO, a former Minister of the Crown.

I welcome to the Chamber Mr Coleman's family, who have joined us to commemorate his enormous contribution to public life. On behalf of all members of this place, I extend our condolences and, in so doing, acknowledge the sacrifices made by families and loved ones for those who hold public office. In particular I extend our sympathy to Mr Coleman's children, their families and friends in the gallery today.

Mr William Peter Coleman represented the electorate of Fuller in this place for over a decade from 1968 to 1978, representing constituents across North Ryde—where I grew up—Gladesville and Hunters Hill. In that time he held the positions of Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer from 1975 to 1976, Chief Secretary in 1976 and Leader of the Opposition from 1977 to 1978. Throughout all the various phases of

his career and life Mr Coleman was a public intellectual, someone who never stopped pursuing knowledge. In the many touching and insightful obituaries that have been written in recent months he has been ascribed the labels of philosopher, journalist, politician, intellectual and writer, amongst others. All of those are apt in their own way, although in his own words, "None really fits the case for an individual who passes their life in intellectual pursuits."

Mr Coleman was born in Caulfield, Melbourne, in 1928, the son of Stanley Charles Coleman and Norma Victoria Tiernan. After moving to Sydney as a 10-year-old he was educated at North Sydney Boys High School and at the University of Sydney where he studied under some of the most influential Australian philosophers of our time, including John Anderson and John Passmore. He then travelled to the United Kingdom and continued his education, studying political philosophy at the London School of Economics. No doubt this environment, both in Sydney and London, served as the breeding ground for his intellectual intrigue, unquenchable thirst for knowledge and fiery passion for discourse that would serve him throughout his life. He was a "warrior for intellectual freedom", to quote his son-in-law the Hon. Peter Costello, Australia's best ever Treasurer.

On 5 April 1952 he married Verna Scott and went on to have three children who then, obviously, bore his grandchildren. After marrying Verna he spent a year teaching English in Sudan. Upon his return he decided to turn to journalism, first working for *The Observer* and then as the editor of *The Bulletin* from 1964 to 1967. Mr Coleman became editor of *Quadrant* in 1967, a position he would hold for over 20 years, including during his parliamentary career. I think it reflects his commitment and love of writing, social commentary and the arts that he was able to balance a decade-long career in this place with his continued contribution to his editorial role. In parallel to performing his representative duties, he was able to play a significant part in building *Quadrant* to become a home of cultural and intellectual inquiry in Australia. Under his leadership of *Quadrant* Mr Coleman helped define the publication and its editorial standards.

Mr Coleman participated in public debates that helped shape modern Australia, debates that helped us understand the changing world and our place in it. During the 1950s and 1960s, with the cold war playing out on the global stage, Mr Coleman fought the battle of ideas against communism. He will be remembered as a passionate champion for artistic and intellectual freedom in a time of great political upheaval. He understood and championed the importance of intellectual freedom to the moral fabric of nations and was a great supporter of liberalism.

Mr Coleman made a significant and enduring contribution to liberal philosophy in Australia and regarded himself as a secular liberal. He was strongly committed to the rights and freedom of the individual and, when reflecting on his commitment to the Liberal Party, declared it was "because the Liberal Party is the best expression of Australian liberalism." Mr Coleman once wrote that he could not remember the exact day that he picked up what he called "the political virus". However, afflicted as he was, he would go on to have a parliamentary career spanning 16 years across both this place and the Federal Parliament. As already noted, in 1968 he was elected to this place as the member for Fuller. In his memoir Mr Coleman reflected on his early days in Parliament and the conviction of his ideals with the wisdom that only time can give. He said, "Now I knew where I stood: conservative enough to oppose the totalitarianism of the Left, progressive enough to liberalise the conservatives ... I was for small government, low taxation, State rights and the American alliance. It all seemed easy at the time."

During his time in this place Mr Coleman made significant contributions in the arts and cultural areas, serving as a member of the Australia Council for the Arts, a councillor of the National Institute of Dramatic Art and chairman of the Interim Council for the National Film and Television School. Following various ministerial appointments, he became leader of the New South Wales Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition in 1977. Mr Coleman will be remembered not only for his strong ideals and his commitment to public service but also for the great passion and respect that he held for his community and his constituents. Leaving the New South Wales Parliament following the 1978 election, Mr Coleman responded in typical philosophical style when asked by a journalist what was next by quoting Shakespeare:

All the world's a stage, and one man in his time plays many parts.

That next part would take the form of Administrator of Norfolk Island, where he served from 1979 to 1981, at a critical time in the island's history as it moved towards self-governance. He was then elected to the Federal seat of Wentworth in 1981, where he served as the member until his retirement from politics in 1987. Naturally, following his career in politics he returned to his first full-time love: writing. Writing in its many different forms played a central part of Mr Coleman's career and over many decades he provided widely read, thought-provoking contributions to *Quadrant* and other publications. We will remember him as one of the giants of intellectual life in Australia. *Quadrant* editor-in-chief Keith Windschuttle once described him as one of Australia's "truly great men of letters".

Mr Coleman had a great many impressive talents. He was not only a prodigious writer but also an astute editor, essayist, oral historian and journalist. He has left an impressive body of work, which ranges from a major study of the intellectual battles of the cold war to collections of writing and poetry and of course biographical works, co-authoring *The Costello Memoirs*. He also produced two books that were unsurpassed in their fields: *Cartoons of Australian History* with the legendary cartoonist Les Tanner and a history of censorship in Australia with the attention-grabbing title, *Obscenity, blasphemy, sedition: 100 years of censorship in Australia*. Many of his pieces of work still resonate in the Australian literary landscape and will continue to do so. This contribution was appropriately recognised when Mr Coleman was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2015 for his service to the media industry as well as to the New South Wales and Federal parliaments.

Mr Coleman will be remembered as a figure of immense importance in the political, literary and intellectual life of post-World War II Australia. To his family and friends in the gallery today, we celebrate his life and thank him. He will remain an inspiration and his words will shed light on the social fabric of our nation and our State, in particular in the post-war period and the decades since. We again extend our deepest condolences and appreciation for his positive contribution to enhancing the quality of life of the citizens of this State and of our nation. May he rest in peace.

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (16:47):** I, too, honour the Hon. Peter Coleman, AO, and the substantial contribution he made to this House, to the people of New South Wales and to intellectual life throughout New South Wales and Australia. I acknowledge in the gallery his family, his former colleagues and the many people in public and intellectual life all across our State and our nation who were influenced by his thoughts and by his considerable body of work. Despite his long and distinguished career in State and Federal politics, Peter Coleman will be remembered principally as one of the great Australian men of letters and intellectuals of the post-war era. He fought passionately for the cause of intellectual freedom and began his literary career with a book decrying censorship throughout Australia.

As the Premier said, Peter would go on to edit *The Observer* and *The Bulletin* with another literary and intellectual giant, the great Donald Horne. He later became the editor of *Quadrant* and remained editor almost continuously from 1967 to 1990. Under his stewardship *Quadrant* grew to become one of the most distinguished Liberal and conservative monthly magazines in Australia, publishing work from the great intellectuals, writers, critics, poets and artists of the day. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Peter Coleman's long and distinguished editorship of *Quadrant* defined a whole generation of Australian conservative politicians and thinkers and had an indelible effect on the conservative movement across the thinkers.

I also acknowledge Peter Coleman's long and distinguished career in both State and Federal politics. First elected as the member for Fuller in 1968, he served as a Minister in the Lewis and Willis governments, served in the Willis shadow ministry and then led the New South Wales Liberal Opposition from 1977 to 1978. He then served as the Federal member for Wentworth from 1981 to 1987. Despite his affinity with the conservative side of politics, Peter Coleman had the respect of people across the political spectrum throughout Australia. He earned that respect because he was a fiercely intelligent and persuasive advocate for the causes he took up. I believe that is why those who stood with him and those who stood in opposition to him both remember him with great fondness. My condolences and that of the State parliamentary Labor Party go out to his family, his friends, those who worked with him and those who were and continue to be inspired by him.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (16:50):** Before I met the man or even knew much about him I became familiar with Peter Coleman through his writing. As a student and then as a lawyer with a passion for politics and a deep interest in the conservative cause, I was already an avid reader of *The Spectator*, which is still my favourite Australian political magazine. Like many Speccie readers, I always looked forward to the Australian Notes column and the sparkling prose of its author, Peter Coleman. Peter's writing was a gift. It had the dry wit, the sharp insight, the scathing critique and the principled logic. But, above all, it had the warmth and joy that comes from a life well lived and a heart still inflamed with love for the country and a burning desire that it keep moving towards a brighter future.

Those columns in *The Spectator* came at the tail end of a long and illustrious innings. As I read them in my younger years, little did I know just how much the author had contributed in a life of service to the people of New South Wales and Australia. It was only in 2015 that I actually met Peter, at a small function in this place. It should have been larger because it was a launch of a book on free speech by Brendan O'Neill. It was a fitting occasion. O'Neill is the British Marxist who in recent times finds he has more in common with the conservative and libertarian strains of politics than the intolerant and conformist Left.

Peter's own political journey followed a similar path. He began his political life firmly on the Left, editing a socialist rag at the University of Sydney Left fora. That inclination towards Marxism—without causing offence to those in the gallery—might have been a reflection of his roots, his having been born in the Socialist Republic of Victoria. But the more likely explanation is that it reflected his lifelong sense of responsibility to serve the

community and ensure that the less fortunate members of society are never left behind. As the old saying goes: If you are not a socialist at 20, you have no heart; if you are not a conservative at 30, you have no head.

Peter broke ranks with the Left when it veered sharply into Marxist extremism. Eventually, like many others, he found a home in the Liberal Party: a church broad enough to welcome his socially minded instincts but without the hammers and sickles. I was fortunate to have an engaging conversation with Peter that night in 2015. We talked about the future of conservative politics. It was only in researching Peter's work after our conversation that I realised just what a giant of Australian politics I had been speaking to. The Premier has pointed out the finer details of Peter's career. It is needless to say it was colourful and distinguished. Along the way throughout his life there were cameos from Australia's political and intellectual pantheon. He shared a house with Bob Hawke when they were both doing PhDs at the Australian National University. He worked at Neville Wran's barristers' chambers as a barrister for a while. He later lost his seat to him, which proves the adage that even the great ones lose their seats.

As has been mentioned by other speakers, Peter brought *The Bulletin* back from the dead and then moved on to *Quadrant*. He wrote books, essays, columns and everything in between. He served as a member of Federal Parliament. And he served in this place, including as Chief Secretary and as Leader of the Opposition. Peter's life work demonstrates a deep engagement in the life of our State and our nation and the plight of its people. As a public intellectual he engaged with vigour in the battle of ideas and he did so when it mattered most and the stakes were highest—at a time when our nation's future as a free and democratic society was under threat from the growing power and influence of Soviet-style communism. In that fight, Peter unflinchingly took the side of freedom—even defending the right of the communists to keep their party, while condemning their politics. That commitment to freedom would be a hallmark of his political and intellectual career.

While his intellectual life was rich, Peter was not lost to the world of academia. Rather than reside in an ivory tower, Peter gladly answered the call to serve his community as a member of Parliament—an opportunity to put good ideas into concrete action. As an admirer of Peter's from a younger generation, I consider his life and his contribution to this nation an inspiration and example. The breadth of his interests and areas of expertise are truly impressive. It is reflected in his own body of work, which ranges from meticulous historical writing to political memoir and theatrical biography. But what really stands out for me is the spirit of service that coloured his whole life. At every stage Peter used his gifts to make a valuable contribution. Even in his later years his passion for making Australia better did not wane. His prolific output continued and he contributed to public discourse and the battle of ideas well into his twilight years. He did so not for the sake of it, but because he really wanted our country to be a better place.

On a personal note, I appreciated the kind words of encouragement Peter extended to me in recent years. It was yet another example of his magnanimous nature, his generosity, and his enduring engagement in the political life of the nation. His life is the embodiment of what public service truly means. In mourning Peter I am joined by many people in the organisations where he has left his indelible mark—from *The Spectator* to *Quadrant*, the Menzies Research Centre and, of course, the Liberal Party. But our loss is nothing compared to that of his family. To Peter's children and their families—Tanya and Peter, William and Anna, and Ursula and Avi—I offer my sincere and deepest condolences. We join them in mourning the loss of a father, a grandfather, and a quiet giant of Australian politics. May Peter Coleman's legacy live on and may he rest in peace.

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (16:56):** I warmly welcome Tanya, Peter, William, Leo, Simon, Ursula, Avi, Bruno, Stephanie and all the friends of the late Peter Coleman, AO, whom we are commemorating in Parliament today. Peter Coleman, AO, was a remarkable person. As a prolific writer, journalist and politician he strongly contributed not only to our great State but also to our great nation. I did have occasion to meet and speak with Peter in his later years and seek his advice and counsel. He lived just up the road from me on Edgecliff Road. I was so grateful that we shared a dear and valued friend—the wonderful, delightful Jessie Bartos, who was the person who joined us together. I salute Peter Coleman.

Born in 1928, Peter had several major and influential careers during his lifetime, as we have heard the Premier and Treasurer remark upon. After the Second World War his writing shaped much of the literary and intellectual conversations taking place in Australia. He understood the importance of ideas, which can sometimes be lost in day-to-day politics, and their role in our society throughout time. He first studied philosophy at Sydney University and then at the London School of Economics. Peter—I hope I have it right—authored 16 books on politics, history and culture including: *Australian Civilisation*, 1962; *Memoirs of a Slow Learner*—what a curious title—1984; and *The Last Intellectuals: Essays on Writers and Politics*, 2010.

He was associate editor of *The Observer* at the same time that the late Donald Horne, AO, and the Hon. Michael Baume, AO, were on the staff. From 1964 to 1967 he was the editor of *The Bulletin* and editor of *Quadrant* until 1988. In June 2008 Peter's alma mater, the University of Sydney, awarded him a degree of Doctor of Letters, honoris causa, in honour of his contribution to the intellectual life of Australia for more than 50 years.

In 2015 Peter was again recognised for his distinguished service to the print media industry as a noted editor, journalist, biographer and author to the Parliaments of New South Wales and Australia and to the community as an Officer of the Order of Australia. He recorded numerous interviews, for which I am so grateful. They are held at the National Library in the oral history collection. What is most remarkable is that his passion for writing and ideas continued until his late 80s—that is something to aim for! Peter sat in this very Chamber in which we commemorate him today as the member for Fuller. The seat of Fuller was named after a past New South Wales Premier, the Hon. George Fuller, and is now mostly represented by the electorate of Ryde and some of the electorate of Epping.

During those years in this Chamber he had an illustrious career—the Premier has recounted some of those roles. He made a strong contribution both inside and outside Cabinet. He served as Chief Secretary, Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer, shadow Minister for Justice and Services and then he became Leader of the New South Wales Opposition. It was mentioned previously—but I wanted to remark on it again—that in 1979 Peter was appointed as Administrator of Norfolk Island. I have no doubt that was a very challenging assignment. From 1981 to 1987 we were fortunate to have Peter serve as the Federal member for Wentworth—my companion Federal seat. Peter was elected at a by-election following the resignation of Bob Ellicott, AC, QC, in the Fraser Government. He then served in opposition during the Hawke years from 1983 to 1987. After serving as the local member for Wentworth for six years, he retired from politics and was succeeded by John Hewson, AM, in that role.

I want to share with this Chamber the fact that Peter's life's work was supported—I know this and I have also heard about it, principally through Jessie Bartos, whom I have relied on for some of these notes—by a strong and loving family life. In 1949 he met Verna Scott who, I understand, was herself an accomplished writer. Her writings included biographies such as *Miles Franklin in America: Her Unknown (Brilliant) Career* in 1981, *The Last Exquisite: A Portrait of Frederic Manning* in 1990 and *Adela Pankhurst: The Wayward Suffragette 1885- 1961* in 1996. Soon after Peter met Verna in 1949, they decided they would travel to London where they married in 1952. While in London, Verna worked as a librarian in Essex Library while Peter completed his master's degree in political philosophy at the London School of Economics. They spent a year in Sudan, where Peter taught English, before they eventually returned to Australia in 1955.

Together Peter and Verna had three children, who are here today. Their first daughter, Tanya, is married to former distinguished Treasurer of Australia, Peter Costello, AC. I understand that Peter assisted his son-in-law by helping to edit the *Costello Memoirs: The Age of Prosperity* in 2008. His daughter, Ursula, has carried on the family tradition as a writer. Their son, Dr William, is an economist, whose interest also follows his father's. In his later years Peter wrote many books. He also generously mentored other writers. He wrote a cookbook, as well as books on poetry, including *The Old Boys' Cookbook* in 1996 and *A Return to Poetry* in 2000.

Peter lived out most of his later years with Verna in a beautiful unit with lots of sun on Edgecliff Road, Woollahra. I believe it was a wonderful apartment in my electorate. Verna passed away in 2011 and I understand Peter continued to live there until the last few months of his life. What an extraordinarily rich, vibrant life Peter lived over his 90 years. Peter will be remembered for his distinguished contribution to ideas, literature and politics. He was a decent and thoughtful citizen of the world. He was respected—a quality of character that I have found, in my own recollections, hard to gain but so easily lost. He was a gentleman. He was and is respected. Vale, Peter Coleman, AO. We salute you.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:04):** I pay tribute to Peter Coleman, AO, who passed away at the impressive age of 91. I acknowledge his family in the gallery today and offer my condolences. Peter led a distinguished public life not just for his constituents of Fuller, but for the wider community of New South Wales. He served as the Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer from 10 October 1975 to 23 January 1976, Chief Secretary from 23 January 1976 to 14 May 1976, and Leader of the Opposition from 16 December 1977 to 7 October 1978. Before moving to Federal politics, Peter served as Administrator of Norfolk Island from 1979 to 1981, which, I have no doubt, was a challenge in itself. As was so eloquently described by the member for Vaucluse, he went on to represent the electorate of Wentworth in the Australian Parliament for three terms from 1981 to 1987.

As I reflected on Peter's contribution to the New South Wales and Australian parliaments, what struck me was the incredible number of organisations and groups with which he was involved. I will quote from the New South Wales Parliament's record some of his qualifications, occupations and interests. He attended North Sydney Boys High School and graduated from Sydney University in 1950 with a Bachelor of Arts. He went on to complete a postgraduate degree in 1952 at the internationally acclaimed London School of Economics. He taught English in Sudan and worked for decades as an editor of *The Observer*, and later as editor of *The Bulletin*. While serving as the State member for Fuller he was the managing editor of the Australian Councillor Interim Council for a national film and television training school between 1971 and 1973. He was also involved with the National

Institute of Dramatic Art, the Australian Association for Cultural Freedom and the Australian Museum. What an accomplished career!

I do not think anyone in this place would doubt Peter Coleman's significant contribution to Australian intellectual life. Many will agree that his greatest legacy is his contribution to public debate after leaving public office. His books span both intellectual arguments and biographical works, including *Obscenity, Blasphemy, Sedition; Cartoons of Australian History; Australian Civilization: a Symposium; The Liberal Conspiracy: the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe*; as well as countless essays on politics, history, philosophy, the Arts, religion and more.

Remarkably, almost continuously for a staggering 23 years, from 1967 to 1990, he was editor of *Quadrant*—throughout his parliamentary career and well into his retirement. He recorded interviews with a number of prominent Australians for the National Library's collection, including Garfield Barwick, Michael Kirby and Bruce Beresford. Peter Coleman also assisted his son-in-law, the Hon. Peter Costello, to write his autobiography, *The Costello Memoirs*, which was published in 2008. I had the privilege of working for the company that printed those memoirs; it is a great book. In 2015, in recognition of his service to the media industry and to the New South Wales and Federal parliaments, Peter was quite rightly made an officer of the Order of Australia. *The Spectator* states:

Peter Coleman will serve as a reminder that it was during the Menzies era Australia began to stir, to assert itself as a proudly independent nation and new intellectual force...

I acknowledge all of Peter's family and friends who join us today in Parliament. We have heard a very fitting tribute to a wonderful man. He gave 91 years to our community. Thank you for giving him to us for such a wonderful time. Vale, Peter Coleman.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

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

*Bills*

## **FINES AMENDMENT BILL 2019**

### **First Reading**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mr Victor Dominello, read a first time and printed.**

### **Second Reading Speech**

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (17:10):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Fines Amendment Bill is about making it simpler and easier for the people of New South Wales to deal with their fines. Nobody likes to receive a fine but how can we make this experience easier? The New South Wales Government is leading the way in delivering services that meet the needs of our customers. We are using common sense to design services around the customer and we are using the best technology to do so. But the Fines Act 1996 has not quite kept up with technology or the ways in which customers prefer to deal with their fines. Outdated and inefficient provisions hinder the delivery of a modern, customer-centric fines system. A very common example is a speeding vehicle caught on camera. The registered owner of the vehicle will be fined even though their son was the actual driver. The current legislation only recognises a process that in order to transfer the fine the owner must nominate the son as the driver. The legislation does not contemplate that the son may nominate himself, yet this is what commonly happens.

Many customers want to deal with their fines in this way. It may be because it is more convenient or if the owner, who is a parent, is unable to submit the nomination because of age or for some other reason. The legislation does not provide for those circumstances. Currently Revenue NSW and the customer must wrangle their way through an administrative process to accept the nomination. This is slow, inefficient and simply does not make sense. The bill fixes this problem. This is only one example of the improvements the bill will make to how fines are administered in New South Wales. This Government is committed to making transacting with government simpler and easier for the people of our great State. The bill continues to deliver on that promise.

I turn to the key changes under the bill. We live in the twenty-first century and people are increasingly wanting to use digital means to transact. The bill responds to that expectation and is a further example of the Government's commitment to give people the tools to engage with government with ease and minimum fuss. The Act already allows for electronic delivery of penalty notices and other correspondence. The bill expands this to

a broader range of electronic delivery methods to keep up with how technology and customer preferences are changing.

Customers have told us that receiving lengthy text messages or bulky email attachments is not ideal. Instead, customers could receive a text message, email or app notification that they have a penalty notice ready for viewing and payment. That notification would contain a link to log in to their secure digital mailbox to view and deal with their fine. If the notification is not received, the penalty notice will be sent by other authorised means such as post. Communicating with customers in the way that they prefer makes for an efficient fines system and helps to avoid escalation of the fine to the enforcement stage. This is good for the customer. Currently, many fines are delayed in being paid or enforced because the fine is returned to Revenue NSW undelivered. Expanding the methods for electronic communication increases the chance that the customer knows about the fine and pays or otherwise deals with it in a timely fashion.

I return to the example I gave at the beginning of my speech. Currently self-nominations are not legally recognised. They can delay finalisation of the fine and even result in the wrong person being held responsible for the fine and demerit points. To overcome this, the bill recognises a nomination made by the driver in the same way that a nomination made by the vehicle owner is currently recognised. This self-nomination will be considered a voluntary admission of liability that the person committed the offence. A fine would then be issued to the self-nominated driver, relieving the owner of the liability for the offence and fine. Those amendments will not affect the primary responsibility of the owner to nominate the person in charge of the vehicle. Where the driver has self-nominated and a penalty notice has been issued to them, the owner will be notified that they are no longer liable and no longer need to nominate. The bill also makes related amendments to the Road Transport Act 2013 to support recognition of self-nominations. A further amendment to the Road Transport (General) Regulation 2013 is also included. That amendment prescribes as a penalty notice offence the offence of a person who, after making a nomination, fails to provide a statutory declaration when required to do so.

I now outline the life cycle of a fine to when a fine is paid, in particular what happens when a fine is overpaid. This most commonly happens when a customer sets up a regular bank transfer to pay off a fine over time. When the fine is paid off, the customer forgets to stop regular transfers. This results in an overpayment. The Act currently allows certain overpayments to be reallocated towards certain other unpaid fines of the customer. This counts as a payment towards that fine and can help to minimise any further interest or penalties. Customers can apply to have that overpayment refunded even after it has been reallocated. The bill broadens the use of reallocations to the customer's benefit. Firstly, it extends these provisions beyond enforced fines to also cover penalty notices. This means more overpayments can be put towards reducing the overall fines debt of the customer without affecting their existing right to ask for a refund.

Secondly, the bill creates a general power to refund a payment. Revenue NSW already does this where possible, and this bill updates the Act to reflect this. But the bill goes further and ensures that overpayments made by low-income customers cannot be reallocated unless they request it. The New South Wales Government supports common sense and efficient management of overpayments, but equally recognises that this is ultimately the customer's money. For customers who are most likely to be in financial stress, an automatic reallocation of their overpayment is not appropriate.

When a person does not pay a fine despite efforts by Revenue NSW to engage with that person to resolve the fine, enforcement action may need to be taken. Additional enforcement costs may then be payable. Customers often acknowledge that they cannot pay a fine on time. Currently, customers on a payment plan and receiving government benefits or customers on a work and development order can ask for the fine to be voluntarily enforced. This means that no enforcement costs are added to their fine. For anyone else who cannot pay on time, they cannot apply for a payment plan until after the fine has been enforced. By then, enforcement costs have been added to the fine.

As I have said, this bill is about changing the fines system to better support our customers, the people of New South Wales. This means helping them to more easily deal with and pay off their fines. More importantly, this bill will allow Revenue NSW to enter into a payment plan with any customer at any time after a fine is issued. This will be considered a voluntary enforcement, saving the customer enforcement costs. These amendments mean more fines paid off, and at less cost to the customer. This bill will also make related amendments to remove the requirement to serve an enforcement order when a fine is being voluntarily enforced and to allow minor errors in an enforcement order to be fixed.

I turn now to the final change to be effected by this bill. The Act contains a number of options for a customer to dispute a penalty notice. These options become limited once a penalty notice is enforced. That is because there are time limits for raising a dispute. These are necessary to prevent undue delays and avoidance of paying a fine. However, the reality is that greater flexibility is needed. Although a dispute may be raised out of time, it can contain genuine grounds for disputing a customer's liability. Once an enforcement order is made,



a customer can raise a dispute by seeking to have the order annulled. However, the grounds for annulment are very narrow, with 34 per cent of annulment applications refused. Where granted, many matters must still be referred to the Local Court, even though enforcement has stopped.

If annulment is refused and the person wishes to contest the matter, the Local Court must step in. The court has allowed a significant proportion of appeals. These are often fines issued for operator-onus offences where the operator has failed to nominate a driver within the specified time frame, as in the example I provided earlier of the son driving the parent's vehicle. Such matters could equally have been resolved through an administrative process in Revenue NSW. This bill will vastly improve a process that has proved to be cumbersome and expensive for all parties concerned. This bill provides a simpler and more flexible process for customers to dispute a penalty notice after an enforcement order has been made. Effectively, a customer will be able to dispute a penalty notice at any stage of the penalty notice and fine enforcement life cycle, with the enforcement order able to be withdrawn in some situations.

The power of Revenue NSW to withdraw an enforcement order will be broadened to enable more matters to be settled administratively. The annulment provisions, which are complex and difficult to understand, will be simplified and limited to the purpose for which they were originally intended—that is, where the customer appeals to the Local Court against the commission's decision not to withdraw an enforcement order and the Local Court decides to annul the enforcement order. It is expected that this streamlined process will remove more than 1,000 matters from the Local Court each year and will provide a faster and more just resolution of thousands of other disputed penalty notices. The simplified process will also allow the available options to be more easily understood by customers.

In conclusion, I am sure members will agree that this bill makes important improvements to many customer touchpoints along the life cycle of a fine: from how it is issued to the customer, to payment and to disputing it. The five key changes I have outlined exemplify the commitment of this New South Wales Government to deliver easy and simple services that treat the customer fairly and work with and around the customer. The bill contains the necessary amendments to ensure that our legislation supports the delivery of this commitment. In the circumstances, I commend this bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Matter of Public Importance*

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:25):** Local Government Week 2019 is upon us, shining a spotlight on our local councils and the crucial role they play in local communities across the State. This year's theme is "Your Council", highlighting just how close local councils are to their local communities. The State's 128 councils are vital to its economy but they play a much more important role locally. They are the heart of their local communities. While many are major employers in their regions, local councils provide the key infrastructure, facilities and services that communities need and deserve—from essential infrastructure such as roads and footpaths, to water, sewer and stormwater drainage, to the very facilities that are at the centre of a local community, such as pools, libraries, sporting fields, cycleways and public halls, and those that enrich the lifestyle and amenity of local residents, such as waterfront promenades, art and cultural centres, regional sporting complexes, museums, and galleries.

However, councils are much more than just organisations. The hardworking people of local government are the lifeblood of a local council—from councillors, to senior staff, managers and those who work in the field. Then there are general managers and senior staff working hard to set the strategic direction of their council and community. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful team at Northern Beaches Council, including the chief executive officer Ray Brownlee, who is supported by brilliant staff, many of whom I and my electorate office staff have had the opportunity to work with directly for the benefit of my community. They include Kath McKenzie, Kylie Walsh, David Kerr, Leanne Martin, Liz Reeves and Nikki Adams. Nearly 1,300 councillors in New South Wales serve the best interests of their local communities now and into the future. I note the hard work of my local northern beaches councillors.

Whichever way we look at it, the commitment and dedication of our local councils make our local communities better places to live, work and play. That is why I encourage each member in this place to acknowledge and celebrate the important role that the State's 128 councils play in local communities across New South Wales. I also ask them to encourage their local communities to participate in the many events and activities that local councils are hosting to mark Local Government Week. I recognise the efforts of Local Government NSW and many local councils across the State in participating in and promoting Local Government Week 2019. This Government is committed to supporting local councils to better serve their communities. Since

2011, the Government has provided more than \$9 billion in financial support to local councils to deliver and improve local infrastructure, services and facilities for their communities. The Government will continue to work closely with the local government sector to identify more ways that we can best support councils to deliver for their local communities.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:28):** I am honoured to recognise the work of local government in New South Wales, particularly during Local Government Week. This week gives members in this place the opportunity to celebrate and support the important work of the 128 councils across New South Wales that provide vital services to residents, ratepayers and businesses. They say all politics is local politics and, for me, this rings true as it is the councillors of New South Wales who are on the frontline every day, actively supporting our communities.

Now, some believe that local government should be concerned only with roads, rates and rubbish. However, local government is so much more. Nobody knows and understands our communities better than local councils. As well as planning the growth and development of our communities, councils provide a range of other services and multicultural activities. They are also responsible for providing many frontline services. Councils do the most of any level of government to remove prejudice in communities. Local governments have taken the lead on climate action, with the declaration of climate emergencies allowing for greater focus and increased action on the biggest issue facing all people on this planet.

I gladly share my appreciation for Waverley and Randwick councils in my electorate of Coogee. Both play a pivotal role in creating our sense of community. These councils are the glue that holds my community together. I make special mention of just some of the great services my councils provide the community. Waverley and Randwick have the best lifeguard services anyone could ask for. They look after some of the most populated beaches in Australia. They are so great there is a television show about them! Waverley and Randwick councils are the largest providers of childcare centres in the eastern suburbs. Randwick and Waverley councils are home to three great libraries. These libraries are not only home to local historical societies but also host many free events for our communities. Libraries are important community hubs and we must be thankful that our councils are able to provide this service to our communities.

Waverley and Randwick councils are major employers in the Eastern Suburbs, not only by having a significant day workforce—often employing locals—but also offering great apprenticeships, providing job opportunities for our youth. Randwick City Council, in conjunction with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council, holds the annual Koojay Corroboree on Coogee Beach to launch Reconciliation Week. This event celebrates Aboriginal ceremony, tradition and culture. Then there is the historic Bondi Pavilion, which hosts many activities throughout the year, including theatre productions, events, festivals, art exhibitions, regular classes to attend, pottery classes, workshops, screenings and so much more.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the significant challenges faced by councils, including those in my electorate. In May this year, without consultation with councils, the Government announced a hike to the fire emergency service levy. At the time this hike was announced the majority of councils—if not all—had already signed off on their budgets. As such, communities across New South Wales face a reduction of council services and councils face significant, unplanned budget shortfalls. Some councils have been slugged with bills close to half a million dollars. Randwick City Council was not advised it would receive an 11 per cent increase—that is over \$250,000—to the council levy until after its draft budget had been placed on public exhibition. Waverley Council will have an increase of 10.2 per cent—roughly \$162,000.

Councils now have a choice to make: Slash frontline services or lift their council rates. Either way, the ratepayers across the State will bear the brunt of the Government's bungled and kneejerk policy. Cost shifting like this onto our local councils is out of control. Research by Local Government NSW [LGNSW] has estimated cost shifting onto New South Wales councils at around \$820 million. Not only does cost shifting continue to grow, it is also growing at an accelerated rate. LGNSW data shows this trend is being driven largely by State Government policies. Metropolitan and regional councils have been the hardest hit, largely due to the impact of the New South Wales waste levy; however, data indicates cost shifting also continues to drain the tight budgets of councils in rural New South Wales.

I recognise the great work our councils do but also acknowledge the great work of LGNSW. LGNSW is the peak organisation representing the interests of New South Wales general and special purpose councils. Through its advocacy and work during the last State election with its Renew Our Libraries campaign it was able to secure significant funding from both sides of the House. Particular mention goes to Linda Scott, President of LGNSW, and the work she does advocating on behalf of the 128 councils across New South Wales.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:33):** I thank the member for Manly for introducing this matter of public importance. Local Government Week is an annual celebration of all that is good about our local councils.

Each year councils use Local Government Week to remind communities of all that they do and how they positively impact people's daily lives. Yes, this State's 128 councils do keep our streets clean, collect our waste, fill potholes and tend to our parks—but they do far more. In the Dubbo electorate, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council and Narromine Shire Council all go above and beyond to support events that bring our communities together. A few times a year, the Dubbo Regional Council, for example, throws open the gates of the Old Dubbo Gaol for food and wine, live music and even movie nights, contributing to the city's nightlife and sense of community.

In Mudgee the efforts of Mid-Western Regional Council have been instrumental in getting the St George Illawarra Dragons to make Glen Willow their home away from home. The council also helped Mudgee become Whyhope, the hometown of cardiac surgeon Hugh Knight and the backdrop for the hit Channel 9 television series *Doctor Doctor*. At Narromine the council's continued support of the aviation industry helped the Narromine aerodrome host the Junior World Gliding Championships in 2015, and in 2022 Narromine will welcome the world's best gliders of all ages when it hosts the Open World Gliding Championships, which is tremendous. As many councils expand into diverse and large-scale interests, Local Government Week is an opportunity for councils to justifiably beat their own drums.

With the 2019 theme of "Your Council", Local Government Week is the perfect vehicle for councils to showcase what they do. Local councils have planned some terrific community events and activities around New South Wales this week, which reflect not only the uniqueness and diversity of our councils but also the incredible variety of what they do. As some examples, Yass Valley Council is inviting residents to explore the Yass Water Treatment Plant and understand how the council delivers water to their homes, businesses and schools; Snowy Valleys Council is conducting a trivia competition; and Wollondilly Shire Council has expanded its colouring competition to include a writing competition that asks older students to imagine they are mayor for a day.

Schools and young people have been a focus for a number of other councils, including Albury, Bathurst, Blayney, Oberon and Federation councils. The councils are also hosting visits in which students will learn how their local government operates and hear presentations on, among other things, recycling and road safety. That is just a small selection of the events being held this week but I think it gives a taste of what it is about and how councils can use it to promote their important role in the local community. I note the hard work and dedication of the mayors, councillors and staff at Dubbo Regional Council, Narromine Shire Council and Mid-Western Regional Council. I encourage everyone to acknowledge and celebrate the important role that our councils play and participate in the many events and activities during the Local Government Week.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:36):** I thank the member for Coogee and the member for Dubbo for their contributions to this matter of public importance. I note that the Waverley Council and Randwick City Council make up the electorate of the member for Coogee and I recognise the good work of Bondi lifeguards. Their show is interesting but if they were to make their way to Manly they would see how it was really done. The member for Dubbo mentioned Double Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council and Narromine Shire Council. The Old Dubbo Gaol food and wine festival sounds like a fantastic event, as do the gliding world championships at Narromine aerodrome.

From those two members alone, we have got a diverse view of what our councils can get up to and deliver for the community. Needless to say, councils are at the coalface and frontline of dealing with local communities. Like all levels of government, councils have a long list of increasingly complex issues to deal with. Increasingly, and as always, councils should be seen as a valuable partner of State governments. While the member for Coogee raised the issue of cost shifting, I refer to the fact that since 2011, the State Government has contributed \$9 billion to our local councils. Through strong partnerships with our local councils, we can deliver more for our community and will continue to do that. I thank the members for their contribution to the matter of public importance.

*Private Members' Statements*

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS KEY STAKEHOLDERS GROUP**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (17:38):** In the beautiful Southern Highlands part of my electorate—a wonderful place—an industry group named the Southern Highlands Key Stakeholders Group is making its mark. The group was formed as a result of informal discussions initiated by respected local businessman Hugh Clarke and an elder statesman of the region, Terry Oakes-Ash, OAM, with a range of individuals and special interest groups who have had no real connection with each other. The informal discussions progressed as a result of the high-energy vision and commitment of key locals who could see the value in a coordinated approach in dealing with government and peak industry groups at a senior level.

The group now is very active and, dare I say, working up a full head of steam—like my steam trains. I note the stated mission of the group is to work collaboratively for the priority of setting and delivering benefits for the Southern Highlands. The group formally convened its first meeting on 19 July 2019. I am delighted to say that I was able to offer my strong support to the group at its initial meeting. The group is now chaired by Hugh Clarke and co-ordinated by the high-energy and very professional Randall Walker. The group has 13 different stakeholder organisations, which, until now, have been lone voices for their projects.

The group has a multidisciplinary approach to identifying issues and priorities, and has structured itself into 12 different strategic working groups with portfolios including agribusiness, visitor economy, education and training, health and wellbeing, infrastructure, freight and logistics, advanced manufacturing, innovation, sustainability, retail, arts and culture, equine, and conferencing. Each of these strategic working groups has very clearly defined goals and key performance indicators, and is working collaboratively to achieve those goals. These goals have been developed in consultation with a broad range of groups and individuals. From my observations and discussions to date, this is certainly being achieved. I strongly supported the setting up of the group and I will continue to encourage all members to be part of something that will have long-term benefit to the Southern Highlands.

Although the stakeholder group is only in its infancy I see positive outcomes emerging already. Dealing with government at all levels is a complex matter, and by harnessing the combined energy of the individual members of the group into a single advocacy forum the results will be more focused and beneficial. At a recent function that I hosted at my electorate office some members of the group were able to meet with our great Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, and advocate for their group. The following day the magnificent Minister for Finance and Small Business, Damien Tudehope, from the other House, was in the Southern Highlands to meet with members of this group on both a formal and informal basis. Just last week the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, Dr Geoff Lee, was able to attend an open forum at Chevalier College, which was organised by the group to discuss training needs and opportunities for employment development at the local level.

The stakeholder group has identified three key areas of training that can have an immediate impact on the local economy and drive business opportunities. These areas are aged care, tourism and agriculture. The forum was able to engage with Minister Lee in a strong and positive way that can have immediate outcomes. I was delighted that I was able to arrange these opportunities with my wonderful parliamentary colleague Wendy Tuckerman, who is next door to me in the electorate of Goulburn, for the group to engage with government at the highest level. I look forward to arranging similar opportunities for engagement with other Ministers over the coming months.

This engagement can only be beneficial, as Government will see that there is a strong, united and very driven group advocating for the benefit of the residents and businesses of the Southern Highlands. In particular I mention the role of Hugh Clarke, who has taken his advocacy to Government so well. Instead of a number of uncoordinated and single-focus groups approaching Government there is now a strong united front. This can only be good and beneficial for the area. I wish the group the best. I want to see great and positive outcomes for the Southern Highlands.

#### **DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT PETER LENNON**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:44):** On 26 July 2019 the NSW Police Force farewelled Detective Superintendent Peter Lennon, APM, who retired after 40 years of distinguished service. The morning culminated in a "march out" of Fairfield Police Station, which included a guard of honour along Smart Street and a final salute to the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force, Mick Fuller. It was a moving event with hundreds of people lining the streets and officers standing shoulder to shoulder with a police helicopter hovering overhead to pay their respects to Detective Superintendent Lennon. At one stage he exited the police car that was meant to drive him off to approach a woman in the crowd who was weeping. He embraced her, said it would be okay and then returned to the car to enter retirement.

Peter Lennon was born and raised in Engadine by his parents, John and Margaret Lennon. Peter is one of seven children: Michael, Mark, Chris, Tony, Tim, Maryanne and Peter. Peter and his wife, Jill, have three children, Jonathan, Sam and Grace. He studied extensively while serving in the police force and holds a Bachelor in Police Studies and a Master in Public Administration. Lennon joined the NSW Police Force in 1979 and performed general duties at Sydney Central Police Station. In 1980 he was confirmed as a constable. He remained at Sydney Central Police Station until 1982 when he commenced criminal investigations training at Darlinghurst Police Station. In early 1985 Peter achieved his designation as Detective Constable 1st class and transferred into the homicide squad later that year.

During his time at the Criminal Investigation Branch Peter was promoted to the rank of detective sergeant. He was involved in several high-profile murder investigations, including the 1990 murder of Jodie Marie

Larcombe, the 1991 murder of Victor Chang, the 1987 murder of Sydney underworld figure Barry McCann and the 1986 murder of Megan Kalajzich. He spent the next two years investigating drug supply networks and organised crime as a detective within the Criminal Investigation Branch. Between 1999 and 2000 Lennon worked within the Olympic Security Command Centre and in 2005 he was appointed as commander of the police security command for the 2007 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] political meetings. In addition, Lennon commanded numerous major sporting events and dignitary visits, including the Rugby World Cup, NRL grand finals and World Youth Day.

More recently Detective Superintendent Lennon successfully oversaw the amalgamation of the Fairfield and Cabramatta local areas commands [LACs] to form the Fairfield City Police Area Command. During the amalgamation Peter united a force of 340 officers and staff. He embraced the different demographics of each area and meshed two LACs into one for the benefit of our community. Lennon had a policy of not spending too much time behind the desk, with his officers spending more time in the community. Peter also represented the NSW Police Force on various government cultural diversity committees and was the innovator of the "We are You" community engagement campaign in south-west Sydney. In 2012 he pioneered the State's first "Coffee with a Cop" event, which has since been adopted right across the State. Coffee with a Cop is a chance for the community to meet informally with police, understand their roles and voice community concerns.

Peter had many achievements throughout his career. He was awarded a Commissioner's Commendation for his duties during the Olympic security operation and a Commissioner's Commendation and Citation for APEC 2007. He received the Australian Police Medal in 2007. Under Detective Superintendent Lennon crime in the Fairfield patrol area command reduced significantly. Theft dropped by 29 per cent; robbery with a weapon not a firearm dropped by 41 per cent; robbery without a weapon dropped by 34 per cent; and non-domestic violence-related assault dropped by 20 per cent. Peter leaves a lasting legacy. His passion for policing, his colleagues and community engagement has set a foundation for current and future police officers to foster and build upon.

What is in stall for Detective Superintendent Lennon in the future? Peter said that after travelling with his wife, Jill, to see his daughter, Grace, in London he might do some fishing, play some golf and do some gardening. Without the hard work of Detective Superintendent Peter Lennon the Fairfield and Prospect communities would not have such a great rapport with police. Peter has left behind a better and safer place for our families. He is an authentic, self-sacrificing person who acts when he sees a problem that needs to be solved. The people of New South Wales, particularly the community of Prospect, are thankful for his service.

### **COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE SPORTS STARS**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:49):** If you want to see a galaxy of sporting stars look no further than the Coffs Harbour electorate. We shine so brightly in so many sports and the athletes of the Coffs Coast and those from further afield love our first-class facilities. Coffs Harbour recently hosted the 2019 Westfield National Youth Championships, which attracted more than 330 of Australia's best young female footballers and their families and officials. Front and centre at this week-long extravaganza were seven local superstars who were proud ambassadors for the Coffs Coast and northern New South Wales football. Members should remember these names because they are destined for great things: Emily Knott from Woolgoolga, Olissa Onley from Coffs Harbour, Tahliya Sambrook from Korora, Ella Bhatti from Woolgoolga, Aheisha McPhillips from Corindi Beach, Lilli Hallawell from Emerald Beach and Alice Webster from Karangi. It was great to meet them in between matches at the C.ox Coffs International Stadium, and I wish them well.

I highlight two other popular sporting facilities—Woolgoolga Sports Ground and Geoff King Motors Oval in Coffs Harbour—where many in our community are now enjoying important lighting upgrades. The improvements exemplify how the Liberal-Nationals Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund is changing lives for the better in my electorate. On 1 May fans gathered at the Woolgoolga Sports Ground to cheer friends and family taking the field for the first night-time touch football winter mixed competition of 2019, playing under the new floodlights. The new light towers allow rugby league and touch football matches—and any other sport, for that matter—to be played at night and will help local clubs attract new junior and senior players. The lighting upgrade was made possible by \$168,000 in State Government funding, with a similar contribution from Coffs Harbour City Council. Previously some players had to make the long round trip to Coffs Harbour after work to train and play under lights, which meant more time on the road and less time with family. Players were likely discouraged from taking part. Now the only mad dash players are making is on the football field, instead of rushing to leave work or get out the front door to make it to training and matches on time.

On 11 May we switched on new LED lighting at Geoff King Motors Oval fields 1 and 2, following the New South Wales Government funding of \$318,000. The first night-time game to be played under the new lights was the Group 2 rugby league Ken Orr Memorial Shield clash between the Coffs Harbour Comets and the Orara Valley Axemen. It was not much of a clash, actually; I remember the Comets smashing them. The installation of

200-lux LED lighting on the main rugby league field and 100-lux LED lighting on the adjacent field will benefit rugby league, Oztag and touch football teams for many years to come. You can see it from space. As a local I am incredibly proud to see these infrastructure projects being funded and built on the Coffs Coast. What is more, by providing sporting clubs with the facilities they need to attract new members and thrive, these clubs will encourage our community to become more active and involved by lifting participation rates, boosting health and fitness levels and, just as importantly, helping people to socialise through sport, to have fun and to enjoy themselves.

I acknowledge the commitment of many in our community to these lighting projects, including my predecessor Andrew Fraser, Coffs Harbour City Council, especially the sports development coordinator, Suellen Bordignon, and the hardworking committees led by the following: Woolgoolga Sports Council president Steel Beveridge, Woolgoolga Touch Association president Rod Paton, Woolgoolga Seahorses senior rugby league club president Darren Hopkins, Woolgoolga Seahorses junior rugby league club president Andrew Smith, Woolgoolga Little Athletics club president Graham Burgess, Coffs Harbour Comets rugby league club president Steve Gooley, Coffs Harbour Comets junior rugby league club president Damon Hunter, Coffs Harbour Oztag manager Janine Kelly, Coffs Harbour Mixed Touch Association president Steve Fear and Coffs Harbour Touch Association president Carla Snow.

### **EAST HILLS ELECTORATE COMMUNITY CABINET**

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (17:53):** On Monday 24 June it was a great pleasure to host Premier Gladys Berejiklian, along with all of our Cabinet Ministers, in the greatest electorate of all—East Hills. Not only was it the first Community Cabinet for this re-elected Government, it was also the first ever Community Cabinet in East Hills. I do not believe the electorate has had so much attention from Ministers in its history—and so it should. The event was held in the northernmost part of our electorate in Condell Park. I think Condell Park was chosen to make The Nationals Ministers feel comfortable by being surrounded by horses, stables and the local trotting club. Community Cabinet is a great model used to encourage greater community engagement and promote more direct dialogue between our Government and the people of our State. It creates awareness of the processes of policymaking and invites the local community to partake in the process and give their feedback. This not only gives local constituents a greater sense of being in touch with the decision-makers but also enables them to have a greater influence over policies that impact on their lives and the surrounding community.

Local residents, businesses and community groups were able to share all their issues, thoughts, concerns and comments directly with the Premier and our Ministers. Keen locals raised many issues, including green space and planning with Minister Stokes, support for small business with Minister Tudehope, multicultural issues with Minister Sidoti and, of course, our big infrastructure priorities announced earlier this year: the redevelopment of Bankstown Hospital with Minister Hazzard and the duplication of Henry Lawson Drive with Minister Constance.

On the morning of the event I was also pleased to accompany the education Minister Sarah Mitchell and the Premier on a visit to Panania Public School to announce the Minister's priority of lifting literacy and numeracy standards through the Bump it Up program. The Premier could have chosen any school in the State to make that announcement; however, she chose the East Hills electorate because our local students and teachers epitomise the hard work and passion towards learning that will be required to achieve the 15 per cent target.

During the ministerial visit Minister Sidoti and the Premier met with the president and members of the St Christopher's football club at Marco Reserve where they announced that the \$750,000 election commitment to upgrade the clubhouse had been delivered in the 2019-2020 budget. This was a proud moment to deliver on another election promise. Later in the day I visited Beauty Point Retirement Resort with Minister Anderson and discussed the retirement village reforms, the mandatory buyback and the 42-day cap for recurrent charges with the residents. The day was a huge success and our Ministers can be assured I will follow up on the issues raised with them by our local community. I was so pleased to have all the Ministers visit my local area of East Hills to discuss with my community what is important to them, and I welcome them back anytime.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** I thank the member for East Hills. She is an outstanding member.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (17:56):** I congratulate the member for East Hills on the outstanding day in the East Hills electorate. The member is very well connected and very well liked. The itinerary for the Community Cabinet was well planned and everybody was made to feel welcome in East Hills. It was the first Community Cabinet to be held in her electorate. The member has set the platform on how future Community Cabinet meetings should be conducted. I again congratulate the member for East Hills.

### **GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENT POLICIES**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (17:57):** When it comes to the many important environmental issues facing this State, it has become clear over the last few weeks that the Government is simply

not capable of doing its job. Since the State election we have had the unedifying spectacle of our Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, strutting around the State, desperately trying to impress his deflated National Party branch members. The Government lost four electorates in the March State election. Three of those belonged to The Nationals, so he has got some impressing to do. However, the division and destruction the Deputy Premier has been promoting is unbelievable.

At the National Party conference in Inverell the Deputy Premier promised party members that he would de-gazette the Murray Valley National Park—no consultation with his Liberal colleagues, no consultation with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, no consultation with environmental groups and no consultation with the Opposition. His proposal to completely undermine our national parks estate will make New South Wales the first State in the history of Australia to de-gazette a national park, exposing endangered flora and fauna to commercial logging. What have the Premier and the environment Minister said about that appalling proposal? They have said nothing at all. It seems this rogue anti-environment, anti-science member of Parliament can say whatever he likes under the title of Acting Premier of New South Wales and with no accountability whatsoever.

After strutting around the stage in Inverell and promising to reintroduce the bill first introduced by the then member for Murray Austin Evans, what did the Deputy Premier do when he got back to Sydney? Did he have the courage of his convictions to stand by that promise? No, he did not. He tried to pretend that he had not made that promise at all. So much courage and so much conviction from the Deputy Premier who says one thing in the bush and something else here in Sydney! For the benefit of the House and people watching at home, I will compare the Deputy Premier's actual comments.

At his party conference in Inverell he promised to reintroduce Austin Evans' National Parks and Wildlife Legislation Amendment (Riverina) Bill. The bill de-gazetted the Murray Valley National Park. The object of the bill is written in black and white, to revoke the reservation of the Murray Valley National Park and convert it to State forest so it can be commercially logged. The Deputy Premier promised that he would reintroduce that bill. On top of that, he said to *The Guardian*:

If the only way to return this industry is to carve out the resource of the National Park, then that is what we will do.

Then the man had the gall to jump onto a Sydney radio program and say that he does not support de-gazetting the national park. Which is it? Is the Deputy Premier so devoid of influence and power that he is allowed to say whatever he likes, wherever he likes, changing his tune depending on the audience? On another important environmental issue—feral horses and other animals in Kosciuszko National Park—the Deputy Premier has more positions than a footy team. The policy paralysis of the Government and the weakness of the Deputy Premier has led to significant degradation and destruction of that sensitive ecosystem. Swamps and bogs are being devastated. Creeks and waterways are being degraded daily and worsening with inaction. The plains are losing native vegetation and endangered species are losing their habitat. To most people, this is a significant issue and it warrants a sensible approach to protect the natural environment. At a public meeting in Jindabyne the Deputy Premier said that he supported an immediate 50 per cent reduction in feral horses.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: The purpose of private members' statements is to allow members to talk about their electorates. The Kosciuszko National Park is well outside the boundaries of the Port Stephens electorate and the member is straying well outside of the standing orders.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Port Stephens of the ruling of Deputy Speaker Stewart in 2007:

Members are reminded that private members' statements must not be used to launch an attack on another member.

There are a number of other rulings about the content of private members' statements. I ask the member for Port Stephens to talk about her electorate.

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON:** The issues that I am discussing today are entirely relevant to Port Stephens. It is an area where people care deeply about the environment. It contains the Tomaree National Park, which is under threat from this Government and—

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order—

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON:** Tomaree National Park is in Port Stephens.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** The member seems to be cavilling with your ruling by continuing on with her speech and saying that it does have to do with her electorate when you clearly ruled that the Kosciuszko National Park does not.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** I thank the member for Ku-ring-gai. I ask the member for Port Stephens to talk about her electorate.

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON:** It is obvious that the members of this House do not want me to be saying what I have said here tonight. [*Time expired.*]

**TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL NEVILLE SMETHURST, AO, MBE**

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (18:02):**

I inform the House of the passing of a very dear friend to many members in this place, former Commissioner of Corrective Services Major General Neville Smethurst, AO, MBE. I dedicate this statement not only to Neville but also to those who were inspired by his innovative reform in staff culture and inmate care within New South Wales Corrective Services. I also address the veterans in Baulkham Hills and across New South Wales who served under the well-known general. After a distinguished career with the Australian Army, Major General Smethurst joined Corrective Services as Deputy Director-General in November 1991.

In May 1992 he was appointed commissioner and oversaw significant changes in staff management systems, inmate case management, transfer of inmates and staff training. His objective was to design and implement the most sustained and substantial period of reform to the New South Wales correctional system since the turn of the century. For example, structured days were introduced for inmates, with industry in the morning and education in the afternoon. Greater focus was invested in expanding opportunities for work, education, and rehabilitation by increased recruitment of teachers and social workers. For staff, the emphasis was on training, education and instilling a sense of professionalism and pride. The courses offered at Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy, which is in an electorate that adjoins mine, was expanded and links with tertiary institutions were developed.

The contemporary concept of correctional management known as area management was also implemented to ensure the development of correctional officers as professionals with wideranging responsibilities and not just as custodians. General Smethurst directed that walls be knocked down, concrete removed, grass sown and other degrading elements of disciplinary procedures be abolished. He led negotiations regarding teaching hours with the Department of Technical and Further Education, the primary provider of accredited education services to correctional centres. A formal agreement was reached for the provision of 50 per cent more teaching hours during the 1993-94 financial year, and a 100 per cent increase in 1994-95, at no additional cost to the department.

Correctional Health and the Aboriginal task force were established under his leadership with enhanced staff and resources and an extensive period of significant capital growth ensued. It included the opening of the 600-bed medium and minimum security correctional facility at Junee in 1992-93, the 900-bed Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre in 1995, and the mothers and babies prison at Windsor, in the electorate of Hawkesbury adjoining my electorate of Baulkham Hills. It also included a significant redevelopment of Grafton, an expansion of minimum security accommodation and construction of a new visitors centre at Kirkconnell, modifications to Maitland and changes to Parklea to accommodate young offenders. The capital growth period also included the development of new educational facilities in Parramatta just south of my electorate, the opening of a new periodic detention centre at Wollongong and an improvement of facilities at the Reception and Industrial Centre at Long Bay and also at the Mulawa, Bathurst, Maitland and Glen Innes correctional centres.

It is therefore unsurprising that in 1995 New South Wales Attorney General the Hon. John Hannaford, a member of the other place, commended Neville for leading "a period of quiet but very dramatic reform" which made him "one of the great and sensitive reformers" in Corrections. That is reiterated through General Smethurst's imperative role in implementing several novel suicide intervention strategies to reduce the suicide rate, which included the reorganisation of the Reception and Industrial Centre to allow for the upgrading of procedures for the induction, management and classification of all newly received inmates, with specific attention given to the identification and observation of potentially suicidal inmates.

It also included the establishment of crisis support units at Long Bay, Goulburn and Kirkconnell; the establishment of a police liaison officer at Sydney Police Centre to work with police to identify and help offenders exhibiting suicidal tendencies; the creation of a special placement committee at Long Bay Hospital to ensure inmates were sent to suitable institutions upon discharge from the hospital; and the provision of suicide awareness training for all new officers and follow-up programs for more experienced officers. General Smethurst led from the front in all of this. He was a perfectionist and well informed enough to settle for slightly less if that was the best result. His determination and dedication has contributed to an improved approach towards inmates and, by extension, the department's longstanding stability. I hope fellow members join me in acknowledging the contribution of the great former commissioner Major General Neville Smethurst, AO, MBE. I extend my best wishes to his family and friends as they mourn his loss.



### BEXLEY AND ARNCLIFFE CLEARWAYS

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (18:07):** Many small business owners in my electorate have found themselves in a terrible situation following this Government's announcement that it will be introducing seven-day-a-week clearways along Forest Road and Stoney Creek Road in Bexley and Arncliffe. Just two weeks ago business owners and residents living and working along seven kilometres of main road across St George were informed that the clearways would be going ahead and they had the chance to respond on the paltry offering of replacement parking being proposed by Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]. Those people are now faced with the introduction of clearways from 6.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. on weekdays and 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. on weekends, which will totally kill off their on-street parking.

If those in the Liberal Party actually understood or sought to represent small business, they would know how important on-street parking is to the trade of many of the suburban shops along retail shopping strips like those found in Bexley and Arncliffe, and they would never seek to destroy their livelihoods as they are doing now. Similarly, if those opposite knew what it was like to have a house with little or no off-street parking there is no way in the world that they would entirely remove much-needed on-street residential parking even on weekends. Both Stoney Creek Road and Forest Road already have tidal flow clearways along most of their length, as is common across many other areas in Sydney.

The morning inbound clearways and evening outbound clearways provide a fair balance between the needs of motorists and those of local business owners and residents. Creating clearways on both sides of the road not only in the mornings and evenings but also over the entire day is simply excessive and unnecessary. In addition, the all-day weekend clearways are particularly insulting for many businesses that rely almost exclusively on high weekend trade, particularly those in the hospitality sector. It will be devastating for the many residents along these roads who no longer will be able to host gatherings at their houses because visitors will not be able to park within walking distance for large stretches of these roads. To add insult to injury, the Government is not carrying out so-called consultation on the introduction of clearways—which is apparently a foregone conclusion—but on the provision of replacement parking. What is being offered in many places is line marked angle parking to create a handful of extra spaces on side streets. In many cases those spaces are up to a kilometre away from the residence where parking is being removed. This is simply not good enough.

If those opposite actually understood how important proximity of parking is to many of these small businesses they would not be able to keep a straight face when making such a ridiculous offer. The worst thing is that the opportunity exists to expand existing council car parking facilities at the Bexley shopping centre, which would make these proposals far more palatable for business owners, but the Government has been unwilling to provide any assistance. I congratulate Bayside mayor Bill Saravinovski—our area's very own Boris Johnson—for fighting against these clearways every step of the way with local residents, the member for Kogarah and me. Mayor Saravinovski has repeatedly told Roads and Maritime Services that these second rate consultations are just not good enough. I am glad we have him fighting for Bayside.

There may have been a time when the Liberal Party could justify calling itself the party of small business, but that period has long since passed. We have seen the destruction from George Street through to Surry Hills and Anzac Parade, which has caused hundreds of people to lose their livelihoods, during the transport Minister's botched rollout of Sydney's light rail. The same Minister has punctured a hole in the lives of taxi plate owners and decimated their earnings and retirement savings. So it should come as no surprise that the Minister would find more people to hurt with poorly planned decisions such as this now that he is also in charge of roads. The Government needs to take urgent action to pull back on this disastrous clearway and stand up for these hundreds of small business owners and residents.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (18:09):** I thank the member for Rockdale for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. To update the member, the Minister for Transport and Roads is aware of this issue and the outstanding member for Oatley is addressing it.

### SERVICE NSW REBATES

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (18:12):** Tonight I take the opportunity to speak about some of the cost-of-living initiatives and rebates available to seniors and families with children who play sport through Service NSW. The cost of living for seniors and households is a large issue, which is why the Government has introduced more than 70 rebates and cost-of-living measures that can be accessed through Service NSW. For instance, the NSW Senior Savers card is a new initiative; it came into effect on 1 July 2019. It is available to all residents in New South Wales who are 60 years or over. Eligibility is not means tested and there is no fee to apply for the card. NSW Seniors Card holders must be retired or doing no more than 20 hours of paid employment per week, averaged over a year. Whereas NSW Senior Savers

Card holders just need to be aged 60 or over and can still work over 20 hours per week. People are now working longer and retiring later. This new card will ensure that all seniors can be included in the program—no-one misses out. This is a massive win for seniors in this State.

The NSW Senior Savers Card is a way for the Government to recognise the contribution of our seniors. It will offer them some immediate relief from the growing cost of everyday living by providing access to discounts and deals on products and services offered by over 7,400 participating businesses. There are 9,000 deals out there. Offers range from local hairdressers, cafes, tradespeople and lawyers, to national mobile phone providers and supermarkets. Just this week I welcomed Minister Dominello to my electorate to talk about the NSW Senior Savers Card and the great opportunities for savings it provides. We visited two of the many retailers across New South Wales who have signed up to the New South Wales Senior Savers Card program.

For a constituent of the Drummoyne electorate, the following three deals are great examples of some savings: at Anytime Fitness in Five Dock cardholders can access 40 per cent off the weekly membership rate, with a \$0 joining fee, three free personal training sessions, a free gift pack and a free spine and posture assessment at another local business in Five Dock; at Cafe Birkenhead in Birkenhead Point cardholders can access a 10 per cent discount to the value of \$35; and at Specsavers Burwood cardholders can get 25 per cent off a pair of glasses.

Another great initiative that came into effect from 1 July is the \$200 energy rebate for self-funded retirees. My electorate office has been inundated with calls and emails from constituents asking to know more. It is fantastic to see so many self-funded retirees already registering for the rebate, and it is just another great way our Government is addressing cost-of-living pressures. Self-funded retirees can register online via the Service NSW website or in person at a Service NSW centre—in my electorate the closest is Burwood. For hardworking families across the State, the New South Wales Government has contributed an additional \$40 million to expand the popular Active Kids program. From 1 July this year all parents, guardians and carers of school-aged children can access two \$100 Active Kids vouchers per child.

Over one million vouchers have already been redeemed, which means families in New South Wales have collectively saved over \$100 million in sport registration costs since Active Kids was launched last year. By adding a second \$100 voucher, we hope to see hardworking families being able to keep their kids in sport throughout the entire year and, in turn, see healthy and happy children keeping active. The Active Kids vouchers are also able to be accessed online through the registration form on the Service NSW website or in person at a Service NSW centre—again, the closest in my electorate is Burwood. It is very heartening to see these rebates and initiatives making a real difference for hardworking people in this State.

### EDEN BREAKWATER WHARF EXTENSION

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (18:16):** Sunday 4 August will be a very special day for the community of Eden in the electorate of Bega. It will mark the end of a massive project in Eden. I want to celebrate this amazing milestone with the entire community and I look forward to doing so this Sunday. It is without doubt that industry, volunteers, small businesses and those who live in the town need to take an enormous bow. They have worked, sacrificed and supported this project for many years to build the new commercial wharf for the town. This project is about driving the future security of Eden and the region. Of course, young people are our future. The leadership team of Eden Marine High School will stand proudly with the community on Sunday as this project is opened and the doors of opportunity are opened for the town.

This \$44 million investment into the region is a State-significant project. It has been supported by all tiers of Government: a \$32 million contribution from the New South Wales Government, \$10 million from the Australian Government and a \$2 million contribution from Bega Valley Shire Council. The construction and extension of the breakwater wharf will open up regional opportunities both for the cruise industry and for tourism. The cruise industry is one of the fastest growth industries where demand outstrips supply in the tourism sector. It places New South Wales ports such as that in Eden in a good position in the many years to come with cruise lines that are looking for new itinerary options. As I indicated, Australia is the fastest-growing cruise market in the world, with 5.8 per cent penetration—that is, 1.35 million passengers or one in every 18 Aussies taking a cruise.

An economic report in 2017-18 showed that the cruise industry supported 17,000 jobs, \$1.4 billion in wages and \$4.8 billion in economic value. Eden is now set to benefit. However, cruise ships to Eden are not a new thing—this has been occurring for 15 years. I pay tribute to Cruise Eden and the incredible work of all the volunteers over those 15 years. Visits increased significantly around 2014-15 after funding was announced for the wharf extension. This then enticed P&O visits, which drove industry growth. Some 22 ships will be coming into Eden for the 2019-20 season. It will be the first season when we will have ships alongside port. Four maiden voyages, including Royal Caribbean Cruise lines, are now coming because we have the berth. During the 2017-18

cruise season more than \$8 million in economic value was added to the Sapphire Coast region through passenger and crew spend, port fees and return visitation.

The 2018-19 cruise season realised \$6.9 million in economic value in the Sapphire Coast region, which was slightly lower because fewer ships were visiting during major construction of the wharf. Eden is the only true regional New South Wales port with a berth to accommodate ships of up to 325 metres in length. Given its location, Eden is well positioned for inclusion on itineraries out of Sydney and Melbourne. A ship sailing from the South Island of New Zealand can reduce its sailing time, taking three days to sail to Sydney and two days to sail to Eden. Therefore Eden is well positioned as the first Australian port of call with the Australian Border Force in situ.

Right up and down the coastline we are seeing an expansion in tourism numbers with more heads on beds, more people on tours, more people eating in local cafes and restaurants and more foot traffic in our towns. This is super positive news and keeps our rural and regional communities alive and kicking. With its proximity to the international terminal at Canberra Airport and an unspoilt natural environment, Eden is in the best position we can be to promote tourism and ensure that we are on the world map. This Sunday we are coming together to celebrate what makes us unique and for the greater good of promoting our region.

I particularly acknowledge Andrew Dooley and his entire team, who live in the Eden community and have worked tirelessly for the past couple of years to deliver this game-changing project on time and on budget. I thank Cruise Eden and the community as a whole, who have endured two years of construction to get us to this point. I am super excited about Sunday, knowing that the entire community will be celebrating not only the extension of the commercial wharf—even though there will be no cruise ship—but also what will be the start of change and a fantastic future for the Eden community. Many tourism representatives from Tourism & Transport Forum Australia will be attending Sunday's event, including Margy Osman and a whole raft of others. Eden will truly be under the spotlight after being given this incredible opportunity by the New South Wales Government.

### ESSENTIAL ENERGY

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:22):** I raise some very serious concerns relating to Essential Energy's intentions to drastically reduce its regional workforce and the devastating impact this is having and will continue to have on the Port Macquarie community. Correspondence to members of Parliament dated 3 July and authored by Essential Energy CEO John Cleland states:

Over the next three to five years, Essential Energy will progress a series of programs and initiatives to deliver a better service at lower cost and to create a business capable of responding to the rapid changes being experienced in the electricity sector.

As we drive efficiencies in our business, we will also be ensuring that we have the right size workforce across our service territory.

We know that over 180 jobs at Essential Energy are forecast to go in the months ahead but my fear is that this may just be the tip of the iceberg. Over the past three weeks numerous Essential Energy employees have contacted me. Through face-to-face interviews, telephone conversations and emails they have reported their utter dismay, growing anguish and distress at the current management of the business, including allegations of misappropriation of resources, increasing operational costs, diminished workplace safety and bullying.

They have all alleged that the public commentary relating to efficiencies is a far cry from the reality and that in fact, over recent years, expenditure has continued to dramatically increase to the detriment of local jobs. Reports by employees both past and present of Essential Energy have been overwhelmingly consistent in highlighting a burgeoning senior executive to the detriment of frontline workers. Scrutiny of the Essential Energy Annual Report 2017-18 substantiates some of those concerns. Page 54 confirms:

Senior managers accounted for 11.0 per cent of Essential Energy's employee related expenditure in FY2017-18, compared with 8.4 per cent in FY2016-17. The media reports of local job cuts at Essential Energy on 3 July prompted employees to make contact with me about growing fears for their jobs and those of their colleagues. In response, I immediately issued a statement expressing my disappointment and my intention to stand beside my community to fight for no forced redundancies at Essential Energy. My position has not changed. Last week in Port Macquarie I met with Justin Page from the Electrical Trade Union. I appreciated his input and frank conversation. I have met with the Treasurer's office and the Minister for Energy and Environment and I am in ongoing discussions with the office of the Deputy Premier. As a regional member of Parliament I consider it absolutely unacceptable to witness significant local job losses on the one hand and reports of unnecessary and exorbitant expenditure by management on the other. I call on the New South Wales Government as a matter of urgency to consider an independent investigation into Essential Energy and the various concerns that have been raised with me.

I also request that as a shareholder the Government direct the board of management to immediately cease any further forced reduction in employee numbers until such an investigation has reported its findings and its recommendations. Over the past few years, Essential Energy has been steadily downsizing its staff through voluntary redundancies and natural attrition so that it can achieve efficiencies determined by the Australian Energy Regulator. I understand the critical importance of putting downward pressure on electricity prices to protect residential and small business customers, but I see absolutely no reason why the approach of previous years cannot

continue, thereby minimising anguish for staff and their families and for our local community. Even though Essential Energy is a corporatised entity and reports to a board, the Premier and Deputy Premier have made it abundantly clear that everyone do their part and rally around regional communities battling the worst drought on record. I will continue to work with all stakeholders but remain adamant that any job losses in regional communities such as Port Macquarie are totally unacceptable.

### TRIBUTE TO DIMITRIOS FOUNDAS

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (18:26):** I express my deep condolences to all who mourn the late Dimitrios Foundas, who passed away in January this year at 80 years of age. Dimitri was born in the small village of Metochi, Evia, in Greece in 1938. He migrated to Athens in 1951 at the age of 13 and studied at night school while being employed during the day as a mason on construction sites. Subsequent to that he performed many roles in various workplaces. His exposure to various strata of society and the poverty and injustices he observed formed his political views. He subsequently became a supporter of Centre Union, a liberal centrist party, and became a supporter of Andreas Papandreou, the leader of the democratic socialist wing of the union.

In 1964 he emigrated to Australia. Two years later he married his wonderful wife, Maria, with whom he remained until his death. Maria is an amazing woman with an amazing family. Dimitri was passionate about politics and social justice. He became a lifelong democratic socialist, believing in peace, freedom and democracy. He was a proud supporter of the Panhellenic Liberation Movement and its then exiled leader, Andreas Papandreou. He was an active member of its branch in Sydney from its formation during the period of the military dictatorship in Greece. When Greece's military dictatorship fell in 1974, Dimitri became a founding member of PAK's successor organisation, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement [PASOK]. Dimitri was active in PASOK until his death. He served in many positions, including as secretary of PASOK's prefectural committee for New South Wales.

Even while he was ill in his final years, Dimitri was active in transitioning PASOK's local organisation to the new Movement for Change. He was also active in the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW where he served on the board of directors for 16 years—eight terms—and as its treasurer for the majority of those terms. In 1980 Dimitri became an active member of the Australian Labor Party. For Dimitri participation in Australia's Labor Party and Greece's Panhellenic Socialist Movement were two sides of the same coin. His commitment to fairness and social justice was second to none. He supported working people. He believed everyone deserved equal access to quality services such as health care and education.

I was honoured to be supported and guided by Dimitri during my political career, both during my time in Young Labor and as an active member of the Greek Australian community. Dimitri regularly provided me with valuable insights and advice. He was such a strong fighter for people's rights and for justice. He was an intelligent man. For someone who left school very early, he was both an intellectual and well read. I am deeply saddened by his passing. I extend my condolences to his wife, Maria, their children, Costa and Mary, and their grandchildren as well as to their many relatives who live in my electorate. I thank them all for sharing Dimitri with us.

Dimitri dedicated his life to fighting for fairness, justice and democracy. Even though he has passed from this life, his spirit lives on. I visited him while he was ill a couple of years ago and at that time he was getting better. Unfortunately, due to my own recovery, I could not attend his funeral but my parents attended on my behalf. Each of us who knew Dimitri will carry his memory with us. Our memory of Dimitri will serve as an inspiration, a light that will guide us on the path to a world that delivers justice and fairness for all.

### CAMDEN ELECTORATE COUNCILS

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (18:31):** This week we acknowledge Local Government Week, and I wish to highlight the significant contribution that our local councils make to communities across the State, particularly in the Camden electorate. The Camden electorate contains the Camden, Liverpool City and Wollondilly Shire local government areas, each delivering essential and vital services to local residents. The theme of this year's Local Government Week is "Your Council", highlighting the achievements, successes and accomplishments of councils beyond roads, rates and rubbish. I found during my time on local councils that they are very diverse—perhaps the most diverse organisations in government in regard to the services they look after.

Across the Camden, Liverpool City and Wollondilly Shire local government areas, our councils operate and manage seven public swimming pool complexes, 58 public halls, nine public libraries, 2,480 hectares of open space and 2,480 kilometres of road. With a population of over 355,656 residents across the three local government areas and a revenue of more than \$338 million per year, our local councils can be better described as thriving businesses serving our communities and delivering essential infrastructure and services on a daily basis.

I am pleased to be part of a government that supports our local councils. Since the Coalition's election victory in 2011, over \$9 billion in funding for vital infrastructure and services has been awarded to councils to

ensure the delivery of important projects across our communities. These include local road upgrades, new and improved cycleways across our community, graffiti reduction and eradication programs, animal shelter maintenance, buildings and facilities, and waste management—all done in partnership with our local councils to our community's benefit. The New South Wales Government has invested hundreds of millions of dollars across the Camden, Liverpool City and Wollondilly Shire local government areas, representing a significant investment in the future of our communities.

The Government is also working with councils to ensure that it is easy for local residents to do business with councils, by linking more and more transactions to their MyServiceNSW Account, and so helping people to save time and money by delivering more digital service options. Across the Camden, Liverpool City and Wollondilly Shire local government areas, 1,581 pets have been registered via the new online registry service since its launch in October 2018. Across New South Wales, 12,813 cat and dog owners have utilised the online service, with an additional 1,556 owners paying their pet registration fees via Service NSW since it was added as a convenient, new method in November 2018. The New South Wales Government recognises that our councils are concerned with more than just roads, rates and rubbish. Councils play a significant role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of companion animals, which is why the New South Wales Government reimburses 80 per cent of the cost of lifetime registrations for animals in a local government area as well as the registrations from eligible shelters.

Over \$2.4 million has been allocated across the Camden, Liverpool and Wollondilly Shire local government areas as a result of collecting the New South Wales Government's companion animals lifetime registration fees. The fees assist councils to fund animal shelters, ranger services and dog recreation areas as well as education and awareness activities across each local government area. I thank the local mayors and councillors for their ongoing contribution to our community as well as the more than 1,400 staff who work across those three local government areas. I will continue to work with our local mayors, general managers and councillors to secure additional funding for our region and assist our councils to deliver the infrastructure that our communities expect and deserve. As we acknowledge Local Government Week, I thank again most sincerely those working at our councils and recognise the work they do each and every day to better our communities.

#### **MOLLY'S MISSION**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (18:36):** Today I will speak about a remarkable young lady who has embarked on a remarkable journey. Molly Croft from Dubbo celebrated her thirteenth birthday just four days ago—last Saturday. I assure the House that for Molly and her family it was more than your average birthday. Twelve months ago on Molly's twelfth birthday, her life and the lives of her mother, Angela, her father, John, her sister, Maddie, and their wider circle of family and friends were turned upside down when Molly was diagnosed with high grade osteosarcoma. Like so many of these cases, there was little in the way of symptoms other than a sore leg experienced during a netball trip to Sydney.

The Crofts are a sporting family, with John being a legend of the Macquarie Raiders rugby league club and Molly and Maddie having both reached representative level in netball, hockey and basketball. Once the MRI revealed that the sore leg was far more serious than first thought, the family was off to the Children's Hospital at Westmead for further tests and chemotherapy commenced after that. John and Angela, a tiler and an accountant respectively, did what any parents would do and put their lives on hold to stay with Molly while Maddie had to balance things around her schooling at St Johns College. But thanks to the amazing facilities at Ronald McDonald House, the family had somewhere to establish that second home. That is where the amazing tale of Molly's Mission was born. Days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months and when the Crofts got the wonderful news that Molly was winning her battle, she rang the bell at Westmead and on 9 April this year, after 292 nights at Ronald McDonald House, they hit the road to come back home. What a great feeling that was!

Since returning home, Molly has reintegrated into her community and can often be found at Dubbo Sportsworld helping out with junior and representative basketball. Her beaming smile has been a constant source of inspiration. But beating cancer is not the only remarkable thing that our newest terrific teen has done. Given how beneficial it was for her to have her family around during treatment, Molly decided she wanted to help others in the same situation—pay it forward—and so Molly's Mission was established. Molly set herself a goal of raising \$46,000 for Ronald McDonald House, which is equivalent to the total cost of her 292 nights at the facility where it costs about \$160 a night to house a family. At face value, some may think that was a pretty ambitious target. But not only has Molly achieved it; she is absolutely smashing it.

Before she knew it, Dubbo and the wider community had poured more than \$100,000 into the fund. As of her thirteenth birthday, last Saturday night Molly's Mission has been well and truly achieved. But now things have changed again, given the overwhelming support locally and also further afield. Molly has now re-evaluated her original target and is hoping to raise enough to fund 1,300 nights worth of stays at Ronald McDonald House. This year alone, the facility is expected to support over 1,300 families with a seriously ill child, which quickly

gives us an understanding of the magnitude of what Molly is trying to achieve. The 1,300 night target will require \$208,000. As we stand here today the figure has continued to rise and Molly's Mission has raised just shy of \$175,000, which is truly remarkable in such a short period of time.

Molly's story has been told in various media outlets, including on the *Today* show at Channel Nine which took it to a national audience. Molly has met and shared her story with the Deputy Premier and she recently met the Premier at the final State of Origin match in Sydney. Through those and other opportunities donations have come in from far and wide. There is still more work to do but there is also a lot of support, which is fantastic. For Molly to be able to cast aside her own battle and summon the strength to think of others says a lot about the kind of young woman she is. It also says a lot about the way she has been raised by her parents. I think we would all agree that John and Angela have done a pretty amazing job in raising two wonderful young women. Maddie's role in helping her little sister get through this terrible battle should not be underestimated.

We would all love to live in a world where children did not suffer from serious illnesses and we did not need facilities like Ronald McDonald House. Unfortunately that is not the case. But as parents we can rest a little easier knowing that through the hard work of Molly and the generosity of those who have donated to her mission we have a tremendous facility available to take away some of the stress for families during the toughest of times. Part of the message that Molly is trying to spread is just how amazing and supportive Ronald McDonald House is. Even if you cannot donate you can help spread that message and promote the Molly's Mission website. Molly had a terrific birthday party at the Commercial Hotel on Saturday night. It was great fun. It felt like half of Dubbo was there to support her and her family, which was really nice. Congratulations to the Croft family and congratulations to Molly. You really are an amazing young lady.

## SUTHERLAND 2 SURF

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (18:41):** I am delighted to speak about one of the most important community events in the Sutherland shire's calendar, that is, the Sutherland 2 Surf fun run and walk, which has been uniting our community and bringing thousands of the shire residents together every July for 48 years. The iconic race, which is one of Australia's longest running fun runs, this year took the usual route from Sutherland to Wanda Beach. The 6,200 runners were determined to challenge themselves, regardless of the chilly weather and below six degrees temperatures on Sunday 21 July, to finish the full distance of the race, which is around 11 kilometres.

Thousands of community members watched and cheered as the first place male and female runners crossed the finish line. Kevin Batt from Ryde defended his 2018 title and was again first place male. Leanne Pompeani from Canberra, who was the runner-up in the 2018 race, took the first female place this year. In the groups category Jock Athletic won the Sutherland 2 Surf Runners Team Challenge. This year Australian gold medallist and champion beach runner Ali Najem crossed the finishing line. For the first time since he started participating in the event the race did not coincide with the Holy fasting month of Ramadan which meant that Ali, an Australian Muslim and a volunteer lifesaver at Wanda Surf Life Saving Club, could participate and challenge himself and others.

The story of the Sutherland 2 Surf fun run and walk is inspiring. The first race was held on 23 September 1972 out of a need to secure more fundraising for the Wanda Surf Life Saving Club [SLSC]. Wanda SLSC was established in 1946 after the Second World War by a group of returned servicemen, which is why the colours of army red, air force blue and navy blue were adopted as the club colours. The first race hosted only 50 competitors and was won by Keith Sadler. By 1975 more than 1,200 runners finished the race and in 1978 there were 4,000 runners, including a team of prisoners from Cessnock jail called the Chain Gang. In the years to follow appearances by top national runners such as Dennis Nee and Alby Thomas set the standard for the race and its continued success. What started as a hopeful initiative turned into a great national event that attracted in 1979 one of the country's greatest runners, the Cronulla-based Andrew Lloyd, who was to go on and win the memorable 5,000 metre gold medal at the Auckland Commonwealth Games and become the Sutherland 2 Surf's most successful runner by winning the race eight times between 1979 and 1995. In 1997 this race witnessed history being made.

The first female to cross the finishing line of this race was Heather Turland. She went on to win the City2Surf race only two weeks after the Sutherland 2 Surf race. Since then the race has continued to grow in numbers and attracted top-level Australian and international competitors as a warm-up to the City2Surf. An event like this cannot happen without the continued and spectacular help and dedication of volunteers, club members, supporters and the Sutherland 2 Surf partners and sponsors. I thank everyone for making a difference and supporting the shire's longest-running community event. The funds raised by this event will help support the outstanding efforts of the Wanda Surf Life Saving Club. Those funds allow the club to protect our beaches and save lives on those beautiful beaches.

### ST IVES NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:45):** Many people in my electorate of Davidson have recently written with concerns about the St Ives North Public School gifted and talented program and its proposed exclusion of students outside the local catchment area from 2020. I support the continuation of the gifted and talented program at the school and have been in correspondence with many current and former parents and students who attest to the importance and success of the program for highly gifted students.

The school's gifted and talented program is a unique service designed for highly gifted students, offered to students in years 3 to 6. It meets the specific learning needs for students who require adjustments to the pace, level and content of the curriculum. These students have demonstrated the capacity to learn at faster rates, find and solve problems, and manipulate abstract ideas. As a result the curriculum is adapted to meet the unique needs of these students. This can include modifying the pace and level of teaching, learning and assessment activities, as well as promoting a student to a level of study beyond their age group. It is important to note that some gifted and talented students also have particular learning disabilities that require appropriate teaching.

One parent of an out-of-area student in the program wrote that her child was unable to concentrate in school. After being advised by a child psychologist the student was enrolled in the program. She thrived mentally and socially and was satisfied to be in the care of highly qualified, gifted teachers. The teachers went deeper into topics and mentored her to think outside the square. Without this program the student would have been at a severe disadvantage due to her intellectual capacity. This story highlights the importance of the gifted and talented program and why restricting out-of-area students could have adverse effects on the particular needs of highly gifted students who just happen to fall outside the catchment area. Another concern has been raised regarding the effect this action may have on the quality of the program. While there are plenty of clever children in St Ives North, it is uncertain whether a class of 30 would be filled solely by local residents without having significant changes to the current pace and complexity of the unit.

For these reasons I have supported the continuation of the current gifted and talented program. However, I welcome news that the department's newly released High Potential and Gifted Education Policy 2011 is to be implemented from term 1 in 2020. The policy outlines a clear expectation that all schools should cater for students in the highly gifted range. I also note that opportunity classes remain an option for high achieving academically gifted students in years 5 and 6. There is no doubt that all students, regardless of background or location, should be able to thrive in a school and environment best suited to meet their particular education needs. In that regard I encourage the Government to continue to cater for all gifted and talented students and to particularly ensure that the offering at St Ives North Public School is appropriate to the needs of students in my electorate.

### FIRE SAFETY

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:49):** I raise an issue of great concern regarding apartment buildings in my electorate that requires immediate Government attention and could seriously place at risk residents in one of the most dense parts of Australia. Recently I was approached by a person whom I have known for a number of years in another capacity. He is a member of the construction industry with over 30 years of experience in providing and installing fire-safe doors. He told me that the system for certifying fire-safe doors is a joke and is quite literally putting people's lives at risk. He told me that today any person can decide that they wish to install fire safety doors and certify that they have been manufactured and fitted to meet Australian standards. Such a person requires no training, qualification or accreditation. There is no regulated attribute that makes someone a fit and proper person to certify that a fire-safe door is indeed safe.

The purpose of fire safety systems is to prevent the spread of fire throughout a building. Just as bulkheads stop the inflow of water in one section of a ship to prevent it from sinking, apartment buildings are compartmentalised to stop the spread of fire from a single apartment to the whole building. Fire safety systems protect the lives of the occupants of a high-rise building. Fire-safe doors are a crucial part of that system. They are designed and CSIRO-tested to resist the spread of fire for one, two, three or four hours, but to actually work they must be properly installed. Every element of the system—from the doorframe, handle and hinges down to the three-millimetre gaps between the door and the frame and the 10-millimetre gap between the door and the floor—must be of an equivalent fire rating or the whole system fails.

What is the cost of system failure? We need only look to London's Grenfell Tower. In 2017 a fire in a single unit in that building spread up and down the exterior of the building via dangerous, flammable cladding. Fire also spread throughout the interior of the building and killed 72 of its residents. The building's fire-safe doors, rated to withstand a 30-minute inferno, lasted just 15 minutes. The result of failure of such systems can be catastrophic. We cannot permit a tragedy like Grenfell to occur here in Australia. The whole building system in New South Wales functions on the basis of self-assessment and private certification; it is obvious that self-regulation is no regulation at all.

The proper installation of the crucial systems must be certified by a registered professional who has sat a test administered by the State Government. It has been suggested to me by a senior industry figure that one should not simply be able to walk into a shop and buy a fire-safe door, which he likened to selling a gun to an unlicensed buyer. Instead, one should be required to purchase a holistic service from an accredited professional who procures, fits and certifies all elements of the fire-safe door in accordance with Australian standards. At a recent mobile office in Zetland, I was approached by firefighters who stopped by the firetruck to tell me that when they attend an incident in many of the apartments that have been built over the past number of years, the in-roof sprinklers are not even connected to water.

It is time the Government started taking responsibility again. Deregulation and privatisation have failed. In fact, it may be the case that a Legislative Council inquiry is insufficient to address the full scope of the deficiencies of the building industry. If the crisis continues any longer then it may be necessary to establish a royal commission into the building industry. The profit motive is a sound organising principle for much of the economy, but in matters of life and death—and I would count the buildings where we live as such—it cannot be left up to the lowest-cost-greatest-profit approach. Our very lives are at stake.

#### STATE BUDGET AND COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:54):** A number of welcome surprises fell from the sky in Coolamon last month. First there was the rain, albeit not much of it. Then on 11 June a political entourage like our region has never seen before fought off the fog to deliver the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales to Coolamon. It was an honour to welcome the leaders of the New South Wales Coalition to Coolamon to deliver the heart of the 2019-20 budget—an additional \$355 million in drought assistance. The package brings the Government's support for drought-hit communities to \$1.8 billion. In electorates like Cootamundra, that is all of our communities.

We are feeling the bite of the dry—farmers, tradies, townies, preschools, the local cafes and the IGA. The Mayor of Coolamon, John Seymour, said that in all his years on the land he has never seen it this bad. It may look green from a distance, but many locals have destocked completely and crop yields have been slashed. The Bureau of Meteorology considers the current drought worse than the Millennium Drought and the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics forecasts that New South Wales farm business profit will fall by 166 per cent on 2016-17 levels and that the average farm is forecast to suffer a \$69,000 loss.

Since the Government introduced the Emergency Drought Assistance Package in July last year more than 1,400 families across the Cootamundra electorate have been taking advantage of the measures available to plan ahead, wise up and make informed business decisions on farms, with New South Wales Government support totalling more than \$90 million. The Government is responsive to the changing conditions and needs of the bush. The drought support in the budget is not just more of the same; it has evolved. We recognise that it is not only primary producers, but entire communities who are suffering.

I am particularly proud of the new \$170 million Drought Stimulus Package to ensure locals have reliable work building projects to futureproof regional New South Wales in these hard times. The package includes funding for up to \$120 million to fast-track identified major infrastructure projects, \$30 million on new groundwater supply for Dubbo, \$8.2 million for construction of the water storage at Nyngan, \$2.2 million to augment bore water supply at Coonabarabran, \$2 million towards the Narramine water security and water quality project, \$2 million for Albert Priest Channel critical maintenance at Nyngan and Cobar, and last but not least, \$1.97 million towards the Coolamon Industrial Estate development. The Coolamon Industrial Estate project is expected to deliver leading utilities, including water, sewerage, drainage, electricity, telecommunications, and gas to activate industrial land in Coolamon.

Coolamon has gone against the trend of population decline in New South Wales and is growing, but it needs further space to expand. This fantastic proposal by Coolamon Shire Council will help to diversify and strengthen the local economy, bring new businesses into the shire, help existing businesses grow and provide employment. It will have 22 lots, with the New South Wales Government's \$1.97 million contribution will fast-track the project so that land should be available by 2021 instead of 2029. Without our support this simply would not be possible. The project will create 59 full-time jobs and 25 construction jobs over the build ensuring our contractors, plumbers, electricians, builders, earthworks and landscapers are all in work. In the long term, it gives businesses the space and infrastructure they need to grow, ultimately attracting new industry to the region and helping this vibrant community continue its population trend upwards.

Last week I had the pleasure of making yet another announcement under the Drought Stimulus Package. Glenella Quarry, between Boorowa and Cowra in my electorate, will boost its output and save transportation costs with an upgrade of 4.2 kilometres to Battery Road thanks to \$1 million in funding. Glenella Quarry is one of the most diverse mining operations in New South Wales and sells high-value quartz silica pebble and other raw



materials to the booming Sydney landscaping market. Now, B-doubles should have access to this mine. I am exceptionally grateful to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Regional New South Wales for fighting for us and establishing this important fund. I am grateful to Treasurer Dominic Perrottet for delivering what is truly a budget for the bush.

## **STONEY CREEK ROAD CLEARWAY RESTRICTIONS**

### **CARSS PARK POOL**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (18:59):** I raise an issue of great importance to the people of Kogarah: the Government's decision to increase clearway restrictions on parking for kilometres of Stoney Creek Road, from King Georges Road all the way to the Princes Highway. This stretch of road represents kilometres of shop and residential frontage. It is admittedly a busy thoroughfare; however, there are already clearway procedures in place that ensure ease of congestion during peak periods. The proposal would see a continuation of those clearways throughout the day when traffic is at a fraction of the intensity that occurs during the morning and afternoon rush. The clearways would be extended from 6.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. on weekdays and from 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. on weekends. This is a small business-busting program that will see already stretched local commerce pushed to the wall.

The Roads and Maritime Services' sole determinant of where to place a clearway path seems to be whether there is traffic flow on the road. By its measure vibrant shopping precincts that allow pick up and set down in front of retail shops are a disaster because they prevent cars from travelling on those roads. I note that the member for Rockdale spoke on this matter earlier this evening, which is a measure of how important the issue is to our community. I thank the member and the Mayor of Bayside Council, the indefatigable Bill Saravinovski—Australia's very own Rudy Giuliani—for taking up this issue. I am pleased that the Minister for Transport and Roads has agreed to meet the member for Rockdale, the member for Oatley and me to ventilate these important issues. I am hopeful that this emissary and the resulting meeting will see a reversal of the Government's decision. Affected businesses are relying on a change in the Government's proposal.

I also report on the issue of the closure of Carss Park pool in my electorate. For years the iconoclastic local hero Dick Caine was the coach of the facility and he made a magnificent cottage industry of pumping out Olympic, Commonwealth and world swimming champions. Young Australians born and bred in the St George area trained at the pool and represented the people of our community on the international stage. Unfortunately, today the pool stands closed. The aquatic engineering firm Geoff Ninnes Fong and Partners reported that the pool needed to be replaced in 2011 and that a new facility should be built in its stead. This was not the case and action was not taken.

Earlier this month the pool was closed after Georges River Council self-reported to the Environment Protection Authority [EPA] that the pool was leaking into the Georges River at Kogarah Bay. The EPA demanded that the pool be immediately closed or the council would face steep and increasingly severe economic penalties. The decision to close the pool in the circumstances was accepted by the community but was understandably greeted with disappointment. Where to from here? At a well-attended community meeting on Monday night the council said that it was committed to a three-pool strategy for the area. I respectfully say that there is only one option on the table for the mayor and councillors: to commission a full rebuild at the current site in Carss Park.

The floated proposal to build a new aquatic centre at Jubilee Oval would be disastrous for our community. Put simply, it would be a case of taking a pool from a community that wants one and placing it into a community that does not, not to mention the proposed location is located at a busy intersection with limited parking and the oval is home to the St George Illawarra Dragons and Sydney Football Club. That location is a recipe for a chaotic and fraught existence. The community would like the pool rebuilt at its current location. It is the only sensible choice. When council amalgamations were first floated by the New South Wales Government thousands of residents of the old Kogarah Council area—which the Assistant Speaker was a member of—feared that the bigger Hurstville Council area would dominate decisions and resources. If this iconic piece of infrastructure for our community was taken away it would send a troubling message to our community.

### **WATER MANAGEMENT**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:04):** Today I highlight an environmental disaster occurring in the electorate of Murray: floods. That's right, floods. During the worst drought in history, the Federal and State governments are creating man-made floods through their policy of "just add water". The irony is that while New South Wales farmers and communities are going to the wall on zero water allocation, they are watching overflowing rivers run past them. Why is this happening? The only way to find out is to reveal something that governments have kept secret from us for years: who owns our precious river water.

In the Mid Murray and Edward rivers red river gums are dying in their thousands, in-stream vegetation is drowning, nesting sites for the platypus and kingfisher are being destroyed and washed away and threatened species such as the iconic Murray crayfish are being smothered by excess sediment as riverbanks slump and fall into the water. Downstream water demand, with excessive volumes pushed to meet environmental and consumptive water use, is running the river to breaking point. The irony of the plan is for the Government to flood some areas while bleeding other parts dry. Poor water management is responsible for draining the Menindee Lakes, killing millions of native fish and plunging what were viable businesses and communities into drought years earlier than need be.

The current water delivery within the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and State water management departments does not protect our environment and does not deliver for communities. As a result of a combination of rule changes to water trading, water sharing, water ownership and unregulated permanent plantings downstream of the constraints, we are losing threatened species and habitat. Changes in water ownership have allowed water entitlements to be transferred on paper from one river to another, from upstream to downstream and from agricultural producers to investors. In fact, water management has been turned on its head by those who think they know best. We were told that Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert are freshwater lakes. They are not. In a recent report released by the Natural Resources Commission and a peer-reviewed report by Professor Peter Gell this myth has been busted yet again.

In this House and federally our politicians are turning a blind eye or are actively contributing to the degradation of our environment and communities. Why would our politicians do this? Perhaps we can—and we should—follow the money. The Matthews report, an independent investigation into New South Wales water management, criticised the secrecy behind water ownership in this State. Multinational corporations, communist foreign governments, elected politicians and their wives and families—we know that all those groups have their hands on our water. But there is no way for the public to know the answers to basic questions such as who they are or how much water they own and where. In this House the parliamentary constitution is silent on water ownership. In registering pecuniary interests, there is no obligation on members to tell the public how much water they own and where they own it.

Land and water were separated 20 years ago but our legal requirements and legislation have not kept up. Rule changes have allowed anyone to own and trade water without the need to associate it with irrigated land. For those Federal and State politicians who own and trade water purely as an investment, it is in their best financial interests to have the resource scarce, thereby manipulating water for personal gain. For irrigation farmers water—like fuel, fertiliser and chemicals—is an essential input to production that needs to be delivered at the right place and at the right time. Now with the clawback, the buyback, the stolen water, water has been made so scarce that it has priced itself out of staple agricultural production, such as dairying. With dairies going broke and selling up we may now see our supermarket duopoly looking to other countries to supply our morning cappuccino.

Big corporates and governments are buying, hoarding and trading river water in secret, pushing small-time producers out of business and wrecking our river systems. This is why we urgently need more transparency over our water. I call on the New South Wales Government to take the lead and establish a publicly available national water register. Water needs to have the same legislative requirements as land. When governments—foreign and Australian—can purchase water it becomes increasingly concerning as the ability of family-owned businesses to compete diminishes. I have written to Melinda Pavey offering her sensible, achievable State-based solutions. I have invited the Minister for Energy and Environment to see firsthand the damage taking place in one of the most unique ecosystems in the world. It is now up to us to take all necessary steps to right some of the wrongs of the past and literally clear the water.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:09 until  
Thursday 1 August 2019 at 10:00.**