



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

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First Session**

Thursday, 22 August 2019

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 22 August 2019

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 9:30.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

LAKE MACQUARIE SMELTER SITE (PERPETUAL CARE OF LAND) BILL 2019

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: Order! I strike out that motion the member for Gosford gave notice of. It was totally out of order. The member should not make a speech; it is meant to be a notice of a motion. I warned the House yesterday about this. I am happy for the member for Gosford to redraft and resubmit it.

Later,

The SPEAKER: I draw the attention of the House to the length of the motions of which members are giving notice. They have to be reasonable. The notice given by the member for Port Stephens was testing the limits.

Later,

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I ask the member for Gosford to read the notice of her motion again. For the benefit of those who missed my warning yesterday, which followed the delivery of notices of motions by the member for Newcastle and the member for Campbelltown, I referred to Standing Order 137, which deals with argument or unbecoming expressions. Notice of a motion containing argument, unbecoming expressions or otherwise not conforming with the practice of the House may be amended or ordered by the Speaker to be not printed. Members should note that they are giving notices of motions. This is not an opportunity to present argument or expressive statements but purely to give notices of motions. Consistent with that, notices of motions should be delivered in a relatively dispassionate form rather than as a statement or a semi-speech.

Bills

FINES AMENDMENT BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 31 July 2019.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (09:48): I lead for the Opposition on the Fines Amendment Bill 2019 in this place. I have been working with my colleagues the Hon. Daniel Mookhey and the Hon. John Graham from the other place. I state at the outset that Labor will not oppose this bill. We understand this bill makes some efforts to modernise and simplify how penalty notices are dealt with in New South Wales. Labor strongly supports making it easier for people to deal with penalty notices. Penalty notices play an important part in the legal system in New South Wales.

Penalty notices show how many offences are dealt with in New South Wales and in theory they provide a simple way to deal with offences. As the NSW Law Reform Commission explained in its report on penalty notices published in February 2012, a penalty notice gives the recipient a choice between paying a fine for an alleged infringement of the law or going to court. The Law Reform Commission's report explains the evolution of penalty notices in New South Wales. The report states:

... the first penalty notice provisions related to parking offences and were introduced to address the difficulties encountered by the courts in dealing with a large number of such offences. In 1961, the penalty notice scheme was extended to some offences under the Motor Traffic Act 1909 (NSW) such as driving in excess of certain speed limits and driving without a licence. This was done at a time when the road toll in NSW had dramatically increased and the government decided that the time of traffic police could

be better spent patrolling rather than preparing breach reports and attending court. It was noted that a penalty notice system would save the time spent by motorists in attending court, reduce the costs of issuing and serving summons, and help relieve court congestion.

The Law Reform Commission's report continues:

The offences for which penalty notices may be issued gradually grew beyond parking and driving offences so that by 1983, there were ten statutory provisions authorising the use of penalty notices to deal with offences relating to traffic, maritime services, forestry, and fisheries ... In 1996, Parliament adopted the Fines Act. At its inception, the Act contained 43 statutory provisions authorising the use of penalty notices. Since then, the list has grown to 110 statutory provisions, creating more than 7,000 offences that may be enforced by way of penalty notice.

The penalty notice dataset published by Revenue NSW this year shows that over the past five years approximately 19 million penalty notices were issued in New South Wales. Combined, these penalty notices were worth \$4.6 billion. In total over the past five years penalty notices were issued in relation to 237 pieces of legislation. The majority of penalty notices—roughly 16 million—were for traffic and driving offences. However, it is important to be mindful of the broad range of circumstances that can lead to a penalty notice being issued, from carrying on an unregistered beekeeping business in contravention of the Apiaries Act 1985 to workers not wearing personal protective equipment, as required by the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017.

Penalty notices have become the primary method used to enforce the law in New South Wales. As the Law Reform Commission's 2012 report noted, in the 2009-10 financial year 2.8 million penalty notices were issued in New South Wales. In contrast, in 2009 courts imposed 117,000 penalties, of which around 54,000 were fines. Only 1 per cent of people who are issued a penalty notice elect to go to court. These statistics show that, rather than courts deciding if a person has committed an offence and imposing a penalty, the penalty notice system has become the way that the vast majority of offences are dealt with in New South Wales. To a large extent, this is sensible. Going to court can be a daunting and expensive experience. Moreover, the nature of modern technology in driving offences such as speeding means that there would often be no real legal or factual issues for a court to determine.

However, while it is appropriate for many offences to be dealt with through the penalty notice system, it is important that we are mindful of the impact this system can have on vulnerable people. Many people are able to deal with penalty notices promptly. They are either able to pay the penalty notice on time or they are able to navigate the various avenues to have a penalty notice set aside. Unfortunately, many vulnerable people face difficulties dealing with penalty notices. For people on low and fixed incomes, even a relatively small fine can have a significant financial impact.

Moreover, many vulnerable people experience difficulty understanding their rights in relation to fines, including how they can contest a fine if they do not believe they should have received it. These problems can affect many vulnerable people in our society, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability, people with mental health conditions and people experiencing homelessness. The Australian Law Reform Commission's [ALRC] December 2017 report *Pathways to Justice* notes the particularly adverse impact that fines can have on Aboriginal people, particularly those in rural and regional areas. The report states at paragraph 12.23:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are over-represented as fine recipients and are less likely than non-Indigenous people to pay a fine at the time of issue of the initial notice (attributed to financial capacity, itinerancy and literacy levels). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are consequently susceptible to escalating fine debt and fine enforcement measures.

While the report notes that New South Wales has not imprisoned anyone since 1998 specifically for failing to pay a fine, the failure to pay a fine can result in a person having their driver licence suspended or cancelled. As the report notes at paragraph 12.133:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in regional and remote areas are likely to experience 'transport disadvantage', that is, to live remotely without access to public transport.

The report continues at paragraph 12.136:

Driving unlicensed can have dire consequences. The NSW Council of Social Service observed:

The consequences of driving without a licence can be serious and significant for Aboriginal people and the communities in which they live. Not being able to drive can mean not being able to access vital services, such as receiving medical treatment. Being caught driving without a licence can exacerbate financial hardship and result in loss of employment and potential imprisonment.

The report also refers to data from 2016 provided by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. That data showed Aboriginal people made up 31 per cent of all people imprisoned for driving while their licence was suspended. Even though the bill will have a broad application across a wide range of circumstances, it is important to be mindful of how fines can disproportionately affect different people in our society, including Aboriginal people, people from rural and regional communities and other people who experience disadvantage. New South Wales Labor understands the overall intent of the bill is to simplify the Fines Act in order to make it easier for

people to deal with fines. In his second reading speech, the Minister for Customer Service spoke about how the bill will allow more matters to be dealt with administratively by Revenue NSW, which the Minister hopes will reduce the need for people to contest penalty notices in court. The Minister for Customer Service told the Legislative Assembly on 31 July 2019:

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 Minister did not refer to any reports that support his claim regarding this aspect of the bill. I ask that the Minister in his reply provide any documents or reports that support this claim. On 1 August 2019, the Hon. John Graham, shadow roads Minister and I met with the Minister for Customer Service and various ministerial staff. We appreciated the briefing. At that meeting we discussed the bill. We requested any economic modelling held by the Government regarding the reforms contained in the bill. I am yet to receive that information or any other information which the Minister undertook to provide at that meeting. I hope that information can be provided during this debate.

Labor has contacted several stakeholders in the community services and legal sectors and was told by all that this was the first knowledge they had of the bill. Community Legal Centres NSW has written to the Minister for Customer Service about the impact of the bill on many people it represents. Community Legal Centres NSW represents almost 40 community legal centres across New South Wales. It is the peak body for non-government organisations that provide free legal assistance to some of the most vulnerable people in our community. I put on record that I want to thank community legal centres across New South Wales. The legal officers and the staff involved do a magnificent job. I want them to know how much we appreciate their work. Following Labor's contact with Community Legal Centres NSW, they wrote to the Minister and a copy of that letter was provided by Community Legal Centres NSW to the Opposition. I place on the record some extracts from that letter:

We are concerned that the Bill is being rushed through Parliament without adequate scrutiny and urge the Government to allow enough time for the community to analyse it fully and provide detailed feedback.

The sentiment expressed by Community Legal Centres NSW has been echoed by other stakeholders Labor has spoken with about this bill. I ask the Minister to provide further details of consultation that the Government undertook prior to introducing this bill. I turn now to the key provisions of the bill. The bill makes amendments to the Fines Act 1996, the Fines Regulation 2015, the Road Transport Act 2013 and the Road Transport (General) Regulation 2013. In essence, the bill makes six key changes to these Acts and regulations, the first being electronic service. The bill makes provision to expand the use of electronic means to serve penalty notices and other documents. The Fines Act already allows penalty notices, reminder notices and enforcement orders to be served electronically.

The bill facilitates the expansion of electronic service by allowing penalty notices and other documents to be served through an online notification system. The online notification system will be a website or other electronic means approved by the Commissioner of Fines Administration. While the Government has not provided any specific details regarding this online notification system, we assume these amendments will allow penalty notices and other documents to be served through the Service NSW website and app. This is a logical reform, given that people can already deal with penalty notices through the Service NSW website. I note that the Minister's staff are present in the Chamber and I thank them for being here. I ask the Minister in his reply to provide specific details in relation to this process because I have had a number of questions about it.

Importantly, the bill provides that a person must consent to receive penalty notices and other documents electronically. Also, consistent with existing legislation, electronic means cannot be used to serve a document on a person under 16 years of age. Labor feels very strongly that the use of electronic means to serve documents should always be on an opt-in basis. Many people have difficulty using the internet. This can include older people and people experiencing homelessness. Internet communication can pose a particular problem for women escaping domestic violence. Some women share email accounts with their partners, and some women have their phones paid for or otherwise controlled by abusive partners. This can mean that, in order to escape domestic violence, some women are forced to restart their digital life and abandon email accounts and other contact details they previously relied on. In those circumstances, it is important to have a paper backup method of communication. These concerns were expressed by Community Legal Centres NSW in its letter to the Minister for Customer Service dated 7 August 2019. In that letter Community Legal Centres Executive Director Tim Leach stated the bill will:

... amend the Fines Act 1996 to enable service of a penalty notice or penalty reminder notice, in an 'approved electronic manner', including via SMS or email. This will likely benefit people who regularly use a single email or mobile number.

However, it may negatively impact people experiencing economic hardship or discrimination, including older people, people who are homeless, victims of domestic and family violence and people with mental illness, who may not regularly access or check their

electronic notifications, or who may have difficulty accessing or understanding them. In addition, people in these circumstances regularly change mobile phone numbers or email addresses due to their circumstances.

The letter from Community Legal Centres NSW continues:

We have particular concerns about the use of SMS to serve penalty notices and penalty reminder notices. The wording of the amendment ... suggests that the sending of the SMS would amount to service of the notice, with no requirement that the person view the actual notification on the online system.

Some people do not receive or are unable to read their SMS messages straight away, which could impact on their ability to review and appeal the fines they have been issued.

The letter continues:

People experiencing economic hardship and homelessness will be particularly disadvantaged by reliance on SMS. They are often unable to charge their phones, to afford regular credit, or to access free wi-fi. While they may receive messages, they may not be able to follow the web link provided to view the actual notice. Further, free wi-fi is generally not secure, especially if a person is going to be accessing a sensitive system containing lots of personal information.

While an SMS can be easily read, navigating a fines system portal on a phone can be very difficult. People experiencing economic hardship and discrimination will be particularly disadvantaged by this because they are less likely to have access to a computer or tablet and would need to access the system through their smart phone.

The letter continues:

People are increasingly warned not to trust or click on unsolicited links received via SMS. Such links may be viewed suspiciously and not be followed. For example, our members report cases of emails containing virus and other malware being sent to individuals purporting to be fines from the police.

SMS can be easily inadvertently deleted. Our members report that this is having negative impacts on tenants in the public housing sector where SMS is increasingly being used to convey important information. ...

There may be particular risks for victims of domestic violence. Our members report seeing increasing instances of abusive partners accessing an individual's personal electronic information including their phone or email accounts.

It is also unclear whether, once a person has agreed to receive notification in an approved electronic manner, all future fines will be issued in this way. People experiencing economic hardship and discrimination often change phone numbers regularly (because they lose their phone or can't pay their bill or intentionally change their numbers, including for safety reasons).

Labor shares the concerns expressed by Community Legal Centres NSW regarding these aspects of the bill. I hope that the Minister will address these concerns and provide clarification. In particular, we are concerned about the implications of electronic service in relation to fraud and cybercrime. This is a problem that the Australian Taxation Office [ATO] deals with in relation to its communication with taxpayers by email and SMS. On 4 April this year Assistant Commissioner of the ATO Gavin Siebert issued a statement stating:

The ATO has received 40,225 reports of impersonation scams so far in 2019 with just over \$1 million in losses. The technique of displaying misleading phone numbers is known as "spoofing" and is commonly used by scammers in an attempt to make their interactions with taxpayers appear legitimate.

While we do not oppose the expansion of electronic means to serve penalty notice and other documents, we are concerned about the opportunities this could provide cybercriminals to defraud the people of New South Wales, particularly the most vulnerable. We ask the Minister to outline in his reply what steps the Government is taking to protect people from these scams. I turn to the withdrawal and annulment of penalty notice enforcement orders. The second main change this bill makes relates to the withdrawal and annulment of penalty notice enforcement orders. A penalty notice enforcement order is an order made if a penalty notice is not paid or otherwise dealt with. The consequences of an enforcement order can be severe. These consequences can include the suspension of a person's driver's licence, an order to seize and sell personal property, an order to garnish wages and the issuing of a community service order. The bill replaces the existing provisions of the Fines Act that deal with the withdrawal and annulment of penalty notice enforcement orders.

The new provisions contained in the bill allow a person to apply to the commissioner for a penalty notice enforcement order to be withdrawn, allow the commissioner to withdraw a penalty notice enforcement order on the commissioner's own initiative, provide a list of grounds for the commissioner to withdraw a penalty notice enforcement order and provide that if a person is dissatisfied with the commissioner's decision not to withdraw an order, they can apply to the Local Court for the order to be annulled. In essence the bill establishes a clear distinction between the withdrawal of a penalty notice enforcement order by the commissioner and the annulment of a penalty notice enforcement order by the Local Court.

As I noted previously, the Minister for Customer Service stated that the Government believes this will facilitate more disputes being resolved by the commissioner, thereby avoiding the need for around 1,000 matters to be heard in the Local Court. Labor supports making it easier for people to deal with fines. It is obviously preferable that people are able to avoid going to the Local Court if possible. It can be an intimidating and a confronting experience. However, Labor hopes the Government will provide ongoing reporting on the impact of

this initiative. Ongoing reporting will be important to understand whether these reforms achieve their stated goal of reducing the workload of the Local Court. I hope the Minister will provide me with details of the reporting process.

Ongoing reporting will also be important to understand how this change affects vulnerable people—I understand from the Minister's seconding reading speech he is trying to address this—because it is important they maintain their right to take matters to court. Finally, ongoing reporting will be important to understand whether the list of grounds provided in the bill for the withdrawal or annulment of a penalty notice enforcement order are adequate to deal with situations where people face financial hardship or other forms of disadvantage. The letter from Community Legal Centres NSW to the Minister for Customer Service states:

The proposed changes limit the Court's capacity to annul a penalty notice enforcement order to the grounds on which the Commissioner may withdraw a penalty notice enforcement order under section 47.

Although we can see how this will streamline matters, we are always apprehensive of limiting annulment applications by the Local Court. The Local Court is able to consider matters more fully than Revenue NSW or State Debt Recovery and is often more lenient. Labor shares the concerns expressed by Community Legal Centres NSW. We hope the Government will commit to ongoing reporting so that the impact of these reforms can be understood. The third major change made by this bill relates to the reallocation of overpayments toward other amounts a person may owe. Currently, section 122C of the Fines Act allows the commissioner to reallocate any overpayment made by a person toward other amounts the person might owe. The bill proposes to replace the existing section 122C with a new section. Under proposed new section 122C, the commissioner would not be able make a reallocation if the person who made an overpayment is in receipt of a government benefit, unless the person requested the reallocation.

Proposed new section 122C would also require the commissioner to revoke a reallocation if a person requested them to do so. This appears to be a positive reform. It will mean that many people on low or fixed incomes will be able to choose to have any overpayment made refunded to them. However, Labor is concerned the change proposed by the bill does not go far enough. While the bill adopts the criterion of a person receiving a government benefit to define people on low and fixed incomes, we have concerns that this definition will exclude many vulnerable people who should otherwise be covered by this provision. As Community Legal Centres NSW stated in its letter to the Minister for Customer Service:

We are concerned that this proposal will be highly detrimental to people experiencing financial hardship who are not eligible for or do not receive a Centrelink payment such as refugees, people on bridging visas, and people who are homeless or affected by domestic violence and financial abuse.

Due to difficulties for Revenue NSW to reliably identify all people receiving a Centrelink payment and the detrimental impact on the people mentioned above, the reallocation of overpayments towards other fines should never be permitted without first obtaining the person's consent.

Labor shares the concerns expressed by Community Legal Centres NSW. In his reply I would like the Minister to address a very important area concerning those people who do not receive a Centrelink benefit. The fourth change made by the bill extends the time a person has to apply for an internal review of the decision to issue a penalty notice. The bill also makes other minor changes to clarify aspects of the Fines Act in relation to internal reviews. The fifth change removes the requirement that a person be in receipt of a government benefit in order to be given additional time to pay. The bill also allows the commissioner to make a fine enforcement order at any time in order to make either a work and development order or a time to pay order. Community Legal Centres NSW has also expressed some concern about this proposal. It stated:

This proposal provides greater options for people about how to address a fine they have been issued. However, there is a risk that people experiencing economic hardship or discrimination may feel pressured in the first instance to deal with their fine through a [Work and Development Order] or time to pay order ... before having the opportunity to obtain legal advice on their options, including exercising their right to request a review or challenge a fine.

Labor shares the concerns expressed by Community Legal Centres NSW. We ask the Minister to confirm that a person who agrees to a work and development order being made after a penalty notice will still be able to obtain an internal review or contest the matter in court if they receive legal advice that the penalty notice should not have been issued. The sixth change made by this bill will allow people to nominate themselves as the correct person who should receive a penalty notice. This situation often arises in relation to driving offences.

Currently, a person may receive a penalty notice if a camera captures the vehicle they own speeding or driving through a red light. While the penalty notice will be sent to the owner of the vehicle, the offence may have been committed by someone else who was driving the vehicle at the time. Currently, the owner must nominate the driver of the vehicle in order for the penalty notice to be issued to the person who actually committed the offence. This is usually done by completing a statutory declaration or prescribed form. The bill will make

provisions to allow the person who committed the offence to nominate themselves as the person who should receive the penalty notice.

In conclusion, the reforms made by the bill are welcome to the extent that they make it easier to deal with fines. Labor has ongoing concerns about the impact of penalty notices on vulnerable people in our community and many of my colleagues will talk about that at great length in their contributions to this debate. While penalty notices are an essential part of our legal system, it is important that we understand penalty notices may have different impacts on people, depending on their circumstances. Labor also has concerns about the implications for cybersecurity and personal privacy, which this bill raises. The bill encourages more people to deal with penalty notices electronically. The bill also encourages more people to deal with penalty notices through Revenue NSW and internal review mechanisms.

However, the bill is being introduced by the same Minister whose office was investigated by the NSW Police Force this year in relation to the unlawful release of hundreds of citizens' private data during the last election. It is concerning that the Government is asking the people of New South Wales to place their trust in Revenue NSW and this Minister when no-one has been held accountable for that data breach. The Minister should explain why members of this House should vote for this bill when he has failed to adequately explain the privacy breach his office was involved in. I foreshadow that the Opposition will be moving an amendment with respect to privacy breaches and the disclosure of information.

Debate adjourned.

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT (NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF PRIVACY BY PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 1 August 2019.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (10:18): I continue my contribution to this debate. The proposed changes in the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019 have already been adopted by the Federal Government. Those changes should have been adopted by this Government a number of years ago. I do not understand, and I ask the Government to explain, why it has not implemented the commissioner's recommendations some four years after they were made. I know it has given all kinds of excuses with regard to funding—and goodness knows what else—but there is no excuse.

The bill deals with the important issue of the privacy of the citizens of New South Wales. People in this State need adequate protection from breaches of their privacy. As I mentioned before, the need for protection can be seen in the recent leaking of motorists' personal data held by Revenue NSW. Inadequate practices and the manner of that data leakage illustrate the need for this bill. Individuals whose privacy was breached have still not been advised by any government agency of that breach. My understanding is that the only real avenue they have at the moment is to complain to the Ombudsman. It should not have come to that. The discussion paper put out by the Government, "Mandatory notification of data breaches by NSW Public Sector Agencies" in July 2019 gives example after example of why notification is so important. I quote from page 1:

- 1.1 NSW Government agencies hold a broad range of information about citizens, including sensitive personal, health and financial records. Unauthorised release of such information can have serious consequences for individuals and agencies. For individuals, the potential consequences include but are not limited to:
 - Reputational damage;
 - Harm to physical or mental health;
 - Financial loss;
 - Identity theft;
 - Family violence;
 - Physical harm or intimidation.

I am sure the list goes on. The discussion paper gives examples and the rationale for the introduction of mandatory data breach reporting. The section of the report that looks at the need of individuals to be provided with an opportunity to take remedial action is important. On page 7 of the discussion paper it states:

- 3.9 Informing citizens when privacy breaches have occurred provides them with an opportunity to take action to protect themselves and potentially avoid adverse consequences.
- 3.10 In its 2008 report on Australian Privacy Law and Practice, the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) noted that concerns about identity theft and identity fraud have been key drivers for the introduction of mandatory data breach

notification schemes in the United States. For example, Michael Turner stated in a 2006 publication by the Information Policy Institute that:

The logic behind notification is simple. If individuals are told that their sensitive information has been breached, they can monitor their accounts, take preventative measures such as opening new accounts, and be ready to correct any damage done.

That quote dates back to 2006—13 years ago. The discussion paper also states:

- 3.11 Other preventative or reactive measures that individuals can take include checking accounts, changing account passwords, notifying the police, reviewing financial accounts and credit reports for fraudulent activity, and notifying financial institutions.

Many other jurisdictions have accepted that mandatory notification laws should be implemented: It has been done in the United States of America, in Canada, in New Zealand, and at the Commonwealth level in Australia. Every country in the European Union has accepted that data breaches must be reported and the person impacted must be informed. The discussion paper continues:

...

- 3.13 Surveys conducted in Australia indicate that the Australian community expects to be told when a data breach occurs. For example, the Australian Community Attitudes to Privacy Survey 2017 found that 94 per cent of respondents agreed that they should be told if a business loses their personal information. Ninety-five per cent of respondents agreed that they should be told if a government agency loses their personal information.

Ninety-five per cent of citizens in this country, and throughout New South Wales, say that these should have been reported to them so they could monitor their accounts. However, this Government has been sitting on its hands for four years. I commend the bill to House.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (10:24): I make a contribution to the debate on the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019. I thank and acknowledge the work of the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool for bringing this important bill to the House and all my parliamentary colleagues who have made contributions to the debate on this bill. The collection of personal data has never been greater in the history of human civilisation. Technological advancements in hardware and software have made the storage, access, usage, extraction and manipulation through analysis and automated algorithms all the more easy. Gigabytes and terabytes of data can be sent out to a global audience with a click of a computer mouse, a link on a text message or an attachment to an email. Those actions are not always done for proper purposes and may have significant personal and privacy consequences for the individuals involved.

A number of my colleagues have raised many valid points on why the bill is required. I focus on two points: public sector responsibility and trust; and the importance of privacy and the balance of power between those who provide the data and those who control it. Parliament and public sector agencies must always lead the way in setting public standards. Indeed, we should be over and above what is expected. In recent times, we have seen a major erosion in public trust in government institutions. Let me share some data with you—no pun intended given the nature of this bill.

The Australian National University's post-2016 study contains the following results: 56 per cent of people believe government is run for big interests; 26 per cent of people think government can be trusted; and only 12 per cent believe it is run for the benefit of the people. These are concerning results about what our people think of how government operates. It is our responsibility to find ways to continually improve public services and to increase public confidence in public administration. One of the simplest ways is to own up when a violation has been made and to notify affected people of the violation that led to the breach of their personal data.

Schedule 1 of the bill proposes new sections 59A, 59B, 59C and 59D of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. Proposed new sections 59A and 59B outline when a public sector agency "causes a serious violation of an individual's privacy". Proposed new sections 59C and 59D clearly outline the obligations of a public sector agency that is in breach to notify affected individuals and the Privacy Commissioner, respectively, of any serious violation of privacy it has caused.

It is not and should not be the responsibility of the individuals involved to inquire whether a public sector agency has breached their private data; even worse if they learn of the breach from an external source. Depending on the type of data privacy violation, a breach could create an uncomfortable and potentially embarrassing scenario for the people involved. It is not difficult for a public sector agency to redress a data breach for the people it exists to serve. How could members opposite honestly say that the Liberal-Nationals Government is in the business of public service if they do not support the bill? If Government members do not support the bill it will not be because the bill has no merit, but rather because it is a Labor bill.

The move towards electronic public administration for all public documents and application forms necessitates increased data collection. Governments are becoming increasingly data-dependent and data-driven. Accordingly, they have a responsibility to ensure that people's private data is protected in every instance. I acknowledge that inadvertent data breaches may occur on the odd occasion in the absence of a systematic failure of process. On such occasions it is imperative for the public sector agencies involved to do the right thing by the public and notify affected individuals at the earliest opportunity.

If that responsibility is too onerous, proposed new sections 59F and 59G of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act contained in schedule 1 of the bill provide the Privacy Commissioner with enforcement powers to direct public sector agencies to notify individuals whose privacy has been breached. Hopefully, it will never come to that because public sector agencies should do the right thing by the people they serve and notify them of any breaches involving their personal data, without having to be reminded of their responsibilities and coerced into action.

In an age where private citizens are continually handing over personal data in their interactions with public sector agencies, and in every action they undertake, they must be confident that their personal data will be handled with care at all times. However, should the situation arise where a violation has taken place, inadvertently or otherwise, public sector agencies owe it to affected people to rectify the situation as soon as possible by proactively notifying them of a data breach. It is the courteous and respectful thing to do and goes a long way in building public confidence in government services.

One of the fundamental tenets of our strong and enviable democracy is the right to privacy and anonymity. In an age of technology, terabyte personal data collection and social media, our privacy is continually and incrementally being stripped away—sometimes voluntarily but not always. The protection of privacy is a mechanism to ensure a better and more equal balance of power for those who have control over a person's individual data and those who have provided the data—either through necessity or voluntarily—but have no control over that data once it has been provided. Public service is important and we want to make sure that we continue to serve the people we represent. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (10:30): I support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019. I commend my colleague the shadow Attorney General, the member for Liverpool, for introducing the bill and for all the work he and his staff have done in its formation. I also recognise the contributions of my other colleagues, in particular the members representing the electorates of Lismore, Prospect and Canterbury. It is clear from their contributions that they and all Opposition members understand that the role of legislators is to act on the priorities of the public and that this bill addresses a real and significant problem confronting contemporary, modern society.

Modern government has institutionalised a reliance on data sharing and storage. As citizens in 2019, to interact with government departments and participate in the common life of New South Wales, we are required to share our private information. That can no doubt be effective as it allows the public service to do its job better and allows the public to get better and quicker results for their inquiries. However, it also poses significant risk to the security and confidentiality of personal data. This apathetic Government, in whom the public's trust is misplaced, is ignoring that risk. Our role as legislators is to take the lead on emerging issues and provide the model for industries to use as best practice; in data security, we are failing in that duty.

The bill defines when a public sector agency causes a serious violation of an individual's privacy. It provides the criteria or matters to be determined if privacy has been violated in a serious manner. It makes it compulsory for public sector agencies to notify an individual about any serious violations of their privacy. It makes it compulsory for public sector agencies to inform the Privacy Commissioner about serious violations of an individual's privacy. It also contains a range of measures arising from the four operative inclusions in the Act.

The leak of motorists' personal data sourced from Revenue NSW earlier this year can be characterised only as a serious violation and a lack of requirement to notify in the public domain. The breach made clear the need for the bill to protect the people of New South Wales. I take this opportunity to give a voice specifically to the youth of this State, who do not know life without the internet. The government tracks their every move, including their health records. At no stage have those people given their express permission to government departments to hold that information. In academia, these generations of young people are commonly referred to as digital natives. There is a common belief that digital natives are technologically savvy—which might be the case—but it is easy to identify that unlike members in this place, the digital natives are yet to fully consider the long-term ramifications of identity theft, reputational affliction and of the significant repercussions of data breaches like that seen with Revenue NSW.

The compounding effect for most young people today is that they have never had an option of opting out. From birth their every move, purchase, health concern or run-in with the law is recorded digitally but not once have they consented to that occurring. The sheer number of young people who will have their data tracked without the option of opting out is mind-boggling. The repercussions of a major breach in New South Wales are real and worrying. In recent years we have seen high-profile, globally significant data breaches in the private sector. Around the 2016 United States presidential election the length and depth of data insecurity in modern society was laid bare. In 2015 the personal data of 87 million Facebook users was acquired via 270,000 Facebook users who used a Facebook app called This Is Your Digital Life.

Giving the third party app permission to acquire data also gave the app access to information on the user's friend network, resulting in the data collection of about 87 million users, the majority of whom had not given Cambridge Analytica explicit permission to access their data. The data was then weaponised to present what amounted to propaganda onto the news feeds of individuals whose votes may have been swayed. There will be over 7½ million people with online accounts with Services NSW and some five million digital driver licences. A break on that scale would have unknown repercussions on the public and the individuals they are connected with overseas.

The events brought the world of data security to a new low, but since then social media companies and all those entities that interact in the data sharing space are on notice for their behaviour and any breaches are covered by privacy law. However, the New South Wales government departments are not. It is disappointing that the Government has not shown more support for this crucial bill when it is clear that more needs to be done. Worse, it seems the Government is happy with breaches occurring so that the information can be used in the private sectors for private benefit. In electorates across the State, people have been encouraged to sign up to a Service NSW account, which requires the integration of a lot of personal data into the one, enormous pool of information, ripe for the picking by private interests. In August 2018 in my electorate of Coogee, more than 140,000 New South Wales drivers across Sydney's eastern beaches region were eligible to participate in a new metro trial of the digital driver licence.

If the Government wants to make the digitisation of information essential for people to engage in day-to-day life, it needs to take some leadership on these issues and support the bill. The millions of people across the State who are forced to have online accounts with Service NSW have a right to know that their personal data is secure. I repeat: If the Government wants to make the digitisation of information essential for people to engage in their day-to-day lives, like driving a car, it needs to take some leadership on these issues and support the bill. If it does not, I am sure later this year I will be back debating a bill that the Government will have put forward on similar themes and direction. That will lead to several more months of data insecurity and risk to the people of New South Wales.

The goals of the bill are crucial for the personal security of people in my electorate of Coogee and across New South Wales. The bill will ensure that all public agencies that are found to have violated the privacy of residents of the State notify that person and the Privacy Commissioner of the breach. Both those steps are essential for continual improvement of data security: The individual is given cause to reflect on the way they share their information and with which government entities it is prudent to share it, whilst the Privacy Commissioner is then tasked with investigating the leak, working with the agency that caused it and developing a mechanism to avoid similar breaches in the future. It is pretty simple. Never before has government been so outrun by an industry within society and, therefore, information technology and sharing poses a significant risk to the effectiveness of government in protecting its people.

As legislators, we have no option but to chase technological innovation and at every turn, ensure that the people of New South Wales do not come to harm due to a lack of regulation and intervention. The unique significance of the bill is that it is created to protect individuals from mistakes made by this Government. If we cannot be industry leaders, if we cannot be the model for data security, then we cannot hope private industry to follow. The public deserves this law; it deserved it years ago when government departments began forcibly moving the data of private citizens online. I commend this bill. May it give greater security to the people of New South Wales and act as a prompt for vigilance from this Government in the realm of cyber protection.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (10:38): In reply: I acknowledge the members who have participated in this debate: the Attorney General as well as members representing the electorates of Canterbury, Lismore, Wollongong, Prospect, Macquarie Fields and Coogee. The Opposition members supported the bill while the Attorney, speaking on behalf of the Government, opposed it. It is in accord with the iron law of New South Wales politics that the Government will not support an Opposition bill, although there are signs the Government might finally be doing something in response to the bill.

The core of the bill is that a public sector agency that causes a serious violation of a person's privacy must notify the individual concerned and the Privacy Commissioner of the breach. The arguments in favour of

this approach are very strong, as recently shown in a discussion paper from the Government. Mandatory notification of serious breaches of privacy by State agencies was recommended four years ago by the State's Privacy Commissioner, who was an appointee of the O'Farrell Government. It is a measure that is expected by the community. Surveys show overwhelming numbers of our constituents expect to be notified if their privacy has been breached. The measure has been adopted by a conservative Federal Government and by overseas jurisdictions. It is generally regarded as best practice in this field. The Government's performance has been abysmal in this space. It has demonstrated sloth and indolence and absolute disinterest in protecting the personal privacy of the citizens of this State.

After the Government failed to respond to the Privacy Commissioner's 2015 recommendation, I introduced a bill in the previous Parliament. In response, the Government said it would conduct a review into privacy leaks in New South Wales to see if the existing scheme of non-mandatory disclosure was adequate. A question on notice that I asked several months ago shows that that review, if it happened, has disappeared into the ether. I am delighted to note that since I reintroduced the bill and gave the second reading speech the Government released a discussion paper titled *Mandatory notification of data breaches by NSW Public Sector Agencies*. It was released by the New South Wales Department of Communities and Justice and the accompanying media release came from the department, not from the Minister. I am delighted that the reintroduction of the bill has at least prompted some activity from the Government. The argument for the bill is so powerful that the Government had to do something and the discussion paper is at least a step in the right direction—although, way too late. Mind you, some say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

The iron law of politics in this Chamber is that the Government will never support an Opposition bill, so it will vote this bill down. The discussion paper it has released suggests that it will introduce its own bill with substantially the same provisions at some stage in the future. That is at least some progress, albeit a clear case of the Opposition leading the Government. The discussion paper is an interesting document. In many ways, it does not start a discussion; it is more like a piece of advocacy. The argument the paper puts for mandatory notification is very powerful and there is no case presented in opposition. Of course, that is no surprise to me. The case for such provisions is very powerful—that is why I reintroduced the bill. The discussion paper notes the broad range of information held by government agencies about individuals. Apart from the damage to individuals, data breaches can have problems for government agencies—they can lead to significant reputational damage and undermine public trust and confidence in agencies and government.

The paper notes that the Information and Privacy Commission—the IPC—has a voluntary data breaches policy to encourage agencies to report breaches to the Information and Privacy Commission. Crucially, however, this is not mandatory. The paper notes that the Commonwealth has a mandatory scheme called the Notifiable Data Breaches scheme—the NDB. The paper emphasises the potential impact of data breaches upon individuals. They can, depending on the size and nature of a data breach, include financial fraud, identity theft—with all the consequences flowing from that—family violence, physical harm or intimidation and damage to personal reputations or positions.

The paper sets out a number of reasons why agencies should report data breaches. It demonstrates to clients that agencies have a way of dealing with data breaches; it strengthens data breaches and privacy processes, preventing future breaches and minimising risk; it reinforces accountability to protect information and promotes a privacy positive culture; and demonstrates that the agency views the protection of information as a priority which, in turn, increases public trust. Crucially, however, the paper pinpoints the weakness of a merely voluntary scheme, which is the current scheme in New South Wales. Paragraph 3.8 states:

However, there are factors that may influence agencies not to disclose data breaches. For example, the Australian Law Reform Commission has identified that there are limited incentives to encourage voluntary reporting of data breaches. In particular, there may be little incentive to voluntarily report where: the cost of notifying may exceed expected damage to the organisation; the notification could result in negative media publicity; there is risk of litigation proceedings by affected individuals; and there is real potential for reputational damage and lost future profits.

The discussion paper notes that mandatory notification is increasingly considered best practice and has been introduced in the European Union, the United States and Canada, and legislation to implement a scheme is currently before the New Zealand Parliament. The paper even quotes the figures from the Australian Community Attitudes to Privacy Survey about the expectations of citizens that they should be notified of any data breach of their privacy. I have made that point and quoted those figures about survey results in previous speeches, including the second reading speech introducing the bill. The discussion paper is a powerful advocate for the provisions of the bill before the House. The real stake to the heart against the Government's position in this debate, however, comes in paragraph 3.14, which shows the comprehensive inadequacy of the current voluntary scheme—the scheme the Government will continue by voting down the bill, as it did by opposing the bill in the previous Parliament. Paragraph 3.14 states:

Many NSW public sector agencies already voluntarily report data breaches to the IPC. However, the Commonwealth experience suggest that underreporting may be the norm. For example, the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner reported that notifications increased by 712 per cent during the first year of the Commonwealth NDP scheme.

That is hardly a surprise to anyone seriously engaged in this space but it is a powerful statistic demonstrating the complete inadequacy of the current voluntary model. Of course, we also have practical concrete examples of cases where the voluntary scheme was not adequate: Last year the Privacy Commissioner's Office encouraged Revenue NSW to contact the 193 people—including a number of my constituents—whose private data about penalty notices was given to journalists, and to notify those citizens of the data breaches of their privacy. That did not happen. The Dominello scandal reveals why the current scheme is inadequate—as does his absence from this debate. Whatever credibility Government opposition to the bill may have had has been demolished by its own discussion paper. The Government contribution to this debate consisted of a series of debating points designed to hide its indolence on the issue. It has had four years and done nothing until the release of its discussion paper. If that were a serious response by a government interested in the issue it would have happened four years ago, rather than be provoked by my introduction of the bill earlier this year. I respond to the Attorney General's opposition to the bill with the following quote:

Personal privacy is a fundamental human right. Indeed it is the 12th Article in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The authors of that document were still walking through the ashes of the Second World War and therefore unsurprisingly placed a primacy on privacy. Australia was one of the 8 nations involved in drafting the Universal Declaration. Privacy is embedded in our democracy and laws exist at both state and federal levels protecting same.

That quote then goes on to deal with an incident in September 2015 of Vodafone breaching someone's personal privacy by hacking into a phone. The comments continue:

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

That is precisely the standard that the bill seeks to impose on State agencies. Curiously, those 2015 quotes I have cited come from Minister Dominello, who is demanding a standard of Vodafone that his Government rejects for State agencies. The hypocrisy of the Government is palpable: it refuses to uphold the standard it demands of others. That is especially the case with Revenue NSW and Minister Dominello. Over 190 citizens of this State whose privacy was egregiously breached have not been notified. Apart from the powerful and logical arguments in support of the bill and apart from the incredibly strong support for the bill from the Government's own discussion paper, the crescendo in the argument in support of the bill is in the Dominello scandal. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I welcome year 11 students attending the Young Women's Leadership seminar conducted by Parliamentary Education in the New South Wales Parliament, the oldest parliament in Australia.

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

The House divided.

Ayes43
Noes47
Majority.....4

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

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

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

Barilaro, Mr J
 Clancy, Mr J
 Cooke, Ms S (teller)
 Davies, Mrs T
 Evans, Mr L.J.
 Gulaptis, Mr C
 Henskens, Mr A
 Lee, Dr G
 O'Dea, Mr J
 Petinos, Ms E
 Roberts, Mr A
 Sidoti, Mr J
 Stokes, Mr R
 Tuckerman, Mrs W
 Williams, Mr R

PAIRS

Lalich, Mr N

Smith, Mr N

Motion negatived.

*Motions***VOLUNTEER ORGANISATIONS**

Debate resumed from 1 August 2019.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (10:57): In continuation of my contribution I again thank the member for Heathcote for bringing this motion in support of volunteers to the House. Volunteers work across the community ensuring that we stay safe, that our environment is nurtured and protected and that our arts and culture remain central to community life. Volunteers protect the legal rights of citizens, help women affected by domestic violence, assist the aged to remain connected to community life, and work to give kids in our community the richest and most fulfilling life possible. Volunteer organisations are prevalent in Summer Hill in the inner west of Sydney and some of them do incredibly important work. These organisations include the Addison Road Community Centre, Reverse Garbage, Marrickville Legal Centre, the Exodus Foundation, Youth Off The Streets, the Mudcrabs, Inner West Council Bushcare, the Haberfield Association and many other sports and arts groups across the inner west. I say to each and every one of those volunteers that I am incredibly grateful for the selfless work that they do and for care that they provide to our community with great generosity.

I also specifically note the good work of the Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville SES units. The very first thing I did on being appointed the shadow Minister for volunteers was to visit the Marrickville SES at its state-of-the art station in Sydenham. It is a fantastic facility provided by the former Marrickville Council and those volunteers work many nights of the week training and preparing to help our community in times of need. I thank them for their service and for their support of the community more broadly. These volunteers dedicate their time to protect our safety and our property in the face of storms and flooding, and in Marrickville that is often along the Cook River. Many other groups are working to provide community resilience in the face of storms and disasters. I am really proud that that unit is running a groundbreaking course which helps local women prepare their homes and protect their safety in the event of those storms. I look forward to participating in the first of its workshops in coming weeks.

I take this opportunity to note that as demands for not for profits increase there is a greater need to help guide and resource community organisations. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reveals that New South Wales has among the lowest volunteer rates in Australia, and that has to change. We must support our volunteer organisations. We must do more. I welcome the announcement by the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services that consultation has begun on the third NSW Volunteering Strategy. In the course of the consultation the Government will need to hear from the many volunteers so that we have the best supported volunteers. I believe that also requires a dedicated Minister for volunteers. I reiterate that call to the Government. I thank the member for Heathcote for bringing this motion to the house.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (11:00): By leave: I acknowledge the member for Heathcote, who is in the Chamber, and thank him for this excellent motion recognising the outstanding work that volunteers do in our communities, recognising organisations such as Surf Life Saving NSW, the SES and the Rural Fire Service for their work, and noting the Government's ongoing support for these organisations. Never a truer case I must say. I am so proud as the member for Terrigal to talk about the many volunteer organisations in my electorate. I have said in this Chamber before that I am very lucky to have seven surf lifesaving clubs in my electorate, second only to the member for Pittwater who has 11 in his electorate. I have been so proud to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of support to surf lifesaving clubs over the past four years since becoming the member for Terrigal. Over the past three seasons there has been not one drowning death on a patrolled beach on the Central Coast, which is completely and utterly thanks to the outstanding work of Surf Life Saving Central Coast and the surf lifesaving clubs on the Central Coast.

More than 100,000 people visiting the beaches in my electorate, and almost 100,000 hours of volunteer time every year goes into keeping our beaches safe. I note the member for The Entrance is in the Chamber. His surf lifesaving clubs do an outstanding job keeping people safe across the Central Coast. To have no drowning death on a patrolled beach for multiple seasons is a true testament to the dedication and service that volunteer surf lifesavers provide to our community; a service that could not possibly be paid for. The surf lifesaving clubs in my electorate of Terrigal include Wamberal, Terrigal, North Avoca, Avoca Beach, Copacabana, McMasters, Killcare, and the list goes on. These organisations are manned by volunteers year round, from the youngest to the oldest members of our community. It is so pleasing to see the numbers on the rise. More than 4,000 patrolling members from clubs in my electorate take up the baton to keep our residents and visitors safe on the Central Coast.

In addition, outstanding work is done by the local SES, which is based at the Erina depot in my electorate on the Central Coast. It does a most wonderful job in the most difficult and trying circumstances. I have been so pleased to be able to support Erina SES. Long-serving members have been in the SES for decades, providing protection. When storm events occur on the Central Coast and during bushfire season the SES is always there to help. I am pleased to say its members cohabit with the Brisbane Waters Rural Fire Brigade. They train in conjunction with the RFS, which is in the same location. Our volunteer organisations are sharing their resources and their training experience, whether it be the RFS or the SES.

Only last week we officially opened the eagerly awaited extension to the fantastic Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade facility on Tumby Road. I was delighted to be able to provide thousands of dollars of funding for that project, including most recently an extra \$1,600 dollars for an honour board to be erected inside the fire station, which was ready for the opening last weekend. It also includes Empire Bay, which is the oldest rural fire service on the Central Coast. Recently I was joined by the Minister to provide Empire Bay with an extra grant of \$8,000 for a thermal imaging camera, which offers extra protection for our volunteer rural fire service brigades by providing them with images of what they are walking towards.

These are great organisations, whether it be our RFS, SES or surf lifesaving clubs right across the Central Coast. These volunteers give up their time and their work time to keep us safe. They train during the week, often working with Fire and Rescue NSW. A lot of RFS groups do training. I know that the Avoca RFS trains in conjunction with Fire and Rescue in Kincumber. Volunteer organisations are working with paid professionals, which delivers great outcomes for the Central Coast. I congratulate the member for Heathcote on his excellent motion. I thank all volunteer organisations on the Central Coast for their great work every single day for our community.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (11:05): By leave: As the previous Minister for volunteering in New South Wales, I inform the House that there are currently just over two million registered volunteers in New South Wales and their contribution to this State has been estimated in dollar terms to be in excess of \$5 billion each and every year. It is an extraordinary contribution, a selfless contribution and an unpaid contribution by so many. We have heard the litany of volunteer organisations that members have already spoken about. I commend the member for Heathcote who, amongst other volunteer organisations in his backyard, has very well-established surf lifesaving clubs in some of the wonderful beaches in his electorate. From time to time those wonderful beaches come under threat. Beaches can be dangerous places. Last year, with the member for Heathcote, I was very pleased to provide significant funding for satellite telephones for those beaches to provide connectivity to health and emergency services when things go wrong on his beaches. That is just one example of people who give up their time selflessly on behalf of their community. As the member would know, and we now know, satellite phones have already seen lives saved.

These people put their hand up and they do not ask for much. It is wonderful when, as a government, you are able to contribute a few thousand dollars for a very important communication service such as satellite phones. I was very proud to be able to do that together with the member for Heathcote. In turn, he has brought this motion into the House. Debate involving volunteers always evokes a lot sentiment from many members because they

realise the important work they do, whether it is the RFS protecting life and property during bushfire, or the SES when storms and wind blow roofs off homes, as we are seeing now right across the Sydney metropolitan area. It is probably a year now but in The Hills district roofs remained tarped up in areas such as Rouse Hill and Beaumont Hill from trees that came down and hail. Unfortunately from time to time we suffer from heavy weather events. I acknowledge the many volunteers and organisations such as the Red Cross and the Smith Family, which are not always recognised.

I acknowledge Gemma Rygate, who heads up the Centre for Volunteering, and undertakes the very important task of presenting outstanding commendation awards to volunteers each and every year. Next week I will attend such an event at Castle Hill RSL on behalf of my area of The Hills, and also the Hawkesbury and Hornsby districts to recognise the wonderful contribution of volunteers. To every volunteer across New South Wales: We could not do it without you. I thank the member for Heathcote for bringing this important motion to the House. We acknowledge the great work of our volunteers across New South Wales.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (11:09): In reply: It warms the cockles of my heart to hear members in this House discussing the fantastic work that their local volunteers are doing. I failed to mention in the first part of this motion one of my volunteers—Steven Pearce, the CEO of Surf Life Saving NSW, who is a resident of Heathcote and a volunteer at Stanwell Park Surf Life Saving Club. He does a fantastic job in his role now. It is fantastic to see that he has moved on from some issues he had earlier in his career and is now heading up Surf Life Saving in our great State. He is doing a fantastic job. He is known around the traps as Steven "Hollywood" Pearce because he does not mind getting in front of a camera—a bit like me. I thank the members for Lismore, Wollondilly, Port Stephens, Kiama, Summer Hill, Terrigal and Castle Hill for their contributions.

As we all know—and we have all been speaking about volunteers in our area—when everyone else is running the other way, RFS and SES members run into the fires and storms. They do so much for our communities. The member for Castle Hill mentioned the Centre for Volunteering's Gemma Rygate. Last week I attended volunteer awards where a lot of my constituents were awarded certificates of merit for their work. I know a gentleman who has been a volunteer firefighter for 66 years in my electorate—66 years of volunteering is such a hard thing in the RFS. It is absolutely the best thing for a member of Parliament to have these people in their community. You often see them out and about in their uniforms, whether it is SES, Surf Life Saving NSW, RFS, or volunteers in other community organisations. So many people are putting so many hours in on behalf of our community. The member for Summer Hill mentioned that we should be doing more volunteering. In New South Wales—in fact I think across Australia—Sutherland shire has one of the highest rates of volunteering.

Mr Adam Crouch: Second to the Central Coast.

Mr LEE EVANS: Yes, second to the Central Coast. At every citizenship ceremony I take the opportunity to talk to those who are becoming permanent Australians citizens about looking for a volunteer organisation. I am happy to report one such gentleman, a French gentleman, knocked on the door. He said he had come to a new suburb and did not know anyone. I told him that the best way to meet the community was to volunteer, so he knocked on the RFS door at Loftus and he is now part of its crew. He is having an absolute ball, not only socially but also obviously in giving back to the community. I thank all members for debating this motion and celebrating the volunteers in our electorates across New South Wales.

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

Motion agreed to.

PORT OF NEWCASTLE CRUISE SHIP TERMINAL

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (11:13): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Government sold the Port of Newcastle in 2014 for \$1.75 billion.
- (2) Notes that the Government is spending \$55 million on cruise ship facilities in Eden, the electorate of the Minister for Transport and Roads, and member for Bega.
- (3) Condemns the Government's decision to withdraw funding for a new cruise ship terminal in Newcastle.
- (4) Calls on the Government to immediately reverse this decision and provide the funding Newcastle deserves to deliver a world-class cruise ship terminal.

Over the past eight years the O'Farrell-Baird-Berejiklian governments have been relentless in trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the people of Newcastle. The trouble is the electors know best and that is why we have seen more than a 10 per cent swing against the Government in Newcastle. "We will privatise the buses," the Government said, "and you'll get a world-class public transport system." "Trust us", the Government says, as commuters are left stranded by a bus network thrown into chaos and left decimated. "We will put the light rail

down Hunter Street," the Government said, "and we will be open for economic development." "Trust us", the Government says, as businesses in the Newcastle CBD are closing on a weekly basis.

"We will sell off the Port of Newcastle", the Government said, "Trust us", even as it is revealed that anti-competitive clauses were secretly inserted into the lease, crippling the port's ability to build a container terminal. The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government sold off the Port of Newcastle for \$1.75 billion, with less than a third of that revenue coming back to Newcastle "But it's okay," it says, "because we are going to build a \$12.7 million new cruise ship terminal giving international visitors and their wallets an open door to the beautiful city of Newcastle." I cannot wait to see thousands of people eating in our cafes, photographing our coastline, engaging with our artists and makers, boosting the economy and truly revitalising our city. But wait, sorry, that was going to happen. At least that is what the Government promised.

In 2016 Mike Baird came to Newcastle and with much fanfare announced \$12.7 million for a 3,000 square metre cruise ship terminal, lauded to be of similar scale to Sydney's White Bay terminal. It was to be a multipurpose terminal allowing for Newcastle to become a home port for ships. The *Newcastle Herald* reported at the time that construction was expected to start in 2017 and be completed in 2018. Then we hit April 2019 and it is reported that the Government has broken its commitment to the people of Newcastle by taking the money off the table and sinking the project. To quote the *Newcastle Herald*:

Newcastle's cruise terminal development is dead in the water after Infrastructure NSW confirmed funding to build it has been withdrawn.

Meanwhile in the Minister's electorate of Bega what do we have? Not money being taken away but money being pork-barrelled at an unprecedented rate of \$55 million. Last year the Minister told the Eden Business and Community Awards that extra funding was being given to a project at Snug Cove that would increase its capacity to receive cruise ships. According to the Eden *Magnet* the extra funding came on top of the \$32 million contribution—

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: The member opposite is failing to acknowledge that Federal Labor also committed \$10 million as part of that.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): It is a good point, but it is not a point of order.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP: Extra funding came on top of the \$32 million contribution towards the breakwater wharf extension and, oops, another \$10 million for a wave attenuator and, oops, additional funding on top of \$4 million for a new welcome centre and, oops, another \$9 million to fully fund the wave attenuator. On 15 August 2018 the Minister said—listen to this:

From our perspective, it takes the State Government's commitment to the Port of Eden to \$55 million.

In the budget reply debate only a few weeks ago the Minister was in here boasting about the Government's commitment to the Port of Eden and the huge amounts of money being spent there. This follows the production of a slick video on Twitter at more taxpayers' expense, again boasting about the Government's money being spent in Eden. Newcastle's port is languishing and the State's second-largest city does not have welcoming or even adequate disembarkation facilities for visiting cruise ships.

Earlier this month Dream Cruises cancelled trips it had advertised for November that used Newcastle as a home port. This happened because the current temporary terminal does not have the facilities like screening equipment and border force personnel. If the new terminal had been completed last year, as forecast, this would not be a problem. I also note that P&O Cruises last visited Newcastle in January this year but has not scheduled any stops in the city during the upcoming cruise season. The blatantly obvious disparity between government funding for a small port on the South Coast and one of the biggest ports in Australia is absolutely flabbergasting. But, as we now know, it is just another example of this Government's flippant attitude to Newcastle.

The Government's hostility may not have endeared it to Newcastle voters, but they still deserve a fair go. The reality is this decision to prioritise the Port of Eden's capability to welcome visitors over Newcastle's capability is a shiny reward for a Liberal held seat. This decision should be condemned by this House. It is time to end the flip-flopping and the favouritism. We do not want the world; we just want to be treated the same as Eden, in the very Australian tradition of a fair go. I note an extract from the glossy *NSW Cruise Development Plan* that the Government released, which states:

To ensure that NSW builds on its existing reputation as a world-class cruise destination, the NSW Government will work with industry to:

ensure cruise infrastructure is fit-for-purpose in Sydney and at major transit ports in Newcastle—

Newcastle—

Port Kembla, Eden and other potential locations along the NSW coast.

Newcastle is a major transit port. The Minister said it himself. A total of \$3 billion comes to New South Wales from the cruise terminal. Newcastle deserves its fair go. It does not deserve for more and more money to be pumped into Eden after a large amount has already gone in, bit by bit. We all deserve a fair share.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (11:20): It may come as no surprise that I am happy to make a contribution against this motion moved by the member for Newcastle. First of all, let me be clear that the New South Wales Government has not withdrawn funding from the Port of Newcastle for the construction of a cruise terminal. Some \$12.7 million was provided by Infrastructure NSW via the Restart NSW Hunter Infrastructure Investment Fund towards the construction of a cruise terminal in Newcastle Harbour. In response to Port of Newcastle's request for additional funding to meet a projected increase in project costs, the New South Wales Government wrote to Port of Newcastle to indicate that additional funding was not available. Port of Newcastle was given time to source additional funds elsewhere to complete the original project scope.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): The member for Newcastle will cease interjecting.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: In early 2019 Port of Newcastle requested a change of project scope that would substantially downsize the project. This request was not accepted. Although recent media reports have indicated that the funding for the cruise terminal in Newcastle is not available, Port of Newcastle has not officially relinquished that funding and it remains open, should the project be delivered as per the original scope. The Port of Newcastle has said publicly that it has consulted with the cruise industry and that its needs were not aligned with the original terminal proposal, which was for a home-porting terminal, but industry does not see any demand for this, for reasons unrelated to the terminal.

Port of Newcastle also said that decisions about the terminal will not necessarily affect the number of people getting off ships in Newcastle. The funds are open for Port of Newcastle to build a new cruise facility to support the expanding cruise industry in the Hunter and contribute to the regional economy. The 99-year leases of Port Botany and Port Kembla began in 2013 and delivered gross proceeds of \$5.07 billion to the New South Wales Government. The 98-year lease of Port of Newcastle commenced in 2014 and provided gross proceeds of \$1.75 billion. The proceeds from these leases were allocated to a number of immediate priorities, including revitalisation projects and debt repayment, and the remaining \$5.8 billion, including stamp duty, was deposited into the Restart NSW Fund.

The proceeds of the leases and other asset recycling initiatives have enabled the Government to fund infrastructure projects, including public transport—I think there is light rail in Newcastle—roads, education, health, culture, sport and water security. More than \$16.5 billion of the \$20 billion Rebuilding NSW plan has been committed, with work underway on headline infrastructure projects. An additional \$7.2 billion has been committed in the Restart NSW Fund for other priority infrastructure projects and programs. The New South Wales Government is also investing more than \$700 million into the Hunter regions infrastructure from the Restart NSW funds. This includes \$150 million committed and reserved for building the Newcastle Inner City Bypass missing link between Rankin Park and Jesmond, and more than \$470 million committed and reserved under the Regional Road Freight Corridor program.

That program includes \$200 million towards the Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace; \$92 million towards the Singleton Bypass; \$85 million for the New England Highway upgrade between Belford and the Golden Highway, which will begin construction late this year or early next year; and \$68 million towards the Muswellbrook Bypass, which is now fully funded out of other funds by the New South Wales Government and will start construction in 2022. The Government has also committed \$24 million to the redevelopment of the Muswellbrook Hospital, \$18 million to update the John Hunter neonatal intensive care unit, \$17 million to the Water Security for Regions Program—including \$11.5 million committed for the pipeline from Scone to the Murrurundi, which is currently under construction—\$10 million for the Newcastle International Hockey Redevelopment and \$7 million for Singleton Hospital's imaging, ambulatory and primary health care redevelopment.

The Government's decision to enter into long-term leases for these ports has resulted in these critical assets being operated with a stronger commercial focus. Commercial operators have a strong incentive to maximise the throughput and efficiency of their assets, and the arrangements the Government has implemented encourage long-term investment. There is no doubt that from the point of view of those opposite, the members for Newcastle, Cessnock and Maitland—I have not heard from the member for The Entrance yet, which is probably worthwhile—it all seems to be about Newcastle. They want to make sure that Newcastle is part of the thriving Hunter Valley.

I am the member for Upper Hunter, and if it were not for the Upper Hunter, there is absolutely no doubt that Newcastle and the lower Hunter would not be what it is today. There is absolutely no doubt about that whatsoever. If the members for Newcastle, Cessnock and Maitland can sit there and deny that the New South

Wales Government has no right to make up tens of millions of dollars—in fact, hundreds of millions of dollars—of lost infrastructure investment from their previous Labor Government, they are not doing the Hunter any justice whatsoever. In fact, those three members are an embarrassment to the Hunter Valley.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): The member for Upper Hunter will stop baiting Opposition members, who are rising to the bait way too easily. Let us bring some decorum back into this contribution.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN: I am more than happy to come back to the motion and point out the hypocrisy of those members from the lower Hunter and Newcastle who do not have the Hunter Valley in mind in their good nature. What they do have in mind is their position within their own political party. They could not give two hoots about our community in the Hunter.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (11:27): It is with great pride and privilege that I support the motion of the member for Newcastle because I actually care about the Hunter. Unlike the member for Upper Hunter, I care about the Hunter. Here we have a clear difference between those inside Cabinet, who seem to have unlimited access to whatever funds they need at their local port at Bega because that member is under threat, and those outside of Cabinet who are in the Upper Hunter, in the distant echoes of The Nationals with their integrity dying on the vine, who have no ability to leverage any power or influence to get even the smallest amount of additional funding for the Hunter.

Ironically, if the Port of Newcastle has the ability to bring cruise ships to the terminal it would massively benefit the member for Upper Hunter's economy because the simplest thing to do—every member in the Hunter knows this and I am sure the member for Upper Hunter has been briefed about it—is to have a cruise terminal with buses ready to run people inland. Within an hour people can be in the wine-tasting region that is shared between the member for Upper Hunter and me. People with an interest in horses will want to go to the Upper Hunter and people who want to support the ecological visitor industry will view the coalmines. People actually want to see that. The member for Upper Hunter could leverage all of that out of a cruise terminal, yet the member has been speaking for the past seven minutes about how the Port of Newcastle is not a priority for his Government or his influence to extract the funds that need to be spent on this port.

If it was a priority, the member would be reciting how many meetings he had organised to try to influence the decision. He would be talking about how many times he had written to the various Ministers and the Premier to influence the decision. He would be talking about how many times he has been banging on the door or asking for the Ministers to visit. He would be talking about the economic impacts for the electorate that he represents as well as the electorates of all the other Hunter members. But there was none of that. The member for Upper Hunter was sent into this Chamber with a script that, quite frankly, was insulting to his integrity and insulting to every member representing a Hunter electorate, at the expense of what could be a thriving business model and good economic outcomes for the entire Hunter.

Talking about the ports deal, I was in this Chamber when former Treasurer Mike Baird privatised the first two ports. I looked across the Chamber and asked, "What's next, Mike, the Port of Newcastle?" He said, "No, Cessnock, no, that's not on the cards." I said, "Okay, Mike." Guess what happened? They sold the port. Then the Premier announced that the terminal was going to be built—but now it is not going to be built. I do not know what this House is. I can only assume it is the House of lies. It is supposed to be the House of integrity, the House of legislation, and the House of truth and honesty. But it is the House of lies. That is what this House is.

Mr Michael Johnsen: You don't like hearing the inconvenient truth.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: The inconvenient truth for the member for Upper Hunter is that he was handed a seven-minute speech and he came into the Chamber and completely downplayed the importance of this terminal at the expense of his own integrity. There are some days when the member for Upper Hunter should just pass on the speech and leave it to others. I support the motion moved by the member for Newcastle.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (11:31): I speak in opposition to the motion moved by the member for Newcastle. I will set the record straight on the Newcastle cruise terminal. Recent media reports have indicated that funding for the cruise terminal at Newcastle is no longer available. This is simply not the case. The New South Wales Government has not withdrawn funding from the Port of Newcastle for the construction of a cruise terminal. The funds remain available for the Port of Newcastle to build a new cruise facility to support expanding the cruise industry in the Hunter and contribute to the regional economy. Infrastructure NSW provided \$12.7 million via the Restart NSW Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund towards the construction of a cruise terminal in Newcastle Harbour.

In response to the Port of Newcastle requesting additional funding to meet a projected increase in project costs, the New South Wales Government wrote to the Port of Newcastle indicating that additional funding was

not available. The Port of Newcastle was given time to source additional funds elsewhere in order to complete the original project scope. In early 2019 the Port of Newcastle requested a change of project scope that would substantially downsize the project. That request was not accepted. The funds are still open for Port of Newcastle, should the project be delivered as per the original scope agreed in the funding deed.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): The member for Newcastle will come to order.

Ms ELENi PETINOS: The Port of Newcastle has said publicly that it has consulted with representatives of the cruise industry and that their needs were not aligned with the original terminal proposal. The proposal was for a home-porting terminal but the industry does not currently see any demand for this for reasons unrelated to the terminal. The Port of Newcastle has also said that decisions about the terminal will not necessarily affect the number of people who are getting off cruise ships at Newcastle. The New South Wales Government supports the development of regional cruise destinations to support our regional economies. However, as a private port operator the Port of Newcastle is best placed to determine the markets it serves.

I take this opportunity to advise the House of the Eden cruise facilities. Investment in Eden is part of the New South Wales Government's ongoing support of the New South Wales South Coast. The New South Wales Government has invested a total of \$55 million in infrastructure for Eden. This comprises a \$32 million contribution towards the breakwater wharf extension, at a total project cost of \$44 million, which is now complete; \$4 million for a welcome centre; and \$19 million for a wave attenuator as part of the Eden Safe Harbour project. This investment brings Eden's port facilities for cruise ships up to the standard that already exists at the Port of Newcastle. In addition, \$4 million has been allocated for a welcome centre on land. This is less than the Government has made available for the proposed Port of Newcastle land terminal facility.

New South Wales has one of the fastest growing cruise markets in the world. Improving the facilities at Eden means more tourists for the region and a boost to the local economy. The development of Eden wharf will open up the entire region to the cruise industry, driving economic growth across the Sapphire Coast and creating more than 80 jobs in tourism, hospitality and stevedoring. Projects such as this help to diversify the local economy and create sustainable, long-term projects. The Eden Breakwater Wharf extension project is funded jointly by the New South Wales Government to the tune of \$32 million; the Australian Government, with a contribution of \$10 million; and the Bega Valley Shire Council, with a contribution of \$2 million. I ask those opposite to stop lying not only to their constituents but also to members of this place and to respect the contributions made by Government members, who are trying to inform them respectfully about the current situation and the facts as they stand.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): I warn the member for Newcastle.

Ms ELENi PETINOS: I oppose the motion.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): Before I call the member for Maitland, I remind the member for Newcastle that he may speak twice in this debate. He should reserve his comments for his second contribution.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (11:35): I strongly support the motion of the member for Newcastle regarding the cruise terminal in Newcastle. I do so with a lot of experience in the tourism industry—as a local tourist cruise guide at that port, as a travel agent booking trips for people from that port and as the owner of a coach touring company that used to run charters. I know a little about the industry. Do members remember when we had Ministers for the Hunter? We even had Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries for the Hunter when those opposite were in government. I did not really like Scot MacDonald, MLC, but he actually stood up for the Hunter—sometimes misguidedly, but he would do so. The member for Upper Hunter has no capacity in this Government. When Labor was in government, the current Leader of the Opposition was Minister for the Hunter and also the Minister for Tourism and Investment. She worked hard to establish Newcastle as a cruise destination.

We knew back then, more than 10 years ago, that cruising was going to be a peak industry for Australia. It is worth \$5 billion and about 60 per cent of that outlay comes to Sydney. We need to get cruising out to the regions. The problem is that there are huge capacity constraints. Cruise Lines International Association's Managing Director Australasia Joel Katz said that we are at crisis point when it comes to available berths. Why not come to Newcastle? We have this dinky light rail that replaced our fantastic heavy rail. We have the V8 supercars and we have all the things that those opposite have told us they are doing to help boost tourism in Newcastle. The problem is they have given us these things but tourists cannot get to Newcastle.

Newcastle Airport is now an international airport again. Under an agreement for the next three years, flights from New Zealand will land in Newcastle. What do tourists do when they get there? Can they go for a cruise from Newcastle? No, they cannot do that. Can they go to Port Stephens for a bit of whale watching? Attracting tourists from cruise liners would give us the incentive to provide more attractions. Tourists could go to

Maitland and visit Maitland Gaol and our beautiful gardens. Lake Macquarie and Swansea are beautiful areas nearby. These are great tourism icons. I worked with Craig Benjamin from the electorate of the member for Upper Hunter. He used to run thoroughbred stud and coalmine tours for international and local visitors. It would be great if he could offer those tours to tourists getting off cruise ships.

The Government is trying to be a bit tricky by saying, "No, we did not really actually stop the cruise ship terminal; it was stopped because they wanted a bit more funding." More provisioning for the port was requested because we all know that, although we will get a great return from a cruise ship terminal, we will get the best return if it is made a home port. Newcastle port authority representatives tried to be very strategic and forward thinking by ensuring that when they built the terminal there was provision for home-porting capacity. But this Government has demonstrated its mean, penny-pinching ways and undone all the great work that was done by the former Labor Government, with input from the Leader of the Opposition when she was the Minister for Tourism and Investment.

Mr Michael Johnsen: What work was done under the former Labor Government?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I will tell you. In 2011 a Cruise Down Under conference was secured and the Australian Tourism Export Council Meeting Place in the Hunter and Corroboree brought, I think, 600 agents from the United States to experience the Hunter region. On this side of the House, we do not just build it and think they will come and not give them a way to get here; we drive demand and we drive the capacity. Newcastle is a top place for cruises.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (11:39): This motion is an attack on the Leader of the Opposition by the member for Newcastle, the member for the Maitland and the member for Cessnock. That is shameful.

Mr Ray Williams: Attacking their leader.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD: Absolutely; it is an attack on her. We had 16 shameful years of Labor and the Leader of the Opposition was the member for Newcastle for part of that time. But nothing came to Newcastle or to the Hunter.

Mr Ray Williams: What did they do to her?

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD: During that shameful corrupt period her own party rolled the then member for Newcastle, and now Leader of the Opposition. This motion contains mistruths.

Mr Ray Williams: Fibs.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD: We know Opposition members are telling fibs in this House because their lips are moving. The motion notes that the Government is spending \$55 million on cruise ship facilities in Eden. But Eden has money from the local council and the Federal Government, and only \$4 million is for the passenger terminal facility. The Government has offered \$12.7 million to the Port of Newcastle, which is still on the table. The Port of Newcastle asked for more money but the Government declined; the budget is \$12.7 million. It is still available. I want the cruise ship terminal to be built at Newcastle. I call on the member for Newcastle to work with the Government and deliver a terminal rather than playing politics in this place by saying that it is all the Government's fault. He is misleading the House because the money is there.

There is \$4 million for the on-land facility at Eden and the rest of the money is to bring the port up to the same standard as Newcastle. It is not a case of wasting money or pork-barrelling; it is a case of bringing the Eden port up to standard. There is only \$4 million for the on-land facility compared with \$12.7 million for the Port of Newcastle. Opposition members also claim that no money is being spent in the Hunter. The member for Upper Hunter revealed that more than \$700 million is being provided for facilities and infrastructure in the Newcastle-Hunter region as well as \$650 million for the light rail. Listening to the member for Newcastle one would think he is opposed to light rail, but he loves it so much that he has asked for it to be extended. This is a typical example of Labor not getting the facts right and misleading the House and constituents.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): Order! The member for Newcastle will come to order. If I have to warn him again he will be called to order.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD: This motion is about undermining the authority of the Leader of the Opposition, the now member for Strathfield. She was the member for Newcastle for years and Labor would not support her when she tried to do things in the Newcastle area. She was such a great advocate for Newcastle that the party moved to remove her from that position. The member for Newcastle is obviously playing politics today instead of working with the Government and doing great things for Newcastle and the Hunter Valley. The member

says one thing in this place and does something entirely different outside it. I oppose this motion because it is simply misleading the Chamber. [*Time expired.*]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): Order! I call the member for Newcastle to order for the first time.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:43): By leave: I have a word of caution for members about cruise ship terminals: Be careful what you wish for. I have a cruise ship terminal in my electorate and the vessels that come to that terminal cannot go to ports in North America or Europe. Why? It is because those vessels are so dirty, polluting and old. The worst, most polluting vessels are sent here—to the edges of the old empire, to the colonies—where air quality standards are insufficient to protect the health of local communities. Those vessels use the dirtiest, most polluting fuel—bunker fuel—because it is cheap. Carnival Cruises—a P&O business and the major cruise line in Australia apart from Royal Caribbean—crows about the fact that it is spending \$400 million on pollution-reduction technology, or scrubbing technology, in its vessels in Europe. But it will not use the same technology here because our regulations do not require it to do so.

I encourage Newcastle to get a cruise ship terminal—cruising is obviously important—but it needs to be world's best standard. There must be shore-to-ship power so that vessels can plug into electricity on site. If the development does not have shore-to-ship power it is second rate and will not serve the community. A recent study into the health impacts of shipping emissions in the greater metropolitan area, including Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, analysed the number of years of life lost to emissions. The study stated:

An estimated 220 years of life were lost by people who died in 2010/11 alone as a result of ship exhaust-related exposure [to PM2.5] ...

That is a small particulate matter. Why are cruise ships different from normal vessels? White Bay used to have a car shipping facility. No-one complained about that relatively low-impact business. But cruise ships are very different. Cruise ships have up to 1,000 cabins and refrigeration so the vessels' engines must run all day, every day. When a normal vessel berths it requires very little power generation—maybe just for cranes or air conditioning in small cabins. But cruise ship terminals are totally different. In port locations they produce the equivalent of tens of thousands of cars pumping out fumes all day.

A recent report by DNV GL commissioned by the Port Authority revealed that cruise ships generate six or seven times more emissions than other vessels. Berthed cruise ships pump out fumes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. New South Wales has a very poor substitute for good air quality management, and that is a mechanism requiring ships to use low-sulphur fuel when they are berthed—but not when they enter the harbour, as proposed originally. If that regulation is not applied in Eden, Newcastle or any other port, the air-quality standards will be second rate. And I guarantee that the Port of Eden will not have the same air-quality regulation because that regulation applies only to Sydney Harbour. I encourage members to support and work for their communities. However, we must not have second-rate businesses promoting cruising in second-rate vessels in this State. We need world's best standards, which means improved air quality and shore-to-ship power at White Bay and every other location.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (11:48): By leave: I congratulate the member for Newcastle on bringing this motion before the House. He was not re-elected with an increased margin for no reason. He was re-elected with an increased margin because he works so hard for his community on matters like this and for bringing issues to light in the Hunter that this Government would ordinarily keep in the dark. The member for Myall Lakes said the money is available to build the terminal at Newcastle. But I will tell members why the money will not be there. It will not be there because this Government—lacking leadership from the Premier and the Minister for Transport and Roads—is ploughing headlong into building a cruise ship terminal on the last beach on the northern side of Botany Bay.

A business case is underway now. I hope the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, who is at the table, will refuse the project. The Government is going to spend \$600 million of taxpayers' money building a cruise ship terminal in Yarra Bay simply because it does not want to tread on a few toes of people who wear blue uniforms and who like living at Garden Island. So there will not be any money to build a cruise ship terminal in Newcastle, where it should be built. The proposed terminal at Yarra Bay is attended by the same themes that attend all the dealings with the Port of Newcastle—the secrecy and corporate deals. The imperative that this Government always holds as its highest principle is to take the highest bid on its corporate deals over any and all interests of the community. Getting the deal done at all costs drives this Government.

What is the evidence for this in relation to Newcastle? Look no further than the secret clause—and it was a secret clause—that former Premier Baird and former transport Minister Berejiklian put in the sale documents for the Port of Newcastle that ousts the possibility of a container terminal in the Hunter, one of the fastest growing and most economically important regions in Australia. It is important not only for the State economy but also for

the nation's economy. It was sneaky and anti-competitive. It put the corporates first and the community last. The Government is doing the same thing now at Yarra Bay and it is doing the same thing in Newcastle.

Newcastle and the Hunter is one of the most beautiful spots in New South Wales. Not everyone who comes to Australia needs to see the Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge from their cabin window. Visitors can berth at Newcastle, cruise down to Sydney and hop off for a few hours to have a look around and then zip back to where they came from. This is a worthy motion. There should be both a cruise ship terminal and a container terminal at Newcastle. Residents in my electorate of Maroubra do not want one at Yarra Bay. I call on this Government when considering the various themes and the various communities that overlap in respect of this motion to put the corporates after the community for once.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (11:51): In reply: I thank members for their contributions. The member for the Upper Hunter gave a large list of projects in his area. I take the point made by the member for Cessnock regarding the issue of advocacy. He hoped that the member for the Upper Under had advocated for a cruise ship terminal at Newcastle because of the great advantages it would bring to Newcastle and all of the Hunter—

Mr Stephen Bromhead: What have you done?

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP: —and the Myall Lakes as well. So I hope both members on the other side have advocated for a little more than the \$12.7 million that has been allocated.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): Order! I warn the member for Myall Lakes.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP: I thank the member for Balmain for his contribution. I am a very big supporter of ship-to-shore power, which is world's best practice: That is what we deserve and what every port deserves. More than six years ago the Government spent over \$50 million on the White Bay terminal yet only \$12.7 million on Newcastle—which is widely reported as having been withdrawn. If the money is still there in the budget papers let us have the money. Not only that, let us have a little more because every time the Minister responsible for ports asks for more money from Treasury he seems to get it. Here we go: Additional State government funds are being committed to Snug Cove for the wave attenuator just "to get on with it", to quote the Minister. Why don't we just get on with it in Newcastle? Why don't we contribute the real amount it takes to build a world-class cruise ship terminal and get on with it, as the Minister says.

Along with the \$9 million the Government spent on the attenuator on top of the previously announced \$10 million, "Let's just put a little bit more in." Minister Constance also said the Government will fund the welcome centre. To quote the Minister, "There is no point spending almost \$40 million to bring in boats and then not have the facilities to welcome the visitors properly." The Minister says, "This is a fantastic result." You come to Newcastle and you get a tent. You wonder why cruise ship operators are not coming to Newcastle anymore—because they are welcomed with a tent. The Government promises a world-class facility and we do not get it, yet the Government is pork-barrelling at the huge rate of \$55 million down at the Port of Eden. The Minister wants to pop in and put in his two bobs' worth, but the Federal Government is also contributing on top of the \$55 million.

[A Government member interjected.]

So how much will it cost then? How much will it cost?

Mr Stephen Bromhead: That's a lie.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP: Minister Constance said it; I am quoting him. That takes the State Government's commitment to \$55 million. So the member for Myall Lakes is wrong to say it is included. I am quoting the Minister. The member should get his facts right before he comes in here and tries to argue. The member cannot even get the facts right. I thank the member for Miranda for making a contribution. In particular, I thank the member for Maitland, and shadow Minister for Investment and Tourism for her contribution. She rightly said that Sydney is at crisis point: When it comes to cruise ships it is full.

However, we cannot make Newcastle a home port. What is going on? The hypocrisy on display is the annoying issue. So much money is going into other parts of New South Wales. The Government sells the port for \$1.75 billion, hardly puts anything into it and then puts out beautiful, glossy brochures that do not say much at all. It is time to end the flip-flopping and the favouritism. The people of Newcastle do not want the world; they just want to be treated the same as Eden, in the very Australian tradition of a fair go.

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

The House divided.

Ayes45
 Noes47
 Majority.....2

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
 Barr, Mr C
 Catley, Ms Y
 Crakanthorp, Mr T
 Dib, Mr J
 Finn, Ms J
 Harrison, Ms J
 Hornery, Ms S
 Leong, Ms J
 McGirr, Dr J
 Mihailuk, Ms T
 Park, Mr R
 Saffin, Ms J
 Tesch, Ms L
 Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E
 Butler, Mr R
 Chanthivong, Mr A
 Daley, Mr M
 Donato, Mr P
 Greenwich, Mr A
 Haylen, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 Lynch, Mr P
 McKay, Ms J
 Minns, Mr C
 Parker, Mr J
 Scully, Mr P
 Voltz, Ms L
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Bali, Mr S
 Car, Ms P
 Cotsis, Ms S
 Dalton, Mrs H
 Doyle, Ms T
 Harris, Mr D
 Hoenig, Mr R
 Lalich, Mr N
 McDermott, Dr H
 Mehan, Mr D (teller)
 O'Neill, Dr M
 Piper, Mr G
 Smith, Ms T.F.
 Warren, Mr G
 Zangari, Mr G

NOES

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

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

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

Motion negatived.

OPERATION CRAYWEED

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:02): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Commends the work of the Lim Sutton Initiative and Sydney Institute of Marine Science on their work with the Crayweed project.
- (2) Congratulates Dorset Sutton and Jenny Lim on their contribution to the re-establishment of crayweed back to reefs where it once flourished in the Sydney metropolitan area.
- (3) Encourages the ongoing support of this project.

It is a pleasure to discuss this motion. I have had a number of questions about what the crayweed project is and its importance. Operation Crayweed is a flagship project from the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, which the New South Wales Government proudly funds and supports. For those who are unaware, crayweed is similar to seaweed and used to dominate the Sydney coastline. However, there was a massive loss of crayweed extending for around 70 kilometres. It went unnoticed for many years until 2008 when research and scientific literature identified the huge gap in the distribution of crayweed in south-eastern Australia, which essentially matched the size of the Sydney metropolitan area.

Crayweed can be referred to as the forest of the ocean. Research has shown that crayweed supports unique biodiversity, including commercially important species such as lobster and abalone, and microbial communities that are not associated with other co-occurring species of algae or seaweed. It also contributes to soft sediment habitats that underpin the food that key fish species in our harbour and marine environment feed on and use, specifically mullet and bream. Increased activity in our waterways, the urbanised stretch of coastline and the poor water quality that was flowing into the ocean led to the degradation and disappearance of crayweed, which is an incredibly important part of the marine biodiversity. Over time water quality has improved but the crayweed has failed to recover.

The research has been funded by the Department of Primary Industries under the Environmental Trust and Recreational Fishing Trust Fund grants; the Australian Research Council; the wonderful work of Jenny Sim and Dorset Sutton, making up the Sim-Lutton and Breen Initiatives; John T Reid foundation; the Evolution & Ecology Research Centre; the University of New South Wales Sydney; and a large number of individuals. They have worked with the Sydney Institute of Marine Science to pioneer the reforestation of our ocean by sewing the seaweed to a biodegradable block which is placed at the bottom of the ocean. From that installation the reforestation of the ocean occurs as the crayweed grows. Passionate volunteers from across the Sydney metropolitan region have contributed to the project but the lion's share of the effort and focus comes from volunteers in my electorate of Manly around Cabbage Tree Bay.

I am grateful to my local community for its effort, especially the divers who volunteer their expertise and energy to install the crayweed. The pilots have taken place around Shelly Beach and Cabbage Tree Bay. I thank the NSW Environmental Trust, the Recreational Fishing Trust and the University of New South Wales, who have funded and supported the Sydney Institute of Marine Science's research that has led to the development of the restoration methods. People might think Operation Crayweed is a unique and an interesting element taking place along our harbour but it is critical to ensuring that our marine biodiversity continues to flourish. Its flow-on effects are significant for not only coastal communities but others elsewhere.

The economic benefit of tourism and people enjoying our harbour, waterways and beaches is incredibly important, whether it is supporting local businesses, dive shops or the restaurants and cafes that dot our beaches and harbour. People enjoy our harbour and beaches and its marine life when diving, snorkelling or swimming. Initiatives such as Operation Crayweed and the good work of people who volunteer their time, effort and knowledge to support them help improve our marine life. I am proud of the team behind Operation Crayweed. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (12:08): I thank the member for Manly for bringing this important issue to the attention of the House. While Camden is not a coastal area we do have the Nepean River. Issues of water quality and marine conservation are important to my electorate, not only as users of the Nepean but also as people who enjoy the coast of New South Wales. Crayweed used to be abundant along the Sydney coastline but sometime during the 1980s it disappeared completely from the metropolitan area between Palm Beach and Cronulla. Its disappearance can also affect rivers going inland due to water quality impacts and these issues can be found in and around the Nepean. The high volume of poorly treated sewage that was pumped directly into Sydney's beaches and bays before the 1990s is likely to have caused the decline.

The problem is that although water quality in Sydney has improved dramatically since the establishment of deep ocean sewage outfalls, the crayweed forests have not returned. The local disappearance of crayweed from the most urbanised stretch of coastline on the Australian continent was linked to high volumes of poorly treated sewage that used to flow into Sydney's shores before the construction of deep ocean outfalls in the 1990s. Those outfalls and improvements in wastewater treatment practices have vastly increased water quality around Sydney since the 1990s. Despite this, crayweed has failed to recover.

Operation Crayweed tested the hypothesis that today's water quality along Sydney's coastline is suitable for the survival of crayweed by transplanting crayweed from extant populations to the north and south of Sydney onto Sydney reefs with suitable control treatments. It found that the transplanted crayweed not only survived as well as those in natural populations, but it reproduced more. Moreover, by restoring crayweed, unique creatures associated with it were also restored, which is a key component of biodiversity. Crayweed can be male or female and the sexually productive babies attach permanently to the reef, which forms the basis of new, self-sustaining populations that expands from the initially restored patch. We now find adult crayweed, which was the offspring from the original crayweed restoration experiment, hundreds of metres from the original patch.

By creating patches of transplanted crayweed on reefs we can in the long term restore forests of this essential species to entire sites. The solution is thanks to volunteers and the Sydney Institute of Marine Science. The NSW Environmental Trust and the Recreational Fishing Trusts funded the research that led to the development of the restoration methods leading to Operation Crayweed. I thank the member for Manly for raising this important issue and I commend the motion to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:11): I make a contribution to the member for Manly's motion. I commend him for bringing to the attention of the House the work of volunteer environmental groups that make such a difference to the local Sydney Harbour environment. He and I and our constituents share and enjoy the beauty of our harbour with many members of our city and people from around the world. The splendour of Sydney Harbour is able to be enjoyed because of the significant contribution of those who make sure that it is kept healthy.

I commend the work of Operation Crayweed for ensuring the health and biodiversity of our harbour. I particularly wish to talk about the Sydney Institute of Marine Science [SIMS] because it is based in Chowder Bay, in my electorate of North Shore. It works every day to maintain the health, resilience and sustainability of Sydney Harbour. I thank Professor Peter Steinberg, who leads SIMS, for his work and his team of scientists, academics and researchers who make such a difference not only to the local environment in Sydney Harbour but also around the globe. Their research informs other urban marine environments. When we look at Australia's examples, our population predominantly lives on the seaboard and we have dense urban environments around our waterways and harbours.

We need to make sure that we look at the way in which human interactions take place and how they impact our waterways to ensure that they are kept healthy. I have already been involved in supporting a lot of the work of SIMS. In 2017 the Government provided it with a \$100,000 grant for the urban marine innovation fund, which is the business plan behind the Centre for Urban Marine Innovation. It is designed to be a global hub for integrated urban marine research, teaching and innovation. In 2018 we also provided it with an environmental research grant of \$150,000 for two of its scientists to look into marine ecology and conservation in more detail.

As the member for Manly has quite rightly mentioned, the maintenance required to ensure our environment remains healthy and pristine is on the shoulders of our volunteers. I note a couple of volunteer organisations that support maintaining a healthy environment in my electorate. The Mosman Parks and Bushland Association was formed in 1964 by a group of residents who wanted to preserve Ashton Park, which is now part of the Sydney Harbour National Park. Those locals dedicate their time to play an important role in preserving Mosman's individual character and landscape and in particular I note the work of president Kate Eccles.

Recently we provided the association with a small grant to support nesting boxes for ringtail possums that need places to nest in our local bushland. Making sure that we provide those homes for possums in our area is really important because we are on the fringe of deep urban development. Maybe even microbats will use the nesting boxes. We are interested in seeing the outcomes and which animals will use them. The grant from the environment Minister for that project was just over \$3,000. On the North Sydney side of my electorate a significant number of volunteers are working in Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden, which is supported not only by the council but obviously by Wendy Whiteley. I reiterate my support for the member for Manly and, as always, his endeavours to ensure that we have a healthy environment for ourselves, our children and future generations.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (12:15): I make a contribution not only as the member for Kiama and for having an interest in marine ecology and environmental health but also as the Minister who has responsibility for volunteering in our State. I commend the member for Manly for bringing Operation Crayweed and its relationship with the Sydney Institute of Marine Science to the attention of the House. The project had its inception in 2011 and is all about improving the environmental health of the harbour and the ecology of our waterways in Sydney.

I am frequently impressed by the member for Manly and the way in which he engages volunteers in his electorate. Not a day goes by that I do not hear from him about a volunteering issue or supporting volunteers. Operation Crayweed is terrific because it combines the passion that people have for where they live with doing something positive and making a contribution. I am sure that members are aware that sometimes people think that activism is clicking "like" or making a statement on Facebook. I say to those keyboard warriors, all of whom I am sure are listening to the scintillating discourse of the Legislative Assembly on this August afternoon: If you want to make a difference, get out and actually do something. Get involved in projects like Operation Crayweed. Roll up your sleeves, join a Bushcare group, a Landcare group, a dune care group and make a real contribution.

The member for Manly has been lobbying me about Operation Crayweed for some time and expanding it to other areas. I am listening to his calls. I appreciate not only the contribution that the volunteer group in his electorate is making but also the advocacy that he has brought to the House. The member for Manly could have introduced lots of different notices of motion to Parliament today, but he chose to raise the issue of volunteers in his electorate. It might interest members of the House to know that annually in this State around 2.1 million volunteers contribute more than 200 million hours of service and support. Their effort of investing their time is making a contribution of around \$5 billion to our State's economy because they recognise and understand the value of service above self.

I know every member of this House is passionate about supporting the volunteer groups in their electorates such as Lions Clubs, Rotary clubs, the Red Cross, Meals On Wheels, RSLs, the RFS and the SES. We are all proud of them, as I know that the member for Manly is. That is why he has brought to the attention of members in this House the real difference that Operation Crayweed is making to the beautiful waterways and coastline of our communities. Volunteers make an impact. They change lives and make a real contribution. I thank the member for Camden and the member for North Shore who joined the member for Manly to talk about this issue. Those members are incredibly passionate advocates for their electorates. I know them both well and they are always raising issues with me to support our volunteers because they are making a contribution.

Volunteers could be spending their lives doing plenty of other things in business or in work, but they are giving of themselves so our whole community can benefit from their service and their work. I commend the member for Manly for being a champion and advocate of his natural environment and of the people who are supporting it. I absolutely and wholeheartedly commend this motion to the House.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:19): In reply: I thank all members for their contributions to this motion, particularly the member for Camden. As he articulated, whilst he does not represent a coastal electorate, people from his area enjoy coming to our beaches and coastline. His electorate has the nearby Nepean River as a waterway. He hit on the point that it is indeed incumbent on us all across New South Wales to support the improvement and enhancement of our waterways and our marine environment, because whether we live near the coastline or not, ultimately we all get the opportunity to enjoy the coast.

I thank the member for North Shore for her contribution. I know that she is a passionate advocate for our marine environment as she represents an electorate that is ringed by the harbour and is not too far from Manly. I know that she and her constituents enjoy their time at Manly Beach and Cabbage Tree Bay, better known to some people as Shelly Beach. I thank the Minister for recognising the important role that our volunteers play. This is a perfect example of a partnership between the Government, through the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, the NSW Environmental Trust and the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust, and people in our community who are passionate about ensuring that future generations get to enjoy our marine environment.

What is most telling and important about Operation Crayweed is that it provides a demonstrable impact that one can see almost immediately. The seaweed that Operation Crayweed is installing grows pretty rapidly once it is put into the water. It is not theory; it has been piloted, and research has been undertaken with the University of New South Wales to understand the science behind Operation Crayweed. The project would not have come to fruition if it were not for the volunteers who give their time, their energy and their expertise. Divers have worked hard, spending many hours training to get their diver certification and licence and they are installing these biodegradable blocks that have the seaweed or crayweed attached to them, which ultimately will contribute to the health of our marine environment.

The knock-on effect of this project is that not only do people get to have a great time when they go snorkelling or swimming but also it helps local businesses, whether in Manly or up and down the coast, by encouraging tourism and people coming to the coast, spending money on dive tours and hiring equipment to get in the water. The economic return of investing in our oceans is clear for all to see. I thank all members who have made a contribution to this motion. I particularly thank the Minister for taking the time to single out Operation Crayweed and the people who have stood behind it and made it such a success. Long may the seaweed grow in our oceans and hopefully we can see the results of Operation Crayweed up and down the coast and across our harbour. I wish it all the success as the project moves forward.

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

Motion agreed to.

WALLSEND CRIME

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (12:23): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes a recent spike in Wallsend petty crime.
- (2) Notes a strong sense in community sentiment that a permanent police presence is needed.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to find a permanent solution to this cyclical problem.

In early April a worried Maryland constituent sent me a message on Facebook. Her family had gone out for the evening and had come home to find a group of hooligans had broken into their home and were in the midst of robbing the house. Her husband detained one of the young men at the scene while they waited for the police to respond. I am happy to report that another of the alleged perpetrators was caught by responding officers a short

time later. The constituent's son, who has special needs, has not been comfortable in the house since, and she too is feeling unsafe in her home.

This is only one of the most egregious criminal incidents that are occurring in the suburbs of Wallsend, Maryland, Fletcher and Minmi over the past few months. Those suburbs have seen a huge spike in criminal activity with offences such as thefts from motor vehicles, stolen cars and home break and enters. On 3 April the Newcastle City Police District posted on Facebook a warning that cars in Maryland, Fletcher, Minmi and Black Hill had been subjected to an increased number of break-ins over the previous week. Understandably, the community is feeling very unsafe. Joseph from Fletcher said:

I know people ... have had a gutful of these grubs going around and breaking into houses and cars. No wonder people are talking about taking matters into their own hands. We had an incident on Wednesday night where police were called to attend regarding grubs looking in vehicles with torches. It took police an hour and twenty-five minutes to attend. How do I know this? It was my wife who called them.

I know that Newcastle police are doing the very best they can. In response to the increased car break-ins at the beginning of April, police canvassed the neighbourhood and collected CCTV footage. On social media local responses were uniformly positive to this strategy. However, there is a strong sense amongst the community that only a permanent police presence in the western suburbs of Newcastle will provide the circuit-breaker we need. One Maryland resident said:

It's gotten beyond a joke out here. Not a day goes by where you don't hear about something that's gone wrong, someone's house has been broken into, someone's car has been gone through or has been keyed. I know the cops are doing their best, and when they come out to answer a call they're professional and responsive but something needs to change. We need there to be a stronger, more visible presence.

It is clear that the community supports the police and they respect them but they know that we need more. I have been encouraging victims of crime to report their experiences to the Police Assistance Line, but it has been my experience that crimes in Wallsend tend to be cyclical. There is a spate of crime, resources are allocated to deal with it, the crime stops and then the resources are withdrawn. Then the crime starts up again and the cycle repeats. I have presented petitions to this House for debate, moved countless notices of motions, asked countless questions on notice, made speech after speech and still this Government has not taken action. So I stand here today to make the case: Crime is a persistent problem in Wallsend and it is a problem that cannot be adequately addressed by police based in the eastern suburbs moving their already limited resources around to the western suburbs. We need a stronger police presence in the western suburbs of Newcastle. We need more cops on the beat in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Hunter-Port Stephens.

The three local police districts that cover the Wallsend electorate have been given 16 new graduates from the next attestation. That is a good start but it hardly makes up for eight years of neglect. All options need to be on the table and I am committed to working productively with the Government on this important matter. How can Wallsend residents and business owners feel safe to invest in our community unless our community invests in them? I urge the police Minister to listen to the cries of our Wallsend community.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (12:29): I speak in opposition to the motion of the member for Wallsend. Firstly, and with all due respect to the member for Wallsend who is certainly a community spokesperson, I indicate that the process for allocation of police resources is something that the Government puts in the hands of the experts. The member is well aware of that. It is for the Minister, the police area command and the local police commander to make decisions about the allocations of resources on a local basis. The allocation of police positions is also supported by the Government. We have seen that through the 1,500 new police announced before the election this year. The record of this Government in providing the best for our police in this great State has been world class. The Government is proud of the support we have given to police, including adding 1,000 police officers to the force since 2011.

Police numbers are at record levels. In the NSW Police Force there are over 16,800 officers and that stretches across the length and breadth of the State. In November last year the Government announced more than \$583 million over four years to deliver 1,500 new frontline police. That is the biggest single increase in the NSW Police Force for over 30 years. This commitment, worth more than half a billion dollars, will bolster police numbers and increase the Police Force's crime-fighting capability and its ability to protect the most vulnerable members of our communities. The provision of funding for these additional police demonstrates our continued commitment to the safety and protection of the people of New South Wales.

This investment includes additional specialist officers for elder abuse, officers to monitor offenders on the child protection register, extra rural crime investigators, additional police to form domestic violence high risk offender teams, police to patrol the public transport network, police to fight organised crime and high visibility policing. As one would understand from that list, there is certainly an intention to tackle the issues that are of

concern to those within our electorates, issues that affect numerous members of our community but particularly vulnerable members.

Earlier this year, the Government welcomed 261 new probationary constables to the ranks of the NSW Police Force. Class 337 included 261 police who took the oath to protect their communities. For the benefit of the member, as part of the Government's commitment six officers will be joining the Newcastle City Police District this financial year, including an officer involved in child protection registration. I wish those officers the very best in their policing careers and thank them for making this commitment to serve and protect our community. All members would attest that it is a great honour to be a sworn officer serving the community. We know that these new probationary constables will be learning from the best—those experienced and senior officers who are already out and about in our community.

I record my appreciation to all police officers for their commitment and hard work in keeping this great State safe. I thank the fantastic officers in my electorate of Seven Hills and those who work in the Blacktown, Cumberland, Parramatta, Quakers Hill and The Hills police area commands. I thank the officers who work at the Wentworthville Police Station, which is currently underway to being revamped and will provide a great facility for those officers to work out of. Youth crime in any community is a concern and needs to be managed proactively. I note that, according to the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, in the Newcastle local government area every one of the 17 major crime categories is either down or stable and some categories are down by as much as 23.1 per cent over the last 24-month period.

This is consistent with crime rates across the State. In fact, two major crime categories are experiencing reductions: break and enter into dwelling is down 4.7 per cent and steal from person is down 7.2 per cent. New South Wales has some of the lowest crime rates in 20 years and we are committed to ensuring that this downward trend continues. In January 2011 the Auditor-General's report found the NSW Police Force was understaffed by 489 officers and stations were desperately understaffed. That followed 16 years of Labor Government. Has this not dramatically turned around since 2011?

The Liberal-Nationals Government remains committed to ensuring that we continue to invest in our police and to ensure the safety and security of the communities of New South Wales. This Government's strong economic management is ensuring we can make record investment in frontline police to protect and serve the people of New South Wales and assist the force to better fight crime in the best possible way that it can. I commend the actions of the NSW Police Commissioner who is assisting by allocating resources in an efficient and effective manner to provide a great, safe community for all of us.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:36): I support the member for Wallsend's motion. It is a sensible, well thought out motion that relates to every member's electorate. Everyone has the right to feel safe in their home, in their street and in their community. One of the most important duties of the Government is to keep the people of New South Wales safe by ensuring a police presence in each electorate. There is a direct correlation between police presence and the reduction of petty crime in an area. It concerns me that the Government is only taking a reactive approach. A study conducted by the Victorian Ombudsman found that while a heavy police presence in a particular area may reduce crime, such operations tend to shift the location of crime to another area until the presence diminishes. Like in the example of Wallsend, once the police resources are moved then crime simply returns. This cyclical nature of crime can only be broken if we prioritise crime deterrence and prevention through strong police resources throughout New South Wales. It is that simple.

This motion is relevant to every electorate, but disproportionately impacts on regional and rural areas. My electorate of Shellharbour is expecting 50,000 additional residents in the next decade, focused primarily in West Dapto. This population boom in a targeted area has led to increased community concern about safety and the spike in petty crime. Dapto is growing rapidly, yet Dapto Police Station is not open 24 hours a day. This results in extra strain on our local area command at Oak Flats station and unacceptable wait times. I have been encouraging victims of crime to report their experiences to the Police Assistance Line.

The residents of Dapto are forced to wait a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes for the police just to arrive. The hardworking police force in my region do the best they can, but this is just unacceptable. We have a responsibility to keep our residents safe. We need police ready to respond to calls and to be on the scene as soon as possible. My worry is that many residents express that these wait times deter reporting of crime, which prevents the police from allocating their resources accurately. "Broken windows" policing is not effective. The term "broken windows" is a metaphor used by researchers alluding to the fact that if a broken window is left unfixed, it indicates that no-one cares and invites more broken windows and more serious criminal behaviour. I share words left on an online petition by Mrs Sharon Brownlow calling for increased policing in my community:

This crime in our community needs to stop! We have all had enough! We are tired of the way things have been so-called handled. We are in desperate need of our local police stations to be opened up to help combat all this crime!

Another resident, Mr Glenn Ryan, stated:

After living here all my life I have never seen this level of crime. It is obviously a sign that these criminals do not fear getting caught. I have seen a sudden increase in speeding drivers in suburban streets including donuts at any time of the day or night along with lots of community talk of car and house break-ins. We need a much higher profile of our local police.

I have also written to the police Minister asking for a meeting to discuss the issues of petty crime in my area and I look forward to discussing how we can keep Dapto safe. I urge the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to listen to the concerns of New South Wales residents and work with us to find a permanent solution to reduce crime in this State. Again I acknowledge the member for Wallsend on this very sensible and worthwhile motion.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:40): Before I commence my contribution, I note the passing today of Tim Fischer, former National Party leader and former Deputy Prime Minister. I pass on my condolences to his family and, of course, the wider National Party. I turn now to the motion of the member for Wallsend. I support the comments made by the member for Seven Hills and Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice. The Liberal and Nationals Government is committed to keeping our communities safe, including the community of the member for Wallsend. As the member for Seven Hills said, we trust the Commissioner of Police and local area command to make decisions about the allocation of police resources locally. Our police officers are on the front line 24 hours a day, seven days a week protecting our community. It is our responsibility to ensure that they have the resources and support they need to get the job done—and that is exactly what this Government is doing.

I am advised that the office of the member for Wallsend met with the Minister's office and the Assistant Commissioner of Police responsible for the northern region. The Assistant Commissioner explained local crime prevention strategies and what police are doing to ensure community safety. I am advised that the Assistant Commissioner also gave the member for Wallsend his direct contact information and said that she must never hesitate to contact him if there is anything he can do to assist. I have the same access to my commanders on the Central Coast and Brisbane Waters.

I wish to speak about the investment this Government has made in building the infrastructure that our police so needed. The NSW Police Force received a record capital works budget in 2019-20 of almost \$286 million to provide officers with the facilities, equipment and technology they need to protect and serve the community. This includes a \$100 million investment over the next four years for new and upgraded police stations: \$13 million for Bega; \$25 million for Goulburn; \$13 million for the Jindabyne Area Police Stations Program, including Perisher and Thredbo; \$7 million for Bourke; \$7 million for Bathurst; and a \$35 million state-of-the-art training and education facility at Dubbo to ensure that police officers receive the very best training as they put their lives on the line every day to prevent and disrupt crime.

In my own region of the Central Coast the Gosford police station will receive a \$3.5 million redevelopment. That is being done in consultation with local police and will include upgraded flanges. The first \$1 million was delivered in the 2018 budget and the remaining \$2.5 million in the 2019 budget. We do not just talk the talk; we deliver on the promises we make to local communities. Police play an incredibly important role. When everyone else is running away from danger, these guys and girls run towards it. That is why I am so pleased that we can provide better facilities and resources through the redevelopment of the Gosford police station.

I thank Superintendent Tony Joyce, Brisbane Water Police District Commander, and Superintendent John Gralton, Tuggerah Lakes Police District Commander, for their incredibly strong leadership of our fantastic local police officers. The returned Liberal-Nationals Government has committed to deliver new and upgraded stations across the State to ensure our police have the best facilities and resources to proactively prevent and disrupt crime. This Government is committed to providing police with the facilities they need to get on and do what they do best—protecting our communities. We will continue to invest to ensure that New South Wales is safe and secure.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:44): I am pleased to support the motion of the member for Wallsend. I commend her for bringing this matter before the House in her role as a very effective, capable and conscientious local member. Telling the stories of victims of crime is important, particularly for intruder or break, enter and steal offences. Many of us—me included, having spent most of my career as a defence counsel—often look at a series of crimes in an objective way and categorise them in terms of seriousness. For example, break, enter and steal offences fit lower in the pecking order than do murder offences. However, they are not lower in the pecking order for victims who never get over the psychological impact of having had intruders in their homes.

The member for Wallsend said there has been a spike in offences of this nature and the matter cannot be resolved locally. This has not been raised on a political basis. This is a cry on behalf of her community for help. The member for Seven Hills referred to police numbers in 2011. Others spoke of what a fabulous job the Government is doing in delivering on its promise. It is not appropriate for Government members to stonewall this issue. Otherwise I will refer to the Productivity Commission's report where it compares the performance and

budgetary allocation of the New South Wales Government to every other single State of the Commonwealth, and Government members would not be sitting here beating their chest.

The NSW Police Force is one of the largest police forces in the world and it is the responsibility of the Government to provide policing in every breadth and corner of the State. If, according to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, because of the effectiveness of the police service in this State, the number of break, enter and steal offences has been reduced by 4.5 per cent and there has actually been an increase in the area of Wallsend, then there is a problem somewhere. I have great faith in the Commissioner of Police and the skills of his investigators to be able to resolve issues of this nature.

This is a cry by the member for Wallsend for resources. It is a cry to Commissioner Fuller to ask whether the New South Wales police skill, investigative ability and ability to deter crime that has successfully been applied in other parts of the State can be applied to the electorate of Wallsend where there has been a spike—and even when the spike reduces, there is a continued spike. That is what the Government has been asked to do. As I said, the member for Wallsend is not playing politics with this issue. She is asking for help and all we get from those opposite is stonewalling. I hope Commissioner Fuller is listening because I have found him immensely responsible and responsive. Indeed, I hope he is more responsive than the Government members in this debate.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (12:48): I oppose the motion of the member for Wallsend but I have great sympathy for any member who witnesses a spike in crime their electorate. No member is immune; it happens in all of our electorates. I pay my respects to the wonderful work undertaken by the outstanding New South Wales Police Force, led by none other than Mick Fuller. He is as an outstanding commissioner and he has focused his entire police force's attention on addressing crime at a very early stage. In the short time he has been our commissioner there have already been some outstanding initiatives to address youth crime and juvenile crime. The member for Terrigal noted that the member for Wallsend has met with the Minister's offices and with the Assistant Commissioner of Police responsible for Wallsend. It is important to detail the great work that our police have done in recent times, especially in engaging young people.

The NSW Police Force is often the first point of contact with the criminal justice system for young people who are offending or engaging in antisocial behaviour. For this reason, a key priority of the police force is to target youth offending, victimisation and reoffending through a range of diversionary and intervention strategies. The creation by our Government, together with the police force, of the Capability Performance and Youth Command has enabled the NSW Police Force to engage in a renewed focus on youth crime prevention and intervention. That work includes deploying youth liaison officers, specialist youth officers and school liaison police officers to work with young people right across New South Wales.

Police are working in partnership with police citizens youth clubs [PCYC] to conduct over 100 programs to prevent and reduce crime in their local areas as part of the targeted programming framework. When I was the Minister for Multiculturalism much of our grant funding was directed to youth programs with the PCYC. I saw that intervention firsthand and the many thousands of young people who are not only engaging positively with these programs, but are also going on to lead incredibly productive lives. Sometimes we think things are all too difficult but a small amount of resourcing and effort, particularly from police within the PCYC, can have incredible outcomes.

To see those outcomes I look no further than the PCYC in areas very close to home, like at Blacktown where the Savannah Pride program has engaged with young people of Sudanese background through basketball. Some 20 of those young people have been contracted either in high school basketball in America or in college basketball and six of them now play in the American National Basketball Association. One can just imagine the enormous funding they are recouping through that and the proceeds to basketball. More importantly, they have become wonderful ambassadors on behalf of the Sudanese community. That is one very important example of what the PCYC and the police commissioner are doing to reduce youth crime. In New South Wales we do not parallel with the problems recently seen in Victoria. Whilst I oppose the motion, I certainly support the outstanding work of the NSW Police Force.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:52): In reply: I thank the members for the electorates of Seven Hills, Shellharbour, Terrigal, Heffron and Castle Hill for their contributions. I congratulate the Government because the three speakers on its behalf did not mention Wallsend or the issues that I raised. I am not trying to be adversarial. It does not work and I do not believe in it. I want members to hear about the problems we are having with crime in Wallsend. The member for Seven Hills talked about the 17 crime categories. I know that Wallsend is a hot spot because the local area commanders have talked to me about that. I have followed the crime categories in Wallsend. We have problems in the town. I moved this motion not to complain or grumble but to find a solution for the people in Wallsend who are feeling unsafe.

I am also disappointed that the Minister did not make the effort to walk downstairs, as a show of faith and gesture of goodwill, to listen to the concerns of the people of Wallsend. The member for Shellharbour made a good point. She said that the most important duty of a government is to keep people safe in every electorate. It is wonderful that the Gosford electorate is receiving a new \$3.5 million development. How does that relate to Wallsend? In the electorate of Wallsend each week our police station is open for four hours. When the Government was elected in 2011 a superstation at Glendale was budgeted and slated for. What happened to that money? It was taken away from my constituents. We do not have a police station.

It is fine for members to talk about how much is being spent on their electorates for their resources. That is wonderful because it helps the people of Gosford, but it does not help the people of Wallsend. We need a permanent solution to the spikes of crime in the western suburbs of Newcastle—this is a growth area because development is taking place on the old Yancoal and Xstrata land. We need the resources and infrastructure to ensure people feel safe. The member for Heffron spoke eloquently about the importance of victims being able to feel safe and the psychological impact when crime occurs. I am seeing this more and more in the Wallsend electorate and I want it to go away.

The only way to eradicate crime in my electorate is if we have a permanent police presence. I do not think any of the three local area commanders who cover the Wallsend area would disagree with me. But it is not their job to tell the Minister for Police and Emergency Services that we need more policing; it is mine and that is a problem. I am pleased that the member for Castle Hill talked about the PCYC in Blacktown. We do not have a PCYC in Wallsend. Again I am not sure how that helps me or the people in Wallsend. I am disappointed that the Government has not really taken this motion seriously, because it is a serious concern to the people of Wallsend. I want all crime categories to be lowered in Wallsend and I need the Government's help. I will work with the Government, I will work with everyone on this issue to help the people of Wallsend. I urge members to support this sensible motion.

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

The House divided.

Ayes44
Noes48
Majority.....4

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
McGirr, Dr J
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Donato, Mr P
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dalton, Mrs H
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lalich, Mr N
McDermott, Dr H
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
O'Neill, Dr M
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Gibbons, Ms M
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Lindsay, Ms W

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

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

NOES

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

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

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

Motion negatived.**HAYLEY LAWRENCE, CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR**

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:04): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises Port Macquarie-based author Hayley Lawrence for her debut novel *Inside the Tiger* being listed on the Children's Book Council of Australia notable books for 2019.
- (2) Congratulates Hayley Lawrence on her recognition as remarkably one of two debut novelists acknowledged on the 2019 list of children's books with a number of critically acclaimed award winning authors joining the honours.
- (3) Applauds Hayley Lawrence for producing a contemporary reflection of Australian conversation in modern-day life that inspires other locally grown authors to achieve their goals.

It is apt that this motion is being debated today because this week, from 17 to 23 August, we are celebrating Children's Book Council of Australia [CBCA] Week. As members know, there are always lots of activities during this week, particularly at our preschools and childcare centres and for the early years of primary schools that celebrate with book week parades. During this week many pre-schoolers and students in infant schools will dress up as some of their favourite characters from books. I have spoken to a number of members who have told me that tomorrow their children will dress up to celebrate CBCA Week. Some have dressed up in superhero costumes while others will be dressed in the costumes of their favourite character from a book.

CBCA Week is an initiative of the Children's Book Council of Australia. It aims to bring children together to celebrate the wonderful books that they like to read. It is an active time in schools and also in libraries and in bookshops. It is a great time to celebrate the authors of these wonderful children's books. That is what I am doing in noting the wonderful work done by Hayley Lawrence from Port Macquarie. I congratulate her on her achievements. I have a background in teaching and I recognise the skill of children's authors who not only put together a children's story but also illustrate the story to make sure that young children reading the books continue to be excited by the story and want to be engaged in the story. As parents and teachers we understand the important role that reading plays in the development of children's literacy skills. Reading is critical. I see the member for Wyong nodding. I am sure that, like me, he has many great memories of reading to his own children—

Mr David Harris: And to students.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS: And to students, of course, because he understands the importance of encouraging the development of a love of reading from a very early age. One of the childcare centres in my electorate asked me to record a video of me reading a book and then to send the video to the centre. It is getting celebrities and leaders in our community to read a favourite book and to be filmed doing so. These videos will be uploaded to YouTube and will then be available for parents to download for their children to watch when they are at home. Rather than sending home a hard copy of a book the children will be able to access the YouTube videos of leaders in our community reading stories to them. I am interested to know whether any member has heard of the book that I have chosen, which is *Dear Zoo*.

Ms Eleni Petinos: My nieces' favourite.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS: There you go, already a favourite of some members of the House. The reason I chose that book is that it is a flip book about a young child who has written to the zoo, hence the title *Dear Zoo*. In her letter she asks the zoo to send her a pet. When you open the flap of the first crate you see that the first animal the zoo sends her is a giraffe. The child says, "That's way too big and I'll have to send it back". So the story goes with a whole range of animals. At the very end the zoo sends her a puppy, which she says is perfect and that is the pet she is going to keep. That is the book I will be reading. I give a plug to Dymocks bookshop, where I was yesterday to buy a brand-new copy of *Dear Zoo* so I could read it and be recorded on video to share the story with the children at the childcare centre. This is a wonderful initiative.

Childcare centres, libraries, preschools and schools right across our electorates have some very unique and novel ways to celebrate Book Week. But at the end of the day they are trying to make sure that we encourage young children to have a love of reading and hopefully take it with them through their lives. I am sure for all members it is a wonderful to find time in our busy schedules on the weekend or on holidays to grab a new novel and read it. You have a sense of achievement at the end of the break if you have read a new novel. Hopefully these young children that we are nurturing and encouraging to read will enjoy reading great novels in later life, as we do. I commend Hayley Lawrence for her debut novel *Inside the Tiger* being listed as a notable book for 2019 by the Children's Book Council of Australia.

I also commend the Children's Book Council of Australia for its awards that encourage young authors and authors generally to write and thank the council for its work in providing an opportunity in Book Week from 17 to 23 August for all of our preschools, primary schools or libraries to encourage young people to be involved in activities. The theme for this year's Book Week is "Reading is my secret power". A lot of young children have decided to dress up as their superhero. Members should not be afraid when they return to their electorates tomorrow if they see Superman, Batman and many others running around: It is all the name of Book Week.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (13:11): It is my pleasure to support the motion moved by the member for Port Macquarie, who brings lots of good motions to this House that I am often happy to support. This motion is about Book Week and the Children's Book Council of Australia awards. I am a former school principal and my wife is a current assistant principal and a former school librarian. All week my wife has been telling me about her adventures. Because her school librarian is unwell at the moment my wife has filled in and has been spending her weekends, as teachers often do, preparing the school display for Book Week.

As the member for Port Macquarie said, it is about secret powers. Students have been getting their costumes ready and preparing displays around super heroes and special people. I know this drives some parents mad but it adds to the important journey of children understanding the significance of books to learn enjoyment and also to learn about life. I am glad that the member for Port Macquarie acknowledged Hayley Lawrence. I did not know her book *Inside the Tiger* but on a very quick reading I found it an interesting topic. It is about a young girl, the daughter of a politician—relevant to us—who wrote to a prisoner on death row, who wrote back to her. The introduction states:

She only meant to write to a death row prisoner.
She never meant to fall for him.
Micah Rawlinson is a boy with a terrible past and no future.
Will Bel have to choose between him and those she loves at home?
Whatever happens, none of them will ever be the same ...

I assume this book is written for young adults because it contains complex subject matter. It just goes to show that through writing and story telling we can teach young people about society and some important issues. At the same time we can encourage young people to enjoy a love of reading. I am a mad science fiction reader. As many of my colleagues know, I spend a lot of time meeting my favourite authors at Supanova and Oz Comic-Con, which is coming up. Traci Harding, whom I read from a very early age, will be there doing book signing. I have bought my book and I am ready to take it there. Sometimes all the young people are lined up and there is Mr Harris lined up at the back. I am always really happy to talk to them.

One of the best opportunities I had was to meet my all-time favourite author, Raymond E. Feist at Supanova. I was really lucky: I had my book, I was first in line and he came back early so I got to have a 10- to 15-minute conversation with him. It was one of the highlights of my life, I have to say—bit of a groupie. If you have a love of reading instilled in you at an early age it can continue. That is why the role of the Children's Book Council of Australia awards and the nominations for those awards is so important. I know every school library buys all the award-winning books so that they can be medallists. I commend the member for Port Macquarie for moving this really good motion.

Debate interrupted.

Announcements

DEATH OF TIMOTHY ANDREW FISCHER, AC, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I pass on the condolences of the House on the death of Mr Tim Fischer, a former Deputy Prime Minister.

I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

*Members***MEMBER FOR ROCKDALE****MEMBER FOR CHARLESTOWN**

The SPEAKER: I wish the member for Rockdale all the best for his upcoming birthday, and hope he has a wonderful celebration planned.

I wish the member for Charlestown all the best for her upcoming birthday, and hope she has a wonderful celebration planned.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to Sophie Stokes, the wife of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and member for Pittwater. I welcome Nicole Elliott, wife of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and member for Baulkham Hills. I welcome Vicki Kimber, the partner of the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education and members for Parramatta. I welcome visitors from the Bomaderry Bowling Club, guests of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services and member for Kiama. I welcome members of the Lugarno Probus Club, guests of the Assistant Speaker and member for Oatley. I welcome students and teachers from St Columbkille's Catholic Primary School in Corrimal, guests of the member for Keira. I welcome Ms Janice Harris, guest of the member for Orange. Finally, I welcome David Israel, and Jess and Sue Jansson, constituents and guests of the member for Lake Macquarie.

*Announcements***DEATH OF TIMOTHY ANDREW FISCHER, AC, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

The SPEAKER: It is with regret that I inform the House of the passing of the Hon. Timothy Andrew Fischer, AC; a distinguished man, former member of the New South Wales and Australian parliaments and stalwart of the National Party. On behalf of the House I express our condolences to his wife, Judy Brewer, sons Harrison and Dominic, and his family and friends. Tim was an inspirational example to all of us in this place. He leaves a unique and valuable legacy in Australian political life. Tim Fischer's passing will be the subject of a motion of sympathy on a future day. In the meantime, will all members please stand in silence as a mark of respect.

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

*Rulings***POINTS OF ORDER**

The SPEAKER: I remind members of my warning yesterday in relation to points of order that I regarded as deliberately interfering with the flow of an answer. Overnight I did a little reading on decisions from the Chair. I note that previous Speakers—Murray, Rozzoli, Torbay and, particularly, Aquilina—regularly placed members on one, two or three calls to order immediately for engaging in that practice. I flag that I will take a tougher stance on that in the future.

*Question Time***BUILDING CLADDING SAFETY**

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:22): My question is directed to the Premier. The Victorian Government has established a strong scheme to rectify or remove flammable cladding. New South Wales has 553 buildings that have been identified as potential fire-safety death traps. If Premier Daniel Andrews can show leadership, why will the Premier not do the same?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:22): The Leader of the Opposition has acknowledged the socialist State of Victoria. There is no doubt that New South Wales cannot be compared to Victoria, especially when it comes to managing the budget. The New South Wales Government is building infrastructure without debt and getting on with the job of running a strong economy, unlike Victoria.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I digress. The Leader of the Opposition has raised an important issue regarding building safety and cladding. In particular, I note the work of the previous fair trading Minister and

the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation in relation to those very serious matters and especially to the issues that have been dealt with at a national level surrounding the cladding issue. Nobody in this place should underestimate the impact that the recently appointed NSW Building Commissioner will have on the industry. The commissioner has already started going to sites and explaining to industry its obligations. He will also provide advice to the Government on this and many other issues. Unfortunately, the issues impacting the building industry at the moment, including cladding, have existed for at least a decade, if not longer, and the Government is dealing with them. For those opposite to imply that their hands are clean in those matters is completely wrong.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I have said before in the House, it demonstrates the lack of ability of members opposite to stand up in this place or in front of the public and explain how they can justify their comments—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: —when the unfortunate incident of the Mascot Towers hit the press and people realised the impact.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being highly relevant.

Ms Yasmin Catley: This is not about Mascot Towers.

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: This is about cladding.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Swansea to order for the second time. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I know why the member for Swansea is anxious about this issue. I think it was the day after—to his credit, the member for Heffron was more responsible in his comments—we learnt about the sad plight of the residents, who to this day have been adversely impacted by those towers, she got up in the press—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question is about what the Premier is doing about cladding.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being highly relevant. I have heard enough on the point of order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: She got up in the press and said that it was the New South Wales Government's fault that the Mascot Towers had been impacted when, in fact, the towers were approved and built—

Ms Prue Car: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member's point of order had better be different.

Ms Prue Car: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms Prue Car: The question was specifically about flammable cladding.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. I place the member for Londonderry on two calls to order. I just ruled that the Premier was being relevant.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I make this point because the Mascot Towers buildings were built in 2009, approved by a Labor council and by the then Labor Government, yet those opposite had the hide to mislead the public about what happened.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I have ruled that the Premier is being relevant to the question. I call the member for Keira to order for the first time. I call the member for The Entrance to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I raise those issues because issues impacting the building industry and cladding are complex and deserve the attention of the Government, which they do. I ask members opposite to stop being political and throwing blame when their hands are all over it. I make this point. Whether it comes to auditing certifiers or ensuring that everybody in the building industry knows their responsibility or ensuring that our buildings are safe, rest assured that our Government, through the appointment of the new building commissioner,

has made that a priority. We look forward to introducing legislation later this session, which I hope the Labor Party will support.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (14:27): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the ongoing delivery of major projects and the jobs that it has created and will create?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:28): I thank the member for Manly for his question. I know how much he is anticipating the new projects coming to his electorate, as are many of our colleagues. It is important to deliver the infrastructure to improve the quality of life of people by reducing the time they take to travel around our great city and our great State. Delivering infrastructure is also important because it is one of the main reasons New South Wales has the lowest unemployment rate in the nation. We are creating more jobs than all the other States combined. There is no doubt that when the Government invests in infrastructure that creates jobs and gives confidence for business to invest in New South Wales.

Unfortunately, in other States business investment is contracting—it is in negative territory—but in New South Wales it is well and truly in positive territory because the Government's infrastructure spend has ensured job creation and given confidence for business to invest. Regrettably, when the new Leader of the Opposition was asked about infrastructure she said, "The challenge for us moving towards 2023 is to figure out what road projects are underway and what we can stop and what we can't stop." Members opposite are about cancelling and axing projects—same old Labor. That is what she said.

Mr Ryan Park: You're about building stupid projects.

The SPEAKER: That is enough. I call the member for Keira to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I will be generous. Rather than asking the member for Keira now, I will give him until 5 o'clock to give me a list of the "stupid projects" he is referring to.

Mr Ryan Park: The one that's just down the road.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I wonder if the member for Keira, who is the shadow Minister for Health, has any hospitals on that list.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: Near your electorate, Northern Beaches.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Keira from the Chamber under Standing Order 249 until the House adjourns today.

[The member for Keira left the Chamber at 14:30 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Great, thank you. Even though the member for Keira has left the Chamber—he will do anything not to come up with the list by 5 o'clock—I will give him an extension. He has until 5 o'clock tomorrow to tell me what "stupid projects" we are building. But I digress. Under WestConnex—a project that members opposite do not support—the Government has created 10,000 jobs and a number of apprenticeships. We are building the next stage of the metro through the Sydney CBD to Bankstown. Interestingly, I noted the comments of the member for Bankstown yesterday. Until this point she was vigorously opposing the metro but yesterday she had a change of heart because she said her community was looking forward to updates on the metro. She would well say that—

Ms Tania Mihailuk: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. I make it very clear for the Premier in case she misheard me yesterday—

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough on the point of order.

Ms Tania Mihailuk: —that my community has been given no information about this metro—

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

Ms Tania Mihailuk: —and that I would like the Premier to provide updates.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Bankstown to order for the second time. The member for Bankstown is perilously close to being called to order for the third time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I do not understand why members opposite cannot say thank you for all these great projects. The Sydney Metro Southwest goes all the way to the electorate of the member for Bankstown. As we know, the Tallawong to Chatswood stretch of the metro has already been done. The Chatswood to Bankstown metro is creating 4,300 jobs.

Ms Lynda Voltz: What about Birrong and Yagoona stations? You're talking about Bankstown. Tell us what you are doing about Birrong and Yagoona.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Oh, my goodness!

The SPEAKER: The member for Auburn will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I know the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link is a project close to the hearts of the member for Manly and the member for North Shore—

Mr Brad Hazzard: What about the member for Wakehurst, Premier?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: —and the member for Wakehurst. [*Extension of time*]

The Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, which is very close to the hearts of a number of our colleagues—including members representing the electorates of Manly, North Shore, Wakehurst and Pittwater—alone will create 15,000 new jobs. I know that our colleagues in southern Sydney and the shire care very much about stage one of the F6 extension.

Mr Stephen Kamper: It doesn't go to the shire.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Rockdale wants it too.

Mr Mark Coure: He is its biggest supporter.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Of course. Stage one of the F6 will create 3,000 jobs. We know that members opposite do not support the NorthConnex project but it is humming along nicely and it has created 8,700 jobs. We know that all the hospitals, schools, cultural institutions and sporting stadiums we are building are creating jobs because we are the party of the workers. We support working families and we support the workers; those opposite support nothing.

BUILDING CLADDING SAFETY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:34): My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. Given that a Canberra apartment block with combustible cladding caught fire earlier this month, why will he not release the list of 553 buildings in New South Wales with similar cladding so that people know whether they are safe in their homes?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:34): I thank the member for Swansea for her question. It is a reckless question. At a recent Building Ministers' Forum, Ministers across Australia came together to talk about building and construction and what we need to do to get quality, transparency and accountability back into the construction industry. One thing we talked about was cladding and the unfortunate Lacrosse fire in Victoria. After the discussion about cladding on buildings throughout States in Australia, the Victorian building Minister made it very clear that international evidence showed that there was a potential risk for undesirables to cause trouble if reports of exact locations of those buildings with flammable cladding were released to the public. If the list is released, the building and those residents will be put at great risk of harm from those who seek to cause harm in our community. That is why it has not been released and, on our watch, it will not be.

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (14:36): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is improving public transport services in the regions?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:37): I begin by echoing the Speaker's comments made at the start of question time. I note that my thoughts, and everyone's thoughts, are of the late Tim Fischer, who was a stalwart of Australian politics. Today we are thinking of his family and friends. He was a great friend of The Nationals, a great rail man, and in the coming weeks we will hear more tributes from the Premier, the Deputy Premier and other members of this place. I thank the member for Cootamundra for her question about better opportunities for those in the bush. I acknowledge the school group in the gallery today and I thank them for coming along to watch question time in Parliament. I apologise for the

behaviour of their local member, who is no longer in this place. I certainly hope that their behaviour is not like his.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: People in regional New South Wales have more services than ever before and it is not just standard routes; it is on-demand services, driverless buses, hub and spoke trials—the list goes on and on. Our regions are at the forefront of the public transport revolution. Today I share good news with the House: The New South Wales Government is delivering on its commitment to boost public transport services to 44 more communities across the State. I know that the Treasurer and the member for Baulkham Hills are both excited that there are more services for the north-west—services for Goodooga, Walgett and Collarenebri. Those services will mean—

[A Government member interjected.]

They are bus services—more bus services. Those services will mean that residents of small communities such as Spring Ridge and Conargo will be able to access nearby towns on a regular basis, opening up opportunities like never before. Consultation is underway for 13 new public transport routes that will benefit those 44 communities. I encourage all residents to have their say. Those buses will change the lives of people living in small towns, some of which have never had a public transport system before. They will improve access to health services and education facilities, and make it easier to visit family and friends in nearby towns; they will make it easier for tourists to visit some of those towns and communities; and it will also be easier for residents of those areas to visit neighbouring towns that they have been prevented from visiting in the past. It is about creating greater connectivity. Take the new route between Tumut and Wagga Wagga—it will link small towns like Tarcutta, Grahamstown and Ladysmith to Wagga Wagga. Those passengers will then be able to connect to existing rail and air connections to Sydney and Melbourne.

I know that the member for Wagga Wagga is excited about this and that he will be one of the first people in line when consultation begins over the coming weeks. Likewise, the member for Dubbo will get a new service from Dubbo all the way through to Mudgee. I know that he will be first in line, sitting on the very front seat of the bus. Why does it make a difference? It is because it will service the communities of Ballimore, Spicers Creek, Goolma and Gulgong. The member for Northern Tablelands and Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales is excited about the prospect of improved connectivity for residents of small villages in his electorate such as Ben Lomond, North Star, Yetman and Ashford. Across the State we are giving people the opportunity to continue living in their homes for longer. It is about giving people independence to reach services that in the past they may not have been able to. This Government is trialling new services and adapting them to meet customer demand. *[Extension of time.]*

We know that there is demand for more services from Broken Hill to Adelaide and to Mildura, and we are delivering. We know that there is demand for services from Dubbo to Tamworth, and we are delivering. We know that there is demand for services from Tamworth to Port Macquarie, and we are delivering. And we know that there is demand for services from Sussex Street down to ICAC—but we are not going to deliver that service for members opposite. They can get there themselves. We are going to bring on more buses and we are going to create and provide more services.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I notice that Opposition members come to life at the mention of ICAC. They do not care about people in regional and rural New South Wales—they do not even know how to get west of the Great Dividing Range. They only care about city-centric people and their union bosses in Sussex Street. We are the party that will deliver for people in regional New South Wales.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I have not even mentioned jobs yet, but I will shortly. In this term we are also delivering additional bus services to centres such as Tweed Heads, Coffs Harbour, Lismore, Nowra and Albury—and that is just the beginning. We are delivering a new regional rail facility to Dubbo, which will create hundreds of jobs. We are also delivering a second Bathurst Bullet for the Central West and delivering a new train service from Griffin to Sydney, which I know the member for Murray is eagerly awaiting. I say to all members of this House, "get on board." We are going to keep announcing services and keep delivering for people in the country because it is the Liberal-Nationals Coalition that stands up for the people of regional and rural New South Wales.

BUILDING CLADDING SAFETY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:45): My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. Minister, you are clueless on cladding, you hid from the parliamentary inquiry and your laws to fix dodgy buildings—

The SPEAKER: Government members will remain silent. I will hear further from the member for Swansea and then if a member wishes to take a point of order they may do so. The member will start her question again.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Minister, you are clueless on cladding, you hid from the parliamentary inquiry and your laws to fix dodgy buildings are months off, at best. Will you admit to this House that you are completely and utterly out of your depth?

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128, which relates to imputations and inferences against people as part of a question. That question was just misleading. Maybe you could have the good member reword the question.

The SPEAKER: I rule the question out of order not entirely on the basis of the point of order of the Leader of the House. The first half of the so-called question was a statement, which is not acceptable. I ask for the question to be reworded with the first part of the question deleted from any reference in *Hansard*.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. Given that the Minister just admitted what a serious risk it is to have 553 buildings in New South Wales with flammable cladding, why has he not fixed this crisis?

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

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:46): I thank the member for Swansea—she obviously likes me a lot and I am happy to be on her Christmas card list.

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

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: But let us get the numbers right. Fire and Rescue NSW hand-delivered 33,000 letters across the State, and that has been whittled down. Some of those buildings referred to by the member for Swansea may not have potential fire hazard cladding. There are further defect trials going on and that number will be reduced even further. We are continuing to get on with looking after the people of New South Wales; we are continuing to look after those who are the most vulnerable in our community. This is a very, very complex situation. It is a legacy issue that we have taken on and have committed to addressing. Via our building commissioner, we will get on with the quality, transparency and accountability that those opposite swept under the carpet for years.

COST OF LIVING

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Horsworthy) (14:47): My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service. Will the Minister update the House on how hundreds of thousands of households have benefited from the Government's cost-of-living programs?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (14:48): I thank the member for Horsworthy. She does amazing work—in fact, she is a great ambassador for the Cost of Living service. As the Premier identified a couple of days ago, \$1.5 billion has been given back to families across New South Wales because of the various cost-of-living initiatives that we have rolled out through Service NSW. It is not just money that we are putting back into people's pockets—

The SPEAKER: The member for Canterbury will come to order. The member for Auburn will come to order.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: —we are giving them time back. In the bad old days you would have to line up at Roads and Maritime Services or the Roads and Traffic Authority and spend hours trying to get your driver licence. Now it takes only minutes if you go into a Service NSW centre or do it online. I thank the member for Horsworthy, one of the many great ambassadors on this side of the Chamber who are going out to the community telling people about all the great initiatives. There are 70 rebates such as Active Kids vouchers, Creative Kids vouchers, toll relief, Compulsory Third Party [CTP] insurance refunds, Energy Switch, Gas Switch—and the list goes on and on. The average saving per family is \$550, and 99 per cent of people who have used the Cost of Living service have given it the thumbs up.

The SPEAKER: Government members will remain silent.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: If I could just do a quick survey—

Mr Chris Minns: Don't tell him; you can't trust him.

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It is just a quick survey. How many members here have actually got a benefit—whether it is a CTP refund, toll relief, Active Kids vouchers or Creative Kids vouchers? That is why Labor is in opposition; they are either not telling the truth or they are just plain stupid—it is one of the two, or maybe both. The reality is that hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: I resent that. I am not stupid; I just do not trust you.

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I do not understand why those opposite do not like helping their constituents. On the last occasion I had the opportunity to give a shout-out to those opposite because they have Labor friends of the ambassadors of the Liberal-Nationals Government, and they are out there in social media saying what a great role we play. I pay particular tribute to the member for Wallsend because on the last occasion I tried to be nice and I actually complimented her on what she had written on Facebook about what great things this Government was doing. But she was quite nasty.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I ask you to bring the Minister back to cost-of-living savings, which is what the question was about.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: So when it comes to cost of living—

The SPEAKER: The Minister just mentioned the cost of living so I will allow him to continue.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: The member for Wallsend made a comment on Facebook about the cost of living. She said, "Maybe the Minister"—that is me—"should actually read some of the comments my constituents have left"—

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: —"on my social media pages, instead of trying to embarrass Labor MPs"—

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: —"for sharing government initiatives. Then the Government could deliver some real initiatives that are addressing the cost of living for people in the Wallsend electorate." I like feedback, so I did what you suggested: I went to your Facebook page and I read the comments on your feedback.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: I raise two points. First, I refer to the Minister's egregious failure to sit down when a point of order was taken.

The SPEAKER: He sat down.

Mr Paul Lynch: Secondly, he should direct his comments through the Chair and not directly to the member concerned.

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Through you, Mr Speaker, I put on record what the people of Wallsend were saying on the member's Facebook page. In relation to Active Kids vouchers, Leisa said, "Will be using Active Kids for my eldest—every bit helps." Judy tagged her friend Elyse and said, "Make sure you do Active Kids." Kimi said, "Yay." The Waratah Netball Club said, "Thanks for sharing Active Kids Sonia!" Cathy said, "What a great initiative." [*Extension of time*]

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Wallsend Swans said—

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

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: "Active Kids will be an incentive hopefully to gain new players to the sport. Thanks for your support as always. Very much appreciated." Darren said, "Active Kids—Great Idea."

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Kogarah to order for the third time.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I will get to Jodi later on. Bronwyn said, "Thanks Sonia for distributing this information about Active Kids! It's a great initiative and nice to know a bit more about it." Last but not least, Alison said, "Woohoo. Thank you. Love Active Kids." I thank those opposite for being great ambassadors of our Government and the cost-of-living initiatives that we are rolling out to support families across the State.

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

COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (14:54): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your support. My question is directed to the Deputy Premier and Leader of The Nationals. During the election the Deputy Premier went to Cootamundra and Gundagai and promised he would be back within two weeks after the election. The Opposition Leader and I visited, yet five months later the Deputy Premier has not. Is the Deputy Premier scared of going back because of community anger over his Government's forced debacle of council amalgamations?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:56): I think we had better call security, there is a stranger in the House. Is the member for Campbelltown the shadow Minister for Local Government?

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Order 130. Yes, I am. I know the challenge, I know it has been hard for you all to work out, but just to confirm to you, mate, yes.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I thank the member and the shadow Minister for Local Government for his question. We always have to take someone seriously when they are holding a folder. I go back to the question that he asked about my visit to Cootamundra. If I look back since becoming leader in 2016 and count the number of times we went to the Cootamundra electorate—we faced a by-election in Cootamundra and the electorate was returned to the National Party with the fantastic member. We went to a general election with a significant swing to the member for Cootamundra. It is the second safest electorate in the State. We have had a general election and members that were anti council mergers—in Gundagai and Cootamundra as well as Tumut and Tumbarumba—they campaigned in my electorate against me.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, you have asked the question.

Mr Greg Warren: You are not answering it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown will speak to the point of order only.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. We do not care what your campaign was about. We want to know when you are going back to that community, as you promised, and you have not done.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier will continue.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: During the election they campaigned against me in the Monaro electorate. I was explaining that. They wanted me to change my position or my thoughts on mergers leading into the general election. I was honest with my electorate and said our policy is "no demerger". I was absolutely honest with my electorate. The community of Bombala have put a petition together about demergers, but I went to the election absolutely honest and said: No demergers. I won every booth. It was the largest swing in the State. It is about being honest. It is about being honest with the people.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I will not hear a point of order on relevance. The Deputy Premier is being relevant.

Mr Greg Warren: It is Standing Order 59. You promised a review. The indignity and disrespect you have for country people is an outrage. It is nothing short of an outrage. You have hung your local member out to dry.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown will stop.

Mr Greg Warren: You lied to that community. There are no boundaries to your indignity to the bush. You are a disgrace.

The SPEAKER: I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Campbelltown from the Chamber.

[The member for Campbelltown left the Chamber at 14:59 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms]

Mr Greg Warren: You are meant to be the Leader of The Nationals. You are nothing short of a disgrace. You have lied to the people of Cootamundra. You have hung your local member out to dry. Why will you not get back down there and see them?

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown is out for two days: this sitting day and the next full sitting day.

[Business interrupted.]

Members

MEMBER FOR CAMPBELLTOWN

Named

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown has been grossly disorderly. I have asked him to leave the Chamber. I name him under Standing Order 251 for persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House and for being guilty of gross disorderly conduct. However, if he should wish to do so the member for Campbelltown has the right to give an explanation, which is limited to five minutes. I ask the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to give him that opportunity. For the benefit of new members, when I am standing, all members should be seated and they should be quiet. This is not a joke. This is serious. The member for Campbelltown was on three calls to order. I told him to desist, but he continued to argue and abuse members across the Chamber, and that is not acceptable.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

For the benefit of the House, naming is done contemporaneously. For the benefit of the member for Campbelltown, he has been named. I intend to suspend him from the service of the House for two days, which means the day after the next sitting day. Since it is the first time he has been named I have specified the appropriate suspension time. Should the member for Campbelltown wish to exercise his right to give an explanation, no debate, adjournment or amendment is allowed thereafter. Does the member for Campbelltown wish to exercise his right to speak?

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:04): Can I begin by saying I did not actually hear your first warning. Had I heard that I perhaps would have considered my delivery in an alternative tactical approach. But let me say this very clearly: The anger in this community is—

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will not hear the point of order. The member for Campbelltown will continue. He should be mindful not to make a speech, but a personal explanation.

Mr GREG WARREN: My personal explanation is that the community I visited down there has an expectation that this matter be given the appropriate level of execution.

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order—

Mr GREG WARREN: I felt that my answer was the appropriate level—

The SPEAKER: There is no debate. I will take advice from the Clerk. The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order, but I am inclined to let the member for Campbelltown continue.

Mr Andrew Constance: My point of order relates to Standing Order 251. Quite clearly, the member who has behaved disorderly needs to speak specifically to that disorderly conduct and not start to engage in a debate about other communities or any other member. It needs to relate to his behaviour in the Chamber this afternoon and his constant disregard for your rulings.

Mr Paul Lynch: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: I am happy to hear from the member for Liverpool to the point of order.

Mr Paul Lynch: The member was clearly explaining why he was behaving the way he was and, frankly, taking points of order in this particular debate is entirely inappropriate.

The SPEAKER: I have stopped the clock. I am satisfied that the member for Campbelltown is making a personal explanation and I am happy to hear from him further as to why he was behaving the way he was, and then we will proceed.

Mr GREG WARREN: I will continue with my personal explanation. I reiterate that I did not actually hear your first warning. Most importantly, I believe it is incumbent upon all of us to have a consistent representation and execution of delivery in terms of debate and everything that we do in this place. The reality is that the anger and frustration is at boiling point in that region. I sat with these people—and it wasn't just anywhere—and I made reference to the local member because she has been trying to get some traction on this issue as well.

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: I again take a point of order relating to Standing Order 251. I make the point that the good member needs to speak to his disorderly conduct and not debate the issue, and that is exactly what he is now doing. I seek a ruling to that effect.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown has explained the context enough. I would like the member to return to the issue, which is the question before the House.

Mr GREG WARREN: I want to be really clear and I am not going to carry on for five minutes, but there are people down in that region who have lost their jobs, they have lost their council—

The SPEAKER: I do not want to hear about the details.

Mr GREG WARREN: Okay, I will come back. If that means that I am not in this place for two days, then so be it. It is nothing to the degree of anger and outrage and disappointment that the people in that community feel.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GREG WARREN: The House wants context to substantiate my points and my passion on this. My passion is for those people. My passion is for country people. My passion is for the people that rely on us to deliver the outcomes they need. That is the reason. It was not a personal attack on the Deputy Premier. If he took it that way then, mate, you've got to work through that, but I am not apologising for standing up and fighting for something that I am passionate about and that the people in that community are also passionate about.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown having finished his explanation, I do not reside from the question before the House. I do not need to defend in any way what I put before the House; the House can make its own judgement. Without further debate, adjournment or amendment, I will now put the question before the House.

The question is that the member for Campbelltown be suspended from the service of the House for two days.

The House divided.

Ayes50
Noes38
Majority.....12

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
Leong, Ms J
Parker, Mr J
Petinos, Ms E
Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G

Ayes, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A (teller)
Elliott, Mr D
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Kean, Mr M
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Preston, Ms R
Saunders, Mr D
Singh, Mr G
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G

Barilaro, Mr J
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lee, Dr G
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D
Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Smith, Mr N
Stokes, Mr R
Tuckerman, Mrs W
Williams, Mr R

AYES

Williams, Mrs L

Wilson, Ms F

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
 Barr, Mr C
 Catley, Ms Y
 Crakanthorp, Mr T
 Dib, Mr J
 Finn, Ms J
 Haylen, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 McDermott, Dr H
 Mihailuk, Ms T
 Saffin, Ms J
 Voltz, Ms L
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

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
 Scully, Mr P
 Warren, Mr G
 Zangari, Mr G

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
 Tesch, Ms L
 Washington, Ms K

Question agreed to.*[Business resumed.]**Question Time***COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS**

The SPEAKER: To clarify, the member for Campbelltown has been removed from the Chamber for two days. Today counts as one of those days and the next sitting day is the second day. He will be allowed to return the day after that. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: I draw members' attention to an interjection that was made before the member for Campbelltown went to the podium.

The SPEAKER: Is there a point of order?

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Yes. The member for Drummoyne called the Deputy Premier "Pork Barrel-aro", and I ask that that interjection be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier will continue his answer. There are two minutes and 52 seconds left on the clock. Members will remain silent.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I take the comment from the member for Drummoyne as a term of endearment. It is our way of making sure regional and rural New South Wales gets its fair share, just like all our local government areas. Under the Liberals and The Nationals, the partnership between State and local governments has never been stronger. The investment of \$1.7 billion through the Regional Growth Fund, which has brought investments in regional community projects, facilities, local town halls, footpaths, showgrounds, sporting infrastructure, and cultural infrastructure; grown our local economy through the Growing Local Economies [GLE] program and built diversity for jobs has been a partnership with local government. That is what we stand for.

Yes, we had the Fit for the Future period. Yes, we went through a period of mergers in this State. But we have had by-elections and general elections since then. When do we get to move on? The reality is the member for Cootamundra is representing her community. She has brought to the attention of other Ministers in the House and to me the mergers in Gundagai and Cootamundra, and the views of that community. She will continue to champion that cause. I urge members to come to this House and have that debate. I will not play politics. The member for Campbelltown can come see me following his trip to Cootamundra or Tumut or wherever he went and talk to me about it.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: After all that, I want to reiterate the question.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I am happy for the question to be re-asked because of the break. The Leader of the Opposition will only read the question.

Ms JODI McKAY: Certainly. I will not go into the whole question. The question is whether the Deputy Premier will go back to visit the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council. That is what we would like to know. It is what the Deputy Premier promised.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No. I call the Opposition wrong there. I made no such promise.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Just let me finish. Those opposite campaigned against me in my electorate and asked me to reverse my position. I was honest with them. I said, "You wouldn't believe me if I reversed it, so wait till after the election. You judge someone by their character after an election." Guess what? We have been elected and returned with a no-merger policy, so no-one can question our position.

Mr Clayton Barr: But you haven't been back down there.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I have travelled to every single corner of this State. I challenge every member opposite to combine their diaries and I am sure that the kilometres all of you travel in a year will match the kilometres I travel in one day because I have spent more nights away from home representing regional New South Wales. I will not be lectured by those opposite who have come to this Chamber to lecture me about representing regional New South Wales. In 2016 when I became the Leader of The Nationals I stopped the mergers. We supported councils. We have supported each council and seen funding at record levels. I know the Minister for Local Government is also listening, engaging and travelling around the State. I will not be lectured. We have been challenged at elections and we have been triumphant on our policy. Members opposite should respect the mandate of the people of New South Wales. To those communities that still feel that local government mergers are not working and that they are not happy, by all means continue to work through your local member. I know Steph Cooke; I know the member for Cootamundra will fight.

Ms Prue Car: You promised you would go back there.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am sorry, but you have come to this House and misled the House. I made no such promise. You do not want to listen because you want to play games. The member for Londonderry is the former shadow Minister for TAFE and Skills who claimed we were pulling down a TAFE when the cranes were building one behind her. She cannot be believed. She cannot be trusted. I will not be lectured by her. My message to all communities in regional and rural New South Wales is this: You have good, strong local members. You have a government that is delivering in partnership with local government. We want to see strong local government and we will continue that partnership. To those members who want to represent the regions and those members who are representing electorates that have merged councils, by all means encourage your communities to come forward, write petitions, speak up and visit me. I am more than happy to engage with them. I will continue to travel to Cootamundra. I will continue to travel to the Snowy Valleys region, as I always have done and always will do. I will not be lectured by those opposite.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (15:21): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is using the latest equipment and technology to keep our communities safe?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (15:21): I thank the first lady of Hawkesbury. Unlike her predecessor, she is a stayer. I can confidently predict that.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: Be careful, mate. Baulkham Hills is looking good. I love the valley.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: The Treasurer makes a very healthy observation. Baulkham Hills looks very, very good and has never been better served. I start by repeating the Speaker's comments and the member for Bathurst's comments in highlighting how tragically Australian politics will remember this day, with the passing of Tim Fischer. Before he was a member of this House, before he was an ambassador and before he was a writer, he was a soldier. He was a conscript. He volunteered to go to Vietnam, served in the First Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment and was injured terribly in the Battle of Coral-Balmoral in 1968. I ask members to recall the whole life of Tim Fischer, not just his political contribution.

I also thank members of this House who have worked with me since I was sworn in as Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I recognise the fortitude of the firefighters and civilians who risked their lives only last week in that terrible incident in Clarence Street where members of the public and emergency services staff who are not normally trained in that combat-type of combat disarmed a violent offender. I was humbled to meet four of those firefighters earlier this week with the Premier and the Commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW. It is appropriate that I name Mike Stewart, Gonzalo Herrera, Mitchell Bennett and Bennett Gardiner, whom the

Premier and I met on Monday. They are four heroes. As I said last week, they are superheroes. They showed extraordinary courage and that courage is an attribute reflected in the 100,000 volunteers and salaried emergency services workers right across the State. We never pay sufficient tribute to that sort of a rare courage and I am delighted that we are able to do so in this place.

I take this opportunity to talk about another great individual, former Governor Dame Marie Bashir who recently, alongside the member for Hawkesbury, attended the commissioning of the new 737 air tanker that will be stationed in Hawkesbury. The air tanker was named in Dame Marie's honour. It is the first time a 737 has been permanently located here and it will effectively mean that New South Wales is just that little bit safer. The air tanker has a cruising speed of 850 kilometres an hour and it can carry up to 15,000 litres of water and fire suppressant. It can also transport 70 firefighters to anywhere in New South Wales within an hour. Being able to deploy firefighters within an hour is a significant capability for our Rural Fire Service [RFS]—indeed, we have already done so. This investment is part of the \$26.3 million investment in our air wing to support the largest volunteer fire service in the world: the Rural Fire Service.

The Marie Bashir is proof positive that this Government is using technology in every possible way to ensure that our community is safe. Her first mission was to assist firefighters in Port Macquarie—the member for Port Macquarie, alongside some residents, was in touch with me to ensure that that deployment took place. The Marie Bashir has already been deployed on 18 missions, fighting seven fires and dropping 270,000 litres of water from Grafton to Casino and on the mid North Coast in just a matter of weeks. But our skies are not the only battleground to ensure that we promote the use of technology. Fire and Rescue NSW is investing \$6.8 million in its aerial platforms, which are known as "brontos". They provide volumes of water and retardant into high-rise buildings, assuring residents that as our cities grow our firefighting capability grows along with them. [*Extension of time*]

All of these new vehicles form part of the 150 new, 82 refurbished and 26 logistical and command RFS vehicles that the Government will be delivering in this financial year alone. These vehicles will boost its existing fleet by 6,800 appliances. But the fireys are not the only first responders who will be receiving benefits from this Government. We have committed \$56.4 million over the next four years to replace the State Emergency Services [SES] fleet. Men and women in Orange will be getting an additional 270 vehicles, 124 marine vessels and 96 trailers to add to the existing fleet of 752 vehicles, 373 marine vessels and 942 trailers. SES volunteers will not just get 12 days of Christmas this year; they will get 12 months of Christmas—with an extra 30 medium storm and rescue trucks, 60 general purpose vehicles, 26 light storm trucks, five snowmobiles and a 22-seater bus, all set to be delivered over the course of the next 12 months.

It does not stop there. Marine Rescue NSW will get \$37.6 million for upgrades to the marine radio network, which I know the member for Tweed is keen to see for the water-loving communities in his electorate and across the State's far North Coast right down to the Murray River. It is a great time for our police and emergency services. The police will be getting \$100 million to upgrade police stations. I have spoken to a number of members about our ability to allocate that money. The police will also get 5,000 body-worn video cameras, new mobile computerised operational police system [COPS] devices, 1,000 fingerprint scanners, 69 portable drug-testing devices, enhanced intelligence sharing systems, a virtual firing range in a box and remotely piloted aircraft and trained pilots. I am thrilled that this Government is in a financial position to roll out this technology for our police and emergency services, which will make for a safer New South Wales.

ORANGE ELECTORATE SPORTING PROJECTS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (15:28): My question is directed to the sport Minister. Will the Minister consider visiting Orange as my guest in the near future to see firsthand the merits of the proposed Mount Canobolas mountain bike trails and other sporting projects, as did your colleague the Minister for Energy and Environment, with a view to supporting this development, which would deliver enormous financial and social benefits to Orange and the broader Central West?

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Canterbury that she is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (15:29): I thank the member for Orange for his question and I congratulate him on his ongoing support of sport in general in his electorate. Given the New South Wales Government's recent announcement supporting the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup, I make special mention of the excellent work of the Forbes District Soccer Club to foster grassroots sport in regional New South Wales, courtesy of the new training and tournament equipment the New South Wales Government has recently helped to fund. Only yesterday I had the privilege of speaking with the great former Australian Socceroos captain Craig Moore on the sacred turf of the level nine rooftop garden. I can say that I am now better prepared and I am actively showing future Matildas my skills.

Today in the Strangers Dining Room we celebrated two rugby league greats, NSW State of Origin coach Brad Fittler and Roosters captain Boyd Cordner. Make no mistake, New South Wales is the capital of sport in Australia and sport is in our DNA. I believe it is important that I also advise the House that rugby league players Shannon Donatto, Paul Dunn, Darren Britt, Tahnee Norris and even Grace Hamilton, who is the current Australian Wallaroos captain, all called Orange home. Regional New South Wales, specifically the electorate of Orange, has some of the best golf courses in New South Wales. Only last weekend the Forbes golf course hosted the unique New South Wales Sand Grass Greens Championship, an event that attracts players from right across New South Wales. Duntryleague golf course, which can be found in the heart of Orange, is arguably one of the best 18-hole golf courses in Australia.

The first Australian Touring Car Championship, known today as the V8 Supercar Championship series, was held at the Gnoo Blas Motor Racing Circuit in 1960. But Orange is not just a sporting destination; it is also the birthplace of legendary poets Banjo Paterson and Kenneth Slessor. Orange has been the recipient of many grants. In 2018-19 Gosling Creek received \$256,240 towards upgrading track and storage facilities and \$550,000 went to upgrading the sportsground and new amenities for the Jack Brabham ground. The Orange Aquatic Centre received \$122,000 for the installation of a disability lift and solar blanket. Through club grants, the Orange City Council received \$1 million for the indoor cricket centre development. Hang on, there is more. As part of the T2 Legacy Fund, the Parkes Shire Council received \$100,000 for a major upgrade of the Wes Cheney Pavilion's Woodward Oval amenities. Through the Local Sport Grant program of the Office of Sport, Orange Netball has been the recipient of \$20,000 for a barbecue and storage area. The Orange City Rugby Club was the recipient of \$1,300 to install a defibrillator. *[Extension of time]*

I heard that the Minister Kean went on a mountain bike track in Orange but his pushbike was motorised—they have now nicknamed him "Motorised Matt". I will definitely visit. The Coalition was returned to government in March this year and Australia's number one Premier and Treasurer are again delivering for the people of New South Wales. I can reaffirm that the New South Wales Government's commitment to deliver \$25 million for the people of Orange is on. I make it clear that this Government delivers on its promises for everyone in New South Wales, no matter where they live and or who they vote for. Taking the politics out of it, I can say that we genuinely care about what is best for the community of Orange.

Mr David Harris: Point of order: Minister's should not read from prepared speeches.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Unlike those opposite we will not use regional communities like a political football and trade our votes to inner city preference deals.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129, relevance. The Minister was asked a very simple question and he still has not answered. Is he going to Orange?

The SPEAKER: The Minister has eight seconds left.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No-one in this House can say the Liberal Party does not deliver for regional New South Wales. That said, I look forward to visiting the member for Orange.

JOBS GROWTH

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:36): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how jobs are creating new opportunities in New South Wales?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (15:37): Hey, Jodie. How's your voicemail going? You have got a great voice.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is out of order. He will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am sorry, Mr Speaker. I think she should do the New South Wales Labor Party voicemail.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: The Minister knows full well that he should be directing his comments through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: I have just asked the Treasurer to do that.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Press 1 to make an illegal donation, press 2 for an ICAC referral and if you want to speak to a leader, please hold and Chris will be with you shortly.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: The Treasurer is clearly flouting the Speaker's ruling. I ask that the Treasurer be called back to order and for him to answer the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: I genuinely could not hear what the Treasurer was saying. I believe that he is now directing his comments through me.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am. I pressed 2 for an ICAC referral and I am still on hold. New South Wales is the job capital of the nation. The Premier spoke earlier in question time—it was a long time ago—about the lowest unemployment rate in the nation at 4.4 per cent. We have created 13,000 jobs in New South Wales in just one month; 10,000 of them are full-time jobs. This compares with other States such as the resource rich Western Australia where the unemployment rate is at 5.9 per cent, but whilst we gained 13,000 jobs, they lost 4,200 jobs. The lazy Queenslanders up north—beautiful one day, subsidised by New South Wales the next—have an unemployment rate of 6.4 per cent.

Over the past five years South Australia has only created 52,000 jobs and, despite being 7 per cent of the population, it has only contributed to 3.8 per cent of jobs growth thanks to the job-destroying policies of its previous Labor Government. Since April 2015 in New South Wales, when we began our asset-recycling agenda, we have seen over 476,000 jobs added to the economy and our unemployment rate is consistently below the national average. According to the Australian Bureau Statistics, average weekly earnings have also increased by 3.7 per cent. We have the biggest infrastructure pipeline, the strongest budget and more people in work—a winning trifecta. We are the most pro-jobs government in this State's history, unlike those opposite who have declared war on the business community with higher taxes, more regulation and less jobs.

Before the last Federal and State elections the Labor Party wanted to shut down the coal industry, as the member for Upper Hunter knows. Labor wanted to remove coal power as the source of base-load power, when coal supplies 80 per cent of New South Wales' electricity. They wanted to destroy coal jobs in Wollongong, Cessnock, Newcastle and the Hunter. Anyway, it is great that they have had a change of heart. We have seen that Joel Fitzgibbon has had a conversion and on Sunday, when I was watching my favourite morning show *Insiders*, we had the Holy Grail of coal conversions by the flagbearer of the Left, Senator Penny Wong. She said "coal remains an important industry for Australia" and, if she had her way, she would not sign up to demands for Australia to move away from coal. There you go, she loves it. Penny "Coking Coal" Wong is not even into clean coal. She is into the hard stuff: the most purest, unadulterated, unfiltered, beautiful 100 per cent dirty brown coal.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129 or Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold either point of order. This is the last question today. The Treasurer made clear that it was not an aspersion.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Penny is hooked on it, but I want the jewel in the crown. By the end of this term I will be introducing a bill into this Parliament to expand the coal industry and it will be co-sponsored by the member for Summer Hill. It will be a great private member's bill in this House. If any other sponsors want to jump on board they are free to do so. It will not be a conscience vote; it will be a binding vote. [*Extension of time.*]

The member for Upper Hunter knows that the policies of the Coalition Government are providing real dividends in the Upper Hunter and that we support the coal industry, unlike those opposite. We are always looking for new opportunities to grow the economy and expand. Next week is a big week—budget estimates begins. I am looking forward to opening the batting with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. He will be more entertaining than me, so tune in. But the real show, as we know, begins on Monday at the ICAC with Operation Aero.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Neither estimates nor ICAC—

The SPEAKER: I am giving the last question on Thursday discretion and I will let the Treasurer continue.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It is going to be fantastic. I have heard it is already a sell-out. I got in early and have my tickets. I have got premium passes—chairman's lounge, backstage pass, access to all areas, meet all the witnesses, Lindsay is going to be there and meet Ernest. All this for \$1,000. I got a plus-one.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Coffee with the commissioner.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It is all there. I am ready to go. I have got my pass on. I am excited.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Straight after estimates I am out and down to ICAC. It is going to be fantastic.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am done, Mr Speaker.

Announcements

STATUTORY RULES AND INSTRUMENTS

The SPEAKER: For the information of members, I advise that the delay in tabling will not affect the right of any member under section 41 of the Interpretation Act 1987 to give notice of a motion to disallow any of the statutory rules tabled today, provided that notice has been given within 15 sitting days after tabling.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Liquor and Licensed Premises Regulations

Petition requesting that the Government remove current liquor and licensed premises regulations and allow Sydney's CBD to return to being a 24-hour city, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

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

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

Globe Wilkins Preschool

Petition requesting that the Government act to save Globe Wilkins Preschool and ensure that future generations have access to the best possible start in life, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

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

Yasmar Estate

Petition requesting that the Government renovate Yasmar Estate and allow it to continue to be maintained by Crown Lands to protect the estate and encourage community access and use, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Private Members' Statements

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC DAY

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:46): On 15 August 2019 I was fortunate to join my local community in commemorating Victory in the Pacific Day, or VP Day, at the Seven Hills Returned and Services League Club—74 years after the Allied Forces accepted Japan's unconditional surrender on 14 August 1945, marking the effective end of World War II and the commencement of a long period of peace. Australian State governments, including the then New South Wales Government, gazetted 15 August as the "VP" Day commemorative public holiday. On 15 August 1945 Prime Minister Chifley announced the end of the war against Japan with words that would echo throughout the nation—simply, "The war is over".

The commemorative service was conducted by the Seven Hills, Toongabbie, Wentworthville RSL Sub-Branch. It was strongly attended by ex-service personnel and their families and young, local army cadets. It was an honour to lay a wreath on behalf of the local community to acknowledge the sacrifice made by local men and women who served and supported the war effort in the Pacific theatre. The fruits of their sacrifice are the freedoms and the cooperation that now exist in the Asia-Pacific region and the leading role this country plays in trade, security and economic development in the region. The fact that we are free and prosperous because of their sacrifice was not lost on those who gathered for the ceremony.

This is not the first VP Day commemoration I have attended at the Seven Hills RSL Club, nor will it be the last. Next year will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary since victory in the Pacific and the declaration of the end of the war. This commemorative service, like the many others held throughout the year, was indicative of

the commitment of the club and the sub-branch to playing an active role in supporting veterans, educating young people and bringing the community of Seven Hills together around our shared history.

The club is in great shape. It is led by a board that continually seeks to improve its connection with the service history of Australia in innovative ways, most notably through the club's recent expansion of its historical displays of military vehicles, weapons, artefacts and keepsakes to preserve the club's connection to its history and engage the younger generation of defence service personnel and ex-personnel. Like most RSL clubs, the Seven Hills RSL club's greatest challenge is maintaining its place as a steward of community history and patriotism. The club's board, led by President Barry Wilson, is setting it up for a prosperous future. I pay tribute to Barry and his fellow board members: Vice President Graham Black and directors John Burgess, Warren Evans, Peter Harrington, Bob Mackay, Annie Moore, William North and Graeme Quinn.

The club engages with a number of organisations as major community partners, including the Save Our Sons Duchenne Foundation, which assists families dealing with diagnoses of their young sons; the Children's Hospital at Westmead which, I am proud to say, is one of the leading children's hospitals, if not the leading one, in this State and is located in my Seven Hills electorate; and the Royal Life Saving Society, a national leader in drowning prevention and the provision of swimming, water safety and lifesaving skills that are so important, given the widespread use of local and backyard pools in our area during summer.

The club has successfully engaged with young people in the Seven Hills area. More than a decade ago the club commenced a formal partnership with neighbouring Hills Sports High School at Seven Hills to create Seven Hills Youth Club on the school property. The youth club facilities are enjoyed by the school during the day and by the community at night, an embodiment of the strong connection between the club and the school.

The club sponsors a number of local sporting teams and community initiatives through the ClubGRANTS scheme. As an active member of the Blacktown City Council ClubGRANTS committee, the club endeavours to extend financial and in-kind support to locals in need. The Seven Hills group spends over \$1 million in community support and donations annually. This work ranges across the spectrum—from education, health, disability support, domestic violence, migrant resources, crime prevention and sport. I am proud that the Seven Hills RSL Club in my electorate is incredibly active and engaged in the community. I look forward to my next visit and another dignified commemorative service at the club.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:50): I bring to the attention of the House the increasing number of young people who are choosing to take their own life. Suicide is the leading cause of death for Australians aged 15 to 44: That is not okay. Over the last decade there has been a 20 per cent increase in the number of young people committing suicide. The number of children and young people who have taken their own lives over the past 12 months in my electorate of Coogee has risen distinctly. That devastating trend involves the loss of thousands of lives each year. Each loss would be entirely preventable if we knew more about the causes and had early intervention services in place. It is crucial to better understand the paths that lead young people to end their own lives in order to effectively address the problem.

Some things we do know are distressing, to say the least. Each year over the past 10 years, 3,000 people have taken their own lives. That is more than eight people every day—almost double the national road toll. Women are twice as likely to attempt suicide as men. However, males are three times more likely to die by suicide, with men making up 75 per cent of suicides. The suicide rate is twice as high for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than non-Indigenous Australians. The fastest growing statistic is the number of youth suicides. The number of under-age people taking their own life grew by between 20 per cent and 25 per cent over the past 10 years.

We know that the causes of suicide are complex. Factors that we know are part of the contributory mix include underlying mental illness, domestic violence, family breakdown, trauma, chronic illness, drug and alcohol abuse and dire financial hardship. If we are to make any indent in these terrible figures and help each person who finds themselves in those situations, solutions will only come when we start facing up to the issue's painful root causes. Currently our system is singularly focused on picking up the pieces after the damage has been done—repairing the damage after a crisis. Imagine what could be achieved if we channelled more funding into early intervention services.

Children are now more likely to be faced with instability in their lives from a young age and are far more likely to drop out of school and fail to find regular, consistent employment. Instead of putting a bandaid over the wound, early intervention can stop the fall from happening in the first place. One in four young people are living with a mental disorder and 9 per cent of young people aged 16 to 24 years, experience high to very high levels of psychological distress. People aged 18 to 24 years have the highest prevalence of mental disorders of any other

age group, and youth suicide is the leading cause of death in young people aged 15 to 24 years. Again, this is not okay and we must do more to help our young people.

We know that there are protective factors that make people more resilient and can reduce suicidal behaviour such as supportive social relationships, a sense of control, a sense of purpose, family harmony, effective help-seeking, positive connections and the availability of good health services. It is our responsibility in this place to ensure that young people access education and training, jobs, and health care and support systems so they can live happy and healthy lives. Sustainable, reliable and rewarding work is essential to the self-esteem and self-worth of young people. Financial security, financial independence, a sense of belonging and skills development are all built through employment and are essential elements to a happy and productive person.

Youth unemployment is a significant contributing factor to youth suicide rates but, worryingly, rates of youth unemployment show no sign of improvement—they remain stagnant and rates of under-employment are exploding. A recent report by Youth Action, the peak body for young people and youth services in New South Wales, reveals that half of Australia's 25-year-olds are unable to secure full-time employment despite 60 per cent of them holding post-school qualifications. One in three young people is unemployed or underemployed. The youth unemployment rate is more than double the national average. Out of 1.4 million jobs advertised online in New South Wales last year, only 6,311 were advertised with "no experience required"—that is, 0.5 per cent of available positions were entry level.

In this State more than 84,000 young people are experiencing unemployment. The numbers are significantly higher in the Hunter Valley, the mid North Coast and other regional parts of New South Wales. In specific sub-regions such as the Southern Highlands, the Shoalhaven and the Coffs, there are hotspots of youth unemployment reaching up to 28 per cent. Too many young people in New South Wales are caught in the cycle of "I need experience to get a job; I need a job to get experience". The cycle has caused a number of mental health issues such as stress and anxiety. We need to do more. I acknowledge the great work of the Black Dog Institute, which is dedicated to understanding, preventing and treating mental illness. Earlier this year I was pleased to help launch clinical research that the institution is doing into the impact of exercise on mental health. On 12 October I will participate in its Exercise Your Mood half-marathon.

TRIBUTE TO TIMOTHY ANDREW FISCHER, AC, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD HOBSON

TRIBUTE TO KERRY HINES

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (15:56): Vale Tim Fischer—soldier, statesman, veteran, author, historian, ambassador, farmer, train enthusiast and the beautiful man from Boree Creek, who served in this Chamber for 13 years. I extend my deepest sympathies to Judy, Harrison and Dominic and thank them for sharing Tim after his political life in such a profound and important way across Australia for the fight for autism, the Fred Hollows Foundation, trains, and his time at the Holy See. I also thank him for being a great National Party leader and a lion for regional Australia during his time as Deputy Prime Minister. He was not expected to be the one but he was. He did his job with great pride, ability and dignity. To see the comments flowing already is a tribute to him. About 25 years ago I remember saying that I was going to Europe for a break. He said, "Why are you going there? You should go to Asia". I am proud to say that I have been to Asia 14 times since. That message from Tim when I was about 20 years of age was a powerful comment about where he saw our future and what he thought we as a nation needed to look towards.

I also reflect on one of the Bellingen Shire's most beautiful, intrepid and distinguished characters. Recently Harold George Hobson passed away peacefully at Bellingen Hospital, a few kilometres from where he was born in Gleniffer on 29 January 1920. At his service, Hal was remembered for his service to his country, for being a French Legion of Honour recipient and for being a revered, respected and colourful local. Hal was the son of Herbert and Mabel Hobson, who were in charge of the grocery department at Bellingen's iconic Hammond and Wheatley store. In the early years the Hyde Street building saw horse-drawn carts delivering the groceries, which continued until motor transport arrived in 1926. At that time most children went barefoot and the only pair of shoes Hal owned was worn to church on Sundays. After the School Certificate he was the first Bellingen student to attend Coffs Harbour High School for two more years of schooling to attain his Leaving Certificate.

After high school, Hal began a banking career at the Bank of New South Wales at the age of 17. World War II arrived and Hal enlisted as an airman with the Royal Australian Air Force. He set sail from Melbourne to Canada to train with the Royal Canadian Air Force and gained his flying badge, or wings, on 30 December 1942. Then he was posted to France. His duties were to intercept enemy transports and target infrastructure. Hal completed 18 sorties, piloting a Mosquito bomber over enemy territory. He also transported prisoners of war to

safety in England after the war. In recalling his experiences of the conflict, Hal said the mates you had were probably as important as anything else: you stood by one another. After the war Hal returned to the Bank of New South Wales and worked in 11 branches until his retirement in 1979 at the age of 59.

The bank moved officers every three years or so. Hal and his wife, Nancy, had three daughters who were born in different towns—Rosemary was born in Dorrig, Cally in Narrabri and Janet in Orange. They were community-minded and members of Rotary, Red Cross, RSL, the Anglican Church and school committees. An early president of the Bellingen Golf Club, Hal—fittingly at 99—hit his last nine holes at the Bellingen golf course. In 2015 Hal was honoured to receive the French Legion of Honour for his contributions to the liberation of France. It is the highest French award for military and civil merits, established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte. The honour was in addition to his five medals and Returned from Active Service Badge awarded to him by his own country.

He was in retirement for 40 years and was married to his beautiful wife, Nancy. They have been great supporters of our party for many years. At his funeral, which my husband, Warren, attended because I was at Parliament, Hal was described as a gentle, kind and polite man with a wonderful sense of fun and humour. With his bright smile, he was always so happy to see everyone. Earlier this year I saw him at the Bellingen Show and he had a beautiful, happy smile. He was a wonderful man and he made a magnificent contribution.

On another sad note—I really hate cancer—last week we lost a beautiful woman. The member for Coffs Harbour, Gurmeh Singh, spoke beautifully about her. We went to the same high school. She was probably about nine years in front of me. She was incredible, effervescent, energetic, and full of life and spirit. She was a single mum at one point and she raised her kids and created a successful business. She was the heart and soul of Sawtell and so many of our communities. It was one of the biggest funerals ever held. Gurmeh and I could not be there. Kerry Hines, you were loved and respected and you made such a difference. She was a role model for so many women in our region. We are going to miss her.

Business interrupted.

Petitions

KOSCIUSZKO WILD HORSE HERITAGE ACT

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we commence the debate, for the benefit of those in the public gallery, I will explain the process and rationale behind this unique debate. It is unique because it enables the public to bring their concerns directly to the attention of this House. The intent of this procedure is that the petition debate will start with a speech from a member, which, in most cases—and in this case—will be the member who lodged the petition, followed by up to four other members, followed by a Minister in response. To conclude the debate, the first speaker will speak in reply. After all members have spoken, the House will vote on the question that the House take note of the petition. This question will, in most cases, be determined on voices and be passed. However, if it is challenged by a member, it may proceed to a division when the bells are rung and members vote on the question to take note of the petition by sitting on the appropriate side of the House.

The question is that the House take note of the petition.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:03): I am proud to have brought a petition with more than 10,000 signatures for debate to Parliament on this very important issue. I pay tribute to the activists and environmentalists who collected the signatures, made their case to the community and built the argument for repeal of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018. As my Labor colleagues and I argued in June 2018, the bill, which is now an Act, has put wild horses—a beautiful animal but nevertheless an introduced pest—above all other ecological, environmental and cultural values within the Kosciuszko National Park. That fact alone speaks to the absurdity, recklessness and short-sightedness of this Government and its position on this matter. For this reason, the Labor Party opposes the bill; it has committed to repealing it in the fullness of time.

Indeed, to that end, earlier this month my colleague Penny Sharpe introduced a repeal bill in the upper House. In the meantime, the concern for us is the environmental destruction and degradation of our national park by wild horses that will be allowed to run unchecked, causing irreversible damage to soil, water, rare and threatened species, and endangered ecological communities that are unique to the Kosciuszko National Park. The bill was the personal project of Peter Cochran, a former member for Monaro and a business owner who has monetised horse treks through the mountains' national park. That is what this is about and why the bill must be immediately repealed. We must not allow the Parliament to be used to advance the personal profits and interests of a former member and Nationals identity from the area represented by the Deputy Premier.

Before the last election Labor made the following commitments. Firstly, we promised to ensure that the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management would be the primary document guiding the operation of the park

because we understand that the best people to make decisions about the health and future of a national park are the experts within the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. They should not be undermined or tripped up by ad hoc legislation that diminishes their capacity to do their job in line with their professional experience and expertise. Secondly, we promised to restore resources to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service that were cut by the Liberal-Nationals Government and to restore its capacity to protect the pristine environment and threatened species of the Kosciuszko National Park. We committed to this because we have seen the impacts of the relentless cutbacks of the Government.

Thirdly, Labor promised to minimise the impacts of pest species—both plant and animal—through adequately funded and effective control programs, which would have included wild pigs, dogs, deer and horses. We also promised to repair the mountains' catchments by establishing a highly trained Kosciuszko works crew dedicated to halting erosion and restoring and repairing the slopes, wetlands and mountain streams that are currently under threat as a consequence of the wild horse population. This is what responsible custodians of those lands should pursue. It is what experts, traditional owners, our Aboriginal Elders, our national parks workers and scientists are telling us ought to happen in this unique and pristine environment. I note, for the Government's benefit—although I suspect it does not care—that the legislation it enacted last year has faced universal condemnation from the scientific community, academic experts and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service staff.

Stakeholders from the tourism industry, recreational fishers, land rehabilitation groups and wild horse rehoming organisations have also opposed the plan. We know that the Liberal members in this place are ill at ease with the Act and the destruction being writ large upon the Kosciuszko National Park. We know that they only voted for it to secure the cooperation of The Nationals for one privatisation deal or another—or perhaps, as a quid pro quo for the Sydney stadiums fiasco. We know that in their hearts the Liberals know that this is bad legislation; we know they want to get rid of it. The petition and those of us on this side of the Chamber call on the Government to take up John Barilaro's oft-repeated offer to rip up the Coalition agreement and then we call on the Liberals to join with Labor and repeal this garbage legislation. We need to rip up and repeal the Act and remove these destructive pests from our national parks.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (16:08): It is disgraceful that the first part of this debate has already used this House and parliamentary privilege to slur a non-member, Peter Cochran, who does not have the opportunity to defend himself, and to somehow make out that he is running an illegal business. That is incorrect and the member for Blue Mountains should withdraw that comment. I remind members opposite that we just had a general election. I was returned as a local member with a significant swing—the largest swing in the State—and a larger margin. In booths such as Adaminaby, there was 81 per cent support for The Nationals; in Jindabyne, 72 per cent; in Thredbo, 77 per cent; and in Berridale, 61 per cent.

It is clear that in the general election the issue of the repeal of the brumby bill was perpetrated and campaigned on by people such as Richard Swain and a group from inner-city Sydney, Reclaim Kosci, that were paid to campaign against me. They live in a fantasy where they believe that their views and their democracy trumps the democracy of local people who live and breathe the mountains—their generations and their culture. The mistruth in this debate is that over 30 years, 40 years we have not been able to manage the number of horses in the park and that is why we have an issue in the first place. The brumby bill does not do anything more than bring the parties back together.

We have said that we want to see a number of those horses removed from the park once we get a survey completed. We are not trying to stop that; we acknowledge it. But we will not accept the barbaric approach of the previous Labor Government, where horses were shot from the sky and left to die—mares watching their foals die—and it took days and days. That has been documented: the Guy Fawkes National Park massacre under Labor's watch. It is clear that since that massacre we have not been able to achieve consensus in this debate. If we want to protect the park we must remove the horses but to do so we need to bring all stakeholders together.

That is why an advisory committee—and the scientific committee still exists—made up of a broader membership will, in the coming years, achieve a reduction of horses never seen before. Even in the old plan we were talking about reducing the population to 3,000 horses in 10 years. My proposal—the brumby bill—sets the parameters to remove horses in a humane way. Many will still end up in abattoirs but we do not want to see those horses shot and left to rot. If members opposite actually cared about the park they would not want to leave the carcasses of those horses on the forest floor because they attract pigs and dogs—pests that damage the environment of the park.

Again, those members opposite have chosen to play politics and have teamed up with Reclaim Kosci. I know that there are members of that organisation in the gallery—I congratulate your efforts but you do not have the right of democracy here in Sydney, in Macquarie Street. You want to give me the finger, sir? Put your finger

down because that shows a lack of respect in this House. The reality is this: The people of my electorate and I will not be lectured to by those in the gallery because my community took this to an election and our position was endorsed. In my mind it is a game—a political piece of grandstanding and you guys are being used as political footballs. That is the truth.

Later this afternoon we will hear from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers, who previously supported the bill. They have now done a deal with the Labor Party and will oppose the bill or support the repeal bill. Let us see the true colours of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers who, in my electorate, were told, "No chance, we do not want you representing the people of the Monaro." Do not disrespect the people of Monaro—the communities, the generations who have a connection to that park. You cannot do that. You cannot disrespect democracy at a local level and somehow think that people who live in inner-city Sydney have every right to democracy and to dictate to the people of the region what is good or what is bad for them.

More importantly, in the decades to come people will look back to the bill and realise that it delivered a reduction of horses, protected the environment and accepted the cultural heritage connection of the brumby to the park. That is what the bill does. It acknowledges, it sets parameters and it includes stakeholders who were previously excluded in relation to management practices. Members opposite can keep bringing repeal bills, they can keep bringing petitions but we have just had a general election and regardless if they have 10,000 signatures—or 14,000 or 20,000—we have had an election on this issue and the people of the Monaro electorate have spoken. It is disgusting that those members opposite want to take away that democracy and use this issue as a political football.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mrs Leslie Williams): I remind members to my left that Government members sat in silence while the member for Blue Mountains spoke. I ask both sides of the Chamber to extend the same respect.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:13): That tirade from the Deputy Premier says it all. He does not seem to understand that Kosciuszko National Park is a park for the people of New South Wales. Today we are debating a petition that has been signed—

Mr Michael Johnsen: More than just one group of them.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: I can hear the Deputy Premier interjecting and saying, "More than one group".

Mr Michael Johnsen: I got a promotion.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: I say that over 12,000 signatures on a petition, Deputy Premier—he has left the Chamber already. He spoke of respect earlier and he has no respect to even stay in the Chamber today. Over 12,000 signatures on a petition represent just some of the people in the State who care so much about Kosciuszko National Park. We are discussing this petition today because over 12,000 people cared to take the time to sign it asking for action to be taken in Kosciuszko National Park. The people of Monaro do not own the park and the Deputy Premier and his political aspirations do not own it. It is up to the people of New South Wales to have a say, and today is the opportunity for people to have a say in this place about the precious and unique Kosciuszko National Park.

I thank Reclaim Kosci and Save Kosci for their hard work in getting all those people to sign the petition. I acknowledge that there are also very passionate people who genuinely care about this issue across the community on both sides of the argument and they want to see management in Kosciuszko National Park. But anyone who takes the time to listen to those who know best—the scientists and the traditional owners whose ancestors have walked on this planet for far longer than white settlement—will understand that we have a very big problem that requires urgent action. We want the Government to take that action.

We have an area in crisis as a result of a feral species that has been prioritised over all other native species in that park, courtesy of the Deputy Premier's legislation. That is not acceptable to anyone here. People on the other side of the House, Liberal Party members particularly, should understand that this problem matters to most of New South Wales. The Deputy Premier stood in the House today and said that management is what his legislation does. His legislation has done nothing. The legislation was meant to result in a plan of management for the park—a plan that was already created over two years by other experts and should be implemented, but a precursor to the plan under that legislation was for it to go to a committee, and a committee has never been formed.

At this rate, if this legislation remains in place there never will be any action. That is why that legislation must go. The Deputy Premier's bill was just politics. To show the level of contempt that New South Wales holds for the Deputy Premier and his legislation and the Government that is maintaining its stance on this position, I will

quote Mr David Watson, who is a professor of ecology and was on the NSW Threatened Species Scientific Committee. When he resigned from that committee—one of the Government's committees—he said:

Science is not a special interest group. Scientists don't lobby for favours, nor profit from political decisions. We are ambassadors for knowledge, the conscience of the natural world. The wilful disregard that you and your government colleagues have for science diminishes our collective future, relegating our precious national parks and priceless environment to political playthings.

Kosciuszko National Park should not be the Government's plaything, but that is what it is allowing it to be by continuing to stand by the Deputy Premier's legislation. We should all care about Kosciuszko National Park. It is the headwaters of the Murray and the Murrumbidgee and the lifeblood of the Murray-Darling Basin—30 per cent of that catchment comes from Kosciuszko National Park. If the Deputy Premier truly cared about the regions and about the people in the bush he would understand that there needs to be action and that his legislation is not the right action. We must ensure that the Deputy Premier's legislation is repealed. We must get beyond the Deputy Premier's aspirations because unless we take action urgently on Kosciuszko National Park it will be too late.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (16:18): I make a contribution to this debate as a great-grandson of a—

Mrs Helen Dalton: Oh!

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Hang on, there is a Constance hut in the mountains. I am from a grazing family in the Monaro, Helen. You might want to scoff but I do not find it funny. They had cattle leases through the mountains, were booted out in the fifties because of the environmental damage—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I have already spoken to members on the left-hand side of the Chamber. Again I say to them that Government members sat in silence during the contributions of the last two speakers and they should be given the same respect. I know this is a sensitive issue, but members on the left-hand side should give Government members the respect they gave them.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: I just wanted to ask that—

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

Ms Jenny Aitchison: The Minister should direct his comments through the Chair and not direct them to the Opposition because—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand the point of order. The member will resume her seat. The member for Bega has the call and he will be heard in silence.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: So I have a family association with the mountains and I go there all the time. I know that a number of horse surveys have been done over the past two decades and it was not until the last survey in 2014 that a lot of this conjecture around horse numbers came to the fore. I have heard numbers of 18,000, 6,000 and 3,000. The reality is that what we are trying to do through this bill is to protect the iconic nature of the brumby whilst at the same time manage the horses in the park.

In relation to the resourcing management of the park, I believe those opposite should stand condemned because of the way in which the park was managed for many years in the lead-up to the 2003 fires, which absolutely decimated the ecology of the mountains—not just for a decade or so but potentially for 100 years because those fires burnt right through to the roots. They destroyed a lot of the mountain scrub country and also those beautiful Snowy gums, and what have we got? We have a park that should not be in the state that it is. The park does need to be managed. Those opposite mentioned the Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal people knew how to manage the bush and they knew how to manage the Snowy Mountains; they did it through fire management and everything else.

No-one disputes that one thing that needs to be done and understood is to find out the horse numbers and the best way to manage them. The Deputy Premier made the point that there is nothing more inhumane than shooting a brumby out of a chopper and leaving that horse there for two days to die. That is something we should all reflect on when considering how we are going to manage these horse numbers. There are still going to be horses in the park. The 2014 survey increased the management of the survey area by about 60 per cent. Again there is some conjecture as to whether one horse sighting constitutes a sighting of 20 horses or 80-plus horses. In the science behind this there is no doubt that better engagement with the local community, the scientists and all those with a vested interest is the best way to work through this.

No-one wants to see any threatened species in the mountains at risk from any feral animal but we want to see the solution well managed. We have a drought on and we know that in the lower mountains there will be horses that will move to the higher country, particularly where the snow has fallen and where there is going to be a lot more feed over the summer period. That may very well give us a better opportunity to work out the numbers

and manage them. From the numbers that have been thrown around of 3,000 to 18,000 there is no doubt that a really inaccurate debate has been going on until now. That is exactly what the Deputy Premier is saying. He wants to be able to see with accuracy the best way to manage this issue. No-one wants to see 18,000 horses destroying the mountains but, at the same time, we want to see the ongoing management of the brumbies and the protection of that incredibly fragile environment.

I agree with the Deputy Premier, people in the region do care about the mountains and some of the language used in the debate during the election campaign was quite unsettling and unfair. The area is not a giant horse ranch. Members should go and have a look at it for themselves. You can go up to the snowfields today and you can see wild deer running up ski runs. That is just appalling, but that is the type of thing that is going on. You cannot turn a blind eye to the management of our national parks; you cannot just throw away the key and hope that it looks after itself. Under the Carr Government those fires decimated the mountain community, not only the environment but also the people and what they saw there. On this side of the House, unlike those opposite, we are happy to recognise that the brumby is an iconic animal that does need management and that it is part of our heritage and culture and a celebration of what that means for Snowy country people. Ultimately let us get the survey work done, let us get the accurate numbers and let us get the horses properly managed. That is the bottom line.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (16:24): I speak in strong support of the Save Kosciuszko National Park petition. I note that water is also iconic. I speak as an avid horse rider who, when riding through Long Plain, has seen firsthand the destruction caused by these feral animals. There is a very good reason we use the phrase, "eat like a horse". I have seen feral horses devour all high-value vegetation. I have seen these wild animals tear up valleys, wreck river beds, trample plants and poison the most important water source in our State with their effluent. For the past two years this imported species has been allowed to continue to destroy our biodiversity and ruin tourist campsites, all because we have a Deputy Premier worried about a handful of votes in his marginal electorate.

Last week John Barilaro told the media he did not care if a few frogs died for the sake of water security. We know he did not care about the million fish dying in the Menindee. He says, "Frogs, fish, who cares?" Why are destructive foreign feral horses the only animal The Nationals seem to want to protect? No animal does more damage to our water security and water quality than the hard-hoofed feral horse. When it comes to water security, our challenge is securing quality fresh water at the source of the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers. If water quality erodes in this part of the world, what hope is there for downstream communities? Polluting water at the source of the river has destructive consequences for those throughout the State. Uncle Max, the Indigenous Elder whose ancestors stem from the birthplace of Australia's major rivers in Kosciuszko, summed it up best when he said:

The horse is much heavier than us, so when they tread on this, they are turning the taps off on the Murrumbidgee River.

What are they treading on? They tread on something called sphagnum bogs. The wetlands in this area house sphagnum moss that can retain water for up to seven years, naturally filtering the water before releasing it downstream to prevent the low-flow systems, which facilitates the growth of toxic blue-green algae. Over the past few years we have seen explosions of blue-green algae in major waterways across the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers.

Lake Wyangan, near Griffith where I live, is in a constant state of red alert for blue-green algae threats. Overseas studies have linked blue-green algae with motor neurone disease [MND] and it is no coincidence that Griffith has seven times the rate of MND as the rest of Australia. Polluting our water does not simply affect our tourism and our irrigation: It is a matter of life and death. I believe several other illnesses are linked to poor water quality, but the New South Wales Government refuses to research it and does not want to know about it.

We cannot wait any longer. I believe everyone in this Chamber is on the same page, except Deputy Premier John Barilaro. There are a few Nats who have a conscience and would like to do the right thing, but they are too scared to defy their leader. Minister Matt Kean may be in a different party from me, but so far I have been impressed by his willingness to put politics aside and solve problems for the good of the State. He knows how urgent it is for us to repeal the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018 now because more delays will bring more destruction. We cannot make it rain, but this something we must do to protect downstream water security and delivery.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (16:28): I thank every person in the gallery for taking the time today to show their love and appreciation for our national parks and our environment. I thank everyone who signed this petition and said, "We want to stand up for our national parks; we want to stand up for our environment." I deeply appreciate it. Since I have become the Minister for Energy and Environment I have set two goals when it comes to national parks. First, I want to expand the footprint of our national park network in New South Wales. Fifty-three years ago a Liberal member of Parliament, Tom Lewis,

introduced the national parks bill, which established the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and set up a comprehensive statewide system and framework to protect our threatened and endangered species, and protect our environment.

Tom Lewis was not an outlier in the Liberal tradition. Our philosophy is based on that of Edmund Burke, who said that there is a compact in society: The past, the present and the future all owe obligations to each other. We owe an obligation to the next generation to leave our environment and our planet in a better place than we found it, and that is what I intend to do as the Minister. The first thing that I said is that I want to expand the footprint of our national parks. I have set an objective for the next two years to add an additional 200,000 hectares to our national parks. But it is not just about the amount of national parks, it is also about their quality. The second objective I have set is to improve the quality of our national parks and enhance the visitor experience. One of the biggest threats to our national parks is feral pests: feral cats, feral dogs, feral rabbits, and let us call them for what they are, not brumbies, feral horses.

When it comes to the Kosciuszko National Park, my first act as environment Minister was to go to that park to see the impact of feral horses on the park. I saw for myself firsthand one of the most beautiful natural environments anywhere in the world, and the devastating impact that the number of horses is having on that environment. I will update those in the gallery, those listening at home and members of my plan. The Government is about to appoint a community consultation committee as is required by the legislation. That committee will have a balance of people who care about the environment and also care about the heritage value of those horses. We must listen to all stakeholders. We will do an audit to work out exactly the number of horses that are in the national park. [*Extension of time*]

Once we appoint the community advisory committee and the scientific advisory committee—I note that is not a requirement of the legislation, but we must return to the science when it comes to environment policy, and that is what I intend to listen to—we will wait on the results of the audit to work out exactly how many horses are in the national park. The Deputy Premier is on the record saying that he cares about that national park. He cares about rural and regional New South Wales, and he cares about his community. Once we know the number of horses in the park, we will take the scientific advice to work out what is a sustainable population. The Deputy Premier has been on the record about that. That is what we intend to do. We will appoint the committee, we will do the audit, we will listen to the scientific advice and we will work with the stakeholders to make sure we get the best result for our community and also for our natural environment. I am committed to working with you and I am committed to working with my colleagues who care about this very important issue so that we can get it right and hand our national parks and our planet to our kids in a better state than we found it.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:33): In reply: I note in this important discussion on the petition the contributions from many. The Deputy Premier, and the member for Monaro put to us that his brumby bill cares for horses, which is a furphy. Horses are dying and so is the park. The member for Port Stephens reminded us that the headwaters of the Murray and the Murrumbidgee come from this park—we must keep that at the centre of this debate. The member for Bega acknowledged that the park must be managed; he acknowledged that there are threatened species in the park, but re his heritage claim it was the man, not the horse, from Snowy River. I thank the member for Murray for her contribution, in which she said that no animal does more damage than the hard-hoofed feral horse—we must keep that at the centre of this debate too.

I also thank the Minister because he committed here—you all heard it—to expand the footprint of the national parks in this State. We will hold the Minister to that, the fact that he will expand the national parks and listen to the science. I thank the large group of bushwalkers, those who walked the journey from Sydney to the summit of Kosciuszko collecting signatures and raising awareness as they went—people not only from inner-city Sydney but also from across this entire State. I honour you all today, particularly Richard and Alison Swain, Linda Groom, Andrew Cox, Professor David Watson and Uncle Max. There are many thousands of signatories from across this State. [*Extension of time*]

Repealing the Act is straightforward; we need to restore a sensible plan. There are too many horses, the park is being destroyed and the damage being done can no longer be ignored. We will work with the Minister; the Minister will work with the people. Let us get this done, let us repeal this Act. I commend this petition to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the House take note of the petition.

The House divided.

Ayes30
Noes47
Majority..... 17

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J	Barr, Mr C	Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S	Daley, Mr M	Dalton, Mrs H
Dib, Mr J	Doyle, Ms T	Greenwich, Mr A
Harris, Mr D	Harrison, Ms J	Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S	Lalich, Mr N	Leong, Ms J
Lynch, Mr P	McDermott, Dr H	McGirr, Dr J
Mehan, Mr D (teller)	Mihailuk, Ms T	Minns, Mr C
O'Neill, Dr M	Parker, Mr J	Piper, Mr G
Scully, Mr P	Tesch, Ms L	Voltz, Ms L
Washington, Ms K	Watson, Ms A (teller)	Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Anderson, Mr K	Ayres, Mr S	Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G	Bromhead, Mr S	Clancy, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K	Constance, Mr A	Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Coure, Mr M	Crouch, Mr A (teller)	Davies, Mrs T
Dominello, Mr V	Elliott, Mr D	Evans, Mr L.J.
Gibbons, Ms M	Griffin, Mr J	Gulaptis, Mr C
Hancock, Mrs S	Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A
Johnsen, Mr M	Kean, Mr M	Lee, Dr G
Lindsay, Ms W	Marshall, Mr A	O'Dea, Mr J
Pavey, Mrs M	Perrottet, Mr D	Petinos, Ms E
Preston, Ms R	Provest, Mr G	Roberts, Mr A
Saunders, Mr D	Sidgreaves, Mr P	Sidoti, Mr J
Singh, Mr G	Smith, Mr N	Speakman, Mr M
Stokes, Mr R	Taylor, Mr M	Toole, Mr P
Tuckerman, Mrs W	Upton, Ms G	Ward, Mr G
Williams, Mr R	Wilson, Ms F	

Question negatived.

Private Members' Statements

HAWKESBURY POLICE AREA COMMAND

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:43): I commend Hawkesbury Police Area Command [PAC] for its dedication to keeping Hawkesbury's residents safe and assisting our most vulnerable. Members would be aware of the bravery of our police force across the whole of New South Wales. Our Hawkesbury PAC goes above and beyond this by regularly arranging seminars to educate Hawkesbury residents on different topics of concern to the safety of our residents. One such seminar was held on 27 May 2019 and was facilitated by the NSW Elder Abuse Helpline & Resource Unit. I thank Hawkesbury PAC and the NSW Elder Abuse Helpline & Resource Unit for providing my constituents with such an informative seminar.

The seminar was held in the lead-up to World Elder Abuse Day, which is held on 15 June each year. Any offences committed against our elderly are totally unacceptable. Elder abuse is any act that causes harm or distress to an older person. It is abhorrent. The majority of alleged abusers are those closest to and most trusted by the victim. It is therefore important that we are aware of the issue and of the warning signs that may indicate its occurrence. My constituents, as well as constituents in other electorates, are encouraged to visit elderabusehelpline.com.au or to contact 1800 628 221 if they want to know more or to discuss any concerns relating to this issue.

Hawkesbury PAC does well to educate the community through a variety of methods. Seminars are not the preferred resource for everyone, which is why the community is grateful for and benefits from Hawkesbury PAC's active social media presence and its informative podcasts, which are accessible online. Our Hawkesbury PAC is to be commended for its charitable nature towards our most vulnerable. Each year Hawkesbury PAC, with the support of the community, donates playdough to The Children's Hospital at Westmead. Playdough is used in the physiotherapy of the children and plays an important part in their recovery, although it must be discarded after individual use due to the risk of infection. This year Hawkesbury PAC donated 5,000 tubs of playdough to the hospital.

I commend a young boy by the name of Craig Black for, with the support of his family, approaching individuals and organisations within the community and delivering playdough to Hawkesbury PAC to then be delivered to The Children's Hospital at Westmead. I also commend the Richmond Air Mobility Social Club for its great efforts in providing playdough. I thank every individual and organisation that played their part. The donation of playdough means that money that would have otherwise been spent purchasing playdough can be spent on other much-needed areas instead. I commend everyone at Hawkesbury PAC for their work in a variety of innovative ways to protect our community and assist those who are most vulnerable.

SYDENHAM TO BANKSTOWN METRO PROJECT

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:47): Today I draw the attention of the House to an inquiry that was established this morning in the Legislative Council with respect to the Sydenham to Bankstown metro project, also known as metro southwest. I have previously called for a parliamentary inquiry to be conducted into the metro southwest—I note that the Premier spoke of the metro today in question time. I want to be clear that I have always indicated the need for a parliamentary inquiry into the metro, my considerable concern regarding this metro, and its impact on Bankstown and the surrounding areas. Portfolio Committee No. 6 -Transport and Customer Service will conduct the inquiry into the Sydenham to Bankstown line conversion. The terms of reference for the inquiry are:

- (1) That Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and Customer Service inquire into and report on aspects of the planned conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown line from heavy rail to metro, being the southwest part of the Sydney Metro City and Southwest project, including:
 - (a) the adequacy of the business case and viability of metro;
 - (b) the consideration of alternatives for improving capacity and reducing congestion;
 - (c) the factors taken into account when comparing the alternatives and the robustness of the evidence used in decision-making;
 - (d) whether metro is a suitable means of transport over long distances;

I particularly welcome that term of reference. The inquiry will also investigate the consultation process undertaken—or lack thereof, I should say—particularly in relation to the way the community has been sidelined; how little information has been provided to the communities of Canterbury, Lakemba and Bankstown; the fact that to this day we still do not know whether there will be a turnback or where it will be; the lack of information with respect to how this project will be delivered and the impact the project will have on our community. The inquiry will also investigate:

- (f) the impact on the environment and heritage conservation;
- (g) any lobbying, political donations or other influence of the public and/or private sector in relation to making that decision;

That is a very worthy inclusion in the terms of reference. I want that to be examined as well because I have always believed that the Sydenham to Bankstown metro has been a scapegoat and allowed developers to use the area to dump tens of thousands of units. It is important to examine why the decision to extend the metro into Bankstown was made in the first place when, clearly, there is little benefit for my community in being taken off the grid and disconnected from the City Circle and little benefit for suburbs west of Bankstown in losing any direct connection whatsoever to City Circle. It is also important to examine the tender process. I note that the terms of reference refer to:

- (h) the tender process for appointing private operators;
- (i) the contractual arrangements entered into in respect of the project;
- (j) the adequacy of temporary transport arrangements during the conversion process, including for people with a disability;

That is particularly imperative. These are old train stations. A number of them do not have lifts, three of which are in my electorate. The inquiry will also look at the impact on the stations west of Bankstown. I particularly welcome that part of the terms of reference. As I have mentioned on a number of occasions in this House, nine stations west of Bankstown have already been lost from the Inner West and Leppington line. They have lost all direct services into City Circle. Commuters at those stations now have to catch three trains via Lidcombe, Strathfield and Birrong to get into City Circle. Once they have lost the T3 Bankstown heavy rail line, these stations will become entirely disconnected from City Circle. Given that there are no public buses in that region, it is imperative that this Parliament properly assess the impact on the tens of thousands of residents and commuters west of Bankstown. I welcome this inquiry and thank the Legislative Council, particularly Portfolio Committee No. 6 for holding the inquiry. I understand that the committee will report back on 31 March 2020. I look forward to reading its findings and recommendations.

ELECTRICITY DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:52): People in the Myall Lakes electorate and indeed across this great State of ours have major concerns about reliable electricity. We are one of the largest coal exporters in the world and we have been given a gift of amazing natural resources that we choose to sell for export. However, we have not encouraged the construction of new generation coal-fired power. Just ask any restaurant, cafe, butcher or florist and they will tell you that electricity prices are now one of their top expenses and are eating up the majority of profits. In my area dairy farmers and pensioners are struggling with rising power prices. Recently we heard that steelmaking giant BlueScope Steel is investing \$1 million into an expansion into the United States, where energy costs one-third of what it does in Australia. BlueScope Steel has announced a huge expansion to a key mill in the United States that has the benefit of lower energy costs. BlueScope CEO Mark Vassella told Ross Greenwood that he is concerned about the impact of energy prices. He said:

We still face energy costs in this country that are too high. The energy costs for our investment in North America are about a third of what we would pay in Australia. We've got to have a situation where there is more suppliers of energy in Australia.

We must take urgent action, to increase the supply of electricity through a new high-energy low-emissions [HELE] power station, and both State and Federal governments should cease taxpayer subsidies for renewables. Furthermore, we must remove the perceived stigma attached to other clean sources of energy such as nuclear and thorium for our electricity needs in the future. Thorium is a naturally occurring slightly radioactive metal discovered in 1828 by the Swedish chemist Jons Jakob Berzelius, who named it after Thor, Norse God of Thunder. It is found in small amounts in most rocks and soils, where it is about three times more abundant than uranium. Compared with uranium reactors, thorium reactors produce far less waste and the waste that is generated is much less radioactive and much shorter lived. Geoscience Australia estimates that Australia's monazite resources amount to 5.2 million tonnes. At an estimated average thorium content of 7 per cent, it is calculated that around 364,000 tonnes of thorium resources are available from this source right here in our own country. That is estimated to be the second or third highest reserve of the mineral in the world.

New South Wales appears well placed to get through this summer without major power outages—although Victoria may not be so lucky, with more than a million households facing potential blackouts. The assessment from the Australian Energy Market Operator in its annual *Electricity Statement of Opportunities* report released today is that the main threat of involuntary load-shedding in the National Electricity Market is in Victoria. However, Bruce Mountain, director of the Victoria Energy Policy Centre, said on that on the centre's analysis there is a lot to be worried about. He added that shortages in Victoria could affect other States, including New South Wales. Mr Mountain further stated that if Victoria draws power from South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales—in that order—New South Wales usually struggles when Victoria struggles.

New South Wales faces shortages in future summers as its Liddell power station starts to shut in 2022-23. However, those shortages could also occur this summer if bushfires were to disrupt interconnecting powerlines with Queensland and Victoria. I understand and appreciate that our Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean, has been working with his State and Federal counterparts to shore up supplies in the most populous State. We must now look at long-term solutions for our State's energy needs, including the construction of new high efficiency, low-emission clean energy power stations and the investigation of both nuclear and/or thorium power generation. Wind and solar will of course continue to play a part in providing us with clean power; however, with today's technology utilised in solar and wind generation, it cannot and will not provide a reliable electricity supply in New South Wales.

SUNNYFIELD DISABILITY SERVICES

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (16:57): Today I talk about the amazing work of Sunnyfield DisAbility Services at Allambie Heights. There is Sunnyfield sunshine every day for all the people who participate in this incredible registered, not-for-profit, member-based charity. Sunnyfield enriches the lives of people living with disability in my electorate of Wakehurst and across New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. The service began in 1952 when 18 families from the northern beaches formed an association to support full lives for people with disability. Guided by values of respect, trust, honesty and innovation, Sunnyfield now delivers over 2,000 support services for people with disability, their families and carers. More than 1,500 people work at Sunnyfield, providing services from 78 sites.

Sunnyfield provides love and care through a range of activities, including accommodation services, with hundreds of individuals in supported accommodation or short-term accommodation. When I last visited there were 350 or so independent-living residents. Sunnyfield also provides community services, with about 1,100 clients participating at community hubs, receiving drop-in support to their homes or being supported in other community-based activities. Sunnyfield's social enterprise has about 220 supported employees and 60 commercial business customers. Sunnyfield is an incredible organisation positioned at the top of the hill in

Allambie Heights. Everybody on the northern beaches knows and loves Sunnyfield because they appreciate all it does for the people who work there, the people who need accommodation services and generally people who find life challenging because of their disability.

Recently I was delighted to visit the Allambie Heights Sunnyfield enterprise again. I had morning tea with some of Sunnyfield's supported employees, along with members of the executive and board. I saw the two new external all-weather awnings that were funded through the Community Building Partnership program. In recent years there have been many opportunities to support Sunnyfield, and the State Government and I, as the local MP, have offered much support—particularly through the Community Building Partnership. I am very pleased that a number of grants have been made available to Sunnyfield, each of which has provided enormous additional benefits for the people who work there and the people who enjoy the benefits of the Sunnyfield family and community. In the past couple of years more than \$100,000 has been awarded to Sunnyfield.

Normally we do not hold up photographs in the Chamber, but I want to share a photograph that was taken during my recent visit because I want to make sure that each of the people in the photograph knows that their picture has been in the New South Wales Parliament. The photograph was taken at the morning tea. In the front row are Chris, Aliza, Kirsty, Emma and Diane. In the back row are Leslie, Anne, Irene, Caroline—who is one of the chief executives—and Steve, and I am there too. We can see the smiles on the faces of those fantastic people who are doing fantastic things. I say to each one of them that it is my honour and pleasure when I visit them. I see the incredible work they do and the love, kindness and big smiles given to each and every person in their care.

Thank you to Sunnyfield and thank you to each and every one of the people who enjoy the services at Sunnyfield. I can assure them that if there is anything that I, the New South Wales Government and, I am sure, Opposition members can do to support residents and workers of Sunnyfield, as well as those who enjoy other services offered by Sunnyfield, we will be there to support them.

CENTRAL COAST POLICE NUMBERS

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:01): In September 2018 Tony King, president of the Police Association of NSW, visited the Central Coast to meet with me in my electorate as part of the Police Association's campaign Back the Blue, which called on both the major parties to commit to extra police officer recruitment in this State. I assured him at the time that I was right behind his association and its members. I communicated to him that a large number of my constituents had raised with me the issue of police numbers on the Central Coast. Amongst those constituents who expressed their concern was a number of serving officers who reside in my electorate, and I committed to them to work towards improving police numbers on the Central Coast.

By way of introduction, the Central Coast region has two police districts: Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Water, in the south. The Entrance electorate straddles both those police districts and I deal with them and their serving officers. Those serving officers do a fantastic job. My purpose in raising the issue of police numbers is to remind the House and my constituents that I believe our local police do a fantastic job, but there need to be more of them. I am speaking about police numbers on the Central Coast as a result of those representations made to me. At the same time, I note that a Productivity Commission report recorded that nationally the average ratio of police officers to the population was 274 officers for every 100,000 citizens. However, in New South Wales the figure was lower, with 239 offices for every 100,000 citizens. So I determined to try to find out the ratio for the Central Coast.

To do that, I needed to know police numbers for the Central Coast. But it is very hard to get information from the police Minister. I put a number of questions on notice and I was referred to the police website, where there is limited information. As a consequence, I used freedom of information laws to obtain the information directly from the NSW Police Force. I obtained that information in March or April last year in table form from the NSW Police Force. I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* a fairly complicated table listing the number of police officers serving in the police districts of Brisbane Waters and Tuggerah Lakes from 2011 to 2018.

Leave granted.

Year Commencing 1st January	Brisbane Water <i>Actual numbers</i>			Tuggerah Lakes <i>Actual numbers</i>		
	Sworn	Unsworn	Total	Sworn	Unsworn	Total
2011	234	32	266	210	23	233
2012	248	33	281	216	27	243
2013	208	29	237	190	25	215
2014	202	27	229	189	26	215
2015	204	26	230	187	26	213
2016	202	26	228	193	27	220
2017	201	29	230	194	22	216
2018	205	23	228	197	17	214
*28/03/2018	203	21	224	197	17	214

The table shows that in 2011 approximately 444 sworn police officers and 55 unsworn staff served the whole Central Coast. It also shows that on 28 March 2018 the number of sworn officers was 400, with 38 unsworn staff, which indicates a decline. Population on the Central Coast is roughly 330,000 and at present there are roughly 122 police officers for every 100,000 citizens. The Central Coast has a lower ratio of police positions than the average for New South Wales. Consequently, I have called a number of times for more police to be recruited and appointed to Central Coast police districts.

I note that at the last election both major parties committed to recruiting extra police, and I want them delivered to the Central Coast. I note the member for Terrigal has said that I continue to deliberately mislead our community by citing incorrect figures. The figures I cited were supplied to me by the NSW Police Force and if the member has different figures they need to be made public. Simply saying that I am incorrect is not enough. He cannot just assert it; he has to put up or shut up. I will continue to argue for more police on the Central Coast, as that is what my community wants. Our local police do a fantastic job; there just needs to be more of them on the Central Coast.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:06): As the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice, I bring the attention of the House to the 1,500 extra police who are being added to the NSW Police Force by this Government. Members are aware of the comments by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in this House previously concerning new technology, equipment and police stations provided by this Government to the great people in the NSW Police Force to help our officers keep our communities safe. The 1,500 extra police is the biggest increase in the NSW Police Force in 30 years. The member for The Entrance referred to his local area but failed to mention that in 2011 the Auditor-General found that the NSW Police Force was lacking 489 police and was "desperately understaffed after 16 years of Labor being in office." In Labor's final term nearly 50 police stations were closed. That is in stark contrast to what we have today, with this Government strongly supporting the NSW Police Force.

TRIBUTE TO TIM FISCHER, AC, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (17:08): As the member for Albury, I take this opportunity to speak for the Albury community and, on a personal note, to mark the passing of Tim Fischer, AC, who holds a special place in the hearts of those in the Albury electorate. I acknowledge that there will be a time to mark Tim's passing more formally in this House. Boree Creek, where Tim Fischer lived and farmed, is in the electorate of Albury. Yesterday evening Tim Fischer, AC, father of two, passed away peacefully with those closest to him at the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre. I take this moment to extend to Judy, Dominic and Harrison our thoughts and our prayers.

I will share my connection in the sense that my home country, Urangeline East, is just a short trip away from Tim Fischer's home country of Boree Creek. From my childhood days, I have known of Tim and have always looked up to him as a man of integrity and passion for his community. I will spend a moment to speak of a special event that was held only a few weeks ago, when the community of Boree Creek came together to pay tribute to Tim Fischer and to honour him by naming a park the Tim Fischer Community Park. There was a special rail trip from Albury through The Rock out to Boree Creek, which was the first time a passenger train had been on that line for over a decade. As we know, rail was a real passion of Tim's. I acknowledge the Director of Rail National Services, Ross Jackson, who helped organise this special Riverina Spirit ride. Ross said:

Personally for me I wanted Tim to experience train travel to Boree Creek.

We wanted him to have the opportunity to enjoy it. It has always been known as Tim's line, the Boree Creek line.

I don't think it has been done since the 70s and I wanted him to be a part of that and he certainly wanted to do something for the community ...

In that regard, the train ride raised \$5,000 to \$6,000 for cancer research. I also acknowledge the community of Boree Creek, in particular, Jenny and Phil Baker. It was Jenny's idea to commemorate Tim by naming the park in his honour. I also acknowledge the Federation Council, which was very much on board with the idea. It was special to be there to acknowledge Tim. On the day, I spoke about home. I said that home for Tim would always be where Judy, Dominic and Harrison were, but home would always be Boree Creek. On the day, Tim said:

It's nice to be home, on a special train with over 200 people and for a good cause.

Tim Fischer was a man of faith and I know, in that sense, yesterday evening he went home to his Lord. We are the poorer for his passing.

BLUE HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (17:12): Schools are complex organisations where individual students, teachers and parents combine their collective talents to produce improved academic and social outcomes. No one

group can make a difference by themselves; it takes a combined intellectual and work ethic to produce sustained improvement. This sustained improvement can occur only when there is positive leadership—leadership that commands respect, loyalty and hard work. That is why I am so pleased to acknowledge that Blue Haven Public School in my electorate was named the best public primary school in Australia at the recent Australian Education Awards. Its leader, Mr Paul McDermott, was also recognised as the leading public school principal in Australia.

As a former school principal and deputy principal of the neighbouring North Lakes Public School—which 20 years ago was split in half to form Blue Haven Public School—I know the community well. It was my pleasure to have previously written a reference for Mr McDermott for a Harvard scholarship. He travelled to the United States of America to learn more about teaching and learning and used that knowledge at Blue Haven Public School. The school, which was in the bottom 10 per cent of NAPLAN, is now performing in the top 10 per cent. It is a real tribute not only to himself but also to his entire staff.

The annual Australian Education Awards 2019 evening was attended by Australia's leading principals and department heads. Mr McDermott was named the Government Primary School Principal of the Year from a list of incredible educators and school leaders. Blue Haven Public School was successful from a fine list of schools, including finalists Beenleigh State School, Granville Public School, Revesby Public School and Tamborine Mountain State School. I think it is a great credit to Blue Haven that it was announced as the leading school in such a distinguished list. The day after the school was named Primary School of the Year at the Australian Education Awards students arrived at school wearing badges that read, "I go to the best school in Australia." The award certainly received a great community response.

Mr McDermott's approach to teaching has improved wellbeing, teaching and learning, and made a difference to students' results—which, as I said, have increased markedly in two years. He started very simply with strategies such as making sure that every student wore the correct school uniform because he knew the importance of having every student feel part of the team that represented Blue Haven Public School. As a former principal who has carried out a lot of school reviews, I knew it was a good school the moment I walked through the gate because of the feeling in the playground, the ladies in the front office and the teachers I met as I walked down the hallways. It just has that positive feel. Mr McDermott and his staff have created an environment where that is certainly the case. Everything is tailored towards the needs of the kids. They have a strong wellbeing program that makes the kids feel safe and valued.

Mr McDermott said that Blue Haven Public School has undergone a significant transformation over the past three years. The school has created a strong, positive school culture that engages the community and ensures every student is known, valued and cared for. The school boasts a highly trained and dedicated staff. I can vouch for that, having sat in the staffroom and listened to the student-focused conversations at recess and lunch, which gives a good guide to staff thinking and focus. Teachers are using evidence-based practices in teaching and learning. As I said earlier, this improvement has resulted in the school moving from the bottom 10 per cent of NAPLAN value-added results to the top 10 per cent in only two years. The mantra of the school is, "Every child matters every day."

Recently I visited the school for a whole-of-school performance. Mr McDermott was dressed up in costume, leading the assembly and introducing each student act. Every student onstage was proud of what he or she was offering. The hall was full to overflowing. Not all the parents could fit inside—they were out in the cold or underneath. The school has such a positive feel. I know the community well. Mr McDermott and his staff have been able to turn things around. I congratulate him and his school on being the best in Australia.

NARELLAN ROTARY CLUB FUNDRAISING BALL

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (17:17): I recently attended the Rotary Club of Narellan's twenty-first annual fundraising ball. Each year the ball raises funds to support many local charities and organisations. The primary focus of this year's event was on research projects for diabetes, breast cancer, men's health and cancer, computer database cancer treatment, motor neurone disease and bionic voice. It also focused on continuing Western Sydney University medical scholarships for local young doctors and many other worthy organisations and programs. Since 2007 the Rotary Club of Narellan has supported undergraduate School of Medicine scholarships, and 15 doctors have been supported by the club to date. The Perich family, who believe strongly in education, provided the initial impetus for the scholarship.

ADCO Construction Pty Ltd and Narellan Town Centre were the original major sponsors. They are now joined by the Perich Group and The a2 Milk Company, and provide an overall scholarship amount of \$345,000. The club offers two scholarships each year. A key training site for the School of Medicine students is the Macarthur Clinical School, a \$21 million state-of-the-art facility opened in 2017 by Brad Hazzard, MP, the Minister for Health and Medical Research. The facility gives students hands-on clinical experience and mentoring by Campbelltown Hospital senior specialists and other health professionals from their very first year of study.

A wide range of students from diverse backgrounds with the ambition of one-day practising medicine in the Macarthur region attend the medical school. It is a wonderful asset to the region.

The support of the Lady Mary Fairfax Trust has contributed to reversal of the tide of type 2 diabetes in south-west Sydney. A Diabetes Remission Clinical Trial [DiRECT] study across Wollondilly that tests whether diabetes remission is possible by using a very low calorie diet will evaluate outcomes, acceptability and the best method of delivery across Australia for type 2 diabetes. A two-year DiRECT study in the United Kingdom had positive results and it is hoped that the DiRECT study in Wollondilly will also be successful. It is hoped that the program can be rolled out throughout south-west Sydney and New South Wales.

Since February 2017, Liverpool Hospital has had a robotic surgery program that includes the Perich Mimic robotic training program, the Perich robotic research fellowship and the Eggtober Foundation. Some 227 procedures have been conducted, significantly reducing the length of stay for patients. Of course, without the support of sponsors none of those wonderful programs would be possible. Other research projects include detailed clinicopathological databases, marginal costs of robotic prostatectomy productivity and the prostatic cancer combined clinic, early unclamping versus regular clamping in robot-assisted partial nephrectomy, and patient decision-making regarding robotic prostatectomy or radiotherapy for treatment of localised prostate cancer, which has been shortlisted for the NSW Research Health Awards.

I take this opportunity to thank Bob Ingham, Tony and Ron Perich, the Liverpool Catholic Club and the Lady Fairfax Charitable Trust for their unwavering ongoing support. I thank the Perich Group, The a2 Milk Company, Marsdens Law Group, Villa World, Mainbrace Constructions, TRN Group, Freedom Foods Group, ADCO Constructions, Narellan Town Centre, Wisdom Homes, Vitocco Constructions, Cameron Brae Group, Bradcorp, Bombora Pools and Spas, Camden Hire, Masterton Homes and the many other supporters of the event. I give special thanks to the major donors on the night. I also thank masters of ceremonies Jim Marsden, OAM, and Terry Goldacre for making the night so successful. I thank the ball committee—Andrew Moyle, Tony Perich, AM, Phil Dowd, Ruth Morrison and Peter Mihajilovic—and the Liverpool Catholic Club and its staff. Rotary president Paul Hutchinson is to be congratulated on a successful night that raised over \$2 million.

Rulings

STANDING ORDER 54

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Before I call the member for Rockdale, I draw his attention to Standing Order 54, which states:

Members shall be seated unless entering, leaving or moving to any other part of the Chamber during debate and shall not stand in any of the passage ways.

Private Members' Statements

PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER PAY EQUITY

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:22): I raise an issue affecting many of my constituents in Rockdale—that is, pay inequality for public school teachers who began working in 2014 and 2015 and who have been disadvantaged during the transition to the new pay structure. Last year teachers who were employed after 1 January 2016 overtook their colleagues who were initially employed in 2014 or 2015, following the move from the common incremental salary scale to standards-based remuneration. When a large number of teachers who are outraged by this came to my office during the week I had insufficient chairs for them all to sit down. In any workplace structure where many people are performing similar tasks, particularly when their salaries have fixed annualised increases, it is important for both fairness and workplace morale that those performing the same work receive the same compensation.

Through what I assume was an oversight during the transition to the new pay structure—essentially a glitch in the system—equitable treatment has been destroyed. I understand that it will not be corrected for many years without intervention. Teachers are the backbone of our education system. We depend on them every day to teach, to care for and to mentor our young people. It is not an easy job. Teachers have to deal every day with the stress of having dozens of students depending upon them, not to mention the pressure from State and Federal governments as well as the students' families to deliver the best outcomes possible. We as a society place all those pressures on our teachers, and all they ask in return is that they be treated fairly and reasonably at work and that they be paid a decent wage. The pay discrepancy for the affected teachers can be reconciled with that simple request.

Quite frankly, it is totally insulting that the Government has allowed the issue to continue for so long. It is showing a complete lack of respect for hardworking teachers and appears to be taking advantage of the dedication of teachers to their profession. I was upset to find out that teachers starting off are getting paid more.

The teachers are mentoring those teachers who are being paid more. It is a glitch and we must sort it out. I thank the many local teachers who have taken the time to meet with me, as well as the New South Wales Teachers Federation that has been fighting to get the issue addressed. The collective resentment that the ridiculous inequality creates in the workplace affects not only the directly disadvantaged teachers but also their colleagues, principals and administrative and support staff. I know that local teachers have contacted many members in this place on the issue. I challenge any member to say that they believe this situation is fair. I am sure all members know how important their local teachers are to their electorate.

Teachers are community leaders who regularly go above and beyond the call of duty, providing additional services that make our public schools so attractive, and they do so for little or no reward. They use their own time to get kids involved in sport and extracurricular activities. We used to provide teachers with life pensions in recognition of the value they add to our society. Those days are long gone but, if anything, our expectations of teachers have only continued to rise. Teachers have continued to keep up their end of the social contract and it would be nothing but unfair if the State Government was unwilling to act as any decent employer would when an obvious pay discrepancy has occurred.

I understand that a major impasse in the correction of the pay discrepancy is the Government's slavish adherence to its 2.5 per cent wages cap policy. This is despite the fact that it would likely cost less than \$30 million to address the pay discrepancy, which should be seen not as broader wage negotiations but simply as a part of the State's duty to provide fairness to all of its employees. Rigid and unyielding adherence to policy deprives the Government of the ability to make fair and reasonable decisions that properly consider the individual merits of a case. I ask members opposite to do the right thing and provide fairness to all public school teachers.

GIRLS DAY OUT IN STEM

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:27): On Sunday 11 August I was honoured to attend and open the first ever regional Girls Day Out in STEM in Port Macquarie and to speak briefly. The event was held at our wonderful Charles Sturt University [CSU] and coincided with the commencement of National Science Week. In many ways, I am not surprised that the event was such a huge success with over 200 very excited young women attending to be inspired with opportunities for their future. Managing Director of Eureka Explorers, Petriea Skitek, coordinated the much-anticipated event that exceeded all expectations on the day. The event highlighted the public support behind more investigations into science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] education for children aged 10 to 14. Petriea commented on the overall enthusiasm and eagerness of families to involve their children in science-based tuition and, thereby, effectively increasing the talent pool of young girls and women into the industry.

Designed specifically to encourage a higher intake of STEM-qualified women, the gathering heard from featured experts from an array of fields, including BHP Foundation; CSIRO winner of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tertiary Student STEM Achievement Award, Taylah Griffin; STEM leadership participant in the Homeward Bound project, Dr Jazmin Daniells; and Port Macquarie Hastings Environmental Lab supervising scientist in chemistry, Grace Connor. Leading a masterclass in electroplating and colorimetric analysis, Grace Connor demonstrated to her audience how chemists calculate the amount of nitrate required in water as part of a water-testing process. Throughout the day, featured masterclasses in digital detectives and cyber spies sessions were led by STEM expert Emily Climpson who provided the participants with a hands-on learning experience on the intricacies of online environments through app development, online identities, data mining and digital forensics.

Also showcasing his STEM expertise was renowned Westport high school science teacher and ambassador for ocean exploration, Lloyd Godson, who, using his Guinness World Records skills, attempted the fastest assembly of a citrus fruit battery as well as a project to facilitate the longest slime without breaking. Last year Lloyd created Guinness World Records history by generating 2,502 watt hours of electricity by human power underwater. I especially acknowledge year 6 student Sophia Skitek from St Columba Anglican School and year 5 student Alliyra Bentley from Hastings Public School for sharing their enthusiasm and passion for STEM-based subjects. Sophia's career goal is to become a vet or a doctor when she finishes school. She commented about the possibilities available to her in STEM research and how introducing more science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses would support her to reach university goals.

Similarly, Alliyra Bentley outlined the endless opportunities available for students to enrol in STEM. She was excited to join with others in listening to keynote panellists Stephanie Bendixsen, Taylah Griffin and Dr Jazmin Daniells. She noted that they gave her a better understanding of STEM and what she could achieve in her future career endeavours. Those were just a few of the participants but I know that their excitement at being involved on the day and sharing the experiences reflected those of the over 200 who attended. Ecstatic with the high attendance at the inaugural event, organiser Petriea Skitek hopes the event has had a profound experience on

the lives of the young women and that, in some way, it helped to inspire some to pursue future education opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

It was wonderful for me, a former teacher, to see our next generation of young, talented women, considering a career path in STEM after their experiences on the day. I congratulate Petricia, CSU, and our local science leaders in Port Macquarie for the various roles they played in coordinating the first regional Girls Day Out in STEM event. I have no doubt it will not be the last. It is important that we replicate the fabulous event; it will certainly have my support. I congratulate Petricia. Let's do it all again in 2020.

BAULKHAM HILLS ELECTORATE BUDGET FUNDING

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (17:31): I inform the House of recent events in the Baulkham Hills electorate that will see more than \$35 million in local infrastructure rolled out in the next 12 months. Residents living in Castle Hill, Kellyville and North Rocks are among the biggest beneficiaries in the 2019-20 budget. At a time when the Government is allocating unprecedented amounts to education to provide students with state-of-the-art learning facilities, lifting academic standards and making certain every student is valued and cared for at school, a massive \$21 million will be invested to ensure accessible, high-quality infrastructure to accommodate the growing number of enrolments in the Baulkham Hills electorate.

That is significant during Education Week 2019 as we focus on every student and every voice to ensure that children and young people across our communities are informed and feel empowered to achieve their aspirations. The Government has allocated an additional \$12.9 million for major upgrades at North Rocks Public School. The project will deliver 15 flexible learning spaces, new amenities and administration facilities, which will enable the school to accommodate more than 900 students. Construction is scheduled for completion in mid-2020. At Excelsior Public School in Castle Hill, an additional \$8.4 million has been allocated by this Government to deliver 14 new teaching spaces, a new three-storey building, additional administration area, a new library and a new school entrance. It will enable the school to accommodate 650 students. That project is scheduled for completion in early 2021.

Similar to the new Bella Vista Primary School, which opened in January this year, the design has been developed in accordance with education principles and future-focused learning models in line with the school's public identity, including focusing on the needs of learners and learning, building a greater sense of community identity and providing contemporary and sustainable learning environments. This is an exciting time for Matthew Pearce Public School as well, with a major upgrade to expand, remove demountables and provide more places for local students in air-conditioned classrooms and upgraded core facilities. I am pleased that the budget continues the State Government's record school infrastructure program to provide current and future students and staff in the local area with the best educational facilities to thrive and succeed. I will be excited to follow construction once the concept design is completed.

Investments in road and transport infrastructure and easing congestion were equally significant in the budget across the Baulkham Hills electorate, with a further \$12 million allocated towards the construction of the four-lane upgrade of Memorial Avenue between Old Windsor Road and Windsor Road, Kellyville. That is in addition to \$2.5 million to continue planning for the Norwest Boulevard intersection upgrade at Norwest and Lexington Drive at Bella Vista and \$130,000 to install a pedestrian crossing and to upgrade the existing splitter island on Oakes Road, Carlingford. Following an eight-year campaign for new and upgraded critical transport infrastructure across the electorate, I am delighted that the budget reaffirms the Liberal Government's vision to provide accessible, modern and integrated infrastructure where it is needed most.

When the former Government accelerated the development of The Hills Shire in the late 1990s, it forgot to fund much-needed community infrastructure. To that end, I am thrilled that the budget reiterates the Government's promise to make life easier for The Hills district community by easing congestion and improving safety along major arterial roads, such as Memorial Avenue in Kellyville. I commend the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government, particularly Treasurer Dominic Perrottet, on maintaining our record of responsible financial management and securing healthy surpluses so that we can deliver for our local communities and keep investing in the things that matter most.

REGIONAL MEDICAL SERVICES

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (17:34): Today I bring to the attention of the House the concerning trend of centralisation being promoted and facilitated by the Government. It is counteractive to maintaining rural and regional communities, let alone supporting growth, which our country relies upon for its financial prosperity. Some of our rural and regional communities, particularly in Far West New South Wales are in population decline, due in part to the reduced presence of government services to support those communities and provide the jobs that

keep people there. No service is more important than medical services, which our country boasts as being among the best in the world. Sadly, the reality is that the medical services we have available in rural and regional New South Wales are receding toward cities and major metropolitan centres.

In June this year the Western NSW Local Health District [LHD] publically announced it would immediately cease maternity services at the Parkes Hospital of the Lachlan Health Service. The Western NSW Local Health District failed to provide any advance notice of this decision and the Parkes community were shocked to learn it was losing an essential service. This community is expected to grow significantly with the anticipated opening of the inland rail and another mine. The chief executive officer of the Western NSW Local Health District personally informed me that the reason for the closure of the Parkes maternity unit was his inability to recruit medical practitioners with obstetric and anaesthetic specialties to replace retiring and resigning doctors necessary for the maternity unit to operate level three birthing services. He told me that the issue was not a matter of cost. The announcement was curiously timed, given that it preceded the delivery of the New South Wales State budget by mere days.

In the weeks that followed I received a leaked copy of an internal review of the maternity services at the Lachlan Health Service, dated the previous year, which indicated that the cost associated with locum obstetricians and anaesthetists was a factor in the discontinuation of maternity services. It is an understatement to say I was disappointed to learn that I was misled by the CEO of the Western NSW LHD. However, it has motivated me to investigate the matter further and expose the poor management of public health across rural and regional New South Wales. I have relied upon my colleagues in the Legislative Council to prosecute a notice motion calling for papers to discern fact from fiction. Unfortunately, it may necessitate broader scrutiny of the delivery of health services for the communities across rural and regional New South Wales. What is of serious concern to me is that there appears to have been no contingencies put in place by NSW Health or the Western NSW Local Health District for the retirement and resignation of medical practitioners at Parkes.

I have learnt that GPs and other medical specialists are in decline across rural and regional New South Wales. So what is the local health district and the Government doing to rectify this concerning trend? Despite my efforts to obtain records supporting supposed efforts made by the LHD to recruit medical practitioners, I have failed to identify any evidence to support claims by the LHD that it has exhausted all options. Instead, its apparent solution is to discontinue medical services to solve budget constraints. I am discovering further examples of the failure of public health management in rural and regional New South Wales. I am advised that lymphoedema services are not being funded at the Orange Health Service. Lymphoedema could potentially result in infection and health complications for those afflicted with the condition if they are unable to afford private treatment or travel to metropolitan centres for public lymphoedema services. Orange is a regional city, so why is this service not being provided to my community?

The failure to properly fund medical services and manage human medical resources in rural and regional New South Wales is another example of the Government abandoning the people living beyond the Great Dividing Range. It is the Government's responsibility to, at the very least, maintain existing medical services. The community expectation is that medical services will grow and expand to provide services for a growing population across the State. The people of my electorate and broader rural and regional New South Wales will not tolerate the loss of their health services occurring as a result of poor management and budget constraints. If those managing our hospitals and public health services cannot manage and maintain medical and human resources, they must be replaced by those with the willingness and capability to do so. Rural and regional New South Wales deserve better than what they are getting.

SCOUTS AUSTRALIA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:39): The mission of Scouts Australia is to: contribute to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potentials as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. From the many Scout groups that I have had the pleasure to meet it is clear that Scouts Australia is fulfilling this mission. Scouts Australia continues the great traditions of the Scouting movement that has been part of Australian life since 1908. Through creative, outdoor and community-minded activities today's Scouts gain the confidence, leadership skills and resilience that helps them to become outstanding community members.

Over its long history the Scouting movement in Australia has continued to adapt to our changing communities while keeping true to its ethos and ensuring that Scouts learn to become an integral part of their local communities. In recent years initiatives such as Scouts for Refugees have sought to ensure that recently arrived refugee children have the opportunity to join their local Scout group, make friends and contribute to our communities. The Prospect electorate is served by several Scout groups, which ensure that local children have the opportunity to learn important life skills and participate in community service while having fun.

The 1st Smithfield Homenetmen Navasart Scout Group is closely linked with the local Armenian and Assyrian communities. It works with other Armenian Scout groups to ensure that community links are retained and strengthened. Homenetmen Scout groups have a long history in the Scout movement. Last year Armenian Scout groups celebrated their 100th anniversary. Throughout this time they have continued to contribute to the Australian Scouting community, helping build strong cultural ties in our multicultural communities. The 1st Toongabbie Scout Group has been serving our community since 1908. It is one of the oldest Scout groups in the nation. Since its founding it has continuously followed proud Scouting traditions. Over the past 111 years members have continued to learn important skills and serve the local community. Toongabbie Scouts have gone on many adventures over their history. Recent activities have included billycart racing, attending the regional Scout camp in the Hawkesbury and participating in outdoor activities like bushwalking. During these activities Scouts learn valuable lessons while having fun.

The 1st Greystanes Scout Group gives Scouts the opportunity to learn resourcefulness, self-reliance, decision-making and concern for their community and the environment. The activities include canoeing, camping, hiking, performing arts and community service, and they teach the boys and girls involved not just about the world and the environment but also about themselves. Scouts from Greystanes are currently working hard with their leaders to raise funds to attend the NSW Cuboree in January 2020. Young people living in the Prospect electorate also have the opportunity to join nearby Scout groups operating in locations including Blacktown, Westmead, Fairfield and Merrylands. Those Scout groups and others throughout western Sydney work together as part of the Greater Western Sydney Scout region to host camps and to attend joint events.

All of those Scout groups depend on the commitment and dedication of their Scout leaders and parent support committees. Hardworking community members volunteer countless hours to help our Scouts learn valuable skills and become well-rounded members of the local community. I thank everybody involved in running Scout groups across Australia. I particularly thank the Scout leaders in the Prospect electorate and western Sydney, who do so much for our children. I wish all Scouts the very best in their continuing endeavours and I look forward to seeing all that our Scouts achieve for themselves and for the community.

BUILDING CLADDING SAFETY

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:43): Recent media attention on the evacuation of apartment buildings found to be structurally unsound has highlighted the lack of protection for owners and residents whose homes are impacted by defects. The defects crisis extends to the discovery that over 600 buildings in this State are clad in flammable materials, similar to those that led to destructive fires in Melbourne's Lacrosse and Neo200 buildings and London's Grenfell Tower, which killed 72 people. The real number is unknown because the Cladding Taskforce has not released its list of high-risk buildings. Councils have only received sections of the list in addition to other lists from Fair Trading, Planning and Fire and Rescue, as well as owners self-reporting.

Constituents from affected buildings say they are trapped in a financial and administrative nightmare trying to fix their homes and make them safe. They report a lack of government support in navigating what is a complex, costly and risky process. There is no single agency or strategy to ensure flammable cladding is removed from high-rise buildings. After owners corporations are issued with development control orders with strict requirements and time frames they bear full responsibility to make their buildings safe, with no financial or practical assistance. Owners report feeling abandoned by government despite being the least responsible party for the problem—they did not design, approve or build their homes or accredit the products used. Owners corporations already have unlimited liability and strict legal duties to repair and maintain their buildings and they now face potential fines.

Owners tell me that compliance is virtually impossible because there is no consistency among government agencies over products. An example is aluminium cladding. The Government accepts it as compliant because it is not combustible, but NSW Fire and Rescue does not because it melts above certain temperatures and drops large molten masses. Not all products are suitable for all buildings. Owners of one building tell me that they sought advice from a number of experts and only one solution complied with requirements to be "incombustible", but it was unclear whether the material would comply with "debris" requirements.

Furthermore, there is real concern that some products approved now will be banned in the future. For example, it is rumoured that waffle cladding will be banned soon, and in February the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors issued new advice on nine types of cladding and their compliance status remains unclear. It would be devastating if owners corporations were to install materials at great cost and disruption, only to later discover that their homes do not comply and remain unsafe. Owners say they should not be subject to compliance orders until there is a coordinated strategy in place and clear guidance on what products are compliant.

Insurers have now withdrawn coverage to certifiers inspecting and signing off on replacement cladding because the liability risk is too high, leaving owners even more vulnerable. Local Government NSW shares

concern about the lack of consistency and has called for guidance and protocols in assessment and mitigation of risks. The Owners Corporation Network has held seminars and has established a Flammable Cladding Action Group of apartment owners to share information, work together and feel supported in order to fill the gap left by government. It is an overwhelmingly distressing situation for owners who are raising massive special levies to fix cladding, other defects and general building maintenance while their insurance costs have risen.

Recent changes to statutory warranties that define combustible cladding as a major defect provide little relief. Homes built more than six years ago are excluded and it is unclear how the courts will treat those built within the time frame because cladding was compliant and not a defect at the time of build. There is no precedent clarifying the matter, making court action risky. The Government must recognise that if it does not support owners corporations they will struggle to make their buildings safe, at great risk to thousands of residents across the State. I am concerned that there is no way to ensure that buildings with flammable cladding do not have short-term and holiday visitors. Short-term letting increases the fire safety risks, yet affected owners corporations cannot ban them and the Government has no way to know whether short-term letting is happening in these buildings.

I welcome the Building Commissioner's comments that his recommendations to government will include the option of direct support to owners. I acknowledge the Minister's commitment to work towards an outcome and I call on the Government to follow Victoria's lead and provide owners with support, including financial support such as interest-free or low-interest loans, as part of a wider disaster package to help apartment owners suffering financial hardship as a result of defects.

BOOK WEEK

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:49): Where would any of us be without the written word? We owe our parents, grandparents, carers and teachers an enormous debt for teaching us to appreciate language. This week children across the Cootamundra electorate have been revelling in the joy of Book Week. Children and staff have been dressing up as their favourite characters and some have been displaying their costumes in a public parade. Cowra Public School students will be walking along Kendall Street in their costumes, supported by parents and friends as well as business owners and members of the public. Students have also been cleaning up their rooms and homes, choosing which of their own books they no longer wish to keep and would like to bring in to school for a book swap afternoon. This is a wonderful way for Cowra Public School students to choose new books to get their teeth into and to start enjoying new stories or to even find a reference book which sparks an interest in an undiscovered topic.

Year 2 students at Cowra Public School are choosing a picture book which they will read to an infants student, providing reader and listener with an opportunity to get to know each other and to get to know a new story. As a memento for the listener, the year 2 students have been making bookmarks to present to the infants. We have 63 primary schools in the Cootamundra electorate and Book Week is a hands-on, memorable and exciting way to bring books to life for hundreds of children. They are at an age when positive habits are easily formed, and a love of the written word is a habit that benefits us all. For proof of that, I can ask a reporter at the *Gundagai Independent*, Helen Castles. She faithfully reports what is going on in the wonderful Gundagai community, and I am pleased to state that she is not backward in putting me on the spot when she deems it necessary. The news stories she writes for her newspaper are accurate, well-written and fair.

In an age where data is thrown at us from every conceivable outlet, it is vital to instil in our youngest community members the understanding that being informed is being empowered. Our daily lives are challenged by countless decisions, which can only be made properly by our being in possession of the relevant information. While Scoop McLaren may only be a work of fiction, that feisty teenager's love of sharing news and finding out facts reflects our own need to learn what is going on around us. We will not be trying to track down any villains, but we most certainly need to make decisions based on facts we have read. Book Week is a fantastic occasion for all students. Like all memorable events, there is fun, an opportunity to socialise and an important idea to celebrate. Books have created the world we live in, they have shaped our cultures and they have made us laugh or cry. I am grateful to all of the schools and to the parents who have worked so hard to make Book Week the fantastic occasion it is, to enable their children to form a lifelong love of reading and learning.

JORDAN SPRINGS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:52): I have to agree with the member for Cootamundra that it is fantastic to see our young people getting involved in reading and being encouraged to develop a love of literature through Book Week. The only people who feel a little bit nervous about Book Week are parents like me who have to organise costumes. Apart from that, I agree that Book Week is a great event.

But I speak about an issue that was brought to my attention by a local resident. I jump on board with her call for a community health centre in the suburb of Jordan Springs. Like many residents of the community that

I represent, and no doubt like many residents in all the communities across New South Wales, I was one of those lucky new mothers who benefited from the provision of a baby nurse and a fantastic mothers group through my local community health centre. It can be a frightening experience in so many ways when first-time mothers in particular take that little person home and have absolutely zero idea of what to do with them. Those people working at the community health centres are lifesavers who provide amazing support for new parents. That was certainly my experience.

My mothers group was formed at the community health centre that I will speak about in a moment. We are still in contact with each other and our children are now aged six and seven. I attended the community health centre at Cranebrook. It is really buckling under the pressure from growing communities like the community in Jordan Springs. It services the area it has always serviced but across the road now there is a brand-new suburb with thousands of residents. I learnt by researching this campaign that the suburb of Jordan Springs has double the amount of 0 to 4-year-old children than the New South Wales average. That is putting a lot of pressure on services like the Cranebrook community health centre.

Local resident Melanie James from Jordan Springs runs a great organisation called Mama Love Connect. It does an awesome job at promoting the need for inclusive early childhood education for children with special needs and educating educators in how to care for and educate children with special needs in preschool. Like me, Melanie is raising a little family in Jordan Springs. She said, "We have got these great new facilities in Jordan Springs, why do we not have a community health centre?" That made complete sense to me. We have been talking about the lack of infrastructure in these growing communities—I certainly have been on behalf of the community, ad nauseam. I could not count how many times I have stood at this lectern in Parliament and spoken about the need for a school to be fast-tracked at Jordan Springs. Construction on that has finally started thanks to the pressure of the community. We need to seriously look at what can be done by the provision of community health in a suburb like Jordan Springs.

There is an existing community hub. It was funded and built by the developer Lendlease and Penrith City Council. It is a great new beautiful facility. Penrith City Council and Sydney University of the Third Age run programs there. I will be writing to the health Minister and speaking with Penrith council to see if we can get some sort of community health provision at Jordan Springs in the existing building. There is undoubtedly a need for it. It is a hub of the community and there are young children everywhere. It will be well patronised because it is next door to a preschool, so playgroups make complete sense.

I could not believe that I had not thought of it before Mel raised it with me. It is in our local paper *The Western Weekender* this week. It is already getting lots of comments from people who agree it makes complete sense. I will be urging the Minister to look at all options for the provision of community health in Jordan Springs to ease the pressure on the Cranebrook community health centre. It will also provide a service for a community that is full of young families who have invested a lot to live in a beautiful new suburb. I hope we can benefit from one of the most incredible things that government provides—support to new mothers.

BUILDING BRIDGES TO BOOROWA PROGRAM

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (17:57): I bring to the attention of the House the amazing efforts of the Boorowa Community Landcare Group and their work with the North Sydney Bushcare Group. It is with great pleasure that my husband, Michael, and I have been invited to celebrate 20 years of the Building Bridges to Boorowa program on Saturday 7 September 2019. This will be a joint initiative with the North Sydney Bushcare dinner and is sponsored by Hilltops Council, North Sydney Council and Local Land Services East.

This unique friendship between our two communities first came about in 2000 after a chance conversation between one of the North Sydney Bushcare volunteers and a former Boorowa resident about the state of the local environment around Boorowa—its high dryland salinity and loss of habitat—and the magnitude of support required to address the environmental problems. This prompted North Sydney Council staff and Bushcare teams to commence discussions with Boorowa council staff and Boorowa Community Landcare Group to create the Building Bridges to Boorowa program. Every year since, North Sydney Council staff and Bushcare volunteers have travelled to Boorowa and they have planted over 56,000 trees, shrubs and grasses.

Come rain, hail or shine, they have experienced it all through the many years. There have been many seeds of friendship along the way, including a marriage, and it has helped form many lasting bonds between our two communities. Some key concepts of this award-winning project include connecting country and city people through partnerships with Bushcare, Landcare and council. They are all passionate about the environment and providing mutual benefits to all. This successful city and country partnership shows the power of volunteers to achieve significant positive change in the environment and their communities.

Collaboration is crucial for Landcare and Bushcare to grow and flourish. Landcare and Bushcare rely on professional staff and infrastructure, such as local coordinators and central support, to enable volunteers to do their important work. It benefits our farmers as they gain access to additional labour resource. It also benefits our urban bushcarers by building a connection and understanding of rural issues and it enables them to harness and further express their passion to restore environment at a landscape level of change. As to the link between the farmers and the urban bushcarers, Aristotle said, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Deep commitment and a shared sense of purpose has led to achievements that link people from all walks of life to contribute to part of an environmental solution. The superb parrot habitat is being restored—it was on the path to extinction because the natural habitat had been decimated. Wildlife corridors that not only protect stock from the elements but also provide a vital refuge for native wildlife have been re-established. This will allow viable populations to be sustained into the future. In 2017 the Boorowa Landcare and students from Boorowa schools travelled to Sydney to complete another first: a planting at the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability in North Sydney.

Twenty years on and the Building Bridges to Boorowa program is still going strong. This project demonstrates that we can all make a difference at a grassroots level if we work together. I congratulate the North Sydney Bushcare Group, the Boorowa Landcare Group and their respective councils. I look forward to inviting the wonderful member for North Sydney to roll her sleeves up and witness firsthand the wonderful work her constituents are doing in my hometown of Boorowa.

PLASTICS POLLUTION

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (18:01): Tonight I speak again on an issue that I spoke about in May and July—the issue of plastic waste and the challenges we face nationally and globally. In recent years we have seen an unprecedented recognition of the challenges we face from waste, particularly the plastic pollution of our oceans. Much of the discussion so far has centred on tackling the symptoms of the plastic pollution crisis, but that does not address the root cause of the issue. Put simply, we should get smart about plastic and seek a vision that stops plastic waste and pollution at its source by applying what are known as circular economy principles. Not only will this approach provide a considerable market opportunity for Australian innovators and businesses, but it will present a long-term solution to an issue that will not be solved by a ban alone.

More than eight million tonnes of plastic enter our ocean each year. I am passionate about this issue because it sits at the nexus of good government policy, innovation, business and the capital markets. It is a problem that many people have identified as a challenge that's time has come. We are presented with an opportunity to take a problem and turn it into something of value. We need innovators, industry and government to develop systemic solutions to prevent plastic from becoming waste in the first place. I note that major companies, including Colgate, MARS, Nestlé, Johnson & Johnson, The Coca-Cola Company and Unilever are publicly disclosing their annual plastic packaging volumes, which provides an important step towards greater transparency of today's plastic system.

Even more exciting is that there is a growing list of major brands, retailers and packaging companies working towards using 100 per cent reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025—that is not that far off. The list has grown to 11, including companies as big as Amcor, Evian—they make plastic bottles that would be familiar to us all—L'Oréal, MARS, PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company, Unilever, Walmart and so on. Together, those companies represent about six million tonnes of plastic packaging each year. An organisation called the Ellen MacArthur Foundation has created the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, which unites business, government and other organisations behind a vision to address plastic waste at its source.

The companies that have signed up to that represent nearly 20 per cent of all plastic packaging used globally. The 26 financial institutions that have signed the pledge, bring a combined US\$4.2 trillion under management ready to deploy as capital, and they have all committed to making the change by 2025. They will work to eliminate the plastic items we do not need, innovate so all plastics we do need are designed to be reused, recycled or composted, and circulate everything we use to keep it in the economy and out of the environment.

In December the French Government reaffirmed its commitment towards systemic solutions, pledging to recycle 100 per cent of plastics by 2025—not ban, but recycle. In addition to the French, the United Kingdom announced its Resources and Waste Strategy that aims to work towards all plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025. Around 13 per cent of today's packaging, such as chip packets and food wrappers, and flanges used in aircraft are made of layers of different materials fused together. This multilayer construction provides important functions like keeping food fresh, but also makes the packaging difficult to recycle.

In New South Wales, as we heard in question time this week, the Government is underway in the development of its long-term waste strategy that incorporates the principles of the circular economy. When the principles of that economy are embraced, we make a significant move towards solving the challenge of plastic waste at its root, which is an incredibly important outcome that we can all support and celebrate, but it will involve collaboration between industry, governments, designers and start-ups to deal with plastic and turn it from a global problem into a global opportunity.

COST OF LIVING

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:05): I highlight the numerous issues affecting many of the most vulnerable residents in the Fairfield electorate and the need for significant investment in our community. Fairfield ranks amongst the lowest socio-economic areas throughout not just New South Wales but all of Australia. The ongoing lack of investment in our area only further impresses the cost-of-living pressures on individuals and families and further contributes to the burdens felt by so many throughout our community. Those pressures become amplified when you look at our local housing market and discover that the only option that the most vulnerable in our community have to turn to is the enormous supply of garages and extensions turned into granny flats, boasting the only kind of cheap accommodation many of those families can afford.

I am in the unique position as the member for Fairfield to see many of those families firsthand when they attend my office to seek assistance with issues concerning cost-of-living or housing pressures. It is truly heartbreaking to hear how many families are forced to live in such overcrowded and makeshift dwellings. One can only imagine how hard it must be in instances where grandparents, parents and their four children are living out of a garage converted to a dwelling with a sink and shower in the corner solely because this is the only property they can afford to rent. This should not be accepted as, "It's just how things are." Those families need support.

Individuals in those situations are technically living out of an illegally modified dwelling, but many do so out of necessity. They are not covered by any tenancy laws, they have no peace of mind, nor do they have any recourse when their landlords fleece them for exorbitant contributions solely because they can. When we look at the local real estate market we will discover that two-bedroom granny flats are being leased for \$500 a week, while larger family homes lease for hundreds more. There is a huge disconnect between the most vulnerable people in our community and the options available to them to break free from the cycle of hardship. The Fairfield community has the longest FACS Housing NSW waiting list for two-bedroom properties in the entire State. Despite our longstanding issues concerning housing affordability and cost-of-living woes, we are a loving and caring community that digs deep to help those in need. We always have and we always will.

Fairfield is well known as a multicultural hub with one of the most diverse communities in New South Wales. In recent years Fairfield has become home to an influx of migrants and refugees who have fled their war-torn homeland, looking to find a safe haven in Fairfield, right in the heart of New South Wales. Many of our newly arrived residents suffer from a range of medical conditions and trauma as victims of circumstances in their former homeland. We are truly blessed to have a number of so many dedicated non-government organisations throughout our community that work tirelessly with these newly arrived refugees and migrants to assist them in settling here as they find their footing and a new life, free of persecution. We do not turn away our brothers and sisters in times of need, we embrace them and we support them. They are one of us and we cannot shy away from our obligations to do all we can to help out. This is where the New South Wales Government can enter the picture.

In light of the rapid population growth throughout our region, it is clear that our community needs additional resources and more support services to meet the needs of our expanding area. We need to do more, sooner rather than later. Sitting idly by and hoping the problem will resolve itself will only compound the hardships and pressures placed on families, community groups and support services. Hundreds of residents remain on the FACS Housing NSW priority waiting list while thousands of others remain hopeful they will receive some sort of support from Housing NSW within the next 20 to 30 years. It is worth noting that local support services are hardly able to keep up with the rate that our local population is expanding. As a great man, Martin Luther King Junior, once said:

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

I say to the New South Wales Government that we are in a position where we can help those less fortunate than us. We can make a lasting impact in the lives of so many who are struggling more and more with each passing day. Our local community deserves so much more than they are currently receiving and I call on the New South Wales Government to provide Fairfield with the infrastructure and resources we so rightfully and desperately deserve.

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:10): Our Government is committed to making Gosford great again. I bring to the attention of the House how the New South Wales Liberal Government is working to revitalise the Gosford city centre and surrounding areas. The Central Coast Regional Plan tells us that between 2016 and 2036 the region will be home to 75,500 more people. This presents some challenges, but also very exciting opportunities. It requires all levels of government—State, Federal and local—to pull their weight. This involves more than 4,000 housing approvals per year to meet the current and future demand. It also means that investment in health, education and road infrastructure is required. Our Government is working hard to build a better Central Coast and to make Gosford great again.

The largest private landowner on the Central Coast is the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council, stretching from the Hawkesbury River in the south to Catherine Hill Bay in the north and from the Pacific Ocean in the east to the Watagans in the west. It is, of course, the pre-eminent Aboriginal cultural authority in our region, but it also has huge opportunities to develop its land for the benefit of its people. In February former Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts announced a suite of pioneering planning measures to help the Darkinjung better utilise its land. The package of measures includes a State Environmental Planning Policy, or SEPP; a Ministerial direction; an interim Darkinjung Development Delivery Plan; and a memorandum of understanding between the Darkinjung and the New South Wales Liberal Government. With more than 3,700 hectares of land across the Central Coast, the Darkinjung have plenty of opportunities.

The new planning framework allows the land to be used in a variety of ways, including residential development, employment land and, of course, conservation land. As I have already said, the Darkinjung delivery framework brings greater self-determination and encourages better social and economic results from the land. Last week I was delighted to invite our new planning Minister, Rob Stokes, to the Central Coast. We were joined by the chairperson of the Darkinjung to make a very symbolic and significant announcement, which is that the first proposal has been submitted under the new planning framework. The proposal is to rezone land at Somersby to conserve more than 100 hectares of environmental land and around 20 hectares of land for rural housing. This proposal does not have to be subjected to the politics of local council: It goes straight to an independent planning panel for review through the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

I want to echo the words of Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council Chairperson, Matthew West, who said that the Delivery Framework is working to help realise Darkinjung's aspirations to enrich the Central Coast community by building homes, creating jobs and securing education and training opportunities. They were the words of Matthew West. We want to unlock opportunities for the Aboriginal Land Council that help them deliver economic and community benefits from their lands for future generations. I am so proud that this is the first of its kind in New South Wales and it is happening on the Central Coast.

Another significant project I bring to the attention of the House is the Gosford Leagues Club Field. Many would agree that this is the most visible open space across the entire Central Coast region. While Minister Stokes was on the Central Coast, the final designs for the Gosford CBD's Leagues Club Field were released. One only needs to look at the drawings to know that this field will absolutely transform into a world-class public space. The design is nature-inspired. It features new picnic areas, new amenities, walkways, an inclusive playground and a tidal water play area. The park will also feature dozens of new trees, thousands of native plants and an innovative tidal terrace that draws water from Brisbane Water across the road, rising and falling in line with high and low tides. It will create a park ecosystem that changes from hour to hour.

I may be biased, but I think this really will set a new standard for regional playgrounds and open spaces right across the great State of New South Wales. As Minister Stokes has said, the transformation of the Leagues Club Field is totemic of the revitalisation of Gosford. I thank the New South Wales Liberal Government for recognising the importance of this project by committing \$10 million to it. The revitalisation of Gosford is going from strength to strength with cranes in the sky, new residential and commercial building work underway and high quality public spaces—just like the one I outlined—for locals and visitors alike to enjoy. The New South Wales Liberal Government is not just talking about it; it is delivering and working to make Gosford great again.

Community Recognition Statements

TAMIL NADU DROUGHT RELIEF PROJECT

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:16): I was delighted to join hundreds of members of western Sydney's Australian-Tamil community for a traditional Tamil lunch feast, called in Tamil "moi virundhu", to raise funds for a drought relief project in Tamil Nadu, southern India, on 17 August 2019. The fundraiser was organised by a local Tamil charity, Aram Inc, which is committed to improving the welfare of the ethnic Tamil community around the world. Funds raised at the event will be used for a de-silting project, which will improve the resilience

of farmers in the Tamil Nadu region. The long-term benefits of this project will help to ensure that farmers in Tamil Nadu can grow and supply more food to feed their families, their neighbours and their local community. It was fantastic to see our local Sydney community working together to support each other and communities around the world. I congratulate the members of Aram Inc and all the volunteers that helped to make the lunch such a great success.

BATTERY ROAD UPGRADE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (18:16): Recently I visited Battery Road in my electorate of Goulburn to announce a million-dollar road safety upgrade for the users of that road. At the end of Battery Road is Glenella Quarry, which is one of Australia's most diverse quarries. It produces sands, clay and basalt as well as a high quality quartz silica pebble. Due to the purity of the silica content in the pebbles, owners Michael and Amy Howe have spent considerable resources researching and developing the industrial mineral element of their business. The Government's investment in the road upgrade will benefit many in the community. However, I highlight that this investment is a small step in facilitating the global use of Glenella's products. Right now the business is advancing discussions for its products to be sold to Japan. Battery Road connects Glenella Quarry to Lachlan Valley Way, then the Hume Highway, Port Botany, Port Kembla and the world.

TERRY PROSSER

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:17): I commend Terry Prosser of Barrack Heights for his incredible volunteer work for the Illawarra Canoe Club over the past 40 years. Mr Prosser was recently recognised under the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours, and presented with a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to canoeing. Over his 40 years of volunteering Mr Prosser has coached Shellharbour locals, Olympians and Australian titleholders alike. In the 1970s and 1980s he competed with the Illawarra Canoe Club before becoming a life member of the club in 1977. He has guided young rowers into becoming champions and is still coaching today. He proudly proclaims that he will coach anyone who wants to give the sport a go. On behalf of my community and the broader canoeing community of Australia, I thank Mr Prosser for his incredible skill, effort and guidance over the past four decades.

ROSS HALLAWAYS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:18): Friday 26 July was indeed a wonderful day at Avoca Beach Public School. It was the day that Principal Ross Hallaways announced his retirement and officially stepped down as principal of Avoca Beach Public School. I say it was a good day because Ross has done an amazing job and now has the chance to enjoy a very well earned retirement. I have had the privilege of working with Ross over the past four years. He was appointed principal of Avoca Beach Public School at the same time that I was elected as the member for Terrigal. Over those four years we have been able to work together to deliver funding worth thousands of dollars for the school, including upgraded playground space, a covered outdoor learning area and many other opportunities for the school. He has served for almost 40 years in the education department and literally taught thousands of children. The 450 pictures of Mr Hallaways, all drawn by the students at Avoca Beach Public School, are a testament to Ross's dedication. Once again I thank Ross for his dedication to the students of Avoca Beach and the Central Coast over those years.

WARNERVALE WILDCATS RUGBY UNION CLUB

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:19): I congratulate Warnervale Wildcats Rugby Union Club on raising more than \$1,200 for the mental health charity Beyond Blue. The funds were raised during the charity round on 13 July as all Wildcats teams in the division purchased Beyond Blue socks for their games. Club President Chris Acreman thanked all players who purchased the socks for the charity round, including the Terrigal Trojans Rugby Union Club. The club raised more than \$1,200 to help those in the community suffering from mental illness. Mental illness is a severe issue in our community for people of all ages. People can still make a donation at Warnervale's canteen on game day or at the Beyond Blue website. I congratulate the Warnervale Wildcats Rugby Union Club for supporting its local area and community in mental health.

PORT CITY BOWLING CLUB

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:20): I acknowledge the community-focused organisation Port City Bowling Club recently recognised in the 2019 Clubs and Community Awards for partnering with YP Space Port Macquarie to tackle youth homelessness in our region. With the aim of shining a spotlight on the significant issues affecting young people in Port Macquarie, the Port City Bowling Club and YP Space MNC worked in partnership to support homelessness affecting young people aged from 12 to 25 years. Only recently the two organisations combined their resources in a mammoth expedition to Mount Everest, which raised almost \$60,000 in donations. That funding will be injected into programs to accommodate and support our youth living on the streets.

Claudia Buckby was among 12 trekkers from YP Space MNC and Port City Bowling Club who journeyed to the Himalayas to undertake an 11-day hike from Lukla to Kala Pattar before making the return trip home. YP Space MNC chief executive officer Nerida Ackerman commended the club for recognising youth homelessness and for assisting them in fundraising events and awareness campaigns to benefit young people. I congratulate Port City Bowling Club for being named a finalist out of more than 100 registered clubs in New South Wales. I commend the club for its advocacy and support of young people in our community.

SINILIA RADIVOJEVIC

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:21): I congratulate Mrs Sinilia Radivojevic on her recent nomination for the 2019 NSW Volunteer of the Year Award. Sinilia has dedicated more than 35 years to supporting and advocating for those in need while volunteering for various charitable causes and, most prominently, the Cancer Council NSW. I am proud to have had the great opportunity to work alongside Sinilia in the local community since I came to office in 2011. Throughout this time Sinilia has been involved in every community campaign and fundraiser on behalf of the Cancer Council.

Over the years Sinilia's tireless advocacy has helped to raise community awareness and millions of dollars in funding for cancer research and advocacy throughout the local community. Sinilia's ongoing dedication to those in need is second to none. Our community is truly better off for her hard work and passion in helping others. On behalf of the Fairfield electorate, I extend our sincerest gratitude and admiration to Sinilia for her many years of dedication and service to our community. I look forward to continuing to work with Sinilia to achieve better services and support for residents in our community.

AUSTRALIAN DRAGON BOAT CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:22): When most of us are still snug under the covers, a hardy bunch of Coffs Coast athletes are up early, hitting the water with paddles blazing. This outstanding group of achievers has won the hearts of our community. I say bravo to Gary Corrigan, Grant Armessen, John Smyth, Sarsi Holst and Sharon Williams for their fine performances at the recent 2019 Australian Dragon Boat Championships, known as Auschamps, in Canberra. I congratulate them on their hard work. The women's team are still celebrating their bronze in the 500 metre small boats division.

I admire their discipline and dedication and their love of fitness and competition. I am proud of them for being members of the Far North Coast Regional Squad. They can regularly be seen training with the Coffs Coast Dragon Boat Club on the Bellinger River at Mylestom and in Bonville Creek. Sharon is the club president and Sarsi is the club head coach. I presented the group with New South Wales Government certificates signed by Premier Gladys Berejiklian, recognising their selection to represent New South Wales. The presentation helped to raise the profile of dragon boating in our community.

HAZELBROOK SCOUTS

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:24): It was with great pleasure that I recently attended the ninety-seventh birthday of the Hazelbrook Scouts. Scouts is the biggest and most successful youth organisation in the world, as we have all heard. Scouts members are in every part of our community. It is not called a worldwide brotherhood of Scouting for nothing. Scouting is a fun learning environment for young people. Scouts can get involved in leadership, performing arts, community service, amateur radio operation, environmental projects and large-scale Australian events such as Cuborees and Jamborees. Scouts also learn valuable practical skills such as first aid and cooking. The Scouts cooked and served a lovely dinner to all who attended the birthday party in Hazelbrook. I particularly thank Gavan Hall, the Ellicott family and everyone in the Hazelbrook district.

GOLDENFIELDS WATER COUNTY COUNCIL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:24): I congratulate Goldenfields Water County Council on the successful opening of stage one of the Mandamah Rural Water Supply Scheme. I was very honoured to be invited to attend the opening of stage one of this scheme, alongside the Minister for Water, Property and Housing. I recognise the proactive efforts of Goldenfields and the Mandamah community to increase water security in the region. Goldenfields Water made substantial investments into the scheme, without contributions from State or Federal governments, and the farmers themselves contributed \$50,000 per connection. I also mention the excellent opening event that Goldenfields Water organised. It was evident that a lot of thought had been put into making sure that the event ran smoothly, and that attendees were comfortable and able to enjoy the opening.

NICHO HYNES

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:25): Earlier this month peninsula local Nicho Hynes made his debut in the National Rugby League playing for the Melbourne Storm. Nicho grew up in Umina playing for the Umina Bunnies. It has undoubtedly been a long road of hard work and dedication that led to his first game a few weeks

ago. I congratulate him on an excellent performance in his first of hopefully many games, held at our own Central Coast Stadium, and wish him the best for his bright future. I also acknowledge the support of his family and friends, coaches and the wider community over the years. We are all proud of his achievements. It has not been an easy or straightforward journey to this point for Nicho, but his persistence has paid off. All the best for the future, Nicho. We are ecstatic to see a peninsula local out there playing great sport.

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL BEER AWARDS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:26): I congratulate Brad Walker of Oyster Bay on the gold medal presented to Sunday Road Brewing in the 2019 Australian International Beer Awards [AIBA], which has run for over 25 years and is the world's largest annual beer competition, judging both packaged and draught beer. The competition boasts a highly regarded panel of industry experts from Australia and around the world. This year the AIBA attracted more than 2,600 entries from 402 breweries from 26 countries. Brad is the business owner of Sunday Road Brewing, which received a gold medal for its Blackwoods Pale Ale in the Best International Pale Ale category. The Kirrawee-based brewery and taproom only opened in February this year, with its beers and intimate venue enjoying immediate success. The family owned and operated local business can now brew 120,000 litres per year, all brewed and canned at Kirrawee. I commend Brad and his team for their outstanding achievement and extend my best wishes for their future endeavours.

FERNDALE OUTDOOR RECREATION AND LEARNING CENTRE

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:27): I congratulate Patrician Brothers' College Fairfield on the grand opening of the Ferndale Outdoor Recreation and Learning Centre. The new outdoor recreation and learning centre is an innovative space that promotes wellness of students. Ferndale is named in honour of the Dreis family, who formerly owned and worked the vineyard and winery on which the college is located. This space is a wonderful addition to the college as it embraces new and innovative ideas towards the education of secondary students. Ferndale includes an undercover area in the round amphitheatre, a spiritual garden, a dry creek bed, wi-fi connectivity, basketball courts, table tennis tables, a sandstone chess board and an artificial turf area. I congratulate DTA Architects, In View Interior & Lansvale Design, Co-Ordinated Landscapes Pty Ltd and the Sydney Catholic Schools for all their work in creating this world-class outdoor educational facility.

CAMERON WEST

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:28): It is my pleasure to update the House on a remarkable achievement by Hawkesbury local Cameron West. On 17 August 2019 I had the privilege of celebrating Cameron's attainment of the Queen's Scout Award, which is the most prestigious youth award available in the Scouting movement. To achieve such a prestigious and hard-earned award is a reflection of Cameron's determination and commitment to achieving his goals and is a recognition of his adventurous nature, community involvement, leadership development and personal growth. I also congratulate Cameron's family and the 1st Glossodia Scout Group on their role in his success. I wish Cameron, his family and the 1st Glossodia Scout Group continued success into the future.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK HODGES

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:29): I pay tribute to Frank Hodges, a fabulous and well-loved teacher from Hazelbrook Public School, a member of my community, a good family man, a cricket enthusiast and a Labor man. I express my condolences to his family and our community on his loss in the middle of July. Frank was a true believer. He was a comrade. He was a very kind and generous member of our community. He had a very positive impact on so many people's lives. I will always treasure his good humour and memories of branch meetings at which he asked many probing questions. To Damien, Mel and the rest of his family I express my condolences.

HARPER ENASIO

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:30): I congratulate year 6 Asquith Public School student Harper Enasio, who represented the school at the recent under-11s State Rugby League Carnival. He captained the Sydney North Team, which finished third, and he was selected to join the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association squad. A squad of 34 boys took part in a five-day camp at Narrabeen Sports High School and Harper, who plays halfback, made the final squad of 17. Harper is the only 11-year-old to be selected in the team and will play for New South Wales in the National Primary School Carnival, which will be held in Brisbane.

I congratulate Harper. I know his school is very proud of him and I am certain this will not be the last time we hear his name. Harper is one of the most outstanding emerging rugby league talents, and he comes from the Hornsby shire. We do not have our own team. I want to bring back the Bears so Harper has a pathway through

a local sporting club. Every National Rugby League team will compete to pick up Harper in the future. You watch this space, he will be playing State of Origin. We cannot wait to see how far Harper can go.

JEREMY SPINAK YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAM

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (18:31): On Sunday 18 August 2019 I had the pleasure of speaking at the inaugural NSW Jewish Board of Deputies Jeremy Spinak Young Leaders Program to share my experiences as Minister and a member of Parliament. This year there are 12 participants: Vanessa Samra, Joshua Moses, Michaela Levine, Sarah Sack, Mark Collins, Julia Sussman, Lara Czysnok, Emma Jackson, Daniel Alter, Gabi Stricker-Phelps, Prielle Betito and Liam O'Callaghan. The program aims to support the participants to reach their leadership potential, all in the name of the late former NSW Jewish Board of Deputies President Jeremy Spinak, who was a strong proponent of community service and always supported emerging leaders. I thank Sunday's session presenter and NSW Jewish Board of Deputies Relationship Manager Councillor Will Nemesh, who convenes the program alongside Brandon Srot, Nick Harding and Ryan Shelley. I wish the program well this year and in the many years to come.

FREE TRADE DAY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:32): A Free Trade Day gala night was held at Kantara House in my electorate of Terrigal on Saturday 10 August. Free Trade Day is a local initiative that has spread right across the nation. It helps match tradespeople and suppliers to local home owners who are doing it tough and require home repairs or maintenance but cannot afford it. The gala night was held to raise funds for the tradies who are giving up their time to help local people in need of their services. I thank Ryan and Yvette Wilson, constituents of mine, who are the brains trust behind this initiative and who have worked tirelessly to make it a great success. Ryan put the idea together and Yvette did all the hard work. I also thank Brett Hunter from Raine & Horne Coastal at Avoca Beach and Terrigal for being a fantastic auctioneer for the evening. It was great to have Kyal and Kara as emcees for the evening. They are Central Coast locals and are of course very well known through their association with *The Block*. I thank Ryan, Yvette and all local tradies and businesses involved.

BLUE MOUNTAINS HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:33): I acknowledge the work of the Blue Mountains Hospital Auxiliary, which has been raising funds for Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital for more than 90 years. The auxiliary raises funds from the quilt show, an annual fete, a high tea, a musical concert, various raffles and donations from supportive organisations, businesses and groups. These funds are used to purchase equipment for patient care at the Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital. These items make the lives of patients and staff easier and more comfortable. Some of them are life-saving, and patients would not receive this high level of care without it. I congratulate treasurer Dorothy Clempett and Paula Savage, who have been active members for more than a decade, as well as president Noel Rath and secretary Colin Semmler.

PAM HUMPHREYS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:34): I recognise the retirement of Lighthouse Beach Australia Post licensee Pam Humphreys after so diligently serving her community for 20 years. It is hard to believe it has been over two decades since Pam and her late husband, Stephen, purchased the then hardware store and post office at Lighthouse Beach in Watonga Street, Port Macquarie. Her husband was previously the area manager for Australia Post during the 1990s and my husband, Don, and I first met him when purchasing our own licensed post office in Lake Cathie in 1996. Now formerly off the books, Mrs Humphreys plans to enjoy her retirement travelling and relaxing after the very demanding schedule of managing a post office.

After sharing a similar work experience I completely understand Pam's acknowledgement that she will miss the interaction and social discussions with her regular customers. During her time at the post office, Pam concedes that many changes have taken place in the industry over the past 20 years with significant reshaping of the business model as a result of online ordering, bill payment, banking and internet communications. I concur that during the years that Don and I were licensees and mail contractors, there were always new systems and technologies being implemented and therefore much to learn. I know that Pam will be missed by her customers who vouch for her professional and courteous attitude. I wish Pam all the best in her future endeavours and her retirement.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:35): On Sunday 18 August I was honoured to attend Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations at the Coffs Harbour Cenotaph. I am grateful to the Coffs Harbour RSL Sub-Branch for inviting me to this important observance, which began at 5.00 p.m. On this day, we remember the men of D Company, 6RAR, who fought in the battle of Long Tan in 1966. A total of 108 Australian and

New Zealand soldiers fought a pitched battle against over 2,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops in a rubber plantation, not far from the small village of Long Tan. The Australians prevailed, but they were nearly overrun but were saved by a timely ammunition resupply, accurate artillery fire from the nearby Australian base and the arrival of reinforcements. Eighteen Australians lost their lives and 24 were wounded, the largest number of casualties in one operation since the Australian task force had arrived a few months earlier. After the battle, the bodies of 245 enemy soldiers were found, but there was evidence many more bodies had been carried away. Lest we forget. The Coffs Harbour RSL Sub-Branch and its members are proudly led by president John Lloyd, secretary Colin Sztorch and treasurer Garry Heskett.

HELEN CASTLES

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:36): An old piece of advice for authors is to write what they know, so in Book Week I recognise the work of journalist and author Helen Castles of Gundagai. Ms Castles is the creator of the children's character Scoop McLaren and her book sold out of its first print run before it was officially launched. On 2 July when launching her book titled *Scoop McLaren: Detective Editor* Ms Castles visited her old primary school, Gundagai South Public, to speak with kindergarten students about the importance of news and keeping informed. The children took a keen interest in Ms Castles' work as a reporter at the *Gundagai Independent*. I thank Ms Castles for her work to keep the Gundagai community informed and wish her every success in her work as a children's author.

SHERRIE EADIE

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (18:37): I congratulate Sherrie Eadie on representing Australia in the NSW Law Enforcement Torch Run for the 2019 International Special Olympic Games. The NSW Law Enforcement Torch Run provides children and adults with intellectual disabilities opportunities to develop their physical fitness, form lasting friendships and increase their social engagement within the community. It is a fantastic charity event which unites athletes and officers from across the world to reduce stigma and foster mateship. I acknowledge retired detective inspector and President of the Law Enforcement Torch Run Alan Keane for his dedicated involvement in bringing this event to our local community and helping to raise awareness of supporting athletes with an intellectual disability. I also congratulate Acting Inspector Tina Davies who teamed up with Sherrie to represent Australia in the final leg of the Special Olympics held in Abu Dhabi in March this year.

MARROOTA MUSTER

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:38): It is my pleasure to update the House on my attendance on 18 August at the Maroota Muster, which is an annual parents and citizens spring carnival in which Maroota Public School, the surrounding community and visitors from afar come together to enjoy festivities and raise funds for the school. The beautiful weather and scenery was matched by the vibrant stalls and events which showcased the talents and passions of our community. The Maroota Muster is Maroota Public School's biggest fundraising event and is always an annual event to place in the calendar. It was lovely to see the children enjoying themselves on the rides and I must also compliment the great food that was served amongst the stalls. The muster takes a lot of organising with displays from the trucking groups, sports cars, woodchopping exhibitions and engaging groups such as the Wisemans Ferry Men's Shed. I congratulate all who were involved for their part in creating a beautiful and safe community event and I look forward to next year's event.

JASMINE TRUSKETT-JONES

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:39): I pay tribute to an absolute champion rugby player Jasmine Truskett-Jones. Jasmine is only nine years old but has racked up 100 games for the Hornsby Lions Junior Rugby Club. She started at just four years old and has been playing with the boys but this season has been able to play with both her old team and the under-11 all girls team. Jasmine joined the club that her brothers play for after watching them having so much fun on the field. She loves to tackle and score tries, especially, her mum tells me, when it is muddy. Jasmine hopes that more girls will consider taking her lead and join the Hornsby Lions. Jasmine celebrated the 100-game milestone with a guard of honour from the clubs senior women's team the Nalas. She is the first girl to reach the milestone and I know her mum, Karen, and her dad, Tristen, who are amazing people, are exceptionally proud of her fine achievements. I am certain this is not the last time we hear about Jasmine. In fact, I am confident we will hear Jasmine Truskett-Jones called in the Wallaroos squad in a few years time.

SCHOOL LEADERS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:40): I thank Parliament for hosting school leaders from Terrigal Public School this week. Students of Terrigal Public School benefited from a recent visit by the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning. The school is receiving a multimillion-dollar upgrade with a

replacement of its classroom spaces and removal of all demountables as part of the Government's record investment into education infrastructure. Student leaders from Terrigal Public School were in the public gallery in Parliament this week. I thank the Premier and the Minister for giving up their valuable time to spend with our school leaders who found question time very enlightening. I thank Mr Lowe for escorting the children from the school on a great train trip down to Sydney. The feedback is that the students behaved impeccably on the train. Thanks again to the school leaders from Terrigal Public School.

NATTERING NITTERS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:41): The weather has been distinctly wintry in Narrandera and I send my warmest congratulations to Narrandera's Nattering Nitters. The group comprises Margaret Hocking, Iris Schoafield, Pat Powell, Jill Morrice, Josie Middleton, Dot Sheather, Wendy Turner and Helen Knagge who meet every Wednesday at Narrandera Library to knit 25 centimetre by 25 centimetre squares, which are then made into blankets. The group has so far sent 45 blankets to the Sydney charity Wrap With Love, which distributes the blankets to those in need at home and abroad. The Nattering Nitters have also knitted donations for Hats for Heroes and Comfort Teddies, knee rugs for the Teloca House and Opal Aged Care nursing homes, and some 2,500 poppies for display at Narrandera Shire Council's office for Anzac Day. The group's output is prolific and their dedication is remarkable.

HASTINGS CANCER TRUST GOLF DAY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:42): I recognise our local golfing enthusiasts in Port Macquarie for raising money for the Hasting Cancer Trust. Golfers from all around Port Macquarie packed their clubs to compete in the inaugural Hastings Cancer Trust Golf Day, held on 15 August at Emerald Downs Golf Course. Avid supporters of the trust—Steve Thomas, Hazel Kirby and Lynne Frances—were one of 14 teams who battled over the nine-hole competition to take home a range of donated prizes. There were also other opportunities to test the golfers' skills with accolades for proficient chippers, long drivers and much more. Event coordinator Steve Thomas acknowledged the importance of fundraising locally to support those in our community whose lives have been impacted by cancer.

In the past the Hasting Cancer Trust has donated in excess of \$1 million for specialised equipment and needs-based funding services to improve cancer support in our region. The Hastings Cancer Trust is a local, not-for-profit organisation committed to providing a full spectrum of quality care services to cancer patients living in Port Macquarie, Camden Haven and the Macleay. I thank all of the participants for the Golf Day and local businesses who supported the event. Your fundraising efforts are very much appreciated by the Hastings Cancer Trust and our wider community.

RURAL FIRE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:43): Earlier today I had the privilege of speaking about volunteers on the Central Coast. No finer group of volunteers can be found on the Central Coast than those from the Rural Fire Service. The Rural Fire Service does a truly amazing job from one end of the Central Coast to the other. Last week I had the absolute privilege to attend the Brisbane Water Rural Fire Brigade evening at Erina depot, not far from my own office, where they have their training sessions. They cohabitate on the council depot with Gosford State Emergency Services. This Rural Fire Service does a truly outstanding job. Shortly they will hold their Get Ready Day to remind everybody of the dangers of bushfires. I commend the entire team of the Brisbane Waters Rural Fire Service for their outstanding service to our community by keeping it safe. These guys and girls head into danger when everybody else heads in the opposite direction. They do a fantastic job. Their unit at the depot is immaculate and their trucks were truly well turned out. Once again I thank the Brisbane Waters Rural Fire Service for hosting me at its depot last week.

SAMEERA BASHIR

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:44): I congratulate Sameera Bashir from Narrandera on her work in encouraging the women in her community to take up physical exercise and enjoy the benefits of fitness and wellbeing. Ms Bashir is a regular at the community gym at Bidgee Boxing and has become a role model for not only her friends but also other women in Narrandera. People in her age group who once would not have—and I quote—"been seen dead in a gym" have been inspired by Ms Bashir's dedication and are learning that regular exercise improves how they feel physically and mentally. Ms Bashir is a vocalist and uses her stage shows and her exercise routine to inspire all who see her. I congratulate Ms Bashir on her inspiring work, both musical and physical.

LISMORE LANTERN PARADE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate the Lismore Lantern Parade organisers for the successful holding of the Lismore Lantern Parade held during the Winter Solstice. It is Lismore's signature event and attended by thousands, with over ten thousand this year. LightnUp Inc is led by the wonderful Founder and CEO/Artistic Director Jyllie Jackson and her very able team, all volunteers. LightnUp Inc has provided their expertise in Lantern making to many other towns and cities across Australia and indeed internationally, such is their much deserved fame. I said to Jyllie at this year's pre launch that I wished they got the funding to match the fame. LightnUp Inc is a local community arts based organisation that creates artwork. In their words this artwork is inspired by light and shadow. They work very closely with our local communities and others to help them tell their stories and to create celebration. They also do work by commissions, hire out their beautiful lanterns that are installed and themed for a variety of events. Their vision is to 'lighten the hearts of communities across Australia and beyond, through art based activities.' How lucky are we in Lismore City and right across our region that they do this in Lismore itself.

RE:NEW FESTIVAL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—Recently, Shellharbour was lucky enough to be home to a new, forward-thinking festival focusing on sustainability. The inaugural Re:New Festival took place over eight days at the end of June, at various locations in Shell Cove and at Bass Point. The festival explored environmentally-conscious concepts like upcycling, frugal fashion and wellness through events like fashion shows, yoga, bicycle repair stations, markets, and health workshops. Laura Wells, the model and environmentalist, was the ambassador and face of the festival due to her passion and activism for climate change and reducing waste. I would like to congratulate the organisers and sponsors of this event for their initiative and for engaging and inspiring the community of Shellharbour. This festival helped to prove that small changes and everyday actions can make a huge difference in the long run.

COPTIC ORTHODOX DIOCESE

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—On the 4th August 2019 I had the pleasure of attending the 50th Anniversary Jubilee celebration of the establishment of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese in Australia. From humble beginnings in 1969 with the first Coptic church being established, to a growing congregation today of over 70,000 in New South Wales, 50 established parishes, 4 Monasteries, and 5 schools. The Coptic community has and continues to make a tremendous contribution to Australian Society with many Copts achieving expertise within the professions of medical, legal, law enforcement and in many other vocations. The celebration was hosted by His Grace Bishop Daniel in the presence of the Egyptian Ambassador, Coptic Bishops and other leaders from all dominations. It was also well attended by Parliamentarians from across the political divide. I congratulate the church on reaching this milestone and look forward to celebrating many more milestones for the Coptic community.

CHERRY KING AND QUEEN ENTRANTS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Cherry season is fast approaching in my home town of Young and this means the 70th National Cherry Festival is just around the corner. Congratulations to our 2019 Cherry King and Queen entrants and their chosen local charities – David Munnerley (Hilltops Suicide Prevention Network Inc.), Laura Ower (Can Assist Boorowa & Young), Tasman Coulter (Margaret House Refuge Inc.), Kate Cruickshank (Young Men's Shed) and Brianah Griffin (Lions Club of Young). I admire each of these young people for putting themselves forward, for their enthusiasm about their town and for their amazing fundraising efforts in support of their chosen charities. Wishing you, the Cherry Festival Committee and the team at the Young Visitor Information Centre and Hilltops tourism all the very best as we celebrate 70 years.

CURRAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)—Curran Public School is a shining example of how schools and the community can work together for the betterment of students, as well as their parents and carers. I recently had the pleasure of visiting Curran Public School where I saw the incredible work being done at the Schools as Community Centre and community café where parents and carers can learn new skills while socialising, networking and fostering a sense of community. The Schools and Community Centre also provides a wide range of services and activities for families with children from birth to eight years. The centre promotes healthy and happy children and encourages strong links between families, the school and community. I tip my hat to the parents and local facilitator Viviane Fallah who generously treated me to delicious coffee and homemade falafel. I was also impressed to hear that the café uses produce grown in the school garden – what a great lesson for students in sustainability and healthy eating. The Schools as Community Centre and community café are fantastic initiatives bringing parents, children and community together to learn and grow.

DAVID HORTON

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—Recently, one of our longest serving, and well respected school principals Mr David Horton of Bass High School retired after 38 years of distinguished service. Throughout his career, Mr Horton has been a positive influence in the lives of many students, teachers and parents. Driven by a deep commitment to education and a passion and enjoyment for learning, Mr Horton is has been instrumental in creating numerous positive community initiatives. Mr Horton supported the Bass High School P&C in building a community café for students to gain first-hand experience and training in hospitality skills, creating Bass High School's ANZAC Community Garden in partnership with the P&C and the 7th Division, Australian Imperial Force, and developing a blood donation initiative for students, staff and community members. Mr Horton has served as a strong motivator for his students, and provided positive support for his staff, receiving praise and recognition for his warm personality and generosity towards the students, staff and community over the years. It is with mixed emotions that I acknowledge Mr Horton's retirement. I thank Mr Horton for his tremendous contribution to our local community and I wish him and his family well.

NSW POLICE ASSOCIATION COMMISSIONED OFFICERS BRANCH DINNER

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I had the pleasure to attend the NSW Police Association Commissioned Officers Branch 72nd Annual Dinner on the 16th of August, 2019. NSW Police do an important, stressful and dangerous job. Commissioned officers provide the leadership required as the Commanders of Police Area Commands, Police Districts, are the principal coordinators of law enforcement operations and specialist units. The outstanding outcomes achieved by the NSW Police Force is a testament to the hard work, dedication and leadership of the Commissioned Officers.

The Dinner was a great opportunity to discuss the force's achievements over the last 12 months, and the work that the NSW Police Association does supporting our NSW Police Commissioned Officers and all serving and retired members. I would like to congratulate the NSW Police Association President Tony King and his staff for a successful evening and thank guest speaker Allan Sparkes CV, OAM, and his wife Deb for sharing their inspirational story. The leadership provided by NSW Police Commissioned Officers has placed the NSW Police Force into a strong position to respond to emerging criminal trends and the changing needs of our community to deliver a safer NSW. I thank them for their service.

BREAD AND BUTTER PROJECT

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—The Bread and Butter Project represents the very best of the Inner West community, providing practical and compassionate support for the most vulnerable in our community, and is just another of the many ways that the inner west opens its arms to refugees and asylum seekers. The Bread and Butter Project is a social enterprise based in Marrickville that employs and trains newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers. The Project was established in 2013 by Paul Allam, Jessica Grynberg and David McGuinness – the owners of the much loved Bourke Street Bakery – and has been going from strength to strength ever since.

Trainees are provided with on-the job training in baking, as well as English language tutoring and TAFE accreditation, all which prepares them for Sydney's competitive job market. David Grynberg said recently that: "We currently have a 100 per cent track record of participants graduating from our program, finding sustainable employment and no longer needing access to the Newstart allowance." I congratulate all the staff and trainees at the Bread and Butter Project and commend them on all they do to support asylum seekers and refugees in our community.

TIAHNA SKELTON

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—Tiahna Skelton is just 15 years old, but the Wallsend resident has achieved extraordinary success at the Oceania Athletics Championships in Townsville recently. She broke a meet record in the 400m hurdles final, and broke the carnival best time record alongside her relay teammates in the 4x400 event. Tiahna is ranked No.1 in Australia in the under 18 and 20 age groups for 400m hurdles after winning the under-20 event at the national junior titles earlier this year. Tiahna is a member of the Wallsend Little Athletics Club, and her coaches Pete Gentz and Andy Burton deserve congratulations as well. This is an outstanding achievement, and Tiahna has done Wallsend very proud.

THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I wish to recognise the Great Irish Famine Commemoration Committee and the work that they do. They will hold their twentieth annual gathering on Sunday August 25. The commemoration relates to events in Ireland in the 1840s that are often known as the Great Famine. Because famine suggests an absence of food, the events are more correctly known as the Great Hunger or in Irish An Gorta Mor. The events are significant to this land, not just because of the general importance of the Irish Diaspora but also

because of the famine orphans who came from the workhouses of Ireland to Australia, directly as a result of the 1840s. This year the committee will conduct a seminar on Sunday morning entitled 'Looking forwards and remembering' and will then conduct a ceremony of commemoration at the Irish Famine Memorial at the corner of College and Macquarie Sts, Sydney. The population of the island of Ireland is still below that of the 1840s. The commemoration of these events is of great importance.

PHIL MEAD

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I rise today to congratulate Phil Mead of Jannali for marching in his 60th consecutive Anzac Day march on 25 April 2019. Phil started out as a drummer with the St George Sutherland Shire Brass Band in 1959 at just 11 years of age. Since then Phil has marched in Sydney's Annual Anzac Day March through the city in remembrance of our ANZACs. For many years Phil walked in the March with his father who was a WWII veteran and has now passed his love of the Anzac Day March down to his children and grandchildren, many of whom now march with him. Phil's dedication to commemorate our ANZACs is a great inspiration to people of all ages, he is a steady reminder that no matter how young or old, you can always give back and show your respect to the ANZACs. I commend Phil for his on-going dedication to commemorate and remember our ANZACs and extend my best wishes for his future marches.

SARA DREBBER

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Congratulations to local business woman, Sara Drebber of Glenmore Park, who has been named as a Finalist in the 2019 Altitude Awards in the category of Purpose Driven Entrepreneur. This award is for women driving businesses that look to find a balance between profit, people and purpose, creating a force for positive change in the world. Sara's business edUcated was founded on the premise that there was a need to facilitate opportunities for teachers and parents to develop strategies to support learning of children in their care, outside the current education system. It operates on the key belief that each child has the ability to learn and as a community we need to support our children by catering for their individual needs. Congratulations Sara on being named a Finalist!

GREEN INNOVATION AWARDS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I congratulate three Northern Rivers schools on their outstanding leadership and interest in environmental innovation. The winners of the 2019 Green Innovation Awards were Wyrallah Road Public School in the Primary School category, St. John's College, Woodlawn in the High School category and Tregeagle Public School was the winner of the Encouragement Award. The teachers, students and everyone who was involved in designing and implementing these environmental innovations and presenting before the panel of judges should be extremely proud of their efforts and well deserved recognition. I acknowledge the exemplary work of the Green Innovation Awards at encouraging children to develop a passion for the environment by asking them to invent, develop and present their solutions for greener living. The future of our environment continues to look brighter with young minds putting forward ideas on ways they can contribute to looking after our world.

ANTHONY COYLE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I would like to recognise a talented young Hunter singer named Anthony Coyle, who has delighted us all with his rendition of the national anthem and other songs when I have hosted Jean Arnot Luncheons. Anthony attended senior high school at Maitland's St Mary's campus of All Saints College. He impressively achieved one of the Hunter Region's highest marks in the HSC for music. As a result of this fantastic achievement, Anthony was given the opportunity to sing at the Sydney Opera House with other performing arts high-achievers. He has long been part of Hunter community events and festivals and has earned the admiration of many, none more than his devoted grandparents Lloyd and Dian Manderson. Nineteen-year-old Anthony, who is enrolled in a gap year program with the Air Force at Wagga Wagga, is also pursuing university studies in radiography. I wish this young man every success in his life ahead.

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC DAY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On Wednesday 14th August 2019 I joined my community in attending the 74th Anniversary of the Victory in the Pacific Commemoration Service at Cabra-Vale Memorial Park. People gathered from far and wide on this day to commemorate this momentous occasion and to honour those brave men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice defending our Nation. It was a pleasure to welcome the Governor of NSW Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AO QC to this special Commemoration Service.

Present to pay their respects were my Federal & State Parliamentary colleagues, local school students, emergency services personnel, RSL Sub-Branch representatives, current serving officers and community

members. This year's Commemorative Service provided a special focus of the outstanding contributions and service of female nurses during the Second World War. Thank you to all the sub-branch representatives who continue to do a fantastic job on the Victory in the Pacific Committee. I would also like to commend the students from St Patrick's College Campbelltown for their remarkable display of the female officers and nurses uniforms from that period as a tribute to their service. Well done to everyone involved.

WARREN STEEL

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services)—I would like to congratulate local Bombo resident and Kiama Councillor Warren Steel on his 80th birthday. He has lived in the Kiama Municipality for the past 39 years. In December 2017, Warren was recognised for his long service as a Councillor at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference in Sydney. Cr Steel received the outstanding service award for his position as Councillor from 1983–1987 and 1999–present time. He has also served as Deputy Mayor. Apart from being on Kiama Council, Warren also paints and draw cartoons and is a cracker-jack, first class bowler. I have known Clr Steel for many years, and have been very pleased to work with him on a number of community projects which have benefitted our region. Happy birthday Warren and thank you for your service to our community.

THE SOCIAL OUTFIT

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—I draw the attention of this parliament to the amazing work, and incredible achievements of The Social Outfit, and pay particular tribute to former CEO Jackie Ruddock whose hard work and dedication to ethical fashion has had such a positive impact on our local community. In 2012, Jackie Ruddock and a small but passionate team brought The Social Outfit to life in Sydney. Since then they have employed 21 people from the refugee community, which included providing a first Australian job to 18 people, and helping transition 19 people into ongoing external employment. This employment work paid just under \$500,000 directly into the hands of refugee and new migrant communities through secure wages.

The Outfit has also provided specialist sewing training to over 240 women from Western Sydney's refugee and new migrant community, and engaged over 300 people in colourful and celebratory fashion, sewing and other creative design programs. I thank Jacqui for her amazing contribution, and wish her the best of luck with her next endeavor. Congratulations to the whole Social Outfit Team, and welcome to new CEO Camilla Schippa.

MICHAEL HUGHES FOUNDATION

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education)—The Michael Hughes Foundation is a not for profit organisation based in Parramatta with a passion and focus into educating ordinary people about emergency Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). In the instance of any sudden cardiac arrest events, they hope to realise their primary objective of turning ordinary bystanders into First Responders, administering CPR when it is needed. The Foundation's mission involves raising public interest and awareness regarding sudden cardiac arrest, its causes, symptoms, and measures that can be taken to improve the national incidence of this health issue.

The Foundation also provides access to, and raises money to purchase defibrillators on behalf of various businesses, organisations, community groups and individuals; and promotes, educates and trains the public on how to use defibrillators and administer CPR in order to enhance ordinary people's confidence in responding to sudden medical emergencies. I'd like to thank Julie Hughes and Sarah Bouquet along with all the other executives from the Michael Hughes Foundation for their efforts in providing not only top quality First Aid training, but also educating everyday members of the public in performing these essential medical treatments which have no doubt helped save numerous lives before paramedics arrive on the scene.

NARROMINE FIRE STATION

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—The Narromine Fire and Rescue Station 401 recently celebrated its 90th birthday, making it one of the oldest stations west of Dubbo. In December 1929, after a spate of fires and the development of the town's reticulated water supply, community leaders saw the need for a volunteer fire brigade in Narromine. The station has held six captains including A Hawkins, C Woolfe, H Bowden, Edward (Ted) Jackson, Robert Hawkins and Ewen Jones. Like many rural stations, 401 has a strong tradition of being a family brigade, and the Hawkins family has been involved for the whole of the station's 90 year history. Retired Captain Ted Jackson served for 46 years and retired Captain Robert Hawkins AFSM served for 40 years. It is a terrific history of service, and I commend all those involved with Station 401 over the years for that service.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—It was a bittersweet celebration for the Men's Fellowship on Sunday 18 August as they marked 70 Years of "building stronger friendships among men of the church" through a Commemoration and Closure Service at the Wesleyan Chapel. Conducted by Rev Malcolm Hausler and Rev Peter Walker, the Men's Fellowship of the Methodist/Port Macquarie Uniting Church closed the final chapter on a 70 year dynasty, which focused on Christian service through community contribution. The first meeting of the Men's Brotherhood was on 28 August 1949 by Organising Secretary Mr Onis Walker, Chairman Reverend H.N. Whiteman and General Secretary, Mr Alf Burgess opening proceedings.

The 1950's saw the Men's Brotherhood request permission to reserve the Wharf on Town Green to run a model train for children during the Christmas School holidays, which was successfully achieved and replicated for years to come. Money raised was 300 pound in just one month of operation, with funds used to purchase building material to complete the Port Macquarie School Hall. Congratulations is extended to the Men's Fellowship committee, Jim Munro, Brendan Seed, Grahame Kesby, Gordon Finlay, and Alan Edgar for their role in servicing the people of Port Macquarie through the Brotherhood.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—I commend the Sutherland Shire Historical Society on the publication of their book 'Dharawal - the first contact people,' released earlier this year. The book was produced in honour of the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's first voyage to Australia, arriving on the traditional country of the Dharawal people. Through real stories, facts and images the author and President of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society Bruce Watts tells the story of the first encounter between the British and Aboriginal people and highlights the tremendous ramifications this had for Aboriginal people and their culture. I have donated a copy of the book to the NSW Parliament Library and encourage all to take the time to read this book as it enables a greater understanding of our shared past.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I wish to recognise the important role of the Mosman, North Sydney and Neutral Bay Chambers of Commerce within my electorate of North Shore. In my local area, Chambers of Commerce continue to provide opportunities, service and events for local businesses. Their members represent companies from a range of industries, showcasing the diversity of local businesses in North Shore. I am proud to have such organisations championing local businesses and promoting economic development in our community.

I thank Mosman Chamber of Commerce President Pat Purcell, North Sydney Chamber of Commerce President Bruce Mackenzie, and Neutral Bay Chamber of Commerce President Richard O'Grady for their dedication. The networks they provide, especially for small businesses, are certainly appreciated in my community. I was pleased to have attended their joint annual end of financial year celebration. With Mosman, North Sydney and Neutral Bay Chambers of Commerce combining for the evening, it was a great opportunity for local businesses to collaborate and celebrate their achievements together. I thank the Chambers of Commerce for hosting this event and for inviting me to share in the achievements of our local businesses.

RED NOSE DAY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I recognise Red Nose Day held on the 9th of August. Red Nose Day is a great initiative that brings awareness to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Red Nose Day promotes safe sleeping education and raises funds to provide research and bereavement support services for families impacted by the death of a child. This is an important cause as 3,500 families in Australia alone experience the hardship caused by SIDS or sudden unexpected death in pregnancy. I would like to thank Red Nose for their work and efforts which have resulted in \$16.83 million worth of investments into SIDS research over the years. I am also very proud to say this year my staff and I purchased red noses in support of this important fundraising day. Once again, I would like to congratulate Red Nose on their efforts and thank everyone who participated in supporting such a great cause.

CITY2SURF WINNERS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—I would like to congratulate the winners of the Women's Open Team event from this year's City to Surf held on the 11th of August. I am very proud that three of the four members of the team are from my electorate of Charlestown with the fourth member from New Lambton which borders my electorate. Ingrid Cleland, Kim Rackemann, Regina Jensen and Felicity Gamble made it to the finish line with a 15 minute lead on the team which finished in second place. All four women finished the race in under 58 minutes with Ingrid running the best time of 53 minutes and 42 seconds. Ingrid started running the City 2 Surf

while she was in high school and now, at forty years of age, she has run her personal best. Well done ladies and I look forward to seeing next year's results!

MICHAEL TYNAN MEMORIAL CHALLENGE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—The Michael Tynan Memorial Challenge raises much needed funds for the St George & Sutherland Medical Research Foundation and the University of Wollongong medical research. It honours the memory of Sutherland Shire philanthropic businessman Michael Tynan, who died in 2016 after a long battle with cancer. On 17 August the Challenge held a first-ever race day, with a drive and scooter challenge departing Carss Park, via Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre Gynea, bound for Kembla Grange Racecourse, where a fund-raising luncheon was held. More than 100 cars, motorbikes and scooters took part. Special guests included former Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione and former Cronulla Sharks star Luke Lewis, who was named as an ambassador at the lunch. The annual Challenge walk will follow on 2 November, along the Royal National Park coast track, plus car rally, with about 200 people expected to take part.

WARNERVALE WELLNESS CENTRE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong)—Congratulations to Warnervale Wellness Centre at Hamlyn Terrace on their 10th Birthday. The celebration was held at Warnervale Wellness Centre on the 23 July along with Our Lady of Loreto Gardens and members of the community gathered to celebrate their 10th Birthday. The Wellness Centre provides several activities focusing on health, wellbeing, independence and companionship for independent people empowering themselves to live life on their own terms. The activities are designed around your personal needs and are delivered by the team of caring and skilled healthcare professionals. Congratulations to everyone being involved at Warnervale Wellness Centre at Hamlyn Terrace and the best for many years to come.

BELINDA SIDMAN

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I congratulate Belinda Sidman on achieving the silver medal at the 2019 World Disability Water Skiing Championships in Norway last month. Belinda lost her leg in a car accident when she was just 16 years old, but that hasn't stopped her from becoming one of Australia's top athletes. Belinda Sidman has participated in the championship event, which is held every two years since 2011 and has won a medal each time. I congratulate her sincerely for this for this achievement and wish her all the very best for future championships.

EPPING ELECTORATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—I wish to acknowledge some of the excellent secondary schools serving the Epping electorate. As a father of five children, I am so thankful for the choice in secondary education that is available locally. For example, four local schools - Cheltenham Girls High School, Carlingford High School, Cherrybrook Technology High School and Epping Boys High School – were all ranked within the top ten non-selective government schools in 2018. And as every member of this place knows, what makes an excellent school is excellent teachers, support staff, and leaders, and last week I had the privilege of meeting some:

- Suellen Lawrence, principal of Cheltenham Girls High School;
- Brother Steve Hogan, of Oakhill College;
- Ingrid Koodrin, acting principal of Carlingford High School; and
- Maria Pearson who is retiring at the end of 2019 after fifteen years as principal of Mount St Benedict College.

I thank them all for their dedication to teaching and educational leadership, and for their commitment to the scholarly communities they represent. I wish them every success for the rest of the school year ahead, and especially to Maria Pearson, every blessing for the next few months and for her retirement.

ONE SONG SING

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—I rise today to acknowledge One Song Sing, a monthly impromptu community choir that brings hundreds of Novocastrians out to enjoy a song and some company. Inspired by Canada's Choir! Choir! Choir!, once a month Mark Jackson and Jane Jelbart gather some musical friends, arrange a popular song into three-part harmony and then throw open the doors to Newcastle to join them for an hour, learn the song and then sing together. Musical ability is irrelevant; all you have to do is show up. While the choir may not always be in tune they are always happy. There's nothing better than seeing a room of

smiling faces, a little dancing, and a big celebration at the conclusion. We all know music is a great uniter, and the community that is created by Mark, Jane and One Song Sing each month is one to be proud of.

THE HILLS CHINESE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—It was an absolute pleasure to join local women from the Hills Chinese Women's Association to celebrate their 27th Anniversary. The Hills Chinese Women's Association was established in 1992 with an aim at providing support to Chinese women and their families who have newly migrated to Australia and are living in the Hills District. The Association organises for its members various activities such as cooking demonstrations, education talks, craft learning, and outings every Friday morning during school terms. The activities provide opportunities for members to gain some knowledge about living in Australia and offer social support to women who have a similar cultural background. I would like to thank Chairperson Marisa So for extending an invitation to me and to all the association members who made me feel very welcome. Here's too many more years of success.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:45
until Tuesday 17 September 2019 at 12:00.**