



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament  
First Session**

**Wednesday, 25 September 2019**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Wednesday, 25 September 2019**

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

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

## *Notices*

### PRESENTATION

*[During the giving of notices of motions]*

**The SPEAKER:** I remind members about the length of motions of which they are giving notice. The motion for which the member for Vacluse gave notice took one minute, which is pushing the boundaries.

## *Visitors*

### VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** I acknowledge the students from St Mary's Primary School at Scone, which is in the electorate of Upper Hunter, who are in the gallery today. Welcome to Parliament.

## *Bills*

### RIGHT TO FARM BILL 2019

#### Second Reading Debate

**Debate resumed from 17 September 2019.**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (09:47):** When I was a young woman, expecting my first child, I lived in Walcha on the New England Tablelands with my husband and his parents. My husband and I lived in a house that was between the motel that my parents-in-law owned and the local hospital and we would often stay overnight at the motel. On one occasion my husband and his parents were away on tour and I was managing the motel by myself. I woke up in the middle of the night to hear people moving on the street below. A couple of weeks previously a friend from Sydney had called me telling me he was working with New South Wales police. He said he was surprised to hear that there had been a huge increase in theft and malicious damage in my tiny village of 1,600 people. He asked me, "What's happening up there?" But I already knew—news travels fast in the country. Many local business owners had had their shops broken into, mainly for small change, lollies or cigarettes. Sometimes a lock would be broken or a window smashed, which would cost \$1,000 to repair—things that seem to be a part of doing business.

On that night I was not sleeping well. The motel was one of the only businesses in town that had a residence as part of the business. There was one police officer in the town at night, if they were not working hard somewhere else in the district. When the thieves got into one of our sheds at the back of our property I tried to tell myself it was okay and at least they had not got into the office, which was only a staircase away from where I was sleeping. The thieves did not do much damage. I did not see them and they did not hurt me. They just opened a box of Christmas decorations and left them out in the rain. But it still worried me. They had walked past the office, past my bedroom, into the courtyard and down to the very back of the yard. They had had time to go exploring our property while I was sleeping alone. Would they come back?

This was back in the day when businesses in a country town did not have CCTV. We did not even have an alarm on the premises because we were always around to hear if someone had got in. By the time we left, we could not even remember the combination for the safe because we had not used it in 20 years. But I cannot forget the sense of unease and of walking around the streets wondering which of our neighbours in our small community had been in our place while I was asleep and whether they would come back. It was a fear that dogged me the rest of the time that I lived at the motel. It made the nights when the restaurant team went home feel lonely and worrying.

That feeling would be familiar to anyone who has had their home burgled. It is a feeling of invasion, of fear and of wondering what would have happened if you had confronted the trespasser or thief. But it is different when you run a business from your home. An invasion of your professional space is also an invasion of your personal space. I have spent more than 15 years of my life working and living at home. It is convenient because

there is no to commute work, but it makes us a bit more of a target for theft. These days, if you live on a farm and if someone decides that they do not like your farm or what you are doing on your farm, they may decide to trespass and to put your livelihood and, more importantly, your peace of mind at risk.

People who have an ideological objection to the way that you and perhaps multiple generations of your family have lived might even target you. They might put photos of your property on the internet and they might encourage people to trespass on your property. They might even encourage people to do that in large groups. They might harm your animals or family pets, damage your machinery, equipment or buildings or cause a biosecurity risk that costs you dearly. That is not right and it is not fair. The Right to Farm Bill 2019 before us today purports to meet a key Coalition commitment from the 2019 election. In response to one of the five pillars, the NSW Farmers' priorities states:

\$10 million to legislate a Right to Farm, including through a Regional Planning Act and to tackle farm trespass and illegal surveillance

However, the bill before us does not properly meet those objectives. The illegal surveillance aspect of the commitment was recently addressed in a Federal bill, which was supported in principle by Federal Labor and referred to a Senate committee to address deficiencies and unintended consequences in that jurisdiction. Importantly for farmers, this bill completely ignores the primary concerns of the majority of farmers around regional planning legislation and the risk of prime land being urbanised or encroached upon by development. This bill does not address a single planning issue, such as when developers ride roughshod over farming communities and local councils and use the seniors housing State Environmental Planning Policy [SEPP] to develop prime agricultural land into retirement villages. As I go around the State, that is the primary concern around right to farm that farmers raise with me. In fact, if we look at the international legislation on right to farm, we see that it always goes to the planning issues.

This bill is poorly crafted and the Minister's second reading speech was intended to do nothing more than polarise animal activists and farmers without upsetting the Government's key developer lobby by stopping the urbanisation of prime agricultural land—the major concern of farmers. The University of Technology in Sydney, on behalf of the Department of Primary Industries [DPI], has completed a whole body of work on councils' approaches to resolving these planning and zoning conflicts and that work has been ignored by this bill. But I will turn to that later. This bill conflates the tort of nuisance, which is sometimes used against farmers to restrict their activities as a result of the failure of this Government to address planning issues, with the actions of activists who trespass against farming families. It does so in such a broad way that it raises serious concerns about the impact of the legislation on other forms of legitimate, peaceful protest on public lands and even perhaps on industrial action. The proposed legislation falls far short of the Government's election commitment and will potentially diminish support in the community for farmers who face claims of nuisance and illegal trespass.

Importantly, one wonders if the Attorney General, within whose jurisdiction the Inclosed Lands Protection Act sits, has even had a hand in crafting this legislation, because despite it being called the Right to Farm Bill it has the potential to reach far beyond that, limiting the rights of: farmers protesting mineral exploitation on primary agricultural land; people belonging to unions protesting unsafe work practices or unfair pay and conditions; environmentalists trying to stop this Government from ripping out all our forests; Knitting Nannas seeking to protect our environment for their grandchildren and future generations; or even perhaps students protesting about a lack of action on climate change on their own school grounds; nurses protecting against dangerous health policies; or in fact potentially anyone who wants to exercise their implied freedom of political communication.

I turn to the detail of the bill. Clause 4 is essentially about limiting the tort of nuisance. It establishes what is called the "nuisance shield". The University of Technology Sydney [UTS] Institute for Public Policy and Governance conducted the Right to Farm-Agricultural Land Use Survey, which was commissioned by the Government, and a report was delivered in October 2018. When I first went to the DPI website, looking at where the Government might stand in relation to this legislation, I saw it is all about planning. There is nothing about what is in the rest of the bill. Over a three-year period the report surveyed 44 local government councils on their experiences in resolving complaints against agricultural activities. While most council respondents were aware of the Government's right to farm policy on the DPI website—as was I—only 9 per cent of them appeared to be intimately familiar with the policy.

The report found that only three of the 44 councils that responded to the survey had adopted their own right to farm policy. We know there is much more work to do in this space. I note the presence of the member for Coffs Harbour in the Chamber. This is a big issue in his electorate. I went up there about a month ago and people were talking about the proliferation of blueberry farms and the conflict that brings. It would be interesting for him to go back to his community and ask them about the 12-month limit. I hope he has read the bill in relation to this



aspect. If new farm activities are commenced, they will not be shielded by the tort of nuisance. I hope he has read that.

One of the significant findings of the UTS report was that just under one-third of council respondents indicated that they resolved all these complaints on planning issues in-house, in council. In other words, they did not go to tort and did not go to court. Just over half of those referred land use complaints to the NSW Environment Protection Authority and other complaints were commonly referred to Local Land Services, NSW DPI and the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage. It appears that nuisance complaints against farmers do not usually escalate to common law actions involving tort, yet this is the very first aspect that is addressed in the Government's proposed legislation—put up a shield to protect farmers.

There is an argument that residents in more urbanised areas are increasingly using civil litigation to resolve neighbourhood arguments in general, but the Minister in his second reading speech did not give any evidence as to whether or how much this is occurring in relation to farms in rural or even peri-urban environments, nor did he give examples of such complaints under the common law. In his second reading speech the Minister mentioned not letting "a different standard be applied to farmers just because they are farmers". However, this is exactly what the bill is seeking to achieve. Further, the people whom I spoke to in Coffs Harbour who are concerned about what is happening there with farming practices are not going to be happy when they see a shield put up protecting farmers against an independent decision-maker making a decision about who is in the right.

This is important when one recalls that one of the findings of the UTS survey was that communication and engagement are more useful in resolving conflict between neighbours—not shutting them down, not putting up a shield against them. It is unclear how providing that legal shield will help to open practical communication and engagement between neighbours. Practically, when one looks at it, the nuisance shield could also require a decision-maker to determine what constitutes lawful activity, which undermines the effectiveness of the proposed section. This underlies the rhetoric before reality approach that has been taken in the drafting of the bill.

Clause 5 of the bill relates to requiring courts not to make an order to cease where another order is available. This part of the legislation proposes what appears to be a reasonable path, allowing commercial agricultural activities to continue in a way that is unlikely to significantly disturb the other party to the proceedings. However, again there is little indication in the Minister's speech. One would have thought he had a really short time limit because he did not expand on any of these issues for the assistance of the courts which will have to interpret this legislation. He did not indicate what a significant disturbance might look like in practice or even what alternate orders might look like. There are no examples of what might meet this criteria. Again, it appears the Minister has misunderstood his role in the legislative process, which is to fully explain the intention and the situations that the legislation he is proposing will affect.

I now turn to the amendments to the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901. It is interesting because it is not in this Minister's jurisdiction. Where was the Attorney General on this? Essentially those amendments extend the definition of "trespass" by adding "hinder". It adds "damages property, or wilfully or negligently releases any livestock" to the definition of "aggravated unlawful entry" in section 4B of the Inclosed Lands Protection Act. It increases the maximum penalties for the aggravated offence in section 4B (1) and adds a new penalty for those who direct, incite, counsel, procure or induce the commission of an offence against section 4B, as outlined in proposed section 4C.

Despite the Minister's hyperbole about animal activists, parts of the bill are, in all probability, already covered under the Crimes Act, by security regulations and under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act itself. However, in response to the escalating activities of animal activists, farmers and their families have undeniably felt threatened. For example, in April 2019 nine activists had to be cut from equipment after they chained themselves to a conveyor belt inside an abattoir at Goulburn at 2.30 a.m. Similar protests where activists chained themselves to machinery occurred on the same day across Australia. This coordinated protest caused a great deal of anxiety for farmers and their families, particularly in the light of the emergence of the Aussie Farms website which shows the location of hundreds of farms and abattoirs as well a satellite and other photos of the properties. The website encourages people to upload farms or videos of animal exploitation but it also has photos of properties, sitting there doing nothing.

A farmer in the north of the State reportedly only found out that activists had been on his dairy farm after viewing a video on the site, which could only have been taken by a person trespassing on the premises. That is a form of invasion that is very serious and we need to do something serious about it. Farmers in Victoria have alleged that activists have caused deaths to animals and biosecurity breaches on their farms. They allege activists were behind a 2018 incident in which chickens were let out of their pens resulting in the deaths of 200 laying hens which were attacked by predators and costs of more than \$40,000. We must remember that these are allegations, but that is what is alleged. A break-in at another family-run piggery resulted in cut fences, broken doors and a

biosecurity breach resulting in a respiratory problem for the pigs, mycoplasma, which required vaccination of all the animals on the farm at great cost to the farmer.

Labor supports industrial action and peaceful protest. We are a party that was born out of agitating for workers' rights to ensure that workers get a fair go. However, some of the highly publicised actions that have been undertaken by groups on agricultural enterprises have been highly dangerous to the activists themselves and to concepts of work health and safety and particularly harmful and frightening to the operators of farming activities and their families. Farms are not just workplaces; they are also homes where people live, play and rest. Those people should have the right to feel safe—currently they do not. I have friends on farms who have installed CCTV on their farms, are putting additional locks on their doors and are installing alarms on their houses, sheds and outbuildings.

While defenders of animal activists have said they are not intending to threaten the people undertaking such agricultural activities, the impact on these farmers and their families does not concur with the stated intentions of the activists. It is understandably frightening to be living on a property that is remote from neighbours or law enforcement when there are media reports of sometimes large groups of activists removing animals from and/or damaging properties in the middle of the night. In addition, there are very well-founded concerns regarding biosecurity breaches and the extremely high costs resulting from such breaches or stock losses to farmers and owners, who are often small family businesses. In the context of the current drought, these costs may put farmers or owners at actual risk of closure. These costs are just another burden that is often too difficult to bear.

There has been a lot of media coverage of animal activists' activities on farms and other agricultural enterprises over the last few years, which is mostly blamed on weak or inadequate penalties for failing to deter these activists or for awarding insufficient penalties for those charged with such trespass. There was criticism, for example, in the mainstream media of low penalties in cases where activists who stole livestock in Victoria were given a \$1 fine and where an activist who trespassed on a property on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland twice received only a \$200 penalty.

While the maximum penalties have significantly increased under this bill, including imprisonment, such penalties are reserved for aggravated offences. There is a view, however, that an increase in financial penalties or the threat of imprisonment will not provide a deterrent to activists. We just do not know. But what is clear is that there is a wide continuum of trespass behaviour and consequences of that behaviour for farmers, from someone negligently leaving a gate open and stock escaping to a child waking up in the middle of the night to see a large group of people in hazmat gear outside their window or a farmer having to pay \$40,000 to replace stock that is killed by predators after they have been illegally released.

There is no doubt that the coverage of farm trespass and perhaps increasing levels of trespass on farms is creating more fear in the farming community, just from the fact it is happening. Think of your own home and your own life—someone deciding that you should not have a pet because having pets is not in line with their beliefs and setting it free for it to be killed by a predator or damaging your chainsaw because you might cut down a tree on their fence line. Imagine the sense of invasion you would feel. As Dale Kerrigan said, "A man's home is his castle," and so too is a farmer's property—theirs to live in, to play in and to work in, a sanctuary free of harassment, intimidation and fear.

It is difficult to legislate for the continuum of these offences and to anticipate every circumstance that might happen but an increase to the maximum penalty perhaps sends a message to the courts that there are some cases where it goes beyond the pale, that it is not acceptable for people to feel unsafe in their homes and that harassing someone at their place of residence is not a legitimate form of political protest. As always the courts will have the discretion to find that balance.

I turn now to the regulatory provisions of the bill. The Minister's second reading speech did not address any need for the savings, transitional and other provisions of the bill in proposed schedule 1. The view has been expressed by people in the community that these provisions are perhaps wider than needed, particularly as proposed section 6 of the bill, the section dealing with inclosed lands, allows regulations to be made with no direction from the Minister as to what he is envisioning. There were no examples in the Minister's second reading speech of the kinds of regulations that might be enacted or, indeed, necessary under the legislation.

We have seen the Government frequently issue significant changes to regulations, particularly under the current Minister, including the recent imposition of on-the-spot \$1,000 fines for breaches of biosecurity, despite there being no consultation with the community about it. The Minister boasted in his speech on this legislation about the number of signs that have been put up on farms around the State, as if having a sign on a property meets a key performance indicator, KPI, for improving biosecurity. I think that not having breaches is more important than having signs.

We are talking here about a Minister who has dropped in a bill with no prior community consultation that increases the maximum penalty for an aggravated offence to \$13,200 or imprisonment for 12 months, or both, or \$22,000 or up to three years' imprisonment, or both, if the offender is accompanied by two or more persons when the offence occurred or if the offender did something that gave rise to a serious risk to the safety of the offender or any other person on the inclosed land.

These are very large penalties. We should be cautious about giving a Minister who seeks to legislate the hubris and hyperbole of the far Right against protestors—with such scant regard for unintended consequences and no direction in his second reading speech—the unfettered power to make regulations which could seek to potentially limit the implied freedoms of political opinion. Using the Inclosed Lands Protection Act to increase penalties for trespassers may have serious unintended consequences far beyond the scope of the right to farm. It could limit protestors against coal, gas and forestry or industrial action by trade unions. "Inclosed lands" means "any land, either public or private, inclosed or surrounded" in any way "by which its boundaries may be known or recognised".

The use of the word "hinder" in the expansion of the definition of "trespass" in section 4B is also problematic as it sets a very low threshold for trespass. The Minister's second reading speech is silent on the bill's potential to capture the conduct of union officials and representatives who organise industrial action that takes place on the job, farmers who protest against mineral exploitation on their own land, or protestors, individuals or groups, such as Lock the Gate and Knitting Nannas and other activists, engaging in peaceful protests on farms, in forests or on other inclosed lands.

In 2016 Labor opposed the increase in fines in the Inclosed Lands Protection Act that were introduced by the Baird Government. We argued against the increased fines on the basis that they were elevating "business interests above the interests of the community and private property owners". However, it is difficult to mount such a persuasive argument in the case of well-funded animal activist organisations that are mounting protests against struggling farmers and their children, sometimes for no other reason than they do not think people should eat meat. This bill goes far beyond that. The question could be asked, is the Inclosed Lands Protection Act, which is so broad and which encompasses so many spaces, the correct vehicle for achieving the purpose that has been stated as the intention of this bill? Are we going to see situations where young people who play on school grounds without permission or leave a gate open or teachers or nurses who protest at schools and hospitals are caught up in this legislation? Where does this end?

Labor worked with The Nationals to provide safe access zones because we agree there are places where protests should be limited but we did not try to change the Inclosed Lands Protection Act. We did not make a rushed attempt, as this lazy Minister has done, without the support of the Attorney General. The Attorney General has not shown his face in the Chamber during this debate. We did not try to muck around with the Inclosed Lands Protection Act. There are valid community concerns that any court trying to impose penalties in this manner could be open to challenge as per *Brown v Tasmania*. The Minister should be aware of this case because in 2017 the Parliamentary Library published a paper that discussed the implications of that case to the New South Wales Inclosed Lands Protection Act. That discussion paper concluded:

*Brown v Tasmania* demonstrates that, while the implied freedom of political communication protects the right to protest, this right is not absolute. Protecting businesses and their operations from damage and disruption by protestors is a legitimate legislative object. A law whose object is to prohibit damaging and disruptive protest activity will not be invalid, provided it is reasonably appropriate and adapted to advance that legitimate object. The Workplaces (Protection from Protesters) Act 2014 (Tas), the subject of the High Court case, was not reasonably appropriate and adapted to advance that object because its practical effect was to deter protest of all kinds.

I will repeat that for the Government members:

... not reasonably appropriate and adapted to advance that object because its practical effect was to deter protest of all kinds.

Whether any part of this State's protest laws will be challenged on these grounds remains to be seen. If the Government is including maximum penalties of \$22,000 or three years' imprisonment, or both, it is going to open itself to that. The second reading speech did not seek to carve out any forms of protest from this bill. I call on the Attorney General to come forward and enter this debate and to justify why this bill should not be amended to ensure that the community or unions who are not protesting on farming land are not captured by the bill.

The definition of "agriculture" in the bill is very broad and encompasses a wide range of activities. I challenge the Attorney General to explain why he has allowed the agriculture Minister to swagger into the House with all guns blazing with a bill that potentially could limit the implied freedom of political communication and with no reference to what could reasonably be unintended consequences of the bill. After all, this is the Attorney General's bill—or isn't it? Why has the bill been introduced in haste? The Labor Opposition thinks it might be because another political party in this place was talking about those issues. The other day the Minister was a bit

embarrassed. Remember before the election Government members were talking about how they would save the dairy industry and appoint a Parliamentary Secretary for dairying?

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Yes, that is right.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** A few weeks ago the Parliament held budget estimates hearings. Very sadly, the Labor Opposition members asked the agriculture Minister a number of times, not just once—

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** How many times, Jenny?

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I don't know, a few times. The Labor Opposition asked him how many dairy farmers there are in the State. He said, "There's over 600."

**Ms Janelle Saffin:** Really?

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** There is not.

**Ms Janelle Saffin:** I know that.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** The member for Lismore knows that. Is she the agriculture Minister? No. Government members did not even know that on their watch the number of dairy farmers in the State has been dropping and dropping and dropping. The Government also was caught out when before the State election the Hon. Courtney Houssos and the Hon. Mick Veitch put forward the idea of a fresh food and dairy pricing advocate. That is a pretty reasonable suggestion because we know that there are a lot of problems with the supply chain associated with dairying. The agriculture Minister has had six months to put forward the Government's own commissioner. I recall that the Hon. Niall Blair jumped on board with Labor's policy and ran away with it as though it was all the Government's idea. The Government has done nothing.

That became clear because the Hon. Courtney Houssos and I both gave notice of a motion to introduce a bill to establish Labor's advocate. What happened after that? The Government announced its intention to appoint a dairy commissioner. I should not really smile about this because this is actually pretty disgusting. In the budget estimates hearings the Opposition asked a few reasonable questions about what the agriculture Minister had been doing to achieve a good outcome for farmers by the establishment of a dairy commissioner. The questions were not hard. Typically they were, "What is the role?" The agriculture Minister's reply was, "I don't know." "Who chose the dairy commissioner?" The reply was, "I don't know." "What was the selection criteria?" "What was the selection panel?" "Who was on it?" "What are the commissioner's duties?" The Labor members of the committee asked the Minister what powers the dairy commissioner would have. The dairy commissioner established by the Government has no statutory powers because there is no Act. The dairy commissioner is just a guy working with the Department of Primary Industries.

**Ms Janelle Saffin:** Drinking a lot of milk.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** Yes, drinking a lot of milk. Very sadly, the dairy commissioner is within the department. Labor questioned whether being part of the department the dairy commissioner would have the appropriate power to speak out against the Government. We found out that the dairy commissioner is not just a public servant but a contract public servant being paid \$800 a day. If he says something wrong against the Government he will be gone. The bill restricts the right of anyone to protest, so what would the Government do to its own commissioner who says, "Mate, you're not doing the right thing by the dairy industry"?

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Gone.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** Yes, gone. It is the same everywhere I go. Farmers put such faith in the Government and they are being let down every single time. This bill is an example of hubris and hyperbole in an attempt to legislate before the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party does. The Government is really worried. How many seats did the minor parties pick up?

**Ms Tamara Smith:** Three.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** They want to increase their seats.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** Yes. Labor took one seat off the Government because the voters worked out that The Nationals are doing nothing to help the farmers of this State. The Government has lost four seats over the past couple of years. Another one was Ballina. How many seats will this Government lose before it works out that it is not doing the right thing by farmers? The bill is ill-crafted, not thought out and it is a panicked response to a political threat, just like the establishment of a dairy commissioner.

There is no provision in the legislation for a statutory review by the Ombudsman. Those opposite do not care about the impact of this legislation. If the legislation had a review mechanism it would ensure that any

unintended consequences would be properly addressed and that the legislation could be reviewed to ensure that it achieves its intended effect. But the intended effect is to say in Ballina, Orange, Barwon, Lismore and Murray, "We have still got your back. We are going to stop all protests in the State and we are going to threaten people with prison terms. But about your planning issue, we're not even going to talk about that because we've got a few mates in the development industry"—and they have a Minister who has a really close relationship with them at the moment!

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The member for Canterbury and the member for Lismore will come to order.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** Labor is supportive of animal welfare and the prevention of cruelty to animals. We on this side will always support the rights of animals to be treated humanely in all aspects with their interactions with humans. It was the Wran Labor Government that introduced the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979, and Labor has continued this work. The Hon. Mick Veitch took a comprehensive animal welfare policy, including a long overdue review of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, to the last election and Labor supports the inquiry that is currently being undertaken by a committee in the other place, although the inquiry reference does not go far enough.

We know that farmers are humane. I have spoken to many farmers over the years and particularly in the last couple of months. They love their animals. I note the member for Port Stephens, the shadow environment Minister, is in the Chamber. Farmers despair at the damage being done by uncontrolled feral pests to our environment and the impact of wiping out our native flora and fauna. Farmers have talked to me in Parliament House about how upset they are with the Government's lack of support for our native flora and fauna. I have seen the way farmers treat their animals; they are very caring and careful. They do not want rogues in the industry who do not treat their animals humanely. Labor cannot support the situation where farmers who are undertaking lawful farming activities on their own land feel under siege by people who have decided, without any evidence, that they are not behaving in a humane or lawful manner. That is why we have the RSPCA and police look at those situations.

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

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** Farming in Australia has always been a difficult job. Farming provides food and fibre to our nation and to people around the world. Farmers face significant biosecurity risks and with the increasing globalisation of agriculture this is expanding all the time. They have legitimate concerns about their personal safety and the economic loss caused by on-farm activist activities. Farmers have had a major setback from the drought. According to the Australia Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, the gross value of production from our agriculture sector was down \$1.5 billion in past 12 months and \$13 billion in 2017-18, down from approximately \$14.5 billion the year before. It is an industry in crisis. The Government is asleep at the wheel. It does nothing on development that is encroaching on urbanisation, yet in this Chamber slings legislation around.

**Mr Michael Johnsen:** What do you think this is about?

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I acknowledge the interjection of the member for Upper Hunter and faux parliamentary secretary for dairy—or was it agriculture last week when he talked to chicken farmers? Which one is it? I am not quite sure.

**Mr Michael Johnsen:** Do you support the bill?

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** Members will not interject and the member for Maitland will not seek interjections.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I am just responding. I am making my contribution and the member is interjecting. Unless Government members are pushed on matters, they do nothing. That is the whole point.

**Mr Michael Johnsen:** We won't get pushed by you.

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

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** Communities in this State have or are just about to run out of water and farmers have been struggling for years in dustbowl conditions trying to hold onto their farms, their properties and their lives each and every day. What is the response of the Government to this crisis? It has lobbed up with this bill, without proper consultation with the Opposition. I have asked the Minister and his office so many times to tell me what the Government is going to do. I wanted to consult. Anyone who has dealt with me in any of my shadow portfolios knows that I am the queen of consultation.

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

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I want to make sure that everyone in our community who is impacted by legislation has the right to say what the impact will be on them. That is what leads to democracy, that is what leads to good outcomes and that is what will enable farmers to sleep safely in their beds at night. But no, the Government lobs up with a bill, without having properly consulted with the crossbench, the Opposition and the broader community on legislation that has the potential to limit the implied freedoms of political opinion for everyone in our community, including the very farmers that this Minister says he is protecting.

I am sure the Minister hopes that the bill will distract from his Government's hopeless management of water over the past 8½ years and its lack of support for farmers and farming communities who are struggling financially to survive. Obviously the Government members have not read the bill and have not worked out that it has nothing to do with right to farm. It is not about right to farm. It is about the right to kick protesters in the guts and to lock them up and throw away the key. That is what it is about. The Labor Opposition has huge concerns with this bill.

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

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** This is not right to farm legislation. It falls far short.

**Ms Kate Washington:** We have been on calls, Madam Temporary Speaker.

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

**Ms Kate Washington:** Are you going to put me on a call for calling them out?

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** I ask members to respect one another and come to order. The member for Port Stephens will not tell me how to call the House to order. The member for Port Stephens has made numerous interjections during the debate, as have other members on that side of the House.

**Ms Kate Washington:** That is absolutely not true, Madam Temporary Speaker.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The member for Port Stephens will not argue with me. I have asked members on both sides of the House to come to order. I have asked the member for Lismore, the member for Canterbury, the member for Upper Hunter and the member for Tweed to come to order. I have asked both sides of the House to allow the member for Maitland to speak to the bill without interjections and I have asked the member for Maitland not to seek interjections from either side of the House. I would hope that this House could maintain order and respect for this debate. If members will not, then they will be placed on calls to order. The member for Maitland will resume her speech and members will be silent.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** This legislation will not detract in any way from the gross shortcomings of members on that side of the House, who have been asleep at the wheel over the last eight years, who have forgone any opportunity to support our farming and agricultural sector and who ignore at their peril the significant economic impact on our State through their mismanagement of water and their agricultural policy. We have seen farming industries and sectors go to the wall under their watch. Labor has huge concerns about the bill.

I will return to my remarks at the start of my speech. I know what it is like to be in an isolated place away from the protection of law enforcement agencies and to feel vulnerable to people coming onto your property. The Labor Opposition takes very seriously the damage that might be done to farmers, to their property and to their children. But this is not right to farm legislation. The only right to farm in this legislation is in the title of the bill. The legislation falls far short. It is an attack on people's right to protest and goes far beyond what is intended.

Labor will not oppose the legislation in this place because we want the bill to go before the inquiry that is being undertaken in the other place. We reserve the right to move or support amendments, based on a careful consideration of all of the evidence. We will not be rushed by Government members—who have been too lazy for eight long years to look after our agricultural sector—into taking away people's freedom to advocate for issues that are important to them. Our final position will be determined by consultation with the community and the final shape of the bill after debate on any amendments.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (10:28):** I support the Right to Farm Bill 2019. Before coming to this place I was a farmer. Our family grows blueberries and award-winning macadamia nuts. There are some members of my family who are the fifth generation on the farm. Aside from working on the farm I was also the chairman of a local farmers' cooperative. Our co-op also belonged to a group called the Northern Rivers Co-op Alliance, a group of cooperatives based on the North Coast of New South Wales and led by John Seccombe and Simon Stahl from the Northern Co-operative Meat Company, Greg McNamara from Norco and other like-minded people with a passion for farming and cooperatives.

One of the main topics of conversation, which goes to the heart of so many conversations about our society today, is about the complete lack of understanding about where our food and fibre comes from. There is a

basic lack of understanding about farming practices. As long as the produce does not run out and as long as the shelves remain stocked, farming is out of sight and out of mind. Unlike many other places in the world, our farmers have never let us down when it comes to food production. We never see empty shelves in Australia. However, farming lands and farming opportunities are limited. Unlike a commercial office, a farm cannot simply pack up and move premises. It might rely on 30-year-old fruit trees that cannot be moved. Farmers have always had to face off threats such as fire, market forces, drought, flood—the list is endless. Farmers now face a new and more dangerous threat.

The bill amends the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to increase the penalties for offences related to aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands and to introduce new aggravating factors and offences to deal with emerging forms of on-farm trespass. This Government is committed to protecting farmers' livelihoods from a whole range of challenges. This year we committed \$1.1 billion to drought relief programs to support farmers adjusting to these tough times. We strengthened our biosecurity regime by increasing penalties for failing to comply with biosecurity management plans. The bill goes further and introduces a new piece of legislation that will help protect farmers and their operations from trivial complaints.

The Right to Farm Act 2019 will provide farmers with a defence against common law nuisance actions and will require courts to consider other options before ordering that farming activities immediately stop. Known as a nuisance shield, it will provide a complete defence for farmers who are operating legally. The defence will deter people from escalating common nuisance complaints to litigation. Litigation is a costly and stressful exercise that can lead to orders to appease a complainant. That runs the risk of impeding legally operating businesses or driving farmers out of town simply because complainants do not understand the realities of living in rural areas or the realities of modern food production.

The University of Technology Sydney surveyed councils across the State over three years to see how nuisance complaints were driving land use conflict with farming families. The final report delivered in 2018 identified noise, odour, dust and spray drift as some of the most common triggers for complaints. Around half of the councils who responded to the survey reported that at least 50 per cent of the agricultural land use complaints were about legally compliant agricultural activities. Farmers should not have to apologise for their business or for growing food and fibre. They should not have to defend the legitimacy of an entire industry and their livelihoods, especially in a courtroom, against frivolous complaints.

Our regional communities are outstanding places to live but sometimes people are unprepared for the realities of moving into productive areas. In the regions, netting protects horticultural crops from hailstones, bats and birds, de-husking sheds can run for 10 hours a day and trucks and tractors operate at all hours, ensuring that people get to enjoy their fresh food, shiraz or chardonnay. For those of us who grew up in our regions, that is part of the charm and the lifestyle, which is a sign that rural and regional New South Wales is continuing to produce the high-quality food and fibre that fuels this great State. They are signs that rural and regional New South Wales is open for business, even as our farmers battle the worst drought in living memory. But to some others, the sights, smells and sounds of production are an annoyance to be stopped by any means necessary, even though farming was there a long time before the new neighbours and will be there a long time after they leave.

Farmers should not have to waste time, effort and money in the courts simply because someone moved in next door and did not realise that mung beans need a bit of sulphur applied from time to time. Existing laws already ensure that the activities are carried out in a way that protects people's health and environment. I take this opportunity to underline the fact that those laws need to be followed, and when they are not being followed they need to be enforced. This legislation creates a legal defence for farmers operating on land where it is permissible to carry out primary production activities.

The defence will allow for a temporary break in operations to account for hard times such as drought or illness. It will also allow for innovation and growth so that producers may change their type of production at any time. The defence can apply as long as the land has been used for primary production for at least 12 months, whether it was for intensive or extensive agriculture, aquaculture, plantations or private native forestry. This legislation is about defending established commercial farmers who just want to get on with the job. The nuisance shield draws inspiration from Tasmania, which has had a similar defence on the statute books since 1995. A nuisance shield sits on the shelf, dormant until called upon.

There is no regulatory burden, no red tape, no need for ongoing funding and no extra administration for farmers, the Government or the courts. In 2014 when Tasmanian legislators reviewed their Act they found that it was effective in achieving its outcomes. There is no downside to introducing something similar in New South Wales. It is a proactive step to defend farming in this State. The nuisance shield will not stop someone from making a complaint to their local council or undermine the powers of any other Act. For example, the nuisance shield will not stop the Environment Protection Authority from exercising its powers under the Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991. The nuisance shield does not block someone from bringing common law

nuisance action before the courts. People can still try to litigate, but if they do they might be wasting their money if the defence we are introducing today is available to the farmer's activities.

The nuisance shield is a proactive provision that discourages trifling complaints. This saves both time and money for complainants and farmers alike and frees up court resources. In addition, the nuisance shield provision provides additional protections for farmers by limiting the ability of courts to order that farming activities immediately stop if nuisance is found. Instead the court will be equipped with the ability to make orders for the management of the activity causing the nuisance if the court can reasonably ensure that any continuation of the activity after following such orders would be unlikely to significantly disturb the other party. That leads to a more acceptable outcome for both parties as the nuisance is addressed without stopping all production or effectively forcing farms to shut down entirely. It facilitates communities to work with farmers, not against them. A nuisance shield is not a panacea.

The Government will continue to respond to emerging challenges facing our farmers to protect the right to farm. This Government is committed to ensuring the right regulation is in place to protect primary production and support its growth. That is part of the Government's ongoing commitment to both farmers and rural and regional New South Wales. The nuisance shield defence applies if the operation is lawful and not negligently carried out, if the land is lawfully used for agriculture or forestry and if the operation has been continuous for 12 or more months.

The Government recognises and supports the right to protest, but that does not include the right to trespass, harass and intimidate. Farming is a tough game and there are laws to ensure farming activities are carried out in a way that protects people's health and the environment. I say again that those laws need to be followed, and when they are not followed they need to be enforced. But the time, stress and costs of defending what are generally trivial complaints against legal primary production operations are crippling farmers. The bill will go a long way towards fixing that. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (10:38):** I make a contribution to debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I support the comments of the shadow Minister for Primary Industries on this topic. This is a poor bill that is in three parts. The right to farm element is only a very small part of the bill and it deals with nuisance complaints against farming activities. Those provisions are limited in scope and are not a positive response to the needs of farmers. They will provide little comfort to farmers and to the security of the agricultural sector in our community. The most significant element of the bill is the change to the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901. To remind the House, schedule 2 of the bill states:

*The Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 defines **inclosed lands** as a school, child care service, hospital or nursing home, or any other public or private land that is inclosed or surrounded by a fence or wall or other erection or natural feature, and includes a building.*

The bill, which is ostensibly about right to farm, actually changes in a more significant way the Inclosed Lands Protection Act, which will capture a variety of activities that have nothing to do with farming and could have unintentional effects on common protest activity in our community. Farms are workplaces as well. The proscribed activity under the bill will capture legitimate activity undertaken by employees on farms who may wish to protest and complain about safety concerns on the job. They may wish to combine to discuss industrial action and the furtherance of their legitimate claims on the job. The new incite provisions under the bill, which include jail terms for those who incite under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act, will capture the legitimate activities of trade union leaders on the job and those who talk to their workmates at work about taking industrial action which could involve protests on the job.

I invite the Minister in his reply to address that squarely, because that is a big concern for people in my community. There are a number of farming and primary production enterprises in The Entrance electorate such as abattoirs and I am concerned that the bill may reduce the legitimate rights of my constituents who work on those farms. We need a secure and productive agricultural sector. We need to support primary producers as an important part of our economy. This is best done through planning and there is nothing about planning in the bill. Where is the State plan on agricultural land that guarantees the agricultural sector's claim over adequate lands to ensure that it continues to be an important part of our economy and so that it provides agricultural security for the community and this State? Members of this House have to understand a large part of our community wants to see agriculture conducted in a more sustainable and humane way.

The member for Coffs Harbour talked about a lack of information and people not understanding what goes on with farms. The bill does not address that either. This is an issue that could be constructively addressed by this House with proper consultation. Instead, the Minister is trying to satisfy an election promise by rushing in a bill that states very little about the right to farm but proscribes a whole lot of legitimate activity in the community. It does not address in any way the concerns of that large part of the community that is concerned about farming being conducted humanely and sustainably. The Minister needs to think again before rushing the bill through the



House. I look forward to further deliberations on the bill by the other place and hopefully what comes out at the end is better than what we have here, because this is not a right to farm protection. The bill does not do anything for agricultural security and does not provide a better deal for farmers.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (10:43):** I wish to support the Right to Farm Bill 2019. Before I begin my contribution, I wish to compliment the Minister and his staff for their unwavering view on farmers, which is second to none. The bill amends the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to increase penalties for offences related to aggravated unlawful entry—the words "unlawful entry" are very pertinent—on inclosed lands and introduce new aggravating factors and offences that deal with the emerging forms of on-farm trespass. This Government is committed to protecting farmers' livelihoods from a whole range of challenges.

This year the Government committed \$1.1 billion to drought relief programs to support farmers adjusting to these tough times. I do not think that anyone in this House would doubt that these are very tough times. Our farmers are the backbone of the country and they are doing it extremely tough at the moment. We strengthened our biosecurity regime by increasing penalties for failing to comply with biosecurity management plans. The bill goes further and introduces a new piece of legislation which will help protect farmers and their operations from trivial complaints.

The Right to Farm Act 2019 will provide farmers with defence against common-law nuisance actions by requiring courts to consider other options before ordering farming activities to immediately stop. Known as the nuisance shield, it provides a complete defence for farmers who are operating legally. This defence will deter people from escalating common nuisance complaints to litigation. I mean no offence to any of the solicitors in this House, but we all know that litigation is a costly and stressful exercise that can lead to orders to appease the complainant. That runs the risk of impeding legally operating businesses or driving farmers out of town just because complainants do not understand the realities of living in a rural area.

I have experienced this firsthand. A number of years ago a free-range poultry farm had been operating around Cudgen, near Kingscliff, for many years. All of a sudden some new neighbours moved in and complained continuously about the noise and the smell of the chickens. Eventually that business shut down and moved away, which meant the loss of a number of jobs. Some very good friends of mine ran a third-generation dairy farm at Piggabeen, at the back of the airport on the Gold Coast. A new neighbour came and over many years she complained about the smells and the cows mooing at four o'clock in the morning. Each time she lodged a complaint with the Department of Primary Industries, it forced that farmer to come up with just on \$400 for an inspection fee for the department to review his operations. He has now ceased his dairy operations. It just got too stressful for him. This issue is about people moving in and not understanding.

The big one in my electorate is sugar cane. Every year a large amount of sugar cane is burnt in a traditional manner, which has been going on ever since sugar cane was planted in this country some 150 years ago. New neighbours will complain that the Murwillumbah snow, as we call it, will land on their property. But it is a legitimate farming practice that supplies jobs. Before they make the rural change, people should understand what farming is all about. It is part and parcel of living in rural areas. I stand behind my cane farmers. They do an excellent job and many of them are third or fourth generation, particularly in the Tweed Valley. The University of Technology Sydney surveyed councils across the State over three years to see how nuisance complaints were driving land use conflicts with primary producers. The final report released in 2018 reported that noise, odour, dust and spray drift were some of the most common triggers for complaints. Around 40 per cent to 50 per cent of councils that responded to the survey reported that at least 50 per cent of their agricultural land use complaints were about legally compliant agricultural activities.

Farmers should not have to apologise for their business. They should not have to defend the legitimacy of an entire industry and their livelihoods, especially in a courtroom. Our regional communities are outstanding places to live, but sometimes people are unprepared for the realities of moving to a productive area. In our regions, there is white netting to protect our cherries from hailstones and gas guns that scare away birds to ensure you get your annual pick of shiraz or chardonnay. For those of us who grew up in our regions, that is part of the charm—a single sign that rural and regional New South Wales is continuing to produce the high-quality food and fibre that fuels this great State. Those are signs that rural and regional New South Wales is open for business even as our farmers battle the drought. But to some others, the sights, smells and sounds of production are an annoyance to be stopped by any means necessary even though farming was there long before the new neighbours arrived and will be there long after they leave. Farmers should not have to waste time, effort and money in the courts just because somebody who moved in next door does not realise that mung beans need to be sprayed with a bit of sulphur from time to time.

Already there are laws to ensure that those activities are carried out in a way that protects people's health and the environment. The legislation will provide a legal defence for those operations to farmers who operate on the land where carrying out primary production activities is permissible. The defence will allow for temporary

breaks in operations to account for the hard times such as drought or illness and for innovation and growth so that producers may change their type of production at any time. The defence can apply so long as the land is used for primary production for at least 12 months, whether it is for intensive or extensive agriculture, aquaculture, plantations or private native forestry. The legislation is about defending established commercial farmers who just want to get on with the job. The nuisance shield draws its inspiration from Tasmania, which had a similar defence on its statute books since 1995. A nuisance shield sits on the shelf, dormant until called upon. There is no regulatory burden, no red tape and no need for ongoing funding or extra administration for farmers, the Government and the courts.

When Tasmania reviewed the Act in 2014, it found that it had been effective in achieving its outcomes. There is no downside to introducing something similar in New South Wales. It is a proactive step to defend our farmers. The nuisance shield will neither stop somebody from making a complaint to the local council nor undermine the powers of any other Act. For example, the nuisance shield will neither stop the Environment Protection Authority from exercising its powers under the Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991 nor block someone from bringing common law nuisance action before the courts. They can still try to litigate but if they do they might be wasting their money if the defence legislated through the bill is available to farming activities. The nuisance shield is a proactive piece of legislation that discourages trifling complaints, saving time and money for complainant and farmer alike, and freeing up court resources. In addition, the standalone legislation provides additional protections for farmers by limiting the ability of courts to order that farming activities stop immediately if a nuisance is found.

Instead the court will be equipped with the ability to make orders for the management of the activity causing the nuisance if the court can reasonably ensure that any continuation of the activity after following such orders would be unlikely to significantly disturb the other party. That leads to a more acceptable outcome for both parties as the nuisance is addressed without stopping all production or effectively forcing farms to shut down entirely. A nuisance shield is not a panacea. The Government is committed to work for the benefit of the farmers and the whole community. People living in the city must understand that the fresh produce in their local supermarkets—whether it is meat, fish, dairy, fresh fruit or vegetables—must be grown in a commercial environment in our rural areas. Without it the cities would starve. We owe a great deal of gratitude to the farmers in New South Wales. I support the bill that the Minister and his team have introduced. This is a good bill and must be dealt with on priority in the House. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (10:53):** As the agricultural spokesperson for The Greens NSW, I indicate that it is no surprise that my party opposes the Right to Farm Bill 2019, but not for the reasons that others might stereotype us on. I was glad to hear the member for Tweed talk about the canegrowers in the Cudgen and Murwillumbah area. That is my mother's family heritage. I work extremely well with farmers across my electorate, as many members across the Chamber do. Protecting food security and supporting our farming families is a priority for The Greens. Supporting our farmers to be economically viable into the future and to withstand the vicissitudes of markets and a warming planet is also a priority for The Greens. It is utterly confounding that the National Party is doing everything it can to set farmers in this State further and further back from economic sustainability, robust competition in the free market, and the ability to farm in an era of climate change.

Are we surprised? No. These are the same people who passed a motion in July this year at their annual conference to abolish the climate fund in New South Wales and they want to introduce legislation to protect coal companies from legal challenges. The bill is an easy attack on animal welfare activists at the expense of mainstream Australia and it represents a completely lost opportunity. It is a lost opportunity to embrace the animal welfare concerns of 95 per cent of Australians—something I will come back to—and to give farmers an economic edge in an era of high consumer demand for ethically sourced food products. Those latte-drinking hipsters from Surry Hills and the so-called disconnected Double Bay professionals that the Minister likes to cliché have a lot of spending power. So do the 95 per cent of Australians who are concerned about animal welfare.

The bill purports to support farmers to carry on the normal business of farming, but we know from the experience of farmers in the United States—where farmers have experienced 30 years of the right to farm laws—that it does not shield small farmers. The reality is quite the opposite; it shields large agribusinesses at the expense of small farmers. It also protects agricultural activity but it does nothing to protect agricultural land. The contribution of New South Wales farmers to the Australian agricultural economy is huge. Beef cattle farms in New South Wales make up nearly 30 per cent of the total number of beef cattle farms in Australia, grain-sheep and grain-beef cattle farming makes up 36 per cent, specialised sheep farming makes up 34 per cent, dairy cattle makes up 14 per cent, vegetable farms make up 24 per cent, and farms growing fruit and nut trees make up 35 per cent. In the region of my electorate all of those industries are represented.

The defence of agricultural enterprises and shielding farmers from litigation has its context in all 50 States of the United States. Essentially, it protects farmers from being sued at common law if their agricultural

practices unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of another person's land. The rationale is that working farms will emit odours and noise that may disrupt a neighbour but that the purpose of agriculture should trump those property rights. This is despite the fact that only 2 per cent of land in the United States is working agricultural land. The drivers for the laws in the United States, as opposed to here, were the decline of farming on agricultural land, an increase in the urbanisation of rural land and changes in usage of land in rural zoned areas for wedding businesses and bed and breakfasts.

In Australia, Tasmania is the only jurisdiction with right to farm laws and the New South Wales model is based on that. In Tasmania, as in New South Wales, the driver for those laws is the National Party's concession to the Tasmanian, New South Wales and Australian farming associations in response to law suits against farmers for farm odour, noise and impacts of farm operations from adjacent property owners. As I have said, far from protecting small farms, most of the litigation in the United States since this legislation was introduced has actually affected small farms who are up against the big end of town. I also note that the law in New South Wales will protect agricultural practices but do nothing to protect the land.

My colleagues in the other place—the animal welfare spokesperson, Ms Abigail Boyd, and our law and justice spokesperson, Mr David Shoebridge—will certainly be looking carefully at the inquiry report to see whether we can make amendments because we see another way to provide the so-called shield to help small farmers. One of the obvious ways to help farmers would be through section 149 certificates for every person buying a hobby farm or a farm in rural zoned land—because then it would be a case of buyer beware—to specifically and explicitly tell people what living next to a farm is like and what is lawful.

The bill gags animal welfare activism. It amends the Inclosed Lands Protection Act and expands both the definition of unlawful acts of trespass on farms as well as offences and penalties. Locking onto a farm gate in the company of others under this law has a maximum jail term of three years and huge fines. Of major concern is the law's impact on the right of animal welfare organisations to peacefully protest and to name and shame the inhumane treatment of animals on specific farms.

Sometimes it is actually farmers who are protesting on private land. There are multiple instances. In 2011 Ballarat farmers protested about lower potato prices. They drove their tractors to the McCain factory in Wendouree. In Warrnambool farmers staged protests over low milk prices in 2013. In 2014 a Coonamble farmer locked himself to a farm gate to disrupt Santos coal seam gas operations in the Pilliga forest. These are farmers who are protesting—and what of them? The bill also impedes unions and workers taking on issues about the conditions for agricultural labourers who may be being exploited on temporary work visas—poor accommodation, their work hours and horticultural operations operating outside of the law. We will be focusing on looking for the difference. We do not support the biosecurity risks. We do not support the aggravated activities of interfering with farms. But we certainly do see that the lack of transparency around animal welfare is leading to these extreme activities.

The lost opportunity and the changes to the Act, an attack on so-called "vegan vigilantes" and "latte-sipping hipsters from Surry Hills", miss the point. The point is that the recent national report into Australia's shifting mindset on farm animal welfare showed that a staggering 95 per cent of Australians are concerned about the welfare of farm animals. That report was not commissioned by a left-wing think tank. That report was commissioned by the Australian department of primary industries. That report was a national survey. I repeat: 95 per cent of Australians are concerned about the welfare of farm animals, 56 per cent of them believe that cattle, sheep, goats and pigs are sentient and only 10 per cent of respondents thought that current government regulation was adequate. We see that there is a huge economic opportunity for farmers in New South Wales. Those same vegans will pay a premium for ethically sourced food and so will the 95 per cent of Australians who care about the welfare of farm animals. That is a marketing opportunity. That is an economic opportunity. But yet again The Nationals miss the mark when it comes to helping farmers move into the twenty-first century.

Having clear animal welfare guidelines, an independent regulatory body that monitors and has the power to act against incidents of animal cruelty on farms, and farmers embracing transparency around their animal welfare practices can add exponentially to the economic value of food production in New South Wales and Australia. I have seen that in New Zealand. I have seen the scaremongering about biosecurity on farms that was happening around the rail trail in Otago. Those same farms are now making a fortune from having farm stays and farm visitors to see the amazing stuff they are doing—and I am talking beef farms.

The other huge opportunity cost is that this law protects agricultural practices but does nothing to protect agricultural land or our intergenerational resources, soil and water. What we need is leadership from government and real incentives for farmers to protect the soil. We need strong consequences for the destruction of on-farm biodiversity and the waterways, aquifers and groundwater that farms impact. By shielding agribusinesses from the common law right to sue under nuisance and from gagging public scrutiny of animal welfare, both the value of farmland and the value of food production are diminished. Public discourse and the right to scrutinise animal

welfare practices on farms are utterly compromised and utterly disproportionate under this law. We absolutely oppose the bill.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (11:03):** I support the Right to Farm Bill 2019. The Government is committed to protecting the right to farm in New South Wales. New South Wales has a long history of farming. It is a history we have every right to be proud of and one that has underpinned the growth and the development of our State. What a sad day it is that we come to this place to have to protect the right to farm when it is such a—

**Ms Janelle Saffin:** It is sad, because you never took any action before. The Nats just did nothing.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** Order! The member for Lismore will come to order.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** It is sad. It is very sad, because farming is the very reason we have regional communities. Farming is the reason we have towns in outback New South Wales. Those towns only survive and only became a reality because of the farming communities around them. Now what we are seeing from the shadow Minister is that on the one hand she is supporting the farming community against trespass and home invasion—because that is what it is—and then on the other hand she is saying, "No, we are going to support the protesters because it is a step too far." Then on one hand she is also saying she does not want to rush this legislation through, but on the other hand it has taken eight years to get to this point in time. We have not been sitting on our hands; we have been looking at this for a long time. This is the first step in the legislative process to protect farmers. You either have to stand up for farmers and protect them when their home is being invaded—just like your house would be invaded where you live—

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** I talked about that.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** Yes. That is exactly what this legislation is about. It is about protecting the right to farm, protecting the right to protect your family in your workplace and in your home. That is exactly what this legislation is about.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** So put in right to farm legislation. Do the proper legislation. Do the work.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** You are ignoring that legislation.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** Order! The member for Maitland has had her chance to contribute to the debate.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** I am directing my remarks through the Chair because I listened to your speech and I could not quite understand it, to be honest. I thought it was all over the place.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** That's no surprise.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** No, it was all over the place. On the one hand you are supporting farmers; on the next hand you are supporting the protesters. Who are you standing up for? Are you standing up for the farmers or for the protesters? Actually, we know where Labor stands in relation to protecting the rights of farmers, which is why you have hardly any rural seats—it is for that very reason.

**Ms Janelle Saffin:** Yes, but you are losing them too.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** We know why you lost the 2011 election, the 2015 election and the 2019 election—because the community just does not believe you.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** The member for Clarence will direct all of his remarks through the Chair.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** Sorry, Mr Temporary Speaker. That is why those opposite know that they lost the 2011 election, the 2015 election and the 2019 election. We all know there is a whole range of challenges that face agricultural producers in New South Wales and Australia. We are now seeing a new set of challenges emerging. The rise in on-farm trespass comes at a time when farmers are already battling the worst drought in New South Wales history. Farmers have had enough to deal with as it is without having to worry about trespassers on their properties or defending their legal practices to people who complain about them. The bill will hold trespassers accountable for the damage they cause when storming agricultural properties. It will also provide farmers a legal defence against common law nuisance complaints that escalate to litigation.

Survey results from Australian Pork Limited show the impact of farm trespass on productivity: 40 per cent of respondents who reported experiencing farm trespass noted a change in sow behaviour and productivity. Trespass can interrupt feed times or generally stress the sows, leading in some cases to piglet deaths. Complaints against farming operations also have implications on productivity. Complaints that escalate can force

farmers to operate outside of best practice or limit a farmer's ability to innovate and grow their business. This is in addition to the lost farming time and the cost of hiring expensive lawyers to defend themselves in court proceedings—which would be unnecessary if there were no home invasions or no trespass on farming properties.

For example, some poultry farmers in western Sydney are forced to operate under curfews, which stops them from transporting hens in hours recommended by industry to protect the welfare of the hens. Gas guns are also subject to noise complaints, despite being an innovative tool to protect the productivity of vineyards. Dairy farmers are being told to keep their cows quiet and pig farmers are being told to stop their pigs from smelling. The bill will protect farmers against legal action for common law nuisance and by requiring a court to consider other options before it orders farming activities to cease. We know that the impact of land use conflict is also a contributing factor to inhibiting farmers from increasing their productivity and carrying out their activities.

The member for Tweed mentioned the cane industry, which is also a large industry in my electorate. There are many people, often from the city, who love the cane farms. They love the cane fires when they travel through the electorate on their holidays. The cane fires are magnificent at night. The rural activity with cane paddocks—and the quiet—impresses a lot of visitors to our area and they want to come back to live there. When they do, the first time there is a cane fire and there is cane trash on their washing, on their car or in their pool the first thing they try to do is to close down the cane industry. That is something that we will deal with. Councils are already dealing with that in their current planning legislation, but it needs to be strengthened. Our further legislation to protect the right to farm will strengthen those measures to protect farmers in those planning instances.

Trespass and nuisance complaints have real impacts on agriculture, and agriculture is worth protecting. That is why I support the bill. New South Wales is an agricultural powerhouse. Without New South Wales, agriculture all over Australia suffers. New South Wales agriculture produced approximately \$13.4 billion in farmgate output in 2017-18, or about 23 per cent of national farmgate output. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics data for 2015-16, New South Wales produces 32 per cent of Australia's total egg production, 29 per cent of wool, 40 per cent of lucerne, 38 per cent of macadamias, 29 per cent of poultry, 51 per cent of cut turf, 48 per cent of maize for grain and 24 per cent of mushrooms.

As we saw earlier this year, the tactics of protesters who trespass are becoming more aggressive and radical. This kind of unlawful entry brings about a range of risks to production and particularly to biosecurity. Biosecurity is at the heart of a strong primary industry sector. Our world-class biosecurity system supports farmers in producing high-quality food and fibre, contributes to the reputation of New South Wales in agriculture and helps secure market access. The Government recognises the risk of trespass to biosecurity and ultimately our economy. That is why the Government acted earlier this year and introduced the Biosecurity Amendment (Biosecurity Management Plans) Regulation 2019. This amendment introduced tough new penalties for individuals who enter farms and fail to comply with biosecurity management plans.

With this bill we are taking strong and decisive action to deter people from illegally entering farming properties or from making trivial complaints against our farmers. We need to ensure our farmers are able to feel safe in their own homes. We will achieve this by increasing penalties for trespass and ensuring the legislation is able to respond to the various risks caused by farm trespass. The bill acknowledges that New South Wales needs a strong primary industry sector. We need to ensure that our farmers are able to do what they do best without fear of being reprimanded for their legitimate operations.

The bill will support farmers to get on with the job by giving them a legal defence against litigated nuisance complaints. We need to send a message that the agricultural industry has a right to farm in this State and is not going anywhere. I encourage all members to support the bill. If those opposite do not want to support the bill I suggest that they do not go to Cafe Quorum, the Members' Dining Room, or the Strangers' Dining Room for lunch today, tomorrow or the next day because at the end of the day that is what our farmers are doing—they are producing the food and fibre that we need. And I am speaking through the Chair but I am looking at you, if that is okay. I can do two things at once.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** No, not really.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** No, of course it is not. Thank you for that interjection. I really should not look over there, to be quite honest, because it is disappointing to think that Labor, whilst it supports the bill, still supports the protesters that the bill is all about. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (11:13):** As the member for Orange I lead on behalf of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party to contribute to debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. From the outset I indicate that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party will be supporting the bill. Any bill that further protects the rights and liberties of farmers to run their businesses free from unlawful interference will have our support. I note

amendments will be moved in the other place by my colleague the Hon. Robert Borsak to further strengthen these laws, taking into account the intrinsic nature and the unfortunate increasing prevalence and devastating physical, social and emotional effects these crimes have on farmers, their families, their livelihoods and their communities. I will refer to these amendments later in my contribution.

Farming in New South Wales is big business. Data from 2017-18 shows the export of primary industry products is valued at nearly \$5.5 billion, 11 per cent of New South Wales total exports and \$13 billion to the revenue of this State, and employs thousands of people directly and indirectly. It is clear this is an industry that must be protected and encouraged by properly considered and appropriate legislation. The agricultural sector and the farming industry must not be allowed to be discouraged or dissuaded by the increasing threat of animal activists who display serious criminal behaviour in terrorising farmers and their families.

I thank the Minister for bringing the bill to this place. Had it not been for the continued pressure and the increasing influence and political presence of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party the bill may have never seen the light of day. The House should note as a matter of fact that it was my upper House colleague the Hon. Robert Borsak who initiated and chaired the Legislative Council Select Committee on Landowner Protection from Unauthorised Filming or Surveillance referred to in the Minister's second reading speech. On 8 March 2018 the Hon. Robert Borsak also introduced the Animal Protection and Crimes Legislation Amendment (Reporting Animal Cruelty and Protection of Animal Enterprises) Bill 2018. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has long called for and been on the public record for tougher legislation to address this issue.

I believe there are sensible, practical amendments that should be ventilated and considered during this debate. Often it is not what is in a bill that is of concern but what is not. Sadly the bill misses the mark on several opportunities to properly bolster this legislation. The first concern I have is about schedule 2 to the bill on the amendment to the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901. The Act can be described as summary in nature by virtue of the minor penalties provided and the jurisdiction that deals with them. There is no provision of election. There is a limited period of statutory limitations permissible by law for prosecutions to be laid under the Act. It is for those reasons they are generally considered minor by the police and the courts. The short title of offences presently covered under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act include:

- 4 Unlawful entry on inclosed lands
- 4AA Unlawful re-entry on inclosed lands
- 4A Offensive conduct while on inclosed lands
- 4B Aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands
- 5 Penalty on leaving gate open
- 6 Offender may be apprehended
- 7 Owner may destroy goats
- 8 Penalties
- 9 Limitation of civil action

There is a two-month statute of limitations on civil action. It also includes:

- 10 Penalty notices

These are determined by the Fines Act 1996. And finally:

- 11 Regulations

Only 11 sections are presently in the Inclosed Lands Protection Act and all those offences are presently dealt with by fine-only penalties. It would be more appropriate to amend the Crimes Act 1900 and make those new offences criminal offences. The Crimes Act 1900 deals with offences for housebreaking and home invasion, which is what the Minister refers to in his second reading speech. In comparison it provides much tougher penalties. Why should farmers be treated as second-class or lesser just because they live on a farm? Why should the penalties be any less? After all, the Minister stated in his second reading speech:

We would not accept people taking it upon themselves to stage home invasions in a residential context ... We will not let a different standard be applied to farmers just because they are farmers.

But having those offences incorporated under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act allows a different standard to be applied, a much lesser standard. There is an old common law quote that was established in 1628 by Sir Edward Coke, which is often referred to in legal texts and case law on trespass. Coke stated:

For a man's house is his castle ... and each man's home is his safest refuge.

Surely if the Government and the Minister are serious about protecting farmers and punishing criminals who trespass and terrorise our farming families then the penalties need to be much stiffer and incorporated into the Criminal Code. The Crimes Act allows for tougher penalties, matters to be determined upon indictment, bail provisions and a longer statute of limitations, and would allow far greater scope for offenders to be appropriately punished. If my 22 years of experience in the police force is anything to go by, it is also the first Act that police resort to when initiating or looking at proceedings against an offender. Farmers are often geographically isolated, with the nearest police sometimes being many kilometres and long distances away. Along with communication blackspots, they are often vulnerable due to this isolation.

I can share with the House an incident that occurred to a close friend of mine, a farmer who owns a 7,000-acre farming property one hour south of Bathurst. The rear boundary of the property is 16 kilometres from the homestead on hilly tableland country. Over the course of several years he was repeatedly the victim of rural crime, which cost him thousands upon thousands of dollars—stock theft, trespass, malicious damage and illegal poaching, to name a few. He installed motion cameras and made numerous police reports of this activity. He suspected he knew who was committing those offences, but to this day he has had no direct proof.

Whilst he was doing the rounds checking on his lambing sheep, he saw the offender stealing sheep from his property. Finally catching the offender in the act, he confronted the thief. The offender rammed his motor vehicle into the quad bike my friend was riding, forcing him into a large patch of blackberries. The thief then jumped out of his vehicle and, arming himself, repeatedly tried to stab the farmer with a large knife, approximately 30-centimetres long, narrowly missing striking him in the stomach and chest area. Fortunately the farmer was able to avoid several lunges at him that would likely have been fatal. The offender then got into his vehicle and drove off.

My friend was forced to drive his now broken and damaged quad bike, limping into the local village general store several kilometres away so that he could use a public pay phone to call police. Due to mobile blackspots he was unable to use his mobile telephone. The offender was later apprehended by police and charged, and bail was refused. He had a personal violence order placed upon him to keep him many kilometres away from the property. The Inclosed Lands Protection Act does not have this provision. The experience left my farmer mate an emotional wreck, severely shaken up and fearful for himself and his family.

As he said to me, "Had he stabbed me, no-one knew where I was. I would have bled to death." Sadly this is just one case in many that can and do occur to our farmers. That is the reason those offences must be in the Crimes Act, so that, if appropriate, bail can be refused or granted on strict conditions, police can apply for a personal violence order on behalf of the farmer and significant penalties imposed. A potential two or three years imprisonment under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act simply does not cut it. A short term of imprisonment is not a significant deterrent.

Some of the amendments that will be moved in the other place by my colleague the Hon. Robert Borsak relate specifically to amendments to the Crimes Act 1900, amendments to the definition in the Right to Farm Bill, including in proposed section 4C by including "commission or fund aggravated unlawful entry", along with an amendment for a new aggravated offence that whoever in the course of a violation of any subsection proposed in the changes to the Crimes Act causing serious bodily harm to another be liable to imprisonment for 10 years, or in the event of causing death of an individual shall be subject to life imprisonment. [*Extension of time*]

If we as a Parliament are serious about this legislation and our intent is to protect farmers and their families on their own properties doing what common law has allowed them to do for thousands of years—that is, farm and earn a living—then we as a Parliament and the Minister as the responsible person with carriage of this bill must enact legislation that is appropriate, takes into account the objective seriousness and criminality of the offending behaviour and provides a legislative framework to ensure the protection and welfare of farmers, whilst punishing and deterring criminals. The law must have some real teeth, not smack an offender on the cheek with a wet lettuce leaf.

The Crimes Act presently includes offences for housebreaking, home invasions, entering a dwelling and committing a serious indictable offence as well as aggravated offence and special circumstances of aggravation that have far greater penalties attached than what is proposed in this bill. For example, section 111, "Entering dwelling-house", carries a penalty of 10 years imprisonment; aggravated offence is 14 years imprisonment; and specially aggravated offence is 20 years imprisonment. Section 112, breaking into a house, carries a penalty of 14 years imprisonment; aggravated offence is 20 years imprisonment; and specially aggravated offence is 25 years imprisonment. Section 113, breaking into a house with intent to commit a serious indictable offence carries a penalty of 10 years imprisonment; aggravated offence is 14 years imprisonment; and specially aggravated offence is 20 years imprisonment.

Those offences are indictable with no statute of limitations and can be dealt with on indictment to a higher jurisdiction—that is, the District Court—if an election is made. For those reasons this legislation should be encompassed into the Crimes Act not the Inclosed Lands Protection Act. This has nothing to do with a right to protest. Of course in a democracy a right to peaceful, orderly civil protest should exist but that right does not override the civic responsibilities of all of us and give us the green light to perform criminal acts under the quasi excuse of freedom of speech or a right to protest by invading farmers' properties. Once that protest involves trespassing or any other criminal offence then it negates any notion of lawfulness.

The other issue I have is that there is nothing in the bill addressing the use of drones being flown over farmers' properties in an attempt to gain so-called evidence. The legislature should really consider that issue. Most farmers I know certainly do not appreciate someone flying over their properties capturing imagery under the guise of some type of evidence-gathering exercise by zealots. The bill is silent on this. It is unclear in the bill whether there is any protection of businesses such as butchers, abattoirs, restaurants, pet shops, stock drivers and saleyards that may also be exposed to this type of action and unlawful protest. Ultimately we must all remember this: Farm security is food security and food security is national security. I will support the bill but note that our party will be making amendments in the other place to make this legislation better and stronger. I ask the Minister to consider those amendments in the other place to further strengthen these laws and provide adequate and appropriate protection for our farmers and farm-related businesses.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (11:25):** It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I thank The Nationals agriculture Minister, Adam Marshall, for bringing this legislation to the House. The legislation does not preclude the use of the Crimes Act. This is another string in the bow of the police. When police go to any crime scene they can look at a number of Acts and decide which Act the actions fall under. If there is a need for sections within the Crimes Act to be used, the police can use that Act, but the Right to Farm Bill 2019 gives the police another option. The tactics used by animal rights groups that trespass on farms are becoming more organised and aggressive, and trespass is happening on a larger scale. Those animal rights groups are not protesters, they are criminals. It is clear to me that the existing penalties for trespass simply do not deter those criminals from breaking the law.

Take the actions of Aussie Farms, for instance. This is a website set up for the express purpose of collecting and dispersing farmers' personal details, making it a one-stop shop for would-be trespassers to identify their next target. This type of aggravated trespass, where hundreds of people can show up to a farming property in the middle of the night and terrify farming families, including children, is not on. This is a criminal enterprise. I fully support the right of those people to protest against things they do not agree with—that is not in doubt—but the right to protest does not give people the right to trespass on private property, to steal stock or to shut down someone else's business.

This Government is committed to defending farmers and their right to farm. That is why this Government is amending the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to increase penalties for trespass and introduce new offences to respond to the new forms of trespass we are seeing on farming properties. This bill more than doubles the maximum financial penalty for aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands from \$5,500 to \$13,200. This will apply to all inclosed lands, whether it occurs in an agricultural setting or not. The bill also introduces a maximum imprisonment term of 12 months for this offence, which better reflects the seriousness of this offence. Until now New South Wales was the only State that did not have an imprisonment term for trespass. The bill brings New South Wales in line with other jurisdictions.

Other important features of the bill include introducing new aggravating factors for the offence of aggravated unlawful entry, further increasing the penalty for this offence in certain situations and the new offence of damaging property in the process of unlawful entry will now be considered as an aggravating factor. A second new aggravating factor relates to wilfully or negligently releasing stock in the process of trespass, reflecting the risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and public safety that can result from stock being let out. These are all actions of criminals. This change will give the courts the flexibility to hand down financial penalties and/or imprisonment sentences that are proportionate to the damage caused to property or by releasing stock. For similar reasons we are increasing the penalty for leaving a gate open from \$220 to \$1,650 and clarifying the definition of a "gate" to ensure that leaving open other forms of enclosure on rural properties are covered, such as leaving open a slip panel, pulling down a fence or obstructing a cattle or sheep grid.

Additionally, this bill introduces a new higher penalty for aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands when that unlawful entry is committed as part of a group of three or more. At a penalty of \$22,000 or three years imprisonment, or both, it is significantly higher than the penalty for a standard aggravated offence. New South Wales will be the first jurisdiction to introduce an aggravated offence of this type and distinguish between trespass committed by an individual and trespass committed by a group of people. A \$22,000 fine is the highest for



trespass-related offences that applies in any other jurisdiction. This better reflects the heightened risks caused by trespass as part of a group—risks to safety, biosecurity and animal welfare.

The Government also is increasing the penalty for aggravated trespass when the offence does anything that gives rise to a serious risk to safety. The bill proposes to increase the maximum fine to \$22,000 and three years imprisonment—the same penalty as for trespass in a group. Farms are dangerous places as it is, let alone when trespassers are recklessly running around at night without anyone's knowledge or permission and/or tampering with heavy machinery to interrupt business operations. The increased penalty recognises that trespassers interfering with machinery or vehicles can create serious risks to their own safety and to that of farmers or farm workers who may not know or realise that something has been interfered with.

As the events of April 2019 showed us, the existing penalties were simply not effective in deterring people from breaking the law and trespassing on properties. People are increasingly trespassing under the auspices of well-funded organisations. But there is currently no penalty under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 for directing or inciting people to unlawfully enter inclosed lands. This bill closes a gap in the existing legislation by introducing a new offence that prohibits a person from inciting, directing, counselling, inducing or procuring the commission of the offence of aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands by another person. The penalty for this offence is \$11,000, or 12 months imprisonment, or both. These are significant increases to financial penalties but they are well and truly justified and proportionate. The existing penalties simply do not deter would-be trespassers.

In particular, when people have been arrested, convicted and fined for committing trespass offences, we have seen the rise in crowdfunding to offset legal fees and fines. For the information of those who may not be familiar with it, crowdfunding is where people raise money from a large number of people who each contribute a small amount. Crowdfunding usually occurs through the internet. Animal activists have been particularly savvy in their use of crowdfunding, raising thousands of dollars from people all over the world to pay the fines that courts have imposed for trespassing. When fines issued by a New South Wales court can effectively be paid by a large number of small donations from people all across the world, they lose their deterrent effect. This is why the maximum financial penalties simply must be increased and jail time added because, as we know, you cannot crowdfund a prison sentence.

I am confident that this bill is closing many gaps in the existing legislation and will allow authorities to better respond to the changing characteristics of trespass that are occurring on farming properties. With this bill New South Wales will be the first State to respond to cases of on-farm trespass. New South Wales has an opportunity to set an example and show other jurisdictions what an effective legislative framework looks like to manage aggressive forms of trespass. As I said, this bill addresses criminal activities. I refer to what I said earlier about leaving gates open to allow stock to escape. As a former police officer, I went to the Pacific Highway several times as a result of people leaving farm gates open and allowing stock to wander onto the highway.

Members can imagine the danger when motorists travelling at 110 kilometres an hour encounter farm animals. Similarly, people left farm gates open along some rural roads and stock escaped and unsuspecting motorists had to contend with the danger of stock jumping in front of their car. I attended some very serious accidents on the Pacific Highway involving escaped horses and they truly were a great mess. That is what can happen when people leave gates open and leave the slide panels down. In my electorate there are dairy farms, poultry farms, beef farms and abattoirs. Those farmers and business people do not need the threat of criminals, protesters or ratbags—call them what you like—trespassing and causing issues at their premises. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (11:35):** My contribution to debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019 will be brief, yet it is necessary. I grew up in the Riverina, so I do not want to hear Government members complain that this is a speech being given by someone who does not know anything about farm life or the realities of managing livestock on the land. I will get that out of the way quickly because it is all too easy for The Nationals to bleat and moan about Labor not knowing anything of the bush while they collect their travel allowances to subsidise their inner-city accommodation. I will not be lectured by them.

However, elements of this bill are reminiscent of a bill that was brought to this place in 2016 by the then Baird Government, the Inclosed Lands, Crimes and Law Enforcement Legislation Amendment (Interference) Bill, which is now an Act in New South Wales. This Government has a long history of interfering in the democratic right to protest against one thing or another. On the one hand the Liberals, I imagine, are the ones responsible for the legislation which protects the mining activity of their mates in big business and makes criminals of peaceful protesters like the Knitting Nanas. The Nationals, on the other hand, are responsible for the emotive, sensationalist and provocative bills in this place that blow out of all proportion one issue or another. The Nationals do that not because there is some endemic need or some catastrophic social ill underway that they seek to fix; indeed, if that were the case they would turn up here to legislate against their own incompetence. They would do something

about the dry rivers and empty dams in this State instead of providing political cover for the Liberal Party to run roughshod over farmers and industry in rural New South Wales.

I would far rather hear The Nationals' ideas about building back up our inland towns and cities or building public transport infrastructure in the Central West or the Southern Tablelands or improving health and education outcomes for young people who live beyond the reaches of Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong. Instead, we see them introducing confused, poorly drafted and ineffective legislation like this bill, which actually solves none of the existing problems but which they hope—beyond their emotive posturing in their brand-new R. M. Williams boots and their khaki trousers that still have the creases in them from Myer on Pitt Street—will be received by the farming community as some kind of win for the agriculture sector.

This legislation does not capture the primary concerns of a majority of farmers that regional planning legislation is inadequate and does not protect against the encroachment of urban development on prime agricultural land. That is the fact. Likewise, when I last drove along the New England Highway the greatest issue of concern seemed to be from farmers who were protesting and erecting signage against the destruction of their agricultural land by mining interests. There is nothing in this bill that protects the right to farm of those on the land whose farms are situated in mining exploration areas or in the coal seam gas fields of the New England region.

I know who this Government will side with in a fight between small business owners on the land and the big mining companies. I suspect The Nationals know too that farmers and rural communities do not actually stand a chance in the Cabinet room against the New South Wales Liberals and their business agenda. In the same vein, the bill does nothing to upset the property developer lobby to whom this Government is absolutely captive. There is nothing in this bill that protects the right to farm for those on the land who see urban and regional sprawl threatening the viability of their farms.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The member for Ku-ring-gai will come to order.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE:** Labor will not oppose this bill in the lower House but it will seek to move amendments in the upper House, where the numbers are tighter and the IQs of The Nationals members are higher. The Labor Party is committed to animal welfare and the prevention of cruelty to animals. The Nationals should be committed to those principles and in fact I know that most farmers are. There is a lot to do to fix the bill but my greatest concern, beyond the general dishonesty and political chicanery of The Nationals, is that yet again there is a push to limit the democratic freedom of people to protest. I must put my concerns in that respect on record.

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (11:40):** I support the Right to Farm Bill 2019. My electorate of Wollondilly is on Sydney's doorstep and has poultry farms, meatworks, market gardens, equine stud farms and other agricultural and farming activities. Being so close to the city, our farms are at easy striking range for the inner-city activists from the electorates of Balmain, Summer Hill, Newtown—

**Mr Alister Henskens:** And Blue Mountains.

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH:** —and Blue Mountains and other alternative-lifestyle dwellers in close proximity to the city. We are the first line of defence against those activists, who are no doubt consuming products provided by my electorate. Farms in Wollondilly are under enough strain in the current conditions without having to worry about activists destroying their livelihoods and properties, not to mention the biosecurity issues that are a by-product of their activities. Wollondilly is home to a very large poultry processing plant, which provides a large percentage of the State's poultry. The threat to that plant needs to be considered and the industry needs to be protected. There have been attacks by activists on poultry farms in the Wollondilly shire and more recently activists were present at the local meat processing works.

Animal rights groups that trespass on farms are becoming more organised, their tactics are becoming more aggressive and their activities are happening on a larger scale. It is clear to me that the existing penalties for trespass simply do not deter those people from breaking the law. As a member said earlier, take the actions of Aussie Farms, for instance. That website was set up for the express purpose of collecting and dispersing farmers' personal details, making it a one-stop shop for would-be trespassers to identify their next target. That is disgraceful. Those types of trespass, where hundreds of people can show up on a farming property in the middle of the night and terrify farming families, including children, are just not on.

I fully support the democratic right of people to protest, but a right to protest does not give people the right to trespass on private property, to steal stock or to shut down someone else's business and pose a biosecurity threat. The Government is committed to defending farmers and their right to farm. That is why the Government is amending the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to increase penalties for trespass and introduce new offences to respond to the new forms of trespass that we are seeing on farming properties. The bill more than doubles the

maximum financial penalty for aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands from \$5,500 to \$13,200. This will apply to all inclosed lands, whether in an agricultural setting or not. The bill also introduces a maximum imprisonment term of 12 months, which better reflects the seriousness of the offence.

Until now New South Wales was the only State that did not have an imprisonment term for trespass. The bill brings New South Wales in line with other jurisdictions. Other important features of the bill include introducing new aggravating factors for the offence of aggravated unlawful entry, further increases to the penalty for that offence in certain situations and a new offence. Damaging property in the process of unlawful entry will now be considered an aggravating factor. A second new aggravating factor relates to wilfully or negligently releasing stock in the process of trespass, reflecting the risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and public safety that can result from stock being let out. This change will give the courts the flexibility to hand down financial penalties or imprisonment sentences that are proportionate to the damage caused to property or caused by the release of stock.

For similar reasons, we are increasing the penalty for leaving a gate open from \$220 to \$1,650 and clarifying the definition of "gate" to ensure that leaving open other forms of enclosure on rural properties are covered, such as leaving open a slip panel, pulling down a fence or obstructing a cattle or sheep grid. Additionally, the bill introduces a new higher penalty for aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands when that unlawful entry is committed as part of a group of three or more. The penalty is significantly higher than the standard aggravated offence at \$22,000, three years imprisonment, or both. New South Wales will be the first jurisdiction to introduce an aggravated offence of this type and distinguish between trespass committed by an individual and trespass committed by a group of people.

The \$22,000 monetary fine is the highest for trespass-related offences of any jurisdiction. It better reflects the heightened risks caused by trespass as part of a group—risks to safety, biosecurity and animal welfare. We are also increasing the penalty for aggravated trespass when the offence does anything that gives rise to a serious risk to safety. The bill proposes to increase the maximum fine up \$22,000 and three years imprisonment—the same penalty as for trespass in a group. Farms are dangerous places as it is—I had an uncle who died on a farm—let alone when trespassers are recklessly running around at night without anyone's knowledge or permission and tampering with heavy machinery to interrupt business operations. The increase recognises that trespassers interfering with machinery or vehicles can create serious risks to their own safety and to that of farmers or farm workers who may not know or realise that something has been interfered with.

As the events of April 2019 showed, the existing penalties were simply not effective in deterring people from breaking the law and trespassing on properties. People are increasingly trespassing under the auspices of well-funded organisations, but there is currently no penalty under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 for directing or inciting people to unlawfully enter inclosed lands. The bill closes a gap in the existing legislation by introducing a new offence that prohibits a person from inciting, directing, counselling, inducing or procuring the commission of the offence of aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands by another person. The penalty for this offence is \$11,000, 12 months imprisonment, or both. These are significant increases to financial penalties but they are well and truly justified.

The existing penalties simply do not deter would-be trespassers. In particular, when people have been arrested, convicted and fined for committing trespass offences we have seen a rise in crowdfunding to offset their legal fines. For members who may not be familiar, crowdfunding is when people raise money from a large number of people who each contribute a small amount. Crowdfunding usually occurs through the internet or social media. Animal activists have been particularly savvy in their use of crowdfunding, raising thousands of dollars from people all over the world to pay the fines that courts have imposed for trespassing. When fines issued by a New South Wales court can effectively be paid by a large number of small donations from people across the world they lose their deterrent effect. That is why the maximum financial penalties simply must be increased and jail time added. As we know, we cannot crowdfund a prison sentence.

I am confident that the bill closes many gaps in the existing legislation and will allow authorities to better respond to the changing characteristics of trespass that we see occurring on farming properties. With this bill New South Wales will be the first State to respond to cases of on-farm trespass. New South Wales has an opportunity to set an example and show other jurisdictions what an effective legislative framework looks like to manage aggressive forms of trespass. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (11:48):** The Right to Farm Bill 2019 attempts to lay out a framework to protect farmers from threats to their operations and focuses on dealing with nuisance complaints, activists' accessing inclosed farmlands and court injunctions on farming activities. Let us be clear: The bill is about trying to fulfil an election promise of The Nationals. However, it falls well short of its intended purpose and fails to meaningfully deal with the greatest threats to farming in New South Wales, which are land-use changes and the encroachment of urban sprawl. This bill tries to legislate arrogant promises that were desperately made on the fly

in regional electorates across New South Wales during an election campaign. The reality is that laws based on hubris do not work. The Nationals members love to talk up the divides between the city and the country, but their bluster does us all a great disservice.

Residents in my community in the inner west of Sydney understand the pressures faced by our farmers and regional communities. Local schools in my electorate have hosted gold coin and "Fiver for a Farmer" fundraisers, local pubs have thrown "Parma for a Farmer" events, and a Marrickville refrigerator company recently helped transport food donated to Drought Angels to drought-affected communities. As well as the human compassion and concerns we have for farmers and their families who are doing it tough throughout the worst drought on record, we also understand the risks to our State's economy and to food security. As our population continues to rapidly grow, so too does the pressure on New South Wales farmers to produce enough food to feed us all.

Researchers from the University of Technology Sydney [UTS] Institute for Sustainable Futures have shown that the capacity of farms on the outskirts of Sydney—known as peri-urban farms—to produce our city's food is dwindling. In 2011 peri-urban farms supplied 20 per cent of Sydney's food supply. On current trends they will produce only 6 per cent of Sydney's fresh food by 2031. This decimation of peri-urban farming poses real risks to Sydney's food security. Without that source of food we will increase food miles. Food will have to travel further to get to our tables, increasing our emissions. Also, we cannot sustain ourselves. If supply routes to the city were cut off by bushfire or other means, Sydney would only have enough food for two days. Despite what The Nationals members will tell you, the greatest risk to our farmers is not "vegan activists" but rather the encroachment of urban sprawl onto prime agricultural land. We are quite literally paving over our food bowl.

The UTS researchers laid out a series of measures to remedy the problem and better protect farmers. They highlighted four needs: better commercial conditions; a fair price for commodities; land security; and support from other residents. The bill is silent on the first three points. If this bill was serious about enshrining the "right to farm" it would address land security, amongst other issues. However, it does attempt to find a middle ground in the fourth area by establishing a so-called nuisance shield to protect farmers from resident complaints. We are subdividing farms at an alarming rate. As residents move into their shiny new homes they often find that they do not like living next to farms and they make complaints to their local councils about noises, smells and other by-products of agriculture. Those councils then apply residential noise regulations that often cause substantial disruptions to farming businesses, even when the farms have been there for generations.

It is a common story that many inner west industrial businesses and pubs have also faced as shiny new developments have sprung up next door. There are examples where single resident complaints have shut down live music at pubs or activities at industrial complexes that have been in operation for decades if not longer. In those scenarios the attempt in the bill to protect farmers from nuisance complaints is a good thing. However, there is another scenario that deserves consideration: the case of neighbours who have happily coexisted with neighbouring farms for decades, only to face increased health or environmental impacts as more intensive agricultural practices are taken up.

For example, in July this year a macadamia farm in the Northern Rivers was fined following a neighbour's complaint that a chemical spray was improperly used, causing chemical drift onto neighbouring properties. As a result of the complaint, the farming business was fined \$1,000 for failing to keep accurate logs, which would have been the only way to prove or disprove whether the chemical drift occurred in the circumstances, and it was issued with a further caution for not holding a licence to undertake ground applicator work. When issued the warning about the secondary offence, the farmer admitted that he did not know a licence was required. The complaint did not shut down the business or place undue pressure on the farmer. In fact, it led to better farm practices. Whilst I support the need to protect farmers against nuisance complaints, we have to get the balance right and ensure that neighbouring residents are also protected from adverse impacts as agricultural practices intensify on our shrinking farmland.

I now turn to the aspects of the bill that seek to amend the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901. Those changes expose the bill for the Nationals vote-buying exercise that it is. The Nationals scaremongering on animal rights "vegan protesters" is utter nonsense. Every resident in New South Wales has a democratic right to protest. It is one of our fundamental civil liberties, a point that the Minister himself made in his second reading speech. I am in no way a vegan and am a committed lover of meat—something I may admit to my own detriment as an inner westie. But I do understand the concerns raised by many in my community and across New South Wales about animal rights and the growth of industrial and factory farming. I understand the community's horror at videos of livestock crammed into sweltering ships in the live export trade and their frustration at practices that intensify the cycle of impregnation and milking in the dairy industry.

I understand the anger people feel when they learn about atrocious conditions on poultry farms, including battery cages, chick-shredding and beak-clipping. I understand their rage when they see videos of farrowing crates

or other abuses in intensive piggeries. However, I note that most of the shocking footage we have seen in some factory farms has been exposed by farm workers, not vegan activists.

The vast majority of people who care about animal rights, including me, share values of compassion and fairness, and they have every right to express those values. On the whole, those activists protest peacefully. I do not support some of the tactics employed by more extreme animal rights activists, but I agree that we cannot continue to allow the worst atrocities of factory farming to persist unabated. We need comprehensive laws to improve the standards by which farm animals live and die. That work has to be done by governments that show leadership in the interests of animal welfare. I note that the New South Wales Government was criticised and accused of colluding with the poultry industry to stymie more substantive reform on battery hens when the standards were up for public comment in 2017.

The work of improving standards must also be done by consumers. I note the important work of CHOICE in my electorate. Its "Give a Cluck" campaign went a long way to increase public awareness of free-range egg standards. Finally, the work of improving animal standards must also happen in the community, and I acknowledge the important work of the many organisations, activists and community members who rightly will not stand for substandard practices that lead to animal suffering and misery. [*Extension of time*]

This Government—and The Nationals in particular—has decided that animal rights activists are the problem, but this bill raises significant questions about the rights of all people to protest in New South Wales. In 2016 the Government wound back the rights of environmental protesters at mining sites. Now it is again expanding the remit of the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to prohibit protest, this time targeting animal rights activists. However, the bill has been drafted in such a way that it is unclear who else will be affected. In casting such a wide net, will the bill impact on the rights of the Knitting Nannas Against Gas and Greed to protest against coal seam gas activities?

Will it impact on protesters concerned about logging or on those who want to raise their voices against this Government's plans to sell off the Forestry Corporation? Will it affect protesters against coalmines or fracking, or even farmers themselves who are sick of seeing the loss of prime agricultural land to the minerals industry? Will it impact on farming communities who want to protest the onslaught of residential development on our farmlands? Will it impact on the rights of union organisers seeking to assist workers on the job in farming? The Minister acknowledged that some of the most dangerous work occurring in our State at the moment is on farms.

There can be no doubt that by tinkering with the Inclosed Lands Act of 1901 the National Party is opening a can of worms and it does not know the consequences. To top it off the bill increases the penalty of trespass to \$22,000 and the penalty for "aggravated unlawful entry in inclosed lands" from \$5,500 to \$22,000, three years imprisonment, or both. Those penalties are completely disproportionate and an utter disgrace. They are designed to intimidate and bully not only animal activists, but all protesters in New South Wales. The bill does not protect the rights of citizens to peacefully protest and work towards balance. The Nationals have come into this place and have demonised activists as a way to appeal to their political base. That is absolutely craven and it is an ill-advised, petty, political stunt.

I note that the bill comes at the same time as the meeting of The Nationals Federal Council—only a fortnight ago—when it was decided that cracking down on almond and soy milk being called "milk" was a national priority. The drought, climate change, biodiversity loss, our stalling economy, water or The Nationals' decimation of our river systems were not given priority—but almond milk was. This bill is a political stunt that tries to blame farmers' problems on protesters and activists. Given its track record, I say that the biggest threat to farming communities is the leadership of The Nationals under John Barilaro. The bill is not a law enshrining the right to farm because it does not address the loss of prime agricultural land to residential development, to mining or other land uses. It does not work to protect farmers who are protesting the expansion of fracking or mining on their land or the loss of their land.

The bill does not work to better balance the New South Wales planning system, which deprioritises agricultural land and views it merely as blank space ripe for development. The bill does not work to raise the price of commodities for agricultural products or even institute stricter procurement regulations within Government to supercharge local producers—an issue I hear about regularly in my community. It does not seek to bring those concerned with animal welfare to the table in a respectful debate so that we can strike a better deal. It does none of these things. In fact it is just more of the same from The Nationals and John Barilaro. The bill is poorly drafted and is a political stunt. It is a good thing that it has been referred to an upper House committee inquiry because there are many questions that remain unanswered about its implications.

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (12:00):** I am proud to represent a Government that—for the first time—has introduced for endorsement by this Parliament a bill that recognises the rights of a farmer to farm their land, to grow food and fibre to feed and clothe the people of this State, our nation and, increasingly, the

world. It is a bill that also delivers on a commitment this Government made to our State's farmers in the lead-up to the recent March election. I am dumbfounded to think that those on the other side consider the bill is a bad thing and that it is unbelievable we are delivering on our commitments. We are a Government that supports our agricultural communities and protects the rights of farmers.

The Right to Farm Bill 2019 amends the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 and introduces a new Act, the Right to Farm Act 2019 known as "nuisance shield" legislation. This Government is committed to addressing all of the risks posed by unsafe protest activities on farms including risks to farmers, their businesses, their animals, protesters and the public. It is a Government priority to protect our farmers from illegal activities on their farms and it is in our best interests to protect, enable, support and expand the work of farmers across the State. I proudly represent a regional electorate where agriculture plays an important role in our local economy, an economy that drives and supports our local small businesses and creates employment for our people.

Recently at an abattoir situated in my electorate nine activists were arrested after chaining themselves to equipment in the production line. Significant resources of this State were employed to remove, charge and process the perpetrators of these unlawful activities. Police executed their arrest under risky and dangerous conditions. Those activities have the potential to cause serious safety concerns for all involved. Unlawful disruption by protesters is also very costly for farms and businesses alike. Protesters have developed sophisticated tools such as lock-on devices that require rescue squad-type capability to remove them from plant or equipment—without harming the people or equipment involved.

Make no mistake: On-farm animal rights groups who trespass on farms are becoming more organised and more aggressive. The groups are illegally installing recording devices, conducting mass on-farm protests, illegally removing stock, and collecting and publishing farm locations and data. These actions are often associated with online denigration, bullying, harassment and intimidation of farmers through social media. It is no wonder that this behaviour has been equated by some in the farming sector as the equivalent of domestic terrorism. Farms are some of the most dangerous workplaces in Australia. Any increase, even slight, to the known risks or any change to the integrity of equipment could be catastrophic for farmers, employees and, indeed, for the trespassers themselves.

By their very nature farms are often isolated and emergency services, such as police, have to travel large distances to attend those farms should a farm incursion occur. Some unlawful trespass activity, including a mass invasion of protesters on a farm, increases the inherent dangers to both the farmer and the protesters themselves. Farm trespass, particularly of the scale and style we have experienced recently, presents multiple risks. Those risks relate to the safety of farmers, farm workers, farming families, emergency personnel, members of the public and farm animals. It is not uncommon for fences to be cut and stock to be released onto public roads. How this is looking after animal rights is totally beyond me. It is dangerous for everyone involved and does nothing to ensure good animal welfare outcomes.

The Government fully supports the right to protest. It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that we will continue to protect. However, the right to protest does not allow, nor excuse, people breaking the law by trespassing on farms and other primary production facilities. We know that farmers cannot mitigate all risks. The very nature of what they do is sometimes subject to uncontrollable factors—which we are seeing at the moment with the drought—that neither they nor a government can control. But we can ensure they are not subject to illegal activity or threats. We do not accept people taking it upon themselves to stage home invasions in a residential context. We should not allow a different standard to be applied to farmers just because they are farmers. Often the cost of trespass is overlooked. Leaving our farmers unprotected strips them of their enthusiasm for their work and drives the next generation off farms to look for employment in other professions. The time to act on farm trespass is now.

The New South Wales Government recognises that trespassing in a large group is significantly more intimidating and compounds the risks to farming families, including children. Biosecurity risks also increase significantly as the number of trespassers rises. Group trespass therefore warrants a harsher penalty. The bill amends section 4B of the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to introduce a new penalty for aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands when the offender is accompanied by two or more persons. The maximum penalty for this conduct will be \$22,000, or three years imprisonment. It will not be necessary for either of the two persons accompanying the offender to also commit the offence of aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands for the principal offender to be liable for this higher penalty. With this bill, New South Wales will be the first State to introduce a penalty for trespass conducted in groups.

In addition to amending the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 to address trespass, the bill will introduce new legislation to help protect lawful primary producers from conflict and interference caused by neighbours and other land users. This new law, known as a nuisance shield, provides a defence to common law nuisance claims levelled at farmers for what are normal farming activities. It will also stop courts from imposing injunctions on

farmers without first considering other options. This is the first step in enshrining a farmer's right to farm their land. This legislation seeks to protect farmers by providing them with a defence against common law nuisance action. It sets out conditions a court must consider before ordering farming activities to cease based on nuisance findings related to agricultural production.

Complaints about normal and legal farming practices against primary producers occur all over this State and threaten daily operations. Those complaints are commonly around the incidentals of accepted farming practices such as noise, dust or odour, among others. These are basic realities of farming and of living near a primary production operation. It is often the convergence of agricultural and residential land use that drives conflict between landholders—that conflict of urban sprawl onto traditional agricultural land.

The realities of farming are often not well understood by those who choose to live near farms. The Right to Farm Bill 2019 is a proactive step by the Government that seeks to minimise the likelihood of complaints about normal farming practices escalating to costly litigation. It will protect farmers from having orders imposed upon them by a court finding that their completely lawful activities constitute a nuisance. Such orders could severely disrupt production or impact the viability of the business. If a nuisance is found, the court must not order that an activity be stopped if it can instead issue an order that allows the farmer time to adjust their activities to manage, modify or reduce the nuisance.

The bill introduces a new offence of inciting, directing, counselling, inducing or procuring the commission of the offence of aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands. The maximum penalty for this new offence will be \$11,000, or 12 months imprisonment. This addresses a gap in the legislation for people who incite or direct trespass, but who do not actually trespass themselves. The bill also adds two new aggravating factors for the offence of aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands in section 4B of the inclosed lands Protection Act 1901. The first will capture conduct that damages property in the course of unlawful entry on the relevant inclosed lands and could provide a new avenue to prosecute property damage when more serious property damage offences in the Crimes Act 1900 may not be suitable.

The second new aggravating factor will capture wilful or negligent release of livestock and reflects the clear risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and human safety caused by livestock being released by trespassers. For similar reasons, the bill amends section 5 of the inclosed lands Protection Act 1901 to increase the maximum penalty for the offence of leaving a gate open or interfering with a cattle grid from \$220 to \$1,650 to better reflect the range of risks that action presents if done on a farm. This is a strong and proportionate package of measures that reflects the severity of on-farm trespass and the impact it has on its victims—our hardworking farmers. If supported, the bill will better protect our State's farmers and primary production from the risks caused by aggressive on-farm trespass. It will afford the hardworking farmers of this State the protection they are entitled to and deserve.

Let us be clear: This bill is not about removing the right to protest, but the New South Wales Government will not endorse protesters breaking the law. Recent protests involving on-farm trespass have involved criminal activity. These activists are intent on shutting down entire industries, no matter the cost to people, property or production, and their tactics reflect that. Mass trespass on farms does not change consumer preferences. Intimidating farming families and scaring animals does not improve their welfare. The bill will ensure legislation is adequate, and that our farmers and their families' right to farm is protected and enshrined in law. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (12:12):** It seems that the more seats the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party wins from The Nationals, the more The Nationals try to copy our policies. Being a farmer, I have been impacted by trespass on my farm. With the Right to Farm Bill 2019 I am pleased to see that this Government is finally doing something about farm trespass after eight long years of doing nothing. It took the loss of three seats at the 2019 election to spark some action. I know farmers near Griffith whose businesses have been severely damaged by animal rights terrorists. It can be distressing for families and young children. Our farms are our places of business and often the places where we reside with our families. The people interfering with farm businesses are criminals. That is why last year the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party introduced a bill to criminalise this activity. The bill introduced by the Hon. Robert Borsak would have changed the Crimes Act to stop the disruptions to legitimate farming businesses. That is what is needed: changing the Crimes Act.

For some bizarre reason, the Liberal Party and The Nationals refused to support our bill, but have now come up with a far less effective copy—a watered-down version. The economic damage of shutting down an animal-related business can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. I know; I have seen it. Mr Marshall's proposed \$13,200 fine does not go nearly far enough. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party will seek amendments to the bill in the upper House to strengthen it and make it a far more effective deterrent. We will seek a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment, and we want all animal enterprises covered. It is not just farms targeted by criminals;

zoos, animal shelters, pet stores, circuses and butchers should be included too. They all need protection from animal rights terrorists.

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (12:14):** I support farmers' rights to farm, but the Right to Farm Bill 2019 does not quite crack it. It does not go anywhere near it. Having lived in what I would call The Nationals territory for a long time, I know that The Nationals like to posture and this bill represents some typical posturing by The Nationals. It is what is called a bad bill: poorly drafted, a mixture of things, and it does not go anywhere near what is essentially the farmers' call for the right to farm.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Things? A mixture of things.

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** Yes, things. It is indeed.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Very informative. Imagine it having things!

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The member for Ku-ring-gai will come to order.

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** Some things could be done to improve the bill. We have been informed that amendments will be moved in the other place and it will be referred to the Selection of Bills Committee. I hope that when it comes back to this place it will have been tidied up a lot. I will give a little of the background to the farmers' call for the right to farm. The basis for the demands for right to farm legislation lies in the concerns of farmers that farmland—what is defined as prime agricultural land—is being swallowed up in peri-urban areas by rapid urban expansion, particularly in some of our regional and rural centres that are experiencing significant population growth, the rise of weekend farmers or of people seeking to have lifestyles in rural and regional areas.

Inevitably, land-use conflicts have occurred in some places as a result of poor and inadequate planning legislation with local councils having to be the first line of arbitration and mediation, sometimes followed by the Land and Environment Court. If we look at the research in this area and at the reality, a lot of it has been dealt with at a local level. The calls for right to farm laws in New South Wales really began in earnest following the 2014 NSW Farmers Annual Conference. At that conference someone from Mudgee moved a motion and summarised the need for a proposed policy, stating it would lead to less friction and surprise for the people who move into an area and find themselves living beside a farm, unaware of what they might be living beside.

Sometimes this issue is raised with me as a local member. Some people will say, "I'm living in a sugarcane area," and they will talk about emissions when the sugar cane is burnt. I have said to them, "When you moved here, were you aware that you were moving into an area where there is sugar cane and that it is not all green cane with no burning?" In my experience in public life and always living locally near agricultural activities, farmers get better at practices. That is what farmers do all the time. They perfect their practices and get better at farming. Usually local councils deal with these types of issues, and it always comes down to planning and planning legislation. The whole debate around the right to farm was about making the planning system better. The issue of trespass has arisen more recently, particularly in relation to the activities of Aussie Farms. I do not support the actions of those activists and I have made that clear publicly in my electorate. But the issues that arose out of that have somehow fused into this Right to Farm Bill. I also recall the Deputy Premier strengthening the biosecurity regulatory framework.

**Mr Adam Marshall:** That was me.

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** I apologise; it was Minister Marshall. I heard Deputy Premier Barilaro posturing on it. The biosecurity regulatory framework was designed to deal with that issue, yet it is also dealt with a mixture of things in this bill. In July 2014 the NSW Farmers Association released a statement that encapsulates the concerns behind the move for the right to farm. The statement read:

At present farmers are fighting a losing battle to retain their rights to earn a living from land which borders regional cities and towns in NSW as these centers expand onto agricultural land.

It is pretty clear from NSW Farmers that the right to farm is about planning and planning laws, and related issues. Urban encroachment onto agricultural land was the driving concern for that organisation's proposal. Consequently, NSW Farmers lobbied the State Government in the lead-up to the 2015 State election to introduce legislation. In response the State Government instituted a policy. The policy on the Department of Primary Industries [DPI] website is rather complicated. It does not make clear or give expression to the concerns of farmers about a right to farm. I have read that policy in great detail. The Right to Farm Bill makes no mention of the existing policy. I thought that it was rather strange that the bill did not mention the policy that already exists, nor give any expression to it.

When I was discussing this bill with the shadow Minister I said that object (a) of the bill speaks to The Nationals' rhetoric of giving farmers the right to farm. In practice, I cannot see how it could be invoked, as to determine what is lawful requires a decision-maker. I was talking about the tort of nuisance. It is a legal given that



a tort of nuisance cannot be brought against any lawful operation in the first instance. In any case, the matter has to go before a court to determine if the activity in question is lawful or not. Having read this bill I do not see that it puts up a barrier on taking action on the tort of nuisance. I cannot see that within the bill; maybe it is there. I stand to be corrected, but I do not see it.

Object (a) seeks to prevent an action. How will the lawfulness or otherwise be determined if it cannot proceed to a court to determine the matter? Who is going to determine that it is lawful? The Minister might like to speak to that in his reply. Likewise, "negligently" is not defined in this bill. Therefore, it is open to interpretation. I have seen nuisance shield legislation in other jurisdictions—in the USA, for instance. It was challenged and did not overcome some of the common law in the way that might be intended. It is about inadequate and inefficient planning legislation.

Objects (c), (d) and (e) of the bill are essentially trespass provisions, best addressed under that trespass legislation or other legislation. I can see no definition of "agriculture". There are definitions in other Acts, particularly with respect to legislation dealing with local government, the Commonwealth Income Tax Assessment Act and other areas. When I say that is a bad bill I am talking about giving broad definitions and making the bill coexist with existing legislation. That is why the bill needs a further review in a legal sense. Another issue arises from protections of people's right to protest. I am not talking about biosecurity, but more generally—farmers, the Knitting Nannas and other people who have lawfully protested for legitimate reasons.

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (12:25):** It is with pleasure that I contribute to the second reading debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. With due respect to the member for Lismore, I suspect she received her advice from the shadow Minister, who spoke on the bill earlier this morning. That performance seemed to indicate that the Opposition would support the bill one minute then the next, would not support the bill. The member's contribution gave the clear impression that she had not read the bill. I suspect that the member for Lismore spoke in good conscience from her point of view, but has taken misleading advice because some of the things that she just mentioned are clearly listed in the bill. To give some context to my contribution I will read the objects of the bill:

- (a) to prevent an action for the tort of nuisance being brought in relation to a commercial agricultural activity where it is occurring lawfully on agricultural land,
- (b) to require a court to consider alternative orders to remedy a commercial agricultural activity that is found to constitute a nuisance rather than order the activity to cease,
- (c) to extend the circumstances of aggravation for an offence of entering inclosed lands without permission or failing to leave inclosed lands when requested to do so and to increase the maximum penalty for the aggravated offence,
- (d) to create an offence of directing, inciting, procuring or inducing the commission of the aggravated offence,
- (e) to modify offences of leaving a gate open on inclosed lands to apply the offences where the gate is removed or disabled, to specify that a gate includes a cattle grid or any moveable thing used to inclose land and to increase the maximum penalties for the offences,
- (f) to specify how proceedings for an offence under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 are to be dealt with.

It is important to understand the bill in the context of its objects because that is what we are here to debate. A number of issues were raised earlier by members opposite—for example consultation. The fact that members opposite are saying that there has been little or no consultation on this bill clearly demonstrates a complete and utter lack of understanding of the agricultural sector and rural communities, and a complete and utter lack of involvement by the shadow Minister in agricultural communities. NSW Farmers, the National Farmers' Federation and the Country Women's Association all support the bill.

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

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN:** The interjections by those opposite have reminded me of a wonderful saying, which I think is relevant. I think the shadow Minister should know that one of the best lessons you can learn in life is to master how to remain calm. The consultation process has been wide and varied, and has taken place over a long period of time. The member for Summer Hill mentioned that the Government is bringing this legislation to the Parliament because of an election commitment.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Point of order: I cannot quite hear the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture or dairy—whatever it is this week—over the noise coming from the member for Wollondilly. I ask that you call him to order.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** Before I ask the member for Upper Hunter to resume his contribution, I remind all members to maintain order in the House. I have not called the member for Wollondilly to order because I have not heard voluminous interjections from him. I am happy to do so if he is

being disorderly. I also remind the member for Maitland not to interject during the member for Upper Hunter's contribution. The member for Upper Hunter has the call.

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN:** Do not worry—the member can read it in *Hansard* tonight. The member for Summer Hill also mentioned, regarding consultation and so forth, that it was not a very well thought out bill, that the Nationals are just trying to honour an election commitment. Really? Is it a novel idea to Labor that we would want to honour our election commitments? We did make an election commitment and we make no apologies for honouring our election commitments. In fact, in our daily lives in rural New South Wales—in my electorate of Upper Hunter; in the Minister's electorate of Northern Tablelands; in the electorate of the member for Myall Lakes; in the almost second-best place to the Upper Hunter in the Southern Highlands—we talk to farmers all the time.

I do not know how many farmers there are in Ku-ring-gai but that is okay. Many other members here—representing the electorates of Dubbo, Coffs Harbour and so forth—talk to farmers all the time. For quite a number of years they have consistently expressed to us their concern on a number of issues. More recently, one of them has been urban encroachment and the nuisance claims, if you like, against their enterprises. I was on the Upper Hunter Shire Council for eight years and I was mayor for four of those. I know from my time there that one of the biggest problems that our farmers faced, from a council perspective, was "lifestylers" moving in from places like inner Sydney, even places like Summer Hill.

Those people would buy their idealistic rural lifestyle, then come in and complain about the smells of dairy, of pigs, of horses or any other activity or noise or smell—anything to do with any form of agricultural enterprise. Guess what? This would not be a surprise to you, Madam Temporary Speaker: This is what happens in rural areas. When was the last time you saw a dairy farm in Summer Hill? When was the last time you saw some form of forestry operation in Alexandria or somewhere like that? You do not, because of the population density there. It happens in rural and regional areas and people have just got to get used to it.

Other members have said that the bill is somehow not adequate to be able to deal with land-use conflicts. If those opposite had any understanding of what the planning laws are about and what they are like at a local level they would also understand that there is a thing called a local environment plan [LEP] and that councils actually control the zonings. If you want to have a certain agricultural enterprise or any other enterprise within a certain zone in your local council area and you have a problem with it, go to your council. However, when the LEP and the zones are in place, agricultural activities can occur within the particular zonings in a particular council area.

Other people do not have the right to come along and complain about the activities of that agricultural enterprise. In particular, it does not give anyone from Summer Hill or anywhere else in Sydney the right to come along and invade lawful enterprises in the agricultural sector. We hear some weasel words from those opposite, feigning some sort of concern that people should not be invaded in their homes and should feel safe on their farms because it is often their home and so on. However, never do they address how unhappy they would be were we to invade their lounge room while they were running a cottage business, for example. [*Extension of time*]

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** Order! The member for Maitland will come to order. The member for Upper Hunter will continue.

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN:** I thank the House for the extension of time. Not enough focus is put on the feigned concern that those opposite try to express when it comes to things like invading people's privacy—not only invading their privacy at home, which is often their farm, but also their legal right to farm and grow produce that feeds and clothes people. I make no apologies for fully and utterly supporting any bill that we can bring to the House and get supported by this Parliament to make sure that those who have skin in the game in agriculture—those with the capital tied up and the risks that people take in farming to be able to run their enterprise to feed people and to clothe people—should not be harassed and harangued by a whole bunch of what we will call "vegan vigilantes". In a lot of ways that is what they are.

Farmers should not be harassed and harangued. Those vegan vigilantes should not have that ability. It is quite disgusting that in many ways they have the support of those opposite, who are dillying and dallying around whether or not they support the bill, whether they want amendments or do not want amendments, whether they want it to go to an inquiry, whether they want this, that or the other. Members opposite should give a clear indication that they do not support those vegan vigilantes and those criminals who are going out there and putting farmers and families at risk.

There bill has two key aspects. One is urban encroachment, which is dealt with in many ways under the bill, many other Acts of Parliament and planning instruments. The second is people unlawfully invading farms and agricultural enterprises. Both these key aspects of the bill should be fully supported by an Opposition that claims to be the friend of country people. What was their drought policy going into the election? They did not

have one. They had nothing. They went into the election with nothing to support country people. Now all of a sudden members opposite get up and feign some sort of pathetic concern for country people. They have never done it before—they are not doing it now, for sure. All of their words are pointing to absolutely nothing but opposing certain aspects of the bill just because they want to do it. They could not give two hoots about country people or their security.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** Order! Opposition members will come to order.

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (12:38):** I am impressed by the member for Upper Hunter. I did not know he could read. He clearly did not read the bill accurately, because his contribution was full of inaccuracies. I am delighted to correct some of those inaccuracies. I acknowledge the Minister is in the Chamber—

**Mr Michael Johnsen:** You got your advice from the member for Maitland too, did you?

**Mr GREG WARREN:** You have had your say, mate. Don't worry, I will get to you. I also acknowledge my shadow Cabinet colleague Jenny Aitchison, who I know has worked very diligently to ensure that the Opposition's position on the bill is to ensure that farmers throughout rural and regional New South Wales get the respect and dignity that they deserve. We need only look at the member for Upper Hunter to see that some of those opposite are just so clearly out of touch. The member for Maitland and the member for Lismore, as well as other colleagues, made the Opposition's position very clear. There were no weasel words or vegan vigilantes or expressions of an unprotecting nature for our farmers. That is a total and utter inaccuracy. It is offensive to farmers, primary producers and those in the agri-economies who are struggling at this time.

The member for Upper Hunter thinks it is smart to come into this place and utilise this bill, this debate, to pursue an issue of a political nature, while farmers are going to the wall across the State and the nation. What a lack of dignity. What sort of member would come here and use that opportunity at the expense of another? Through the Temporary Speaker I tell the member for Upper Hunter this: One should never seek fortune from another's misfortune. There are not too many people in more unfortunate circumstances throughout our State and economy than our farmers. One need only visit places like the Upper Hunter. It is a nice place. I have been there. I do not know what they think of the local member. They would like to meet him one day. The point is, farmers are doing it very hard. One need only open a paper every day, watch the news every night or listen to the radio.

I commend the Minister, who I know has been an advocate for drought assistance and is doing everything he can, particularly for his community in New England, which is probably one of the worst affected areas in the State. But, oh no, the member for Upper Hunter thought he would take an opportunity and mislead the House as to the inaccuracies of the Opposition's contribution. I was not going to say anything, but I certainly was not going to let the member for Upper Hunter mislead the House with inaccuracies about the Opposition's position. My friend the shadow Minister made very clear the Opposition's position on this matter, and nothing the member for Upper Hunter said bore any relevance to it. He is clearly out of touch. He is trying to politicise this matter for his own purposes, not make a contribution that relates to the bill.

I did not hear him once speak a sympathetic line about our primary producers and farmers. Ultimately, the bill is designed to assist them. There are other views about amendments and the other matters that he discussed, which are again inaccuracies. What others do is a matter for them. It is an atrocious act for the member for Upper Hunter to stand here and grandstand. It is an insult to our farmers and is offensive to the primary producers of this State. I commend my colleagues for their contribution and I condemn the member for Upper Hunter for trying to use the bill for political purposes.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (12:42):** The Dubbo electorate encompasses the geographical middle of the State and is a region that relies heavily on the agricultural industry. That is why I am here today to speak in debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019 and the importance of the bill to our primary producers. Last week we saw history made when the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, Adam Marshall, who is in the Chamber today, introduced the bill. It will implement the toughest trespass laws in Australia, which is what we have to do. These laws will help our farmers do what they do best, and that is simply run their farms, and feed and clothe us. It is no secret that drought is crippling our primary producers. I have spoken numerous times in this place about the New South Wales Government's desire to do what it can to help. Unfortunately, none of us has yet discovered a way to make it rain. But we have through this bill a raft of new laws that will give farmers peace of mind to run their properties without interference from intruders.

Farmers have a right to farm, and it is time that this right was enshrined in law. I have been watching and listening to this debate and some of the comments on the bill have been disappointing, suggesting that it has been brought forward for spurious reasons. I commend the Minister for bringing the bill to the House for exactly the right reasons. I wonder why it is not being supported more wholeheartedly right across the board. We need to clear up that no-one is suggesting that a farmer of any kind, whether a meat farmer, a wool farmer, a nut farmer

or a corn farmer, should do the wrong thing, whatever the wrong thing might be. But there is a basic right that we should all agree to, and that is about privacy and property, including farms. That is exactly what part of the bill is designed to do. The bill provides for the first time that a farmer's right to farm will be embedded in our law, protecting farmers from nuisance claims, illegal hunters and extremist activities that are damaging them.

Let us be honest, along with that it is also confusing consumers. It is not just the random trespass that causes issues, but there is also the threat of biosecurity breaches. That is a real issue when unintended and uninvited visitors enter inclosed lands. The electorate of Dubbo has a broad spectrum of primary producers, from sheep and cattle farmers and corn and cotton growers to those who harvest the grapes that are responsible for our wonderful wines—a real diversity of primary production across my region. My electorate is not only the geographical centre on the map, but also the heartbeat of New South Wales. Our farmers are providing the food and fibre we rely on to feed and clothe, not just those who live in our region, New South Wales and Australia, but people right around the world.

**Debate interrupted.**

### *Committees*

## **LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Reports**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** The question is that the House take note of the report.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:45):** As Chair of the Legislation Review Committee I address the House concerning the *Legislation Review Digest No. 5/57*, the fifth digest for this Parliament, tabled on 24 September. In the fifth digest the committee examined three bills introduced in the last sitting week. I draw the Parliament's attention to some of the issues raised. The first bill the committee examined was the Non-profit Bodies (Freedom to Advocate) Bill 2019. It seeks to prohibit terms in State agreements with non-profit bodies that restrict the advocacy of those bodies on State law, policy or practice. The committee noted that these provisions would operate retrospectively. The committee will generally comment where a bill operates retrospectively. This is contrary to the rule of law that allows people to know the laws to which they are subject at any given time. However, with this bill, the committee noted that whilst such a term in an agreement would become void, any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired in relation to that term would be unaffected. In these circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

Another bill which the committee examined was the Right to Farm Bill 2019. It would limit the circumstances under which a claim of nuisance could be brought against a person for lawful farming activity on agricultural land. The committee noted that the bill may thereby impact on a person's right to enjoy their property without interference from neighbouring farming activities. However, the committee acknowledged that the immunity against a claim only applies where the land has been used lawfully for the purposes of agriculture for at least 12 months. Further, the committee noted that the bill is intended to address the business impact and associated costs on farmers as they answer claims made against them for lawful activity. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

To deter trespass on farms, the bill also significantly increases the maximum penalty for the offence of aggravated unlawful entry on inclosed lands from \$5,500 to \$13,200 and/or imprisonment for 12 months. The maximum penalty rises to \$22,000, or three years imprisonment, if the offender is accompanied by two or more persons, or does anything to put the safety of any person at serious risk. The committee noted that large penalty increases can result in excessive punishment where the penalty is not proportionate to the offence. However, in this case, the committee acknowledged that the penalty increase is designed to better reflect the severity of the offences in question and their impact on farmers and primary production activities. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

The Right to Farm Bill would also create a new offence of inciting or directing others to trespass. It would carry a maximum penalty of 12 months imprisonment. The committee noted that creating a new offence impacts upon personal rights and liberties, as previously lawful conduct becomes unlawful. However, the committee acknowledged that the purpose of this offence is to address a gap in the law where people incite trespass without doing so themselves. Given the public interest in protecting the rights of farmers from trespass, and the potential safety risks involved, the committee made no further comment.

Lastly, I turn to the Road Transport Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2019. This bill seeks to make various amendments to road transport legislation. One amendment would clarify that the power of a police officer to arrest certain persons involved in a motor vehicle accident to test their blood and urine for alcohol or drugs,

applies regardless of where the accident occurred, if it resulted in a death—that is, these powers would extend to off-road accidents resulting in a death. The committee noted that the bill may thereby impact on the right to personal physical integrity and liberty.

However, the committee acknowledged that the powers are designed so that police can properly investigate very serious motor vehicle accidents that occur off-road. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment. That concludes my remarks on the fifth digest of this Parliament. I thank the committee secretariat and the members of the committee for their involvement and contribution. I encourage everyone to read the full digest, which is available on the committee's webpage. I commend the digest to the House.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:50):** On behalf of the Opposition I contribute to the take-note debate on the Legislation Review Committee's Legislation Review Digest No. 5/57, dated 24 September 2019. The committee considered three bills and commented on all of those bills. I will place on record some of the comments we made on the private member's bill to underline that the committee does scrutinise all bills that come before the House, including private members' bills. The Non-profit Bodies (Freedom to Advocate) Bill 2019 introduced by the shadow Attorney General, Mr Paul Lynch, MP. The committee noted that:

The purpose of the bill is to prohibit State agreements with non-profit bodies from restricting or preventing those bodies from commenting on, advocating support for or opposing changes to State law, policy or practice.

The committee further noted that:

Mr Lynch noted arguments against restricting the advocacy work of non-profit bodies through funding agreements. Drawing on the work of the philosopher John Stuart Mill, Mr Lynch stated 'As Mill argued, one way of developing good policy and arriving at the best intellectual conclusion is to confront opposing views'.

The committee considered that the bill trespassed in one respect on personal rights and liberties and the committee noted:

The Bill prohibits and invalidates terms in State agreements with non-profit bodies that restrict their advocacy on State law, policy or practice. This provision is to have retrospective application to any agreements containing such a term entered into before the commencement of the proposed Act. The Committee will generally comment where a Bill operates retrospectively as this is contrary to the rule of law which allows people knowledge of the laws that they are subject to at any given time. However, the Committee further notes that whilst the term will become void, any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired in relation to that term will be unaffected. In the circumstances, the Committee makes no further comment.

At its meeting, the committee also considered the information presented to the public on the Parliament's website in terms of what information the public can see on the committee's work. It was agreed that the committee publish any responses it has received from Ministers and members to letters written to the member or Minister by the committee informing them of the committee's comments on bills or regulations, and that those responses would be collated and reported twice yearly.

Some members of the committee, including me, thought it would make the work of the committee more transparent to summarise the number of responses received from members and Ministers. I am afraid that was not the majority view of the committee. In any event, the outcome of the meeting is that members of the public will be able to see the responses provided to the committee to comments made by the committee on bills from those who have generated the bills in the House. That concludes my comments on the digest. I thank the secretariat for its support and my colleagues on the committee for their work. I encourage all members to use the digest and I commend the digest to the House.

#### **Report noted.**

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

#### *Visitors*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** Earlier this week I had the privilege to meet the Governor of Maryland, Larry Hogan. I extend a very warm welcome to him, along with the first lady of Maryland, Yumi Hogan, and their delegation. They are guests of the Premier and member for Willoughby. I again extend a very warm welcome to Sydney. It is great to see you here.

I also welcome teachers and year 9 students from the Holy Trinity School, Inverell, guests of the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales and member for Northern Tablelands. I also welcome Bryan Doyle, the former member for Campbelltown, and members of the Padstow Rotary Club, guests of the member for East Hills.

I acknowledge Steve and Lachlan Hennessey of the Bowral Blacks Rugby Union Club, guests of the member for Wollondilly. I also acknowledge Jim Byrne, a year 11 student at Wingham High School, guest of the member for Lakemba. Finally I acknowledge Barry and Terri Johnston, Colleen Jones, John Woods and Gai Luff to the Chamber, guests and constituents of the member for Lake Macquarie. I met a number of our visitors earlier and extend a welcome to all of them.

*Governor*

#### ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message regarding the administration of the Government.

*Question Time*

#### MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:19):** My question is directed to the Premier. On 23 March 2018 the Premier stood side by side with John Sidoti at a very big press conference to announce a potential metro stop at Five Dock. Was the Premier aware that John Sidoti and his family owned at least four properties in Five Dock at that time?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:19):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for a question that she asked in various forms last week. I say to her, as I said last week, there is a preliminary investigation into the matters raised. The member for Drummoyne said on numerous occasions that he has fulfilled—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** No, the question is whether you were aware.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** How interesting it is that last week Labor Opposition members took exception to the Government wanting to repeat a fact, that is, that the member for Kogarah—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: The question is very clear.

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Premier has the call. The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. The Leader of the Opposition will refrain from interrupting unnecessarily.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** As I have said on previous occasions, a preliminary investigation is underway. I have complete faith in the ICAC. I do not have faith in the Labor Opposition because they cannot even abide by the law when it comes to political donations. The Labor Opposition cannot even abide by the law.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Is it the same point of order?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. The Premier has the call. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Last week Labor Opposition members took exception to my daring to repeat in this place a matter that had been released publicly, which is that the member for Kogarah had to repay \$900 because the cheque was an illegal donation.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time. The Premier has the call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I say to Labor members that it has since come to light that the member for Kogarah has had to pay back \$5,000 worth of donations.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: This has nothing to do with the question. Did the Premier know about the member for Drummoyne's investment or not?

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time. The member for Swansea will resume her seat. The Premier has the call.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Before I resume, I welcome to New South Wales Governor Hogan and First Lady Hogan from Maryland. Over lunch I warned them about question time. Regrettably, I think my explanation has been fulfilled. Let me put these matters into context.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** A question was asked of me by the Leader of the Opposition. My response is that these matters are being dealt with by the appropriate body through a preliminary investigation.

**Mr Chris Minns:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** What is the point of order of the member for Kogarah?

**Mr Chris Minns:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no breach. I have heard enough. The member for Kogarah will resume his seat. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the second time. The member for Kogarah will resume his seat. The Premier has the call. I warn the member for Kogarah that he is already on two calls to order and that I will go further.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** What the member for Kogarah cannot handle is that cheques were written to the Chris Minns campaign whereas in the Liberal Party everything is written to the Liberal Party.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** What is the point of order of the Leader of the Opposition?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73 and Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order at the moment. The Premier has the call. The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Last week we were told by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kogarah that we had nothing to worry about in relation to them. Where did the \$5,000 come from that he has had to return? Where did that come from?

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. I ask that the Premier be directed to put her—

**The SPEAKER:** There is no breach of Standing Order 73.

**Ms Kate Washington:** She is imputing improper motives.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier is asking a question. She is not imputing improper motives. The member will be seated. The Premier will continue.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The most important question to ask in this place is: How do we know the member for Kogarah did not receive any illegal donations in the last four years which resulted in his 1.8 per cent victory? How do we know he does not have more cheques to return? How do we know?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Time for the answer has expired.

**Ms JODI MCKAY (Strathfield) (14:24):** I ask a supplementary question directed to the Premier. She can answer it this time. Did John Sidoti ever lobby or advocate for a metro stop in Five Dock, right in the heart of his own electorate? Did he lobby you?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:25):** No, he did not lobby me. What a killer follow-up question. What a killer question.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time. Government members will remain silent.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition has not answered what confidence she has that illegal donations were not accepted by her colleagues between 2015 and 2019. What assurances can she give members in this place?

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

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

**Ms Kate Washington:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129 and Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough.

**Ms Kate Washington:** There are personal reflections being made about the member for Kogarah—

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. I do not need assistance.

**Ms Kate Washington:** They must be made by way of substantive motion.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no breach of Standing Order 73. The Premier has answered the question directly, therefore I will allow her to use the rest of her time to answer as she wishes. I will be wary of any breach of Standing Order 73, but a breach has not been occurred at this stage.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I say to members opposite that the questions they ask in this place deserve to be answered because that is what oppositions do and that is what governments do. But asking these questions does not make Opposition members immune to Government members asking similar questions. Without prejudicing any of the proceedings going on—

**Mr Chris Minns:** Heaven forbid!

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kogarah is about to be placed on three calls to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Last week when a number of my colleagues and I wanted to simply repeat what was stated as fact on the public record, Opposition members told us repeatedly that there was nothing to worry about. We have since learned that \$5,000 worth of donations have been returned by the member for Kogarah. That is a fact because he told the media himself. The second thing to note is, regrettably, we have seen from revelations—

**Ms Prue Car:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. This is utterly irrelevant. The question was about a station at Five Dock. It has nothing to do with donations.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier has answered the question directly. I am giving her some leniency during the rest of her time should she wish to use it. I will not entertain any further points of order on relevance for the remaining time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In light of those revelations I think the question that many members would like answered is: What confidence can we have that there were not any illegal donations accepted in the last four years which ensured that the member for Kogarah was elected on a 1.8 per cent margin? I ask members opposite to cast their minds to other members of Parliament who have been forced to sit on the crossbench—

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Auburn to order for the second time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the second time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I ask members opposite to cast their minds to members of Parliament they forced onto the crossbench on the basis of allegations that their staff may have conducted activities, for which they have since been exonerated. What is the Leader of the Opposition doing to ensure that none of her colleagues—

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. How much more does the Premier need to say—

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The member will resume his seat.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In terms of democracy and fair elections in New South Wales, the members opposite face a number of unanswered questions. I implore the Leader of the Opposition to ask her colleagues as to whether the 2019 election was conducted fairly.

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (14:29):** I address my question to the Premier. Will she update the House on the steps the Government is taking to improve community safety, and why is it important that all New South Wales citizens obey the law?

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: That is two questions. That is clearly a breach of the standing orders.

**The SPEAKER:** I regard it on this occasion as one question, the second part inherently linked to the first part of the question.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:30):** I thank the member for Terrigal for his very important question because community safety is something that all members in this place care



passionately about. Recently I was very pleased to join the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Attorney General and the member for Parramatta to visit a small business in Parramatta that was benefiting from the Government's \$5 million program to provide CCTV—

**Mr Paul Scully:** What, only one?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Excuse me, what did I miss?

**Mr Paul Scully:** Only one business is benefiting?

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will ignore interjections.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I apologise to members of the public in the gallery for the behaviour of members opposite. As I was saying, the business we visited was part of a \$5 million program to support small businesses and community organisations applying for a grant to ensure CCTV cameras are located both inside and immediately outside their premises. This is very important because we know that not only do these cameras catch crime but, more importantly, they prevent crime from happening. That is especially important. The small business we visited in Parramatta was called Stormer Music. It specialises in providing music lessons to a broad range of members of the community and often its clients visit the premises after dark.

To allay concerns about safety impacting their business, these cameras will be of enormous use. Rather than have businesses pay for those cameras, the State Government, because it cares about security and community safety and because it has a strong budget—the strongest economy in Australia—is able to give back to the community. I am sure members opposite will be pleased to know that this program is initially being rolled out in the local government areas of Blacktown, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury Bankstown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith and Wollondilly. A number of businesses have already applied and a number of them have been successful. I am pleased to say that in the first round there have been 31 successful applicants. A restaurant in Gledswood Hills in the electorate of Camden and a financial services business in Liverpool in the electorate of Holsworthy have been successful as well as a community organisation in Penrith, a church in Mulgoa, a sporting organisation in Parramatta and a cafe in Cabramatta, and the list goes on. It is important to note that the Government will take any opportunity we have to improve community safety.

I note the second part of the question from the member for Terrigal. All of us care deeply about road safety and the impacts distraction can have on road safety. I commend the transport Minister for his major reform with the announcement of the world's first mobile phone detection camera program. The program will be rolled out in New South Wales by the end of this year and will progressively expand to perform millions of vehicle checks by 2023. The cameras will crack down on drivers who illegally use their mobile phones while driving. We know the tragic consequences that can occur if drivers are not focusing on the job at hand. We also know that families have tragically lost loved ones because of the distraction posed by mobile phones. I am pleased to note that during the Government's recent six-month pilot to look at the impact of the rollout of this policy, the safety technology provided by the tech company checked 8½ million vehicles and found more than 100,000 drivers using their phones illegally.

Those 100,000 drivers are lucky that they did not cause harm to themselves or to somebody else. This program is about ensuring community safety. Sometimes the Government has to intervene to ensure that people do the right thing. If the Government does not intervene—especially in relation to new drivers and those who are distracted by their mobile phones—we risk the road toll going up. In New South Wales we have the Towards Zero program to reduce the road toll and ensure we keep the community safe. Whether it is supporting our small businesses, supporting our community organisations, supporting safe driving or penalising drivers who do the wrong thing, community safety is a first and foremost priority for this Government. I thank all the Ministers and policymakers who have been involved in these policy areas. I commend all members of this place who value, support and uphold community safety, and that includes adherence to the law. Every aspect of the community, whether it is small business or drivers on our roads— [*Extension of time*]

The member for Terrigal is a huge advocate for additional road safety funding in his electorate. I recall visiting a number of schools in his community that received additional funding for safe road access. Improving road safety is a priority on the Central Coast, as it is across the State. As the Premier of this State and of a government that is committed to community safety, it is important to me that it is not just words we mouth but actions we take. I commend the small businesses, community organisations, sporting organisations and religious organisations that have put up their hands and said, "We want one of these safe cameras." These cameras ensure the safety of communities and safety on the street. They provide police with vital intelligence. I commend the Minister for Transport and Roads for the rollout of the mobile phone program which aims to keep drivers safe and alive and not commit harm to themselves or others. It is important to note that a good government focuses on community safety and adherence to the law. The example starts and finishes with us.

**REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (14:36):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the New South Wales Government can best represent communities in regional New South Wales?

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 128 (2) (g). That question is clearly asking for an expression of opinion. I am happy to substantiate my point—

**The SPEAKER:** You can do so on another occasion or speak to me privately. The question is in order.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:37):** I thank the member for Upper Hunter for his question. He is a member who is fighting for a part of the State that is doing it tough during this drought. The Upper Hunter electorate has a strong agriculture sector, a strong mining sector and great vineyards. It is home to some of the great studs and racehorses in the State. It is a great tourism destination. But the Upper Hunter community is doing it tough. Most regional communities are doing it tough because of the drought, the worst drought in this State in recorded history.

I can assure the people of regional and rural New South Wales that the Liberal-Nationals Government is focused on supporting them through this very tough period. We know that it will rain at some point but we will be there during the drought and we will be there on the way out of the drought. It is important for regional and rural communities to have a strong voice in the Parliament to make sure that they are represented in the best possible way. I have started a conversation and debate in the public domain on the number of members of Parliament who represent the constituencies of rural and regional New South Wales.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** The problem isn't the number, it's what you stand for. You stand for nothing.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Canterbury and the member for Bankstown will remain silent.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** Whenever we talk about regional and rural New South Wales those opposite interrupt. They do not care. They play political football with our communities. It is in their DNA.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** They do not care about regional and rural New South Wales. The statistics show that following every redistribution there has been a loss of voice in Parliament for regional and rural New South Wales. Over the past few years the population of the Ryde electorate has grown—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Bankstown that she is about to be removed from the Chamber. This is her last warning. She is on three calls to order.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** In 2017-18 the population of the Ryde electorate grew by 40,000 people. If we compare that to regional and rural New South Wales, most of our seats are static or in decline. That will be an issue following the next redistribution. We know that there will be a redistribution in this term of Government. That means that regional and rural New South Wales could lose another voice in this Parliament at a time when our communities are doing it tough and need proper representation. Political leadership must be at the forefront if we are going to make sure that regional and rural New South Wales communities are not left behind. I turn to the Barwon electorate. I will not even talk about a Nationals seat, I will talk about Barwon.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** It is not a reflection on the member for Barwon. I spoke highly of that member this week. He is doing a very good job in Barwon. The electorate covers 335,000 square kilometres—the size of Germany. I will show members a graphic image. The electorate of Barwon is shown in yellow and 18 Sydney seats are shown in the middle. In Sydney 18 members represent one little patch whilst one member has to cover all of that area for the people of Barwon.

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

**Mr Michael Daley:** It's called one vote, one value, John. Read about it.

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

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** It's not land value.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** That is the point. The Opposition has lost its way. When we look at the Barwon electorate, which has 69 schools—

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

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Joh Bjelke-Petersen lives.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Joh Barilaro.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** You guys are an effin' disgrace, every single one of you. You are an effin' disgrace.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. The Deputy Premier will resume his seat.

**Mr Ryan Park:** I will read Standing Order 72. It is pretty clear. It states:

A Member shall not use offensive words against:

(1) The Sovereign—

That happened last night—

(1) The Sovereign or the Governor.

(2) Either House or its Members.

(3) A member of the judiciary.

(4) A statute, unless moving for its repeal.

The Deputy Premier has clearly breached Standing Order 72.

**The SPEAKER:** What words did the Deputy Premier use?

**Mr Ryan Park:** Mr Speaker, I will talk to you privately. If you did not hear it, there is something wrong with the audio.

**The SPEAKER:** I am happy to hear from you quietly.

**Mr Andrew Constance:** To the point of order: First, I think the word that the Deputy Premier used began with "e". Second, there is so much noise on the other side of the Chamber that no-one heard what was said.

**The SPEAKER:** Members will remain silent. It was very difficult for me to hear exactly what was being said because so much noise was being made. I genuinely did not hear the reference that obviously caused some offence. If an offensive word was used, I will ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw it. Otherwise I will ask him to continue.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** No. I used no offensive word. I said "effin'". What about friggin' or flamin'? I actually used no offensive word.

*[Opposition members interjected.]*

**The SPEAKER:** The clock will remain stopped. The member for Keira is referring to the word "effin'", is that correct?

**Mr Ryan Park:** Yes, I am. Can I talk to you about something?

**The SPEAKER:** No, I have heard enough. I will make a ruling on the point of order. I ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw that word. I think it is inappropriate language.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** No. I will not withdraw, sorry. I choose not to withdraw. I do not have to.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Keira will resume his seat. I have asked the Deputy Premier to withdraw. The Deputy Premier has the call.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: On your first day as Speaker you said it would be your mission to improve the standards in this place. One of the first things you embarked upon was to clamp down upon reflections of a personal nature relating to people's stature and things like that. I agree with that. If you allow this to stand your pledge to improve the standards in this place is hollow. Members cannot swear at other members, even if they use an abbreviated form. You cannot walk past that, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Andrew Constance:** To the point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear from the Leader of the House, but I point out that I have asked the Deputy Premier to withdraw. He has declined to do so and it is not my place to make him do so.

**Mr Andrew Constance:** There is a deliberate attempt by those opposite to disrupt the House this afternoon. Nobody could hear what the Deputy Premier was saying. But we are not going to take a lecture from a bloke who has not withdrawn comments about Asians with PhDs taking our kids' jobs.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough enough. I thank the Leader of the House.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I have made very clear what my ruling is, what I have asked to be done and what my powers are. Is the point of order on something new?

**Mr Ryan Park:** I refer to your statement on 22 August regarding the member for Campbelltown.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. The member for Keira will resume his seat. I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. The Deputy Premier will conclude his answer.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** If you want to clean up this House, the first thing you should do is get rid of the racists. That is what you should do.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: I am assuming you can see that the Deputy Premier is clearly in breach of Standing Order 73. If he wants to start calling members on this side racists, he can bring a substantive motion and we will start talking about Government members.

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier's time has expired. The member for Upper Hunter is standing to seek an extra two minutes. In the circumstances I am going to decline that request.

**Mr John Barilaro:** What? They interrupted the whole answer and you have declined an extension of time?

**The SPEAKER:** I have declined the request. I call the Deputy Premier to order for the first time.

**Mr John Barilaro:** I don't care. Put me on two calls. Put me on three calls.

**The SPEAKER:** The Government Whip will bring the Deputy Premier to order.

#### MASCOT TOWERS

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:48):** My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation—

**The SPEAKER:** I place the member for Kogarah on three calls to order. The Deputy Premier will remain silent. The member for Summer Hill will remain silent. I call the member for Summer Hill to order for the second time. Members will come to order. I have made clear the standards that I am setting in the House. I cannot go beyond my powers. The member for Swansea will be heard in silence.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. I have been contacted by Mascot Towers resident Leona and I quote:

We are begging the government for help and receiving very little. For them to accuse us of a strategy is just so insulting.

What evidence did the Minister have before smearing Mascot Towers residents?

**Mr Andrew Constance:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 128 in relation to inferences. That question was full of inferences, which means that the good member should reword her question.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** I will reword the question. My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. I have been contacted by Mascot Towers resident Leona and I quote:

We are begging the government for help and receiving very little. For them to accuse us of a strategy is just so insulting.

What evidence did the Minister have before levelling comments at the Mascot Towers residents?

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:50):** I thank the member for her question. I remind the House that the New South Wales Government has provided advice to apartment owners and financial support to residents of the Mascot Towers since 14 June this year. Of the 132 apartments in the Mascot Towers complex half are held by owner-occupiers and the rest are investment properties. NSW Fair Trading has been actively involved in making all efforts to assist parties involved after the evacuation and staff have attended meetings that have been organised for the residents. I have personally met with the owners' corporation and visited the site. My office has been kept in regular contact with the strata manager and the building manager.

An extraordinary general meeting of Mascot Towers property owners was held on 22 August this year. At the meeting a motion was passed to commence the remediation works which related to the defects identified in 2017, not the current issues that caused the evacuation. A recommendation was included to accept a loan of \$10 million to fund the remedial works and a special levy over 15 years to repay that loan. The motion was voted down. Instead, a motion was passed to raise \$7.7 million over nine months to fund those defects from 2017, not the current issues that have been identified. Another amendment was put to that meeting to defer a decision on that levy. That was also voted down. Again I stress that this was related to—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: I just want to say that I have respectfully waited for two minutes—

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

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Last night the Minister's office said that it had evidence—

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

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** It is under Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea will resume her seat. I call the member for Swansea to order for the second time. The Minister has the call.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** I stress again that another amendment was put to the meeting to defer a decision on that levy. However, that was voted down again. I stress to the House that was related to the issues from 2017. Following that extraordinary general meeting my office was contacted to set up a meeting with the executive committee of the owners' corporation, which was held on 4 September. At that meeting the owners' corporation advised me that it would be unable to raise the necessary funds to meet the special levy over nine months. However, it was agreed just a week before that they would fund that levy. So they have flip-flopped in that regard.

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** Concerns have been raised with Fair Trading NSW by a number of apartment owners in relation to the financial decisions agreed to at that meeting. Fair Trading has been working closely with residents to mediate the current conflict. The concerns centre on why a strata loan—

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

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being highly relevant, so I will not hear a point of order under Standing Order 129.

**Ms Kate Washington:** It is Standing Order 129 because—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the third time. The Minister has the call.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** Fair Trading has been working with some residents to identify why a strata loan payable and levied over 15 years was rejected in favour of a payment term of nine years, particularly given the subsequent advice from the owners' corporation that a large number of owners would be unable to meet the obligation. Regardless of those issues, we have extended the temporary emergency accommodation package. We have spoken to the banks in relation to financial support. They are switching off their mortgages. We have said to the insurance companies to crack on with the insurance claim to meet the current defect, which has affected the building next door. We want them to release those funds. We are encouraging insurance companies to release the funds so they can start the remediation works and people can return to their homes just like they want to.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Londonderry to order for the third time. I remind the members representing the electorates of Londonderry, Kogarah, Bankstown, Port Stephens and Swansea that they are on three calls to order. If any of them says another word they will be removed from the Chamber.

#### POLITICAL DONATIONS

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (14:56):** My question is addressed to the Leader of the House, and Minister for Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on public affairs, with particular reference to electoral donation law reform?

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: My point of order relates to the almost impossibly wide ambit of the question. In essence, it asks the Minister to comment on public affairs. Many Speakers have given many rulings over decades on the nature of questions that can be put to members of the Executive in question time. The essence of all of those rulings is that a question has to seek information. The practice and procedure handbook, as well as

Erskine May, say that questions should begin with an interrogatory—who, what, when, where or why—and they should seek information. This question simply asks the Minister to comment on public affairs. It renders Standing Order 129 completely nugatory. You can consider that further and give us a ruling, but I ask that the question be ruled out of order.

**The SPEAKER:** The question is addressed to the Leader of the House so it can be of a wider nature and scope, and it particularly referred to electoral donation reform. The question is in order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:57):** I thank the good member for his question. I know certainly from his background he has a very rich interest in the area of public affairs and public policy. There is no doubt that when it comes to the Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981, we obviously need to reflect long and hard on the reforms that we have seen over the years. One of the reasons we do that is, of course, the importance of integrity when one might seek an election with the backing of a political party. When someone goes to the community we want to ensure that democracy is safe and sound in this State. We would hate to see anybody cheat. That is very important and it underpins what this is all about. The community needs confidence to know that that is the case.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I do a lot of reading. I was quite interested to see what the final report of the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption said in relation to the New South Wales Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981. In December 2015 in Volume Two, chapter 3.1, at paragraphs 31, 37, 163, and 171 the royal commission into trade unions and their power made a comment in relation to a loan that happened to be made between the head office of NSW Labor and that wonderful and friendly union otherwise known as the Electrical Trades Union or ETU—a great friend of the Government.

In terms of this issue, a loan was made maybe a couple of days before the changes to the Electoral Funding and Disclosures Act. What the royal commission said at the time was that Labor believed that there might be difficulty with the loan if made after 31 December 2010 because of changes to the Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981 that were due to come into effect on 1 January 2011. What is telling about that is that in 2015 the royal commission asked a Mr Dastyari and another person by the name of Mr Minns to put statements towards the commission in relation to that. Of course, the commission reflected that there was no statement coming from Mr Minns, who at that time was the assistant general secretary of the Labor Party. The reason I am raising this is that I am in receipt—

**Mr Paul Scully:** Point of order: Mr Speaker, you have allowed this ridiculously wide question—

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

**Mr Paul Scully:** It is Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no breach of Standing Order 73.

**Mr Paul Scully:** This is heading towards an effort to impugn—

**The SPEAKER:** I do not care where it is heading; it is not there. The member will resume his seat. I call the member for Wollongong to order for the second time.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I am in receipt of a document that relates to the loan repayments made between the Labor Party and the ETU. Obviously it is nice to know that electrical workers paying their membership fees out of their income to lend money to a political party. That is by the bye; we know what goes on there. More importantly, the assistant general secretary at the time, who put in place the loan repayment, was Mr Chris Minns.

**Mr David Mehan:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order under Standing Order 73 at the moment.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The reason I raise this is that there is now a question mark, as identified, in relation to—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I am told the member's point of order is not under Standing Order 73, which I have just ruled on.

**Mr David Mehan:** I think it is Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The member will resume his seat. I call the member for The Entrance to order for the first time. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the third time.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The reason that I raise this document, which dates from 2012 and involves the assistant general secretary, Mr Minns, is that there is a question mark in terms of the electoral funding laws in relation to the interest repayments and whether they were treated as a gift and whether they were disguised or not.

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order—

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I am starting to get a little bit of a picture about disclosures and the member for Kogarah.

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

**Mr David Harris:** Clearly the Minister is making an allegation now. It relates to Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** No, he is not at this stage.

**Mr David Harris:** Can we have a ruling? I asked for a ruling on what an imputation is. I am now asking for a ruling on what an allegation is.

**The SPEAKER:** The member will resume his seat. I call the member for Wyong to order for the first time.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point that I am making is that under the electoral funding laws, there is a question—

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** There is a question in relation to the treatment of interest as to whether it is a gift and whether it needs to be disclosed. I would have thought that if there was a loan arrangement reached in which there was a better interest rate provided, that would technically make it a gift. To get the picture here, there is an issue around disclosure and it all seems to point back to the way in which the laws have been used by certain people in this State— *[Extension of time]*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Kogarah will cease interjecting. I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Kogarah from the Chamber under Standing Order 249. The member may return to the Chamber in one day.

*[The member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 15:04 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]*

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point that I was making is that the treatment of interest when it comes to loans—

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 74. It is quite clear that this question is intended to create quarrels between members, as evidenced by you just kicking out the member for Kogarah.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will continue.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point that I was making is that, in terms of the treatment of interest in relation to loans set up by the assistant general secretary of the Labor Party at the time, there does not seem to be any disclosure in relation to the interest rate benefit.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Bankstown to remove herself from the Chamber for the remainder of the day under Standing Order 249.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Bankstown left the Chamber at 15:04 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]*

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** That makes it a gift. The point that I am making is that this all seems to point back to the one person and the inability of the Leader of the Opposition to deal with this person.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order: For the past three sitting days we have had questions that elicit this sort of response. There is a really simple solution. The Government should put a substantive motion to the House and debate it.

**The SPEAKER:** I have ruled on that. The member will resume his seat.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point that I am making is that there has been some very questionable issues around the electoral funding laws.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I am particularly keen, as is the Premier and the Government, to know exactly what has gone on in terms of electoral funding—of course taxpayers subsidise political parties, which is important to note—and the receipt of donations, particularly between 2015 and 2019, and some of those relationships. I am going to table another cheque, which I have also received on which the handwriting differs between the person paying it, the sum of it—

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order—

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

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order: The Minister cannot table documents.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Wyong is absolutely correct, but the Minister has not attempted to table the document yet.

**Mr David Harris:** He said, "I am going to table a document."

**The SPEAKER:** I understand. The Minister will continue.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point is that I am in receipt of a copy of a cheque which has different handwriting between who has paid, the sum of it and the signatory.

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order, but it had better be good or the member will be on a call to order.

**Mr David Harris:** The member cannot do this because Hansard cannot record what the cheque is—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Wyong will resume his seat. I have ruled on this. I call the member for Wyong to order for the third time. The Minister will continue.

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

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear the point of order before the clock restarts, but I regard these points of order as deliberate interruptions. Any points of order now had better be really good or the members taking them will be placed on calls to order.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 74. You must be aware that—

**The SPEAKER:** The member will resume her seat. I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member for Canterbury want to be placed on a call too?

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** No, I want to—

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I have ruled on Standing Order 73 and Standing Order 74. Does the member for Auburn have a different point of order?

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Yes, it is a different point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear it.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** I refer to a ruling by the Speaker in 1975.

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

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** The ruling was that there is nothing disorderly in drawing the Speaker's attention to any relevant order. The ruling was by Speaker Cameron on 25 November 1975. The reality is that the Minister is now referring to a fraud. He is alleging that there was—

**The SPEAKER:** The member will resume her seat. There have been rulings that I have to hear points of order, but there have also been rulings that when points of order are deliberately disruptive or frivolous I have the discretion to ignore them. I will allow the Minister to continue in silence, unless I deem there to be a point of order that is warranted or a breach of the standing orders. Otherwise I expect silence for the last 29 seconds of the answer. The Minister will continue.



**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I know that the police Minister is dying to know about this. It is a cheque by the Commonwealth Bank in Chinatown, New South Wales. There is different handwriting used for the sum. The sum is \$900. It says "MH Yee" at the bottom and "Pay ALP Chris Minns". The point is that this protection racket between the Leader of the Opposition and the former assistant general secretary named in the royal commission for receiving dodgy cheques has got to stop. When is the Leader of the Opposition going to take action on the bloke as she should? [*Time expired.*]

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

#### STOCKTON BEACH

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (15:09):** My question is directed to the Premier. I have just returned from Stockton with Leader of the Opposition Jodi McKay, where the community is desperate for the Premier's leadership to deal with a rapidly eroding coastline. We are facing a calamity. When will the Premier visit our community to explain how her Government will save Stockton Beach?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Baulkham Hills will remain silent. I call the Minister for Local Government to order for the first time. I call the member for Newcastle to order for the first time. I ask that the tone of debate in the Chamber return to a sensible level—it is getting more than a little out of control today—and allow the Premier to answer the question.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:10):** I appreciate the question from the member for Newcastle. As members would be aware, I was asked a similar question yesterday. I think it is important to place on record that coastal erosion has been occurring at Stockton Beach since the 1920s, during and after storm events in particular. So we know that this is not a new occurrence. It was the previous Coalition Government under Nick Greiner that oversaw the construction of a fully funded seawall structure at Mitchell Street. It was the Coalition Government that ensured a seawall was constructed around 1989 and 1990. The Government is continuing to support Newcastle City Council to assist it to manage this erosion. As I said yesterday, since 2011 the Government has provided Newcastle City Council with over—

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier is being relevant. The member for Newcastle will resume his seat. I place the member for Newcastle on three calls to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I appreciate the Speaker's ruling. I say to members that when someone is attempting to answer a question there is no need to get up and yell and point fingers.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Newcastle is on his final warning. He will remain silent.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** As I was saying, the seawall at Mitchell Street was constructed in around 1989 or 1990 by a former Liberal-Nationals Government. Since that time the Government has continued to support the council and, since 2011, has specifically provided council with over \$1.2 million to address issues across the region's coastline. Last year in August the Government provided an additional grant under the \$83.6 million Coastal and Estuary Grants Program to prepare a coastal management program for the Newcastle coastline, including Stockton. I implore councils, if they want to apply for further funding they have the opportunity to do so—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: It is under Standing Order 129. The question was not about grant funding.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Whilst I appreciate that this issue is important, I would not take time off from Parliament to go and do something like the Leader of the Opposition did so that she can come into the Chamber and ask me a question—

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member for Newcastle want to leave the Chamber?

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** No.

**The SPEAKER:** Then he should not refer to Standing Order 129. The Premier is being relevant to the question.

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Premier is making a personal reflection on the Leader of the Opposition and me for—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Newcastle will resume his seat. The Premier will continue.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I also wish to reiterate that on a number of occasions State government agencies have attempted to work with Newcastle City Council in order to support its plans. In fact, on a number of occasions when the plans were submitted State government agencies gave feedback to make sure that the council's plans were appropriate for the very sensitive environmental considerations at that location. I also stress that the New South Wales Government stands ready to continue supporting the City of Newcastle Council. The Minister for Local Government—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I do not understand why I can't answer the question.

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It is Standing Order 129. If you stand ready, go up there next week and meet with the community.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the third time. That was totally inappropriate. The Premier will continue.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I think the challenge here is that those opposite have seen that the New South Wales Government has worked constructively with council over a long period of time to try to meet these challenges. They can—

*[An Opposition member interjected.]*

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** A very long time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Well, it took a Coalition Government to build the seawall and another Coalition Government to provide the funding to actually support council's efforts. I also say to those opposite that Government officials are in constant liaison with council. As I said before, Minister Hancock as the Minister for Local Government will be visiting Stockton Beach in the coming days.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Newcastle and the Leader of the Opposition will remain silent.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I make this point as strongly as I can: There are many challenges facing that community at this point in time. But do not let the Leader of the Opposition's stunt today take away from the fact—

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. What is the member's point of order?

**Mr Greg Warren:** It is Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Mr Greg Warren:** The personal reflection by the Premier is not only—

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. Please sit down.

**Mr Greg Warren:** —inaccurate; it is unfair.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. Sit down.

**Mr Greg Warren:** The Leader of the Opposition went up there to see that community—

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down, please.

**Mr Greg Warren:** —and the simple question is—

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time. The Premier will continue.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** As I was saying, I am incredibly proud of our Government's record in Newcastle and the Hunter. *[Time expired.]*

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

**STATE ECONOMY**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:16):** My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the New South Wales economy is benefitting from the special relationships with our most important trading partners?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (15:17):** I thank the member for his question. No-one stands up more for their community than the member for Oatley. Despite what people say, Mr Speaker, I think you are objectively the fairest Speaker in all of the land. The member for Campbelltown thinks so, he wants to get thrown out for two days again. The member for Oatley knows all too well that New South Wales is once again open for business. New South Wales is Australia's gateway to the world and the world's gateway to our great country. Most of our prosperity is due to our free and fair trade that we have with many important global partners. There is perhaps no more important friend and ally than the United States of America. I note that Prime Minister Scott Morrison is currently in the United States with President Trump. He attended the first State dinner since the great Prime Minister John Howard, a sign of the special relationship our two nations share.

The United States is also an important market for New South Wales, offering vital opportunities as an export destination for foreign investment. More than 35 per cent of US merchandise trade with Australia occurs within New South Wales. The United States is our second-largest import source and our fifth-largest export destination. Last year there were over half a million visitors from the United States to New South Wales—that is the second-largest source of international visitors to our State. It is fair to say that New South Wales and the United States also have a very special relationship, one that continues to grow even deeper.

As has been pointed out, today the Premier, the Deputy Premier and I hosted a lunch for the Governor of Maryland Larry Hogan, who was here in the gallery earlier. It is interesting that he is only the second re-elected Republican Governor in the 243-year history of that State. Wherever you look around the world the centre-right governments are taking over. Whether it is Johnson, Trump, Morrison, Hogan, Berejiklian—we are on the march. Governor Hogan is leading a delegation of US government and business leaders here to learn about our world-leading infrastructure program using public-private partnerships and asset recycling. The trip follows a previous US delegation of Democrats and Republicans, which I have spoken about in this House before, that visited and worked with NSW Treasury on infrastructure financing and delivery. Governor Hogan recently wrote:

...there are leaders [in our States] who are willing to work together across party lines to take on the big problems [such as infrastructure].

There you have it. Asset recycling is good enough for the Republicans; it is good enough for the Democrats; it is even good enough for Bernie Sanders, but it is not good enough for the hopeless backwater of a swamp that the NSW Labor Party has become—a swamp you cannot drain. Robertson tried, Daley tried, Foley tried—and Jodi, well, she is not even trying at all. It is this asset recycling approach that the United States and other jurisdictions around the world are starting to look to and replicate. Two days ago we saw President Trump with Prime Minister Morrison in Ohio as they opened a \$500 million mill owned by great Australian businessman Anthony Pratt.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Auburn will remain silent.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** That mill has created 1,500 construction jobs and nearly 250 permanent jobs.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** What does Mr Pratt put that investment down to in choosing Ohio? Company tax cuts, tax cuts for businesses that make it viable to invest. That is because on this side of the House we know that tax cuts lead to jobs growth, which leads to wage growth. On this side of the House we are focused on delivering dividends for the people of New South Wales. We know that the Labor Party is only interested in building special relationships that will deliver dividends for themselves.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Auburn is on her final warning.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We continue to make sure that our policies drive economic growth and continue to drive better results for people right across our State—lowering taxes, building infrastructure, creating jobs growth—whereas it seems the Labor Party is more interested in dodgy deals and dividends for themselves to get ahead. [*Extension of time*]

The transport Minister has made the point today about the member for Kogarah and special relationships. Since this case has been made, I have never seen the member for Kogarah give out more cash than we have seen over—

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** He has been paying more cash—

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** It is Standing Order 73. The Minister was asked to speak on a trade relationship. He is now making an allegation about the member for Kogarah, who is not in the Chamber to defend himself.

**The SPEAKER:** I ask the Minister to desist from using that type of language.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** It is about special relationships and he is paying out more cash than a double feature on Queen of the Nile at the Kogarah RSL. It is "Jackpot Jodi".

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Auburn will resume her seat. I instruct the Minister that allegations of dispersal of cash are going too far.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The real question here is how many other dodgy donations did the Labor Party receive in the 2019 election?

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** That is a different comment. I have called the Treasurer back to the question. It is a different comment. It is okay at the moment. I am listening carefully.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** It is Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer is being relevant. The member for Auburn will sit down. The Treasurer will continue.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** What about Marginal Seat Marjorie over there in Coogee? How many dodgy—?

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Just give us our seat back. Give us our seat back. We want our seat back!

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will resume his seat.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I want our seat back.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will resume his seat.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** You're the only party that try to buy an election and you lose it.

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

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Time has expired.

#### COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:24):** My question is directed to the Premier. Recently, lawyers acting for the Commissioner of Police had to correct the record after he made incorrect accusations about a young woman who had given evidence at a coronial inquest that police had told her they would strip her "nice and slow". Does the Premier believe that the police commissioner should apologise for this so that young women are not deterred from speaking out?

**Mr David Elliott:** He didn't apologise, he just corrected the record.

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member for Baulkham Hills want me to put him on another call?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:25):** I thank the member for Newtown for asking a question on a very serious issue. I appreciate it is something that she and her colleagues feel strongly about. I state at the outset that one of the most difficult challenges for any government, and indeed for the police force, is to find the balance between community safety and individual rights. I have full confidence in the Commissioner of Police and the NSW Police Force in striking the right balance. Strip searches are used to ensure people's safety. I appreciate the issues raised by the member for Newtown and I can only speak from my own personal experience that when concerned parents approached me about the experience they had in their family, and I raised those matters with the police commissioner, he was beyond outstanding in his dealing with that issue. I speak from personal experience when someone raised a concern with me. They wrote to me and I found the issues necessitated me forwarding them to the police commissioner. His response was simply outstanding.

I do not want to comment on whether or not there were any corrections to any information provided. This is a matter for the commissioner. I stress that the challenge for all of us is finding the best balance between community safety and individual rights. We can never get it right 100 per cent of the time, but I have full confidence in the commissioner and the police force in making sure that that procedure is used only when it is necessary. In fact, in the past 12 months there has been a slight reduction in the use of that procedure. There has also been a reduction in crime. If there are any specific instances of concern I ask people to come forward because my experience has been when I raised the concerns with the commissioner, the way he dealt with that particular matter was outstanding. I would implore others to come forward if they have any concerns.

#### **COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS INDUSTRY AND SKILLS COUNCIL**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:27):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education and the Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is supporting skills cross the State and provide an update from the Council of Australian Governments [COAG ] Industry and Skills Council last week?

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (15:27):** I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for his question, because I know he is a great representative of his local community. It was great to be there last month turning the sod for a \$10.7 million trade hub. What a great member he is. He is one member, like all on this side of the House, who understands the importance of skills and training to New South Wales. It is a privilege to update the House on the COAG Industry and Skills Council last week. On Friday I am sure all members know the first ever COAG Industry and Skills Council was held in Melbourne.

Members on this side of the House are following it in the media, because they care. At the first ever COAG Industry and Skills Council all the States came together with the Commonwealth and agreed on the priorities around the country. I commend Michaelia Cash for her great leadership of the meeting. We agreed on the priority of relevant training and skills to industry requirements to address the critical skills shortages in the community. We agreed upon the need for quality teaching materials, delivery and what is actually taught. Finally we agreed on the priority of accessibility. As the Premier always says—a great Premier, the best Premier ever in New South Wales—

**Ms Gladys Berejiklian:** Thank you.

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** No problem, well deserved and I know you say because we have always agreed with you. With accessibility, we must be able to deliver what we can for every single person in New South Wales, no matter where they live or what circumstances they come from.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Canterbury will remain silent.

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** I also commend the COAG Industry and Skills Council for developing a road map of where we will be reporting back in November this year. It is all right to have those priorities, but we need the road map of how we can address the critical skills shortages across the nation.

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

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** At the COAG Industry and Skills Council I am very proud to say that we identified—and I am particularly passionate about—the parity in funding between vocational education and training [VET], and higher education. That is something that we need to resolve at the Commonwealth level with the States to make sure we put no barriers in front of people who are required to or choose the VET option, whether it is TAFE or a privately registered training organisation [RTO] to get those valuable skills. We will have ongoing discussions. It is a huge issue that we all need to address, especially the Commonwealth. We also need to address developing industry skill packages faster. As members would know, some of those packages take up to six years to develop. By the time they are actually implemented they are out of date. The speed is important because we know that industry needs skills now to address critical skills shortages.

That leads me to the final area that I am passionate about, which is to reflect industry requirements. We will design our training to reflect industry needs. We are not going to design training just to train for training's sake, but to address the critical skills shortages, which is very important. We need industry to be involved in the development of the packages, in their delivery and their assessment. We need industry to be part of the solution. I will personally champion all three of those initiatives. This builds on the great work of the New South Wales Government. We are building a world-class, dynamic, skilled workforce. It builds on the back of a \$93 billion investment in infrastructure across the State over the next four years. We have some great initiatives.

I am very proud of the \$1.85 billion in the TAFE budget this year, which is up 3.1 per cent on last year. It is sensational to say that that represents 80 per cent of the skills budget for TAFE. It is a fantastic achievement to support TAFE. I commend all the teachers and the staff. When I am at the TAFEs I can see the passion in the

teachers. With passionate teachers we know we get great education. As a former TAFE teacher I know the importance of good teaching for our student outcomes. There are other great initiatives, whether it is the 100,000 fee-free apprenticeships over the next four years, or the 70,000 fee-free traineeships that start on 1 January. I know many members on this side of the House are very interested in skills and training. The member for Wakehurst is very interested and very excited. There are another 30,000 TAFE places for mature age students. *[Extension of time]*

I thank the member for Coffs Harbour, who is perfectly able to champion for his community. He is someone who really cares. Of course, there is more. There are 14 connected learning centres around the State. I congratulate the Deputy Premier on his initiative. We are going to deliver another eight more connected learning centres, overcome the tyranny of distance and allow people in rural and remote areas to get access to fantastic education. One of the things that impressed me was I was fortunate enough to open the Yamba Connected Learning Centre. This is the first time ever that TAFE has had a presence in Yamba, and that changes a community. It is particularly important that we should acknowledge the role of connected learning centres in our future education. I could go on with great news stories, but I want to update the House on the recent Australian Skills and Quality Authority [ASQA] audit that TAFE has just been through.

**Mr Stephen Kamper:** You don't have to.

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** No, there is more. I know the member for Wakehurst is enthusiastic to learn about ASQA. I am happy to report to the House that ASQA has recently renewed TAFE's registration for seven years, which is the maximum possible. What a fantastic result. That reflects TAFE's reputation as a quality provider of vocational education.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Rockdale is on his last warning.

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** That does not come by accident. It comes through the hard work of our staff and teachers at TAFEs across 130 campuses right throughout New South Wales. I am particularly impressed by our teachers and staff for achieving this standard. I thank ASQA for all its work and all its suggestions. We are committed to working with ASQA in the future and not just in terms of benchmarks. On this side of the House, we are focused on delivering TAFE as a gold standard in VET. On this side of the House, we care about our communities. On this side of the House, we care about TAFE. We are for the workers.

#### *Committees*

### **COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

#### **Reference**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES:** In accordance with Standing Order 229 (1), I inform the House that the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption has resolved to review the 2017-18 annual reports of the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the full details of which are available on the committee's homepage.

#### *Announcements*

### **CONDOLENCE MOTION: TIMOTHY ANDREW FISCHER, AC**

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I advise the House that it is the Government's intention to move a motion of condolence for the late Timothy Andrew Fischer, AC, a former member of the Legislative Assembly and Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, on Wednesday 16 October 2019, straight after the placing and disposal of business.

#### *Petitions*

### **RESPONSES TO PETITIONS**

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following Ministers have lodged a response to a petition signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Shelley Hancock—Hay Shire Council—lodged 20 August 2019 (Ms Helen Dalton)

The Hon. Andrew Constance—Taxi Licence Buyback—lodged 21 August 2019 (Mr James Griffin)

*Bills***JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019****Returned**

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

*Members***MEMBER FOR MONARO UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE**

**Mr RYAN PARK:** Mr Speaker, during today's question time you referenced the fact that you could not hear the exchange between the Deputy Premier and members of the Opposition. I respectfully request that you review the footage of today's question time and you come back tomorrow and outline to the House what your ruling is and what you will do about it.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** With due respect to the member opposite, Mr Speaker, you made it quite clear during question time that you could not hear. Time and time again, with due respect to the Opposition's Leader of the House, repeated points of order are a disruption of the flow of the House. It was so noisy today that the Speaker could not actually hear what was said. We do not go back and review footage, because if we go down that path we will have to review a whole heap of footage.

**The SPEAKER:** I ask both the member for Keira and the member for Bega to have a chat with me about this matter as soon as I leave the chair.

**Ms JENNY LEONG:** Mr Speaker, I appreciate that you might be trying to resolve the matter, but there are actually 93 representatives in this Chamber, not just the two representatives you have invited to discuss the matter. I think it is important to reflect on the impact of the Speaker not making a ruling in response to the Deputy Premier when he repeated on the record what he had said and he disregarded the Speaker's ruling. This has an impact on all of us in this Chamber and it has a serious impact if people continue to disrespect the Speaker's rulings in relation to our ability to participate and represent our communities. While this matter might be settled over a nice cup of tea, I request that at least some update is provided to the rest of us in this Chamber and it is not just a discussion between three blokes over a cup of tea.

**The SPEAKER:** I understand that and I will make three comments. First, I did comment in relation to the remark, when it was clarified. I asked that it be withdrawn, but that did not occur. It is not within my power to dictate what a member does or does not do. Second, if a member has a problem with any decision or ruling that I have made, they can move dissent. There is a procedure and the members can see the Clerk in relation to that procedure. Third is in relation to the nature of the discussion I will have, which may or may not be on a confidential basis. In principle, I am happy to let the member for Newtown and the House know of any outcomes of that discussion tomorrow.

**Mr Andrew Constance:** The behaviour of the House today was disgraceful.

**The SPEAKER:** I will agree that the behaviour of the House today was unacceptable.

*Members***CALLS TO ORDER**

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Before the Clerk calls the next item of business, I remind members that the Leader of the Opposition is on three calls to order, the member for Wyong is on three calls, the member for Londonderry is on three calls to order, the member for The Entrance is on three calls, the member for Kogarah is on three calls to order, the member for Cabramatta is on three calls to order, the member for Canterbury is on two calls to order, the member for Swansea is on three calls to order, the member for Auburn is on three calls to order, the member for Lakemba is on three calls to order, the member for Bankstown is on three calls to order, the member for Maroubra is on three calls to order, the member for Port Stephens is on three calls to order, the member for Newcastle is on three calls to order, the member for Rockdale is on three calls to order, the member for Campbelltown is on one call to order, the member for Wollongong is on two calls to order and the members for Keira, Summer Hills and the Deputy Premier are on a number of calls to order. The member for South Coast and the Treasurer are also on calls to order.

*Bills***RIGHT TO FARM BILL 2019****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:42):** Before I resume my contribution to the debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019 I will reiterate a couple of things in relation to this bill, which was presented to this place by agriculture Minister Adam Marshall. Our farmers, those who put food on our tables and clothes on our backs, are struggling like never before—we have talked about their plight a lot—as a result of drought, and they need our assistance. To be honest, I would have thought measures in this bill to allow our farmers to go about their business would be supported in more of a bipartisan manner, but unfortunately that does not seem to be the case.

Giving our farmers the ability to go about their work should be as easy as it is for any of us in this place to go about our day-to-day business. But when your place of work sometimes spans vast distances, as is often the case with farmers, they cannot be everywhere at once and unfortunately they are sometimes at the mercy of vigilantes who feel they can just go onto properties, on a whim, and do whatever they like. That must stop. We must make it clear that this behaviour must stop.

While there has been some agreement from those opposite, there has also been quite a bit of flip-flopping. Do people have the right to voice their concerns? Yes, absolutely they do. But do they have the right to come onto my property or your property to voice those concerns and put my enterprise at risk? The answer to that is quite simply: no. This bill is the first time that a farmer's right to farm will be embedded in our laws, protecting farmers from nuisance claims, illegal hunters and extremist activities who are damaging our farmers and—let us be honest—confusing consumers. It is not just the random trespass that causes issues but also the threat of biosecurity breaches, which also are a real issue when unintended and uninvited visitors enter inclosed lands. The Dubbo electorate has a broad spectrum of primary producers ranging from sheep and cattle farmers, corn and cotton growers and those wonderful producers who harvest the grapes that are responsible for our wonderful wines.

As I mentioned, my electorate is not only the geographical centre on the map but also the heartbeat of New South Wales. Our farmers are providing the food and fibre we rely on to feed and clothe not just those who live in New South Wales and Australia but people right around the world. As we have heard, this bill will increase penalties and introduce new offences under the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901, including: increasing the penalty for aggravated trespass from a maximum of \$5,500 to \$13,200 as well as a new 12-month term of imprisonment, or three years if the offence is committed in company; increasing the penalty for any aggravated trespass that causes a serious safety risk, which will attract a three-year maximum imprisonment term; and introducing new offences to better address common trespass activities including an aggravated offence for damaging property in the process of any unlawful entry and wilfully or negligently releasing stock in the process of the unlawful entry.

There is also a new offence for inciting, directing, counselling, inducing or procuring any aggravated unlawful entry by another person. That will have a fine of \$11,000 and/or 12 months imprisonment. This bill is something that the farming, grazing, horticultural and livestock producers in my electorate are very happy to see. Many producers have spoken to me on this very issue and they are completely supportive of this bill and the need for a bill of this type to be introduced. But the issue of trespassers on farming properties can also have ramifications for the wider community.

In recent times the NSW Police Force has put a real emphasis on rural crime and a lot of that revolves around the theft of firearms from farms. That happens far more often than we would like to imagine and we know what can happen when firearms fall into the wrong hands. This is not pie in the sky stuff I am talking about: It has been happening and it has happened a number of times in my electorate alone. Firearms kept by farmers have been the target of thieves who creep onto their premises in the dark of night or when property owners are in the back paddock. It is hard to be everywhere all the time when we are talking about vast areas of land. While they are at it they might steal some petrol or diesel. That all adds to the stress and financial burden on our farmers. The theft of stock is heartbreaking. Over the past few years hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of stock has been pilfered.

These are real issues that are confronting our primary producers. They are issues that need to be fixed and this bill aims to do just that. In recent times there seems to have been an increase in the belief by some that essentially they can do whatever they want on someone else's property without much recourse. Well, thankfully that is about to change—and change for the better. Unfortunately most of us know somebody who has been the victim of property crime, often through a break and enter in their home or perhaps their place of work. We know the anger, the hurt and the emotional trauma that causes within communities. Our agricultural property owners



should be treated absolutely no differently. The land they farm or run stock on is their home and it is their business. It is vitally important that we protect them in the same way as we protect the rest of the population.

It is also important that we protect the rights of farmers in the wake of continued residential expansion. We certainly do not want to see situations where longstanding farming enterprises have their viability placed in jeopardy due to arguments over noise, lighting or smell. Again, this a very real problem and one that will become a greater issue and continue to grow as our towns, regional cities and metropolitan cities continue to grow. In recent times this issue has been raised with me specifically by a local dairy company. When appointed, the agricultural commissioner will be focusing on finding a way to protect our farmers and their rights so they can continue what they have done in the long term and not be put at risk by someone who has moved into a smaller property and suddenly says, "Well, I don't like the smell of the cows in the next paddock."

Put simply, provisions should be put in place to ensure our primary producers are able to do what they do best—produce. In simple terms the Right to Farm Bill 2019 will introduce the toughest penalties in Australia for farm trespass, including three years jail time and up to \$22,000 in fines. Currently there is no jail time for trespass. The bill also will introduce new offences and aggravating factors for activities such as trespassing as a group, damaging property and releasing livestock. It will give legal recognition of a farmer's right to farm, shielding them from nuisance claims. The Government is drawing a line: Invade a farm and you'll do time. Let us be clear: If you eat, you need farmers, and right now, as I mentioned, our farmers are battling the worst drought on record and need all our support to make sure they can keep doing what they do best—feed and clothe us. This bill is the biggest step forward we have seen in doing exactly that. I commend the Minister for introducing the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (15:50):** It is with pleasure that I participate in debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. Although this legislation falls far short of what the Coalition promised the industry during the election period—this bill now just seems to double up on existing laws and protections—it is important for the Government to put protections in place for farmers. What our farmers really need is respect, dignity and certainty that their land is not going to be sold off for ever-encroaching urban development, and proper planning legislation that will reflect that need, not this thrown-together bill. We know how fragile our local farming industry can be. It is interesting that during the debate the member for Upper Hunter said that urban residents have no idea. I acknowledge the hard work of farmers in my community but point out that New South Wales farmers have been undermined by cheap foreign-imported produce, having their land stripped out from under them by mining companies for fracking, and by dodgy water deals.

I am really lucky to have a very vibrant farming community in my electorate. Mangrove Mountain and surrounds is home to flower farms, avocado farms, cucumber farms and chicken farms, which cause some degree of concern to people who are looking for a tree change and end up buying next door to a chicken farm. This legislation will go some way to protecting established farms from the complaints and abuse laid upon them simply for running their business in what is becoming an increasingly residential area. I give a shout-out to all the other farmers in my electorate. I know the electorate has a long history of growing fruit, which is really important to our east coast beverages community. My electorate also is home to many other organisations that supply the Sydney market with produce from one of the farming communities that is closest to this big city.

The bill addresses the serious consideration about protections for biosecurity on our farms. Traditionally farms had the benefit of being far away from communities, but more and more often, with suburban sprawl and new greenfields opening up to residential development, with the growth in popularity of farmgate markets and with some people looking to purposefully trespass on farm land to disrupt activities, biosecurity concerns in the food supply chain can emerge. The memory of the Newcastle disease outbreak still runs deep on the Central Coast and not just in the farming community. Twenty years ago Newcastle disease decimated our poultry industry and resulted in the culling of more than two million birds. Controlling the disease required multistage decontaminations, long quarantines and loss of income. Even though the disease was confined to one area it took three months to control with up to 5,000 people working on eradication. It is estimated to have cost the Government around \$22 million excluding compensation.

I acknowledge my predecessor, Mr Chris Holstein. I speak of him with the fear of what could happen if we do not continue with and increase the biosecurity protection of our farms across New South Wales. In response to what happened in my community, poultry carcasses and shed materials were buried in three containment pits on Mangrove Mountain. Since that time bores surrounding each pit monitor potential impact of the sites on groundwater quality. Our farmers are rightly still on high alert to make sure it does not happen again. This is a real and continuing issue for the industry and not something taken lightly. Biosecurity is vital for the protection of the New South Wales agricultural sector, which already has been hit hard by the ongoing drought.

Local farmers and the major agribusinesses who buy our local produce are serious about making sure their supply chains are not breached and that the product they are growing is safe and reflects the hard work and

dedication they put into it. The last thing they want or need is an unknown, uncontrolled element coming onto their farms and bringing with it contagions or contaminants. Many farms are small businesses like any other and there can be extremely high costs resulting from such breaches. We have heard that farmers in Victoria have alleged that activists have caused deaths to animals and biosecurity breaches on their farms. They allege activists were behind an incident which saw chickens let out of pens, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of laying hens attacked by predators, costing thousands of dollars.

In another incident a break-in at another family-run piggery resulted in cut fences, broken doors and a biosecurity breach which resulted in a respiratory problem requiring vaccination of all animals on the farm. Our farms in New South Wales are not just workplaces. They are also homes for families and children who have a legitimate expectation that they can go about their lives and businesses lawfully without having their property invaded by groups of activists. Farmers should have the right to control who comes onto their land. This bill will go some way to ensuring that. While many farmers will welcome this bill, it raises serious questions about the priorities of this Government.

We know that farmers across the State are without water and are not just ignored but actively worked against by this Government, which does dodgy water deals, with just a tiny piecemeal offering. This bill will do nothing to deal with larger and much more serious issues facing our farming industry. It is time the Government got serious and actually dealt with the serious matters affecting farmers that are seeing the end of generations of farming families because it just is not possible to be a farmer in Australia anymore. We are seeing regional communities dying. The member for Barwon has come into the Chamber. I send my greatest respect to the communities in his electorate that are suffering more than I think us townies will ever begin to imagine.

It is a time when the Government should be trying to encourage people to move out of Sydney. It is doing nothing to make it possible for people to maintain a decent quality of life in rural communities. The member for the Upper Hunter says he is the Parliamentary Secretary for dairy, yet when he goes out to visit groups in other agricultural industries he says he is the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture. It appears that he has not even read the depth of the bill and he comes in here making a mockery of us standing up for farmers in our community. I thank my local farmers for their work in feeding our community, employing so many workers and bringing so much light, colour and diversity to our region.

Our farmers deserve so much better from this Government and there is so much work to be done. Hopefully the Government will take on board some of the constructive criticism in this debate and deliver a better deal for our farmers and also takes heed of the voice of our local councils across New South Wales with guidance around planning. Local councils are already dumped with massive cost cuts, forced amalgamations and lack of support from the Liberal Government to help them with what is going to be a future planning debacle without additional planning support from the New South Wales Government.

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (15:57):** I support the Right to Farm Bill 2019 and commend the Minister for bringing it to the House. Farming is one of the key industries underpinning the growth and development of our State. For the Cootamundra electorate, home to cattle, sheep, pork, poultry, dairy cattle and other livestock operations as well as abattoirs, horticulture, viticulture and broadacre farming, agriculture is a vital part of our economy and the fabric of our communities. I am extremely proud of our agricultural producers for their efforts and their resilience in battling a myriad of challenges, with drought and floods only part of these pressures.

It is not right that agricultural producers should also face threats from activists who trespass on their land, placing at risk the welfare of farmers, their families, the animals under their care and their farms. Nor should they face interference from neighbours who complain about noise, dust or odour from legitimate and legal farming practices. It is estimated that Australia-wide agriculture produces approximately 93 per cent of daily domestic food supply, supporting over 1.6 million jobs along the supply chain and contributing 3 per cent to Australia's total gross domestic product. In New South Wales agriculture produced approximately \$13.4 billion in farmgate output in 2017-2018, or around 23 per cent of national farmgate output.

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics data for 2015-2016, New South Wales produced 32 per cent of Australia's total egg production, 29 per cent of wool, 40 per cent of lucerne, 38 per cent of macadamias, 29 per cent of poultry, 51 per cent of cut turf, 48 per cent of maize for grain and 24 per cent of mushrooms. The Cootamundra electorate is a rural electorate that contributes a significant portion of the State's agricultural production. According to the 2016 census, 20 per cent of people in the Cootamundra electorate are employed in the agriculture sector, the biggest industry employer for our region.

The New South Wales Government is committed to supporting agriculture in this State. In response to the growing threat of rural crime, the Rural Crime Legislation Amendment Bill passed in 2017 and has ensured that perpetrators face the full force of available laws. The recent NSW Police Force re-engineering program

strengthened emphasis on rural crime. We now have three police officers solely focused on rural crime in the Cootamundra electorate. In recent times we have seen a growing number of attacks on farms by individuals and groups with an anti-farming agenda, including a number of significant attacks on farming operations in the Cootamundra electorate. Not only do these attacks impact production but they also place at risk the wellbeing of our farmers and farming communities. The nature of these attacks is becoming increasingly more aggressive and radical. Our agricultural producers and their operations must be protected.

The New South Wales Government has committed to protecting farmers from trespass. Earlier this year the Government introduced the Biosecurity Amendment (Biosecurity Management Plans) Regulation 2019 in recognition of the risks that activists entering farmland pose to farm biosecurity. People coming onto farms without going through the proper biosecurity precautions risk spreading and introducing pests and diseases that not only impact productivity but can also cause serious harm to animals. For example, African swine fever is a highly contagious, deadly disease affecting pigs for which there is no commercial vaccination and it is spreading rapidly across Asia. This recent bill aims to support farmers to control these types of outbreaks.

The legislation introduced tough new penalties for individuals who enter farms and fail to comply with biosecurity management plans. These two previous measures were an important step in the right direction and we are here today to strengthen our laws further, increasing the penalties and protections against aggravated trespass by amending the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 No. 33. The amendments will extend the circumstances of aggravation for an offence of entering private land without permission or failing to leave when asked. This part of the bill applies to all inclosed lands, including meat processing plants. Trespass may be conducted by individuals or in groups and the amendments to subclause 4B (1) will increase the penalties for both of these circumstances. They make it clear that creating a safety risk is completely unacceptable by also increasing that penalty.

Trespassers who hinder or attempt to hinder the usual course of the business for the farm will be expressly prohibited under amendments to paragraph 4B (1) (a). It is completely unacceptable that a farmer's property be damaged or livestock be released by a trespasser. The addition of paragraphs 4B (1) (h) and (i) will add these as aggravating factors for trespass. This would include circumstances where fences are cut. Out-of-touch organisations sitting in an office in Sydney will no longer be able to hire muscle on the ground to harass farmers with the addition of section 4C to introduce a new offence of directing, inciting, counselling, procuring or inducing the commission of aggravated trespass.

The penalty for leaving a gate open under section 5 will also be increased. Damage to property or the releasing of stock is intolerable and creates a safety and welfare risk for those animals as well as for people. I cannot stress enough how dangerous and irresponsible many previous examples of farm visits by activists have been. For example, where stock are released onto a public road, either through inadvertently leaving a gate open or a deliberate action, there is a risk that they may be hit by a motorist, injuring or killing the animal and the people travelling in a car.

Trespassers may unintentionally frighten farm animals and cause them to hurt a nearby person, flee or injure themselves by jumping through fences. Stress to the animal through fear or illness can also impact on productivity. For example, intruders may stress sows and cause them to abort their piglets. A dairy farmer in my electorate explained that if cattle are released or frightened by strangers in their pens they could injure themselves or develop mastitis if they missed their routine milking. A poultry operator in my electorate explained the impacts that trespassers have had on their birds. The intruders shone torches at the birds at a time when they would usually be asleep, which was frightening and confusing for the birds. Usually they are fed in the morning when they wake and the lights made them think that it was time for breakfast. Stress from the ordeal inhibited them from laying eggs, which led to other health and productivity impacts.

However, the effect on the farm is not just physical. Negative portrayals on social media and other platforms, as well as the release of personal details without consent, can be detrimental to a business's reputation and the morale of its employees. People working in the agriculture sector care about the animals they look after and animal welfare is a top priority for successful agricultural businesses. Industries uphold a standard of animal welfare through best practice and in many cases auditing is carried out. One poultry farmer explained that reputation is paramount and industry standards do not permit poor operators to continue.

Several piggeries in my electorate have experienced break-ins in the middle of the night by trespassing activists. The trespassers disturbed and stressed the pigs who woke. The animals started to look for the food that they would normally receive on waking in the morning and became frightened and agitated. Footage of the pigs was then used to misrepresent the conditions inside the piggeries and as a result those operations have faced harassment and intimidation through mechanisms such as letters in the mail and silent phone calls. This is extremely frightening for farmers, farm workers and the families living on those farms.

Farmers and their families should feel safe in their own homes and it is completely unacceptable that farmers and their families may go to sleep fearing the arrival of activists in the night or that employees may arrive at work in the early morning fearing for their safety. Young children growing up on farms should not feel victimised or ashamed as a result of trespassers' actions. Our next generation is crucial to the ongoing success of the industry and we need to make sure that we foster a sense of pride in young people who are considering a career in agriculture. Producers have raised with me concerns about trespassers injuring themselves on a property they have illegally entered. Whilst landowners do owe a duty of care to all visitors, including trespassers, the Civil Liability Act 2002 requires courts to consider the obviousness of the risk and contributing negligence on the part of the trespasser. This lowers the scope of the duty of care owed to a trespasser. [*Extension of time*]

I also note that the New South Wales Government is exploring options for drones, which was a recommendation of the 2018 inquiry into unauthorised filming and surveillance. The Right to Farm Bill 2019 will introduce a new Right to Farm Act, which will provide a defence for agricultural producers who are carrying out commercial agricultural activity against nuisance complaints about accepted agricultural practices. Sometimes people who move to rural areas to seek a rural lifestyle discover that there are some elements to the lifestyle that they find unpleasant, such as dust and noise from trucks or machinery or the smell of manure. Those of us from farming communities know and accept that some noises, smells and sights are part and parcel of a farming lifestyle. However, newcomers often make nuisance complaints and in some cases they have commenced litigations against agricultural producers for the lawful operations of their businesses. Litigations are not only costly but also impede productivity and force producers to change methods of production outside of best practice.

It is vital that we support farmers to conduct lawful farming practices without the risk of nuisance claims. Agricultural producers in New South Wales are globally competitive and we must permit them to continue to perform according to industry best practice without the interference of nuisance claims by people who do not properly understand farming. To deter frivolous claims, section 4 of the Right to Farm Bill will prevent an action for the tort of nuisance being brought when the commercial agricultural activity is being carried out lawfully. If an issue does reach the stage of litigation and a court does find that an activity is a nuisance, section 5 of the bill will prevent the court from ordering the activity be stopped if that activity can be managed, modified or reduced in a way that enables the agricultural operation to continue in an efficient and commercially viable manner and is unlikely to significantly disturb the person who made the complaint.

One intensive poultry operator in my electorate reflected that it is possible that the people making trivial complains about farming operations do not consider the ongoing consequences of their actions. Costly legal actions can affect businesses, which in turn affects the people who rely on those operations for an income. In some cases the complainant has purchased a property next to an agricultural operation and then complained about activities that have been carried out since long before they took up residence there. Nothing in the Right to Farm Bill prevents protesters from legally protesting; rather it adds a layer of protection and certainty for agricultural producers. It makes it clear that agriculture is important and sends a message that we value the food and fibre that is produced and the efforts of those who produce it. It shows that we will stand strong in the face of those who try to denigrate the New South Wales agriculture sector. In closing, I thank the numerous farmers and agricultural producers across my electorate who we consulted with for their contributions to both the design of this bill and to my contribution to this debate. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (16:11):** I speak in debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. The concerns this bill seeks to address are important to rural people who significantly depend on agriculture as both a way of life and a business. The economic viability of most communities in the Barwon electorate is underpinned by successful agriculture. The current drought is a significant impediment to economic and community viability and is being felt deeply by all communities in my area. There is a close relationship between our towns and farmers and between farmers and the land. The majority of farms in the Barwon area are family operations and many of them are intergenerational. Those operations consist of husbands, wives and their children, who correctly view their farms as homes and safe places. The bill seeks to put a stop to the increasing number of invasions of those safe places for the purposes of activism. This behaviour has been driven by the visual connectivity offered through platforms such as Facebook.

The bill seeks to address unwarned, unwarranted and, unfortunately, often aggressive situations where people unknown to a farmer organise themselves to arrive and deliberately create a confrontational situation with unsuspecting people who are simply going about their legal farming business. As I said, farming operations often involve children of all ages who are genuinely involved in farm activities. They have a right to feel safe within the confines of their farming operations. I ask those who have no experience with these kinds of businesses and lifestyles to consider that these invasions are similar to a home invasion where someone goes into a person's home and looks through their personal items while they are absent. The common experience of people who have experienced that is a loss of personal security and increased anxiety.

For several years the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers [SFF] Party has been concerned that the law is lacking in responses to organised and deliberately confrontational trespassing. The SFF Party has raised the issue with the Government consistently over time but the Government has been uninterested in taking action. However, we were not dissuaded by the lack of interest from the Government. We are well aware that the ongoing interest of our party in this matter and similar matters ultimately creates resolve from disinterest. One of the strengths of our party is our membership in both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. It is the intention of the SFF Party members of this House to flag amendments to this bill and to the Crimes Act 1900 that will be pursued in the Legislative Council.

While we agree with the intent of this bill, we do not believe it will deliver a sufficient deterrent to stop this concerning behaviour. There are also questions that need to be answered regarding agriculture-related businesses that are not on agricultural or farming land. My parliamentary colleague the member for Orange has detailed the amendments that will be moved in the Legislative Council. I am concerned that there is some potential for this bill to have a negative impact on the rights of farmers, among others, to oppose coal seam gas operations where the Government has granted a coal seam gas company right of access onto a farmer's inclosed land. These concerns should be fully addressed in the committee we expect to see formed in the upper House.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (16:14):** It gives me great pleasure to speak in the debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I commend the Minister and the Government for undertaking to introduce this proactive measure to eliminate illegal trespassing on farming and agricultural businesses and many other pursuits on rural land—unfortunately something I have witnessed in my time as a representative. Today my electorate of Castle Hill has a small amount of agricultural land and market gardening. Prior to its redistribution, I represented the majority of the vast areas of farming land across the Hawkesbury region. It was a very productive area which contained duck farming, chicken farming, poultry farming and many horse breeding and thoroughbred training establishments. The area was largely populated with animals and agricultural pursuits. My family and I have always lived on rural land and kept animals.

In 2009 or 2010 I was absolutely incensed when a person contacted my office to tell me that protesters and illegal trespassers had entered a duck farm along Putty Road, up past Colo Heights. I was so incensed because of the biosecurity risk—especially to birds, ducks, chickens and other animals—when irresponsible people take it upon themselves to trespass onto other people's land. I would not have been as well versed in the risks of biosecurity had it not been for the outbreak of equine influenza in 2007. I do not know how many times I rose, when I was on the other side of the House in Opposition, and pleaded with the New South Wales Labor Government of the day to declare a state of emergency, given the impact of equine influenza. Equine influenza had been prominent around the world but because of Australia's good procedures and practices regarding animal movement into our country we had never seen the threat on our doorstep. I think we felt we were immune from equine influenza entering this country, but how wrong we were.

In 2007 equine influenza brought the New South Wales racing industry to its knees. It had the same effect on the racing industries in Victoria and Queensland and the Queensland Government at the time declared a state of emergency. Given the enormous benefits derived from the horse racing industry through betting and taxation, I felt it was only fair that government should do everything it could to sustain that particular industry. Sadly it fell to the Howard Government—and I acknowledge not only the Prime Minister at the time, John Howard, but also the Hon. Peter McGauran. Mr McGauran was a member of the National Party who pleaded with his Prime Minister to take action and subsequently many hundreds of millions of dollars were injected across the industry in order to stop the disease in its tracks and prevent its further spread.

It also provided immunisation to many affected animals and prevented the loss of the jobs of thousands of casual workers involved in the thoroughbred racing industry. At the time I felt that when people moved away from the industry—even for a short time, a matter of weeks—it would be difficult to replenish that particular employment. Full credit should be given to the Howard Government. It provided the massive injection of funds which ultimately sustained the industry and enabled it to come out the other side. Better protections have been put in place and the industry is stronger now than it ever was.

The bill seeks to support New South Wales farmers undertaking lawful primary production operations and protect them from illegal trespass and its impacts. This Government's election commitment was to introduce specific legislation and policy to support and protect farmers' right to farm. That is exactly what farmers should have. They have enough on their plate. We acknowledge that today we are in the worst drought in recorded history in this country. If that is not enough, farmers have to put up with illegal trespass on their properties and the risks to the safety of the trespassers, the farmers and the animals. We have seen many instances where animals have been carried off farm. Once again this presents a high biosecurity risk.

It is also upsetting to many families who have farmed their land for generation after generation. It is nothing short of abhorrent and disgusting that people think they have a right to climb through fences and disrupt

those particular farming industries. It should be ruled out. I cite the increased penalties in the bill and the introduction of new offences within the Inclosed Lands Protection Act, including increasing the penalty for aggravated trespass from a maximum of \$5,500 to \$13,200, together with 12 months imprisonment, or three years jail if the offence is committed in company. That is the sort of message we need to send to these people. There is nothing wrong with peaceful protest. Indeed peaceful protest is very much a part of our make-up and very much a part of the dichotomy of the Australian population.

In the 12 years that I have been in this place, we have seen many protests in front of this House of democracy and no doubt we will see many more in the time I am here and well into the future. But the fact remains protest and trespass on private property should not be permitted and that is what the bill seeks to address. In 2018 the Government committed to reviewing the sufficiency of penalties for trespass. The initial increase to \$13,200 and 12 months imprisonment or three years if in company goes a long way to sending a clear message that if people are stupid enough to trespass, after the legislation passes, they deserve to feel the full force of the law. This legislation has been a long time coming. I think it will be welcomed very broadly by everyone who undertakes agricultural pursuits across our rural land. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (16:22):** I speak briefly in debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I believe property owners generally have a fundamental right to keep unwanted, uninvited and sometimes militant trespassers off their property, regardless of whether they are on a 1,000 hectare farm in the Hunter Valley or further west or living in a one-bedroom unit in Surry Hills.

People living and working on rural properties have a fundamental right to perform legal farming practices or approved activities without nuisance or illegal trespass on their property. Too often in recent times we have seen those farms become the scene of an ideological warfare that is poorly targeted and, in many cases, dangerous. This issue first came to my attention in Lake Macquarie some five years ago when I was contacted by a young family who were producing eggs, which is an industry that is quite common in my area. The family had been targeted by a website called Aussie Farms. The young family were doing a great job in an area that was relatively close to other residential areas and that had never been the subject of any complaint from the community. In fact the community had embraced them as part of the milieu, of the character and tradition of the area. The couple and their daughter were targeted and intimidated by people associated with this particular website.

I totally accept that people can have different ideological arguments, but invading privately owned farms and homes to push those arguments is not, in my opinion, acceptable, and nor is any other form of offsite intimidation. Some of the activities carried out by activists in recent times have been appalling and also dangerous for all concerned. I believe that in the eyes of many they have damaged their cause more than they have promoted it. According to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, the number of invasions or incidents of trespass on rural farms and properties has increased by 27 per cent since 2014. The tactics employed by some of those groups and by some animal rights groups have been aggressive and way over the top.

I absolutely support people's right to protest, but quietly invading a family's property in the dead of night, often wearing face-concealing dress, and then stealing or interfering with stock or property is wrong and dangerous and does no cause or person any good. Chaining oneself to machinery is not the safest way to make a point, however valid one might think that point is. Bullying or threatening a legally operating farmer, farming family or farm employee does nothing to promote a vegan diet, if that is what they are pursuing, or to provide a better welfare outcome for animals.

I note the comments from other members and I agree with many. In particular, I agree that vigilantism is sometimes born of the lack of adequate oversight from legal or industry regulators. I also accept there have been examples of illegal practice or animal cruelty on some farms, which have been identified by groups other than through the official process. I do not for a minute think that every single farm or primary industry operation in this State performs entirely within the rules all of the time. But there is a fair argument that the regulators or inspectors are not adequately empowered or funded to regulate or inspect properly.

Groups such as the RSPCA and other animal welfare groups provide oversight of things such as animal welfare. Departments such as the Environment Protection Agency are charged with monitoring and ensuring that things happen within the law or within appropriate legal guidelines to minimise offsite and environmental impacts. But those groups cannot do the job properly if they are not adequately equipped to do it. That is something the Government could be doing better and should address, particularly regarding the RSPCA. While the Minister is in the Chamber, I take the opportunity to note that some time ago I sat on an inquiry into companion animal breeding practices, which the Minister chaired. I was shocked to find just how little resourcing the RSPCA receives from the Government. I raise that and ask that the Minister be mindful of whether there is adequate resourcing for those oversight organisations and address it if possible.

But that is not the primary focus of this bill, which is aimed at protecting inclosed lands and private farming operations from nuisance trespassers, vigilantes, illegal hunters and those who seek to disrupt legal operations. The bill also introduces legislation to further protect primary producers from conflict and interference caused by neighbours or other land users. I will not speak in detail to that part of the bill, other than to say that it will further reinforce protections for lawful operations. But there may be further actions in relation to nuisance that could complement the intention of the bill through mechanisms such as section 149 certificates, as raised by the member for Ballina, or other ideas that may have been suggested by other members during the debate.

I accept that some primary industry operations have the capacity to create noise or odour issues and the like for neighbours, particularly in areas where the urban residential sprawl is meeting the fringes of what have been traditional farming or agricultural areas. In the vast majority of those cases, the farming operations have existed for generations and operate under conditioned approval or legal guidelines in terms of things such as noise and odour. Their lawful operations, then, should be legally protected from those who would seek to disrupt them with vexatious or frivolous claims. Our farmers and primary producers have enough to deal with without the added burden of having their lawful operations unduly and unfairly disrupted. Some believe the bill goes too far; others—including, as we have just heard, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party—want tougher measures and penalties. Is the bill perfect? Probably not. But as a start, I believe it is a genuine attempt to assist farmers with just one of their challenges and therefore is supportable. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (16:29):** I make a small contribution to the second reading debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I thank Minister Adam Marshall for addressing this important issue. I speak as the member for a regional community and as someone raised on the land. While this State has a raft of laws which limit protest, which protect landowners and tenants from trespass and which guard communities and neighbours from excesses of noise, odour and what the law calls nuisance, a genuine gap has been identified and it will be remedied by the bill before us. The tort or wrongdoing of nuisance is a part of our legal landscape with a long history.

Quiet enjoyment—a quaint term, perhaps, but a legal concept fundamental to our social fabric—is the backbone of our society and encapsulates more than can be put into words about our way of life. We know we can enter a contract to purchase land or to rent someone else's property; more than that, we can set about enjoying life from this position. At a certain point, however, one person's rights of enjoyment, of conducting life and of conducting business will come up against another person's wishes. Black letter law struggles with this. How do we sort out the balance in mere words? In our connection with property—and, particularly for business owners and operators, it is the business they are building up or fighting to preserve—the basis for caring is emotional too.

The role of this place is to review and, if necessary, reset the point of balance in our legislation and regulation when, from time to time, a fresh challenge or new technology starts tipping things to the point where that quiet enjoyment is undermined. The Minister has crystallised a lot of the thinking and concerns of the regional communities of New South Wales by proposing a new balance point for our laws on nuisance, one that recognises the fundamental role of farming and food production in supporting all of us. The tort of nuisance is a protection, but it is also being seen and utilised as a tool of protest and disruption. That is perhaps not a role we can all—or in all ways—support. Clause 4 of the bill addresses this matter head-on. The clause states:

- (1) No action lies in respect of nuisance by reason only of the carrying out of a commercial agricultural activity if—
  - (a) the activity is carried out lawfully, and
  - (b) the activity is not carried out negligently, and
  - (c) the activity is carried out on agricultural land, and
  - (d) the land on which the activity is carried out has been used for the purposes of agriculture for a period of at least 12 months.

Clause 5 calls upon the courts to support farming that meets current standards. The clause states:

- (2) The court must not order the complete cessation of the commercial agricultural activity if the court is satisfied that it could make an order that would permit the continuation of the activity in a manner—
  - (a) that is managed, modified or reduced, and
  - (b) consistent with an efficient and commercially viable agricultural operation, and
  - (c) unlikely to significantly disturb the other party to the proceedings. These are sensible improvements to our laws. Particularly as our peri-urban environment expands and interfaces with our agriculture community, we need to support the right to farm. Schedule 2, Amendment of Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901, acknowledges the concerns of those in our agriculture industry. Earlier this week I was in Boree Creek speaking with farmers, and they raised concerns about illegal trespass—concerns that touch upon their safety and their security. There are people living or working on farms and in primary production who are vulnerable to the threats presented by uninvited persons moving across the property, particularly after dark. This can be a lonely land. We are all challenged by research cited by the Minister

showing that there has been a 27 per cent increase in the number of recorded incidents of trespass on farms and rural properties since 2014, according to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. Just today, in the *Border Mail* newspaper, a story begins:

A boomgate will close access to Huon Hill on high fire-risk days this season and after-hours closure "to curb anti-social behaviour" is being considered.

This is a motion under consideration by Wodonga Council. CCTV cameras have been installed in this place and signs warning against illegal hunting are also prevalent on the hill. I raise this news story because it reminds us that it is no rare thing for a community to take action to rebalance its rights on various pieces of land. And it encapsulates a range of the fears and dangers presented by people who think they can behave how they wish on someone else's property. There is a parallel with the concerns of farmers about farm invasions. These trespassers might come to make their protests or to take videos, but they simultaneously trample over biosecurity measures through ignorance or simply in the heat of the moment.

In other words, there is an underlying level of disruption which has the potential to spread harm widely. The Huon Hill boom gate and CCTV are examples that illustrate the issue at multiple levels. Antisocial behaviour is just the start. The great underlying concern is of bushfire, whether commenced deliberately or through inadvertence in this bush setting. Unthinking or careless behaviour has ramifications for safety across whole communities. I support these changes to the use of an action for nuisance. I support the way the bill requires the courts to consider alternative orders before issuing an injunction or compelling the cessation of farming activity on a site. Our shared life, in modern communities, relies upon a maze of social contracts. Some of these join the individual to their community, to each other or to government.

A most basic point is the age-old trade-off we make—whether we realise it or not—with government in return for protection. Historically, and arguably just as pointedly today, this protection has been against external forces and powers. But protections for us as consumers, householders, tenants or business operators are part of our broader network of social contracts that build a just and fair society where people have room to express a host of freedoms. It is time to protect farmers and farm workers and their families from forms of protests which are unacceptably invasive, uncaring, indiscriminating and unsafe and which can be better directed elsewhere. This bill is welcomed by our farming community. I thank the Minister for his leadership on these important matters. I support the bill.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:37):** The Right to Farm Bill 2019 attempts to deal with Government claims that neighbours are instigating nuisance complaints against, and animal activists are wreaking havoc on, farms across the State. The agricultural industry is vital to the health and wellbeing of all residents. I have long supported retaining a food belt in and adjacent to Sydney to provide Sydneysiders with access to fresh food. A local food industry provides us with secure and safe produce without producing the "food mile" greenhouse gas emissions of imported food.

But I am concerned that this bill puts the property rights of the agricultural industry ahead of other important and competing outcomes, including the right to live in one's home free from environmental pollution, and the right for animals used in farming to be treated as live sentient beings. Urban sprawl has moved residential communities closer to food-producing regions and it is vital that this process does not result in the loss of our food belt. But removing neighbours' protections against disturbing environmental impacts caused by adjacent farms is not going to solve what is a strategic planning challenge. Furthermore, it is not clear whether access to nuisance claims poses any real threat to farming operations. Living adjacent to a farm has the potential to create serious impacts to the enjoyment of one's home including from noise, dust, water pollution or chemical drift. Neighbours should not have their option to have the courts address these impacts removed, and it is unfair for the Government to take away this protection while it actively pushes communities closer to the fringes of the city.

I am especially concerned by the intention of the bill to stop animal protection groups uncovering cruel operations in agricultural facilities. The bill more than doubles the penalties, introduces massive new jail terms of up to three years, and creates new offences and aggravating factors for trespassing offences aimed at animal welfare operations. The changes are clearly not about safety for farmers and their families, given the penalty is higher for someone who trespasses in a small group of three than for someone who trespasses with a gun. I am concerned this bill will silence the whistleblowers we rely on to uncover cruel practices in agricultural facilities. In many cases we have no idea what actually happens to animals on farms because it happens out of the public eye. What we do know—from the footage we have seen and the reports we have read—mostly comes from covert operations by animal protection groups. This transparency detects concealed cruel practices and helps inform consumers about the choices they make on their food. Indeed such exposés provide an important public benefit.

Staff on animal farming facilities who witness cruelty will have few options to get action under the bill. The not-for-profit organisations authorised to monitor animal welfare on farms are under-resourced and they, like the police, need evidence before they can instigate an investigation. I know of situations where would-be



whistleblowers who worked on facilities and saw serious animal welfare breaches could not get the authorities to act and who either entered the property at night to install cameras to get evidence or who reported what they saw to animal protection groups. Under the bill they will be at risk of serious penalties including jail time for trespassing or inciting others to trespass. Indeed, the proposed new offences around inciting someone to trespass create a very grey area in the law that requires clarity from the Minister.

We must not put at risk political engagement about animal welfare. If general statements about animal cruelty—whether in general or related to a specific facility—could be considered an aggravating factor for trespassing and incur a prison sentence it would create serious perverse community outcomes. Much of what animal protection groups do raises community awareness about cruelty in farming practices and in specific facilities, and this role is in the public interest. It is not even clear if there is a risk to media outlets who report stories about cruelty or who report on comments from someone who incites or directs others to take action against cruelty. The Minister must provide clarity in his response and ensure that reporting of cruelty by animal welfare groups and the media can continue without the threat of a breach.

Animal protection groups trespass and undertake covert surveillance because existing oversight and accountability measures are inadequate. Animal husbandry includes significant responsibility towards animals in recognition of their ability to feel physical and psychological pain, but sometimes profit or just sheer cruelty puts animals at risk of suffering, which can include torture, and that the community does not accept. This problem will not go away by criminalising and hindering the very important work of animal protection groups; it will just go undetected. It would be more effective and in line with community values and expectations if the Government instead focused on improving transparency and accountability on farms and at commercial animal facilities.

The organisations tasked to oversee the industry need better resources to undertake regular unannounced inspections and to investigate complaints. Compulsory closed-circuit television cameras in all commercial animal facilities, farms and slaughterhouses would encourage compliance with animal welfare laws and codes. This bill fails to get the balance right between private property rights, environmental impacts and animal welfare. I thank the Minister for his consultation on the bill and I thank the members of the Animal Justice Party for allowing me to consult with them on the bill. It will come as no surprise to the Minister that I share the view of the Animal Justice Party on this legislation and that I do not support the bill.

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:43):** I am pleased to speak in debate on the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I have listened to some of the debate in this Chamber today and I think those opposing the bill are misinterpreting what the bill stands for. It is about giving certainty to farmers that their assets, stock and property will be protected and that protesters will no longer be able to violate a farmer's privacy and territory. Farmers have a right to take control of their land. They work 24/7, often for little financial reward and right now, when they have a drought to deal with, this bill is what is needed to offer some certainty in uncertain times.

The bill is part of the Government's election commitment to protect farmers' right to farm. In 2018 the Government committed to reviewing the sufficiency of penalties for trespass in response to the recommendations of a parliamentary inquiry into landowner protection from unauthorised filming or surveillance. A multi-department working group was established. The amendments to the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 recommended by the working group addressed general gaps in trespass law and the deterrence of on-farm protests. The bill will ensure that New South Wales will have the strongest penalties in Australia for this conduct.

The proposal is to increase the maximum penalty for aggravated trespass to a fine of 120 penalty units, or \$13,200, and 12 months imprisonment from the current maximum penalty of a \$5,500 fine. The bill proposes to increase the maximum penalty for aggravated trespass when committed in a group to a fine of 200 penalty units, or \$22,000, and three years imprisonment. It increases the maximum penalty for aggravated trespass when the trespasser does anything that gives rise to a serious safety risk to a fine of 200 penalty units, or \$22,000, and three years imprisonment.

The bill introduces a new aggravating factor for aggravated trespass where the trespasser damages property in the process of trespassing. Further, it introduces a new aggravating factor for aggravated trespass where the trespasser wilfully or negligently releases stock in the process of trespassing. The bill seeks to introduce a new offence of inciting the commission of another aggravated trespass offence, which is punishable by a fine of 100 penalty units, or \$11,000, and 12 months imprisonment. Finally, the bill proposes to increase the maximum penalty for leaving a gate open to 15 penalty units, or \$1,650, from the current penalty of two penalty units, or \$220.

The bill establishes a new Right to Farm Act, which provides a defence for agricultural producers against common law nuisance claims and protection from being subject to injunction orders based on nuisance findings relating to agricultural enterprises. Stakeholders, including the Law Society of New South Wales, the NSW Bar Association, NSW Legal Aid, the NSW Farmers Association and the National Farmers' Federation, have been

consulted on the bill. I am told by the Minister that the Country Women's Association is also very supportive of the bill.

The notion that the bill should incorporate changes to planning laws is totally removed from the intention of the bill. Those supporting this notion just do not get the purpose of the bill. They need to spend less time enjoying lattes at inner-city cafes and more time sheep dipping, lettuce planting or strawberry picking to really understand what it is like to be our farming friends. How dare activists think they know best? They scour the landscape for ideological ideas that they can champion. They should be getting down on bended knee and giving thanks to our primary producers, who often for generations have worked the land, herded cattle, sheared sheep and buried their livestock when they can no longer protect them from drought. Do they not have a right to protect their farms? Shame on protesters who have shown no respect for our farming families.

It is up to the Liberal-Nationals State Government to acknowledge the needs of farmers and to put the bill forward. I represent the electorate of Hawkesbury. Many of my constituents are farmers and breeders and they have expressed their appreciation for the intention of the bill. They are a silent, hardworking, genuine group of people who just want to be able to get on with their farming. They want legislation like this bill before the House to protect them in the future.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (16:53):**

I support our local farmers and I support the Right to Farm Bill 2019 that is before the House. Under the bill farm trespassers will face the toughest penalties in Australia, including up to three years jail time. The bill recognises a farmer's inherent right to farm and provides safeguards against nonsense nuisance claims. It has not come soon enough. The Tamworth electorate has had enough of attacks against hardworking farming families. Agriculture Minister Adam Marshall is from our region. He was born and bred in Gunnedah and is now the member for Northern Tablelands, just up the road from the Tamworth electorate. This groundbreaking piece of legislation, introduced by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government, is crystal clear in being a deterrent to any would-be vigilantes considering unlawfully trespassing on farming properties in the Tamworth electorate. I am calling on everyone in the Tamworth electorate to go to [www.righttofarm.com.au](http://www.righttofarm.com.au) and show their support for our farmers.

I will recap the intent of the Right to Farm Bill. It introduces the toughest penalties in Australia for farm trespass, including three years jail time and up to \$22,000 in fines. Currently there is no jail time for trespass. It introduces new offences and aggravating factors for activities such as trespassing as a group, damaging property and releasing livestock. It gives legal recognition to a farmer's right to farm and will shield them from nuisance claims. I know in farming operations in the Tamworth electorate that animal welfare and integrity is at the top of every agricultural enterprise. In addition, biosecurity remains a significant focus of our agricultural enterprises so that when people come and go they do not carry dust and animal diseases with them. In this way, farmers keep their farms free of any diseases that would impact on their farming operation. Biosecurity is critical in making sure that our farmers are able to thrive and survive. It enhances a farm's viability. Farmers should not have to worry about people who trespass and threaten their operation.

Poultry is a significant employer in the Tamworth electorate and a significant contributor to our economy. I say to those who wish to trespass, who wish to wear camouflage and hidden cameras and break into people's properties, nine times out of 10 the farmers live on those properties with their families. It was a disgraceful act to put a map on the internet for all to see highlighting where the farmers live. It virtually created a terrorist's guide to farming families in regional New South Wales. It was disgraceful. I had calls from farming families in the Tamworth electorate who expressed their deep concern that their private place of residence, which is their workplace as well, was on the internet for all to see.

It is tough enough to make a quid in agriculture in New South Wales, particularly regional New South Wales. We want our farmers to thrive and survive and we want to enhance farm viability. We do not want our farmers to be held to ransom by those who seek to destroy the agricultural industry. NSW Farmers is calling on all political parties to back the farm trespass reform package that is being debated in Parliament today. NSW Farmers is in lock step with us. President of NSW Farmers James Jackson stated, "The introduction of increased penalties, including potential jail terms, recognises the significant impact for farming families from illegal entry on farms. It is a criminal activity that should be recognised as such."

In Tamworth we have intensive livestock in the form of poultry farms, which are split between broiler farms and egg production. These farms have the highest welfare and integrity. In terms of livestock—whether it is sheep, cattle or poultry—welfare and integrity is at the top of the tree. We want to ensure that our Aussie farmers, our regional farmers, particularly in the Tamworth electorate, feel protected. Up until now they have been at risk. Imagine after a long day's work—a 14-hour day perhaps—a farmer, his wife and his family have finished their day's work, had their dinner and gone to bed. Suddenly they hear noises or see strange lights or vehicles on

their property in the middle of the night. What are they to do? Their livelihood is threatened and they feel unsafe and insecure.

The Right to Farm Bill before the House is welcomed because it introduces the toughest penalties in Australia, including jail time, and recognises farmers' inherent right to farm. We need to protect our farming operations, our farmers and their families. These trespassers sneak around in the dead of night and cut chains and locks to gain access to farms and to get vision or, even worse, to place hidden cameras in barns, sheds and yards to capture footage to be used in evidence against the farmer, regardless of whether anything is untoward. They take the footage and flog it to the highest bidder and broadcast it on television to try to shut down hardworking, honest farming families who are doing the right thing, farming families who have welfare and integrity at the top of their list.

I live in the country and the trespass component concerns me when I see people who are not meant to be on a property. I get calls from farmers wanting the phone number of the rural police. I have received phone calls from farmers reporting stock theft, trespassing and illegal shooting where people have cut chains and broken down fences to hunt on properties. Again, there is the biosecurity risk. The toughest penalties should be in place for the new offences and aggravating factors for activities such as trespassing as a group, damaging property and releasing livestock. This also gives legal recognition to farmers' right to farm and shields them from nuisance claims. I support our farmers, who work hard to continue to provide the food and fibre to feed Australia.

My electorate is the food bowl of New South Wales. My community provides some of the finest food and fibre to markets, not only at a State level but also nationally and internationally. I call on everyone to go to the Right to Farm website and show support for our farmers. Let us stop this aggravated violence and trespass by terrorists who seek to shut down the agricultural industry. I congratulate the agriculture Minister, the former Mayor of Gunnedah and now member for Northern Tablelands, Adam Marshall, who understands and knows how important this is to farming operations and families in our regions. We know the important role that agriculture has to play. Farmers do the right thing. I fully support the Right to Farm Bill 2019. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:58):** I support the Right to Farm Bill 2019, which is an excellent piece of legislation. The Government is committed to protecting the right to farm in New South Wales. New South Wales has a long history of farming. It is a history we have every right to be proud of and has underpinned the growth and development of our great State. Agricultural procedures in New South Wales and Australia face a myriad of challenges but we are now seeing a new set of challenges emerge. The rise in on-farm trespass comes at a time when farmers are already battling the worst drought in New South Wales history. Farmers have enough to deal with as it is without having to worry about trespassers on their properties or defending their practices, which are legal.

The bill will hold trespassers accountable for the damage they cause when storming agricultural properties. It will provide farmers a legal defence against common law nuisance complaints that escalate to litigation. Survey results from Australian Pork Limited show the impact of farm trespass on productivity. The survey showed that 40 per cent of respondents who reported an experience in farm trespass noted a change in sow behaviour and productivity. A trespass can interrupt feed times or generally stress the sows and in some cases it can lead to piglet deaths. Complaints about farming operations also have implications on productivity. Complaints that escalate can force farmers to operate outside of best practice or limit the ability of farmers to innovate and grow their business.

**Debate interrupted.**

*Public Interest Debate*

### **ASSET PRIVATISATION**

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:00):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Condemns the Government for its ideological obsession with privatisation policies, including poles and wires, the land titles registry, public uses, Port Botany, Port Kembla, the Port of Newcastle and the Northern Beaches Hospital.
- (2) Condemns the Government's short-sightedness in removing more than \$70 billion in assets from public hands, which has removed stable sources of revenue.
- (3) Calls on the Government to rule out further privatisations, including the Forestry Corporation.

In moving this motion, I record for the House that my community knows that those opposite are obsessed with privatisation. They have seen it firsthand and they do not buy it. Power privatisation was front and centre in debates held during the election campaign in 2015. Those opposite said prices would go down in the energy

market if privatisation of the State's transmission system, the poles and wires, went ahead. My community did not buy into that at all. They accepted the argument from this side of the House that that was wrong. The result on the Central Coast was clear as crystal: Four Liberal-National Party members lost their seats and Labor was returned to the Central Coast. My community was right.

The Australian Energy Regulator's latest report indicates that over the past 10 years power prices for consumers have gone up 56 per cent, year on year, most of that time under this Government and most of that time when those opposite have had control of power prices in this State. My constituents and the people of New South Wales have seen their power bills continue to increase year on year. More than 80,000 people in this State have sought assistance from their retailer or a charity because they are having trouble paying their power bills. Hundreds have had their power cut off under the awful system we have created for people to consume energy in this country. When I introduced myself during the last term of Parliament to the three largest employers in my electorate—Sanitarium, MasterFoods and Sara Lee at Lisarow—they said to me, quite independently of each other and without prompting, that their single biggest challenge was power prices and how the cost of power constrained their growth and threatened their business in this country. The National Energy Market has been a disaster and privatisation has been fundamental to the National Energy Market.

When we consider that traditionally Australia had low energy prices compared to the rest of the world under the previously regulated system of power prices, a largely socialised system of power prices, the National Energy Market, privatisation and deregulation have been a complete disaster. This strategy has not been bought by my community on the Central Coast. Those opposite said: We need to do this to raise money. Fair enough, but my community has the right to ask: Who is paying for that? When we consider that over the past 10 years, bond rates have been some of the lowest in history and the ability for government to borrow at low interest rates has never been better, those opposite chose a path of accepting money from the private sector, which borrowed money at commercial rates to buy the privatised assets.

Those community assets were already doing a good job but they were sold to the private sector, which operate those assets and then recoup the money they have borrowed from the commercial markets by jacking up prices as much as they can to cover their costs and borrowings and meet the profit targets they expected. It has been an absolute and fundamental disaster for my community. My community does not believe the Government. They know that those opposite are obsessed with privatisation and will conceal their plans. The Government has done it before and it will do it again. The field evidence is there.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Wollongong and the member for Ku-ring-gai will come to order.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN:** With all the talk about privatisation in the 2015 election, not once did those opposite mention their plans to privatise our State hospital system. After they got elected, what was one of the first things they did? What was one of their signature policies during their last term of government? It was the plan to privatise public health by privatising five public hospitals. This prompted the biggest challenge on the Central Coast and the biggest campaign we have had on the Central Coast. Where was the one Liberal-Nationals member on the Central Coast during that debate, a debate that prompted more than 20,000 signatures from people on the Central Coast on a petition opposing privatisation? Those opposite and their representatives on the Central Coast were absolutely silent. They said nothing about privatisation in the lead-up to the election. And that is what they are up to again.

In the campaign for the election just gone they said nothing about their plan to privatise the Forestry Corporation, but now there is a scoping study. They cannot be trusted. Each time they get re-elected they will try to privatise another industry again, again and again. They did it back in the Greiner years with Port Macquarie hospital. They did it again with Northern Beaches Hospital—and look at what a disaster that has been. And they will try privatisation again if they get re-elected. My community knows this. I will keep talking about this issue to ensure that those opposite are seen for what they are. They are obsessed with and addicted to the horror of privatisation. They are not concerned about the terrible cost-of-living consequences of privatisation for my community. I commend the motion to the House and I ask the House to support it. I call on the Government, those opposite, to make very clear that it will rule out the privatisation of the Forestry Corporation.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** During the speech of the member for The Entrance, I note that interjections came from Opposition members while their member was speaking. I remind Opposition members that nearly all of them are on three calls to order. Any member on three calls to order who continues to interject will be removed from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A for the rest of the day. The Treasurer has the call. He will be heard in silence.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (17:08):** This is like park football. My day has been interrupted by my having to come here to respond to this pathetic motion, which sums up everything that is wrong with the New South Wales Labor Party.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will remove members from the Chamber if they do not come to order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Those opposite are nothing compared to what their great party once represented. The Labor Party used to be a party of reform, a party that achieved many great things and set up our nation for success. Now they come in here and talk about electricity—

**Ms Jodie Harrison:** Point of order: The Treasurer should address his remarks through the Chair.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. The Treasurer will address his comments through the Chair.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** They come in here and talk about electricity privatisation at the 2015 election, a policy that has unlocked capital that the Government has now invested in record amounts of infrastructure right across the State—over \$90 billion of infrastructure.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** But those opposite want to take the proceeds of our hard work. The member for The Entrance said, "You lost a seat here, you lost a seat there".

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I say to him that there is something deeper and greater about being in politics than simply winning seats. It is about setting up the State and the country for economic success.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** That is exactly what we on this side of the House do. The problem with members of the modern Labor Party is that they will put politics before doing what is right for the people of this State. It is not just me who has said this. Troy Bramston, a former Labor leading light, summed it up in *The Australian* this week. He said that after losing the last two elections the Labor Party "is ignorant, inert and increasingly irrelevant". Those opposite are deserting the blue-collar base that the party once represented. The party remains in the grip of an identity crisis, not sure of who it represents, what it stands for and what it wants to achieve in the twenty-first century. Its short-term populism will always be lost on the people of this State and the people of this country. That is exactly what we have seen. Labor, as ever, is sleepwalking into a bleak future.

Let us remember when the Labor Party was actually great. Then it wanted to do something for the people of Summer Hill and something else for the people of Swansea. It actually stood up and believed. Although some of its policies were not popular, it knew what was the right thing to do. The Government took asset recycling to the 2015 election and accepted that it was going to be a hard reform. But the Government did it because it was the right thing to do for the people of our great State. Look at how those opposite have fallen since the great era of Paul Keating. What did Paul Keating do? He regulated the labour market, reduced tariffs, floated the dollar—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member to Maitland to order for the third time.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —and privatised government enterprises like Aerospace Technologies of Australia, the Australian Industry Development Corporation, Aussat, Australian Airlines, the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, the Commonwealth Bank, the Moolamba-Sydney Pipeline, Qantas and the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation. The Labor Party rolls out Paul Keating and pretends that it loves him. But he would be embarrassed to be associated with such a bunch of populists who have gone so far away from what the party once stood for—introducing the right reforms, which might have been unpopular but were in the best interests of this State and this country.

I have researched comments made by people recently in respect of asset recycling. One person said they supported privatisation because they believed it was the right thing to do: It is a good plan and this State needs it. The person went on to say: Opponents to privatisation were fighting a battle of the past. Who said that? Was it Friedman, Smith, Hayek, Thomas Sowell? No, it was none other than the member for Strathfield before she was the Leader of the Opposition. She is the princess of privatisation masquerading as an Opposition leader. She comes in here to do what is in her political interests, not what is in the interests of the people of our great State.

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:14):** I support my colleagues in this debate regarding privatisation. At the outset I state I am quite offended that the Treasurer has tried to tell us—members of the still great Labor Party, of which I am a member—what Paul Keating would think. Treasurer, do you know Paul Keating? Have you worked with Paul Keating?

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

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will direct my comments through you. Paul Keating did a lot of great things. Paul Keating had a contract with the people and with business. He did things that were great for the country. I will return to discuss the substance of the motion. When people in rural and regional New South Wales hear that another public enterprise is about to be privatised, they immediately think that services will be cut, prices will increase and jobs will go. They think of higher electricity bills, despite all the promises from The Nationals and the Liberals at State and Federal level. On the topic of electricity prices, I know that Government members read what I read. Based on the research, information and facts, we know that electricity prices have increased at least 56 per cent for households and a lot more for businesses and farmers. During the State election NSW Farmers had as one of its election priorities in essence fixing up the mess of electricity prices as it is killing farmers; it is pulling them down.

When the people of rural and regional New South Wales hear the word "privatisation", they also think more potholes because there will be less money for roads. There will also be less money going into mental health services and there will be fewer TAFE courses. They do not think it will mean less public transport because people in rural and regional areas have none to speak of. The people of rural and regional New South Wales do not get the benefit of privatisation. They also think that privatisation will result in greater costs involved in exporting their products through the ports. In rural and regional areas, people do not often think about ports but in my electorate and in the electorate of the member for Clarence, we have the port of Yamba, which is the eastern-most seaport in New South Wales and Australia. It services the Northern Rivers and the New England regions and it is home to the State's second-largest fishing fleet. It is the first port of entry for vessels and goods under the Commonwealth Biosecurity Act. It is a 24-hour operating service. At this stage I have not seen any plans to privatise it. I hope I do not. And, I am sure, the member for Clarence would object. He is not saying anything but I have not seen The Nats object to too much when it comes to privatisation. Shame on them!

How can The Nationals be in a coalition with the Liberals, who privatise everything that is not nailed down? I say, "Here we go again." People in the country also think more spin, more bull and it is all about Sydney. That is what people think when we talk about privatisation. If the Treasurer is happy to continue his privatisation juggernaut I ask him to reflect on what I have just said. I also ask the Deputy Premier, and Leader of The Nationals, to do the same. The Deputy Premier may not have noticed but his political party lost seats in rural and regional New South Wales. Yes, that was not the result of just one issue but this issue is one at the core of rural and regional communities. The people of rural and regional New South Wales know that over the past few years jobs have disappeared in the country. Jobs are going now, despite the Premier and Deputy Premier's comments that no jobs will go in rural and regional New South Wales under the current budget. There might be a reprieve for Essential Energy, but those jobs have not been guaranteed. Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that you care about that issue.

People in rural and regional areas know that Restart NSW has not met its target of 30 per cent redistribution to regional and rural New South Wales in any year of its operation. Despite the Government telling us, particularly the Treasurer, who pretends to be the world's greatest Treasurer, that the State Government has surpluses coming out of every government orifice and that this Government is the world's best manager, the Government cannot even manage to meet the legislated distribution target from Restart NSW. I note that the Deputy Premier said that 30 per cent is not large enough, given the geographical size of regional and rural New South Wales. I could not agree more. I say to the Government: Bring in an amending bill and I will support it and I am sure my colleagues will too.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (17:19):** It is great to see that members of the Labor Party think that their public interest debate should be on a topic that favours the Coalition Government. I think it is great that today they have conceded to talk about privatisation. It is a little bit like open mike night at the pub. Today from the Labor Party, we heard the incredibly intelligent member from The Entrance tell us that the National Energy Market is the source of all problems with electricity prices. I happen to agree with him. The problem is that the National Energy Market was Paul Keating's idea—the great Labor icon. It was his idea to have a National Energy Market. The problem was not with the idea; the problem was with the current implementation. What has distorted that market and pushed electricity prices so high is the renewable energy rebates that were imposed by the Rudd-Gillard governments. That distorted the operation of the market and pushed prices up.

In relation to the privatisation of the poles and wires, the component of electricity prices that is attributed to the rent of the poles and wires is low in New South Wales. The highest electricity prices in Australia happen to be in Queensland where reforms have not been taking place. The Queensland Labor Government is gouging its consumers and ratepayers with the generation and transmission costs because it has not privatised any of the State's electricity assets. The problem with Labor debates is that the detail always gets in the way of the ideology.

What is really the source of Labor's opposition to privatisation? If the private sector can deliver public services more efficiently and better than the public sector, why not go to the private sector? There is no reason to

not privatise if privatisation will lead to a better and lower cost service for ratepayers and taxpayers. The reason Labor opposes privatisation is because of the public sector unions. The Labor Party has to protect its income source. The member for The Entrance said that this Government conceals its policies from the electorate at election time. I remind Labor members of some evidence given on oath—which means that people will go to jail if they tell a lie—that has been given at ICAC in the past couple of weeks. It is the evidence of Kaila Murnain, who is the stood down general secretary of the Australian Labor Party [ALP].

**Mr Paul Scully:** Point of order—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Ku-ring-gai will resume his seat. What is the point of order of the member for Wollongong?

**Mr Paul Scully:** It relates to relevance. What has this got to do with the debate?

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** Listen and you will find out.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Ku-ring-gai's remarks are relevant to the motion.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** I am directly responding to statements about concealing policies at elections. I make the very obvious point that Kaila Murnain has given evidence on oath that in September 2017 she was told about a \$100,000 illegal donation.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Point of order—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Ku-ring-gai will resume his seat.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I respect very much—

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

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** It relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. The member for Ku-ring-gai should confine his remarks to the motion, which deals with privatisation.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have ruled on a similar point of order. The member for Ku-ring-gai has the call.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** In September 2017 the general secretary was aware of an illegal donation.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** What was the ruling?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I said the member for Ku-ring-gai may continue. There is no point of order.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** Was any of that disclosed to the voters of New South Wales between September 2017 and March 2019? Not a word was said. Even when ICAC raided Labor's offices, Labor pretended that ICAC was doing the wrong thing by exceeding its powers and acting in bad faith. How many Labor members of this House did not know that there was a \$100,000 donation to the Labor Party in cash? Of course they knew about it.

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

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Ku-ring-gai will resume his seat.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129 and Standing Order 73. If the member for Ku-ring-gai wishes to make allegations against Labor members, he should do so by way of substantive motion.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have heard the point of order. The member for Maitland will resume her seat.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** It is not an allegation. It is evidence given at ICAC by the leader of the member for Maitland's political party.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Ku-ring-gai will resume his seat. Does the member for Auburn's point of order relate to Standing Order 129?

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** I refer to the ruling of Speaker Rozzoli in 1993.

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

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Members speaking in reply may only speak to matters that—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Auburn will resume her seat.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** The \$93 billion—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Ku-ring-gai will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will not continue speaking at the microphone while I am speaking. The member did not even give me a chance to rule on the point of order. I remind members that if they take a point of order they need to cite a standing order, not tell me about rulings from previous—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Members can raise rulings from previous speakers.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea will not interrupt when I am speaking. Members need to cite a standing order.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Can I just get some clarification on that?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea will resume her seat. The member for Ku-ring-gai will be heard in silence.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** The net assets of this State have increased over \$100 billion from \$160 billion in 2011 to \$262 billion in this year's budget. It is projected to be \$311 billion in 2023. Opposition members should just say thank you and not put stupid motions like this before the House.

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (17:25):** One would think that after all these years Liberal politicians would have learnt their lesson about privatisation. The member for Ku-ring-gai must have political amnesia. It was one of his predecessors who privatised Port Macquarie Hospital. Do members remember that great privatisation? They had to pay for it twice and give it back. What a great piece of financial wizardry. It is obvious that Liberal members just cannot remember how bad privatisation can be. Just look at the Northern Beaches Hospital. Indeed, there are few more discredited practices in the eyes of the public than the Liberals' obsession with the privatisation of government assets and services. It is not only the public who think that. Former champion of privatisation and the current chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Mr Rod Sims, has undoubtedly changed his mind on the matter. In an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 26 July 2016 titled "Privatisation has damaged the economy" Mr Sims said:

I am almost now at the point of opposing privatisation because ... I think it's severely damaging our economy.

He added:

Of course you get these lovely headlines in the *Financial Review* saying 'Gosh, what a successful sale, look at the multiple they achieved' ... Well of course they bloody well did: the owners factored in very large price rises because there's no regulation on how they set the price of a monopoly. How dopey is that?

Indeed, Mr Sims, how dopey is that? If only this Government heeded his sage advice and the Premier listened to him rather than her privatisation-obsessed Treasurer we would not be in this sort of mess. It is not as if the public has not caught on to this game. Time and time again members of the public are left rolling their eyes at the short-sightedness of Liberal politicians' privatisation obsession. Mr Sims alluded to that in the article. He said:

When you meet people in the street and they say 'I don't want privatisation because it boosts prices' and you dismiss them ... recent examples suggest they're right.

Indeed, they are right. To add further public insult, in response to questions around the privatisation of the Forestry Corporation at a budget estimates hearing the Deputy Premier said, "I am being up-front." But a few minutes later he said:

We are being honest with the public ... it has never been off the table ... there are a lot of things in Government that we do not tell the public.

Have a go at that! Not only are they obsessed, they are also misleading the public. It is not as if they have not been warned about bad privatisations. There is an endless list of failures that have resulted in job losses, higher bills, cuts to services and a disillusioned public. Just ask anyone on the street about deregulating the electricity market. If failed privatisation was a sport, this Liberal Government would be world record holding gold medal winners. Without doubt, the privatisations have failed. They have failed economically, they have failed socially and they have failed the public. They have failed miserably. The Government would have us believe that privatisation is the magic pill to solve all our ills, but the public will not swallow that. No amount of spin doctoring, no amount of sugar-coating and no amount of glossy brochures will convince the public otherwise. It is not surprising that the Government champions privatisation. Given its lack of long-term strategy and vision to grow the State's economy this Government has relied on lazy, short-term financial hits to prop up the bottom line.

Quite simply, privatisation is lazy economics for a lazy and tired government with no long-term solutions for our State. Our roads are clogged, our trains are packed and our hospitals are struggling to cope with the growing



population, but all the Government can do is fall back on lazy privatisation. Whether it is the inner west buses, Northern Beaches Hospital or Land Registry Services, nothing is safe and everything is for sale. It would be so sad if it was not so pathetic. All Government members see are dollar signs when they look at the State's assets. They do not see the families who are struggling to pay their electricity bills, the workers who are forced from their jobs or the residents who are pulling out their hair trying to understand why there is a fire sale on publicly owned assets. The Liberals are actually blind and obsessed with an ideology that has produced bad outcomes for our community.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (17:31):** I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting all words after "House" with a view to inserting:

"Supports the Government's asset recycling program."

It is a straightforward amendment. Now I will introduce some facts into this debate.

**Mr Anoulack Chanthivong:** Alternative facts.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** No, real facts, real news. Fact number one: Asset recycling has enabled us to make \$130 billion worth of investment and still be in negative net debt. Fact number two: At \$93 billion over the next four years, asset recycling is going to enable the biggest investment in infrastructure. Fact number three: Labor used to believe in asset recycling but it was just never any good at it. Take for example the gentrader transaction, which Labor sold for \$1.85 billion below market value, squandering \$1.85 billion worth of assets for the community.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Maitland that she is on three calls to order.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** I am shocked that the shadow Treasurer is not here because I know he is a good supporter of mine. Back in 2016 he said, "We are not opposed to privatisation as a general rule." That is not a criticism of the shadow Treasurer. I encourage him to revisit that train of thought because it was an incredibly sensible view that he held. The reality is that asset recycling has turned a pole on someone's street into new schools or hospitals in a local communities across the State. Without asset recycling there would not be a new metro being built under our city, there would not be over 190 new or upgraded schools being constructed around our State and there would not be nearly 40 new and upgraded hospitals being built. This evening I have heard a couple of comments around the Northern Beaches Hospital. I doubt whether any members opposite have actually been there. I will tell them this much, I am proud—

**Mr David Mehan:** We'd probably die!

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** Whether those of you who spoke have been there or not, I am proud of the building of the Northern Beaches Hospital and I am proud of members who have been there. I will tell you what—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Manly will resume his seat.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** The member for Manly should direct his comments—

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

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** I am saying he should—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea needs to cite a standing order.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** The member for Manly should direct his comments through the Chair.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea will resume her seat.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** To the point of order—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** There is no specific standing order that asks the Speaker to direct members to speak through the Chair.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am fully aware that members need to direct their comments through the Chair. I am sure the member for Swansea knows that because we talked about it yesterday. I uphold the point of order. The member for Manly will direct his comments through the Chair.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** I am sure the Deputy Speaker will be thrilled to know that the Northern Beaches Hospital is a fine institution.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** How many times have you been there?

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** My son was born there.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. In question time I noticed that members were only too happy to cite standing orders 129, 73 and 74. We need to go back to basics and look at Standing Order 52, which requires that members be heard in silence. Members on both sides of the Chamber will remain silent. The member for Manly has the call.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** I am proud of the Northern Beaches Hospital and the people who work there. We have transformed lazy assets into bricks, mortar, concrete and steel. Asset recycling has unlocked additional funding for infrastructure projects and has enabled the accelerated delivery of critical projects. Projects around the State that have been made possible because of asset recycling include: the Sydney Metro City and South West; the More Trains, More Services program; regional road and freight corridor upgrades; and the Parramatta Light Rail. If Labor was in office there would be debt and deficit and no money would be invested in infrastructure. Labor never would have established Restart NSW, which it opposed. It opposed its establishment and it opposed the money that went into it.

Approximately \$25 billion of the \$33 billion invested in Restart NSW has come from asset recycling. A list of the projects that have been made possible through Restart NSW includes the Safe and Secure Water Program, regional road and freight corridor upgrades, the hospitals growth program, the Regional Growth Fund, the new intercity fleet, the Fixing Country Roads program, western Sydney roads upgrades, the Western Sydney Airport, the Lismore Base Hospital redevelopment and the Fixing Country Rail program. The list goes on and on. I will finish with some comments from the 2017 World Economic Forum report entitled *Recycling our Infrastructure for Future Generations*. It states:

So far, the state of New South Wales has most successfully implemented a complete asset recycling strategy. Some of the concurring factors in New South Wales include:

Political leadership;

Infrastructure sectors with supportive regulation for privatization;

An attractive asset base on public balance sheet for divesting;

An independent and capable infrastructure agency;

A dedicated infrastructure fund ...

I suggest that members take on board the view of the World Economic Forum, rather than the view of a confused opposition.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:37):** On behalf of The Greens I support the motion moved by the Labor Party and recognise the importance of ensuring that public assets remain in public hands. The Greens members believe that we should be strengthening the public sector, rather than reducing its capacity to deliver world-class services. We believe the public sector is best placed to respond to changing social, environmental and economic circumstances. It can enhance society's capacity to pursue important goals, including justice, equality and environmental objectives, as well as its community service obligations. Public ownership can remove the requirement to maximise financial returns and it can create valuable opportunities to provide quality goods and services. It can protect disadvantaged assets and, most importantly, prevent environmental damage and assist in the transition to new types of technology.

Successive State and Federal governments have been driven by a privatisation agenda that has undermined our long-term social, economic and environmental capacities. We have heard a lot about privatisation in New South Wales. I recognise the mistakes of past governments around privatisation, including mistakes of the former Labor Government and the current Government. The public ownership of services allows for greater control over the price and accessibility of essential services, particularly in remote areas where public assets can deliver equality of service even when there is no capacity to pay. In my electorate of Balmain, the privatisation of the local buses was controversial and not supported by the community. On 3 June I was disappointed that the first round of performance measures revealed that, whilst there have been some increases in performance in some areas, there was a decrease in the punctuality of services in my area. That is something I am particularly disappointed about.

It is important that the Government's promises are delivered on the ground. When it comes to public assets and services, electricity is particularly important to The Greens because we think public ownership has the capacity to ensure that we can transition to improve the environmental performance of the electricity industry, which is a major greenhouse gas emitter. We need to keep electricity in public hands to ensure that we can have a sensible and continuous transition to renewable forms of energy. In my own community I am concerned about

last night's decision by the Inner West Council to open up expressions of interest for nine different public assets in the community: four council depots, three administration buildings and two town halls, including the Leichhardt Town Hall and the Petersham Town Hall.

The proposal stated that the council "was seeking proposals from experienced property developers and landowners to develop a strategy to address the council's future accommodation needs". I know that there was an amalgamation of councils, but the issue is that last year the council had a \$3 million deficit and this year that deficit is projected to be \$18 million. The revenue from those public assets will not be used to invest in future facilities; it is set to plug the budget deficit. I foreshadow that I will move an amendment to the motion to call on councils, as well as the State Government, to ensure that public assets stay in public hands. Most importantly, all the polls indicate that privatisation is not supported by the majority of the public, who are suspicious of and concerned about privatisation.

Whilst the Government can rightly claim that it won the last election having taken the issue of poles and wires to the people, it was not the only issue the Government ran on. It is fair to say that all published polls—particularly those in rural and regional parts of our State—indicate that privatisation is not seen in a positive light. We need to be incredibly cautious about privatisation. That is why The Greens support the motion moved by the Opposition. I acknowledge all the Opposition members who have contributed to this debate, as well as the Government members. It is important for us to have these types of debates. We need to discuss the big ideas about how to fund the future, the State's revenue base, what to do with borrowings, how to manage debt and how to invest in the future of our communities. In my local area I am concerned that the Inner West Council is making the wrong decision. I move:

That the proposed amendment be amended with a view to adding:

"(2) Calls on the Inner West Council to stop the privatisation of public assets, including local iconic heritage buildings like Leichhardt Town Hall and the Petersham Town Hall."

Some people have said, "It's still in public hands," but that is what the Government said about poles and wires. The council has said, "We will keep the town halls," but that does not prohibit 99-year leases or 51 per cent sales. Assets like those iconic heritage buildings, which are there for the community, should stay in public hands.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:42):** In reply: I thank all the members who have contributed to the debate on this motion. I thank the Treasurer for his contribution. I appreciate that the Treasurer believes that privatisation is the right thing to do, but I note that only Liberal Party members contributed to the debate today. Clearly privatisation is not the right thing to do in the bush because there is a different message in that area. I thank the member for Lismore, the member for Ku-ring-gai, the member for Macquarie Fields and the member for Manly for their contributions.

I note that the Opposition does not support the member for Manly's amendment to the motion. I welcome his invitation to the Northern Beaches Hospital, but there is a whole bunch of public hospitals in my area that we have retained and they are my first port of call. I thank the member for Balmain for his contribution. We will not support his amendment either. The core of this debate is about privatisation. Members on this side of the House would say—and if members opposite were honest they would agree—that most communities instinctively oppose privatisation. That is because communities have lived experience of privatisation.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN:** I remember doorknocking a constituent in my electorate during the election campaign. He was no friend of Labor; he worked in the power station. He said that before privatisation he used to spend his time making sure that as little coal as possible was consumed in the production of power for our State. After privatisation he spent all his time trying to increase the wholesale price they charged retailers to get the maximum return for his now privatised business. We have seen the results of privatisation on the Central Coast. Vales Point Power Station was given away by those opposite for \$1 million and now it is worth \$700 million. It is a privately operated business that has no obligation—when it decides to close down—to clean up any pollution that remains in the area. The member for Manly talked about \$130 billion being freed up by the asset recycling process at the heart of which is privatisation. The question I pose to this House is: Who pays? The honest answer is that our community pays. If anyone thinks that our community is not disappointed with our attention to this issue, they need to think again. Support the motion. [*Time expired.*]

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the amendment of the member for Balmain to the amendment of the member for Manly be agreed to. A division has been called. There being only five members in the minority having challenged my decision, I declare the determination of the House to be in the negative. I direct the names of those members be recorded in the votes and proceedings.

Ayes, 5

Mr A Greenwich  
 Ms J Leong  
 Mr J Parker  
 Mr G Piper  
 Ms T Smith

**Amendment of the member for Balmain to the amendment of the member for manly negatived.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the amendment of the member for Manly be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....43  
 Noes .....38  
 Majority.....5

#### AYES

Anderson, Mr K  
 Berejiklian, Ms G  
 Conolly, Mr K  
 Coure, Mr M  
 Dominello, Mr V  
 Gibbons, Ms M  
 Hancock, Mrs S  
 Johnsen, Mr M  
 Lindsay, Ms W  
 Pavey, Mrs M  
 Provest, Mr G  
 Sidoti, Mr J  
 Speakman, Mr M  
 Upton, Ms G  
 Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S  
 Bromhead, Mr S  
 Constance, Mr A  
 Crouch, Mr A (teller)  
 Elliott, Mr D  
 Griffin, Mr J  
 Hazzard, Mr B  
 Kean, Mr M  
 Marshall, Mr A  
 Perrottet, Mr D  
 Roberts, Mr A  
 Singh, Mr G  
 Stokes, Mr R  
 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  
 O'Dea, Mr J  
 Petinos, Ms E  
 Saunders, Mr D  
 Smith, Mr N  
 Tuckerman, Mrs W  
 Williams, Mr R

#### NOES

Aitchison, Ms J  
 Butler, Mr R  
 Chanthivong, Mr A  
 Daley, Mr M  
 Donato, Mr P  
 Harrison, Ms J  
 Hornery, Ms S  
 Leong, Ms J  
 McKay, Ms J  
 Park, Mr R  
 Saffin, Ms J  
 Tesch, Ms L (teller)  
 Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E  
 Car, Ms P  
 Cotsis, Ms S  
 Dalton, Mrs H  
 Greenwich, Mr A  
 Haylen, Ms J  
 Kamper, Mr S  
 Lynch, Mr P  
 Mehan, Mr D (teller)  
 Parker, Mr J  
 Scully, Mr P  
 Voltz, Ms L  
 Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S  
 Catley, Ms Y  
 Crakanthorp, Mr T  
 Dib, Mr J  
 Harris, Mr D  
 Hoenig, Mr R  
 Lalich, Mr N  
 McGirr, Dr J  
 O'Neill, Dr M  
 Piper, Mr G  
 Smith, Ms T.F.  
 Warren, Mr G

#### PAIRS

Preston, Ms R  
 Sidgreaves, Mr P  
 Taylor, Mr M  
 Toole, Mr P

Barr, Mr C  
 Finn, Ms J  
 McDermott, Dr H  
 Watson, Ms A

**Amendment agreed to.**

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

**Motion as amended agreed to.**

*Private Members' Statements***BEROWRA CRICKET CLUB**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (17:58):** When it comes to anniversaries, nothing is more special than 100 years. Today I pay tribute to the best cricket club in the entire country, the Berowra Cricket Club, which this year celebrates its 100th birthday. Berowra Cricket Club is an institution in the Hornsby shire and a shining example of what can be achieved through hard work, determination and community involvement. While I may be retired from my cricketing career with the club, I have long been a Berowra cricketer. I have very fond memories of playing for Berowra and the club will always hold a special place in my heart.

The club's first documented game was against Girraween Cricket Club on 20 Sunday December 1919, but it is believed that cricket was played in Berowra for many years before that. In fact, rumour has it that there was a cricket oval in Berowra before there was even a road into the suburb. In those early years cricket would be played on Sunday, starting at 10.00 a.m. with lunch at 12.00 p.m. Play would stop for church at 3.00 p.m. While most played just in Berowra, some would travel across the district to play cricket on a Sunday. It was not just locals who played: Former interstate and Northern District Cricket Club captain Frank Buckle would bring out international players to take on the locals at the great game.

Following the Second World War the Berowra Cricket Club was quickly re-formed and joined the Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai & Hills Cricket Association. A lack of grounds in the local area caused the club to step away for two years while players worked to ensure that they had an oval to play on. They worked hard and in 1952 they opened one of the best playing surfaces in the district, Berowra Oval. Until that time there had been only senior teams at Berowra, but in 1954 the club fielded its first junior team. The growth of the junior part of the club since that time has been integral to the success of Berowra Cricket Club to this day. Berowra Cricket Club has not always had an A-grade squad. In fact, following a dispute in the late 1960s, many of the top players left the club. But that turned around after the opening of a new and improved Berowra Oval, which brought many new and returning players to the club. It was the turning point and since 1973 the club has always been able to field an A-grade or A-reserve squad.

While its early days focused on senior ranks, Berowra Cricket Club has become a place where the juniors hold just as much importance. The biggest drawcard for young kids was the introduction of Kanga Cricket, which was brought in at the association level by Berowra club member the great Jimmy Barrett, who now does amazing work with the Northern Districts Cricket Club as well. Kanga Cricket was introduced as a pre-competition that focused on developing cricketing skills for kids aged five to eight years old. It gave them a taste of the game and what to expect if they started playing in the older teams. This has been a driving force for younger players to join the club. Despite a name change to Milo cricket, it is still around today.

Volunteers and the community have been an integral part of the success of Berowra Cricket Club—from those who established the club to the current season, where volunteers are still working hard to ensure a positive experience for senior and junior players. Over the past 100 years countless volunteers have made their mark at the club. I cannot name them all, but I take this opportunity to thank those who have made a significant contribution and been named life members of the club. The list includes Charles "Chas" Woof, George Pennicook, John Barry, Bill Foster, Chris Gartung, Michael Barry, Bill Gainsford, John Bentley, Bruce Moore, Ian Spencer and Graham James. I cannot forget Johnny McQuillan, who was the umpire when I took nine-for in the grand final—thanks, Johnny! He did not give me the extra wicket to get my 10, but anyway. The list continues: Ross Foster; Alick Lindsay; Peter Street; John Alcock; James Barrett; Les Wicks; John Adams; Garth Lindsay, who does so much for our community; Colin Davenport, whose son is a rising star; Robbie Mooney; Mark Jones; Marty Lindsay; Mark Adams; and our local councillor and my great mate Nathan Tilbury.

I thank all of those fine people who have done so much for our club and community. Those men have done more than one season of volunteering; they are members who have dedicated years to the club and have gone above and beyond to see the club continue to succeed. I also thank the current group of volunteers who make up the committee, headed by president Greg Fiedler, who moonlights as the president of Club Berowra. I thank Greg for all he does for the community. He is assisted by his son, Will Fiedler, who is an outstanding young man and a brilliant cricketer; Geoff Silver; the great Dougie Foster; Nathan Elder; Mark Adams; Michael Parker, who runs the Berowra Post Office as well as all the junior competitions—a special shout-out to him; Mark Birrell; Kath Davenport; Fred O'Connor; Joseph Leighton; A.J. Cook and Jack Smallhorn. Their contributions to the club and the community do not go unnoticed. I thank them for everything they do to keep cricket not only alive but also flourishing. I congratulate Berowra Cricket Club on reaching this milestone: 100 years of cricket in our community and we are stronger for it. I know 2018-2019 was a particularly good season, with the A-grade team taking out the premiership, and I know this season will be even better.

## TAMIL LANGUAGE

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (18:03):** I am privileged to represent a significant Tamil Australian community. The Tamil language is one of the oldest surviving classical languages in the world. It is spoken by over 80 million people. It is thought to have influenced almost every corner of the globe, and has helped shape how we understand and describe the world today. The Tamil language also has a rich literary history, with many classic works that are still relevant and widely discussed. One such discussion took place at the International Conference on Peace and Harmony through Literature at the University of Sydney, hosted by the Tamil Valarchi Manram.

The conference centred on the universal nature of *Thirukkural*, one of the oldest poetic works in Tamil literature. It was composed some 2,000 years ago yet it still remains a sacred and relevant text to millions of Tamils throughout the world. Whilst the *Thirukkural* is secular in nature it outlines how a conscious and spiritual individual life can lead to a moral and ethical life that strives towards peace and harmony. The *Thirukkural* also promotes the concept of the universal connection between people and the oneness of humanity. It is this concept of universality that has allowed the *Thirukkural* to transcend national boundaries, races, religions and languages, and remain applicable in today's modern world. One key speaker at the conference was the Venerable Galkande Dhammananda, a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka, who spoke on the practical importance of the *Thirukkural* teachings. He said:

Thirukkural is a recital about life ... It is a guide to develop one's mind with the aim of making an individual a better human being who understands and loves others. Such an individual will naturally influence others in a positive way for them to be better individuals.

The international conference was also a unique opportunity to celebrate the contributions of individuals in the Tamil Australian community, such as my friend Thiru Thirunanthakumar, who has spent most of his life teaching the Tamil language. Thiru began his career in Sri Lanka as a teacher at Jaffna Hindu College and, after moving to New Zealand and then Australia, he continued his passion and commitment to teaching the Tamil language. He began volunteering as a teacher at the Homebush Tamil Study Centre in my electorate of Strathfield and eventually became the school's principal. Thiru's continued dedication to teaching the Tamil language was recognised at the conference, where he received the Tamil Thai award for his outstanding contribution to the Tamil language. In the oldest parliament in Australia I want to say that I am immensely proud of him and congratulate him on this significant achievement.

I also take this opportunity to thank Dr Chandrika Subramaniyan, Kavitha Jeyakumar, Jeyakumar Ramasamy, Durga Owen and Sris Ponniahpillai for their work in organising the conference and for their continued efforts to support the Tamil Australian community. The International Conference on Peace and Harmony through Literature gives us important opportunities to reflect on the universal human principles outlined in texts like *Thirukkural* and how they have positively influenced individuals and societies. Today I am reminded of the importance of celebrating people like Thiru, who pass knowledge to new generations and are committed to ensuring that concepts of peace, harmony and reconciliation are practiced each and every day.

## CLARENCE VALLEY EDUCATION FACILITIES

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (18:07):** It is a pleasure for me to inform the House about two wonderful education opportunities that have been presented to the communities of the Clarence Valley in the past four or five weeks. The first was the Country Universities Centre, which was officially opened by Deputy Premier John Barilaro on 3 September 2018 in Grafton. This is a wonderful initiative in which the New South Wales Government invested \$1.3 million and the Federal Government invested a further approximately \$1 million. To date 50 students have already enrolled, which has far exceeded expectations.

The benefits of the Country Universities Centre are wonderful because locals can study for a tertiary level education in their own towns. They do not have to leave. It is affordable, because they do not need to pay for accommodation or living-away costs. It keeps our kids in local communities, which means that they can be part of the fabric of those communities—the sporting organisations and volunteer organisations. It trains the future local workforces, helps local businesses and strengthens regional communities. It is the modern way of learning.

The Clarence Valley Country Universities Centre will provide a new and revolutionary style of access to tertiary education, with students from any Australian university studying any degree being eligible to access the centre. It will feature state-of-the-art technology, including computer terminals, break-out spaces and tutorial rooms with fast internet connectivity, and face-to-face wraparound support, allowing regional students to embark upon and complete degrees without having to leave the area. The Clarence Country Universities Centre is the fourth Country Universities Centre in regional New South Wales, following the successful openings in Goulburn and Broken Hill in March this year.

The divide between people in regional and remote areas who are trying to achieve tertiary education versus those in based in major cities is severe. As reported earlier this year, about 20 per cent of people living in regional and remote areas have degrees compared with 40 per cent of city dwellers. In some regional areas the university attainment rates are as low as 15 per cent. I must congratulate the board on bringing this terrific facility to the Clarence Valley. Board members include Scott Monaghan, chair; Fiona Leviny, vice chair; Adam Smith, secretary; Ashley Lindsay, treasurer; Marty Williams; Warren Steele; Meghanne Wellard; Joh Tarrant; and Duncan Taylor. I make special mention of Duncan Taylor, who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Country Universities Centre. I congratulate him on bringing this wonderful initiative of tertiary education to regional communities.

The second education opportunity that was presented to the Clarence Valley was the opening of the new \$5.9 million Connected Learning Centre at Yamba, which was opened by Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee. This is the first time a TAFE has been located in Yamba, which means that students in Yamba will be able to access TAFE without travelling. It is a state-of-the-art facility providing greater access to skills training and employment outcomes to the people of Yamba and the surrounding region. The Connected Learning Centre will give local communities access to digitally enabled technologies such as simulations and virtual reality experiences, and offer a greater number of courses and flexible study options. The investment in TAFE will open up new opportunities for education and training in the region, and demonstrates that, in government, The Nationals are committed to Yamba and the surrounding communities in the Lower Clarence.

Local TAFE NSW students can study a range of new courses such as the certificate IV in Ageing Support, the Statement of Attainment in Events Co-ordination, and the Diploma of Conservation and Land Management. It will be supported by mobile training units and learning technologies, including simulation and augmented reality. The new Connected Learning Centre will deliver the practical training TAFE NSW is known for, and set students up for success in the workplace. I tried one of the simulation programs on plumbing. It was remarkable how well it stayed with me. Wearing the simulation glasses I was able to learn how to be aware of the workplace and how to work. It was the next best thing to having a mentor there to take me through the steps. It is a wonderful initiative, and I thank the New South Wales Government for bringing these education opportunities to the Clarence Valley.

#### KIAMA ELECTORATE PREMIER'S VISIT

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services)**  
**(18:13):** As all members of the House would agree, having the New South Wales Premier visit your community is incredibly special. On 10 September I was very pleased to welcome our Premier Gladys Berejiklian to the Kiama electorate to do a host of things. I appreciate very much the fact that the Premier has taken the time to come to see the things that the Government is delivering in my electorate. There is no doubt that her warmth and generosity of spirit were very well received in the community. The essence of the way the Premier is perceived is as someone who is caring, warm and dedicated to our community. I am grateful that she was able to come and spend some time with us.

Our first stop was the Albion Park Rail bypass—something that members of this House know I have spoken about ad nauseam. I am so proud of this \$630 million project, which will change lives. It will eradicate a number of different intersections—in fact, five sets of traffic lights and 16 intersections. It is the largest ever single investment in the history of the Princes Highway. It was one of those projects that I am sure many of us have seen before: When they are announced people say, "I will never be alive to drive on it. I will never see it." However, right before their very eyes they are now seeing the bridges come to fruition. They are rising out of the ground like a phoenix rising from the ashes. I am so proud of the work that is occurring there. I pay tribute to the former roads Minister who is here in the Chamber. I know she was also a great advocate for this project. What it will do is save my community—

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** She was a very good roads Minister.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** She was an outstanding roads Minister and she is an excellent water Minister. I enjoy working with her as land and housing Minister. We have a great partnership. The Albion Park Rail bypass is quite seriously something that will change lives. For so many years we have seen congestion drive people to frustration in my community. I take very seriously the campaigns we have led in this House to see investments in roads. The Premier was able to visit bridge 5, which is an example of the work that is happening around Yallah to provide for traffic under the Princes Highway and to construct the section that will make way for the Albion Park Rail bypass. As I say, it is the largest single investment in the history of the Princes Highway. I know the Premier was very impressed by this project. It is an example of the infrastructure projects that we are delivering. We have done the hard work to pay off the debt and to invest in projects that make such a difference to people's lives.

We then went further down to Kiama and visited Blue Haven. I thank the Mayor of Kiama council, Mark Honey, for hosting a reception for volunteers. It might interest members of the House to know that Kiama has an above-average number of people who volunteer in our community. I am proud of the fact that we have a community that recognises service above self. Our community has a huge commitment to supporting others. Those volunteers were recognised with a visit by the Premier, who simply came and in a very genuine and caring way said thank you. She spent some time with so many people from across our community, from Meals on Wheels to Lions to Rotary to Red Cross. It was so wonderful to see her there to recognise their commitment to our community.

We then went further south, travelling down the Princes Highway. The Premier was able to see the works between Berry and Bomaderry—a \$450 million project that the Government is committed to. Again, it is separating out a Princes Highway that was previously single lane and incredibly dangerous, where people have lost their lives due to head-on collisions and accidents. The Princes Highway improvement is something that Shelley Hancock, Andrew Constance and I are very committed to doing. Country people know all too well what can occur when accidents happen on dangerous rural and regional roads. I am so proud that the Government is investing in the Princes Highway—not just there but, of course, in the Shoalhaven River Bridge project. Three tenderers are now being considered for that work. Our commitment, made by the former roads Minister, is to continue that work all the way to the Victorian border. On that point, I use the opportunity to again call on the Federal Government to invest in the Princes Highway.

We see 80-20 funding splits on the Pacific Highway but not a cent for works at Albion Park, at Gerringong or from Berry to Bomaderry. We have not seen a commitment from them there. I want to see that Federal Government election commitment honoured. Shelley Hancock and I then took the Premier to Shoalhaven Hospital where a hospital car park is rising from the ground. I remember receiving a letter from a nurse who was fined by council because she had to park her car on a road verge but had to walk in the dark to get back to her car. That is not acceptable, it is not safe and it is not appropriate. The new car park will not only meet the needs of today but those of tomorrow. I thank the Premier for her visit and for her genuine care and affection for the people of the South Coast. As we saw at the last election, that care and affection was returned. It will continue to be returned as the Premier continues to invest in our region.

#### **CFMEU NORTHERN MINING & NSW ENERGY DISTRICT MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:18):** On 8 September the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union [CFMEU] held the twenty-fourth annual CFMEU Northern Mining & NSW Energy District memorial service day. The service is held to remember the more than 1,800 lives lost to coalmining in the northern district coalfields since 1801. This year's service sadly paid special tribute to 37-year-old Quinton Moore, who was killed at Bengalla Mine in November. On 3 November last year Quinton went to work at Bengalla Mine just like any other day, but tragically it was not like any other day. Mr Moore's name is the latest etched onto the saddest of rolls: the Jim Comerford Memorial Wall. Mr Temporary Speaker, I know you know exactly the wall I am referring to. His wife, Shannon, and the rest of the family attended the annual memorial service. I pass on our sincere condolences from this place.

The Jim Comerford Memorial Wall lines the perimeter of Federation House in Aberdare. It was opened in 1996 by then Labor leader Paul Keating. It contains the names of those who have been fatally injured while attempting to mine coal. The oldest person to appear on the wall was 76 when he was killed; the youngest was just 11. The number of names on the wall is a sombre reminder of the dangers our mine workers face every day. The memorial is a practical way of ensuring the lives of those miners who have been killed at work are not forgotten. Jim Comerford had a long and eventful, sometimes controversial life. He was a long-time official of the Miners' Federation of Australia, one of the strongest, most militant unions. He was present at two of Australia's most important industrial relations events.

Federal Labor leader Anthony Albanese joined us to mark the important milestone. Mr Albanese delivered the keynote speech, telling the hundreds gathered that Jim Comerford would have hoped that 23 years after the wall was unveiled the industry would have done with adding names to it. This is a unique industry which has special needs. Few workplaces give such an unforgiving edge to the concept of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. We must ensure that safety issues remain at the forefront of any policy debate with respect to the industry. For over 200 years the union and the labour movement have worked tirelessly to ensure that a miner can leave home to start a shift and be confident that he will return home. Every worker has the right to leave for their job in the expectation that they will return home safely and be there for their family and friends when the working day is done.

The service provides us with the chance to pay respect to those who have lost their lives, but also to the noble work that the trade union movement does to ensure the health and safety of those who work in dangerous industries. Jim's courageous spirit, tears and toil shaped the world's-best-practice mine safety laws that we have



in this State and this country today. We have a lot to be proud of in the legacy of Jim Comerford and those who served around him. However, as we were reminded at this year's service, tragedy still strikes in the most unexpected ways.

Our trade union leaders are committed to workplace safety as much as those who served before them. We will continue to work towards zero deaths, because one death is one too many. I particularly acknowledge Shane Thompson and Peter Jordan, officials of the northern miners' branch. I thank their hardworking staff who go to an enormous amount of trouble to ensure that the service is so respectful, so gracious and always with the utmost respect for those workers whose names are on the Jim Comerford Memorial Wall and their families.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** I thank the member for Swansea for her contribution. All members who have coalmining operations within their electorates would appreciate the sentiment that she has delivered.

### **BLAZE AID**

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (18:23):** The Bees Nest fires continue to burn in my electorate and those of the member for Northern Tablelands and the member for Clarence. It is a challenging time. Some 97,000 hectares have burnt, with seven homes lost but 156 saved, stock losses in the hundreds and, sadly, death and injury to an unknown amount of wildlife. The big number in the damage wreaked by the Bees Nest fire on the Dorrigo Plateau is the extent of the land scorched—almost 1,000 square kilometres, an area bigger than the nation of Singapore. While grass on farms will regrow, an army of volunteers is coming to help rebuild the fences.

There have been terrible losses in our ancient Gondwana rainforest, places like Mount Hyland, where Rosie Yates and her allies have fought for days to save the houses, then turned their attention to saving the landscape around them. Made vulnerable by the long drought, which has seen the Dorrigo Plateau receive only one-third of its normal rainfall this year, swathes of normally lush, wet forest that never evolved to burn, caught fire. With other firefighting resources devoted to protecting human life and property Rosie put out a call on social media for people with strong arms and legs who knew and loved that Mount Hyland forest to come and save it. She wrote:

The rainforest is on fire and we need someone to help put it out.

And people came. She started with a donation drive on Facebook to buy a professional firefighting unit and other gear, aiming for \$7,000, but raised \$12,000 in a few days. Victorian paramedic Henry Garrad, 28, who grew up in Bellingen, was one of those who answered the call. He first visited Rosie's 40-hectare Mount Hyland forest retreat with a Bellingen environmental youth experience camp and also spent a week there in 2009 with a wilderness youth theatre group. People came to help and look after her property, and people came to help and look after everybody's property. It is important for us after this fire to take stock. About two-thirds of the fire went through the Guy Fawkes National Park. I mention the koalas that we do not know about that were there. We need to have some good conversations amongst ourselves as a community about the way we manage our rainforests and the way we manage our forests generally.

There needs to be respect for some old-timer traditions, and I am talking about real old-timers in terms of our Indigenous forebears. We cannot just lock up the forests and throw away the key. There are different management approaches and styles for the different conservation areas that we have. I ask that we have some good conversations post this fire and in having those conversations not forget BlazeAid. This incredible organisation is setting up camp now at Ebor to rebuild farmers' fences. President Kevin Butler runs a sheep farm and truck delivery business at Kilmore East in Victoria, where my great-uncle Ed and great-aunt Margaret used to live. He understands the reluctance of farmers to accept that they need help but urges them to swallow their pride.

I know BlazeAid volunteers addressed a crowd of about 50 people, including property owners from the fire-affected areas of Tyringham and Bostobrick within my electorate. Local Land Services manager Paul Hutchings was at the meeting to talk about the emergency assistance his group is providing. He has firsthand experience of BlazeAid and says he cannot speak highly enough of them. It will be an incredible boost to these farmers and communities to have the fences replaced. They are also able to offer some paid work to local fencing contractors because of the amount of donations that they receive as an organisation, and that is appropriate. It is incredible to think how people will rush to help—and I know my parents themselves are thinking of going across to help. Dad is a former farmer, so he knows what needs to happen.

There are a lot in my dad's demographic who have a bit more time on their hands these days and will go and help, and that is the basis of BlazeAid. In saying this and wrapping up, I acknowledge all the work of the Rural Fire Service volunteers. There is a community meeting today at the Dorrigo Showground at six o'clock—

I am sorry I cannot be there—and another one at the Ebor Sportsground at six o'clock on Friday evening where information will be available. Support is there from the Government, and from their friends and communities. I give a big shout-out to a lady called Erika Krishanan, from Dorrigo, who has been communicating really well via Facebook with everybody, organising and talking about all the fundraisers that have been held. My brother, Kenton, and his wife, Monique Shaw, have been doing their bit to keep the National Parks and Wildlife Service firefighters very well fed.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** I also acknowledge the very resilient communities that the member has spoken about and the great amount of generosity being shown to them. I hope they recover quickly.

#### **KU-RING-GAI ELECTORATE YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (18:29):** Ku-ring-gai is a great place to bring up a family but growing up is not always easy. We all remember in our teenage years dealing with the emotional, psychological and social challenges of moving into adulthood. Our youth are not only our future but are a significant segment of our population. Approximately 31 per cent of Australia's young people between the ages of 12 and 25 live in New South Wales. They are 1.3 million in number and make up 17.7 per cent of the State's population. The New South Wales Government is committed to ensuring our young people have the best opportunity to achieve their full potential. Its Youth Health Framework 2017-24 has outlined a plan to make young people "healthy, safe and well".

Our schools are very important custodians of the wellbeing of our youth. I have received strong, positive feedback from our local school principals praising the recent increases in counselling services in our public schools. These services have been steadily improved by the Coalition Government over the past four years that I have been in Parliament. The recent New South Wales budget included implementation of the election promise to employ 100 additional school counsellors or psychologists and an additional 350 student support officers over the next four years. I frequently try to understand and see on the ground the youth services that are available in Ku-ring-gai.

In August I returned to Turramurra High School where I met with the students who are benefiting from the work of the Raise Foundation. The Raise Foundation delivers a very successful mentoring program, Youth Frontiers, which is run in partnership with schools and supported by the New South Wales Government. Their focus is to empower our youth to become resilient, capable and connected through what are structured, best practice programs. All mentors receive TAFE accredited training and are supported by a qualified program counsellor. The Raise mentors are an amazing community of volunteers who tell me that they receive a significant amount of personal satisfaction from being involved in the program. As I participated in the group activities prior to their one-on-one mentoring, I noticed the developing confidence of the year 8 and year 9 students. Youth Frontiers is a valuable program in our local community and for over three years has been impacting on the wellbeing of all involved.

The Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service [KYDS] is a not-for-profit organisation located in Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby that aims to help young people understand and manage issues in their lives by providing personalised counselling, support services and wellbeing workshops. KYDS strives to ensure issues such as grief, friendship problems, body image concerns, depression, anger, anxiety and self-harm, to name a few, do not consume young people. I have been a regular at the KYDS annual fundraising lunch. Youth ambassador Sarah Ashton says that there is constant pressure on young people. She stated:

When things aren't going well, kids tend to give up a lot easier, even on the small things. There are still many young people not knowing what their passions are.

KYDS ensures all young people in the community have access to the information and support they need in a safe and confidential environment. Young people are more fascinated with virtual worlds and technology than ever before and this has provided new wellbeing challenges. Cyber bullying, or bullying of any kind, leads to feeling powerless and alone, which increases the chance of a young person developing severe depression. That is where Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury, one of 40 centres across Australia, has had such a positive impact in my local area. They save lives by providing vital services to the community, including a 24-hour crisis support line and face-to-face counselling at their centre in Gordon. I am proud to be a supporter of Wendy Carver and her local team of amazing volunteers.

October is Mental Health Month and the continued collaboration between the New South Wales Government and non-government organisations is crucial to delivering accessible and effective wellbeing services. Ku-ring-gai is very fortunate to have Raise, KYDS and Lifeline performing such valuable work in our community. They are supporting engagement with education and employment and by doing so building healthier and more dynamic young people, who in turn will be better placed to make a strong contribution to our nation.

## HURLSTONE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (18:34):** It is an annual tradition that has been bringing a touch of the country to the city for 80 years, but now Hurlstone Agricultural High School's Country Fair and Farm Open Day at Glenfield is under threat. Why? Because the Liberal Government has decided to sell off the Hurlstone Farm, home of the country fair, to developers. This appalling decision formed part of a deal the Liberal Government struck with Western Sydney University in late 2015 to move Hurlstone Ag from its current home at Glenfield to the Hawkesbury campus. It was an announcement with much fanfare; there was even talk of a tethered cow. But that foolish idea was soon shelved. Why? Well, you see there would be no dairy at the new school in Hawkesbury. That is right—no dairy means no cows.

There are more than 100 cows at Hurlstone Ag in Glenfield. The cows' fate remains to be seen with Hurlstone set to move to Hawkesbury. It turns out they will be sold, gifted or slaughtered. So it is goodbye to the cows, another great Hurlstone tradition lost. The cows have long been a drawcard to Hurlstone's country fair. But in a telling sign of the fair's imminent demise, there appeared to be no cows at this year's fair. That is right, no cows at a country fair, despite the school at Glenfield having a fully functioning dairy.

The Liberal Government has shamelessly run Hurlstone Ag and its annual country fair into the ground. You see, the decision to move Hurlstone Ag to Hawkesbury was completely inconsistent with and contradictory to the bill introduced into the Parliament by the then Liberal-Nationals Opposition in 2009. The backflip on this issue is breathtaking and ripe with hypocrisy. Those opposite have gone from being Hurlstone's defender to being its destroyer. My local community has, quite rightly, been outraged by the Government's decision on Hurlstone. Often politicians lament the lack of public trust in our political system. Sadly, decisions such as this Liberal-Nationals Government backflip on Hurlstone only add to this level of disengagement and distrust.

The same can be said of the Liberal Government's high-rise plans for Glenfield, which are also shrouded in secrecy. To date the Liberal Government has failed to disclose how many rooftops will replace the green open space at Hurlstone, nor has it disclosed the proposed heights of high-rise flats set to block the Glenfield skyline. Feedback from my constituents is clear. They want local students to have access to an outstanding agricultural high school and they want the invaluable greenspace on Hurlstone's farm—140 hectares, no less—to be saved from developers.

It is almost four years since the Government's appalling decision to move Hurlstone Ag to Hawkesbury and sell off the farm, but I have not given up the fight. I will continue to stand up for my community, just as I will continue to hold this Liberal Government to account for its lies, spin and shameful hypocrisy. I will not allow the Liberal Government's continuous spin to dupe us into believing we are getting a better outcome. The truth is, we are not. When the bulldozers turn the first sod of earth, it will all be too late, just as it will be too late when the farm gate finally shuts on the Hurlstone Country Fair—a fair that, just like Hurlstone at Glenfield, has a long and proud tradition in our community. Our community will pay the price for this Liberal Government's duplicity and greedy land grab. It is the Hurlstone name and tradition at Glenfield that we value, which for close to a century has been an intrinsic part of our community's history and heritage. So I continue the fight to save Hurlstone and its farm.

In doing so, I requested in May a meeting with the New South Wales Minister for Education to discuss the future of Hurlstone Ag at Glenfield. I have yet to receive a response on a meeting date. After 80 years, the final Hurlstone Country Fair is looming and my community will mourn its loss, just as we will inevitably mourn the loss of Hurlstone and its farm at Glenfield. As a cattle auctioneer would say, "Going, going, gone", only this time the auctioneer is the Liberal Government and the highest bidder is greedy developers that run the agenda. The Hurlstone farm and the school belong at Glenfield, their rightful home. I will not give up the fight. My community members have made it very clear that they will not stand for the Liberal Government's out-of-control development agenda at the expense of our green space, community heritage and suburban character. The country fair will soon be a distant memory of a bygone era, all thanks to this greedy Liberal Government and its sneaky land deals. But I simply will not stand for it, nor will my community—hands off Hurlstone!

## TRIBUTE TO FATHER JOHN NEILL

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (18:39):** Tomorrow night, the Institute for Ethics & Society at the University of Notre Dame Australia will host the official launch of *The Quiet Man*, a documentary on the life and legacy of Father John Neill. A documentary directed by Tim Perkins, *The Quiet Man* profiles the life of a man for whom I have a great deal of respect and admiration, someone who was a pillar of support to me and an entire cohort of students during our time at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney. As the promotional material for *The Quiet Man* outlines:

Fr John Neill is a priest who has been instrumental in Australian Catholic education for more than 50 years.

*The Quiet Man* tells the story of Father John's life, in his own words and through the testimony of many who have shared the journey with him. Father John dreamed of a Catholic University in Australia, having been inspired as a young man by Notre Dame University in the United States. *The Quiet Man* powerfully records how this dream was realised, from the humble origins of Father John's own education journey, to a calling to the Dominican priesthood that would reorient his life mission; from a leader in Catholic schooling to a foundational influence in the establishment of both the Australian Catholic University and the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Archbishop Anthony Fisher, OP, describes Father John as "the father of Catholic education in Australia". In 2014 Father John Neill was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for service to education and to the Catholic Church in Australia. Tomorrow night the film will be introduced by the acclaimed Australian journalist and media host Geraldine Doogue. *The Quiet Man* is a story of humility, grace, humour, and great tenacity. I am delighted that a mentor to me, John Rees, has been instrumental in bringing this story to life. In my mind, Father John possesses two of the greatest qualities that a person can have—humility and tenacity. He was a regular fixture on the sideline at our university rugby games. He would lead the team in prayer before we ran on to the field, even though this did not help with the final score most of the time. My wife and I were married by Father John, and I know he was and is an inspiration to many students at Notre Dame. I have no doubt this documentary will shine a light on a man who never thought that he would be the subject of a documentary. To Father John, congratulations on the screening of the documentary from a grateful former student.

### MASCOT TOWERS

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:41):** This House is aware of the tragic evacuation of the residents of 132 units at Mascot Towers in my electorate of Heffron on Friday 14 June this year. Owners have seen the value of their most significant asset plummet, they have been effectively homeless for three months and they face repair costs in the millions of dollars if they are to salvage their homes. They are now starting to get answers. I draw the attention of the House to an article dated 18 September in the *Australian Financial Review* titled "Soil-filled water erodes Mascot Towers' foundation":

The tower's investigation team has now confirmed the 'cracking' of the building that led to the building's evacuation was due to building work at its neighbour, Peak Towers at 27 Church Avenue... particularly the soil-filled water that has been leaking from Peak Towers into Mascot Towers...

The soil underneath the building is falling away, peer-reviewed investigations indicate.

As advised..., experts believed the cause of the subsidence was the construction of the adjoining building and not any original construction defect.

This is consistent with the advice of engineers on the night of the evacuation, and with what I have been saying ever since. Since that time, everyone has been looking for someone to blame, whether it be private certifiers, Botany's Bay City Council or the deregulation of the building industry. The fact is that construction is a private market and markets just do what they do—they seek the lowest cost and highest profit solution. Without regulation or supervision, markets fail and the building industry in New South Wales has failed spectacularly. There is a generation of failure in this industry, which has been allowed by governments for more than a generation.

I was there on the night that the building was evacuated, with the Mayor of Bayside Council, Bill Saravinovski, and emergency services personnel. I saw the heartache and anxiety of those residents who found themselves in that situation through no fault of their own. I have always taken offence when anyone tried to take political advantage of my constituents' misfortune. While the Premier has remarked that my public comments were irresponsible, she herself was no angel when she made remarks in this place on 31 July and 22 August.

It is remarkable that the Premier would do that because she had in her mind the very suspicion about the cause of the Mascot Towers issue that I had—that this was not a matter of planning consent or building certification. Even the Building Commissioner could not help himself but to make some comments about the matter when he toured the site and in his remarks to a committee of the other place, comments the substance of which have now been found wanting. The real issue now is that residents cannot raise from their banks the funds sufficient to pay the emergency levies necessary to stabilise the building.

I was very grateful to the Government for the emergency funds they provided for temporary accommodation, which was a unique decision. Today I am asking for the Government to provide an interest free loan to more than 35 owners who cannot fund their share of the \$7.7 million in urgent levies necessary to stabilise the building. The loans can be secured on the title and should ultimately be recovered from proceedings or an insurance company, which will no doubt flow as a consequence of the liability of the developers of Peak Towers. I know this request is unusual and I do not think the State Government should be regarded as a lender of last resort but there is an extraordinary failure of government over a generation to regulate these industries.

There is a failure of planning legislation that allowed Peak Towers at 27 Church Avenue, Mascot, to be granted approval in the Land and Environment Court, contrary to the council's recommendation and

determination. There has been a failure to enforce conditions of consent in respect of 27 Church Avenue by the Department of Primary Industries, which is responsible for oversight of the site, which has allowed that development to so drastically undermine Mascot Towers, and the engineering workshop on the eastern side, which itself is cracking. It is a crisis for those residents. The Government must take responsibility for these failings and I implore those opposite to assist my residents.

#### **SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:46):** I acknowledge some of the season highlights celebrated at the Sutherland Shire Football Association's sixty-seventh presentation dinner on 20 September. I was delighted to present the Sutherland Shire Senior Women's A grade [SWA] premier's plate to the Miranda Magpies Football Club. The Miranda Magpies SWAs are one of the most decorated teams in Sutherland Shire history and have won almost every title possible since playing in the under 14s together. In 2019 the team finished first with 14 wins, one draw and one loss, taking out the minor premiership and going on to win their grand final against St Patricks Football Club 3-nil.

I acknowledge the dedicated Miranda Magpies executive committee, namely president, Gary O'Riordan; vice-president, Bob Rivett; secretary, Joanne Milburn; treasurer, Tracey Lentell; senior vice-president, Darren Smith; junior vice-president, Luke Richardson; and assistant secretary, Craig Smith. I also acknowledge Kellie Hogan, who serves as the senior women's age coordinator alongside the secretary, Joanne Milburn, and the SWA's coach, Rod Vanderhart, and manager and vice-president, Bob Rivett. Finally, I recognise and celebrate the amazing team of sportswomen that comprise the SWAs, including Amy Andrews, Tiarne Cavanagh, Ashlee Chuter, Tessa Feggans, Lorna Genoud, Lara Halls-Smith, Jacqueline Harris, Natalie Harris, Vanessa Lee, Lauren Miletich, Genna O'Neill, Victoria Read, Deborah Stewart, Lisa Stewart, Brittney Vanderhart, Samantha Waterworth and Emma Whawell. I congratulate the Miranda Magpies SWAs on yet another outstanding season and wish them all the best for those to come.

I was pleased to also present the Sutherland Association Cup to Bonnet Bay Football Club, who were acknowledged as the all age men's grades 4-16 champion club. The award was received due to excellent performances throughout the minor premiership, with the AL8s finishing first, AL9s third, AL11s second and the AL13s fifth. I commend the club's executive committee for coordinating another successful season, including president, Peter Burgess; vice-president, Brett White; junior vice-president, Carla Richardson; secretary, Mike Elliott; treasurer, Ian Petrovski; committee members Andrew Collins, Lyn Vella and Nigel Wax; and registrar, Callie Noakes.

I also recognise the coaches and managers who supported the four teams throughout the 2019 season. I acknowledge from the AL8s the coach, James De Bono, and managers, Heath Melville and Jackson Trevenar; managers of the AL9s, Ryan Strachman and Chad Martin; from the AL11s, super coach, Chris Downy, and manager, Stu McKinnon; and the AL13s manager, Paul Taylor. It is the hard work and dedication of these coaches and managers that realise the potential of these young football stars and result in receiving the prestigious Sutherland Association Cup.

Sylvania Heights Football Club were also celebrated on the night, receiving the Rick Napier and Andy Page Memorial Shield for the over 35 and 45 champion club. I acknowledge the Sylvania Heights executive committee for their unwavering support of the club's players throughout the year: president, James Shearer; vice-presidents, Steve Stavropoulos and Michael Barker; secretary, Brenton Kemp; treasurer, Helen Plakias; and registrar, Lisa Bacon. I also thank outgoing executive members Russ Strudwick, Trent Jordan and Jay Nataly for their service to this club and for continuously going above and beyond throughout the season.

I congratulate the over 35 and over 45 teams and support staff responsible for this award. The O35s finished the season as semi-finalists and the senior most improved team. I commend the coach, Steve Stavropoulos; manager, Paul Houston; and players, Michael Barker, Warren Bliss, Martin Buikema, Finian Byrne, Bradley Childs, Steven Cleary, Fabio De Morais, Crispin Dobson, Jonathan Fleming, Adam Glasson, Mark Harris, Gary Knight, Jason McGregor, Magnus Petersson, Michael Rossi, James Shearer, Steve Stavropoulos, Luke Ttoulounge and Benjamin Weldon.

The Trees' amazing O45s were the season premiers, minor premiers, senior and overall club champions. The team won 15 games and lost only three, scoring 59 goals and conceding a mere eight. I applaud coach, Todd Mayne; manager, Brad Harrop; assistant manager, Simon Oldroyd; and players, Roy Agostino, Mario Auciello, Michael Baker, Peter Brown, Shaun Caldwell, David Crisp, John Cuciti, Alan Dean, Philip Dunn, Geoff Gidney, Brad Harrop, David Harrop, David Hills, Craig Hodgson, Peter Kyriazis, Michael McAvoy, Andrew Momsen, Simon Murray, Simon Oldroyd, Michael Papanikolaou and Craig Parkes. I also congratulate the Sylvania Heights FC executive committee and the players who support both teams on this prestigious award.

With over 18,500 registered players participating in more than 750 matches each weekend, the Sutherland Shire Football Association is one of the largest in Australia. It would be remiss of me not to thank the amazing executive for their hard work and dedication throughout the year and congratulate them on yet another successful season. I acknowledge president, Matt Brady; vice-president, Keith Ward; honorary treasurer, Giulio di Stefano; committee members, Laura Cowell, Paul Gallagher, Jim Hankins, David Johnson, Barry Jones and Russell Marsden; general manager, Jeff Stewart; and football manager, Jon Long. I once again congratulate the Sutherland Shire Football Association on another successful season but I especially applaud the Miranda Magpies, Bonnet Bay and Sylvania Heights football clubs for their respective awards.

### CENTRAL COAST MARINERS

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:51):** I wish to preview another A-League season for the mighty Central Coast Mariners, whose centre of excellence is located in my electorate at Tuggerah. I can say with some sadness that the seasons following the fantastic grand final victory in 2012/13 have not been quite what local Coast supporters would have hoped for, but after a series of new signings and an upcoming Football Federation Australia [FFA] Cup semi-final against Adelaide United at Central Coast Stadium, local football fans have some hope for a resurgence this season. Coach Alen Stajcic is building a strong work ethic within the team and this has been on display during FFA Cup matches, particularly against Hume United in the games they played in Victoria which saw a nine-second minute winner to snatch victory from youngster Abraham Majok.

Alen previously coached the mighty Matildas. He and assistant coach Nick "Monty" Montgomery have been working the team hard. Monty even spent some time at Manchester United recently, looking at their coaching set-up with Mike Phelan, the Manchester United assistant coach, who has been assisting the Mariners for the past two seasons, rebuilding the club. Our new signings include Giancarlo Gallifuoco from Western Sydney Wanderers, Ruon Tongyik from Brisbane Roar and Abraham Majok from Western Sydney Wanderers. Daniel De Silva has returned to the club after a loan period with Sydney United and Ziggy Gordon, our Scottish import from Hamilton Academical, is fitting in very well. He has a good sense of humour and is a hit with the local media. The new signings also include Mark Birighitti, the great goalkeeper from Melbourne City; Kim Eun-Sun from Ansan Police; Milan Duric; Dylan Fox; and Gianni Stensness from the Wellington Phoenix.

The club has unveiled a new playing strip and released a catchy new motto for the season: "For the Badge". The season starts with an away fixture against Western Sydney Wanderers—it will be quite tricky, as always—before our first home game against our F3 Derby opponents, Newcastle, which provides great rivalry and plenty of action. I am sure the home fans are looking forward to playing the old enemy once more. This year our Central Coast Mariners play their fifteenth season in the A-League, which have seen three grand final appearances and one victory. Our yellow and navy team has punched above its weight season after season. Whilst last year was a low for the club, I am confident that this year will see them semi-final bound once again. The Mariners are a proud little club who have built a fantastic men's and women's academy to develop pathways for local talent to reach the highest level of the game.

The Mariners very proudly have amongst their ranks the former international players John Aloisi, Michael Beauchamp, Mark Bosnich, Oliver Bozanic, Dean Heffernan, James Holland, Sasho Petrovski, Tom Pondeljak, Nick Rizzo, Mile Sterjovski, Tony Vidmar, Danny Vukovic, Alex Wilkinson and Storm Roux, who played for New Zealand, among others. We also have some of the Socceroos greats such as Mile Jedinak, who also played in England along with players like Trent Sainsbury; Matty Ryan, who is currently playing for Brighton in the Premier League; and Tommy Rogic, who is playing for Celtic. The current Mariners captain, Matt Simon, has played for Australia. There is Nik Mrdja, Damian Mori and a host of other players, including our legendary John Hutchinson, who played for Malta but is the very good former captain of the Mariners. Michael McGlinchey, who also played for New Zealand, is in the current squad.

We have a proud history because of the way our little club has always been there for the whole community. I wish the Central Coast Mariners well for this season. To owner Mike Charlesworth, who has put a bucketload of his own money into the club—not always popular with the locals—I hope for his sake the team has a better season this year. CEO Shaun Mielekamp is trying his heart out to get the Mariners back to where we want them to be. My family have their season tickets. We look forward to cheering on our team, the yellow and navy. This year we will do it "For the Badge".

### MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE SPORT

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (18:56):** I wish to talk about sport in the Myall Lakes electorate. A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of going with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to the Taree PCYC, where we met up with the Taree PCYC Gymaroos, who this year gained sanction to represent Gymnastics Australia at the World Gymnastrada event in Dornbirn, Austria in July. World Gymnastrada is held every four years with over 20,000 athletes representing 34 countries from across the globe. The team would not

be able to do what it does without the support from our local community and their team coach Sarah Hayes and team leader Justin Hayes. I congratulate the team members, Penny Schubert, Ava Sharpe, Cameron Storok-Lohse, Evan Thomas, Elizabeth Vaessen, Sophie Watson, Ellie Hiles, Tyla Humphrey, Patrick Hayes, Ebony Lumantas-Hooke, Jack McGinn, Tylah Roach, Nicholas Robinson, Pippa Rogers, Island Rosamond, Savannah Hunt, Nicholas Lampen, Rebecca Boyd, Asha Clarke, Miley Cox, Georgia Daley, Ruby Daley, Ffion Davy, Lucy Hallot and Taya Hawke.

Last week the Taree High School's open girls hockey team won the New South Wales combined high school championship for the third successive year, beating Westfield Sports High School 2-1 in the final played at Moorebank. Taree started the semi-finals with a win against Mulwaree 3-2 in the quarter finals against Grafton. The girls impressed with a 5-3 win, taking them into the grand final against Westfield. It was a tough game, with both teams tied 1-1 with 90 seconds remaining. Lara Watts found the net from the corner, giving Taree the win. The team would not have been able to reach the success without the support from our local community and their team coach, Jordan Hardy. I congratulate the team members: Abby Watts, Hayley Manus, Chloe Neal, Shai Yarnold, Kalani Cross, Tilly Hunter, Makayla Manus, Tyler Williams, Phoebe Cause, Jordan Moscatt, Bree Pensini, Georgia Tran, Lara Watts and Brianna Williams.

Recently Taree cyclist Glenn Mathiske has returned from Poland after competing in the UCI Gran Fondo World Championships race. Glenn competed in the 40-44 years division and placed twenty-second in the field of 225 riders. The championships were held in the city of Poznam. Glenn told of the condition of riding into the wind and on roads akin to goat tracks. I also acknowledge former Wingham junior Mitch Barnett, who since 2016 has played for the Newcastle Knights. Last week he was awarded the Danny Buderus Medal for the second time. Mitch also won the club's Gladiator of the Year award.

Recently I had the pleasure of going to Coomba Park, where I inspected the pontoons and jetty that were put in place with government funding. The pontoons and jetty will allow Coomba Aquatic Club to host the Sailability NSW Championship next year. I also looked at their amenities—the sheds and the clubhouse—that were built with the assistance of a \$1.2 million funding from the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund. Finally I give a shout-out to the Forster Tuncurry Dolphins, who are again the rugby premiers after a 47-14 win against the Manning River Ratz in the Lower Mid North Coast Rugby competition. I congratulate coach Ron McCarthy and all the boys on doing the mighty Dolphins proud.

#### WESTCARE

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:00):** Since 1977 WestCare has been committed to the relief of poverty, suffering, distress and helplessness in the people of the Penrith community. While offering a caring environment with a growing body of experienced volunteers, WestCare is also a great avenue of resource for referrals. By increasingly networking with other local service providers WestCare can outsource the best support required for individual client needs. Likewise many clients are often referred to WestCare by other government and non-government organisations.

This network and connectedness was on clear display at this year's annual fundraising dinner. On Thursday 5 September I had the pleasure of attending the seventh annual WestCare fundraiser dinner at The Coffee Club Café Nepean River, in which businesses from all over Penrith and the surrounding areas came together to support WestCare's focus projects for 2019—the crisis domestic violence accommodation and the student wellbeing support workers initiatives. For over 40 years WestCare Community Services has been providing individuals and families in crisis with above-and-beyond care and giving the resources people need for a fresh start.

It was truly inspiring to see how organisations such as WestCare positively impact the local community with a dedicated and selfless commitment that is not seen across our communities except in those amazing dedicated organisations that work so hard for troubled and distressed people. I acknowledge those who contributed greatly to the WestCare fundraiser dinner. First and foremost I honour and acknowledge the incredible staff at WestCare: director, Andrew Paech; emergency support services manager, Margaret Seumanu; administrator, Gillian Vella; community connection coordinator, Lyndy Waddington; and retail manager, Niu Vai. I thank them for their round-the-clock work to see those in our community are provided with the right support and equipped for a brighter future.

This year's fundraiser dinner was hosted by new owners of The Coffee Club, the Salamakis Family, and Luke Kohler from Sydney Direct Fresh Produce, who were both instrumental to the running of the night. I also make mention of outgoing The Coffee Club owners Jeremy Horne and Aaron Jack, who hosted the first six dinners alongside Luke Kohler. Jeremy and Luke were also involved in this year's dinner and received a special recognition of their support. I acknowledge the 40 staff who volunteered their time, skills and energy to provide

food and beverages to the many guests who attended the event and the 20 WestCare volunteers whose efforts ensured that the evening was a success.

I thank the following businesses for their donations of products and services: The Coffee Club, Penrith Party Hire, At Print Creative Solutions, Cellarbrations Kingswood Park, Zilzie Wines, Brooke Grosse Photography, M&J Chickens, Fishboy Seafoods, Remondis and Secureguard. I also mention editor of *The Western Weekender*, Troy Dodds for his role as emcee and auctioneer Troy Kennedy—western Sydney's greatest—for his stellar efforts extracting as much money out of the room as possible during the fabulous auction. I extend a special thanks to the following businesses and individuals for their generous donation of auction items: Cabe, The Blonde Butler, Travel Associates, Adelaide River Inn, Black Door Gallery, Andrew Keen, Twin Creeks Golf & Country Club, Ivan and Nathan Cleary, Sass & Co Hair and Makeup, St Marys Rugby League Club, *The Western Weekender*, Western Suburbs Concrete, Sydney Motorsport Park, Golf NSW, Australian Arms Hotel, Flash Me Photoboos, Ken Hale Plumbing Services, Penrith Golf Club, Vintage FM, Mantra Aqua, Quest Penrith, Bordeaux Candles, Duck In, Pro-Tune Motorcycles, The Creative Fringe and Penrith Whitewater Stadium.

Some of the night's largest financial donors included Penrith Panthers, which gave an incredible \$50,000 for crisis domestic violence accommodation; The Great Walk Foundation, which donated \$31,000 for student wellbeing worker placements; and St Marys Band Club, which gave \$14,000 for school personal development program resources. At the end of the night we reached \$195,000. While that result astounded the WestCare team and supporters, when Derry from O'Donovan's Gas threw in another \$5,000 to make it a clean \$200,000 raised, everyone broke out into massive cheers and applause. Through overwhelming community support during the past seven years, WestCare has raised over \$700,000 for key local projects.

Congratulations to WestCare Community Services and everyone else involved in this year's fundraiser dinner. I look forward to seeing them continue to impact our community for the better and thank them for ensuring local needs are met by local people. On a personal note I thank Andrew Paech, an incredibly diligent, dedicated and community-minded director of WestCare. He has worked very hard to build extensive and respectful connections with community service providers, local government, State government representatives and even Federal government representatives across the Penrith region. His leadership and passion to see people achieve their personal best and overcome personal challenges and heartache is to be commended. Thank you to the WestCare team and thank you to the amazing, generous people of Penrith.

#### WOLLUMBIN FAMILY SUPPORT INC

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:05):** I speak in support of the Wollumbin Family Support Inc, a Murwillumbah-based organisation that my colleague the member for Richmond, the Hon. Justine Elliot, is patron of. I congratulate the organisation on its significant success to date as a local volunteer organisation. I will soon turn to talking about some of its successes. In 2015 when the Government closed the Tweed Valley Women's Service, as it was then called, the community rallied and there were a few outcomes. One was the formation and registration of the Wollumbin Family Support organisation in December 2016.

The community understandably objected to the closure of the service that had provided support to women and children fleeing domestic violence since its formation in 1985 as the Tweed Valley Women's and Children's Refuge and, later, the Tweed Valley Women's Refuge Collective. The board consists of president, Ilze Jaunberzins; public officer, Marty Rubenstein; secretary, Carolyn Hastie; treasurer, Michelle Bradley; and one of the ordinary members, Kim McMillan. Susan Rothwell was an ordinary member who contributed very well but has recently left the board because she is doing other things in Australia.

Some of its successes to date include attaining charitable status with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission—that is not always easy to do; holding its first annual general meeting in 2018; securing all of its insurance covers including public liability and volunteers and management liability—that is not always easy for a volunteer organisation; joining the Murwillumbah District Business Chamber in March 2017 as active participants; engaging positive support from local businesses, which have donated \$15,000 worth of raffle prizes; receiving a \$14,000 financial boost from Cunning Stunts Events; and applying for five grants in 2017, of which they were successful with three. Those grants included \$5,000 from *I'm a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!* to develop a one-stop web portal, [www.wollumbinfamilysupport.org.au](http://www.wollumbinfamilysupport.org.au); a \$5,000 contribution in 2018 to the pilot Love Bites, a respectful relationship program for adolescents in Murwillumbah High School that is well known in the Northern Rivers area; and a Federal volunteer grant of \$5,000 for the volunteers. I know the \$5,000 volunteer grant program very well from when I was a Federal member.

**Mr Geoff Provest:** Absolutely. You did well for Lismore.

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** The member for Tweed interjected and I have to respond: I did well for Page.

**Mr Geoff Provest:** You did: \$60 million for the hospital. Well done.



**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** A lot. I go back to Wollumbin Family Support. It established a relationship of trust and support with ConXions Church Murwillumbah, which has been providing rent-free premises for the Power to Change program, as well as providing great morning teas. They call them "nourishing"; I call them "great". As I said, the Love Bites program was introduced to Murwillumbah High School and I saw the results of that—an eight-week program completed.

Wollumbin Family Support also established positive relationships with tertiary education provider Southern Cross University in taking on student Kym McMillan, who is a member, for her Bachelor of Social Work workplace experience and Australian College of Applied Psychology student Michelle Tansey. The organisation trained seven volunteers and a project officer, Kyra Worden, in the Love Bites program. It has done active outreach to community service groups, members speak at Rotary meetings. It developed a sponsorship pitch—there is a lot more that I cannot get in in the five minutes that I have. For me, it is a service in the local community that provides care, safety and comfort to victims of domestic violence, which is an essential service. I hope they can get some funding from the State Government.

#### **NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE ROTARY CLUBS**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:11):** Rotary clubs have a long and distinguished history of service in my electorate of North Shore. Notably, the Rotary clubs of Mosman, North Sydney, North Sydney Sunrise and Crows Nest have embodied the Rotary ethos of "service above self" as well as promoting integrity, advancing world understanding and enacting goodwill and peace through a fellowship of community leaders. Members of these clubs volunteer their time and dedicate their energy and passion to sustainable and long-term projects both within Australia and internationally. Each project undertaken by Rotary's clubs has its own specific community and humanitarian aims which reflect the unique local character of our communities. There are more than 33,000 Rotary clubs around the world, all dedicated to making the world a better place.

I joined the Rotary Club of Mosman at its changeover dinner to celebrate its achievements and to welcome its new board. I congratulate the new office holders: president, Graeme Robinson; treasurer, Derek Andrew; secretary, Chris Bell; and new board members, Mark Alderson, Richard Vahtrick, Di McKenzie, Barry Starr, Halyna Koscharsky, Clare Stockdale, Mike Blakeney and Rob Sturrock. I also thank all those who contributed on the night, including the Mosman High School youth jazz band, who played wonderfully. I also acknowledge three fantastic members who received the Paul Harris Fellow Award, which recognises and commends individuals who contribute significantly to The Rotary Foundation.

The three recipients of the Paul Harris Fellow Award were Joan Groth, Mark Wallis and Derek Andrew. Joan joined the Rotary Club of Mosman in 2012 and has since taken an active role in many avenues of service including club, community, youth, membership and fundraising. Mark joined the club in 2014 and his passion as a community advocate is evident in his history with the club, having taken on several varied roles within the organisation. Mark's willingness to assist in club promotion and membership drives is a testament to his personal commitment to the club. I also note that he is heavily involved other community organisations, including the board of Taldumande, so I get to spend a lot of time with Mark and I appreciate his community involvement.

Derek joined the club in 2008 and is now the club's treasurer. He has continued to demonstrate his strong support for our local community during his time with the club. In recognition of their ongoing expression of the Rotary ideal of "service above self", the Rotary Club of Mosman recognised Derek, Joan and Mark with a sapphire pin. I am proud to have a number of outstanding Rotary clubs in my electorate, including the Rotary Club of North Sydney, which is one of the foundation clubs in Australia. Chartered on 16 August 1928, the Rotary Club of North Sydney is the longest standing club in Rotary District 9685, which encompasses the northern suburbs of Sydney.

The club has a variety of local projects and activities to serve and improve life in local communities, as well as international projects that expand Rotary's humanitarian reach around the globe. The club also embraces our local business community and encourages and supports youth in our communities to achieve their life potential. I congratulate the new club executives: president Lily Clarke, administration director and immediate past president Ross Waugh; secretary Tony d'Arbon; treasurer Doug Garner; membership executive Jenny Thomas, OAM; and all the new club directors, J. T. Taylor, Samantha Lee, Peter Lulic, Geoffrey Pritchard, OAM, and Malcolm Sharpe.

Another outstanding Rotary Club serving the North Shore community, if I may say so myself, is the Rotary club that I am a member of, the Rotary Club of North Sydney Sunrise. I wish to acknowledge this club, which is also working hard to better the lives of those in my community and around the world. The North Sydney Sunrise club is planning its next fundraising event to support efforts to eradicate polio worldwide. I congratulate the board of the North Sydney Sunrise Rotary Club: president Allan Coates; former president Iain Clark; secretary Allen Colburt; treasurer Moira de Vos; and board members Ken Preshaw, Cathy Glinka, Greg Blainey,

Lindy Hunt, Warren Greig, and Andrew Young. I also thank Ivan and Lissie for hosting the changeover dinner this year and Moira and Warren for organising the evening.

It is with great sadness that I take this opportunity to note the passing of Mr Ken Palmer, an esteemed and much-loved member of the Rotary Club of Mosman. Ken was affectionately known as the Mayor of Cowles Road and for the past 20 years has been the custodian of the Balmoral Wishing Well. As the custodian, Ken could be seen down at Balmoral Beach collecting and cleaning coins for donation. He will be dearly missed by the club and the wider Mosman community. I know that my team and I will also miss Ken. He was very kind to us and we got to spend a great deal of time with him. I am proud to say that all of the Rotary Clubs in my electorate epitomise the ethos of "Service Above Self". I commend my local Rotary Clubs and thank them for continuing to demonstrate service above self in my electorate of North Shore.

### RIVERSTONE LITTLE ATHLETICS

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (19:16):** I draw to the attention of the House the performance of Riverstone Little Athletics over 37 years. The Riverstone & Districts Little Athletics Centre is an athletics club that caters for children from tiny tots to those aged under 17 years. The club was formed in 1982 and has continued from strength to strength. If my arithmetic is correct, the club at this stage will be celebrating 37 years in 2019 of continuing activities. The club caters for children of all levels of ability and allows the Little Athletes to see progress against their own performance and to focus on personal bests, or PBs. It is not about what place they come compared with others. The children's results are uploaded to a website, Results HQ, where they can track their progress throughout the season. The club competes at the Riverstone Park on Friday evenings starting at six o'clock.

The Little Athletics slogan is "Family, Fun and Fitness". The club encourages parents and family members to become involved and to help their children experience the joy and satisfaction of learning, being fit, training and competing as well as making friends in their athletics environment. On Friday 6 September I had the privilege of visiting the club for the opening night of the season. I was invited to blow the hooter to mark the start of the competition. It was a gusty and windy evening. There were more than 100 excited and energetic children buzzing around—I think the wind only whipped them up a bit more—and they were keen to get into it: to run, jump, throw and do all the things that children do at Little Athletics. I acknowledge the club's management and volunteers who make that possible. Like so many sporting activities, Little Athletics depends on volunteers to make it work.

So many of the activities in our communities are built on the generosity, willingness and eagerness of adults in our community to help kids to benefit from those opportunities. Certainly that is the case at Riverstone Little Athletics. I particularly acknowledge the club president, Vernon Cross, who has been with the club for a very long time, if not right from the start. Vernon is a stalwart of the club who has worked to keep it going through thick and thin throughout the many years he has been involved. I commend the club's publicity officer, Hayley Iori, who organised my visit. I thank them and all other members of the committee who keep things ticking over, organise the canteen, get all the equipment ready out, mark the lines, et cetera—all the things that have to happen so that the kids can compete, stretch themselves, realise their potential and do their very best.

Last year it was my privilege to be able to assist the Riverstone & Districts Little Athletics Club through the Community Building Partnerships program. As all members know, the program allows members of Parliament to seek out and support good community groups who make a difference to their communities by giving them the opportunity to enhance their facilities, to help people in the community to stretch their budgets a little further or to do a little bit more for the people in their area. Last year Riverstone Little Athletics received approximately \$15,000 to install a new public address system and to get some timing gates. For the information of those who are not familiar with timing gates, I will explain.

In the old days half a dozen parents would be at the finish line with stopwatches trying to work out who finished first, second and third and give them their times. These days that is done electronically, which helps the races to be run more quickly. There is not a delay in trying to figure out who finished in which position. The timing gates do all that and the next race can get underway very quickly. The benefit is that kids have more opportunity to participate and spend less time waiting around. It is a much better system. I have been able to provide funds for timing gates for a couple of Little Athletics groups and it is a great way of encouraging more kids to get involved. I commend the Community Building Partnerships program to any clubs that are trying to stretch their funds further to be able to do more for their community. The program may well be a way of accomplishing that.

I point out that the club, like any sporting club, is benefitting from the Active Kids rebate. There are now two rebates available during the year for kids who are actively engaged in sport. The rebates will assist in getting those who are not yet engaged off the couch and out there doing something to get active and get fit. The 100-plus

kids who were at Little Athletics on 6 September certainly were taking advantage of that program, among the many thousands of children who are doing so throughout the Riverstone electorate. I am very pleased to be able to support the Riverstone & Districts Little Athletics Club. They do a wonderful job for their little neck of the woods. I pause to reflect that my most recent involvement before 6 September was in the 1990s as a parent when some of my own kids went through Riverstone Little Athletics. They had a wonderful time and were all the better for it. Well done, Riverstone Little Athletics.

### **BELMORE TOWN CENTRE**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh):** Before I call the member for Canterbury to give her private member's statement, I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of her guests—her son, George Sarandos, together with his friend and his friend's sister—who are visiting the Parliament to celebrate her son's birthday. Welcome to Parliament House.

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (19:21):** Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker, for that acknowledgement. I wish to speak about the town centre of Belmore in my electorate of Canterbury. Belmore is home to more than 12,000 people and is a vibrant and diverse community. Around 56 per cent of people in Belmore were born overseas and 87 per cent of people in Belmore have at least one parent who was born overseas. Belmore Sports Ground is the home of the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs and the Sydney Olympic Football Club. The town centre of Belmore is home to many small businesses, churches and other places of worship. It is the centre of activity for the community.

I have been working with local residents and businesses to improve the Belmore town centre. I acknowledge my colleague Councillor Nadia Saleh from the Roselands ward of the City of Canterbury Bankstown for working with me to improve the Belmore town centre. I also acknowledge Peter Katholos, who is the chair of the Belmore Shopkeepers Association, for his very strong advocacy, particularly advocating very strongly for small businesses, improved amenity of the area, parking and more opportunities in the Belmore town centre. Recently the City of Canterbury Bankstown Mayor, Khal Asfour, responded to concerns which were raised on behalf of our community and small businesses. Mr Katholos and the Belmore Shopkeepers Association have been liaising with the council on a number of issues. I am raising those issues on behalf of my community in Parliament because I would like the Government to listen to groups who are conversant with the issues in my community.

Mayor Asfour indicated that the council would take a number of actions to address the concerns of the shopkeepers, including replacing damaged tiles and investigating slip-resistant pavers; repairing the road pavement, gutters and footpath; and working with Ausgrid to replace broken street lighting along Burwood Road. I ask the House to note that currently the council is limited by the uncertainty created by the Government's precinct plan for Belmore. The plan means that the council is unable to improve the streetscape in Belmore or build new public amenities because of the uncertainty about the Government's plans for the area. Tonight I call for clarification from the planning Minister so that the Belmore community knows what the plans are.

I seek clarification in relation to planning for the town centre and for car parking. The community recently lost the Commonwealth Bank of Australia from Belmore. I call on the Government to work with the council, with me and with shopkeepers to get either another bank or another large business for our community. I also call on the Government to work with the council and me to improve community safety by installing more CCTV cameras, to take action to end illegal dumping practices, to increase the capacity of car parking, particularly in relation to line marking that has been identified around Redman Parade, and to improve the link between Belmore Sports Ground, Belmore station and the town centre.

Belmore is a great place and amazing people live and work there. I thank our small businesses, which are doing it tough. A lot of the reason for that relates to lack of parking. There is a lot of goodwill amongst our shopkeepers in our community, we all work together, but we want the community and our small businesses to thrive and we want more large businesses. I will repeat my call on the planning Minister in writing. I hope that he hears our voice loud and clear. The Minister is more than welcome to visit the amazing and fantastic community of Belmore. I want to acknowledge the very good work of Belmore Boys High School, which is also part of the Belmore town centre. Once again I call on the Government to work with me, the City of Canterbury Bankstown council, our shopkeepers and bigger businesses; to invest in our local community; and to institute a coordinated plan.

### **BARWON ELECTORATE DRUG AND ALCOHOL REHABILITATION SERVICES**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (19:26):** Members may not know but in the late 1990s and early 2000s I was a drug and alcohol counsellor working in three correctional centres and through the community in both metropolitan and regional areas of New South Wales. This was the area of study of my first postgraduate

qualification. Between April 2017 and March 2019, in the Far West of New South Wales amphetamine use and possession has increased by 61 per cent, the highest increase in the State. Drug-related crime figures, presentations to emergency departments and ambulance call-outs for drug-related incidents are all on the increase. This is putting a massive strain on health services, which are already letting down our communities in Barwon.

The Barwon electorate is 356,000 square kilometres. It comprises 44 per cent of New South Wales and over 79,000 people call the towns in the Barwon electorate home. For the entire population of Barwon, who are spread across the vast western reaches, there are 26 residential rehabilitation beds for people looking to beat drug or alcohol addiction—just 26. If you live in Broken Hill, the largest community in the electorate with roughly 17,000 people, and you need to access residential rehabilitation, your options are either the Wiimpatja Healing Centre, which is 70 kilometres from Wentworth and over 330 kilometres from Broken Hill, or Orana Haven at Brewarrina, which is some 700-odd kilometres from Broken Hill.

They are the only two centres in the Barwon electorate. Both services have been established for Aboriginal men who have no serious criminal convictions and who have been through detoxification. Both facilities have waitlists that can be up to two months. If you need residential rehabilitation and you are from Broken Hill, other options include Mildura, which is 295 kilometres away; Orange, which is 887 kilometres away; Cowra, which is 922 kilometres away; Sydney, which is 1,144 kilometres away; Adelaide in South Australia, which is some 512 kilometres away; or Murray Bridge, which is a 547-kilometre trip. For the entire population of Broken Hill and the Far West of the State, there are just three drug and alcohol counsellors—just three.

I am not sure whether members are aware but there is a model called the stages-of-change model, which was developed by two fellows named Prochaska and Diclemente. The model talks about people in either a pre-contemplation or contemplation stage. Pre-contemplation is the stage before thinking about change, when people are drinking or drugging and not looking at changing their behaviour. Contemplation is a state of ambiguity. It is a state of thinking about change but not actually taking action. Eventually determination is a point where people decide to make a change and then there is action. The important thing is that when a person is at a point in their cycle where they are actually thinking about change and making a decision that they want to change, they have to have a place to go to straightaway for both detox and rehabilitation. They need to capitalise on that moment; they cannot be put on a waitlist for months.

If the Government does not take action and does not commit to establishing detox and rehabilitation facilities in western New South Wales, it is likely there will never be an end to the drug problem. There will never be an end to the strain placed on hospitals and health services due to people seeking assistance for drug addiction if the Government does not address the lack of rehabilitation facilities and beds. Last year the Committee on Community Services inquired into the provision of drug rehabilitation services in regional, rural and remote New South Wales. As part of the inquiry, the Government was asked how many residential rehabilitation beds were in the State. It advised:

... it is aware of 1,182 residential rehabilitation and withdrawal management beds in New South Wales across non-government and private providers.

The Government is not certain on the number of beds, it is just aware of some. The Government's lack of oversight of the beds available is telling. How can it possibly be working to address this problem if it does not know how many beds are available? A number of lawyers and legal services have commented on the inability to find places for their clients. I know from working in Corrections the difficulties faced when looking for a pre-sentence report option for a community placement into rehab. The lack of publicly available information on the services that are available, in which locations and under what conditions greatly prohibits lawyers from getting care for their clients. They all say that in rural New South Wales there is a complete deficiency of residential rehabilitation facilities available and fewer resources to break the drug crime cycle.

General practitioners, community nurses, counsellors and families are all desperate to find care for people who are suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. The evidence shows that residential rehabilitation programs work but, importantly, they do not necessarily work the first time. When people quit smoking, on average they go through quitting and starting again 13 times. The communities in my electorate are calling out for help. They want action; they want and need facilities. It is time for the Government to fund them so that we can start to break the cycles and get people living healthy lives.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (19:31):** The Government continues to invest in protecting our local communities. Having recently attended my local area command's monthly Community Safety Precinct Committee meeting, it was encouraging to hear the great news that the NSW Police Force continues to keep the community safe, with crime statistics showing all major categories either stable or falling. Police men and women across this State continue to deliver time and again, putting their own personal safety on the line to ensure our communities

are safe and protected. I am proud to be part of a government that recognises this incredible work and is investing accordingly to allow officers to continue this daunting task.

In last year's budget the Government announced \$29 million to upgrade and redevelop Hurstville Police Station. The multimillion dollar police station is a win for the community and will ensure local police have the resources they need for generations to come. The location of the new police station in Hurstville is yet to be determined but it will take into consideration feasibility, land space and accessibility. More information will be made available in the coming months following consultation and a number of design phases. My local community is thrilled with this announcement.

However, it is not just infrastructure that this Government is investing in. The Government recognises the incredible efforts of police officers who have worked tirelessly alongside the community to keep crime rates low. That is why the Government has also taken the major step to fortify the force into the future with the investment of more than \$583 million over four years to deliver 1,500 extra police officers. Recently the Premier and the police Minister welcomed class 337, which included 261 new probationary constables to the NSW Police Force, 16 of whom will work in my electorate. We all thank these new probationary constables for their willingness to serve our community and we wish them all the very best as they embark on their important and rewarding careers.

Our local Hurstville firefighters have also recently been recognised for their extraordinary efforts in two separate incidents. Fire and Rescue NSW members were honoured in the annual St Florian's Day awards during a ceremony at the Emergency Services Academy. St Florian's Day, also known as International Firefighters' Day, is celebrated annually on 4 May. Alongside other crews, the Hurstville crew was presented with the Unit Commendation for Meritorious Service Award. Two members were also honoured with the Individual Commendation for Meritorious Service award. They were commended for their dedicated actions in a confined space rescue at an Auburn ink plant in 2017. Another team within the same station at Hurstville was recognised for its life-saving actions at a motor vehicle accident on the Hume Highway at Menangle in September 2017. Recipients were described as individuals who displayed dedication and professionalism on behalf of their organisation. One of my son's favourite days is the open day at our local fire station at Morddale. Like many other children, he loves the sound of the sirens, the firefighter hats that are handed out and the chance to check out the station and the trucks.

Earlier this year we celebrated National Volunteer Week, which is an annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers. As part of this celebration I was honoured to represent the Minister for Police and Emergency Services at the NSW State Emergency Services [SES] Marrickville awards ceremony. The SES volunteers have a long and proud history of assisting their community with their invaluable emergency response during floods, storms and other emergencies. It made me incredibly proud to see the depth of the commitment of the Marrickville SES and the outstanding community spirit and dedication that they demonstrate. When things go wrong the SES are there time and time again. They give up their time to help others in need and often that comes at the expense of their own safety. We are a country built on volunteerism, on mates helping mates and on doing the right thing when things go wrong. I look forward to keeping the House up to date on any further developments with the Hurstville Police Station and I congratulate all those who are involved in assisting the community.

#### CLAREMONT MEADOWS PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (19:36):** Before I raise an important issue on behalf of a school community in my electorate, I would like to acknowledge a resident of my electorate who is in the public gallery this evening. Mark Phillips is a resident of St Marys and an active member of the Labor Party. He is a big supporter of mine and I am very grateful for his help. He lives on a great poster site on the Great Western Highway and has done some fabulous things for me over the years. I thank him for that.

This evening I raise an issue concerning the growing community around Claremont Meadows. The Claremont Meadows community has existed for some time but the new release areas in Caddens and the growth of the existing area has rapidly expanded the population of Claremont Meadows Public School. To its credit—and members will not hear me saying this very often—the Government has acknowledged the issue by investing in an upgrade of the school. The upgrade is well overdue. The school has had to deal with a large number of demountables for many years but the upgrade is happening. Oddly, whilst the Government acknowledges that the community is growing at a rapid rate and needs a school upgrade, the school cannot seem to get a school crossing supervisor to ensure that the Claremont Meadows children can cross the road safely.

The road crossing has been an issue for a number of years. I have been at the school to speak with parents on many occasions and I have seen the problem firsthand. I was there only a couple of weeks ago and this issue was raised with me again then. Sunflower Drive, where the school is located, is a very busy main road. I note that

not only local children go to this school. The school has a special needs unit which is renowned in the community and children from the Penrith and St Marys area who need to attend a special needs unit all go there. Kids are crossing the road all the time and there is no supervisor.

During the past 12 months we have collected signatures on petitions. Frustratingly, the school has enough children to qualify for a supervisor in the morning but is a small number short in the afternoon. There is a very rigid bureaucratic criteria that determines whether a school can get a school crossing supervisor. That is very frustrating for local residents. The issue has been raised in the local media and parents are constantly contacting me about the issue. Of course I am very sympathetic, as there have been a number of near misses outside the school. At the recent State election the Government made a commitment to relax the criteria for school crossing supervisors and alleged that there will be 300 extra lollipop supervisors across the State. My reading of that commitment to relax the criteria is that Claremont Meadows Public School will now meet the requirements. The school is also of that opinion.

When I was at the school about a fortnight ago the principal asked me when they will be getting a school crossing supervisor. The principal is nervous every day, particularly in the afternoons, that something will happen. We believe that the Government's election commitment means that Claremont Meadows Public School will meet the criteria but as yet that commitment has not been met. After I spoke to the principal and to parents I wrote to the Minister about the issue. I received a response back from the Parliament Secretary that concerned me and has necessitated my raising the issue in Parliament.

The response did not say whether or not Claremont Meadows Public School will get a school crossing supervisor. It could have been a response to anyone at any school across the State. That is more than slightly offensive, given that I am very worried about the children at the school being hit by cars as they leave school. I ask the Minister to tell us once and for all whether Claremont Meadows Public School will receive a lollipop man or lady and, if so, when it will happen. The population of the area is growing every day. The Government has admitted that by investing in an upgrade. I ask that the Government gives the school a road crossing supervisor to protect the children of Claremont Meadows.

#### **FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE HSC STUDENTS**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (19:41):** Year 12 students throughout New South Wales are on the verge of completing 13 years of formal education, marking a significant time in each of their lives. It is an important period for students as they head towards the completion of the Higher School Certificate [HSC], the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. Following the completion of the Higher School Certificate not all students will continue to walk down the same path. These high school graduates will find themselves facing a vast array of opportunities that will challenge and mould them into the people they are destined to become. Whilst some graduates will continue their educational journey, undertake tertiary studies and set their sights on one of many career prospects, there will be many others who will instead turn to alternative routes, such as finding employment, taking a sabbatical or picking up an apprenticeship.

With examinations just around the corner, many year 12 students have already completed large parts of their HSC through the submission of major projects and works. These students are now at a critical juncture where they are afforded the opportunity to consolidate all of their time and effort in the final push as they prepare for their final exams. Fairfield is home to a number of students who are in transit from refugee camps, where they lived only a few years ago. They arrived with little to no understanding of the English language but today they are overcoming great adversity and are gaining an education that will open up opportunities that before they never dreamed were possible. It fills me with great pride to acknowledge those students, many of whom will be the first members of their families to complete high school, let alone attain the HSC. The achievements of those young people are an inspiration to us all. I commend them for their hard work, perseverance and dedication. They have made their families and communities incredibly proud.

I send a message to all students who are still unsure about what they want to do when they graduate, what career path they wish to follow or what their next step in life should be. I encourage those young people to try not to stress. They are not alone and what they are feeling is completely normal. Everyone goes through stages of uncertainty, doubt and confusion. If they give it time they will eventually choose their desired paths. On a personal note, when I reflect back to this week 30 years ago when I too was graduating from year 12, I would have never in a million years dreamed that this is how my life would have panned out. Despite believing that they are barrelling themselves down a single path, I assure those young people that life has a funny way of working things out and that new paths will continually open up throughout their lifetimes. They just have to keep their eyes peeled for the opportunities that come up.

If I had known back then some of the lessons I have learned throughout my lifetime I know my young adult years would have been far less stressful. That is why I emphasise to year 12 students graduating this year

that doors will open and close many times throughout your lifetime. Do not dwell on a missed opportunity or a chapter in your life coming to a close. If you dwell, you are likely to miss the new opportunities and the doors that will open up for you along your journey. None of us would be here today without the ongoing contributions, support and guidance of our friends, family, teachers and support staff. They have played an invaluable role in shaping us into who we are today. On behalf of every student, past, present and future, I extend our sincerest appreciation and admiration to them for everything they have done and will continue to do throughout our life's journey.

As the local MP I have had many great opportunities to attend local schools and to support students over the years. As a result, I have seen many of the graduating 2019 class coming through the year groups, starting from feeder schools to entry into their respective schools in year 7. It fills me with great pride to have seen those students grow and mature over the years and to see them now going out into the world as young adults and fine upstanding citizens in our community. On behalf of the people of the electorate of Fairfield, I congratulate the year 12 students of Canley Vale High School, Fairfield High School, Fairvale High School, Mary McKillop Catholic College, Pal Buddhist College, Patrician Brothers College Fairfield and Westfield Sports High School and all the students who live in Fairfield but attend schools outside the electorate on completing 13 years of formal education. We wish them all the best in their examinations and the exciting prospects that lie ahead of them. We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved and we look forward to seeing what their next chapter holds.

### **SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTH COAST**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:46):** If anyone requires inspiration they should look no further than the athletes and their supporters at Special Olympics North Coast. Their regional carnival on the Coffs Coast was one of the most uplifting events I have ever been involved with. The 103 tenpin bowlers, 29 golfers and six gymnasts won spectators' hearts as they passionately played the sports they love, with gold, silver or bronze medals up for grabs. Athletes made the trip from as far afield as Brisbane, Port Macquarie, Taree, Armidale, Tamworth, Sydney, Blue Mountains and Canberra. The North Coast team was enormously successful with its haul of 18 gold, 22 silver and 16 bronze medals.

Proud members of that team are Coffs Coast athletes Ethan Mitchell, Luke Jourdan, Chloe Muir, Kristie Flick, Ashlea Paton, Cara Reeves, Brooke Moss, Tasharna Butcher, Shane-Anne Child, Katrina Lowe, Renae Knodler, Jessica Dunn, Peter Mott, Brendan Stevens, James Muir, James Robertson, John Gosbell, Jordan Davis, Blake Pollard, Zane Davey-Newman, Joshua Ives, John Browning, Lachlan Smith, Chris Hendry, Aidan Van Houts, Cameron Pollard, Daniel Huxley, Iain Misselbrook, Ben Paul, Stevie-Rose Eckhardt and Gabrielle Norris.

Special Olympics North Coast provides weekly sporting and social opportunities for people with an intellectual disability on the Coffs Coast. As many as 60 athletes are under the supervision of a dynamic team of volunteer committee members, who truly are the heart and soul of our community. I thank Chair Francine Reeves, Treasurer Debbie Telford, Secretary Cate Rutherford, Margaret Markham, Noela Van Houts, Ruth Smith, Christine Huxley, Matthew Huxley, athlete mentor Phil Crofts, and volunteer coaches Brendan Barnes, who coaches golf, Trish Kelsall, who coaches tenpin bowling, and Julie Wales, who coaches gymnastics. I also recognise sports coordinator Kate Pollard for helping to change lives for the better.

In an exciting development, Special Olympics North Coast hopes to expand its offerings to include swimming and basketball. By competing in regional carnivals such as the Coffs Coast event, athletes are then eligible to progress to State competition, which can give them further opportunities to represent their State at national competition and world games. I acknowledge Coffs Harbour's Club300 Bowling & Bar, Sawtell Golf Club and So Fun Gymnastics Woolgoolga as the host sites for the regional carnival. I am told the dinner dance at Sawtell RSL Club was a highlight of the weekend for athletes and their supporters.

### *Community Recognition Statements*

### **CREMORNE SYNAGOGUE**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:49):** For almost 60 years Cremorne Synagogue has provided a strong foundation for Jewish residents in my electorate of North Shore. Under the leadership of Rabbi Chaim Koncinski and his wife, Dina Koncinski, Cremorne Synagogue continues to provide support and guidance for the Jewish community. The synagogue is nurturing ancestral connections and strengthening diversity by offering conservational Hebrew lessons for adults and children. I know the importance of providing support for parents with young children and I am proud to see Cremorne Synagogue running a playgroup to assist parents. Cremorne Synagogue is making a difference in the lives of our local Jewish residents. I am pleased to have supported them in the past by advocating for funding for a multi-purpose community space. Last year I had the

privilege of lighting the Cremorne Synagogue Shamash candle for Hanukkah and I was delighted to be welcomed back for the recent dedication of a new handwritten Sefer Torah scroll. It was a very special and joyous occasion for the synagogue. I thank Secretary Brian Doobov, Rabbi Konceptolski and Dina Konceptolski for inviting me to celebrate with them.

#### **RICHMOND POLICE DISTRICT**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:50):** On 17 September my local university, Southern Cross University, was the subject of threatening calls made to local police and a police operation was launched. The action of police was timely and correct and after a lockdown they safely evacuated over 800 people. I praise the local police from the Richmond Police District, led by Superintendent Toby Lindsay and supported by specialist units including Tactical Operations Regional Support, the Negotiation Unit, the Rescue and Bomb Disposal Unit and the Traffic and Highway Patrol Command. During the operation I stayed in touch with the SCU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Adam Shoemaker. He and the whole team, including the staff member who liaised with the police, acted wonderfully. Their professional response and cooperation was valued by the police. The nearby high school and two childcare centres were not the subject of threats but went into lockdown given their proximity to the university. The teachers and staff kept the children in their care safe, secure and calm. I thank them and the parents who cooperated and the local bus drivers from the nearby bus company whose actions were exemplary.

#### **C.EX GROUP NSW MASTERS ROAD RACE & CRITERIUM CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:51):** On 21 and 22 September the best road racers rolled into Coffs Harbour for the prestigious 2019 C.ex Group NSW Masters Road Race & Criterium Championships which was proudly presented by the Coffs Harbour Cycle Club and Cycling NSW. The event attracted 200 competitors from across the State. They spent money at local businesses and saw much of what our beautiful city has to offer. Saturday's Road Race started and finished at the Sid Burke Rest Area on Pine Creek Way at Bonville, and Sunday's Kennards Criterium was a 900 metre course around Brelsford Park in central Coffs Harbour. On Saturday Dan Alcock won the Men's Masters 3 Road Race and Laurelea Moss won the Women's Masters 3 Road Race. They are both fantastic athletes from Coffs Harbour. On Sunday "Fresh Legs" Phil Almond claimed second place in the Masters 4 Criterium. I thank the hardworking Coffs Harbour Cycle Club organising committee made up of Kerry Westwood, Teresa Cadogan, Chris Pratt, Joel Barker and Scott Walcot. I look forward to being beaten by all of them over the summer criterium season.

#### **KEIRA ELECTORATE FOOTBALL CLUBS**

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (19:52):** Last weekend was very successful for football clubs in the fantastic electorate of Keira but not so lucky for those in my neighbouring electorate of Wollongong. I congratulate the historic win of the Corrimal Rangers Football Club over Wollongong Olympic. This is the first win for the Rangers in 46 years. After conceding a goal in the first minute of play they went on to win 2-1 at WIN Stadium, finally breaking their own drought. Tarrawanna beat Wollongong United in the Under 23s and Bulli beat Wollongong United in a penalty shootout for the Youth Grade Championship. This just shows that when it comes to football the northern suburbs of Wollongong are outplaying our southern rivals. I know my friend the member for Wollongong will be disappointed but I look forward to his speech about how great my teams are after he lost our annual friendly bet. I congratulate Corrimal, Tarrawanna and Bulli on their wins and Football South Coast on another successful season.

#### **ST GEORGE MEALS ON WHEELS**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (19:53):** I acknowledge the great work of St George Meals on Wheels, which was established in 1967. St George Meals on Wheels is a community-based organisation that provides meals to the St George area, including my electorate of Oatley. It offers a variety of meals to assist people who are frail, aged or disabled to live and stay at home and to ensure that their family or other caregivers are supported in their role. For many years I have been fortunate to volunteer as a "runner" for Meals on Wheels, which involves delivering meals to the doorstep. This is an incredibly rewarding experience and a great opportunity to meet some of our locals. In 2017 I was pleased to present the CEO of St George Meals on Wheels, Ms Nahed Soliman, with the Oatley Local Woman of the Year award for her dedicated coordination of the organisation's services. I thank St George Meals on Wheels NSW for the valuable work it does for our local community.

#### **BERKELEY VALE COMMUNITY GARDEN**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (19:54):** The Berkeley Vale Community Garden began in 2010, with local residents installing fencing, garden beds and tanks. The garden's first open day was 25 March 2012, showcasing the community garden and its success. Over the years the garden has been maintained by managing the fruit trees, vegetables, grass, mud and indigenous plants, and by changing the layout. On 7 September I visited



the Berkeley Vale Community Garden to celebrate Community Garden Week. The garden opened its gates, and invited locals to explore and learn to grow plants in their community garden. I was handed broccoli and snow peas and morning tea, including banana slice made from freshly grown bananas from the Berkeley Vale Community Garden. Berkeley Vale Neighbourhood Centre is actively working to provide and maintain the community garden in Berkeley Vale. The Berkeley Vale Community Garden is always looking for more volunteers to join at a very reasonable yearly cost of \$2.20. Well done to volunteers and members for being involved in the Berkeley Vale Community Garden.

#### **TERRIGAL SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:55):** I bring to the House's attention the upgrade of the public toilets at Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club. Earlier this year, I spent many mornings at Terrigal Esplanade, asking for local residents to sign my petition to help secure funding to upgrade those amenities. I called it the "fix the stink" petition, because the toilets were in such a bad way that you could smell them when you walked past. Thanks to the hundreds of signatures of support I was able to gather, the Government very kindly provided \$240,000 to get the job done. I am really pleased that the council received the funding immediately and has now completed the project. I am delighted to inform the House that this Friday I will be making the official "first flush" of the brand-new public toilets. This is something the community so desperately wants and I am delighted it has been made possible by the New South Wales Liberal Government's funding.

#### **AMPCONTROL**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (19:56):** Today I relate to the Chamber the story of how Ampcontrol, a local company based out of Tomago in my electorate, has researched and developed a clean drinking water solution and delivered it to a Central Australian community. Ampcontrol's Gilghi remote water system transforms undrinkable bore water into drinkable pure water. For its design, manufacture and delivery of an off-grid, fully transportable containerised water treatment system, Ampcontrol was recognised with the Excellence in Innovation award at the recent 2019 Hunter Business Awards. That award backed up the 2018 award that Ampcontrol received for Excellence in Business. From its 51 years in business, it is clear that Ampcontrol is a valued local company that is kicking goals in many ways. Aside from engineering clean drinking water solutions, Ampcontrol delivers integrated electrical, electronic and control solutions to improve safety and efficiency in mining, renewable, infrastructure and industrial applications. I congratulate the entire Ampcontrol team.

#### **MODEL FARMS HIGH SCHOOL**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (19:57):** Model Farms High School educates many students from Baulkham Hills and Winston Hills in my electorate. Led by principal Mark Grady, the school is well regarded in the community. The teachers and the executive, support and office staff are all dedicated to ensuring every student has the opportunity to succeed. Model Farms P&C does a tremendous job of supporting the school. I thank president Belinda Schuster, vice-presidents Carolyn Brown and Matthew Walton, treasurer Dale Doyle and secretary Julie May for their hard work and advocacy. I note the school's academic, creative and sporting excellence, which has continued since I attended Model Farms High School many years ago. The school prides itself on producing great leaders, such as his Excellency Brendan Berne, the Australian Ambassador to France. Recently it was my pleasure to present the local 2019 Rotary Youth vocation awards. A give a big congratulations to Chloe Conry, Kara Conry and Jayden Powell from Model Farms High School on their recognition as tremendous vocational education and training students.

#### **GRANVILLE AND DISTRICTS SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

**Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (19:58):** I congratulate the Granville and Districts Soccer Football Association on another well-run season and gala dinner presentation. In particular, I recognise the work of all the club volunteers, including Mel and Lee Rennie from Lidcombe Waratah Football Club, Greg Moses and Bas Farag from Newington Gunners Soccer Club and Murat Kivrak from Auburn Football Club. Steve Trainer was recognised for his extraordinary 50 years of service to the district, and Yvonne and Peter Bacha for 40 years of service each, as well as Danny Bouzas and Osman Jebara. Referees were recognised with the awarding of the inaugural Phillip Williams Referee of the Year medal jointly to Stephen Prattent and Glen Arnott. I congratulate Auburn District on winning the Club Championship and Holroyd Rangers on taking one of the oldest continuously played for silverware in Australia, the Cottam Cup. The return of the oldest soccer football cup in Australia, the Atkinson-Price Challenge Cup, saw Premier League Champions Auburn Football Club take on Marulan Football Club and an earlier women's game between Granville Waratah SFC and Moss Vale Soccer Club.

#### **RYAN LE ROY**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:59):** Regentville student Ryan Le Roy was recently selected to participate in the 2019 International Science School at the University of Sydney, where he undertook a two-week

residential program of talks, tours, activities and social events with world-renowned science professionals. Ryan was one of 140 top science students from Australia and around the world to take part in this program. Ryan was recommended by his chemistry teacher to apply for the event. From there, he was able to engage with some of the greatest minds of the twenty-first century. The program included lectures and workshops that varied from DNA sequencing through to astronomy. Through this intensive science-based program, Ryan was exposed to a variety of fields that he previously never considered as career opportunities. After completing his high school studies, Ryan plans to study a master's degree in biomedical engineering at the University of Sydney, where he hopes to utilise his experience to benefit the industry of prosthetics and supply aids to those in need.

#### **HABERFIELD NETBALL CLUB**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (20:00):** I warmly congratulate Haberfield Netball Club member Rachel Weston on recently being awarded the National C umpiring badge. This award recognises Rachel's enthusiasm and the mentorship she has provided to many young women from across the inner west as they start their umpiring careers. The Haberfield Netball Club also recognised the commitment and skill of junior umpires in the club who have been awarded association and club badges this year. I extend my congratulations to Georgia Hobbs, Madeleine Smith, Amber Simpson, Jasmine Gilligan and Frankie Murphy. Although 75 per cent of young women aged 12 to 14 participate in sport, only 20 per cent of young women play sport after age 18. Rachel Weston of the Haberfield Netball Club and her commitment to the sport she loves are testament to the importance of supporting young women in sport and encouraging them to stay engaged with the sport that they love. I thank Rachel and I congratulate her and all the winners.

#### **FEROS GROUP**

**Ms ELANI PETINOS (Miranda) (20:01):** I congratulate the Feros Group on being recognised as the best hotel group in Australia. Sutherland shire based Feros Group was founded by Nicholas Feros in the early 1970s and has since grown and developed to operate seven successful destinations under the management of Nicholas's son, Chris. The group is well known for its outstanding hospitality throughout the shire, with venues including The Prince Hotel Kirrawee, Taren Point Hotel, Highfield Caringbah, and the adjoining Huxley's bar and Ugly Pizza. Feros Group was presented with the prestigious title at the 2019 Australian Hotels Association National Awards for Excellence earlier this month.

The Feros Group was catapulted into the national final by winning the New South Wales award in this category last year. I commend the hard work of the Feros Group leadership team, including director and founder Nicholas Feros, director and chief executive officer Chris Feros, chief financial officer John Ryan, chief operations officer Simon Johnston, director of marketing Ben Auricht, group executive chef Paul Pirreca, and group facilities and gaming manager Steve Rogers. I congratulate Chris and his team on their outstanding achievement and extend my best wishes for the future.

#### **KU RANDWICK COOGEE PRESCHOOL**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (20:02):** I inform the House that the KU Randwick Coogee Preschool recently celebrated its sixtieth anniversary of providing quality early childhood education and care to local families. KU Randwick Coogee Preschool was started by a group of dedicated mothers who saw a need for a preschool in the Randwick area, and wanted to provide excellent early education and care for children based on the Early Years Learning Framework. Within the local community the preschool has a proud reputation of providing rich education and care that concentrates on individual children in a family-focused and supportive way. This was clearly demonstrated by the many children, families, and past and present staff, along with Mayor of Randwick Councillor Kathy Neilson and myself, who all turned up to celebrate. Happy sixtieth, KU Randwick Coogee Preschool!

#### **COOTAMUNDRA WATTLE TIME FAIR AND STREET PARADE**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:03):** I acknowledge the efforts of the staff and board at the Cootamundra Development Corporation to coordinate a hugely successful 2019 Cootamundra Wattle Time Fair and Street Parade. August is known as Wattle Time in Cootamundra, when the first bright yellow wattles begin to flower throughout the town. On the last Saturday of August the town celebrates with a street parade, which this year saw a large crowd line Parker Street and cheer on the Chinese dragon, a Cobb & Co coach, the 7th Light Horse Gundagai Troop, vintage cars, Bollywood dancers, decorated fire engines, tractors and other colourful floats and marching groups. After that, the parade moved to Fisher Park to enjoy the fun of the fair. I congratulate the Cootamundra community on supporting this annual celebration and the organisers and participants on putting smiles on faces.

### GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY GIANTS

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (20:04):** Well, there's a big, big sound from the west of the town. It's the sound of the mighty Giants! On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I congratulate the Greater Western Sydney Giants team on its history-making season and its appearance in the Australian Football League [AFL] grand final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday 28 September 2019 against the Richmond Football Club. The Giants appearance in the grand final would not have been possible without the direction of club Chief Executive Officer David Mathews, Board Chair Tony Shepard, Head Coach Leon Cameron and his predecessor Kevin Sheedy, co-captains Phil Davis and Callan Ward and, of course, the Giants players. I hope all the fans enjoy the week and the game. In the true words of the club song, "We will never surrender and we will fight until the end." From small beginnings, the little brother of AFL in Sydney has come of age and is well and truly all grown up and ready for the fight in the big dance at the cauldron. The Giants will be mightily supported by the entire State every step of the way in the grand final. Go the Giants!

### THOMAS HINE

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:05):** I recognise Hammondville resident Thomas Hine for his triathlon achievements. Thomas Hine is 17 years old but has already been training as a triathlete since the age of 11. He has been a proud member of Macarthur Triathlon Club ever since he joined the club with his father. He placed seventh among government schools and nineteenth overall at this year's NSW All School Triathlon. Thomas is aiming high, with aspirations to qualify for the 2024 Olympic Games. He has previously been named Holsworthy High School's swimming and athletics age champion and is definitely on his way to success. Once again, I congratulate Thomas Hine on working hard at his training to become a successful triathlete. It is always great to see someone so young in our community pursuing such a challenging passion. I wish him the best of luck in his future triathlon competitions.

### RANDWICK PETERSHAM CRICKET CLUB

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (20:06):** On 23 September I had the honour of attending the launch of the Randwick Petersham Cricket Club's 2019-20 season at Sutton Rosebery. The club president, former fast bowling legend Mike Whitney, AM, our local Randwick success story, gave a rousing and inspiring presentation on the importance of leadership, and his vision for the club to be the finest cricketing club in the world—an achievement which is not out of reach for this very impressive club. I and my parliamentary colleague the member for Coogee, the Federal member for Kingsford Smith, the then deputy mayor and now Mayor of Randwick Danny Said, Mayor of Inner West Council Darcy Byrne and Consul General of Ireland Mr Owen Feeney were also presented with the official history of the Randwick, Marrickville and Petersham cricket clubs, an impressive tome written by the club's historian, the legendary Lyall Gardner, OAM. It was a pleasure to present players with their caps before their first game this weekend. I wish every success to the Randy-Petes for their 2019-20 season.

### LILLIANAH WILLIAMS AND EMERSYN SMITH

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:07):** I recognise our duo hockey sensations Lillianah Williams and Emersyn Smith for their selection to compete in the under-13 girls Australian hockey carnival in Hobart during October. The pair from Port Macquarie-Hastings Hockey Association will head to Tasmania next week and join the New South Wales Stars to compete in a seven-day tournament and play an estimated 12 matches on their way to the finals. For Lillianah, this is her maiden under-13s national representative tournament. Normally someone competing in such an event would be accompanied by nervousness and tension, but not this confident and excited teen; she is looking forward to the amazing learning experience that comes with playing representative hockey. Emersyn has some understanding of the task ahead after watching her father, Jarrod, in action when he competed in harsh weather conditions and ice on the other side of Bass Strait. This will also be Emersyn's inaugural selection at this level but, like Lillianah, she cannot wait to hit the field and show the home team how New South Wales can play the game. I congratulate Lillianah and Emersyn on being named in the under-13 side for New South Wales. I wish them all the best in the upcoming tournament.

### NEWCASTLE AIRPORT

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (20:08):** It was a big night for Newcastle Airport at the recent 2019 Hunter Business Awards. Newcastle Airport is the second busiest airport in New South Wales, constantly breaking its own passenger records and bringing more and more people each year into our beautiful region. At the Hunter Business Awards, Chief Executive Officer Peter Cock was recognised as a joint winner of the Business Leader of the Year Award. This is a highly coveted award, and is a strong show of confidence from our local business community in Peter's leadership. The airport itself was also the recipient of the 2019 President's Award. Hunter Business Chamber President Hennie du Plooy noted that this recognition was due to the airport's special contribution to the current and future prosperity of Port Stephens and the Hunter. Newcastle Airport is the

airport of choice for over a million people each year, and it is not hard to understand why. I extend my congratulations to CEO Peter Cock, Chairperson Peter Gesling, and the entire Newcastle Airport team, together with airport owners Port Stephens Council and Newcastle City Council.

#### **NORWOOD PRESCHOOL**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (20:09):** I acknowledge Norwood Community Preschool for celebrating its sixtieth birthday. The not-for-profit preschool, known by locals as the Preschool by the Park, has helped educate hundreds of young children over its 60 years. It originally started in the home of Mrs Dorothy Bannister on the Pacific Highway at Mount Colah before it moved to its current location at Mills Park. I pass on my congratulations to Norwood's longest serving staff including Director Karen Watts, who has been at the school for 35 years, more than half its life. I thank Karen so much for all the work she has done for the kids in our community. I also acknowledge educational leader Beverly Gowenlock, who has been at the preschool 23 years and who I believe is retiring this year. I thank Bev. I also thank office manager Jan Woolley, who has dedicated 20 years. Norwood is dedicated to its students and believes that ensuring each child has a positive start to their education can have an effect that lasts for a lifetime. Happy sixtieth birthday, Norwood. I thank the staff for giving the youngest members of our community a bright start.

#### **RANDWICK VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (20:10):** I inform the Parliament of the phenomenal contribution of volunteers across Sydney city and the eastern suburbs whose efforts were recognised at the annual NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards in Randwick. Linda Deutsch was awarded the 2019 Adult Volunteer of the Year for her work teaching English language skills to people from non-English speaking backgrounds at the Junction Neighbourhood Centre. The Sailors with Disabilities Wright of Passage volunteers were awarded the 2019 Volunteer Team of the Year for their work helping young people who have disengaged from school or TAFE via a workplace learning program that teaches new skills and provides a pathway to work. The Eastern Suburbs 2019 Volunteer of the Year is Philip Feinstein, who founded the Music for Refugees program to help provide self-esteem, confidence and happiness for refugees at the Villawood Detention Centre. He has helped collect musical instruments to donate through the program and was invited to extend its work at the Christmas Island Detention Centre.

#### **1ST BALMORAL CUB SCOUTS**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (10:11):** Scouts NSW is nurturing bright and intelligent young minds in my electorate of North Shore. I had the pleasure of meeting some of these young cub scouts when I joined the 1st Balmoral Cub Scouts for its award presentation night. It was a privilege to present three Grey Wolf awards, the highest decoration for a cub scout, to Oliver Gibbons, William Raymond, and Oisin Newport-O'Connor. The award acknowledges all the hard work they have done as cub scouts, including through leadership courses, community service, learning new skills, and leading fellow scouts on bushwalks.

I also recognise Flora Munro, who was awarded an Australian Medallion, the highest achievement given to a scout. I was amazed to hear that in working to achieve her Australian Medallion, Flora, aged only 13, planned, managed and led a 30 kilometre three-day hike for herself and five other scouts through the Katoomba bushland. I also congratulate Assistant Scout Leader Kim Reardon, who received a service award for 15 years of dedication. I thank Kim and 1st Balmoral Leader in Charge and Cub Leader Rod O'Connor for their ongoing commitment to our next generation of leaders.

#### **TURKISH CHARLIE RYAN**

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (20:12):** I was privileged to join Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch and State colleagues for the Turkish Victory Day celebrations and the launch of the *Turkish Charlie Ryan* book. The book tells the unbelievable story of Sir Charlie Ryan, an Australian Major General and World War I hero, who was one of the important figures in the Armistice at Gallipoli on 24 May 1915. He is admired by many Turkish historians and credited with helping create the great mutual friendship between Australia and Turkey post war. Auburn has a wonderfully rich Australian Turkish community, which we are immensely proud of. I congratulate authors John Gillam and Yvonne Fletcher on their fantastic book that is helping educate young Australians on an oft untold story of World War I. I say well done to Cumberland RSL Sub-Branch members and their President Greg Read for supporting this great book to help bring together the Australian and Turkish communities in my electorate of Auburn.

#### **PETER BROWN**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (20:13):** Woolgoolga and the Northern Beaches has lost a true community champion, Peter Brown—better known as Brownie—who passed away after a long health battle

on 25 August, aged 81. He was a life member of the Woolgoolga Surf Life Saving Club, where he was an active patrol and committee member. He raised significant funds for the club through raffle ticket sales at Moonee Beach Tavern and elsewhere all the way through his health battle. Peter was a former Woolgoolga Seahorses Rugby League Football Club president and staunch committeeman, and he also passionately supported the Northern Beaches Multi-Purpose Centre. Peter also served on Coffs Harbour City Council. Peter was farewelled at St Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Our thoughts and prayers are with Peter's wife, Pam, and his family and friends. Woolgoolga will not be quite the same without this one-eyed St George supporter.

#### **ANDERS AND DEB CARLSSON**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (20:13):** I congratulate Anders and Deb Carlsson, the owners of Tuggerah-based Narellan Pools, on winning the 2019 Business of the Year Award. The company became the largest pool builder on the Central Coast in just three short years. It has a range of fibreglass pools, plunge pools and spas, including over 50 designer shapes, sizes and colours made locally in Australia. The team members at Narellan Pools are committed to the business and to the success of owners Andre and Deb. Narellan Pools focuses on sales, delivery volume, growth, client experience, contribution to the brand and leadership in the Narellan Pools network, and gives back to the community. I congratulate Anders, Carlsson and staff members of Narellan Pools on winning the Business of the Year 2019 Award. I note that I do not have a pool.

#### **GEORGES RIVER BRICK FAIR**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (20:14):** Today I congratulate Oatley Public School on hosting the successful inaugural Georges River Brick Fair, which provides students with a brick pit play area, activities and competitions as well as Lego displays by the Sydney Lego User Group [SYDLug]. The event was attended by over 1,000 members of the public, and the kids' building competition received 55 entries. The event was extremely successful and raised almost \$9,000, which will be reinvested back into Oatley Public School. The event would not have been possible without the efforts of volunteers, who included community members and school families. The volunteers put in countless hours helping out on the day, providing donations to the cake stall and letterboxing flyers around the community. I had a fantastic time at the Brick Fair with my son James. We particularly enjoyed looking at the competition entries from students—particularly the Star Wars ones. We were blown away by the creativity and expertise of all those who participated in the Brick Fair. Thank you, Oatley Public School.

#### **SYDNEY U3A**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (20:15):** Sydney U3A—University of the Third Age—offers hundreds of courses to more than 6,000 members from across the Greater Sydney region, including the inner west. Sydney U3A is an entirely voluntary organisation ably led by Barbara Boston and Dianne Ekert, and the more than 300 expert leaders who run lectures, workshops and classes in their respective fields. Expert-led courses are available in multiple languages, art, drama, literature, music, philosophy, ethics, technology, history and the sciences as well as public tours of our buildings, including St Mary's Cathedral and Government House. These programs ensure thousands of seniors and older people are able to learn, connect with others, and share their knowledge and experience with others in the community. I thank and congratulate the leaders and volunteers from Sydney U3A, and commend them for their extraordinary commitment to learning and to older people in our community.

#### **COASTAL CRUISERS**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:16):** I acknowledge the Coastal Cruisers, a Central Coast based mountain bike riders' group that rides in charity events and raises funds for cancer research. This group was formed in 2016 and currently consists of 36 adult riders and eight junior riders. Almost every family is touched by cancer, including my own. Around one in four people is expected to be diagnosed with cancer over their lifetime. In 2020 the Coastal Cruisers will participate in the Tour de Rocks, a three-day, 270-kilometre ride from Armidale to South West Rocks from 2 to 4 April. This event raised \$360,000 in 2019, with the Coastal Cruisers team contributing a phenomenal \$30,000 to this total. I congratulate the many riders and supporters of Coastal Cruisers, who have been very active at seeking sponsorship from local businesses for promotions and resources. They recently donated a tilting nursing chair to the oncology department at Gosford Hospital. I thank the Coastal Cruisers for giving up their time and effort to help improve the lives of others.

#### **FAIRFIELD POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (20:17):** On Monday 26 August 2019 the Rotary International clubs of Cabramatta and Wetherill Park hosted the 2019 Police Officer of the Year Awards for the Fairfield City Police Area Command at Club Marconi. The award ceremony was very well attended by local community leaders. Also attending were NSW Commissioner of Police Michael Fuller, APM, and Mrs Fuller; Rotary presidents Mr Shane Burette and Ms Thy Ha; Rotary district governor-elect Mr Warwick Richardson; police area commander

Superintendent Jason Weinstein; and, last but not least, my parliamentary colleagues Mr Nick Lalich, MP, and Dr Hugh McDermott, MP. On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I congratulate Senior Constable Daniel Breen, who was selected as the 2019 Fairfield Police Officer of the Year. Daniel continues to go above and beyond the call of duty and this award is well deserved. I also commend all award nominees for their ongoing work in the Fairfield City Police Area Command. Our city is that much safer because of your efforts.

#### **DAVIDSON ELECTORATE EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (20:18):** There are many preschools and not-for-profit long day care centres in my electorate of Davidson that do a fantastic job for young people in our community. These include Chabad House, Ganeinu Long Day Care and Preschool, East Lindfield Community Preschool, Integricare Christ Church St Ives Preschool, St Ives Preschool Kindergarten, Uniting Forest Preschool Belrose and Gordon Community Preschool. They are all examples of fine establishments that look after young people in my electorate of Davidson. I am thrilled that the littlest learners in Davidson will benefit from some funding that the State Government has provided. I acknowledge those institutions that are making physical improvements to early childhood services, such as new gardens, jungle gyms or bathroom renovations. The funding can also assist the rollout of new learning programs, like music lessons or yoga classes. I look forward to seeing how those six services in Davidson utilise the \$10,000 in funding that they have been given.

#### **AUSTRALIAN CROATIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NSW**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (20:19):** On Thursday 22 August 2019 I had the great pleasure of being the parliamentary host to the Australian Croatian Chamber of Commerce's annual cocktail event, which was held this year in New South Wales Parliament House. This event was a great opportunity for Australian Croatians from far and wide to attend, and to engage with the various members of the Australian Croatian business community and learn more about what is being achieved in their local areas. It was my great pleasure to welcome Senator Arthur Sinodinos from the Federal Senate on the evening and to listen to a number of talks highlighting the tremendous contributions of the Australian Croatian community at home and abroad. I extend our sincerest thanks to Fairfield City councillor Mrs Anita Kazi for being the official presenter on the evening and to everyone who contributed to making the event a great success.

#### **LALOR PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (20:20):** Lalor Park Public School recently celebrated its sixtieth year of educating the young people of postcode 2147. The school is led by principal Deanne Taylor and assisted by a large executive team of instructional leaders of preschool, special education, literacy and numeracy. Lalor Park Public School is incredibly dedicated and inspiring, and has teachers, and support and office staff. Lalor Park Public appeared on the ABC's 7.30 recently demonstrating the benefits of a "story dog". The school is experimenting with and finding better results in reading abilities of students across kindergarten to year 6 with the aid of Baron, an English mastiff and the largest story dog in Australia. The kids love reading to Baron. The innovative Story Dogs program is building the confidence and fluency of reading support students at Lalor Park Public School. I am pleased to see great programs like Story Dogs being used in our western Sydney classrooms. Lalor Park Public School has fantastic students and teachers. I wish the school all the very best for its sixtieth year.

#### **MANILLA COMMUNITY BUS**

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—**I recognise the Manilla Community Bus Volunteers who have raised more than \$60,000 towards upgrading and replacing their community bus. This was topped up with a grant of \$130,000 to fund a new bus. This is a classic example of keep pushing, keep working hard and get everybody at the table. Now we have a brand new bus for Manilla that is suited to the aging members of the community with wheelchair access to the rear of the bus, wider aisles and more legroom.

Groups that use the community bus include the Country Women's Association, the Men's Group, the Sunday school, Manellae Lodge and hospital residents, the Auxiliary and Voice, Interests and Education of Women clubs. This bus will be managed by Hunter New England Health and they have done an amazing job with the ordering and purchase of the bus. I'd like to commend these residents for their efforts and congratulate them for their fantastic community spirit.

#### **BANKSTOWN STEAM LOCOMOTIVE SOCIETY CO-OPERATIVE**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—**I was delighted to visit the Bankstown Steam Locomotive Society Co-operative at Ruse Park on Saturday, 10th August 2019, and see firsthand their finished railway track upgrades as part of the Community Building Partnership (CBP) grants program. In 2017 the Steam Locomotive

Society was successful in obtaining a CBP grant of \$3,600 to purchase materials to construct 250 metres of 5-inch ground level miniature steam locomotive railway track. I am proud to have supported this CBP grant and it was truly a delight to see local families enjoying a day out at Ruse Park on one of the Steam Locomotive Society's monthly running days, where the community can take rides on the miniature locomotives.

I acknowledge Bankstown Steam Locomotive Society Co-operative Chairman and President Mr Ian Middleton, Vice-President Mr Bruce Pratt, Secretary Mr Geoff Todd, and Treasurer Mr Raymond Wilson, as well as Directors Mr Ronald Hawkins, Mr John Seckold and Mr Michael O'Grady. I thank the Bankstown Steam Locomotive Society for a thoroughly enjoyable day.

### **BIG RED KIDNEY COMMUNITY WALK**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)**—On Sunday the 8th of September more than 100 Highlanders participated in the first Big Red Kidney Community Walk at Lake Alexandra, Mittagong. The Big Red Kidney Walk is Kidney Health Australia's annual event to bring people together to raise funds and awareness to fight kidney disease, as well as to show support to loved ones who are battling the debilitating effects of this disease. According to Kidney Health Australia, Kidney disease affects 1.7 million Australians. The Big Red Kidney Walk is helping to remedy this problem, and the Mittagong community was certainly supportive. The event was a great success, with locals from across the Southern Highlands community participating in the walk. Events such as this are great initiatives to remind people to check their kidney health, and to take steps to reduce their risk of getting the disease by making some healthy lifestyle changes.

### **BOSSLEY PARK HIGH SCHOOL**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Bossley Park High School held their HSC Showcase to exhibit the product of students work over their High School careers. Works exhibited included visual art, photography, furniture and textiles. The showcase also featured musical performances by the students. All of the works displayed at the HSC Showcase were of a high quality and showed the great effort and ingenuity of students. The students at Bossley Park High School are a credit to our community. Their work is a reflection of both their own efforts during their schooling career and the dedication of all the teachers and parents who have assisted them over the last 12 years. I would like to thank Principal Vera Chevell and Deputy Principal Ann-Maree Ager for inviting me to the showcase and all of the staff at Bossley Park High School for their work educating our young people. Most of all I would like thank the students for showing me their work, congratulate them on all of their achievements and wish them the best with their post school careers. Focussing on excellence and success.

### **IRAQI AUSTRALASIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)**—I recognise the Iraqi Australasian Medical Association (known as IAMA) which was officially launched on Sunday 15 September at Bonnyrigg in Sydney. The office bearers of IAMA include the President Dr Munjed Al Muderis, the Vice President Dr Mariam Sarkis and the Secretary Dr Ahmad Alrubia. The main goals of the Association include to work to promote employment and better job opportunities, networking to assist advanced medical knowledge and skills, to promote health in the community and establish a medical directory so patients and the community have better access to doctors who are fluent in Arabic, Assyrian, Armenian, Kurdish, Armenian and/or Turkmeni. IAMA now has branches in all Australian States and in New Zealand. It has links with medical associations in Iraq. The development of IAMA will undoubtedly benefit its members, but it also will help the Iraqi Community in Australia. It's also another layer in our multicultural community. I look forward to working with IAMA into the future.

### **GIFTS WITH GRACE**

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)**—Each Friday morning the ladies of "Gifts with Grace" join together at Caddens Baptist Church and put their craft, knitting, crocheting and sewing skills to good use and make hand crafted items such as blankets, bags and cushions which are then combined with useful items and made into care packs for those in need in Western Sydney. Gifts of Grace is a not for profit organisation who work closely with charities and government organisations to determine what items are needed to provide support to those who require it. I take this opportunity to congratulate these ladies for the dedication and compassion they show in helping those less fortunate in our community in their time of need.

### **ELLEN AND DUTCHY HOLLAND**

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)**—The name Dutchy Holland OAM is particularly well known in Campbelltown. Dutchy – formally known as Gordon – has been the president of the Campbelltown RSL Sub-Branch for many years and has done a wonderful job advocating for veterans in our local area. But as the saying goes "behind every great man is a great woman" and that is certainly the case with Dutchy. Ellen Holland has

stood by her husband's side for many years – in fact, recently they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. It is an incredible milestone and one I know both Ellen and Dutchy would be extremely proud of. In a recent interview the couple said they knew they would marry each other when they were both aged just 14. At the age of 18 they tied the knot before Dutchy headed overseas to serve in the Malayan Emergency and the Vietnam War. The couple have amassed quite the large family over the years with four children, 17 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Congratulation again Ellen and Dutchy on 60 years of marriage and a truly incredible life together.

### **KICK-ON FOR WOMEN**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)**—Earlier this month, I attended the launch of the Kick-On for Women program. Kick-On for Women is an introductory program to football designed specifically for women to fit into their busy lives while juggling the commitments of family, work and friends. The idea for the program came about from the demand for mothers, sisters and female spectators of football wanting to be involved in the sport, but not having the confidence to play full-length games, perform in a competitive environment or be able to commit the time.

With a commitment of just 45-minutes a week, the program has a strong focus on fun, inclusion and friendship and is run by experienced facilitators and provides participants the opportunity to spend time focusing on their own fitness and wellbeing in a judgement-free environment. The program started at Garden Suburb Football Club, in my electorate of Charlestown, and is now trialling in 23 locations across New South Wales. Well done to all involved in creating this supportive and inclusive sports program!

### **ALBURY WODONGA HEALTH RESEARCH**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I rise to recognise Albury Wodonga Health and their recent contributions to research. The research that has been undertaken supports health organisations by providing up to date information about patient recovery and wellbeing. A group of six staff members have been acknowledged for their contributions; Sally Squire, Anna Moran, Leah Wiseman, Sarah White, Emma Horsfield and Rhiannon Memery. Dr Moran leads a team which aims to examine allied health roles. It was voted Best Rural Health Oral Presentation in March.

Albury Wodonga Health is contributing to an international study that examines post operation respiratory complications such as pneumonia. As much of the current evidence in this area is over 20 years old, this study will contribute to the wellbeing of patients worldwide. There is a major focus on resources, support, and education, which can be put into practise. I would like to thank these professionals for the valuable research they have made to health internationally.

### **FIRE IN THE FIELDS**

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)**—There is no shortage of creative and artistic talent in my electorate. I recently had the pleasure of attending the 2019 Fire in the Fields event hosted by the Ingleburn community of schools. Dozens of students from seven local schools took to the stage on the night to show off their musical and dancing talents. It was inspiring to see so many young people passionate about the creative and performing arts. Each and every student did their school community and family very proud.

I want to pass on my congratulations to the students who spent many hours rehearsing before the main event – your hard work was evident on stage. I also want to say thank you to the parent helpers and staff from Guise Public School, Ingleburn High School, Ingleburn Public School, Macquarie Fields Public School, St Andrews Public School, Sarah Redfern Public School and Woodland Road Public School. It was the commitment and dedication by parent and staff helpers that helped the students shine.

### **REGENTVILLE CAMERA USER'S (PHOTOGRAPHERS) GROUP**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)**—Within the Mulgoa Electorate, the Glenmore Park - Regentville Camera User's Group was formed for local camera enthusiasts to come together and share in their experiences. Member numbers have grown to a staggering 74 people since the group began and will continue to grow. Formed as a community effort to encourage interaction between local camera users, enthusiasts and casual camera users, this group helps strangers with a common interest come together and share tips, experiences and photographic assistance on camera operations. Currently, the group is mainly based in the Glenmore Park area, but also venture towards the Nepean area, Blue Mountains and Richmond area. What a wonderful initiative! Well done to all the members of the Glenmore Park – Regentville Camera Users Group for setting such a great example of true community spirit.



### INNER WEST WAR ON FOOD WASTE

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—The Inner West War on Food Waste was recently hosted by the Inner West Council and the War on Waste's Craig Reucassel. The event highlighted the fact that more than a third of all household waste is food. In 2014/15 the Sydney Metro Area – including the inner west – sent 331,150 tons of food organics to landfill. At today's costs, that tonnage would cost councils \$47.3 million. Mr Reucassel's presentation brought together councils, industries and state and federal representatives to discuss plans for a ground-breaking food recycling scheme for Sydney.

I am proud the Inner West Council and local inner west community groups continue to take the lead in advocating for a commercial sustainable and large scale organic recycling program for Sydney. I especially acknowledge organisations including Oz Harvest, Food Bank NSW and the ground-breaking Food Pantry at Addison Road Community Centre. They are all driving transformational initiatives to divert food waste from lan-fill and meet the growing problem of food insecurity in our community. I thank Mr Craig Reucassel and congratulate the Inner West Council, Mayor Darcy Byrne and Councillors who came together to discuss a proposed organic recycling program for Sydney.

### HUNTER VOLUNTEER AWARDS

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—Recently, a number of Hunter residents were recognised for their voluntary contributions to the community in the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards. The awards are the largest celebration for volunteers across the country and are run by The Centre for Volunteering. Local winners included Share the Dignity, who were awarded the Hunter Volunteer Team of the Year. Share the Dignity are based in Black Hill where Founder and Managing Director, Rochelle Courtenay and her team of volunteers, run campaigns to help collect sanitary items for refuges and shelters providing accommodation to women facing homelessness and domestic violence.

As a result of this, Share the Dignity has become a national charity that currently has over 4,400 volunteers Australia-wide in addition to the multiple initiatives aimed at giving dignity to women. My congratulations extends to additional award recipient Anthony Milburn for his efforts in collecting and transporting fresh produce that would otherwise go to waste to the Slow Food Hunter Valley Foundation where they turn it into meals; Joshua Wallace for his work with St John Ambulance; and Rosalie Taggart for her work with the Hunter Valley Breast Cancer Foundation.

### BANGALOW PARKLANDS

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—Today I acknowledge the great work being done by the Bangalow Parklands group in creating a wonderful environmental space at the edge of their village. In particular, the development of an architecturally landscaped precinct with gardens and a children's adventure playground in conjunction with Murwillumbah firm Plummer and Smith, who won the NSW Landscape Architecture Award in the Play Spaces category for their design.

### ILLAWARRA AND SOUTH COAST EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services)**—Last Saturday morning 21st September began with the challenging and complex rescue of Betsy the cow who had fallen over a 20-metre cliff in Gerringong. She was perched on a 1.5 metre wide ledge, buried in thick lantana. In came the Kiama SES Unit supported by the Gerringong Rural Fire Brigade who abseiled 2.5 metres down and were forced to clear much of the lantana before restraining the animal in a halter. A sling was attached to Betsy and using a local farmer's tractor and a tirlor winch, Betsy was hauled up and onto large rescue slides, then released back into an open paddock none the worse for wear.

I would like to acknowledge from Kiama SES: Unit Commander Mr Chris Warren, Andrew McCullough, John Wall, Keiran Clough, Alex Bussing-Todd, Darren Stokes, Deborah Dunster, Aapo Skorulis and Zander Newcombe. I also acknowledge the representatives from Gerringong RFS who also assisted with this successful rescue which took over five hours to complete. Our local Emergency Services across the Illawarra and South Coast do an amazing job and this is yet another shining example of their courage and bravery under extreme conditions. And for their sacrifice and service we say thank you.

### EPPING SLEEP OUT 2019

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)**—On Saturday 24 August, the second annual Epping Sleep Out took place in Boronia Park. The Epping Sleep Out aims to raise awareness about homelessness, and to raise funds to support local charities making a difference in that area. This event encourages members of the community to forego the comfort of their beds and the warmth of their homes, and experience what it would be like to live without any shelter on a cold winter night. This year, the event also included a multi-cultural festival,

reflecting the diverse and vibrant community in the Epping electorate. The Epping Sleep Out was organised by the Community Foundation of North Western Sydney, an independent, not-for-profit organisation which has been run entirely by volunteers since 2007. 100% of donations go to the local community.

Homelessness is a significant issue in Australia. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there are over 105,000 Australians experiencing homelessness or inadequate living arrangements. I acknowledge Rajiv Chaudhri and Gailsusan Moore for their hard work and for effort that went in to making this event a success. I am pleased to support great initiatives such as this and I look forward to the next one.

#### **CASTLE HILL ROTARY CROSS COUNTRY CHALLENGE**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)**—It was a pleasure to open the first stage of the 2019 Cross Country Challenge hosted by the Rotary Club of Castle Hill together with Hills Shire Mayor Michelle Byrne last Sunday. It was a successful day at Bella Vista farm – the sun was shining and people brought their families down to enjoy the family fun run, or teamed up with their mates to take on various cross country challenges. Congratulations to Michael McGuinness who took away first place in the 11.1km challenge, to Shannon Nolan who came first in the 7.4km race, and to Idris Burkhardt for taking home first place in the 3.7km challenge. I would like to thank the Board and Members of the Castle Hill Rotary Club for putting on a fantastic event raising vital funds for headspace in Castle Hill. Particular thanks to Mike Blair for all the hard work putting this event together. This event gets bigger and bigger every year and is a testament to the dedication of the members of the Castle Hill Rotary Club.

#### **WAVERLEY COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)**—I rise today to inform the Parliament of the Waverley Community Living Program (WCLP), an incredible local Council initiative to help people with intellectual disabilities transition from living at home to living independently. The program was set up in 1985 in response to local families needing help with accommodation and independent living support for their adult children with an intellectual disability. WCLP became a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider in 2017.

The Waverley Community Living program works with each participant and the important people in their lives to understand their unique abilities, skills, life experiences and goals. Our service and support are tailored to the needs and choices of each individual. In addition to accommodation services, WCLP also provides practical skills development and training including budgeting and time management; Independent living skills such as cooking and domestic tasks and social and recreational activities including attendance and sporting matches, art galleries and concerts. I would like to thank Waverley Council for their great work in building a more inclusive and supportive community.

#### **JUAN GEORGE-SNOWSPORTS**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)**—I congratulate 10 year old Juan George from Woollooware Public School on being crowned national champion at the Interschools Snowsports Championships at Mount Buller Victoria this month. Juan had earlier progressed through the regional and state championships at Perisher Valley, becoming state champion in the snowboard cross. Juan also finished second in snowboard giant slalom, picking up a silver medal in division five. Juan became national champion after beating a field of 45 competitors.

#### **EMILY CRUDEN AND MICHELE TEYS**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)**—I would like to congratulate 19 year old Emily Cruden of Berowra who has taken part in the Blackmores Sydney Running Festival. Emily, who is visually impaired due to a rare genetic disorder, runs with her former learning support teacher Michele Tey. The two are a familiar sight on the streets of Berowra as they run tethered together. Michele has been with Emily since she attended her first outdoor camp in Year 7 at St Leo's College. Michele encouraged Emily to start running with her and they began on the local ovals before tackling the streets. Emily is using the run to raise money for the Guide Dogs Association and has so far has raised over \$2,000. Making Emily the second highest fundraiser for Guide Dogs at the event. I know they have been training hard and I would like to congratulate both Emily and Michele on completing the run and raising funds for this important cause.

#### **ST VINCENT'S PRIVATE HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)**—On behalf of the Sydney Electorate, I rise to acknowledge the valuable contribution of the St Vincent's Private Hospital volunteers who contribute to the care and support of patients. I hosted a celebratory luncheon in Parliament with senior church and hospital representatives along with more than 90 volunteers. These inspiring people staff the hospital shop, act as companions for patients, take the famous trolley direct to patients who cannot get out of bed, inform and escort visitors and relatives, and help patients sort out practical things while they are in hospital. Having a helping hand and caring person can make a

big difference when you are ill and not feeling 100 per cent. The luncheon was a great way to thank these volunteers for giving their time, skills and their care to support patients and their families at this critical time.

#### **WAYNE AMOR**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—I'd like to take this opportunity to commend Dubbo's Wayne Amor on his 6 years of service to the suicide prevention and awareness charity Black Dog Ride, as the NSW Ride Coordinator. Wayne recently announced his retirement from the role that he has held since 2014. He will continue to coordinate the local Dubbo 1 day Black Dog Ride. Started in 2010, Black Dog Ride takes hundreds of roaring motorbikes through normally sleepy remote and regional towns, using the commotion to start conversations about depression, mental health and suicide.

Most of the riders are driven to take part by their own experiences, with many personally affected by mental illness at some point in their lives, or affected by the mental illness or suicide of a close friend or family member. The conversations started are crucial. They help to rid our communities of the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide, which we all know leads to more people seeking help. Importantly, the Dubbo ride has raised \$38,000 in the last 5 years for Lifeline Central West. I thank you Wayne for your dedication to this cause.

#### **2019 SOUTHERN SYDNEY VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR CEREMONY**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Centre for Volunteering on the success of their 2019 Southern Sydney Volunteer of the Year Ceremony, held on the 16th of August at the Tradies Club in Gympie. The afternoon acknowledged the work of volunteers in our local community, with categories including Young Volunteer of the Year, Adult Volunteer of the Year, Senior Volunteer of the Year, Volunteer Team of the Year and the Southern Sydney Volunteer of the Year Award.

I was lucky enough to attend the ceremony along with my friend, the Member for Heathcote, and was greatly impressed with the dedication and selflessness of the award recipients. Volunteers are the lifeblood of communities like my local area. They drive charity initiatives and make a great difference in the lives of many. I encourage all people to take any opportunity to give back to their local community- it is a rewarding and worthwhile experience. On behalf of my local area, congratulations to all award winners.

#### **COMMEMORATION SERVICE FOR THE BATTLE OF AUSTRALIA**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—On Wednesday 4th September 2019 I joined with local residents in attending a solemn Commemoration Service for the Battle of Australia at the Leo McCarthy Memorial park, Smithfield. This special commemoration service acknowledged and gave thanks to those who fought for our nation and paid the ultimate sacrifice. The service included the Battle for Australia Address, which was performed by my Parliamentary colleague, Dr Hugh McDermott MP, State Member for Prospect. The service included hymns, prayers and a wreath laying ceremony.

It was wonderful to have a number of local schools, Fairvale High School, Fairvale Public School, Mary MacKillop Catholic College & Fairfield West Public School in attendance on the day and paying their respects. The highlight of the day was the presence of World War II veterans Mr Brett Colins 103 years, Ms Iris Terry 102 years and Mr Colin Hubert 96 years whose attendance was appreciated and admired by all as they engaged with locals throughout the course of the commemoration service. I extend my sincerest appreciation and congratulations to the Smithfield RSL Sub-Branch Secretary Mr Douglas Clarke and the organising committee for arranging the service. Lest We Forget.

#### **WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—On World Suicide Prevention Day, (September 10) I joined locals at the inaugural Lifeline Northern Rivers Walk With Us, breakfast event, held in Heritage Park Lismore. I commend Lifeline for organising this welcome and wonderful public event. I commend Lifeline for their long term work in this area. I commend the special guests Kaiden Powell, Georgina Cohen and Rob Fleetwood who bore witness to both harrowing and uplifting times in their lives; inspiring us all. Lifeline has been at the forefront of suicide prevention for decades, and its wonderful volunteers have been instrumental in keeping people alive.

Lifeline local general manager Mr Niall Muligan thanked the Lismore Suicide Prevention Collaborative, an initiative of the North Coast Primary Health Network in helping make the event possible. I join Niall in giving thanks. Niall further said that "this event is an opportunity for Lifeline to walk together with the community and shine light on the importance of human connection for people when supporting each other." Uncle Mick Roberts, in his warm welcome to country told us of his time working at the local mental health facility and of the need to connect Indigenous people with country and culture.

### **MOUNT DRUITT HOSPITAL PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT**

**Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)**—I recently learned of a new initiative implemented at the Palliative Care Unit of the Mount Druitt Hospital. The Unit have introduced a music therapy project for their patients. Music therapist, Hanna, engages patients with musical instruments and singing. Hanna's project is evidence based and uses palliative care data which charts the scales of pain and nausea. Hanna uses this data to match the scale with the patient's condition and found many people with pain and nausea or sleep deprivation benefited from the music therapy. Patients can elect to play a musical instrument or to sing along with Hanna to their favourite songs, or can simply just listen to Hanna. Mount Druitt Hospital Palliative Care Unit continues to lead the way in the care of terminal patients, the staff and volunteers are very supportive and it is heartwarming to see such great initiatives introduced. Well done.

### **DR SARAH WENHAM RECOGNISED**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)**—Congratulations to Dr Sarah Wenham, Palliative Care Staff Specialist at Far West LHD, who was presented the Excellence in Palliative Care – Rural and Remote Award at the 2019 National Palliative Care Awards. The awards were presented by Palliative Care Australia (PCA) at the Oceanic Palliative Care Conference held in Perth on Thursday, 12 September 2019. Dr Wenham's commitment to Palliative Care and to the Broken Hill Community had previously been recognised, when she won the Medical Clinical Excellence and the Medical Leadership Excellence awards in the Far West Local Health District staff Recognition Awards earlier this year. I congratulate Dr Wenham on not only her achievements but say, "thank you, for your hard work, dedication and outstanding commitment to Palliative Care in remote communities."

### **KINGS LANGLEY–KINGS PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH COMMITTEE**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)**—Recently I met with members of the Kings Langley – Kings Park Neighbourhood Watch Committee to discuss their work in the Seven Hills electorate. The Committee work closely with police officers of Quakers Hill Police Area Command and Riverstone Police Station on crime matters that are raised in the community. The Committee have a growing Facebook page currently at over 2,500 locals who communicate with each other on small crime issues, safety measures and local community information. The Committee meets every quarter and produces a newsletter for the community with local community information and safety tips for the NSW Police Force. I thank the Committee's secretary Narelle Masonwells JP, along with Christine Clark, Peter Woods and Dom Fernandes for meeting with me and for their efforts in keeping Kings Langley and Kings Park safer.

### **FUNDING FOR BAULKHAM HILLS COMMUNITY LANGUAGE CLASSES**

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services)**—I commend the following community-run language classes in Baulkham Hills who will share in more than \$5.5 million in funding from the NSW Government: Sydney Sae Soon Presbyterian Church will receive \$51,002.88 to support the operation of its community Korean lessons; Chinese Language and Literature Association, which runs classes at Baulkham Hills High School, will receive \$1,461.02 to support the operation of its community Chinese lessons; Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia, which runs classes at Crestwood High School, will receive \$2,125.12 to support the operation of its community Sanskrit lessons; The Hills Chinese School, which runs classes at Crestwood Public School, Matthew Pearce Public School, and Winston Hills Public School, will receive \$64,019.24 to support the operation of its community Chinese lessons; Carlingford Chinese Language School, which runs classes at Muirfield High School, will receive \$12,883.54 to support the operation of its community Chinese lessons; Rooyesh Farsi Language School will receive \$2,500 to start running community classes in Farsi at Model Farms High School; and, Boya College of Language and Culture will receive \$2,500 to start running community Chinese lessons at Village Green Community Centre.

### **MOSMAN ART PRIZE**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—My electorate of North Shore is lucky to have some of the most creative and talented artists in NSW. I had the privilege of seeing this talent on display at the Mosman Art Gallery where I was joined by the Hon. Don Harwin MLC Minister for the Arts for the opening of the Mosman Art Prize exhibition. In its 72nd year at the Mosman Art Gallery, the Mosman Art Prize recognises excellence in modern and contemporary Australian art. With former finalists including 1947 inaugural winner Margaret Olley, the Mosman Art Prize is showcasing best and brightest of our creative community. Also being exhibited at the time was the photography of local artist Denise Pope. I particularly enjoyed her work which, through a series of portraits, showcases the diversity of Mosman's local community. The works shown at Mosman Art Gallery highlight the importance of providing opportunities for artists across NSW, and I am pleased to have supported numerous creative institutions including Mosman Art Gallery in this regard. Congratulations to Paul Keheller for winning the 2019 Mosman Art Prize, and thank you to the Minister for the Arts for joining me.

**SUPERINTENDENT GREG MOORE**

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government)**—I welcome newly appointed commander of the South Coast Police District, Superintendent Greg Moore, to the South Coast community. I note Superintendent Greg Moore, comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience from his time in charge at Bourke. When he began the role of commander in Bourke in 2013, it had one of the highest crime rates per capita in the world and topped six out of eight major crime categories in NSW. Since Superintendent Moore's time in Bourke, the region saw domestic violence rates and violence crimes almost halved.

The South Coast region has already experienced a positive trend decreasing crime incidents, and I look forward to this continuing into the future. The NSW Government will work to support this with the rollout of 5,000 additional Police across NSW, and with the new Station open and operating within the Bay and Basin. I am also pleased that the NSW Government has committed to construct a new Police Station at Culburra Beach, further strengthening police resources in our community. Welcome Superintendent Greg Moore, and thank you for joining our local community.

**SUTHERLAND HOCKEY CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I congratulate the fantastic team at Sutherland Hockey Club on yet another successful season. Formed in 1965, Sutherland Hockey Club is one of the largest hockey clubs in Sydney, priding itself on promoting, growing and developing the sport. The Club is consistently successful in producing outstanding players and teams, as was apparent in the numerous awards I saw presented over the weekend. Notably, Matthew Bennett of Sylvania received the Sydney Hockey Premier League award for the highest goal scorer in the Premier League, with a final tally of a remarkable 27 goals.

I recognise the executive committee at Sutherland Hockey Club for their continued dedication to the sport and players, including President Craig Turner, Vice President Peter Tait, Secretary John Mulcair, Treasurer Luke Domrow, Senior Men's Convenor Andrew Hoy, Women's Convenor Lee-Anne Callinan, Junior Convenor David Richardson, Publicity and Sponsorship Officer Peter Krepp, Buildings Officer Frank Rowling, Records Officer Steve Harvey, Equipment Officer Garry Thomas, Development Officer Graeme Cartwright, Social Convenor Sharon Rose and Assistant Secretary and Registrar, Sarah Dredge. I commend the team at Sutherland Hockey Club for continuing to successfully promote and grow the great sport of hockey in the Sutherland Shire.

**NSW HEALTH COMMUNITY PALLIATIVE CARE VOLUNTEERS**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I would like to recognise the first intake of Community Palliative Care volunteers who have completed their Induction Training Program to prepare them for volunteering in the Wentworth and Dareton Communities. Four volunteers, Michelle Fortuna, Christian Luther, Pamela Stidiford and Ruth Gordon were presented with their Certificates of Achievement on August 28. They can now help patients living at home who are receiving Specialist Palliative Care Services and are eligible for Community Palliative Care Volunteer Services. These volunteers are warm, empathetic and compassionate people with a strong commitment to volunteering. Congratulations to the small but dedicated team of volunteers on completing their training and Far West LHD for the innovative program.

**DOG ON THE TUCKERBOX**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—As many in this chamber already know, Gundagai's famous Dog on the Tuckerbox had a bit of a "ruff" time recently when he was knocked off his plinth by vandals and his ear broken. On Saturday, repair work completed by Council and sculptor Nick Stranks from ANU and his team was unveiled. The community and wider nation's response to this act of vandalism, frankly, blew me away. The Dog is more than just a statue for many in Gundagai, he is a mate, and so I take this opportunity to formally thank the Riverina Police District for their swift investigation, and Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council for wasting not a second to get our friend repaired and back in his spot.

**PORT MACQUARIE STROKE CLUB**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I rise to recognise a fearless advocate for stroke awareness and recovery, Amy Jennings for her motivation and determination to support people impacted by a Cerebrovascular accident (CV). The detrimental effects of a Cerebrovascular accident or stroke is something that no person should have to bare but regrettably at the age of just 32 years old Amy Jennings's life was dramatically changed. Since her stroke Amy has championed a campaign to raise awareness on stroke and brain injuries, particularly aphasia, to support others in the community that have been severely affected. In 2018, and with the help of the Stroke Recovery Association, Amy was able to establish the Port Macquarie Stroke Club which aims at supporting survivors through shared experiences, advice and recovery strategies to help people manage the effects of a stroke on their life. The month of September recognises Stroke Awareness Week with this year's theme

F.A.S.T heroes, encouraging people to check the most common signs of stroke. Over 56,000 people are impacted by stroke each year which equates sadly to 1 stroke every nine minutes. I thank Amy for passionately campaigning to support the recovery of stroke survivors in our community.

**NANCY BOYLING**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)**—Mr Speaker, I rise to celebrate the contribution of Nancy Boyling to Quota International and the Manning Community. Nancy joined the Taree Quota Club in 1993 and has been recognised for her long term commitment to Quota and her community being named Quota Volunteer of the Year for Region 11. Just last week, Nancy and the ladies of Quota Taree held a movie premiere for Downtown Abbey and I am pleased to inform the house they raised \$2000 for Can Assist. Made our Mark in Quota across Australia. Nancy is a fine Woman and I want to thank her and all the ladies of Quota for their contribution to the Myall Lakes Community.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:22 until  
Thursday 26 September 2019 at 9:30.**