



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 24 October 2019

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 24 October 2019

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 09:30.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to year 9 students visiting us today from Sacred Heart Central School, Cootamundra, guests of the member for Cootamundra.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: TABLING OF PAPERS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (09:32:00): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended this sitting to postpone the commencement of general business notices of motions (for bills) until consideration of Government business has concluded.

That is courtesy of the upper House, with its deadline today, and we have a Government bill that needs to go through. Hopefully it will not eat into private members' day too much.

Motion agreed to.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

Mr David Mehan: Point of order: I cannot hear the motion. Generally at this time of the morning members on both sides courteously hear each other's notices of motions without interjection. This morning members on the other side have gone overboard.

The SPEAKER: I ask members on both sides of the House to desist from exchanging comments.

Later,

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea is out of line. I have previously asked the member not to respond to interjections. Her response was not warranted. The member will continue giving notice of her motion.

Bills

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (TERRITORIAL LIMITS) BILL 2019

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Rob Stokes, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (09:49:56): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Territorial Limits) Bill 2019 is to clarify how conditions of development consent under the State's planning legislation treat impacts occurring outside the territorial limits of Australia. The bill does this by amending part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and a State environmental planning policy created under the Act. The scope of development consent conditions has recently come under close scrutiny as a result of some recent case law. In August 2019 the State's Independent Planning Commission granted consent for the United Wambo open-cut coalmine. The development consent came with a condition directing the proponent to prepare and comply with an export management plan for the coal that it was extracting. This involved the proponent using all reasonable and feasible measures to ensure the extracted coal is only exported to countries that are signatories to the Paris Agreement

within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or are signed off by the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment as having similar policies.

Whilst the United Wambo development consent related to overseas downstream greenhouse gas emissions, conditions like this one highlight a technical and jurisdictional issue with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, which does not deal expressly with the extraterritorial impacts of development—that is, impacts of development outside the territorial limits of Australia and therefore outside the territorial capacity of the New South Wales planning system to effectively be involved with the enforcement of such conditions. When the United Wambo conditions were initially proposed, the Government expressed concern that consideration of downstream, or scope 3, greenhouse gas emissions did not automatically mean that those emissions should be controlled by the conditions of a development consent.

The New South Wales planning system currently contains requirements to consider greenhouse gas emissions, which is absolutely appropriate. Such requirements have always focused on the impacts of development that can reasonably be controlled by the applicant. By contrast, there are no applicable State or national policies requiring New South Wales coal projects to minimise or offset downstream emissions that occur overseas. As the secretary of the planning department correctly highlighted in his letter to the Independent Planning Commission in relation to the United Wambo proposal, it is not the Government's policy to regulate—either directly or indirectly—matters of international trade. They are matters for the Commonwealth Government. I have since written to the Commonwealth Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction seeking some guidance on this issue and have not yet received a response. It is therefore important that we clarify the limitations of the New South Wales planning system to control the impacts of development that occurs overseas.

I turn now to the amendments in the bill. The bill principally clarifies that development consent conditions can only be imposed if they relate to impacts occurring within Australia or its external territories. It does so by inserting a new section 4.17A into the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 that identifies prohibited conditions which have no effect if they are part of a development consent granted under part 4 of the Act. This includes consent for State significant development. The prohibited conditions will include those imposed for the purpose of achieving outcomes or objectives relating to the impacts occurring outside Australia or an external territory as a result of the development, as well as the impacts occurring in the State as a result of any development carried out outside Australia or one of its external territories. This will prevent consent authorities from imposing conditions seeking to control, for example, downstream greenhouse gas emissions or other climate change impacts occurring outside Australia as a consequence of development that is carried out outside Australia.

This new provision in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 is about conditions of development consent. It is not about the evaluation of a proposal. Nothing in the bill will change the requirements in the Act for a robust assessment of the impacts of development. The economic, environmental and social impacts of proposed development will still be weighed up by the consent authority on a case-by-case basis when deciding whether or not to approve or refuse a proposal. This will not change as a result of the bill.

Finally, the bill will amend the State environmental planning policy for mining, petroleum production and extractive industries in line with the new restriction on development consent conditions by omitting a specific reference to downstream greenhouse gas emissions in clause 14 of the State environmental planning policy. Importantly, the bill will not have retrospective effect. It will not invalidate any conditions of previously granted development consents before it is enacted. The bill only applies to future decisions and sends a clear message to all consent authorities about the limits of the New South Wales planning system.

It provides certainty to all players in the planning system about how extraterritorial impacts can be dealt with in New South Wales planning approvals. It makes the basic point that while consent conditions can quite appropriately relate to matters within Australia's territorial limits, there is clearly an enforcement issue with development conditions that purport to control impacts outside the jurisdiction of Australia. The legislation is consistent with the well-defined Newbury test for conditions of consent and the development of case law in line with the Newbury Principles. It simply codifies how planning conditions can be created. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL (NO 2) 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 15 October 2019.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (09:57:46): I lead for the Opposition on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019. The Opposition does not oppose the bill. Schedule 1 to the bill

makes what are said to be minor amendments to various Acts and instruments. Schedule 2 seeks to amend various Acts and instruments in a way that is sometimes called pure statute law revision. Schedule 3 has consequential and ancillary provisions. This bill is a mechanism that avoids a multiplicity of bills, each making separate amendments. This mechanism has been used by governments of all persuasions over several decades. My favourite amendment in the bill corrects the spelling of the word "Minister" in the Aboriginal Languages Act 2017—an amendment worth making, even if the Act has not commenced yet.

One curious feature of this is the frequency of such bills coming before the House. In the comparatively limited sitting period since the election, we have had two miscellaneous provisions bill, plus the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill. I note the amendment in schedule 1.14 to the Ombudsman Act, especially as it relates to the competence and compellability of the Ombudsman to give evidence or produce documents in legal proceedings relating to the unauthorised publication of evidence or prejudicial disclosure of information during investigation by the Ombudsman. In his speech in reply, I ask the Attorney General to clarify whether this proposal arose from the inquiry by the Ombudsman concerning Operation Prospect and whether he apprehends that these provisions may be relevant to any proceedings arising from aspects of Operation Prospect. Having said that, the Opposition does not oppose the bill.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (09:59:15): I will make a very brief contribution on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019, which follows the statute law tradition of making a number of small policy and drafting tidy-up changes to various Acts and regulations. My contribution will focus on amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, which will update the definition of "doctor" to ensure that overseas qualified doctors can verify that a person has undergone a sex affirmation procedure for the purpose of updating their sex on their birth certificate.

While it will provide important certainty for people who have surgery in countries like Thailand and India, the vast majority of transgender people do not have surgery and the reforms in this bill highlight the excessive, unnecessary and intrusive steps we impose on transgender people just to allow them to have their correct sex or gender recorded on official State documentation. Surgery is expensive, irreversible and often unnecessary to transition and it can result in unwanted outcomes like sterility. Surgery is not the most common form of sex affirmation treatment, with hormonal treatment more widespread. Many transgender people live within their chosen gender without any treatment at all. In addition, for some people who have medical conditions that cause their bodies to naturally feminise or masculinise the treatment would be inappropriate.

Our current requirements fail to recognise the variability in transgender communities. The result of these archaic laws is to force people to live with incorrect and inconsistent official documentation. The Births, Deaths and Marriages register should accurately reflect people's lives, and all citizens should be able to access accurate documentation. Documents like birth certificates are used by employers, including for police checks; they are used to access services and benefits. There are negative consequences of having a birth certificate that does not correctly reflect one's sex. An incorrect birth certificate means transgender people have to disclose their former gender when applying for a job, and it can create difficulties accessing medical services. Transgender people often experience discrimination and stigma. It should be their choice who they inform about the deeply personal matter of their transition. The transgender community is a minority group with alarmingly high attempted suicide rates. An incorrect birth certificate will only contribute to feelings of isolation and social rejection.

A growing body of evidence shows significantly higher rates of mental health problems among transgender people, including for anxiety, depression, substance abuse and self-harm. The Curtin University's *First Australian National Trans Mental Health Study* found that 57 per cent of participants had been diagnosed with depression at some point in their lives—four times that of the general population. One in five participants reported suicidal ideation or self-harm on at least one day in the two weeks prior. Stigma, discrimination, isolation and exclusion all contribute to poorer mental health outcomes in these communities.

The Human Rights Commission report *Resilient Individuals: Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Intersex Rights 2015* recommended removing barriers to transgender people updating the sex or gender marker on State documentation. That report was produced when the now Federal member Tim Wilson was the Human Rights Commissioner. It was launched by the former Federal Attorney-General George Brandis. Victoria and Tasmania recently removed their surgical requirements and moved to world's best practice models of self-determination. Surgical requirements have been removed in South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. The Commonwealth removed it for passports over five years ago. New South Wales needs to catch up. I look forward to this Parliament working towards reforms that treat transgender people with dignity, privacy and respect.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (10:03:17): I am pleased to support the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019. I will speak specifically in support of the amendment detailed to the Workers Compensation Act 1987. Schedule 1.26 items [1] and [2] and schedule 1.27 contain amendments to the

workers compensation legislation to increase the maximum compensation for funeral expenses in the Dust Diseases Scheme from \$9,000 to \$15,000. This change will increase the amount of funeral expenses in the Dust Diseases Scheme in line with other workers compensation jurisdictions in New South Wales. This is an important change that will provide equal access to funeral expenses compensation for all families tragically impacted by a work-related death.

Specifically, the amendments will extend the increase in funeral expenses compensation introduced in 2015 to the Dust Diseases Scheme by overriding a general savings and transitional provision in part 191 of schedule 6 to the Workers Compensation Act 1987. It will also address a drafting error in section 8 (2A) of the Workers' Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942 by amending the reference to section 27 of the 1987 Act, which has been repealed. Section 8 (2A) will now reference section 26 of the 1987 Act, which sets the compensation amount for funeral expenses. The amendment will consolidate transitional provisions relating to death benefits for coalminers, and bushfire, emergency and rescue volunteers from the 2015 and 2016 workers compensation regulations into schedule 6 of the 1987 Act. This will ensure that all related provisions are co-located.

Amendments made to the 1987 Act in 2015 increased the maximum amount payable for funeral expenses compensation from \$9,000 to \$15,000. This change applied to workers with a date of death on or after 5 August 2015. However, due to savings and transitional provisions, the amendments did not extend to claims made under the Dust Diseases Scheme. The amendments to workers compensation legislation contained in the bill rectify this. The Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice considered the issue during its 2018 review of the Dust Diseases Scheme. I thank the committee for bringing this matter to the Government's attention. The committee recommended an increase in funeral expenses in the Dust Diseases Scheme to bring it in line with other workers compensation jurisdictions in New South Wales.

The proposed amendments will extend the 2015 changes to funeral expenses compensation under the Dust Diseases Scheme. This change will apply retrospectively to any worker with a date of death on or after 5 August 2015. The related amendments consolidating savings and transitional provisions made by regulation in 2015 and 2016 into schedule 6 to the 1987 Act will not change the operation of these provisions. There is, therefore, no change to funeral expenses compensation for any other cohorts of workers. This amendment is about equality and it is about fairness. It is vital that we continue to assess and scrutinise past legislation in this way to ensure we always continue to improve our service to the people of New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (10:07:24): I acknowledge the work of the shadow Attorney General on this bill. I have a number of questions in relation to how the bill affects some of my responsibilities. I raised some matters with Minister Dominello's office staff, who were very good in responding, but I put two things on the record. The first is with respect to the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007. The proposed amendment would allow documents to be served on the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority by electronic means. I want to make sure that those documents can be served not only electronically but also by post or by hand delivery. I have the same questions with respect to the Gaming Machines Act.

The second issue is with respect to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART]. The bill replaces the requirement to place advertisements in newspapers with requirements to use means that the tribunal is satisfied will bring a notice to the attention of the public. The staff of the Minister's office explained this wording to me and I understand that the only means of advertising now is in newspapers and that this legislation will provide for advertising through social media or other platforms. I ask that the Attorney General put on the record that this will not mean that IPART will not advertise in newspapers. I want an assurance that IPART will continue to advertise in newspapers about its many activities. IPART is an independent body, but to ensure openness, transparency and accountability it is very important that it advertises in newspapers and other media, including on other social platforms.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (10:09:43): I support the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019. The Opposition supports the bill. The bill, which is quite important, impacts on 25 different Acts. Often, people examine legislation looking for one particular issue, but the bill has an impact on so many different provisions and pieces of legislation. People often say that bills such as this are boring, but their impact on people's lives is really important. The bill continues 30 years of revisions like this under the statute law revision program, which is quite an effective method of making minor adjustments to legislation. Our legislation needs to reflect our society. It needs to be reflective of the changes to society. Bills such as this do that, with its impact on 25 different pieces of legislation.

Minor policy changes to maintain the quality of legislation in New South Wales are very important. Schedule 1 to the bill certainly reflects policy changes of a minor and uncontroversial nature. It is good that both the Opposition and the Government can come together on these things to make amendments. The 25 Acts and related amendments that have been put together as three instruments in the bill cover myriad things. Those which

stand out to me are the impacts on gambling, with changes to the Betting and Racing Act 1998, the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007, the Gaming Machines Act 2001, the Public Lotteries Act 1996 and the Totalizator Act 1997. All those pieces of legislation relating to gambling in New South Wales are affected by the bill.

I will talk about the bill's impact on workers compensation Acts. Those pieces of legislation are the Workers Compensation Act 1987, the Workers' Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942 and the Workers Compensation Regulation 2016. The bill also has an impact on different judicial commissions and tribunals, with changes to the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, reforms to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Act 1992, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016 and the Ombudsman Act 1974. I note that in his previous contribution the shadow Attorney General mentioned the Ombudsman Act and the impact it has on evidence and interviewing witnesses.

The bill also affects the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995, the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Co-operatives (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012. The bill affects fair trading legislation, which another shadow Minister has raised, as well as the Hairdressers Act 2003, the Housing Act 2001, the Public Works and Procurement Act 1912, the Passenger Transport Act 2014, the Registered Clubs Act 1976, the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Review) Act 2018, the Road Transport Act 2013, the Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002 and the Surveying and Spatial Information Regulation 2017, as well as the tow truck industry and the Transport Administration Act 1988. The bill affects quite a significant number of areas throughout New South Wales.

I will talk about a couple of the changes to legislation. First I mention the proposed amendments to the Workers Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942. Dust diseases have had a major impact on people's lives in the electorate of Prospect, as they have throughout New South Wales and Australia. It is very important that those victims of dust diseases and their families are looked after and protected. As members know, if you have a dust disease it is a terminal sentence. You are not going to beat it. It is going to kill you. It is not a matter of if but when. Since the forties we have been dealing with workers compensation for dust diseases. The Act that the bill will amend was put in place in 1942. The bill reforms the amount of funeral expenses compensation payable so that it is consistent with the Workers Compensation Act 1987. The change was recommended in the 2018 review of the Dust Diseases Scheme by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice. In fact, it increases the amount of funeral expenses compensation payable for the death of a worker resulting from a dust disease.

That is vitally important when considering the pain and suffering of not only the victims of dust disease but also their families. Often those victims are elderly and have had the disease for many decades, after decades of hard work. The fact that it is being increased from \$9,000 to \$15,000 is quite important. A sum of \$15,000 means a lot to a working family that has gone through so much with medical bills and loss of income because of the dust disease of a loved one. It is important that the compensation given to those families keeps in line with the impact of current inflation. Funerals are not cheap. Any of us who has lost elderly parents or members of our family or friends knows how expensive they can be. As the Attorney General said in his second reading speech, this is in line with funeral expenses compensation payable to workers generally. I think that is important.

I touch on reforms to the Ombudsman Act 1974. I am a member of the oversight committee for the Ombudsman. It is important that the Ombudsman continues to play such a leading role in the administration of justice and review in New South Wales. One of the key things for the Ombudsman is that the person in that role has wide and valuable experience, not only in that type of role but also in previous roles. When the Ombudsman makes decisions, investigates or listens to complaints and concerns of people in New South Wales, that experience enables the Ombudsman to act appropriately. I think that you can only ever get that type of knowledge through experience.

Schedule 1 to the bill removes the requirement for the Ombudsman to be under 65 years of age and extends the effect of the amendment to any person currently appointed. Previously the Ombudsman had to be under 65, which is obviously age discrimination if you want to look at it that way. People of any age can be experienced. There are some people much younger than 65 who may do the job very well. However, the ability to recruit someone who is older than 65 who can do the job well and has a lot of life experience, as well as professional experience, in assisting people throughout New South Wales with their concerns is a very good idea. I think that most of our legislation concerning current appointments, certainly statutory officers, has removed age limits. This change is just consistent with that approach, and that approach needs to continue. I am pleased about that.

The other thing I mention is changes to the Registered Clubs Act 1976. Currently, the Secretary of the NSW Department of Customer Service may carry out investigations and inquiries to determine whether a complaint about the secretary or a member of the governing body of a registered club should be made to the

Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority. The role of the secretary of the department is very important. Clubs are a vital part of the community in the electorate of Prospect and throughout western Sydney. The electorate of Prospect was an amalgamation of the electorates of Smithfield and Toongabbie, which brought together diverse areas, populations and ethnic groups.

However, there is no real centre of community. There is no town centre in the electorate of Prospect. People in the north of the electorate look towards Blacktown as their town centre, people in the centre of the electorate look towards Parramatta and people in the south of the electorate look towards Fairfield. However, none of these town centres is actually in the electorate. It is important that people have a sense of community and they have a centre of the community. In the electorate of Prospect it is the pubs and clubs, especially the clubs. The pubs and clubs are the centre of our community. Not only do they have a social aspect but also they give back a lot to the local electorate and to western Sydney through sporting clubs, grants and other such things. [*Extension of time*]

The pubs and clubs are the centre of our community in the electorate of Prospect, especially the clubs, whether it be Smithfield RSL club, Wenty Leagues at Wentworthville in the north, the local golf clubs at Cumberland and Fox Hill, or Club Marconi, which is a very big club for football as well as for the local Italian community, and also increasingly for the local Vietnamese, Chinese and South American communities in my electorate. These clubs are very important. It is essential that the bill gives the power to the secretary of the department to determine whether a complaint about a secretary or member of the governing body of a club should be made to the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority.

A decade or so ago Club Marconi had massive issues. Today, those issues have been sorted out, thank goodness. Clubs are getting bigger and have more and more influence in my electorate of Prospect, which is why it is extremely important that they have good governance. They are multimillion-dollar businesses that have a major effect on families in western Sydney. The amendment to the Registered Clubs Act ensures that those powers remain available in relation to a proposed complaint or after a complaint has been made right up until the authority makes a determination on the complaint. Such oversight is very important.

The bill has been uncontroversial. In his second reading speech the Attorney General commented that if the amendments caused concern or required clarification that should be brought to his attention. If necessary he would also arrange for government staff to provide additional information on the matter raised. If any particular matter of concern could not be resolved and was likely to delay the passage of the bill the Government was prepared to consider withdrawing that matter from the bill. It is good to have a nonpartisan approach to dealing with important legislation that impacts on 25 other pieces of legislation. It is a shame that attitude is not adopted with other legislation before the House. It is extremely important that we approach bills and legislation in a nonpartisan manner when we can. Certainly the Attorney General's approach has been very important.

The shadow Attorney General's comments today reflect that approach. There is an open dialogue about delivering good legislation, about ensuring through the Statute Law Revision Program that legislation reflects what is happening in our modern society. The provisions in this legislation reflect that. This is an effective way to insert minor policy changes. I congratulate the Attorney General on bringing the bill to the House and ensuring a nonpartisan approach by being prepared to address any concerns rather than trying to force the bill through this House. Time and again the Government tries to force bills through. We saw what happened recently with the abortion bill and how that all blew up.

Mr Geoff Provest: Oh, you were on a roll there for a minute. Be nice.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: Here we are already being threatened and attacked as I congratulate the Attorney General. Those opposite cannot help themselves. I am pleased that this legislation and the approach have been so positive. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (10:23:23): I address the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provision) Bill (No 2) 2019. The bill makes minor alterations to definitions within the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 of the person who can sign a statutory declaration confirming that a person requesting to change their sex on their birth certificate has undergone "sex affirmation procedure". The term "doctor" is replaced with "medical practitioner" or similar. Other members have mentioned this, in particular the member for Sydney. The Greens commend the Government's Statute Law Revision Program as an effective way to ensure legislation is up to date and consistent. However, it is important not to tinker around the edges of this part of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 when there is need for substantive reform.

Requiring people who do not identify with the sex on their birth certificate to undergo invasive, prohibitively expensive and often unnecessary surgery before their sex can be changed on their birth certificate is impractical and humiliating. It places completely unacceptable barriers in the way of a person's basic right to be

recognised for who they are. For many, being unable to make what should be a simple change causes extreme distress on a daily basis. To remedy the discrimination that section of the Act imposes on trans, gender diverse and intersex communities, every Australian State and Territory—except New South Wales and Queensland—has removed this onerous requirement. This is a great opportunity for New South Wales to consider doing the same. I ask the Attorney General to make any comments he may have in his speech in reply.

It is The Greens position that self-identification should be the key factor for those who wish to amend their identity documentation. The current law in Victoria and Tasmania provides that birth certificates can be amended with a statutory declaration from the person requesting the change, or their parent if they are under the age of 16. This model ensures that people who do not identify with the sex on their birth certificate are given the agency to make their own decisions when it comes to their lives and their bodies. Trans and gender-diverse people face discrimination every day. Many members will know of the research undertaken that identifies that they are nearly 11 times more likely to attempt suicide than the general population, and seven times more likely to self-harm. We all have a responsibility to do what we can to make sure the laws in the country are harmonised, to address this issue in a proactive and positive way, and to ensure that we do all we can to support this part of our community.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (10:26:23): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019 and note the Opposition supports the bill. I commend the Attorney General. He is a man of honest and measured opinion, and he approaches the House in a serious manner in the spirit of what would be called a true liberal—not like the conservatives who occupy the Government benches currently. He is an old-fashioned liberal, a real gentleman, and he approaches his job in a very professional manner. He has wide respect among the legal community. I commend him for that. As somebody who is a geologist by training I refer in particular to the changes that are being made in the bill to the Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002. I note these changes include a change in the definition of the Australian Height Datum to mean:

... the datum surface prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this definition.

The regulation itself is altered by the bill to make it clear that:

For the purposes of the definition of the *Australian Height Datum* in section 3(1) of the Act, the datum surface approximating mean sea level that was adopted by the National Mapping Council of Australia in May 1971 is prescribed.

That is a really important measure we use in this country. The height datum that is referred to is the mean sea level measured between 1966 and 1968 and was assigned a value of zero metres in the Australian Height Datum at 30 tide gauges around the coast of the Australian continent. It is a very important measure. All surveyors use it for referencing the height of building works and the height of contours around the coast. It is very important that we have a standard definition. The bill, which should pass today, will amend the parent Act and regulation to standardise that definition and also give flexibility to the regulation to enable any changes in the professional view of how the Australian Height Datum should be measured to be incorporated into the parent Act through the regulation. The bill contains many other useful changes to various Acts in force throughout the State. It is a useful body of work. The Attorney General has done a fine job. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (10:29:25): I speak to the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019. I also commend the work of the Attorney General in bringing this bill forward. He is incredibly thorough—

Mrs Melinda Pavey: The thoroughness man.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Very thorough, always. That is why he is our great Attorney.

Mr Geoff Provest: There's love in the room.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: She wants bail.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: No, I do not.

Mr Geoff Provest: It's a love-in.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: An hour ago they were saying terrible things about me.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): We like a bit of fun and banter, all with good humour. It is nice. Keep playing like that.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I was being genuine, not humorous. I do believe he is an excellent Attorney General. Returning to the bill before us, I refer to the amendment to the Hairdressers Act 2003 No. 62 concerning the definition of "authorised officer", including investigators appointed under the Fair Trading Act 1987.

I represent the electorate of Swansea and I know that a very large group of hairdressers work throughout the Hunter. They pay particular attention to the regulation of their profession.

Mr Geoff Provest: They do an excellent job too.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Thank you very much. Hairdressers speak to me regularly about the regulation of their profession. People underestimate how important the regulation of the hairdressing profession is. Hairdressers need to be properly trained, properly qualified and properly regulated. My daughter had an unfortunate experience at a hairdresser when she went to have her hair coloured and suffered a third-degree burn. I spoke to the hairdressers I am very good friends with about this experience because I regard them as experts in the field. They were flabbergasted that this had happened. This experience made me realise that we must continue to ensure that hairdressers receive proper training. I know the former fair trading Minister suggested reducing the training and qualification of hairdressers, but on speaking to experts in this field I believe it is critical that we do not reduce those qualifications. Instead, we must ensure that we have the best-quality hairdressers operating in this State to make sure that consumers are safe.

In the course of their work hairdressers use chemicals that most of us know nothing about. Therefore, it is important that hairdressers are trained to use those chemicals safely so as to protect the consumers of New South Wales. It is important that we have investigators on the ground checking on compliance and, where necessary, enforcing the regulations to ensure the safety of unsuspecting consumers. My daughter's unfortunate experience resulted in her undergoing surgery for a skin graft after receiving a third-degree burn to her scalp. She went into the hairdresser to get her hair coloured and it took a long time for her to recover from the experience. I do not want anybody else to have such an experience and therefore it is important to ensure that investigators are enforcing compliance with the regulations. That is exactly what this bill does, and I am pleased to see that.

I turn to the Workers Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942. We know the importance of this legislation. Mr Temporary Speaker Piper, you have spoken in this place about asbestosis a number of times, as I have. People in our electorates suffer from that terrible disease and recently workplaces are encountering the scourge of silicosis. It is important that we have legislation around dust diseases and I am pleased that attention is focusing on silicosis. Any death of a worker is shocking, but a preventable death is even more shocking. We must make sure that we keep our workers safe right across this State and the Workers Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act goes a long way to doing so.

The bill before us also makes minor amendments to the Workers Compensation Act 1987. Yesterday the Hon. Daniel Mookhey introduced a bill to enhance the Workers Compensation Act. I hope every member of this Parliament considers the fine enhancements in that bill to make the Act even better. The bill before us gives us the opportunity to amend legislation. It reminds us of all the pieces of legislation that we need to consider to make sure that our laws are robust, fit for purpose and serve our communities well. On that note, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (10:35:40): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Liverpool, Sydney, Cootamundra, Canterbury, Prospect, Balmain, The Entrance and Swansea for their contributions to debate on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019. I thank the member for Liverpool for the precision and economy of his contribution, and I thank the members for Prospect, for The Entrance and for Swansea for their very gracious remarks. Schedule 1 to the bill contains policy changes of a minor and uncontroversial nature that do not warrant the introduction of a separate amending bill. It contains amendments to 25 Acts and related amendments to three regulations.

The bill also deals with matters of pure statute law revision and includes savings and transitional provisions. As part of the ongoing statute law revision program, the bill enables minor policy changes to be made efficiently and redundant legislation to be repealed. Overall, it ensures that New South Wales legislation remains as up to date and effective as possible. The member for Liverpool asked about the origin of amendments to the Ombudsman Act 1974. If I may, I will answer him directly in correspondence. The member for Canterbury raised some questions in relation to the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act. She asked whether existing modes of service will no longer be available. The amendments to the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act will add to the way documents can be served, rather than taking away. Proposed section 42 (1) of that Act, under this bill, will read:

A document may be served on the Authority by any of the following methods—

- (a) by sending it by post to an office of the Authority,
- (b) by leaving it at the office with a person authorised in writing by the Authority to accept service of documents on behalf of the Authority,

- (c) by sending it by means of electronic communication addressed to the Authority at the Authority's address for service of electronic communications.

This is expanding the modes of service rather than replacing them. The member for Canterbury also asked about the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] Act 1992 and modes of publishing notices of investigations of public hearings. At the moment, section 13 (2) and section 21 (3) require IPART to publish notice of its investigations and public hearings in a newspaper. It is proposed to amend those requirements so that, as an alternative to newspaper publication, IPART may publish notice in a manner that IPART is satisfied is likely to bring the notice to the attention of members of the public.

Each advertisement costs approximately \$1,000. This is the cost of a small notice in the government classified section of a major newspaper. The proposal is to amend the Act to achieve the purpose of informing the public at a lower cost. IPART's consultation processes rely on public participation and, therefore, public awareness. A newspaper advertisement may not achieve this. IPART therefore uses other mechanisms to notify the public of its investigations and public hearings. At a minimum, IPART first issues media releases, which can facilitate media coverage with greater prominence than a notice in the government classified section. Secondly, it publishes notice on IPART's website, which allows for information to be conveyed for a longer period than a single hard-copy publication. Thirdly, it emails stakeholders who have previously registered an interest in a matter or in IPART's investigations generally.

In addition, IPART considers the appropriate engagement strategy on a case-by-case basis. For example, it may target notifications or encourage relevant agencies or industry peak bodies to publish notice on their websites or in other communications. The proposed amendments are in a form consistent with amendments that have been made to a large number of other legislative newspaper publication requirements in schedule 2 to the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018. This is an amendment that has been proposed by IPART. As I said, the words that will be inserted will be that it has to be in a manner the tribunal is satisfied is likely to bring notice to the attention of members of the public generally. There is the overriding obligation on the tribunal to be satisfied that, however it publicises the matter, it is brought to the attention of members of the public generally. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS REGISTRATION BILL 2019

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Yasmin Catley, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (10:41:30): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Professional Engineers Registration Bill 2019. The bill will provide for the registration of professional engineers and set up the parameters for a registration scheme and professional engineering board. The bill just makes sense. It aligns with people's expectations, it aligns us with other States and it helps the industry and the Government to establish checks and balances for all engineering work to ensure that disastrous events like those at Opal Tower and Mascot Towers never occur again. Those checks and balances ensure that engineers practising in New South Wales are appropriately qualified. Fundamentally, there will be a comprehensive system to ensure that anything designed by engineers in our State is of the best standard it can be, which meets community expectations.

The bill is the result of Labor's extensive work with stakeholders in the industry and was a commitment we made to the sector at the last State election. In fact, during the election campaign the Liberal-Nationals Government also committed to establishing an engineering registration scheme. Mr Matt Kean, the former Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, said in his media release of 22 February 2019 that "the biggest recommendation" in the Opal Tower report was "about registering engineers". He then said, "We have already agreed to that." One would think it would be sensible for the Government to consider supporting the bill in order

to fulfil the promise it made in February this year. Most importantly, the industry needs this bill to restore consumer confidence in our building and construction sector and in all areas of building design, including bridges, roads and tunnels.

Engineers Australia has repeatedly called on the Government to provide the sector with a robust registration scheme to ensure that unqualified engineers are not practising in our State. We rely on engineers to ensure that our buildings are safe, to ensure that our bridges can carry heavy loads and to ensure that public infrastructure, such as tunnels, roads and government buildings like schools and hospitals, stands the test of time. I do not understand why the Government has dithered in introducing any kind of serious or robust reforms of engineering registration while both industry and consumers cry out for it. We had to wait until yesterday for something to be done in this area, but it was not enough. In Engineers Australia's poll 88 per cent of Australians said that engineers should be registered. In New South Wales that figure was even higher, at 91 per cent.

It is clear that this is what our community wants and it is our role as legislators to ensure the laws of this Parliament meet community expectations and solve existing problems in our State that are not otherwise captured by current legislation. The comprehensive scheme to register engineers proposed in the bill clearly passes the pub test. In its own press release issued just last month Engineers Australia was open about the concerns. It said:

It is unacceptable that virtually anyone in NSW will still be able to call themselves an engineer even if they have no relevant education or experience, and no commitment to maintain competency. This contrasts with other professionals like architects, doctors and lawyers, who all must be registered before legally providing services.

Without regulation of professional engineers, public confidence will remain broken, leaving innocent people and the economy as victims.

It is all well and good for the Government to introduce its Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019. However, it only requires the registration of the few select class 2 engineers who work on the construction of residential buildings. This does not include engineers who work on commercial buildings, bridges, tunnels, transport infrastructure or schools and hospitals. In the near future the Government is looking at registering only engineers who work on class 2 high-rise residential buildings. That is not good enough, which is why I stand here today introducing this bill. New South Wales is not alone on this matter; other parliaments have comprehensive engineering registration schemes. Just as we would require doctors or architects to register, have degrees and complete continuing professional development, we should expect a high standard from our engineers as well. I point to Queensland for an example of a robust and comprehensive Act. Engineers Australia said:

Engineers Australia's position is that we support New South Wales introducing legislation which is the same, or similar, to laws in Queensland.

There, comprehensive registration of engineers is in place, under a model which has proven to be highly successful in maintaining professional standards for engineers and public confidence in the building sector, as well as engineers more broadly. Professionals Australia, the association representing engineers in the workplace, is also supportive of a comprehensive registration scheme. I note the presence of its representatives in the public gallery today—welcome. Those organisations have seen how comprehensive registration schemes have worked in other States. They know that this will lift professional standards for engineers and ensure that engineering work is of the highest quality. This check and balance is absolutely paramount. In fact, it is so important that recently the Victorian Parliament voted in favour of its own engineering registration legislation, the Victorian Professional Engineers Registration Act 2019. The Victorian Labor Government said of its scheme that:

The comprehensive scheme recognises the pivotal role engineers have in ensuring public safety in a wide range of areas, including complex infrastructure projects, and promote continuing professional development for practitioners.

There is consensus moving forward. That is why I have introduced this bill today. Industry groups are in favour of it. Engineers are in favour of it. Consumers—regular people buying houses, using public toilets, driving on newly constructed roads, working in new commercial office buildings—are in favour of it. In fact, they are flabbergasted that engineers do not have to be registered to date. So let me say again: It meets the pub test. I will now discuss the contents of the bill in detail. However, my speaking time is limited and the bill is long, so I may not refer directly to each individual part. The detail is available in the bill, which I have tabled today. Part 1, "Preliminary", addresses commencement, definitions and the objects of the Act. Importantly, this Act will commence on 1 January 2022. This time frame was decided upon to ensure there is sufficient time to set up the board and assessment entities and so that engineers currently practising can ready themselves for registration. The bill then goes on to define a professional engineer and professional engineering service in clause 3 (1) as:

professional engineer means an individual registered under this Act as a practising professional engineer or non-practising professional engineer.

professional engineering service means an engineering service that requires, or is based on, the application of engineering principles and data to a design, or to a construction, production, operation or maintenance activity, relating to engineering, and does not include an engineering service that is provided only in accordance with a document that states procedures or criteria—

- (a) for carrying out a design, or a construction, production, operation or maintenance activity, relating to engineering, and

- (b) the application of which, to the carrying out of the design, or the construction, production, operation or maintenance activity, does not require advanced scientifically based calculations.

The bill then describes the objects of the proposed Act:

- (a) to protect the public by ensuring professional engineering services are provided by a professional engineer in a professional and competent way, and
- (b) to maintain public confidence in the standard of services provided by professional engineers, and
- (c) to uphold the standards of practice of professional engineers, and
- (d) to provide mechanisms to monitor and enforce compliance with this Act.

Part 2 prescribes the registration of professional engineers. Clause 6 (1) prescribes the areas of engineering, stating that the following are considered areas of engineering for the purposes of this bill:

- (a) structural engineering,
- (b) civil engineering,
- (c) mechanical engineering,
- (d) electrical engineering,
- (e) fire safety engineering,
- (f) another type of engineering prescribed by the regulations.

This is important as it will capture a wide range of engineering professions, not just engineers that work on class 2 buildings. That is a critical point. Clause 7 prescribes that professional engineering services require registration. This means that persons cannot falsely represent themselves as an engineer and it also prescribes penalties for those who do—an important measure needed to maintain consumer confidence. Division 2 prescribes the application for registration. Clause 9 describes the application process for registration. Clause 10 describes the eligibility for registration, which will be defined in the regulations or assessment scheme. Clause 11 describes the fitness to practise as a professional engineer, including provisions for ensuring engineers who have had their registration cancelled or suspended in another jurisdiction are thoroughly assessed.

Division 3 describes the determination of application for registration. Clause 12 describes the determination of application, including determining whether an applicant is fit, eligible and has the qualifications and competencies to be registered in the area of engineering. Clause 13 discusses the granting of application process. Clause 14 discusses the processes of refusal of application, including that the applicant must be given notice of the reason for refusal. Clause 15 defines the period of registration as three years, which is specified in the certificate of registration. Clause 16 outlines the notification of expiry of registration. Division 4 outlines the renewal and restoration of registration, including the continuing requirements of registration. Division 5 outlines the conditions of registration. I note that the registration of a professional engineer, as per this bill, is subject to the following conditions, in clause 25, "Conditions of registration":

- (1) The registration of a professional engineer is subject to the following conditions—
 - (a) the conditions prescribed by the regulations,
 - (b) the conditions imposed by the board,

Division 6, "Disclosure by professional engineers", outlines the obligations of engineers, including obligations to notify the board of particular matters. Division 7 contains some miscellaneous matters, including identifying the criminal history of applicants, inquiries about fitness to practise and the refunding of fees. Part 3, "Board of Professional Engineers", describes the function of the board and register, who will oversee the registration and assessment schemes for engineers. Division 1 outlines the constitution of the board, membership of the board, functions of the board and ministerial direction. Division 2, "Register of professional engineers", outlines the keeping of the register and the inspection of the register. This includes making the register available to members of the public. Part 4 is the code of practice. It prescribes the board's role to develop the code of practice within nine months of the commencement of the part, the tabling of the code, inspection of the code and the notice of approval or amendment of the code. It also outlines the use of the code in disciplinary proceedings.

Part 5 covers complaints and investigations. Division 2 outlines complaints about conduct and how complaints may be made, the collection of information for complaints—including statutory declaration—and the rejection and withdrawal of complaints. Division 3, "Investigations", outlines the investigation of a professional engineer's conduct, investigation of compliance with the Act, timing of investigations, notice of an investigation and its processes, and the authority for the board to engage persons to help in investigations. Division 4 outlines the responsibilities in reporting on investigations, including the board's responsibilities, reports to be tabled and that the board may report those complaints to the Minister. Division 5 outlines the action following investigation.

This includes the board's decision, notice to show cause and the grounds for suspension or cancellation of a professional engineer's registration. It also describes the procedure for suspension or cancellation, notice of result of investigation and the process for publishing certain decisions about professional engineers after investigations.

Division 6 provides for action following an investigation of persons other than a professional engineer. Part 6, division 1, "Appointment of authorised officers", describes the appointment of authorised officers, their scope of authority, information-gathering powers and recording of evidence by authorised officers. Authorised officers also have the power to enter premises and on premises can examine and inspect, take samples, take photographs and direct persons to produce records, among other powers. This is crucial to ensure the scheme is robust and people can remain confident that there are adequate checks and balances in place. This sort of transparency is absolutely necessary. Persons who fail to comply with those directions will face severe penalties.

Part 7, "Assessment entities and schemes", describes the assessment schemes that will assess professional engineers. This includes detailed instructions on the application, approval, renewal and cancellation of the assessment schemes by the board. This is in line with the way in which assessment schemes already operate in other States. Part 8 contains miscellaneous provisions. It outlines processes on warning notices, the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, personal liability, regulations and so forth. Schedule 2 to the bill describes the constitution and procedure of the board. As members will have gathered, this is a comprehensive bill. It works to mirror existing legislation in Queensland and forthcoming schemes in Victoria so as to make it as practicable as possible for engineers to practise across States and to provide assurance to engineers and engineering firms that there is consistency on how they operate across this country.

I extend my thanks to those organisations who consulted on this bill—in particular, Gordon Brock and his staff from Professionals Australia and Jonathan Russell and staff from Engineers Australia. I also thank my counterpart in the other place, the Hon. Adam Searle, who has worked on this bill with me, and other Labor colleagues who have provided their input. I strongly urge those opposite to consider the importance of this bill. The time to act is now—not in six months or 12 months. It is time to put it in legislation, not leave it to regulations, to decide how and when our engineers will be registered. We have an opportunity to get it right and provide real assurance to our community through this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I thank the member for Swansea. I was going to say how well engineered the member's timing was. There was obviously a little bit of tolerance built in—I am not sure what percentage it was, but we will give that to her.

Debate adjourned.

PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS (PROHIBITION ON SUPPLY BY RETAILERS) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 17 October 2019

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (11:02:10): I speak in opposition to the bill because, as other speakers have said, we cannot look at this issue in isolation. In noting this fact, I congratulate the Minister for Energy and Environment on the leadership that he has shown on this issue and I welcome the comprehensive and consultative approach that he intends to take. The Government is working on a comprehensive plastics policy. We on this side are working on the 20-year waste strategy. We are working with all State and Territory governments and the Federal Government to develop an action plan to support the National Waste Policy. We published the New South Wales Circular Economy Policy statement in February this year and we stand by our target of 100 per cent of packaging being recyclable, compostable or reusable by 2025—and hopefully even sooner.

Last week the Minister acknowledged the severe impacts that plastics are having on our environment, and what were Opposition members doing? They were interjecting and speaking over him because the Opposition is not serious about this topic. The Opposition wants a headline, a media grab and a piece on the nightly news. Opposition members will not acknowledge the good work that the Government is doing in the waste space. They have tried to make the entire debate on waste and plastics solely about plastic bags. I agree with the Minister that we must ban the bag and I also agree with the Minister that we must not do it in isolation. In saying that, it is not just about banning things and increasing red tape.

Community engagement is a critical factor for changing littering behaviour. It raises awareness and builds the norm that littering is not the right thing to do. As a local MP who has significant green space, national parks and rivers in my electorate, I have seen the real, on-the-ground difference that events like Clean Up Australia Day and groups such as Keep Australia Beautiful and Landcare make. Community engagement is vital in finding a

solution to our waste problems. We have already seen this with major retailers moving away from single-use plastic bags and the impact that that is having on consumer behaviour.

The Government does of course have a role to play here as well. In 2014 the Hey Tosser! campaign was launched. The campaign focused on establishing a social norm to not litter. The next phase of the campaign launched in 2018, shifting from the "Hey Tosser!" tagline to "Don't be a Tosser", focuses on the excuses that people use for littering, to help them recognise and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Four out of five adults in New South Wales now recognise and remember the Tosser campaign. This is a significant result. A marine litter campaign is also scheduled for early March 2020 to raise awareness of the impact of litter on the marine environment. The Government has also developed a litter prevention kit, which provides research results and advice on designing effective anti-littering programs. The kit is used by community groups and councils. The NSW Litter Prevention Strategy has recently been updated to incorporate community input and updated litter figures.

I recognise that enforcing litter offences is an important strategy in changing the social norms around littering. I say this to reinforce my point that it is not as simple as just banning the bag. We need to move to a circular economy that will provide long-term economic, social and environmental benefits for New South Wales. We need to change community behaviours, we need to work with other jurisdictions and we need to consider the issues surrounding waste and plastics comprehensively and consultatively. I end where I began: I commend the work of the Minister for Energy and Environment, I look forward to the continued success of the initiatives already in place, I welcome continued discussions on plastics and waste policy and I welcome a sensible and considered approach to managing plastic bags. I reiterate my opposition to the bill.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (11:06:52): It gives me great pleasure to speak on behalf of the Government and to oppose this bill, but I say at the outset that I always commend any endeavours to reduce our footprint on the environment. I commend any endeavours by individuals to improve our environment overall. For the record, the current New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has been responsible for the largest reduction in plastic waste ever seen across this country. That has been through the introduction of the container deposit scheme, Return and Earn. Further, for the record, in 2007 my namesake, counterpart and great friend, John Williams, the former member for Murray-Darling—

Mr Greg Piper: Crusty.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Lake Macquarie. "Crusty" is the name that he had. They used to call the pair of us the Williams sisters, and I always reminded him that I was Venus. More importantly, John Williams brought a motion before this House in 2007 requesting the Government at the time to commence the process of installing a container deposit scheme. As most people would remember, the Murray-Darling electorate adjoined South Australia and there has been a container deposit scheme in South Australia since Adam wore short pants, or for a long time. John Williams saw firsthand the reduction in plastic waste.

I was very happy to join with him at that particular time—a long time ago now—to call on those in the former Labor Government to put in place a container deposit scheme. That was in 2007. They had plenty of time to do that. They had plenty of time to act. They had plenty of time to do whatever they liked to reduce plastic waste across New South Wales. As we know, they did nothing. The request fell on deaf ears, but it did not fall on deaf ears on our side of the House. So we pursued it. I acknowledge the former Minister for the Environment and member for Vacluse, Gabrielle Upton, who is in the Chamber. She introduced that particular scheme. To date it has been the most effective environmental scheme to reduce plastic waste across New South Wales that has ever been initiated in this country. Billions and billions of bottles and containers are no longer strewn along our roadsides and in our waterways, affecting marine life and making this State look absolutely filthy.

We now see initiatives to reduce plastic bags. I note for the record that corporations are taking it upon themselves to reduce their environmental footprint by reducing plastic bags. My own family certainly lives a very sustainable life. The boot of my car is overflowing with reusable bags in multiple colours of red, blue and black. We have so many reusable bags that it almost looks like the Rainbow Warriors invade the boot of my car every time I open it. But there has to be a personal sense of responsibility on the part of every person who goes shopping to, as much as they can, reduce the use of single-use plastic bags. I am not going to condemn anybody for introducing what I say is a worthwhile initiative. But as has been said many times by Government members, we need a comprehensive approach to reducing the amount of plastics in our environment.

Is the problem just plastic bags? No, it is not. There are many other plastics. We are already seeing with the Return and Earn scheme how we can reduce the amount of plastics in our environment through this very strategic approach. The last time the Minister sent me figures, I think my electorate was on top of the list for the highest number of people who were collecting their 10c. Some very industrious young people are out there raiding

rubbish bins every night. I started to get numerous emails from people who were very disturbed to hear the rattling and clanging of rubbish bins on the side of the road.

I said, "Look, please don't take away from the fact that these wonderful, industrious entrepreneurs are not only getting themselves 10c but are ultimately ensuring that those particular containers are going back to recycling, which we like." I note that many of our Scouting and sporting groups are taking the opportunity to direct that money back to their organisations. It is having a marvellous effect on funding for many of those groups and organisations. Most importantly, it is having a monumental effect on reducing the amount of plastic waste on our streets.

A small number of disgusting and filthy people continue to discard their waste out of their car doors. It does not matter what road, motorway or street you drive up; there will be an abundance of filth, litter and discarded waste on every road. We really are a disgusting community when you look at the amount of litter alongside roads. For the sake of my own health, my wife and I walk for three or four kilometres every morning, and the amount of litter I pick up is phenomenal. I like to keep my patch and my area clean. But since the introduction of the container deposit scheme, there has been a vast reduction in the amount of litter alongside our roads. We really need to ask the question: In this day and age, when there is a such a focus on trying to create a much more sustainable environment, whatever comes into the heads of people who discard their litter out of their car doors while they are driving around one of the greatest countries in the world?

But I place on the record the fact that there is an abundance of filthy and disgusting people. It is not everybody; it is a small number of people. There is always a small number of people who make life difficult for everybody and who ultimately make life difficult for government, which has to create further regulations, fines et cetera. The Don't Be a Tosser campaign has been mentioned by earlier speakers; that was one of those actions by government. The Government should not have to do that. People should take responsibility, just as they should take responsibility to minimise their impact by using reusable bags every time they go to the supermarket.

A number of measures can be taken and none are more important than the Government's \$802 million investment into the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative to revitalise anti-litter action across New South Wales through new education, community awareness, targeted enforcement programs and new and upgraded litter prevention initiatives. The Government's aim is to lower the State's litter count per capita. Here we are as a government having to spend \$800 million because people driving around our streets cannot be trusted to keep their rubbish until they get home and put it in their own bin. It is very much a bugbear of mine, as is graffiti.

Under the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative, by 2021 the Government will have invested \$50 million specifically in litter reduction and enforcement programs. It is also working in partnership with communities and local government to achieve the Premier's Priority to reduce by 40 per cent the volume of litter in New South Wales by 2020. That is just one of the initiatives this Government undertakes. I look forward to seeing in the future a comprehensive bill put forward by this Government which looks at further reducing plastic in our environment. At this point in time, I oppose the bill.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (11:16:56): Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker, for taking the chair to allow me to make a contribution to debate on the Plastic Shopping Bags (Prohibition on Supply by Retailers) Bill 2019. I apologise, but the member for Castle Hill had so much to say. Apparently he has not convinced the Opposition members on my side of the House, but I am sure there will be further attempts to do so. I really wanted to speak on this bill. I congratulate the member for Port Stephens and those members of the Opposition who are supporting this bill, because I certainly will be. At the same time, I will not be so ungenerous as to not recognise the good work that the Government is doing. I have had numerous discussions with the previous Minister for the Environment, the member for Vacluse. I am glad that she is present in the Chamber; I know she is going to be contributing to this debate. I am continuing my discussions with the current Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean.

This is a really important issue and it is something that I have been involved with for very many years. It was almost literally a slap in the face when I came to understand the extent of the problem of plastics in our environment. That was some years ago when I used to travel to Bali to surf—I was a bit younger and a bit fitter. Bali is a destination for Australian tourism and it was drowning in plastic. It was almost emblematic of the problem. It was one of the best examples of the disposable society we had become. While we have a lot of problems here in Australia, it was so dense and intense in Bali that you could see it literally in your face. I did some work over there with some not-for-profits and some great organisations of largely Australian expats who are living there. One of my great shames is that I had to move away from that; I just did not have the capacity to go on. But the people on the ground continued to work over there, including our friend Ian Kiernan, who took Clean Up the World to Bali. I worked on that over there with him. But that is only one part of the solution.

Bali is a place I never thought would come to grips with the issue of single-use plastic bags but in June this year Bali banned single-use plastic bags. A few other places need recognition. There are Third World countries that have many issues yet understand the problems created by plastics. I understand that Bali is only a small part of Indonesia and that the whole country has a big struggle in front of it but countries like Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda and Somalia have banned the use of single-use plastic bags. Every other jurisdiction in Australia has taken significant steps along this path but New South Wales has not.

I have listened to Government members and I agree with them that this State needs a comprehensive strategy to deal with plastics in our environment. There are a lot of people working on the problems caused by plastics. I am sure that Government members, including the former Minister for the Environment, Gabrielle Upton, know many people—many more than I do—who are working on the issue. Many people in universities are working on projects in this area. One such project is AUSMAP, which is looking at micro particles in our environment.

The member for Manly and I have visited that project, which is looking at ubiquitous plastics, some of which will last in the environment for thousands and thousands of years. In some cases plastics will remain in the environment for millions of years. When we have gone, that will be a legacy for any life that might survive. The problem with plastics has only really existed since the 1950s when plastics started to be commonly used and disposable. So this has had a huge impact within 70 years, with plastics being found in the Antarctic and in the deepest parts of the oceans. Plastics are choking our waterways. Birds are ingesting it in the terrestrial environment and seabirds are ingesting plastics in the oceans. Whales die from bowel obstructions caused by ingesting plastics. A lot of these problems come from the single-use plastic bags, because of their very nature.

I commend the Government for looking at a whole-of-plastic-problem strategy. "Reduce, reuse, recycle" is a good mantra to live by and to keep working on. I implore the Government to keep investing in this area. I have been working quite closely with a scientist from the University of Newcastle, Dr Thava Palanisami. His team recently identified the fact that each and every one of us consumes, on average, about a credit card of plastic per week, I think. It is some incredibly large amount, but whatever the number is it should be a wake-up call because we do not know what that will do to our health in the long term. We know that, in the short term, our wildlife is dying from the ingesting of plastics or by becoming tangled in single-use plastic bags. Sea life in particular is prone to ingesting plastics bags.

I appreciate that the Government is doing a good job but we need to be realistic. The reason that this issue is not being dealt with is not because the Government needs to step back and look at it from an overall perspective. While that might be a good idea it will also cause a delay, and every time there is a delay more wildlife dies. It is estimated that 130,000 tonnes of plastics go into Australian waterways every year. Every day, week, month or year that we delay, more wildlife will die unnecessarily. So I believe that we need to take action on this. It is another wake-up call to the community.

As the member for Castle Hill said, we need to take personal responsibility, but this legislation is a reminder to people that they need to keep stepping up. I believe that this is a good bill but I can do the numbers and I believe that I will be in the chair for the division. This bill will probably not pass because it is a non-government bill—a bill that has been put forward by the Opposition. That is the reality of it. As a discrete bill relating to single-use plastic bags, this bill could be very easily dealt with. It would be a very simple thing to do. When the Government does have a comprehensive strategy for plastics—the ubiquitous plastics that need to be repurposed or reprocessed in some way—this single-use plastic bag prohibition could be rolled into it, or it could stand alone. This is a very simple bill.

The way in which single-use plastic bags interact with the environment is different to the way many other plastics interact. That is because of the nature of single-use plastic bags—their fineness and the way they are ingested. I know that this bill will not be passed by this House but I agree that the Government has been doing some really good work in this space. I acknowledge that former Ministers have done some good work; it has been a progression. I congratulate the former Minister for the Environment, Gabrielle Upton, on the Return and Earn scheme; it has been a huge success. I thank her and the Government for doing that, but we can do more.

I acknowledge the member for Port Stephens, who introduced the bill. The Plastic Shopping Bags (Prohibition on Supply by Retailers) Bill 2019 is a very simple bill. The intention of the bill is to change, as quickly as possible, the way we deal with plastics in our environment. I believe that that is imperative. I thank the Chamber for giving me an opportunity to speak on this legislation. I commend the bill to the House. If it is defeated I ask that the Government enacts other strategies as quickly as possible.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (11:26:17): I oppose the bill that has been brought to this House by the member for Port Stephens. In doing so I recognise the people in the gallery. I have listened to the speeches of the member for Lake Macquarie and the member for Castle Hill and I reiterate that we all recognise the need to

reduce our environmental footprint and the need to reduce waste. I am very proud of what local government has done in my electorate to work with the community on programs such as Halve Waste. Local councils have made significant inroads in reducing waste. This debate comes down to the whole notion of whether it is as simple as just banning plastic bags—

Ms Kate Washington: Which you can do today.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY: —or whether it is about taking a more comprehensive approach. The gallery might—

[Opposition members interjected.]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Mark Coure): Order! Members will come to order.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY: I will give two insights. The first is the fact that retailers who have taken the initiative to stop using single-use plastic bags still allow shoppers to go home with mini plastics and ooshies. A simplistic approach is not the response we need. The second insight that I gained in consultation with the community of my electorate is in relation to the simple approach to take-away containers. Cardboard takeaway containers can be unlined, lined with a petroleum-based product or lined with a natural-based product. Some of those containers will be biodegradable and recyclable, some will be recyclable and some are neither biodegradable nor recyclable. The fact is that because waste management companies such as Cleanaway cannot differentiate, all of it goes to landfill. So taking a simplistic approach is not the response that we need.

People in my community have said, "Yes, we need to do this, but we need to do it well." That means taking a comprehensive approach, and I am very supportive of the approach of the Minister for Energy and Environment to developing a comprehensive plan. It is important to work with the Minister for Energy and Environment to push forward on this issue so that we can leave a legacy with a comprehensive plan. The use of bans is only one tool available. We need to look at ways of working with industry. We need to look at reducing the amount of unnecessary packaging because the use of plastics in packaging has grown over recent years. We need to look at stewardship. As the member for Castle Hill said in his contribution to this debate, we need accountability within our communities. It is this sort of approach and thinking that is at the heart of the Government's policy approach to litter and pollution.

I note, as the member for Castle Hill did, the container deposit scheme. The Opposition has taken a simplistic approach but failed to see that its colleagues in other States need to come on board. The New South Wales Government has invested \$50 million over nine years in litter prevention and enforcement initiatives such as the Waste Less, Recycle More program, which is having results. According to the National Litter Index beverage containers make up the largest proportion of litter volume in New South Wales at 54 per cent, or around 160 million containers littered. That is why the Government introduced the Return and Earn scheme, which allows anyone who returns a beverage container to receive a 10c refund. This has been a priority for the Government.

Now there are more than 630 return points across New South Wales. Over 300 schools, charities, community and sporting groups have already featured as donation partners on reverse vending machines across New South Wales. We see Scouts and Girl Guides groups earning something through utilising the container deposit scheme. The scheme works to encourage consumers. It is not a ban but an encouragement for our community to do the right thing with litter. To date, more than 2.3 billion drink containers have been returned to Return and Earn collection points. This is a testament to the public's appetite for the scheme.

Since 2013-14 we have achieved a 35 per cent reduction in litter volume. This means we are close to achieving the 40 per cent reduction target. We will continue to do more. Over the next 20 years Return and Earn is expected to result in 1.6 billion fewer beverage containers littered, almost 11 billion fewer beverage containers ending up in landfill and 12.6 billion more beverage containers being recycled. The scheme has been a great success statewide. However, being on the border, it does have its challenges. This is where the Labor Opposition is being shown up. One simple thing would be a great boost to the success of Return and Earn, particularly for my community in Albury and on the border: I want to see the Victorian Labor Government sign up and implement a container deposit scheme. It is the only jurisdiction that is not involved in a container deposit scheme.

The people of Victoria are missing out on the benefits. The lack of a scheme causes unnecessary confusion for my community living along the border. I want to see a commitment from the Labor Opposition in New South Wales to encourage its comrades in Victoria to implement such a scheme. Please take the initiative and work with the Government to encourage your Victorian colleagues to come on board. The Labor Opposition has been silent on this issue and has done nothing to advocate on behalf of communities living along the border. It is important to reduce our environmental footprint. I will be working hard with the environment Minister. I encourage our Government to continue working towards a comprehensive plan to address plastic waste and

pollution. The New South Wales Government will continue to deliver considered, collaborative and effective action on litter. I look forward to making this State a better place for the generations that follow us.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I acknowledge the many students in the gallery from Hornsby Primary School leaders' group, guests of the environment Minister and member for Hornsby. I also welcome their mums, dads, carers, grandparents and teachers to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. I am sure the member for Vacluse will enjoy speaking in front of those attendees. I remind guests they are not allowed to wave. Members are debating the very important subject of plastics. I believe that members across the board are all trying to do something to improve our environment.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vacluse) (11:35:07): I thank the Temporary Speaker for his warm introduction to the guests in the Chamber today. I welcome you all to Parliament House. You have come to see us debate a bill that I am opposing. The bill goes to plastics in our community and how they impact our environment, something you would all understand. During my speech today I will explain why I oppose the bill. The bill is only focused on one part of the plastic that we have in our environment. This part represents only 0.23 per cent of the plastic that we find in our environment. We can do better than this. We can have a strategy that reduces the plastic in our environment in the many ways that we find it—whether it is plastic straws, plastic containers we get for our take-out meals or the larger, heavier plastic bags we get when we go to the large retail stores.

We need to reduce those items of plastic and many others at the same time to really do something significant, instead of what Labor is doing in the Chamber today: Holding up single-use plastic bags, such a small part of the plastic litter stream in our environment, and making that the best that it can do. Surely it is not the best it can do. We all agree this is such an important issue. The Minister—your local member—has made an offer to the Labor Opposition to come together in a bipartisan way to develop a comprehensive plastics production strategy across the State. However, they have not done that. They are arguing about one very small part of the plastic litter stream. That is not the way to tackle a bigger issue that we need to deal with in a comprehensive way. That is the logic behind my position on the bill.

We all know that when we create matter—whether it is plastic or anything else in our lives—that it does not go away. It turns from one form into another. You might have learnt at school about the law of thermodynamics. I know I did when I was at school—maybe when a little bit older than you. When you create things, you do not destroy them and they go to nothing; they simply turn into different forms. Frankly, we have not dealt with that inconvenient truth when it comes to litter in our environment. We put it in our yellow bin to go to recycling or our red bin, where it goes to landfill and basically gets buried to disintegrate—and sometimes not disintegrate—for many generations beyond us. We think that is the end of the story, but it is not. That litter continues to exist in our environment. That is why we can be much cleverer, more nimble and do something much more comprehensive that will really tackle the issue the Labor Opposition is today bringing to the House in such a light-touch, simplistic, symbolic way.

I hope I have made it clear to the House today that waste and plastics are a wicked problem. However, on this side of the House we are up for solving it. We have a responsibility to you, our future generations—to my kids, to my daughter who is doing her HSC exams this week—to solve this problem and set our community on a pathway to reduce plastics in our environment. I really thought the shadow Minister was better than this. I was environment Minister before the change of ministry at the last election. I thought if the shadow Minister came to this House that she would be smarter, more nimble and more sophisticated than to bring the bill back into the Parliament. I thought she would talk more comprehensively about how we can reduce all the plastics in our environment. However, she has chosen not to do that and I think that is really shameful. This debate could have been a very different one, one much more constructive that helped you and our whole community across New South Wales.

We heard the member for Lake Macquarie talk about why plastics are so endemic in our environment. They have become ubiquitous, they are everywhere around us. In fact, if I were to look around the Chamber I am sure that I would find something plastic. Why? Because they have become so cheap to manufacture, they are versatile, they are waterproof—which we all love—and they are used in so many products across our community that we no longer see them. The features that made plastic so popular as a bright, fantastic material developed in the last century have really made it the environment hazard that we know it to be today. It does not decay. We are still testing whether things that are called "biodegradable" actually degrade. Some things that are called biodegradable will only degrade in very special circumstances, so they do not actually degrade. Sometimes that smartness around what really goes on is missed on all of us, unless we have done a bit of reading.

Clearly my point is that we have to reduce all plastics, not just single-use plastics. We want to be able to reuse them and recycle them. When I was the environment Minister something called a circular economy was introduced. That means we should have an economy where we reduce the waste we produce, then we repurpose

it, if we can, and reuse it. One of the best examples of that is the container deposit scheme, which others have spoken about today. That was a tough reform for our community. It involved much more than people taking their bottles to a kiosk for a 10c return. It involved a change in the supply chain—from the commercial bottlers down to the way in which we deal with plastic bottles, cans and glass bottles in the environment.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): The member for Newcastle will come to order.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: We are the leading State on that initiative. That has dramatically reduced the number of drink containers that would otherwise go into our waterways, beaches and parks. We are really proud as a government that we have done that. We are the leading State in the technology that has been rolled out. The funny thing was, when I introduced that off the shoulders of previous environment Ministers in this House, the Labor Opposition contested it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): The member for Newcastle will come to order.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: They did not want to be a part of it. In question time they repeatedly asked questions about it. They were trying to shoot the scheme out: the best litter reduction scheme that the State has had. They decided they did not like it and wanted to score political points on it. I called them out on that.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): Opposition members will come to order.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: The irony was, some Labor Party members took me aside and said, "We want a Return and Earn kiosk in our electorate because we really love this. We love being able to get a deposit back. It incentivises us to pick up our plastic and glass bottles and cans and put them into the kiosks to help reduce the bottle and drink containers in our environment."

[Opposition members interjected.]

The Opposition is arguing hard and trying to make you not able to hear me. They are ashamed that they did not come on that journey with us. It is even more shameful that they do not tell their colleagues in Victoria to get on board and roll out the scheme. Victoria—run by the Labor Party—is the only State that has not introduced a Return and Earn scheme. Shame on Labor. What has happened—let them talk away, I will keep talking to you about what we need to do. We are tackling marine pollution on microplastics. That is a great story. Do you realise there are little plastics that you cannot see in household items that you use to clean up—I am sure you all help your mums and dads clean up at home—and in some of the cosmetics in your bathroom cabinet?

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

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: We are leading an initiative federally on marine pollution from plastics to make sure that the small microplastics that you cannot see in your deodorant or the cream that you might use are reduced over time. The plastics we cannot even see are going to be taken out of the litter streams. They will not be in the waterways or the ocean. They will not create a health hazard for our marine life or for us when we eat seafood. I have talked about Return and Earn and how those on this side are really proud of that initiative. It is the biggest litter reduction recycling initiative across Australia. I encourage you all to think of some bright ideas on how we can reduce our plastic use. It is not just about single-use plastic bags. Yes, they are part of the solution, but they are not the focus that we should have. I ask the Opposition and the shadow environment Minister to come on board with our now environment Minister to help design a comprehensive strategy that will reduce all plastics in our environment.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:45:12): I speak in debate on the Plastic Shopping Bags (Prohibition on Supply by Retailers) Bill 2019. It is fair to say that all members in this place want to see a reduction of all forms of plastic.

[Opposition members interjected.]

Mr MARK COURE: You have had your turn, now it is my turn. I think we all want to see a reduction. It is clear to me that there are some people—those opposite—who are playing politics with the issue. We are not playing politics with the issue.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: It's called a mirror.

Mr MARK COURE: It is a very good mirror too. Results speak for themselves. I can report to the House that over 10 million bottles and plastics have been deposited in Return and Earn machines in my electorate—over 10 million. That is huge. I am sure that the member for Newcastle—from the rate he goes in this Chamber, he has probably deposited more bottles and cans from his own personal collection in his Return and Earn machines. In fact, from the rate he is going I think he has already taken a trip to the bar this morning.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): The member for Oatley will address his comments through the Chair.

Mr MARK COURE: Talking about the importance of bottles and cans. I place on record my thanks to everyone in my electorate of Oatley and throughout New South Wales who have added to the more than two billion bottles and cans deposited since the introduction of the Return and Earn machines. I congratulate the environment Minister, the previous environment Minister, and the one before, and the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and member for Pittwater Mr Rob Stokes, who has just walked in on cue.

Ms Kate Washington: We supported banning the bag when he was Minister.

Mr MARK COURE: You have had your turn. He was one of those who came up with some of the mechanics of the Return and Earn scheme in the State. I place on record that the Government remains firmly committed to working with industry and collaborating with other Australian jurisdictions across the country to reduce plastic pollution. I think we are all on the same page. I note that the member for Rockdale has just waked into the Chamber. I also thank the industry, which has taken a strong leadership role in phasing out the use of plastic bags to reduce the impacts of plastics. Major supermarket chains have been the largest providers of single-use plastic bags in New South Wales.

In July 2017 the Woolworths Group, Coles, Harris Farm Markets and IGA announced that they would voluntarily phase out lightweight plastic bags at their checkouts by July 2018. I thank and commend them for their proactive steps to phasing out lightweight plastic bags. In addition to that, major Australian supermarkets Coles and Woolworths have also committed to phasing out plastic packaging on fresh food and providing soft plastic recycling bins in all stores. But it should not just be them; it should be all specialty retail shops, a coffee shop or newsagent. Everyone needs to get behind the soft plastic recycling bins and reduce plastic packaging. Their collective decision in voluntarily phasing out plastic bags and other plastic packaging will significantly reduce plastic litter in New South Wales.

I mentioned the Government's commitment to reducing litter with Return and Earn machines. To date more than two billion bottles and cans have been recycled in New South Wales as a result of having these machines. We expect about three billion cans and bottles to be recycled over the next 12 months. I note the member for Rockdale has entered the Chamber. In my local community, more than 10 million bottles and cans have been deposited in just two Return and Earn machines in my electorate, one in Castle Park and the other end Peakhurst. I am sure recycling is no different in the electorate of Rockdale and the electorate of Kogarah. To complement industry's actions on plastic bags and other single-use plastic items, at a recent meeting of environment Ministers all Australian environment Ministers agreed to explore options to reduce the use of thicker plastic shopping bags, which I think is the next step.

A cross-jurisdictional working group has been established to do this work and New South Wales is working with the other States and Territories to achieve this goal. In addition, Australian environment Ministers recently endorsed a target of 100 per cent of Australian packaging being recyclable, compostable or reusable by 2025 or earlier. Governments are working with the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, representing over 1,400 leading companies, to deliver this target. The New South Wales Government is working with other Australian jurisdictions to finalise a national action plan, which is due to be tabled at a meeting of environment Ministers later this year. The New South Wales Government is also developing a 20-year waste strategy for New South Wales and a plastics strategy. This sets out a long-term—

Ms Kate Washington: Have you got that strategy?

Mr MARK COURE: —this is important—vision for waste management across the State and will provide a framework for improved plastic management in New South Wales.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 76. I ask the member to speak on the Plastic Shopping Bags (Prohibition on Supply by Retailers) Bill 2019, not the waste strategy of New South Wales.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I appreciate the member for Charlestown's attempt, but you would have had to take that point of order much earlier in this debate. I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr MARK COURE: I give her points for trying. I believe any action regarding the phasing out of plastic bags must begin at a local level. This is why I personally have been working with local community groups in my electorate, such as the Lugarno Progress Association, to aid and encourage local small business to transition away from the use of shopping bags and single-use plastic, such as plastic straws, plastic cups et cetera. I am on the record supporting the phasing out of plastics to make sure that we see a reduction of plastic waste in my community. We need a sensible approach in partnership with industry and the community, and that is exactly

what members on this side of the Chamber will do. Therefore, I think the bill before the House is premature and targets only one source of plastic pollution that affects our natural environment.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (11:53:25): In reply: Has this not been an interesting debate on the Plastic Shopping Bags (Prohibition on Supply by Retailers) Bill 2019? Government member after Government member has tried to make their contributions to this debate last long enough that this bill does not have to go to a vote. Former environment Ministers have tied themselves in knots in their efforts to say why they could not possibly support a bill that they themselves wanted to pass when they were the environment Minister. One thing communities expect of us is that when we stand in this place we tell the truth and we are honest. However, a number of members who have contributed to this debate have been neither truthful nor honest. Some have been on the public record as wanting to ban single-use plastic bags in New South Wales. Why would we not want to ban single-use plastic bags in New South Wales? We know that every other State and Territory has already done so.

As the good member for Lake Macquarie mentioned in his contribution to this debate, Bali has banned single-use plastic bags. We know that a number of countries have banned single-use plastic bags: Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Seychelles, Tanzania, Tunisia—and yet this Liberal-Nationals Government in New South Wales cannot quite bring itself to support a Labor bill to do exactly what members of the Government know needs to be done and ought to be done. Instead, in this debate Government member after Government member has spoken about a consistent approach or a comprehensive plan. We know that they do not actually have an approach or a plan; that is the really shameful thing about this debate. Members opposite have spoken about something that they are going to do.

I remind members that this Liberal-Nationals Government has had the levers of power for 8½ years, during which they should have come up with a plan. People are appalled by this inaction and they will continue to be appalled if government members choose to oppose this bill today. Communities will be appalled because communities right across this State want to catch up and join with the rest of Australia in banning single-use plastic bags in the State. But those on the other side of the Chamber cannot bring themselves to support a bill brought to this place by the Labor Opposition. This is our bill. I have offered it to the Minister. I said he could name it whatever he liked. He could call it the "Matt Kean for Premier Bill" or he could call it the clean air strategy—he does not have one of those either.

Many press releases have been issued about all the things the Government is going to do. I am offering the Government the opportunity to support this bill today because the bill will actually do something and put words into action. There has been a lot of talk about the Government's intention to come up with a plan, which will be a holistic response. We on this side of the Chamber cannot believe that the Government does not have a plan. Yes, there needs to be a plan, but there is nothing stopping any government member from taking a step towards doing the right thing today. It would be a single step towards what will be no doubt be part of the Government's plan, banning single-use plastic bags in New South Wales. Right here, right now those opposite can take some positive action.

Everybody in this Chamber knows—even those who spoke against the bill—that single-use plastic bags should not be used and should be prevented from entering into our environment. The member for Rockdale reminded me moments ago about something that those of us who represent coastal electorates are seeing in our communities. Turtles are dying and it has been found that they have died because they ingested thin plastic bags. The Government's failure to support this bill will mean that the deaths of marine animals will continue. The failure to support this bill will mean that plastic bags will continue to enter our waterways. We know that every week that we delay banning single-use plastic bags in New South Wales, an additional 230,000 bags go to landfill and potentially enter our waterways. Those are 230,000 plastic bags that will enter into our landfill and waterways next week which the Government can prevent today, right here, right now, but they just cannot bring themselves to support this bill.

There has also been a lot of chest beating about other initiatives that are underway and one of them in particular that has been mentioned is the waste levy. I remind members that almost \$800 million was collected from across this State by the Government last year from the waste levy, which the NSW Environment Protection Authority says will go towards waste-reduction programs. Less than a third of that \$800 million has been returned and is now going towards waste-reduction programs—less than a third. That means more than two-thirds of the Government's waste levy has gone straight to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. This is a tax on the citizens of New South Wales.

There are so many opportunities, programs and industries crying out for additional support so that we can become the circular economy that the former environment Minister mentioned today. She said she introduced this to New South Wales, but that is not happening because there is no investment from the Government into the industry and the sector that needs this investment to make it happen. When it comes to plans or action on protecting

the environment the Government is sorely lacking. Shameful contributions have been made by Government members, who know that this ought to happen. They have been directed not to vote for this bill purely because of politics. Today we had the biggest demonstration of petty politics ever. Government members know that single-use plastic bags should be banned in New South Wales.

While every other State and Territory has done it already, New South Wales is the environmental laggard because it has failed to move on this. We are serving up an opportunity for the Government today to actually do something but instead we hear about plans that it does not have. I make a final plea to Government members to look into their consciences and to remember the faces of the students who were in the gallery moments ago and who all would have wanted the Government to support this bill today to ban single-use plastic bags in New South Wales. They get it, they understand, though they probably cannot understand the politics that will prevent this from happening today. But this is one last plea to back the communities that Government members represent, to back the environment, to back the students who were in the gallery today and to back Labor's bill to ban single-use plastic bags today.

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

The House divided.

Ayes37
Noes48
Majority.....11

AYES

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

NOES

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

PAIRS

Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Mr T

Kean, Mr M
O'Dea, Mr J

PAIRS

Hornery, Ms S

Sidgreaves, Mr P

Motion negatived.**FOOD AMENDMENT (SEAFOOD COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING) BILL 2019****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from 17 October 2019.**

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (12:10:52): I lead for the Government on the Food Amendment (Seafood Country of Origin Labelling) Bill 2019. The New South Wales Government is a strong supporter and defender of the New South Wales seafood industry. It knows how important seafood is to local communities up and down the coast of New South Wales as well as in inland areas. The New South Wales Government therefore supports the intent of this bill. However, it wants to support the seafood industry rather than impose additional regulatory burden on businesses with potential perverse outcomes for both the seafood industry and consumers. Instead, this Government will continue to build the value of local seafood in partnership with the food service industry.

The national Country of Origin Food Labelling Information Standard 2016 requires food retailers such as supermarkets, wholesalers and fishmongers to display information about the origin of seafood for retail sale in Australia—that is, when the seafood will be consumed later. The food service sector is exempt from this mandatory country of origin labelling. Therefore restaurants, cafes, takeaway shops and school canteens selling food to the public for immediate consumption do not need to state the country of origin information. They can if they wish; they may, but are not required to do so. Instead, food service businesses can freely advertise the provenance of their seafood when it is in their interest to do so or when they desire to do so.

When the national information standard was implemented, the regulatory burden that would have been placed on the food service sector was deemed too high. This situation has not changed. A mandatory country of origin labelling scheme would impose additional regulatory burden on the food service industry. The physical and online menus, signs and chalkboards would need to be updated and changed every time the business switched between Australian and imported seafood. For some food service businesses this may require an update to menus partway through the day or the evening. Any business that fails to update the country of origin information on its menus, signs or chalkboards commits an offence. This would impose an unnecessary burden on small businesses in particular as they often operate in price-sensitive environments.

I will inform the House about fish labelling and names more broadly. The Food Standards Code does not define names for fish. The seafood industry has worked with Standards Australia to develop an Australian Fish Names Standard, which provides guidance on standard fish names to be used in Australia. However, there can at times be issues with fish naming. These are often due to culturally different names for certain species or spelling errors. Consumers are able to contact the relevant enforcement agency if they are concerned that their fish is incorrectly labelled.

In Australia the relevant enforcement agency is the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. Since 2006 it has been a legal requirement that all fresh seafood sold by retailers is clearly labelled with its country of origin. The exemption for the food service sector is contained within standard 1.2.11 of the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code, which applies to fish, pork, fruit and vegetables, beef, veal, lamb, hogget, mutton, chicken or a mix of any of the aforementioned foods. This code applies to the aforementioned foods whether they are cut, filleted, sliced, minced or diced, pickled, cured, dried, smoked frozen, preserved, marinated or cooked.

The Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code is administered by Food Standards Australia New Zealand. Changes to labelling schemes are overseen and decided upon by the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation. Forum membership is made up of lead Ministers from all Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions, and is chaired by the lead Minister from the Commonwealth. This system and forum is in place to sign off on all food standards and can also request that a draft standard be developed, reviewed, amended or rejected. Forum membership is designed to reflect a whole-of-food-chain approach to food regulation. The forum has two distinct roles as a decision-maker. It must carry out its responsibilities as outlined above and also is required to be the system arbitrator. To do this, the forum must balance food regulation in the bi-national interest with potentially competing views from consumers, from industry and sometimes from itself.

So why do we have this system? It ensures consistency in labelling across New Zealand, Australia and all jurisdictions within Australia.. This is beneficial for trade, to businesses, to States and ultimately to the

consumer. It means there are clear standards and that industry is not faced with a vast array of labelling variations across Australia from State to State or Territory to Territory, or from Australia to New Zealand. It attempts to achieve consistency across all of those jurisdictions. Labelling considerations are best placed, then, for that forum to consider. They are not strictly within the domain of individual States or Territories.

There is also no evidence of the need for government intervention on this matter. Research on consumer willingness to buy Australian seafood over imported seafood indicates that while consumers prefer Australian seafood, the willingness to pay more for Australian seafood is relatively low. Due to the much higher price of New South Wales and Australian seafood, it is therefore unlikely that mandatory origin labelling of seafood will result in increased sales of seafood in fish and chip shops, clubs, pubs and many cafes across our State. Seafood is an important part of a healthy diet. It is high in protein, low in saturated fat and contains omega-3 fatty acids. Regular consumption of fish may help reduce risk of heart disease, stroke, dementia and macular degeneration.

We also know that many people do not include sufficient seafood in their regular diet. The New South Wales seafood industry produces high-value premium seafood commanding a high price. Globally, Australia has a reputation as a reliable and high-quality supplier of high-value fishery and aquaculture products. On the other hand, imported seafood tends to comprise lower-value products, such as frozen fillets and canned fish. These low-cost seafood products do not compete directly with the more expensive, premium local fish, but provide consumers a low-cost alternative to other forms of protein, such as chicken and mince. It is a very important point that imported products do not necessarily compete against our homegrown products, but they do provide many more options for consumers, depending on their taste and their budget, and at which outlet they are shopping.

These reasons combine to create a situation where mandatory country of origin labelling for seafood could result in unintended negative consequences for the local seafood industry, which this bill is trying to support, and I acknowledge the member for The Entrance and his intent in bringing this bill. Firstly, mandatory seafood country of origin labelling could mean that a cafe or restaurant may completely remove seafood from their menu to avoid the cost and frustration of updating menus when their seafood source switches periodically between local and imported seafood. This may create a shift in sales away from seafood to other cheaper proteins, such as chicken, as those other proteins will not face the same additional regulatory burden.

Secondly, cafes and restaurants using Australian seafood when it is available and cost-effective, but imported seafood at other times, may be less willing to use Australian seafood over imported seafood due to the costs associated with having to reprint their menus. Overall, mandatory country of origin labelling for seafood may mean that, ironically, consumers end up with less choice in seafood sold in cafes and restaurants; businesses face higher costs; and there is lower demand for local seafood. Any further reduction in seafood consumption would also reduce access to the health benefits of seafood. This would be a disappointing outcome from a public health perspective.

I reiterate the New South Wales Government's support for the local seafood industry. The New South Wales Government will continue to work with the local fishing industry to promote locally caught seafood, to educate consumers on the value of New South Wales seafood and to maximise the long-term economic value of seafood across our State. We want more local seafood on New South Wales plates and that is why we recently launched a grants program to increase consumption of New South Wales seafood, to drive the value of our State's seafood through increased awareness and consumption, and to build local seafood industry capabilities and cohesiveness.

The \$1 million Supporting Seafood Future grants program will build marketing and promotional capacity within seafood businesses through small-scale and large-scale grants. In April 2019 I announced the first 12 projects to receive funding through this program, with a second round of projects to receive funding later this year. The New South Wales Government also provides support for young commercial fishers through business coaching under the New South Wales Young Farmer Business Program. The program promotes and creates opportunities for young farmers and fishers to expand their business aspirations, improve their skills, and enhance their businesses for strong future growth.

Through these approaches, the New South Wales Government is building value for the local seafood industry in partnership with, rather than imposing further regulatory burden on, the food service industry. If this Parliament decides to impose mandatory seafood country of origin labelling on the New South Wales food service sector, it will set a precedent for other industries facing competition from international markets that would also like to see country of origin information displayed on menus. If country of origin information must be stated for several ingredients on menus in the future, it will be very difficult for food service businesses to manage and it will be impossible for customers to read a menu.

If any mandatory country of origin labelling is to be imposed on food service businesses, a national approach is the preferred solution, as this will overcome any issues that might emerge from differences in laws as

I stated earlier, from New South Wales to Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, the ACT and the Northern Territory, or between Australia and New Zealand. The New South Wales Government supports the intent of this bill and is a strong supporter of promoting the local seafood industry. However, the Government does not support a mandatory scheme, instead preferring to build the value of the local seafood industry in partnership with the local food service industry. For these reasons, the Government cannot support the bill.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (12:25:16): It seems like every day we hear from this Government about a lot of good intentions, but not a lot of outcomes. I want to respond to a few issues that the Minister raised, firstly, that if we tell people where our seafood comes from, it might make them less inclined to eat seafood and they might instead turn to chicken or lamb or beef. I do not see the logic in that, because they would be turning away from imported seafood, which does not help anyone in our primary industries sector or support our farmers and local fishers. I do not think there is logic in that.

I heard the Minister's comments about wanting a national approach, and it was good of him to list all the States in case we missed them, but on every other issue where there is an option for New South Wales to be number one we hear the Government proudly crowing about model legislation and the things that it wants to do to improve everything for everyone in New South Wales, and "We will be leaders in Australia". Given the disastrous reforms that have been made to the commercial fishing sector over the last four or five years, trying to support that sector should be number one. I go around the State, up and down the coast, talking to fishers. I have done that as shadow Minister for Primary Industries, and previously as shadow Minister for Small Business. It is very disheartening to walk into takeaways and seafood shops and see "We love local seafood" collateral that has been produced in Queensland. New South Wales fishers and fishmongers are using that in their own premises because they want to promote Australian seafood. That is the level of ridiculousness we have here.

We need the Government to be consistent, and I know that the Government has not been consistent on much of this debate around primary industries over the last couple of weeks. I am sure I heard the Minister talking about the proper labelling of milk and other products recently, so that we were clear that milk is the mammary secretion of an animal and we did not want almond milk to be called milk; we wanted to call it nut juice or almond water or something else. On the one hand, the Minister wants to put up his hand and say that he is supporting the dairy industry, but he does not want to support the fishers. It is inconsistent, and it is what we are used to.

I also wonder about the issue of signage. I used to own a cafe and conference centre, and we used to sell fish from time to time. We also had a restaurant. I have to say that there was no issue because, if you have a species or type of fish that is subject to availability, it is not always in stock or you cannot always get it, you can use a chalkboard, as the Minister himself said. The point is that you can change a chalkboard every day—in fact you can change it twice a day or three times a shift if you need to. We had our restaurant about 18 years ago, and we were in a country area, so we had to wait for the guy to come and do our menus, but there is something that has become much more accepted in business over the last 20 years, and that is a computer, and desktop publishing.

A lot of restaurants are doing their own menus, and a lot of restaurants are promoting the provenance of their food. We hear about New England lamb and that sort of thing, about where the animals are harvested from; yet, with seafood, we are not making it a similar issue. If restaurants and cafes want to promote higher prices for their products, they should be explaining to consumers why the prices are higher. We know that under the reforms undertaken by this Government, the price of seafood has increased substantially.

When I was a tour operator 20 years ago, I remember being up in the Gulf of Queensland. We visited the barramundi farm near Lorne Hill and our group was eating at a particular restaurant. The menu said it was barramundi and I remember a particularly lovely lady, Betty—she was probably about 83—said, "That's not bloody barramundi! That's Nile perch." We could not say yes or no, because there was nothing to indicate whether it was—just what the restaurant menu said. We do need to be clear because even about 20 years ago consumers wanted to know that they were supporting Australian seafood. They wanted to know that they were supporting local industries. The other thing about this Minister that I cannot quite come to grips with is that he talks about his good intentions. A ministerial media release from his predecessor, dated 30 May 2016, stated:

Seafood lovers will be able to read on the menu where the seafood they order is sourced from, under a NSW Government proposal for a new labelling scheme aimed at promoting local seafood consumption.

I suppose we do not have Niall Blair anymore and we do not have Troy Grant as Deputy Premier anymore, but these were good ideas. The Opposition agreed with and supported them. The Government did not come up with the legislation, so in 2017 the member for The Entrance—very proactively and on his own initiative—drafted the bill. But the Government could not support it. I think the reason it gave at the time was that there were no penalty units. What happened then? Unlike the Government, which when it puts something in legislation that is not achieving its purpose, it tries to ram it through with its numbers and ends up like the Right to Farm Bill, stuck in the other House with pages and pages of amendments—

Business interrupted.*Visitors***VISITORS**

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I welcome to the public gallery secondary teachers of legal studies. I hope they enjoy the debate.

*Motions***CARTERS ROAD, LAKE MUNMORAH****Debate resumed from 17 October 2019.**

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (12:32:44): By way of background, and as I mentioned in the debate on this motion last week, Carters Road is a local road managed by Central Coast Council. It has one lane in each direction and intersects with the Pacific Highway at Lake Munmorah. The intersection between Carters Road, Elizabeth Bay Drive and the Pacific Highway is controlled by traffic lights. A pedestrian footbridge is provided over the Pacific Highway. The schools in the area have their own drop-off and pick-up areas internally, including areas for buses with restrictions on Carters Road parking. Transport for NSW is responsible for operation of the traffic lights, lane configuration and pedestrian safety at the Pacific Highway-Carters Road intersection, including the school zone signs, pavement patches and approval of the speed zoning.

Providing students with a safe environment adjacent to school premises is paramount. Speed limits of 40 kilometres per hour in school zones are in force on all weekdays that are not a public holiday or a publicly notified school holiday for government schools. The lower speed limit reduces the risk and potential severity of a crash. The New South Wales Government has a strong focus on improving the visibility of 40 kilometre per hour school zones, and children's and pedestrian crossings to protect children around schools. A school zone safety campaign runs at the start and end of each school term to remind drivers when school zones are in operation and to obey the 40 kilometre per hour speed limit. Additionally, the "bus flashing lights" campaign warns motorists that they must not overtake or pass a bus with flashing lights at more than 40 kilometres per hour, as children are most at risk in the minutes after they get off the bus.

Over \$5 million worth of new safety infrastructure has been rolled out via 140 projects around New South Wales schools, including raised crossings, kerb extensions, pedestrian refuges, new fencing, footpath improvements, new signs and splitter islands at roundabouts. Transport for NSW is responsible for the management and safety of the school crossing supervisors who work on the pedestrian crossing on Carters Road closest to the Pacific Highway. The School Crossing Supervisor program currently funds up to 1,200 supervisors at around 800 crossings across the State. In January 2019 the New South Wales Government announced an \$18.5 million commitment to provide 300 additional school crossing supervisors over the next four years.

I am advised that there are non-standard school zone times to cater for all school start and finish times for the schools on Carters Road. These times are between 7.30 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. and between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. School crossing supervisors work at the school crossing on Carters Road on gazetted school days from 8.00 a.m. to 9.15 a.m. and from 2.20 p.m. to 3.20 p.m. to assist primary students to safely cross the road. The school crossing supervisors are conscious of marshalling students before stopping traffic to safely cross students and minimise traffic disruption. The school crossing supervisors assist students to cross Carters Road when the traffic lights are green on the Pacific Highway.

Education is a key component of the New South Wales Government's approach to road safety. Transport for NSW maintains a range of road safety partnerships with stakeholders and community groups to help deliver safety messages at a community level. The Government funds the Road Safety Education Program via the Community Road Safety Fund, which invests about \$5 million per year in the early childhood and school education sectors. The program provides road safety education consultancy support for teachers in more than 3,000 primary and secondary schools. It also provides more than 3,500 early childhood services across New South Wales. From education programs in schools and preschools through to road safety advertising campaigns, education has been proven to play a role in changing behaviour to reduce trauma on our roads.

I understand that during school drop-off and pick-up times, Carters Road is heavily congested. Ausgrid is located on the corner of the Pacific Highway and Carters Road and has a public car park that is available to parents to drop off and pick up their children. A U-turn bay at the end of the precinct assists motorists to turn around to exit Carters Road. I take this opportunity to advise the House that changes to the layout and operation of Carters Road are a matter for Central Coast Council, as the Opposition should be aware. On behalf of the Government, I oppose the motion.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:37:40): I thank the member for Swansea for bringing this important matter to the House. It is a matter that the New South Wales Government keeps washing its hands of and pushing back to Central Coast Council—like so many other issues it would rather ignore than fix. What the Liberal-Nationals Government is ignoring in this matter is the safety of our kids. Let that sink in: Instead of coming to the table and working with the council and community to solve the problem, the Government is quite willing to plonk four schools on a 150-metre stretch of road and then walk away.

Carters Road is a two-lane dead-end road that is the only feeder road for every parent of students from Lake Munmorah High School, Lake Munmorah Public School, St Brigid's Catholic College and St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, and a preschool, to drop off their kids. They have to contend with each other, with buses, with kids riding bikes and with the busy four-lane Pacific Highway at the end of the street. What should be an unassuming local street is actually chaos. It can take 15 minutes to 20 minutes just to turn out of the street in the afternoon. Schools have had to stagger their start and finish times to try to fix some of the congestion. That can be a nightmare for parents with kids at multiple schools, who have to make extra runs or leave kids waiting longer at school. So bad is Carters Road that it was in the NRMA's top five worst roads on the Central Coast. The Government needs to stop passing the buck and stump up the funds to fix the serious congestion and safety problem on Carters Road.

The New South Wales Government did not do the work it should have done when it approved the four schools in the first place, and now it is leaving Central Coast Council to pick up the pieces at its own expense. The populations of these schools will swell in the near future as new suburbs pop up all over the northern end of the Central Coast, and this problem will only get worse. The member for Swansea has had a few wins on this road, with the north-bound turning lane on the Pacific Highway extended, but this needs a long-term solution, including a second access point to the road to stop the dead-end bottleneck.

I commend the work of Councillor Jillian Hogan, who has been a fighter for this cause since her election to Central Coast Council. Councillor Hogan moved her own motion at council, which will finally see council review traffic issues and start works that could include intersections, parking and signage changes. But the council cannot and should not be doing it alone. The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government needs to come to the table for our community on the coast. I know that Councillor Hogan and the member for Swansea stand side by side with the community in demanding a safer and more sensible option for the students and parents who rely on Carters Road every single day. I call for additional State Government investment to support the people of the Central Coast.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (12:40:39): I am advised that Carters Road is a local road managed by the Central Coast Council. I appreciate that during the school peak periods congestion is experienced on Carters Road, which has a flow-on effect to the Pacific Highway as people try to get to and from the schools in Carters Road. It should be noted that the consent authority for the development of the four schools on Carters Road—a no-through road—would have been the then Wyong Shire Council. Because I have been on council for 11 years, I understand the regime of approvals. I understand that there have been suggestions to extend Carters Road to connect with Tall Timbers Road. Construction of that paper road would help to reduce the congestion.

Ms Yasmin Catley: We agree.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON: It is great that we agree on that. The development and construction of the road is a matter for the Central Coast Council to consider and fund, as it would be part of the local road network managed by council. If Central Coast Council considers that construction of the link road to reduce congestion and improve safety is warranted it could consider applying for funding through Federal and State government programs. I am advised that, over the years, Transport for NSW has been involved in meetings with the schools and council, and provided advice to help resolve the issues in Carters Road near the schools. That occurred in August 2015 and November 2017. Teachers from Lake Munmorah Public School attended road safety education workshops in 2016 and 2017 and teachers from Lake Munmorah High School attended road safety education workshops in 2017 and 2019.

People from Good Start Early Learning, Lake Munmorah, attended a road safety education workshop in 2014 and St Brendan's Early Learning Centre attended a workshop in 2017. Teachers from St Brendan's and St Brigid's participated in road safety education workshops in 2014 and 2018. Transport for NSW also completed improvements in the vicinity of the intersection in late 2015, including extending the right- and left-turning lanes on the western side of the Pacific Highway and Carters Road intersection along with adjustments to the line marking. The traffic signals at the intersection have also been optimised as much as possible to assist the traffic during school zone times. The Government does not support this motion.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (12:43:27): I support this motion moved by the member for Swansea, who has been a fierce advocate for Government funding to try to alleviate the problems at Carters Road.

Sometimes in this place we have to face the fact that there have been dumb planning decisions. It is up to the current Parliament—the people who are in this place now, including Government members—to try to fix these past problems. I have a bit of a vested interest because my wife teaches at Lake Munmorah Public School. I know the issues because she has been teaching there—she is currently the assistant principal—for 20 years and she has seen how this problem has come about.

The schools on Carters Road include Lake Munmorah Public School, with 432 students; St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, with 490 students; Lak Munmorah High School with in excess of 1,200 students; and the new St Brigid's Catholic High School, which only opened in 2014. The enrolment of St Brigid's High School is growing. I think this is the first year that the school has transitioned kids through to year 12. This is not just a traffic problem; it is a safety problem. In 2013 a massive bushfire started in Rutleys Road and moved along that corridor all the way to Catherine Hill Bay. I remember when the fire started because I was at Budgewoi, just up the road. I could see the smoke from the fire in the distance and I knew that it was in the vicinity of all the schools.

My first reaction was to call my wife and ask if they had been able to evacuate the schools because the fire occurred just on going-home time. You can imagine all the traffic—the cars and the buses—and all the kids on that roadway that had only one way in and out, and a bushfire coming towards them. So this is a safety issue. It is all right to blame the council and everybody else for the actions of the past, but the Government now needs to work with the member for Swansea and the current Central Coast Council to come up with a solution. This is not rocket science. It would be terrible to have to stand in this Chamber to talk about a disaster because of traffic chaos during a bushfire.

The fire that I spoke about was one of the fiercest bushfires that had ever hit the Central Coast. In fact, one of the firefighters who was involved was so traumatised that he now suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. His fire appliance got caught on the Pacific Highway near Catherine Hill Bay and the crew was trapped. Luckily, nobody was injured. We need a solution to this problem. We do not need arguments back and forth about it. Funding should be made available to the council, even if it is on a fifty-fifty basis, to get this road constructed. I do not want to be standing here at any time talking about people who have lost their lives because we could not work out whose responsibility it was.

Ms Robyn Preston: Have council offered the funds?

Mr DAVID HARRIS: The council has put in for grants in the past, but it has not been successful. I understand that the council has asked for money and has not been able to get it. The council is looking for a solution, but it needs help. The Government merged the two councils but since that occurred the Government has only beaten up the council. The Government does not want to work with the council; it only wants to throw bombs. Let us get this problem fixed and look after the kids at those schools.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:47:42): I seek leave—

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order: Mr Temporary Speaker Evans, you had not asked for a member to seek the call.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for The Entrance has the call.

Mr DAVID MEHAN: By leave: I thank the member for Swansea, one of my Central Coast colleagues, for bringing this motion to the House. I thank all of my Central Coast colleagues who are here today. We try to work together for our community on the coast. I know that the member for Swansea has been a strong advocate around the issues at Carters Road. I will address the comments made by the member for Miranda, which go to the Government's arguments—that is, that the Government is not at all responsible for this. What a lot of nonsense. This is the State Parliament and it is paramount over local councils. The State Government regulates the planning system that local councils operate under. When the Government builds schools in local communities it should do the proper planning. It is the case that there are two public schools in Carters Road as well as two private schools and a preschool, which creates planning issues.

A significant problem in this State is that public servants work in silos: They have narrow accountabilities. The result is this dumb decision by people who have responsibility for the Pacific Highway, which intersects Carters Road, who say they are not responsible for anything to do with the roads the highway intersects. The public school authorities set up schools, but have no regard whatsoever for the consequences for traffic management in the area. It is just dumb. That is why people have this real frustration with government, which does not need to be there. Government can solve people's problems. As a socialist I think that government is well placed to solve the community's problems and make the community a better place for all of us. Carters Road is a great example of where we are doing it wrong.

It reminds me of the issues I have had around Tuggerah Public School in my electorate. It is the same sort of thing. It is a local school where the NSW Department of Education says that access, parking and traffic around the school are not its problems anymore. The school has worked very closely with council to try to improve that. The State Government advised the council to apply for Transport Access Program money to improve pedestrian access to the school—however, a number of applications have been knocked back. Council then had to step in to improve footpaths around the area to address the access problem to Tuggerah Public School because the State Government refused to assist in any way whatsoever. It is a really dumb way to operate on the Central Coast.

We are not just saying it to have a go at Government members—it is an easy kick—but they should listen occasionally. Maybe some people would start voting Liberal on the Central Coast if they did listen to our criticism occasionally. I guess it is in our interests to have those opposites sit there, take meaningless points of order and continue to do their writing instead of paying attention to the business of the House. They should start listening and stop trotting out the member for Terrigal as the apologist for the Government on the Central Coast and the guy who does not want to work with our local council. How dumb is that? We have the third-biggest council in the State, yet the State Government refuses to work constructively with it. The Premier comes to the Central Coast and bags it. I support the motion and commend it to the House. [*Time expired.*]

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:51:51): By leave: I address some of the points made by members on the other side of the House in relation to this motion. I am advised that the New South Wales Government has implemented a safety system within New South Wales school zones, where a 40-kilometre-per-hour speed limit and high-visibility safety treatments such as signage, road markings and flashing lights are in place. Those treatments are in place on Carters Road, along with raised pedestrian and children's crossings, extended school zone hours and a pedestrian overbridge on the nearby Pacific Highway. Higher fines and demerit points also apply in that area.

School zones are now one of the safest areas on the road network. New South Wales has not lost a child pedestrian in an active school zone since 2013. The New South Wales Government has ensured that every school in New South Wales has at least one set of school zone flashing lights. The New South Wales Government also has a strong focus on improving the visibility of 40-kilometre-per-hour school zones, and children's and pedestrian crossings to protect children around schools. More than 6,000 school zone flashing lights are in place across New South Wales to warn motorists when they are about to enter a 40-kilometre-per-hour school zone. This lower speed limit reduces the risk and potential severity of a crash.

School zone signs, dragon's teeth road markings and flashing lights improve the visibility of school zones. School zones are in force on all days that are not a weekend, a public holiday or a publicly notified school holiday for government schools. The New South Wales Government has also installed additional school zone flashing lights at more than 500 schools across New South Wales with multiple busy entrances to further protect children travelling to and from school. Transport for NSW met with representatives from the schools in question and Central Coast Council. Over the years it has provided advice on a number of occasions to help resolve the issues on Carters Road near the schools.

Transport for NSW has completed improvements in the vicinity of the intersection to try to help ease congestion and improve safety on Carters Road. Those improvements included extending the right- and left-turning lanes on the western side of the Pacific Highway and Carters Road intersection along with adjustments to the line markings. In 2015 Transport for NSW changed the lane allocations on the Carters Road approach to the traffic lights. At the lights there was a left-turn lane and a shared right-turn and through lane. This was changed to a shared right-turn and through lane and a shared left-turn and through lane. The merge on the departure on Elizabeth Bay Drive was adjusted to make it a zip merge, where the vehicle ahead has right of way in merging, regardless of which lane it is in. These changes enabled more vehicles to pass through the intersection on the Carters Road approach in each traffic signal cycle.

The traffic lights at the intersection have also been optimised as much as possible to assist the traffic during school zone times. Preventing right-turn movements on Carters Road would have some traffic-efficiency benefits. However, as this is a council road this is a matter for council to consider. I understand road safety officers from Central Coast Council have worked with the schools on road safety education. Road safety flyers have been included in newsletters sent home at the beginning of each new school term. Midway through the first term a bus travel insert is sent to all schools that encourages bus usage, which reduces congestion around schools.

Other initiatives have included a kindy orientation presentation on road safety and newspaper advertisements at the beginning of the term and throughout the year, containing information on parking around schools and relevant fines. Of course, the development and construction of the road is a matter for the Central Coast Council to consider and fund, as it would be part of the local road network owned and maintained by council. If Central Coast Council considers construction of the link road to reduce congestion and improve safety

is warranted, it could consider applying for funding through Federal and State Government programs or a special rate levy, like other councils do for their local road networks.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (12:56:08): In reply: I thank the members for the electorates of Miranda, Gosford, Hawkesbury, Wyong, The Entrance and Myall Lakes for contributing to this debate. I particularly thank my colleagues on the Central Coast for their support of our community at the northern end of the Central Coast. The community will very much appreciate your ongoing support. It is my job to represent the views of the community in my electorate. In turn, any good government—and this really goes to the message from the member for The Entrance—should take those views on board and respond to them accordingly.

What we have had from this Government is almost five years of stonewalling, essentially washing its hands of the significant chaos that affects the everyday lives of ordinary people in Lake Munmorah—residents, workers, students, parents, grandparents and carers. The Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Roads is currently in the House and I am very pleased that she is. The most recent response I received from her, which was regurgitated in this debate by the member for Hawkesbury, read:

Thank you for your correspondence to the Minister for Roads about funding for safety upgrades to Carters Road ... I appreciate your concerns; however the development and construction of the paper road is a matter for Central Coast Council to consider and fund as it would be part of the local road network.

Members of my community are tired—not just tired, but bloody exhausted—of the amount of buck-passing that has been going on for at least half a decade.

Ms Robyn Preston: Council has let you down.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The safety of students and motorists travelling to Carters Road is not something that can continue to be ignored with the Minister simply saying, "Not my problem". I welcome the interjection from the member for Hawkesbury. Her Government actually amalgamated our council and put it further down the list of work, so thanks for that! My community wants action. It has waited long enough. In 2014 the former Wyong Shire Council listed Carters Road as two of its top 10 priorities for the local government area, calling on the then Government to stump up the cash to help fund it. It is only a matter of time before there is a significant accident and someone is hurt on Carters Road.

I say to the member for Myall Lakes that you can have all the statistics in the world, but you have seen nothing like this particular road. The intersection of the Pacific Highway and Carters Road is an accident waiting to happen. It is dangerous and it beggars belief that the Minister has done absolutely nothing to address it thus far. The fact that Carters Road is a local road should not be a matter of concern for the reasons I outlined earlier, but also because there are thousands of local government projects right around this State that have received State Government funding.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Hawkesbury will come to order.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: They have not received that funding on the basis that they are dangerous.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Oatley will come to order.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Quite frankly, the safety of the community should be above arbitrary divisions in government responsibility, which we have seen used by this Government as a reason to just do nothing.

Ms Robyn Preston: Cost shifting.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes, it is cost shifting—from the Government to the poor ratepayers. I thank the member for Hawkesbury for the interjection. I urge members opposite to get their act together, support the motion and fix the mess.

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

The House divided.

Ayes41
Noes44
Majority.....3

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dalton, Mrs H

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dib, Mr J

AYES

Donato, Mr P
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lynch, Mr P
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
O'Neill, Dr M
Piper, Mr G
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N
McGirr, Dr J
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Lee, Dr G
O'Dea, Mr J
Petinos, Ms E
Saunders, Mr D
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A (teller)
Elliott, Mr D
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Preston, Ms R
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Barilaro, Mr J
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Davies, Mrs T
Gibbons, Ms M
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Tuckerman, Mrs W
Williams, Mr R

PAIRS

Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Hornery, Ms S

Kean, Mr M
Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P

Motion negatived.

RIDE FOR COUNTRY KIDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:10:05): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the valuable fundraiser Ride for Country Kids, supported by Royal Far West, which coordinates a bicycle ride from Albury to Lake Cargelligo that raises vital health, education and disability services for country children and their families as well as telecare in local communities.
- (2) Commends local rugby union coach Nigel Harding for embarking on the 450-kilometre journey from 7 April to 9 April 2019 as part of the newly created group Fraser's Friends in loving memory of his close friend's son who tragically passed away in a farming accident at the age of nine.
- (3) Acknowledges the Port Macquarie Pirates Club for hosting a fundraising night that raised \$400 towards the ride along with Ryan Moore and Brad Hodges from Moorebeer Brewing Co. and Essential Energy pledging their support for Fraser's Friends ride.

I am delighted that my motion has appeared on the *Business Paper* today and that this House collectively will have the opportunity to recognise the extraordinary efforts of Nigel Harding and his support of Royal Far West [RFW]. Nigel is a rugby union coach in Port Macquarie for the Port Macquarie Pirates first-grade side but, more than that, he has demonstrated that he is a man of compassion, a man of generosity and a man of commitment. Nigel has compassion for others who have been impacted by the loss of a loved one. He is generous with his time and makes a personal effort and commitment to make a difference to the lives of others. Nigel's motivation for

participating in the Ride for Country Kids is admirable and, as a passionate supporter of the work of Royal Far West alongside so many of my colleagues, I am extremely grateful for his efforts and the efforts of his friends.

About 10 years ago one of Nigel's very close friends, Bill Wearn, lost his only son, Fraser—who was just nine years old at the time—in a tragic farm accident. Some five years ago Bill decided that he would rally together six close friends who knew his son, Fraser, well to participate in the Ride for Country Kids to honour Fraser's life and to raise funds for Royal Far West so that other country children would reap the benefits. And so Fraser's Friends started their mission but, as happens in so many regional communities, they were not on this journey alone. I also acknowledge fellow Pirates members Wiburd Shield and Yates Shield for hosting a fundraising night in partnership with Port Macquarie High School, and with Ryan Moore and Brad Hodge of Moorebeer Brewing Co. generously donating and supporting their efforts. I also acknowledge Essential Energy, which played an instrumental role through its contribution to the fundraising effort.

For those in the House who may not know the significance of the Ride for Country Kids, it should be noted that it is the biggest fundraising event for Royal Far West, which seeks to raise funds to help connect country children to the developmental care they need. This year 63 cyclists took on the challenge of the 450-kilometre ride, which started in Albury on 7 April taking the route to Lake Cargelligo via Wagga Wagga and West Wyalong to finish on 9 April. I know there were participants from across regional New South Wales but also many of our city cousins joined in to support the event. The member for Manly, in whose electorate the headquarters of Royal Far West are located, will talk about some of the fantastic and committed riders from his electorate who took part in this challenge, as will the member for Albury. I congratulate and, as a regional member whose community benefits from the great work of Royal Far West, sincerely thank each and every participant for their efforts.

I have spoken previously in this House about the work of Royal Far West. I have been privileged to visit its headquarters in Manly on many occasions and have had many conversations with the RFW team—including of course the amazing CEO, Lindsay Cane—about RFW's exciting initiatives that benefit our country kids. Royal Far West has been around since 1924. RFW makes sure that country kids in regions right across New South Wales are connected to the health care they need and may otherwise be unable to access. Those kids might need specialist services, particularly paediatric services. Today over 300,000 children are living in our rural and remote areas and in our very remote communities.

Debate interrupted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Members

MEMBER FOR SEVEN HILLS

MEMBER FOR LISMORE

MEMBER FOR WOLLONGONG

The SPEAKER: I wish the member for Seven Hills, the member for Lismore and the member for Wollongong all the best for their upcoming birthdays. I hope they have wonderful celebrations planned.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to student leaders, teachers and parents from St Kevin's Catholic Primary School, Truscott Street Public School and Marsden High School, guests of the Minister for Customer Service, and member for Ryde. I welcome Belinda Johnson and Arlene Gaffney from the Blue Knot Foundation, guests of the member for North Shore. The Blue Knot Foundation provides support to adult survivors of complex trauma. The pins worn by my colleagues and I today are in recognition of the tenth anniversary of Blue Knot Day, which falls on Monday 28 October.

I acknowledge student leaders and teachers from Granville Boys High School, Merrylands High School, Holroyd High School, Cerdon College, Delany College and St Paul's Catholic College, guests of the member for Granville. I acknowledge Lara McGirr, the daughter of the member for Wagga Wagga. Finally, I acknowledge the guests and constituents of the member for Lake Macquarie in the gallery.

*Question Time***ASSET PRIVATISATION**

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:19:51): I direct my question to the Premier. On the eve of the election the Premier was asked whether she would privatise more public assets. She said, "We have said no. If we were, we would have told you up-front." Today the Government has moved to privatise Sydney Buses. Why has the Premier betrayed the people of New South Wales?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will remain silent. This is a serious question. I expect all members to show the Premier respect when listening to her answer.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:20:40): Shock, horror! We have been franchising bus services since 2011. Fifteen months ago we franchised the inner west bus service to improve its services. Wakey-wakey!

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We have been doing it for the last eight years. Shock, horror!

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question relates directly to the commitment the Premier made in the lead-up to the election that there would be no more privatisations. She did not tell the truth. Why did she betray the people of New South Wales?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has had her grab.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I heard that the first time, by the way. What does Labor have against customer service? What does Labor have against more services? What does Labor have against making sure that public transport in New South Wales is the best in the world?

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is very interesting that on 15 February last year the Leader of the Opposition, in relation to public transport, said, "It does not matter whether it is privatised or not." She said that on 15 February 2018. For the benefit of members opposite, when we privatise or franchise bus services the assets—the buses and the depots—are owned by the citizens.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Leader of the Opposition said it does not matter whether or not services are privatised and then, in relation to electricity privatisation under Morris Iemma, she said, "We are fighting a battle of the past. We need to support"—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier is not answering the question. The people of Newcastle have had their buses privatised. We will bring 1,000 people to every town hall.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being generally relevant to the question. The member for Swansea will resume her seat. I call the member for Swansea to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I said, we have been—

[Interruption]

There are some interesting noises coming from over there.

The SPEAKER: Where is the noise coming from? Whoever it is, I do not want to hear that noise again.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We have been franchising buses since 2011 because we want the best customer service for our citizens and we also want more services.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Coogee to order for the first time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In relation to the inner west I am happy to advise the House that since we have franchised the services in the inner west there are now—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They are eating into my time.

The SPEAKER: They are.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Since the inner west services were franchised, I am pleased to report there are 270 additional weekly bus services, a 20 per cent increase in patronage, cancellations have been reduced and customer complaints are down.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is embarrassing what those opposite did to public transport when they were in government. We care about our citizens, we care about the workers and we care about the future of New South Wales.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (14:25:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the New South Wales Government is making mathematics compulsory for all students in New South Wales?

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time. I call the member for Fairfield to order for the first time. I have not heard from him for a while, but he is now on a one call to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:26:00): I thank the member for Castle Hill for his question because at the beginning of this week we learned about the interim report on the curriculum review. The Government is pleased to say that it will support three key principles as a result of that review, which we will take forward when the final report is handed down. This includes getting back to basics. We believe that school curricula should focus on literacy and numeracy. We want to make sure there are more opportunities for students to take up a trade or apprenticeship while they are still at school.

We want our students to gain a deeper understanding of those core areas to make sure there is less clutter in the curriculum. These are important initiatives. Today I will focus on the initiative of getting back to basics. Our Government believes very strongly that—it does not matter at what level—every student who studies in high school and completes the HSC should complete a maths subject. The level of maths a student wants to study will depend on how motivated they are—whether they study 4 unit, 3 unit or 2 unit mathematics or a general course which supports them in learning mathematical skills that they will use for the rest of their lives.

Ms Prue Car: There aren't enough maths teachers at the moment.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Londonderry to order for the second time. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the third time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I note the interjection of the shadow Minister. She does not care about providing the best curriculum; she is more worried about the challenges.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say this in response to her interjection: A teacher who teaches 4 unit or 3 unit maths requires different qualifications to a teacher who might teach a general life skills course in mathematics.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Let it be placed on the record that the Labor Party does not support students completing mathematics in high school. That is its policy, as the shadow Minister just said.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Their response is just because something is challenging, we should not do it. Just because something is going to improve values, we should not do it. Their attitude to everything is to sit on their hands and do nothing. That is what they want, to sit on their hands and do nothing.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Wyong to order for the first time. I give the member for Londonderry a final warning.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I repeat for the benefit of those opposite, because their interjections show they are not aware of what the Government has been doing in relation to encouraging further teachers to take up mathematics as a teaching subject—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: —I was pleased to advise the House that the Government has progressed with recruiting 100 specialist primary school maths teachers over the next five years. We will also provide scholarships valued at \$50,000 each for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics [STEM] undergraduates and career-changers to fund master's degrees and support teachers in these areas. We know that we need to do more to attract maths teachers. That is exactly the path we are on. Importantly, if we are serious about giving students the best opportunity to be able to get jobs in the future, the best opportunity for our workers to be qualified in those areas of science, technology, engineering and maths, we need to encourage every student to take up a maths course all the way through to year 12. That is what we will do.

Obviously people have different levels at which they can study maths. Ordinarily students study between 10 units and 12 units. If they study 12 units and maths is not their best subject, their 10 best units are counted towards their qualification. If we are serious about improving literacy and numeracy, if we are serious about improving core competencies then the Government will do what is necessary to make sure that maths becomes a compulsory area of study for all students moving forward. This solid and important policy will ensure that every student has the opportunity to get a job when they need it, that they have the life skills—whether they are a tradie making measurements on a job or whether they want to be an engineer. [*Extension of time*]

Fortunately, because of the Liberals and the Nationals everybody who studies maths will get a job—whether they are a tradie working on WestConnex or the Sydney Metro Northwest, working on the Coffs Harbour Bypass, working on the hospital in The Tweed or working on the roads in Dubbo—no matter where they are.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We know how important this is.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We look forward to a future where all our students have a deep learning and understanding of literacy and numeracy.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: These are life skills that our students will be able to use no matter what career path they take or no matter what they choose to do with their lives. We know that at the end of the day a good grounding in education gives every child the opportunity for a great life and the choice to make sure they get the jobs they want. We are the party of the workers.

ASSET PRIVATISATION

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:32:23): My question is directed to the Premier. In a week of betrayals, the Government has ripped a quarter of a billion dollars from NSW Health, offshored manufacturing jobs, killed the Parramatta Speedway, blown the timetable for Sydney Metro West and now privatised Sydney Buses. Why should the people of New South Wales believe a word she says?

The SPEAKER: The Premier will wait until all members are silent. Today after only two questions a record number of members are on calls to order. I will not hesitate—

Mr Ryan Park: All on three calls.

The SPEAKER: Absolutely. All from your side because Opposition members are making all the noise. Government members are being quiet today. If they misbehave, they will be called to order as well. I call the member for Prospect to order for the first time. I call the member for Prospect to order for the second time. I will not hesitate to remove members from the Chamber if they continue to interject. I want silence. This is a serious question. The Premier is entitled to respond to it with respect shown by the Opposition.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:33:54): The only people who have let down the people of New South Wales is the Australian Labor Party. It took them three months to get a leader and we have now seen through the ICAC that they spend their weekends not thinking about—

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

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Oh, Mr 78 himself.

Mr Chris Minns: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier did not have the guts like Mike Baird had to put this to an election.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The member will resume his seat.

Mr Chris Minns: She has lied to the people of this State.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Kogarah has a lot of explaining to do.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: He was mentioned at the ICAC how many times—78 times.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier is—

The SPEAKER: I have just ruled on that. The Premier will continue.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am very pleased to say that we went to the election telling the people of New South Wales that we would get it done.

Opposition members: Lies!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is true.

The SPEAKER: Government members will also remain silent. They are not setting a good example.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: What do you call the inner west franchising 15 months ago?

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. Government members have also contributed unnecessarily to the noise in the Chamber. The Premier is not being assisted by members on the Government benches, who are now encouraging Opposition members. I ask Government members to desist.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We made a commitment to the people of New South Wales to get things done. We are not focused on ourselves, as those opposite are. We are focused on improving the quality of life of our citizens. I am very pleased to say that since the election we have opened in excess of 10 brand-new schools, we are building new hospitals, we have opened the Sydney Metro Northwest, the M4 tunnels, and all the road projects in the bush that were just a vision many years ago are now becoming a reality. We are also making sure that the people of New South Wales not only get the infrastructure and services they need but also that we are planning for the future. A day does not go by without every single member of our team getting up and thinking about how we can improve life for our citizens; how we can improve life for the community.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has run out of credit.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: What those opposite want to overlook is that they say one thing and they do another.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Let us make it very clear: When it comes to franchising bus services we have been doing this—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Mr Speaker, they asked the question.

The SPEAKER: They did ask the question and they should listen to the answer.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to those opposite: You saw the positive change that happened after the inner-west services were franchised.

Opposition members: No!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is true.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I recall, when I was the shadow Minister for Transport counting the hundreds and hundreds of weekly bus services they cancelled, the hundreds and hundreds of weekly rail services they cancelled—cut, cut, cut! That is the Labor Party way. We will always do what is in the best interests of the people of New South Wales. What those opposite cannot handle is that we are the party of the workers. We are the party for better transport, better health, better education—they are a horrible mess!

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Rockdale that he is on three calls to order. One more word for the rest of question time and he will be out of the Chamber. Members will not converse across the table. I particularly direct that comment to the member for Maitland and the member for Hornsby.

SNOWY HYDRO LEGACY FUND

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:39:41): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on how regional New South Wales is benefitting under the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund?

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Rockdale to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of two hours.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Rockdale left the Chamber at 14:40.]

The SPEAKER: The member for Tweed will repeat his question.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST: My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on how regional New South Wales is benefitting under the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:41:01): I tell you what, on a Thursday they have to remove the red cordial from the cafeteria—everyone is excited this afternoon. I thank the member for Tweed for his question—a member that is 100 per cent for the Tweed and just like the Snowy fund, 100 per cent for the regions and the bush. I have to commend the Treasurer on what has been a great asset sale—a sale to the Feds—where we were able to fleece the Feds of \$4.2 billion for our share of Snowy Hydro and make sure that 100 per cent of it went to the regions.

We have got on with the job to underpin regional and rural New South Wales on top of our 20-year economic blueprint that really does map out the regions, prosperity and opportunities right across regional and rural New South Wales. We have underpinned that blueprint with \$4.2 billion from the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund. Every single cent will be spent on transformational, generational infrastructure in regional and rural New South Wales. Underpinning that blueprint and underpinning the \$4.2 billion are five principles. The first is water security. We have announced the raising of Wyangala Dam wall and made announcements around Dungowan Dam and Mole River Dam. On top of that, a significant investment around emergency water infrastructure. Water security was the first priority and at the heart of the five principles of the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund.

The second principle was connectivity. In this year's budget we announced that in this term \$400 million would be spent—\$300 million towards mobile phone blackspots and \$100 million for two data centres in regional and rural New South Wales, one located most likely in Wagga Wagga and the other in Dubbo. We are following through on the principles of this investment. The third principle of the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund relates to road and rail. When it comes to faster rail, we are already mapping out regional and rural New South Wales in relation to investment around faster rail: The northern corridor of Sydney, Central Coast, Newcastle, Taree and Port Macquarie; the western corridor of Sydney, Lithgow, Bathurst, Orange and Parkes; the southern inland corridor of Sydney through Goulburn to my neck of the woods in Canberra; and the southern coast corridor of Sydney, Wollongong and Nowra.

Our focus is on connecting regional and rural New South Wales. Members can see that there is a theme of connectivity—the new language being telecommunications data and the old language being road and rail. We will continue to see that investment. That is why the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund is so important for the future of regional and rural New South Wales. Another principle is freight linkages. We have been out in the market looking for opportunities to move produce, food and fibre, directly from producers in regional and rural New South Wales—possibly through investment, turning one of our regional airports into an international trade airport—to markets abroad, again empowering our farmers and producers and getting them the best price. We always hear that Australia will be the food bowl to Asia or the supermarket to Asia. I keep saying it will be the delicatessen because we want to sell niche product and high-value product to a market that values green, clean and, of course, fantastic produce delivered by the most innovative farming sector in the world—that is, Australian farmers.

The final point is our special activation precincts, which are changing the way we deliver and attract investment, grow the economy and grow jobs in regional and rural New South Wales. Our first special activation precinct was in Parkes, because of the investment by the Federal Government into the Inland Rail freight line through the State of New South Wales: \$11 billion, connecting north to south. Our opportunity is in how we tap into that Inland Rail. Parkes now becomes an inland port with connections north to south and east to west. We have already seen investors such as Pacific National relocating to Parkes under the special activation precinct, in

which we offer a concierge service, master plan the site, give guaranteed 30-day approval on planning and deliver investment. There is some exciting news to come for the people of Parkes as we grow jobs.

The second special activation precinct was in Wagga Wagga. Recently I was down there with the member for Wagga Wagga at the Bomen estate. The New South Wales Government has already announced another \$30 million to go into that special activation precinct to attract further investment and diversity to the local economy. We want to future-proof regional and rural New South Wales. We can only do that by building diversity in our local economies. The special activation precincts are doing exactly that. There are more announcements about the special activation precincts. In the previous term of the Liberal-Nationals Government, when we made the transaction around Snowy Hydro— [*Extension of time*]

When we made the announcement about Snowy Hydro, we came to this House and legislated that every single cent would be spent in regional and rural New South Wales. Why did we legislate that? We were worried that if we did not win the election, those opposite—as they always do—would raid the region's coffers and spend the money on Sydney electorates to protect their seats and take the fight to The Greens, at the cost of regional and rural communities. Since the election, we have been focused on delivering diversity and investing in generational, transformational infrastructure and program funding in the regions. It is no surprise that over the past 12 months we have seen the creation of around 40,000 jobs in regional and rural New South Wales, at a time when we know agriculture is struggling. If you compare that to the rest of the nation, regional Australia has only 5,000 new jobs; yet here in New South Wales there are 40,000 new jobs in the regions.

We do not stop there. But those opposite, who also said they had a plan for the Snowy Hydro fund, have nothing to show for it. They never detailed the plan. As always, once they got elected they were going to spend it on their pet projects in the city. What we know about the Country Labor brand, of course, is that they have been focused on using Country Labor as a sham vehicle to hide illegal donations. We have seen that through the ICAC. That has been made clear. We are talking about Country Labor that is \$1.6 million in debt. It cannot pay off its debt. It cannot take money from the rest of it and now it is most likely looking at being wound up. Country Labor by name—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. This has absolutely nothing to do with Snowy Hydro.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier is being overwhelmingly relevant. I am happy for him to continue.

Ms Kate Washington: I am a very proud member of Country Labor.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is about financial management and fiscal management. Under Bryce Wilson—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have just heard a point of order. The Deputy Premier is about to finish his answer.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Bryce Wilson, the Labor candidate who ran against me, heads up Country Labor. This guy oversaw \$1.6 million in debt under the Country Labor sham vehicle of hiding illegal donations. [*Time expired.*]

SYDNEY FOOTBALL STADIUM

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (14:48:17): My question is directed to the acting sports Minister. The Government went to the election promising that it had a Sydney Football Stadium construction contract with Lendlease. It now has no contract and no development application and has not started construction. Will the Minister still guarantee that that stadium will open by March 2022?

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (14:48:48): I thank the shadow sports Minister—is that what you are?

Ms Lynda Voltz: Yes.

Dr GEOFF LEE: Very good. What a great week it was last week. Was it a great week on this side, Premier? Exciting! We locked in 27 years of grand finals in New South Wales. The wonderful thing about being the acting sports Minister is that Queensland was prepared to pay \$20 million or \$30 million just to have one final.

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

Dr GEOFF LEE: They made a run for it and we smashed them. Victoria wanted it.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

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

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being very relevant.

Ms Jodi McKay: The question asked whether the stadium will be open by March 2022.

The SPEAKER: I heard the question. The Minister is speaking about the stadium and I am happy to hear him speak further.

Mr David Harris: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have just ruled on the point of order.

Mr David Harris: The grand final is played at ANZ Stadium, not at the Sydney Football Stadium. The Minister is not talking about the right stadium.

The SPEAKER: That may be an attempted point of clarification, but it is not a point of order. The member for Wyong is close to being on three calls to order.

Dr GEOFF LEE: What a great announcement—27 years. Melbourne was in the race to steal our grand finals, and we smashed them too. I understand that even New Zealand wanted our grand finals. We beat them all.

Ms Gladys Berejiklian: Tell them how Parramatta Stadium is going.

Dr GEOFF LEE: That is true, Premier, but I will leave that to them. Members on my side of the House are very encouraging. I thank the Premier for her encouragement. We are 100 per cent committed to our stadia strategy. This is a once-in-a-lifetime rebuild of \$1.9 billion. As the Premier reminds us, we were just up on level 9 talking to the Western Sydney Wanderers. Do you know what the chairman of the Western Sydney Wanderers said about Bankwest Stadium? Best stadium in the world. We went to an election on stadia issues—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: This is just absolute drivel. We want to know if the stadium will be open by March 2022.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: It relates to Standing Order 129. Stop the drivel, Geoff.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being generally relevant to stadiums and I am happy for him to continue.

Dr GEOFF LEE: During the election campaign, those opposite were against building every stadium. They all added up. Now that we built Bankwest Stadium, they see how good it was. They were opposed to it and we delivered it—the world's best stadium. What amazes me is that you see those opposite at Bankwest Stadium, and where are they? They are first in line for the buffet. They know who they are. I have seen many of them lining up for the Chandon, sipping the Chandon and going, "Isn't this beautiful?" On this side of the House, we are delivering world-class stadia. We are committed to the stadia. We are committed to National Rugby League grand finals. Bankwest Stadium is the first stadium in many years to be built in New South Wales. It is a fantastic achievement; 30,000 people crowd the area. For the local community, it means \$1 million for every sports event that we have. It is a very exciting thing.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on that point of order. The Minister is talking directly about stadiums, which is generally relevant to the question.

Mr Clayton Barr: But not the stadium about which he was asked.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat.

Dr GEOFF LEE: As I was saying, we are 100 per cent committed to delivering our stadia. We will deliver it on time. We will do what those opposite are unable to do: Deliver our stadium on time and on budget.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (14:54:01): I ask a supplementary question. Will the acting Minister guarantee that stadium construction will begin before the Sydney cricket test in January?

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (14:54:10): I thank the member for her supplementary question. As I have said before, the Government can guarantee that it will deliver stadiums on time and on budget. The Government is 100 per cent committed to those stadiums. Isn't it wonderful when you have 30,000 people crowding Bankwest Stadium? It is a great stadium. The local community benefits. It is about jobs, the economy and world-class experiences. Government members are very proud of our achievements because we know that we are delivering. Those on the opposite side try to politicise these matters but those on this side get on with delivery, so we are very proud.

BUS SERVICES

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (14:55:12): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering world-class bus services across Sydney?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will begin his answer when there is silence. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the second time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:55:26): I thank the Minister for Health and Medical Research for swapping questions during question time today so that I could get a question on buses. I note that the poor Rail, Tram and Bus Union [RTBU] has donated \$380,000 to those opposite but only got one question asked today. On that note, let me get to the crux of the question. Over the next three years the Government will put to tender the 13 metropolitan bus contracts in Sydney. The Government is doing that because it wants more and better services for its customers. We want to capitalise on the innovations of on-demand rides and take an important step in the issue of community health by starting to electrify the State's bus fleet, which is very important. I suggest that if those on the other side of the Chamber do not care about this issue they should leave. They should just go.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Government wants to electrify the State's bus fleet because in cities like London there is a major community health impact from diesel buses. The Government is going to do this in partnership with the private sector, which delivers 80 per cent of the buses across New South Wales—from every country town to western Sydney. The Government wants to deliver more services at a time when it has committed to 14,000 additional weekly services on top of the 30,000 additional weekly services that have already been delivered.

This is about trying to ensure that we have world-class operators, regardless of whether they are Australian or international, managing all contract regions. If those opposite want to be consistent in their arguments in relation to this they should go ahead and announce a policy of nationalisation for the entire State bus fleet. In every single one of the five regions of western Sydney this calendar year, the private operator has met the key performance indicators [KPIs] every single month. That includes Transit Systems in Liverpool, which has met its KPIs for two years running.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I know that the member for Liverpool will not attack Transit Systems. The bottom line is that the Government needs to do this because of the dynamic change in the bus network, in terms of innovation, on-demand services and higher frequency trunk-line services. I have given examples of that, including the 333 Bondi link service and the B-line and other services. The bottom line is that the community will require a growth in the bus sector because of the dynamic change that is occurring, with people opting to use buses. There has been a 50 per cent increase in patronage in six years.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: That has to be financed and managed somehow. Members opposite want to treat taxpayers as a bottomless pit but the Government is going to manage resources well and work with the private sector to deliver the best outcomes. I also have a message for bus drivers and maintenance crews in this State. We have world-class bus drivers delivering difficult services on congested Sydney streets. The bottom line is that they do an amazing job. Their jobs are secure. There will be an 18-month period in which State Transit will exist, until the middle of 2021. The Government will contract the three current State Transit regions 7, 8 and 9. The Government will embed into the contract a two-year job guarantee for bus drivers and maintenance workers. That is 3½ years, all up, for the State's bus drivers. That is pretty good going.

Last night I spoke to the union leaders and I told them that the challenge for them is to go and work with the private operators and embed, through a memorandum of understanding, even greater advantages for those bus

drivers. That is what they can achieve. Because those drivers will be working for the private sector the 2½ per cent wage cap will also go. The Transit workers in region 6 are on increases of 3 per cent per annum. That is the type of change that we will see for bus employees. There have been a lot of scare campaigns running about bus services being cut. The member for Drummoyne will be able to tell the House that there have been 270 additional weekly services. Guess what—the Government needed an extra 157 people to work in that franchise region.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: So there are more bus drivers and more and better services, including on-demand services. But what do we hear from those opposite? We hear, "No, no, no, no." [*Extension of time*]

I remind everybody that our friendly shadow Minister for Transport has been mentioned 78 times in the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC]. He was on Ray Hadley's program this morning. He said that private bus operators do a great job right across western Sydney. If it is good in the west it will be good in the east and in the northern districts of Sydney. That is the bottom line. If members opposite attack the Government's process then they are saying that they do not like bus operators in Punchbowl, the Transit System, Ingleburn and Busways, Forest Coach Lines, Neville's. Those opposite are saying that those operators are not up to the job.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Kogarah to order for the third time. This is the last warning for the member for Coogee.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Those opposite need to work it out. Their attack on the private sector today is absolutely shameful. But there is another dynamic in relation to this. I was somewhat bemused to pick up a pamphlet from the TWU which has been circulating around the depots this morning. It says that the TWU is the only union that has years of experience in the private bus industry in New South Wales. It goes on to say, "The TWU is already fighting for you. We are already in contact with the Minister for Transport to ensure your job security and protection of your conditions and entitlements." Guess what—they are protected. I thank the TWU.

Likewise the RTBU wants to drive its membership base. I say to both unions, "Go head to head. This Government will grow the number of bus drivers and you will grow your membership base." But my expectation is for better services for customers and ultimately that we will get a dynamic bus network which is electrified with more on-demand services, better services across Sydney and, ultimately, as we experience in country New South Wales, operators who know their local communities and can deal with their local communities in the best ways possible. That is the great outcome that can be achieved by engaging with the private sector. That is what those opposite are refusing to back it; it is shameful politics on their part.

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the President of the Victorian Parliament and the Clerk. I thank them for visiting today. I acknowledge Peter Wardman and Anne Leonard, who are guests of the member for Coffs Harbour.

ENERGY SECURITY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:03:24): My question is addressed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is ensuring energy security for New South Wales and downward pressure on prices?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:03:38): I sure can. I will paraphrase the Prime Minister and say, "How good is the member for Oatley?" I think he is the hardest working member of this Parliament. He may not be pretty but he is pretty effective. He has a laser-like focus on reducing household power bills. Whilst we on this side are very focused on covering household power bills the Leader of the Opposition is focused on getting Labor households to cover Kaila Murnain's power bills. I feel sorry for the ordinary rank-and-file members of the Labor Party. First they have to cop Kaila losing elections. Then they have to cop her covering up a crime—

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: Then they have to cop her lying to ICAC—

The SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order? The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr MATT KEAN: Then they have to cop her whipping for the Leader of the Opposition's leadership.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Ryan Park: I think even you would say it is Standing Order 129. This is probably not relevant.

The SPEAKER: I will allow him a little bit more time.

Mr Ryan Park: Oh, okay. Yeah, sure. He is getting very close to being relevant.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am getting close to being relevant but I am not quite there yet. The price that the rank and file of the ALP have to pay is Kaila Murnain's payout. They have to allow the Leader of the Opposition to pay seven Aldi bags of cash—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is it a different point of order? If it is not, I will give the Minister a little bit more time.

Mr MATT KEAN: —for Kaila Murnain, Cover-Up Kaila's retirement plan. But I digress.

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: We are focused on driving down power prices for households right across New South Wales. That is why I was delighted to announce this week the low income household rebate—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I think the Minister was coming back to the leave of the question, but I am happy to hear the point of order from the member for Shellharbour.

Ms Anna Watson: Can you explain to us exactly how what he is saying—

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

Ms Anna Watson: —what is coming out of his mouth—it is Standing Order 129—is relevant in any way shape or form? Can you explain to the House—

The SPEAKER: If the member for Shellharbour was listening, the Minister was actually starting to address the question. The Minister will continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: I was trying to tell the member for Shellharbour about the solar for low income households program that we have just rolled out. In fact, the member for Shellharbour's region will be one of the beneficiaries of this trial scheme. There are five regions across New South Wales that will be benefiting from this: on the north coast, on the South Coast, in the Illawarra and the Shoalhaven and, of course, the member for Oatley's community down in southern Sydney. It is a great thing the solar for low income households program is doing, rolling out solar panels for 3,000 households at a cost of about \$3,000 for installation. The benefit of this program is that it will drive down household bills by, on average, \$300. It is just another example of how we are driving down prices for low income households.

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Swansea: Another word and you are out of the Chamber. You have had a lot of leeway in the past two days. Not another word.

Mr MATT KEAN: But whilst we are working for the worker, the Leader of the Opposition wants to get workers working to pay off Kaila Murnain's debts. That is the reality.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: This will be an easy one—it is Standing Order 129. This has got nothing to do with the former general secretary of the Labor Party and everything to do with energy and electricity bills.

The SPEAKER: I will allow the Minister to continue, but I want him to try to be a little more relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Kogarah and I are not the only ones who think this is outrageous. I note a great article from that great investigative journalist Andrew Clennell in *The Australian* this week. He quoted former general secretary and Labor luminary John Della Bosca. The article stated:

... those who negotiated the deal had "failed in their fiduciary duty to the ALP and its members"—

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: It is a surprise one—Standing Order 129. I know it is unusual.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. I uphold the point of order. The member for Keira will resume his seat. I ask the Minister to come back to energy matters.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am very happy to talk about the solar for low income scheme. I am also happy to inform the House about the Emerging Energy Program that the New South Wales Government is rolling out. This is a \$75 million program. It is not only about driving down prices by putting more supply into the grid but about delivering reliability into the grid. What we are doing is backing new generation going into the system, new technologies such as wind and pumped hydro and hydrogen, for example—

Mr John Barilaro: Nuclear. Nuclear reactors.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Monaro is very enthusiastic about nuclear. That may be part of the solution in the future. I am yet to believe that technology is quite there. However, our Emerging Energy Program

is all about backing the private sector to deliver energy into the system. More supply means lower prices.
[Extension of time]

The SPEAKER: The Minister has had fair leeway. I do not want two minutes of off-beam answering.

Mr MATT KEAN: I know you are very enthusiastic to hear about the Emerging Energy Program, Mr Speaker. We have rolled out 10 feasibility grants to programs from Broken Hill across to Armidale, amongst others. We are focusing on new generation capacity, bringing electrons into the system to provide more supply and drive down energy prices. It is exciting and another example of how we are driving down prices and delivering reliable energy. The by-product is that it is clean energy too, so it is a good thing all round.

We have also got the transmission strategy in New South Wales. That is about building the infrastructure to allow new generation to be able to come into the grid. The challenge in this State is that new projects are coming into regions but they cannot get their product to market. We want to ensure that they can get their product to market, which is why we will build the transmission infrastructure that they need to be able to get electrons into the market. That is a good thing. Everyone loves new things coming into the market, including comments from John Della Bosca. He said—

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: "Never before has an MP or party official—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat while the member for Auburn takes a point of order.

Mr MATT KEAN: —admitted wrongdoing and had the party pay their legal fees".

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

Ms Lynda Voltz: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I am pretty sure you gave him the big hint before—

The SPEAKER: The Minister just gave us a minute of substance. I will give him a little bit of leeway. The member will resume her seat. I cannot hear the member for Auburn over members on her own side. The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr MATT KEAN: Well the guys in the public gallery are very excited about this.

The SPEAKER: The Minister may continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: They are very excited about the emerging energy—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk has stopped the clock. I will allow the Minister to continue. The last minute of his answer has been relevant, so I will give him a little bit of leeway, but not too much.

Mr MATT KEAN: That is another one of your excellent rulings, Mr Speaker. I have talked about solar for low income households. I have talked about emerging energy. I have talked about transmission. I have talked about all the things that we are doing to deliver reliable, affordable and clean power into the electricity system. But let me tell you what is not clean: the ALP.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: Paying Kaila Murnain's fees was described by John Della Bosca as "obscene"—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr MATT KEAN: —so while we are energetically delivering cheaper reliable energy—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order—sit down, Minister!

The SPEAKER: The Clerk has stopped the clock.

Mr MATT KEAN: —the Leader of the Opposition is energetically seeing Kaila Murnain's retirement plans paid out—

The SPEAKER: I will have to put the Minister on a call to order for that comment. I call the member for Hornsby to order for the first time.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am done.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has finished his answer.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: We wanted to hear more about western Sydney?

The SPEAKER: I point out that the Clerk had stopped the clock. I remind the Minister that if I ask him to sit down, I expect him to sit down. I had stopped the clock for his benefit. Have you finished your answer?

Mr MATT KEAN: Yes, I have.

WILD DOGS

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (15:12:32): My question is directed to the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales. The drought is taking its toll on primary producers and all other regional industries. The impact of drought is being exacerbated by wild dogs and the catastrophic impact they are having on domestic stock and rangeland goats. The risk is that these pests will spread destruction further across New South Wales, crippling agricultural businesses already on their knees. What comprehensive approach will the Minister offer to manage these pests and stop their spread in New South Wales?

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (15:13:05): There it is: That is how you ask a question about agriculture. I ask those opposite to take note, especially the member for Maitland, if she has ever got the ticker to ask me a question—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Canterbury has taken a point of order. It had better be good after 10 seconds of the Minister's answer. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Sophie Cotsis: My point of order relates to relevance. We all want to hear the answer—

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time. Anyone who takes a point of order on relevance in the first 10 seconds of an answer is just being disruptive. The Minister has the call.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: As I was saying, I thank the member for Barwon for his question. That is how you ask a genuine question about a genuine issue. Those opposite apparently have some farm bill—they do not know what is in it yet but it is better. They cannot support farmers in drought at all. To the member for Barwon's question, he is spot on. Wild dogs present a massive issue for primary producers right across the State, particularly in the west and the Far West and throughout his electorate. Modelling from the NSW Department of Primary Industries shows that wild dog strike—taking down of sheep, goats and even cattle in some instances—costs primary producers around \$22 million a year in the west and Far West of the State alone. The Government recognises this huge problem and that is why we made a commitment in the lead-up to the election to extend the wild dog fence in New South Wales, a \$37.5 million commitment to safeguard our farmers in the electorate of Barwon, the electorate of Murray, and everywhere in between.

Currently the wild dog fence covers 538 kilometres along the South Australian and Queensland borders. Under the Government's commitment—which will begin before Christmas this year—we will add to that fence another 742 kilometres. It will go all the way along the South Australian border to the Murray, and all the way along the Queensland border to the town of Mungindi in my electorate. That will mean it will cover virtually 75 per cent of the non-river borders of New South Wales between Queensland and South Australia.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: Just be quiet and listen to the answer. Those opposite do not care. They do not give a damn about farmers and what they are going through. When this fence is built it will be the largest of its kind anywhere in the world, and it will be delivered by this Government as per the commitment. When that is done it will enable us to double down on our efforts to get on top of the wild dog problem. I can advise the House and the member for Barwon that we are not just waiting for the fence to be built to begin that process. We have just completed an aerial baiting program across the western region with 46,000 1080 baits laid for wild dogs. In the next two weeks that will be backed up with 112,000 ground 1080 baits throughout the electorate of Barwon and beyond.

From January next year we will begin a large-scale trapping program, the likes of which has never been seen. As a government we are doing that now through Local Land Services working with local landholder groups and individual farmers. Once the fence is extended it will stop the inflow of dogs into our State from Queensland. All they have done is try to shove them all down our way, they have not done anything to fix them in their State. That is Labor's commitment to getting rid of wild dogs; flick them on to someone else. That is what they have done in Queensland. We will build the fence and that will keep them out. That will then enable us to increase the wild dog baiting program to help the member for Barwon's constituents.

An interesting fact is that it is estimated when the fence is built and the souped-up baiting program begins it will increase weaning rates, particularly for cattle producers, by about 15 per cent. If we can hit that mark it will

put an extra \$300 million a year into the pockets of farmers in the Barwon area and western region. That is the importance of the fence. In my meetings with the Border Fence Maintenance Board and other landholders in the electorate of Barwon I can assure members that they love the idea of the fence being extended. They cannot wait and are champing at the bit to help out with any of the baiting programs.

I appreciate the question from the member for Barwon and thank him for giving the House the opportunity to hear about a very important program. It would be nice if occasionally we got a question or two, or just some remote indication of interest from those opposite, about the issues confronting rural and regional areas and farmers. It is not just me who holds that view; very clearly, according to *The Sydney Morning Herald*, members of the Opposition feel the same way.

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:18:36): My question is addressed to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering social and affordable housing to the people of New South Wales?

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (15:18:51): I thank my friend and colleague and my Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Holsworthy, for that question, the best Parliamentary Secretary I have ever had, without a doubt. The New South Wales Government has the biggest social housing building program of any State or Territory across the country. The 23,000 new and replaced social housing dwellings through the \$22 billion Communities Plus program will fast-track the redevelopment of social housing in our State. Projects include mixed communities where social housing blends with private, affordable housing, with better access to employment, transport, community facilities and open spaces. The benefit of well-designed mixed tenure communities and redevelopments is well documented and the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute has supported the concept of a mixed tenure model.

We are delivering 3,400 social and affordable housing dwellings through the Social and Affordable Housing Fund. In September we achieved an important milestone with over 2,000 dwellings delivered or under construction as a result of this program. This represents more than 60 per cent of the 3,400 dwellings to be delivered under the first two phases of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund. We have delivered 384 new dwellings specifically for older people. We have delivered 269 new dwellings in regional areas, and 344 in metro areas. In the last few months we have opened brand new social and affordable housing dwellings built under the Social and Affordable Housing Fund that are already providing safe and stable homes. In Gosford we have opened 55 new dwellings in Point Clare with BaptistCare, including 43 one-bedroom units to provide social housing for older people, and 12 two-bedroom units providing social and affordable housing for single parent families. This site is fully tenanted, close to train stations, the public school, shopping centres and a range of local amenities.

In Campbelltown we have delivered 48 new one-, two- and three-bedroom dwellings with St Vincent de Paul less than a kilometre from the Campbelltown CBD. In Shellharbour we have delivered eight new social and affordable housing dwellings specifically for older people as part of a redevelopment delivering 78 new homes. In Dubbo we have delivered 22 new social and affordable housing dwellings over three locations with Housing Plus. I thank the member for Dubbo. I was with him recently when we handed keys to Jess, giving her the opportunity to have a new home. She was at risk of homelessness and we were able to see her in a new home with her family. It was a wonderful thing and I thank the member for Dubbo for his hospitality.

Over 1,700 new homes for vulnerable families have been delivered through the Millers Point sales program. For each of these properties sold, four to five new fit-for-purpose homes have been built. More than \$41 million of Millers Point sales proceeds will be used to build properties for seniors, older women and young people at risk of homelessness in regional areas, including Dubbo, Wagga Wagga, Tweed Heads and Nowra. We have transferred the management of an additional 14,000 properties to the community housing sector, further building the capacity of the sector to deliver additional housing and leveraging over \$1 billion in Commonwealth rental assistance over 20 years to improve tenant outcomes for those in social housing.

The rollout of the Sustaining Tenancies in Social Housing initiative also supports individuals with complex care needs, such as mental health and substance abuse, to sustain their tenancies through community-based outreach and support. Supporting an additional 2,740 women and children each year through an extension of the Staying Home Leaving Violence program to Griffith, Albury, Coonamble, Walgett, Port Stephens and the Richmond Valley is important to the Government. This brings the number of Staying Home Leaving Violence sites across the State to 33. I am proud of the Government's record in respect of these programs. I heard some interjections from those opposite. Labor sold off more than 1,700 public housing properties in the 2008-09 and 2009-10 financial years, with no plan to grow the supply of social housing in New South Wales.

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

Mr GARETH WARD: I heard a speech recently from a member of the Opposition. After hearing this speech, when ignorance goes to \$100 a barrel I want the drilling rights for the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: I have just warned the member for Canterbury. One more word and she is out of the Chamber.

Mr GARETH WARD: In this speech the member said the Government had sold off \$15 million-worth of properties. It turns out that they were right. But, you know how many properties we sold to get that \$15 million? Just 15 properties. That is 1½ Kaila Murnains per one fellow there. How many properties are we delivering? *[Extension of time]*

The SPEAKER: Minister, you were highly relevant for four minutes and 40 seconds of your answer. I do not want two minutes of irrelevancy.

Mr GARETH WARD: How many properties are we actually delivering to that part of the world? More than 800 properties. Who might the member have been who made that extraordinary speech in this place? It was none other than the member for Newcastle. They call him "Crackers" and I thought that was because his last name is Crakanthorp, but after I read his speech I realised there was a different reason for calling him crackers. I have said that the member for Newcastle should be on the front bench. Do we not all agree that he would raise the average height, halve the average IQ? Before I get a point of order, I will withdraw that comment because I cannot be sure that it would actually halve the average IQ.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: It is Standing Order 73. We know that the Minister cannot talk about their woeful legacy on public housing.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The member for Campbelltown will sit down and the Minister will continue.

Mr Greg Warren: That is not a reason to talk about the member for Newcastle.

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

Mr GARETH WARD: As it is Thursday, I have some more interesting news for the House. I have been advised that there has been another walkout in NSW Labor. It turns out that the social committee has walked out of the caucus, leaving the member for Swansea as its sole member. She will put the social back into socialism, a comrade without any commies I can see. I take it this information has come from all the members who are leaking on each other. We have seen the Opposition in shambles this week. An opposition that cannot run itself cannot run this State as a government. This side of the House is investing in regional New South Wales and it is investing in social housing. Those opposite will ignore it. We will continue to deliver.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Reference

Ms ROBYN PRESTON: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1) I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure has resolved to conduct an inquiry into electric buses in regional and metropolitan public transport networks in New South Wales, the full details of which are available on the committee's homepage.

Petitions

COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY

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

Commercial Fishing Industry

Petition requesting an immediate full independent public inquiry into various aspects of the New South Wales commercial fishing industry, received from **Mr Philip Donato**.

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

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: TABLING OF PAPERS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I move:

That for the remainder of the 2019 SITTING, standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide:

- (1) The tabling of papers by Ministers may be affected by an announcement in the House without handing up copies of such papers.
- (2) Any papers tabled by announcement shall be lodged with the Table Office prior to their announcement in the House.

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

The House divided.

Ayes49
Noes33
Majority..... 16

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Dalton, Mrs H
Elliott, Mr D
Greenwich, Mr A
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Piper, Mr G
Saunders, Mr D
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L.J.
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D
Provest, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Williams, Mr R

Barilaro, Mr J
Butler, Mr R
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A (teller)
Donato, Mr P
Gibbons, Ms M
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lee, Dr G
McGirr, Dr J
Petinos, Ms E
Roberts, Mr A
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Harrison, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Finn, Ms J
Haylen, Ms J
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
O'Neill, Dr M
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L (teller)
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Zangari, Mr G

PAIRS

Davies, Mrs T
Preston, Ms R
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Tuckerman, Mrs W

Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Hornery, Ms S
Watson, Ms A

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Pet Shops

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Affordable Housing

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

Powerhouse Museum Ultimo

Petition requesting the retention of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and the expansion of museum services to other parts of New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Owners Corporations and Short-term Letting

Petition requesting that owners corporations be given the authority to control short-term letting in their buildings, including to place limits beyond State controls or to ban the practice outright, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Private Members' Statements

CENTRAL COAST LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (15:37:42): One of the problems the Opposition has been talking about that is affecting my electorate of Wyong is the way in which local health districts are being forced to juggle their budgets to meet growing demand while funding is not increasing at the same rate. This financial year Wyong Public Hospital will end up in the red, though it has been trying to manage its budget with its available money. I do not want the two cases that I will raise to reflect poorly on the staff at Wyong Public Hospital, who are pressed to the limit, particularly in the emergency department. Two very disturbing things have happened. Firstly, Mischelle Rhodes, a 19-year-old university student, passed away on 29 August. Her family is still very distressed about what happened.

Mischelle felt quite unwell at work at a sports shop shortly after returning from a skiing holiday. Her mother was called and she took Mischelle to the GP at Tuggerah Westfield. The GP thought that something was significantly wrong, so prepared her for hospital by inserting a catheter and calling an ambulance. The paramedics who picked her up also had concerns. She went to hospital and was kept under observation while she had a blood test, then a doctor gave her some Nurofen and Panadol and sent her home. Mischelle continued to feel worse, though, so her mother rushed her back to hospital where, about an hour after returning, she died from meningococcal disease. An independent investigation found things that needed to be fixed in the system and highlighted that staff at the hospital were so stretched that things possibly could have been done a lot better.

Secondly, I highlighted in the House earlier this week the case of Lorelei Bellchambers. I have spoken to her mother and father, who are both still very unhappy with the situation. Lorelei was a 21-month-old girl who was involved in a head-on car crash. Lorelei's mother had scans in hospital but Lorelei did not and was sent home. The pain became so bad that her parents took Lorelei back to hospital. She was transferred to Gosford Hospital for scans, where it was found that she had fractured her C1 and C2 vertebrae. She is now in a half-body cast. Lorelei's mother expressed that, though her child was sent home, if they had picked her up the wrong way she could have died or become a quadriplegic.

These cases highlight that Wyong Public Hospital Emergency Department is becoming so busy it cannot keep up with demand. Whilst the Government is upgrading facilities, the number of staff is not being increased at the same rate. Our emergency department nurses met with Central Coast Labor MPs and told us that some days they go home in tears because they are unable to provide the care that they want to give people. They are stretched beyond limit, work double shifts and are absolutely exhausted. The Government talks about increases in funding, but in real terms our health system is falling behind. Government members must understand that if they do not increase funding to meet demand then problems like this will continue to occur in the Central Coast Local Health District.

KELLYVILLE LIONS CLUB

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (15:42:45): Recently I had the pleasure of attending the fortieth anniversary of the Kellyville Lions Club, which has served our community proudly since its formation in 1979. This is a wonderful organisation, as are the incredible volunteers in my electorate of Castle Hill who give up their time to serve our community. I know that other members in this place can attest to the great work of Lions Clubs. They are a part of community life in small towns and in big cities. They are easy to identify with their distinctive

logo and the motto, We Serve. Lions Clubs are filled with the best people in our communities who are joined by a common desire to make their communities a better place through creativity, enthusiasm and energy.

I have been a card-carrying member of the Kellyville Lions Club for the past 17 years during which time I have witnessed some of the great initiatives and projects the club has been involved in. In the past 20 years Kellyville Lions Club has donated over \$400,000 to local community groups, individuals and Lions Club foundations that provide funding for drought relief, cancer research, cord blood, hearing dogs, diabetes awareness and many other worthy causes. The figure is actually much greater than \$400,000 because the money raised at fundraisers like barbecues at local school fetes and fairs is donated immediately back to the respective schools.

You know you are doing something right when a fundraising activity becomes a part of the community and an eagerly awaited event on the local calendar. The Kellyville Lions Santa Train is one of the club's proudest achievements. Members are continually asked if it will again make the rounds in the coming Christmas season. The Kellyville Lions Santa Train travels the streets of Kellyville selling the traditional Lions Christmas cakes, with money raised going to charity. The success of this annual activity is not purely based upon the money raised from selling these delicious cakes; it is also measured by the amount of community engagement and the connectivity it brings to the community. This activity gives Santa the opportunity to stop by and visit with the local children and their parents, which is a huge thrill for the young children during the festive season. The train helps to turn a street into a neighbourhood and a neighbourhood into a community.

The club is justifiably proud of having assisted so many school and church groups as well as its primary focus of providing much-needed wheelchairs and mobility equipment for mobility-impaired children in The Hills are. Each year the club has been able to assist four to five children with life-changing mobility equipment. The club is also proud of its assistance to local schoolchildren through its participation in the public speaking Youth of the Year project for high school children in The Hills. Lions presents community service awards annually at 10 local primary schools, recognising students for their school community service.

We recently celebrated 40 years of continual Lions commitment from Kellyville Lions at The Fiddler Hotel, along with 90 guests. We were treated to a fabulous video presentation that depicted the club's history and highlighted some of the major projects the club has assisted with over the past 40 years. I congratulate my great friend John Foster on receiving the Melvin Jones Fellowship award on the night after 28 years of active service. The Melvin Jones Fellowship award is named after the founder of Lions International and is the highest recognition that can be received for exemplary service. The 27 current members of the Kellyville Lions Club have given 488 years of service between them to the Lions and therefore to the community. They include Janice Fraser, Anne Famularo, Paul Campbell, Lyn Legrand, John Noppert, Marilyn Courts, Jan Pinter, Pete Graham, Cedric Misso, Erich Karbon, Roslyn Giles, John Love, Colleen Lee, Richard Lee, Annette Cossart, Noel Casey and Ruth Cocks.

I also acknowledge a few long-serving members of the Lions, including Geoffrey Cossart with 46 years' service, Stuart Rook with 44 years' service, John Fullarton and Gary Pinter with 39 years' service each, John Daley with 35 years' service and Allan Drew with 32 years' service. I note in particular Bruno Guarna with 32 years' service, John Foster with 28 years' service, and my good friend Wayne Kedward with 20 years' service. Wayne is the person who initially encouraged me 17 years ago to join Kellyville Lions Club. Once again, I congratulate Kellyville Lions Club on its fortieth anniversary. Here's to many more years of successful service. This club has made an indelible mark on our community and continues to do so. Well done.

COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE SHOWS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (15:47:42): It is spring in the Cootamundra electorate—but more importantly, it is show season. Across the Cootamundra electorate this spring season there are 21 shows. Each one has a dedicated, hardworking and inspirational show committee that makes it all happen. Our shows are more than just dagwood dogs and the Cha-Cha; they are celebrations of our town's finest citizens, our best agricultural produce and our farming skill. Life on the land can be isolating and even more so in these tough times. The role our shows play in maintaining social connection and the identities of our towns is priceless.

As the Ferris wheel churns slowly upwards at our small town shows the wide view, sadly, is not as green as we would like it to be. But the adversity of the present time makes celebrating our strengths and our skill in a fun day out all the more vital. Whether through whip cracking, woodchopping, merino breeding, baking or sheepdog training, our shows rubbish the myth of rural tall poppy syndrome and lift up the great talent in our towns to be applauded and celebrated with a shiny blue ribbon. In the past few weeks alone our towns have come alive with shows in Woodstock, Barellan, Grenfell, West Wyalong, Ungarie, Murrumburrah, Narrandera, Ariah Park, Barmedman, Young, Temora, Bribbaree, Morongola, Illabo, Cootamundra and Cowra.

It was great to catch up with show president Courtney Taylor, Lisa Eastaway and many locals at the start of the 146th show in Grenfell. This year saw the introduction of a brand-new award in honour of the late Elaine Needham, whose contributions to the Grenfell PAH & I Association has left a lasting legacy. The new most valuable contribution award went to Marie Cotter, a longstanding volunteer and the head steward of the junior craft and Lego sections, and the school art and handwriting sections. Like so many show society volunteers, Marie has put in countless hours to ensure that entries are received, managed, displayed and returned across the show period.

Tradition lives large at our shows as cooking, craft, art, photography, animal training and rearing competitions display the great fruits of our labour for young and old to celebrate. While these are timeless parts of the annual events, our shows have moved with the times and are in no way stuck in the past. Alison Rutledge of the Woodstock Show maintains an impressive social media presence, keeping the region informed of the latest attractions and updates right up until show day. The showgirl tradition lives on, but many of our shows now also celebrate our best young beaus and junior stockmen.

In Ungarie the wind may have been strong enough to blow a dog off a chain, but it did not dampen spirits. This little show reformed just last year. It was an absolute honour to judge the showgirls and spend time with 2019 winner Katie Ridley, president Murray Wiley and his wife, Michelle, secretary, Sonya Ward, my good mate councillor Kerry Keatley, the wonderful Sherie Brown and 2018 Ungarie Showgirl Brydie Daly. I congratulate the show society committee and the many volunteers and sponsors who have breathed new life into the Ungarie Show and made it so fun. I had never laughed so much as I did during the official proceedings.

Across regional New South Wales, sadly, volunteer numbers and attendance at some country shows has been waning. In Narrandera last year there was no show. Not enough people put their hands up to form a committee and help with the organisation. But out in the bush we never say die, and I am absolutely stoked that this year the show society was able to form a committee and deliver a successful event for the town once again. I congratulate and thank the president and all committee members in Narrandera for putting on a cracker of an event that included live pro wrestling.

As the show season draws to an end, I have attended as many shows as humanly possible. For many people in these towns, these days out are the biggest event of the year. While the fairy floss alone is enough to get me there, they really are incredibly valuable days for tapping into the successes and the sentiment of our great towns, with the very best and brightest of our spirit on display. My very own blue ribbon today goes to the many unique and varied show committees of the Cootamundra electorate. I thank them for the laughs and the priceless contribution they make to our communities.

SYDENHAM TO BANKSTOWN METRO

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:52:48): I take this opportunity to update the House on an inquiry that was established recently into the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro project. I had the opportunity to make a submission on 9 October and look forward to the hearing that will take place in November. The final inquiry will hand down its report in March. It is an upper House inquiry. I welcome the agreement that was reached in the upper House to conduct an inquiry with extensive terms of reference. I have mentioned these terms of reference previously in this House. The inquiry provides for residents in my electorate, residents in neighbouring electorates, my colleagues and me to make submissions. I have made a number of submissions throughout this process to Government Ministers in Planning and Transport, but I have never received an adequate response to the many issues that my constituents have raised about this project. As I have said on many occasions, there is a veil of secrecy when it comes to this project and whether it will provide any benefit whatsoever to my community.

The vast majority of my electorate is west of Bankstown and it is very clear that the metro will not provide proper services to that area. There will now be nine train stations. As a result of the inner west train line being shut down since October 2013 and with this metro potentially being online in the next few years, my area will be entirely off the grid, off the network, and it will take several train interchanges for the majority of my constituents to be able to go in to the City Circle. I have taken the opportunity to raise a number of areas within the submission. I have looked at the adequacy of the business case and the viability of the metro. I have looked specifically at the area west of Bankstown and the impact on those constituents who will need to change not once but twice, and potentially many times, as they travel in to the City Circle—that is, changing at Bankstown from heavy rail to the metro then back onto heavy rail at Sydenham to connect with the City Circle. These are major inconveniences that will impact a generation of people from my electorate.

I have made comments in relation to the failure of this Government to consider other alternatives—namely, saving the Bankstown line itself. I acknowledge a number of stakeholders, including the Save T3 Bankstown Line association, particularly Roydon and others who are involved in that, as well as EcoTransit, which has been publicly vocal in its opposition to this metro, and rightfully so. It is always wonderful to see

volunteers who are prepared to be active in this domain, providing proper information that this Government has failed to provide to constituents throughout this particular project. Throughout the entire duration of this project there has been no proper consultation with the public. There has been a lack of interest on the part of the Government to conduct proper consultation with schools, community groups and organisations. We have simply had a handout of glossy pamphlets at the train station but very little detail as to the true impact that this metro will have for years to come on our business community and on the broader demographic in our region.

I welcome the fact that the inquiry will look at any lobbying, political donations or other influence of the public or private sector in relation to making this decision. I would like that to be explored vehemently by the inquiry because I think there are many motivations—and one in particular—as to why this project has always been of interest to the Government. There is a real interest to rezone and develop around the Sydenham to Bankstown train line at the expense of the current community of Bankstown. I also think it is important to continue to look at the impact on the environment and heritage conservation. The tender process itself, contractual arrangements and temporary transport arrangements should be examined. I welcome the inquiry and I look forward to the hearings in November.

MENAI DISTRICT SPORT AWARDS

SUTHERLAND PCYC

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:58:37): On Saturday 19 October I attended the Menai District Sport Awards. It was a fantastic night celebrating the great sporting talent we have in the Sutherland Shire. The master of ceremonies for the night was Robert Di Pierdomenico, known to all of us as "Dipper", who entertained us with his quirky sense of humour and ensured that the evening went off without a hitch. The night showcased the talent produced by Menai district sporting clubs and it was great to see the teams and single participants recognised and awarded on the night.

I congratulate the Junior Male Sports Person of the Year, Sam McCulloch from Bangor Barden Ridge Cricket Club; Junior Female Sports Person of the Year, Karina Bell from Illawong Little Athletics Club; Junior Male Rookie Sports Person of the Year, Connor Lawson from Illawong Menai Cricket Club; Junior Female Rookie Sports Person of the Year, Ella Phillip-Clarke from Menai Dragons Basketball Club; Senior Female Rookie Sports Person of the Year, Talia Cutelli from Aquinas Colts Junior Rugby League club; Junior Male Sporting Team of the Year, 12A team from Aquinas Colts Junior Rugby League club; Junior Female Sporting Team of the Year, 13-14 years team from Menai-Illawong Physical Culture Club; Senior Male Sporting Team of the Year, First Grade Winter Team Illawong Baseball Club; Senior Female Sporting Team of the Year, 4x4-kilometre road relay team from Illawong Senior Athletics Club; Sporting Club Person of the Year, Margaret Daley from Menai Hawks Netball Club; and Sports Star of the Year, Cody Fuz from Aquinas Colts Junior Rugby League club. It was great to celebrate all the sporting people and teams in the Heathcote electorate. I congratulate all the finalists.

Sutherland PCYC recently celebrated its fiftieth birthday and I was pleased to join them in commemoration of this remarkable milestone last week. Police Commissioner William John Mackay established PCYC NSW in 1937, partnering with Rotary to provide youth with an alternative to the streets in a safe and positive environment. The work undertaken by PCYC is more than just providing physical activity; it is giving troubled youth a safe space to talk and socialise whilst feeling accepted and at ease.

Over the years PCYC has offered a wide range of crucial programs for youth. Today it offers programs such as FitForService, which is a key work experience program originally established in 1997; the Traffic Offender Intervention Program, which was initiated in 2000 as the Traffic Offender Program; the Safer Driver Program, which is in partnership with Roads and Maritime Services, to educate young drivers and substitute hours in their logbooks; Ride the Wave of Respect to promote cultural diversity; and the Graffiti Removal and Interventional Program to educate youth about graffiti. It also offers activities to promote an active lifestyle, such as boxing, gym and fitness. I commend the dedicated team of police, staff and volunteers at PCYC in Sutherland and across New South Wales, who have an incredibly challenging job but work tirelessly to make a profound positive impact and provide life-changing pathways to troubled youth.

During the celebrations, PCYC's longest-serving Youth Case Manager, Senior Constable Michelle Druery, was farewelled. It was clear from the gathered crowd that she will be sorely missed. After 28 years as the head of the Sutherland PCYC, she retired on the night. Michelle is held in the highest regard by those who have had the privilege to cross paths with her at Sutherland PCYC as well as young people from South Coast, rural and remote Indigenous communities. It was clear from the words spoken about her on the night by those who know her that she was the winner as far as being the most loved at PCYC over 50 years. I commend Michelle on her 28 years of dedicated service at Sutherland PCYC and wish her the best of luck in her new role at the PCYC State office to oversee its police programs.

*Petitions***COFFS HARBOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRECINCT**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery Ann Leonard and Peter Wardman from Coffs Harbour. I thank them for joining us. The petition debate will start with a speech from the member who lodged the petition—that is, the wonderful member for Coffs Harbour—followed by up to four other members, followed by the Minister in response, and to conclude the debate the first speaker will speak in reply. Following that, the House will vote on the question that I put—that is, that the House take note of the petition.

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

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:04:13): I start by acknowledging Peter Wardman and Ann Leonard, who have made the trip down from Coffs Harbour today to listen to the debate on this petition. The rules state that petitions must have more than 10,000 signatures to be debated; this petition got nearly 13,000 signatures in a very short time. That was the number of signatures at the time the petition was tabled, but the petition is now up to nearly 15,000 signatures. That represents nearly one-third of the voting public in the Coffs Harbour electorate. It is a significant petition. The text of the petition requests:

... a pause in the progress of the Council Chambers, Art Gallery, Library and Museum project in Gordon Street, Coffs Harbour, pending more and meaningful community consultation on that project. Furthermore, we desire and request more and meaningful community consultation for the assessment of the other options for a new performing arts facility, art gallery, library and museum for our local government area.

What is the Gordon Street project? It will start with the sale of four council properties: the current council chambers; Rigby House, which is another council administration building; and two smaller council-owned buildings, for a total of about \$20 million. The project will then use an additional \$10 million of cash reserves and borrow approximately \$45 million to \$46 million to construct a new six-storey building on Gordon Street. The new building will comprise a gallery, museum and cafe on the ground floor; council customer service and co-working spaces on level 1; a library on level 2; a rooftop garden and multi-use space on level 3, and council offices on levels 3 to 5; and building services on level 6.

Before going too much further I will compare this site to comparable buildings or civic precincts in other cities of a similar size. The Geelong Library and Heritage Centre is an iconic-looking building. It looks like a golf ball that has been sliced in half. It is a beautiful building. It is surrounded by Johnstone Park—three hectares of pristine parkland in the centre of Geelong. It cost about \$45 million. The Shellharbour Civic Centre comprises a museum, council administration offices, a cafe, a library, an auditorium for conferences and concerts, and various meeting rooms. It is surrounded by green space and parkland and it cost about \$60 million. That project also went through quite a controversial period at its beginning. The Wagga Wagga civic centre precinct contains a visitor information centre, the Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre, the National Art Glass Gallery, council chambers, a library and the regional museum. It is set alongside the Victory Memorial Gardens and expansive parklands. A precedent therefore exists for comparable projects in similar local government areas.

What are the issues? Why do we have a petition of nearly 15,000 signatures? What have people fed back to my office? One of the main issues that people have is with the location and setting. The site is about 3,000 square metres. That is three average-sized house blocks, compared to some of the other projects that are set along acres or hectares of parkland. Yes, it is in the CBD; it is centrally located. It is surrounded by office buildings on three sides and a car park on the fourth side. Parking has been identified as an issue. I have been to events at the gallery to which most people would have driven, because not much residential space is available within walking distance of the proposed site. In fact, the nearest bus stop is about 300 to 400 metres away. As we know, public transport—especially for night-time events—is nearly non-existent in regional cities.

The second major area of concern is the numbers. Some of the numbers used to justify the project have caused some concern. There will be a projected 400,000 visitors to the site every year. To put that into context, the State Library of New South Wales next door and the Art Gallery of New South Wales across the Domain get 2.5 million visitors between them each year. By a rough calculation, we are expecting about five times the population of Coffs Harbour to visit that precinct every year. The figure of 2.5 million visitors is about half of Sydney's population. That is a bit of a mismatch and there is some concern about that number of 400,000. It equates to 155 visitors per hour every hour that the site will be open.

Some people have questioned the council's ability to deliver a project of this size. I understand why people have those concerns but the council has delivered some pretty big water and sewerage projects worth around \$400 million. It can deliver projects of this size but at the moment there is a gap between community expectation and delivery in some areas. The council does some things very well. For instance, its events team over-delivers. Over the past week it has organised Oztag, which brought 12,000 visitors to the town. The State

Government is sponsoring a Big Bash tournament in January next year, and Elton John will play two shows in February.

Of course there is an emphasis on delivery within Coffs Harbour City Council, but in one meeting it claimed to have a zero infrastructure backlog. That is a very bold claim for any government at any level to make. The residents of Brooklana have been waiting years to get their road tarred, only to be told time and again that the council does not have the money to do it. Residents in Emerald Beach were asked to pay for footpath and road upgrades, not as part of a development but as an ongoing cost of being a resident on top of their rates. A gap exists between residents' expectations of service delivery and what is being delivered. My office has been inundated with people letting us know where they think the backlogs are.

It is understandable that governments cannot deliver every single project at the same time. They have to put things in a continuous infrastructure pipeline. The third main issue has been community consultation. Regardless of what the council thinks it has done—technically it might have followed the process as prescribed—community members do not feel like they have been consulted adequately. The council at this time is split fifty-fifty. It has been what might be called dysfunctional for a few meetings. The petition is simply asking for a pause in the process, not to stop it.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:11:17): I begin by acknowledging Ann Leonard and Peter Wardman from Coffs Harbour, who are in the public gallery. I welcome them to the Parliament and thank them for coming to listen to the debate today. I acknowledge my colleague the member for Coffs Harbour. We met with him yesterday and I know he has been making all the appropriate representations, having meetings and trying to find a balance in a very complex and controversial matter for the people of Coffs Harbour. As the member said, 14,300 people have signed this petition, which indicates two very important things: firstly, this is a serious issue for the people of Coffs Harbour; and, secondly, it is to their credit that they are taking action within their community about something that they feel very deeply about. I acknowledge and understand the feelings of the community.

Whilst it is not my place to be involved in the council's processes or the resolutions it is considering and will resolve, I feel it is appropriate to make some remarks in relation to this petition, given that it has been tabled by the member for Coffs Harbour. As he said, four properties, with a value of \$20 million, will be sold off to fund the project. A further \$10 million presumably will come from recurrent revenue in the council's budget and \$45 million will be borrowed. I acknowledge the council stated that it has a zero asset renewal backlog. That is truly remarkable and, indeed, admirable. I have not been through the council's figures, but if that were the case then well done to the council. That would be truly unique.

As a former mayor, I understand—as does my opposite, the Minister for Local Government, who was also a councillor—the challenges in maintaining the asset renewal backlogs of councils. But community members feel that they have not been appropriately consulted. They feel that the only ones consulted were special interest groups. I could make a number of recommendations to those local representatives. Local government representatives—like me and every other publicly elected representative—will ultimately be held to account at the ballot box. It is very clear that this community feels disengaged and not consulted on this matter. I urge members of the community to make appropriate representations if they have not done so already.

The other bit of feedback that I received was that the community felt that there had been no regard for scale, existing street setbacks, overshadowing, lack of open space, pedestrian links and movement access. As well, there were no provisions for tourist buses. The community was concerned that there was no available space to cater for tourists and that existing traffic congestion in peak periods was not appropriately considered. The other point that I discovered in my research was that the community was concerned about flooding in that area.

I note the community's concerns in relation to transparency. It is important for the council to engage with the community. Public representatives and elected councillors should ensure that they are as transparent and as engaged as possible with their community. I note that the council is split fifty-fifty on this matter and I urge councillors to find a balance. I note that my former sparring partner the former member for Coffs Harbour has been very vocal on this matter as well. I commend him, as a member of that community, for engaging in this issue to ensure that members of the community have the appropriate support and that they are heard.

I note that the community is requesting that the Minister pauses the development to allow proper community consultation to take place. I will leave that to the discretion of the Minister. I will not comment on that; I will understand whatever decision the Minister makes about this. I know that the Minister will give this due consideration and make an appropriate decision about what she feels is best for the community. I note what the member for Coffs Harbour has said, and I commend Coffs Harbour City Council for its good record on delivery. The community is concerned about the delivery of this project but I note the council's history in achieving its programs. The community is understandably concerned about the cost implications of the development. The

community should be engaged with and consulted, and I will leave that in the hands of the elected representatives. I will also leave consideration of the pause to the Minister and her department. I thank the House.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (16:17:30): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for bringing this petition to the attention of the House, and for his dedication and commitment to his electorate. He beats a path to my door almost every second sitting day, advocating for his community. I rarely see members with such passion. This is a tough issue. The council is pursuing a certain line and there is a group of opponents to the project. I have met with both groups and listened to what they have said. The petition requests that I pause the project. I do not have the power to pause a project but I have worked with the Office of Local Government [OLG] and assured myself of the Local Government (General) Regulation.

Under this regulation, councils are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities. In doing that, a council must prepare a community strategic plan [CSP]. This is a minimum 10-year plan identifying the community's aspirations and priorities for the future and strategies for achieving these goals. The council must also prepare a delivery program—a four-year program identifying the main activities the council will undertake to implement the strategies set in the CSP—and an annual operational plan identifying the council's proposed activities, revenue policy, and fees and charges for the next year.

I am advised that Coffs Harbour City Council has a community strategic plan in place as well as a four-year delivery program and an operational plan. I am also advised that council's strategic priorities, identified in its 2017-2021 delivery program, identify the implementation of the City Centre Masterplan, including investing in the cultural and civic space project, as the No. 2 priority on its list. However, the signatories of this petition—there are many of them—have called for a more meaningful community consultation for the assessment of this project and it is for this reason that we are here this afternoon debating this issue.

Of course each council should communicate, engage, liaise with and listen to its community. It is important that councils follow open and transparent processes when doing so. That is often very difficult. Councils may engage with the community and go through many consultation processes but, at the end of the day, community members may disagree with the decisions made by council. That is why people have signed this petition: they disagree with a decision of council. I can assure the residents who have travelled from Coffs Harbour—it is a long way—that the Office of Local Government will continue to monitor this project and will continue to watch the activities of the council. The council is aware that that is happening. I have asked the Office of Local Government to continue to do that throughout the process so that the community can be effectively consulted.

I also state that the OLG has not identified any evidence that indicates council has breached its statutory obligations in pursuing the cultural and civic space project. I thank all those who have signed this petition, and those who are here today. I thank the member for Coffs Harbour. It is not my position to ask the council to pause this project. I do not have that power under the Act. I have met with the Office of Local Government to ask it to monitor this project, and it has. At the end of the day this is a decision for council. It is not up to the Minister for Local Government to intervene in the decisions made by a local government. Local governments are independent statutory bodies under their own Act and with their own rights. If local governments do not fulfil their statutory obligations the Government can take the issue further, but at this stage no evidence has been found that this council has breached any of its statutory obligations.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:21:53): In reply: I thank the member for Campbelltown and the shadow Minister for Local Government for his remarks. I also thank the member for South Coast and the Minister for Local Government for her remarks and for her time in dealing with this issue. This is a very important issue for the Coffs Harbour electorate. I echo the remarks of the Minister and say to the council that this is a council project. It is not something that the State Government has jurisdiction over. Having read a lot of the debate over the last six months or so I have concluded that it is obvious that the council is split and the community is split on this issue. The council is split fifty-fifty. There were two meetings when half of the council walked out to deny the other half a quorum and that remains an ongoing issue.

I have been impressed with the level of respect between the councillors. They have managed to keep things cordial and hopefully they are now on a path where they can get back together again. But I believe the online debate could reach a more cordial and respectful level. It is a hallmark of our democracy that we can exchange ideas without resorting to name-calling and personal attacks. Nobody is doubting the need for a new library, a new gallery, better spaces for council employees, a new museum space and revitalisation of the CBD. These are really not negotiable. Everybody would want to see those things. The question is how to go about achieving those spaces. How do we get from A to B and keep the majority of the community happy and onside?

It is obvious from the number of people who have signed this petition that it is not a noisy minority. One-third of the voting public of Coffs Harbour have taken the time to sign this petition and let the council and the

State Government know that they have concerns. I think that the council has finally realised that community perception is an issue. They have started addressing some of the issues by taking out full-page advertisements and doing mail-outs. This level of community consultation probably should have happened six months ago. The petition asks for a pause at this point; I think that would be beneficial to bring the community together. It is not a step down or a step back. The petition is not asking for the project to stop and be thrown out. It is simply asking for a pause. The community is engaged. I hope that the council can come together again and arrive at a solution that everybody is happy with.

Petition noted.

Private Members' Statements

LIFE EDUCATION NSW

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:25:37): Today I talk about Life Education and its iconic Healthy Harold. I know members on both sides of the House are quite familiar with Healthy Harold—in fact, he was here in Parliament only recently. Life Education was born from one man's vision. That man was the late Reverend Ted Noffs. Through his work at the Wayside Chapel, Ted witnessed how health and social issues were impacting the lives of Australian children and was not prepared to watch it get any worse. The year was 1979. Along with other health challenges, the issue of illicit drug use was exploding. As a community, we were struggling to understand how to deal with this problem. While still committed to providing crisis relief and rehabilitation, Ted saw an opportunity to address the issue through education before it became a problem.

His vision for Life Education was centred on a powerful concept: Each and every child is unique; a true marvel in body, mind and spirit. Ted made it clear that we must not frighten our kids with scare tactics. We must teach them so they act in the ways that we think are best for them. We must motivate and empower them so they make safer and healthier choices. As the demand for the newly founded program grew, it was clear that the classroom in Sydney's King Cross was not big enough. That is when innovation stepped in. In 1982 the first mobile classroom, or MLC, was built, enabling the program to be where it was needed most. Kids will remember the Life Education caravan anchored in the school carpark or playground, with its twinkling star lights on the ceiling, the TAM—transparent anatomical model—and Harold himself, who would emerge from behind a curtain. Strangely enough, he was never more than an arm's length away from a Life Education officer.

Harold has been visiting schools for just on 40 years and has shared the program with, believe it or not, more than 710,000 Australian students. Healthy Harold loves to learn new things and is a lot more tech savvy these days. He likes keeping up with his friends via his website and his Facebook page. Today Life Education is the largest non-government provider of drug and health education to children and young people, their families and communities. It is to be commended. One of the first vans was funded by the Tweed Shire Council and our long-serving mayor in those days, Max Boyd. That van is still in existence today and a group of dedicated volunteers is raising funds to restore it. I was given a list of local schools in my electorate during the event in Parliament recently. I noted that out of about 15 schools I had three in red, which means they have not been for at least three years. I will be contacting those schools to come back.

I congratulate new CEO Jonathon Peatfield on the amazing work that Life Education does, as well as previous CEO Kellie Sloane. And how could I go past the effervescent Alan Cadman? He who served over 30 years in politics and is still serving the community today in his role on the board of Life Education. I think members on both sides of the House know that Alan is never too far away from Healthy Harold. Life Education does a great job. I saw members from both sides of the House at parties this week. We need to do more with young kids. They are the susceptible, and we can influence them in their early years to ensure that they have a happy and fruitful life. As I have often said in this place, I am 100 per cent for the Tweed. However, I guess I am also 100 per cent for Healthy Harold. Long may he live on.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the member for Tweed. I am sure that all members of this House share his enthusiasm and love for Healthy Harold.

ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:30:05): On Saturday 19 October 2019 I had the great pleasure of attending the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry [ICCI] 41st Annual Business Excellence Awards at the White Bay Passenger Terminal in Sydney. The awards—which get better with each passing year—were a tremendous success, with many local and foreign dignitaries present and more than 500 people in attendance. The purpose of the awards ceremony is to promote and acknowledge the outstanding contributions made by Italo-Australian companies and to recognise certain individuals for their many years of dedication and service to the Italo-Australian community.

We had a very special surprise this year as none other than Mr Armando Tornari was inducted into the hall of fame for his many years of dedication and service to the Italo-Australian community both at home and abroad. Mr Tornari is the grandfather of the Italian community and well known for his work with La Fiamma. If you have ever attended an Italian function anywhere in Sydney or New South Wales, I can guarantee you that Armando has been there snapping some photos and interviewing the guests. Armando is at the forefront of everything that is Italian here in Australia. The room erupted with rapturous cheers and support as his name was called and he was inducted into the hall of fame. Well done, Armando. We could not be more proud of you.

On the evening the ICCI showcased a large number of small, medium and large Italo-Australian businesses and provided some insight into not only the operations of each business but also the impact they have made on the community both here and internationally. We need to remember that all the trade links between nations reap benefits for both sides. As one of Australia's largest trade partners, we are not just talking about the Italian companies such as Salini Impregilo and Ferrero that are present in Australia and employ local families while supporting our local economy. There is a multitude of Australian companies spread throughout Italy that provide the same cultural and economic benefits for their regions. Westfield is one of those groups.

With billions of dollars traded between Italy and Australia, it is important to recognise the tremendous contributions of the business sector and the benefits of bilateral trade between our two nations. It was great to see a number of local businesses being showcased throughout the evening, with interactive exhibitions and produce available to sample. Whatever your appetite, there was something there for everybody. People could try the delicious range from the artisans at Pure Gelato or take a virtual reality tour on the MSC Cruises international fleet. It was truly a remarkable experience.

This year the Annual Business Excellence Awards also served as a remarkable opportunity for the broader Italian community in Australia to meet the newly arrived Ambassador from the Italian Republic, Her Excellency Francesca Tardioli, as well as the newly arrived Consul-General of Italy in Sydney, Dr Andrea De Felip, who had only arrived in Sydney with his young family 24 hours prior to the event. I also commend the outstanding efforts of the Navarra Group, which catered the wonderful function. As expected, the Navarra Group did an outstanding job providing an authentic Italian menu for all guests—and it did not disappoint. Well done to the Navarra Group. The evening would not have been possible without support from the platinum, gold, silver and bronze sponsors, whose generosity continues to make this event possible.

On behalf of the Italian community, I congratulate the President of the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Fabio Grassia, and commend him for his ongoing drive and determination in supporting Italo-Australian businesses. I also congratulate the ICCI's CEO and secretary-general, Ms Rachele Grassi, and thank her for her outstanding efforts in organising such a successful event and for her ongoing contributions to the Italian chamber in Sydney and throughout New South Wales. Last but not least, I thank members of the ICCI board for their continued dedication and expertise in guiding the chamber over the years. Once again, on behalf of the Italian community in New South Wales, I welcome Her Excellency Francesca Tardioli, and the Consul-General of Italy in Sydney, Mr Andrea de Felip. We wish them both well during their postings in Australia.

TAXI LICENCES

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:35:02): On 26 September a petition about the New South Wales taxi industry was debated in Parliament. I was in the Chamber for the debate but, unfortunately, I did not have an opportunity to contribute to it. When I sought leave to speak, it was denied by Government members. Given I did not have the opportunity to do so then, I speak now about the taxi and hire vehicle industry in the electorate of Lakemba. I thank all the constituents who reached out to my office requesting a buyback of New South Wales taxi licences. With hundreds of constituents in Lakemba working in the taxi and hire vehicle industry, this issue has had a significant impact in my electorate. The New South Wales Labor Opposition understands and is sympathetic to the concerns raised by the State's taxi industry.

The Government has legislated to allow the entry of other providers into the Australian market to encourage competition. This has been to the significant financial detriment of taxi plate owners and drivers, and may lead to the taxi industry's demise. The Government has refused to compensate taxi drivers for the depreciation of taxi plates whilst deregulating the market. In most cases, operating costs for rideshare vehicles are less and they do not have the same regulations that have been foisted on the taxi industry. In trying to deregulate the market, the Government has effectively destroyed the taxi industry. This is not the first time that I have spoken about this issue. In the early days I called for adequate compensation. Supporting the proposed buyback of New South Wales taxi licences will help people from my electorate, like Mahmoud Youssef from Greenacre.

Mahmoud has stated that he will be able to get fair and just value for his taxi plates if New South Wales taxi licences are in the Government's hands. Let us not forget that these plates were worth in excess of \$350,000 before the Government played its hand. Today, people do not want to buy plates because they effectively

have no value. The current legal framework around industry assistance for taxis and hire vehicles in New South Wales is clearly not working as it entrenches an unsatisfactory situation that is hurting many hardworking Australians. These are the same people who purchased taxi plates from the Government. People may take a big risk and make wrong decisions when going into business, but if the investment is with the Government they do not expect to get ripped off. That is the last thing people expect. Yet taxi plate owners in my electorate and across the State have had that experience with this Government.

My constituent Moussa Mahfouz, for example, was unable to take advantage of the hardship assistance payment scheme that was offered to taxi licence holders affected by the introduction of Uber and other rideshare providers into the Australian market. I wrote to the Minister explaining Mr Mahfouz's circumstances and requesting consideration of the financial effects of this change on him. All I got back was a generic response from the Parliamentary Secretary—which was most likely written by a public servant. I hope the Parliamentary Secretary at least read my letter. I received no response from the Minister. I listened to the Minister say in debate that he wants to help everybody out and that everyone is valued. My constituent's only mistake was that he filled out the form too late. That is the reason he was knocked back. He is still suffering financial hardship. Then he received a generic letter that means absolutely nothing.

I had to explain to this gentleman that, even though his plates were worth a fair bit of money and he is now suffering enormous financial stress, somebody just signed a piece of paper. The Minister stood in this place and said he cared about taxi licence holders. If the Minister cares about them he should prove it by providing adequate compensation. The Minister must understand that the Government created this situation; it is not the fault of taxi plate owners. Many bought the plates as an investment. They had a choice either to buy a house or to buy a taxi plate. They bought a taxi plate licence from the Government and, unfortunately, things have gone completely wrong for them. Mr Mahfouz is just one of many who have felt the full blow of this taxi scheme, but seemingly that does not matter to the Government. I acknowledge Martin Rodgers and Nick Abraham of the NSW Taxi Council. They are representing the views of taxi plate owners. Competition is part of economics but when we introduce more competition we need to make sure we provide a level playing field and adequate compensation. That is all the owners want.

PARRAMATTA RIVER

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans)
(16:40:04): An important environmental project is taking place in my electorate to make the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025. This includes funding to activate various locations along the river, including three spots in my electorate, which I will elaborate on further in my speech. The goal is quite ambitious and it is a complex task but it is proving to be achievable, with four locations already open to the public for swimming. The Parramatta River has a long and rich history, with origins as a dry valley over 15,000 years ago. It was an integral part of Aboriginal life and culture, and still holds great significance for our Indigenous community today.

During the industrial era the Parramatta River became primarily a working river for the many industrial sites that were established along its foreshore. Over the years, the river has experienced many changes—much like the foreshore. Most of the old industrial sites are no longer there and have been replaced instead with urban development. However, quite a large portion of the river foreshore is open space and public parklands. In fact, there are 70 riverfront parks and reserves along the river. The idea of making the Parramatta River swimmable again emerged from the Parramatta River Masterplan, which is an important document that protects this iconic river, ensuring its future for generations to come.

There are currently four locations on the Parramatta River where people are able to swim: Lake Parramatta, Dawn Fraser Baths, Cabarita Park Beach and Chiswick Baths. The latter two of these swimming spots are located in my electorate. Cabarita Park Beach is a wonderful location at the northern end of Cabarita Park. There are beautiful parklands, public toilets, and picnic and barbecue facilities with access by ferry and ample parking, all within its surrounds. The great thing about this program is that the Parramatta River Catchment Group has really captured the essence of a fun family day out and ensured that the swimming locations are inclusive for all.

The team have consulted with the community and really listened to what people would like to see in the new swimming spots. The corresponding results reveal that the team has created and facilitated swimming locations that offer more than just a place to swim; they are places to have a leisurely picnic, to kayak, to cycle or to walk along the foreshore paths, ensuring there is plenty to see and do. Chiswick Baths is a quiet swimming spot located on Bortfield Drive in Chiswick, where I grew up. The site is enclosed by a childproof fence and accessed by a short set of stairs. It has a shark net and is proving to be a popular destination for locals wishing to enjoy a refreshing swim or to enjoy the views of the river and the Gladesville Bridge.

As part of the program, the team has identified McIlwaine Park in Rhodes as another spot to activate on the river. The Government has provided the City of Canada Bay Council with \$5 million in funding for the McIlwaine Park upgrade and Brays Bay river access project. Upon completion of the project, amenities will include a launch facility; foreshore access improvements, such as a naturalised riverbank; and a new, accessible pathway for shared use along the foreshore. This means that residents and visitors to the park can enjoy kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding and other various fun water activities.

The council is currently undergoing community consultation about the project plans to gain feedback and to gather insights into how the community wishes to use this park and foreshore, both now and into the future. I recognise the important contributions of all councils along the Parramatta River, including the City of Canada Bay Council, which has been very receptive to the project. I commend the Government for the important work it is doing in this space and I am delighted to see the Parramatta River being preserved for future generations.

MYANMAR DELEGATION EXPOSURE VISIT

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (16:44:20): Last week the Speaker welcomed into our Chamber an official delegation from Myanmar. Delegation members were undertaking an exposure visit that is one element of a machinery of government program. The delegation was supported by the Union Government of Myanmar, the Australian Embassy in Myanmar and the United Nations Development Programme Myanmar, which is the lead partner providing strong technical and resource support for the machinery of government program. The purpose of the exposure visit was to observe and engage with Australian government institutions, including the New South Wales and Australian parliaments and the Australian National University, which hosts a Myanmar centre and has a Myanmar Students' Association.

Myanmar's transitional framework with its state architecture is actively pursuing federal arrangements, hence a look at a federated state such as ours—and I note that New South Wales is the oldest State in Australia. The other leg of the exposure visit will take place in Singapore. The delegation was led by His Excellency Mr Tin Myint, Deputy Union Minister, Union Government Office. I seek leave to incorporate the delegation list, which is quite lengthy.

Leave granted.

H. E. Mr Tin Myint, Deputy Union Minister, Union Government Office (leader of the delegation)
 Mr Khin Maung Win, Bill Committee Chair, Pyithu Hluttaw
 Mr Soe Moe, Bill Committee Member, Amyotha Hluttaw
 Mr Tun Tun Naing, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Finance
 Mr Aung Naing Oo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations
 Mr Win Kyaw Aung, Director General, State Counsellor Office
 Mr Thant Sin Lwin, Director General, Directorate of Investment and Companies Registration, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations
 Mr Win Htike, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Deputy Director General), Ministry of Planning and Finance
 Ms Marlar Than Htike, Deputy Director General, International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 Mr Sai Thaw Win, State Administrator (Deputy Director General), General Administration Department in Rakhine State, Union Government Office.
 Dr Thida San, Deputy Director General, Union Attorney General Office
 Mr Myat Htun Oo, Director, General Administration Department, Union Government Office
 Mr Aye Min Htike, Deputy Director, President Office
 Ms Dawn Del Rio, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
 Mr Joerg Stahlhut, Programme Advisor, UNDP
 Ms Lat Lat Aye, Head of Nay Pyi Taw Office, UNDP
 Mr Philipp Annawitt, Project Manager, UNDP
 Mr Thomas Gregory, Committee Specialist, UNDP
 Ms Mya Mya Thet, Interpreter, UNDP
 Mr Sai Nyi Nyi, Interpreter, UNDP
 Ms Lucinda Kaval
 Ms Janelle Saffin Honorary Strategic Advisor-Institutional Strengthening UNDP Myanmar

I thank the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Jonathan O'Dea; the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Ms Helen Minnican; Clerk Assistant – Committees, Legislative Council, Mr Stephen Frappell; the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms, Ms Jenny Whight; Director, Procedural Research and Protocol, Legislative Assembly, Mr Simon Johnston; Manager, Procedural Research and Protocol Mr Rohan Tyler; Director, Legislative Assembly Committees and Procedural Research and Protocol Office Mrs Rickee Murray; Director of Legislative Assembly Committees Ms Elaine Schofield; and the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and member for Lake Macquarie, Mr Greg Piper, for the wonderful snapshot they gave of our Parliament. Everyone in this place is proud of our Parliament, which is the oldest in the nation. It is the premier Parliament in the premier State.

The visit covered a background briefing on the policies, practices and politics of the system of government and a tour of our historic Parliament that covered both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council as well as a briefing on the practices and procedures of our Parliament, including committees. I thank the people and institutions who made themselves available to the delegation: the Department of Premier and Cabinet; the Deputy Secretary Transformation Unit, Ms Christina Hickey; the Assistant Director of Protocol, Rachelle Luke; the Assistant Director of Government Partnerships SPC, Mr Josue Castro; the Law Reform Commission Chairperson, Mr Alan Cameron, AO; the Chief Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Hon. Peter Hall, QC; the ICAC Executive Director, Legal Division, Ray Walden; the Department of Stronger Communities and Justice Secretary of Justice and Director of Policy, Mr Paul McKnight; and the New South Wales Auditor-General Ms Margaret Crawford, Mr Ian Goodwin and Mr Chris Clayton.

The delegates found it really interesting to see a legislative drafting unit at work when they met with the Office of Parliamentary Counsel. The Acting Principal Parliamentary Counsel, Ms Jessica Channel, and Ms Annette Callinan gave the presentation. It was a successful visit. The delegates were made very welcome in the Parliament. They hope to follow up and have a stronger relationship with our Parliament.

FABFEST 2020

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (16:49:00): As the Beatles said, "She loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah". The unmistakable sound of The Beatles will be coming to the great electorate of Wollondilly in 2020. It will be the sixtieth anniversary of the naming of The Beatles and 9 October 2020 would have been John Lennon's eightieth birthday. To celebrate this occasion, the music of The Beatles and the swinging sixties, a three-day event called FabFest will be celebrated in Mittagong from 16 to 18 October. It will be a bit longer than a Hard Day's Night, come October next year. Plans have now commenced for the festival. The music of The Beatles defined a generation and will always have a special place in music history as it led the Merseyside beat that was the music of 1960s. Parkes has its annual Elvis Festival, which attracts many visitors and contributes significantly to the local economy. It has become an international event and now Mittagong will have a festival dedicated to The Beatles that I am sure, in time, will rival the Elvis Festival.

The Wollondilly electorate already has a number of great festivals and attractions from DamFest in Warragamba to Tulip Time in Bowral in September and Pie Time right across the Wingecarribee shire in July. Now FabFest will be part of the festival scene in Wollondilly. Those events are a great boost to the local economy and to job creation and provide a wonderful opportunity for local communities to become involved. Festivals like this provide the opportunity to showcase the region to a wider audience. The festival will kick off with a charity gala opening night concert featuring a Beatles tribute band, a sixties fashion show, a sixties trivia session and an auction of some great music memorabilia. The charity that will be associated with the festival and will directly benefit is the food rescue organisation OzHarvest.

The gala opening will give everyone a chance to dust off their flairs, platforms and paisley shirts, and dress up sixties style. Yeah, baby! Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds, Eleanor Rigby and even Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band will be there. You may even want to twist and shout at this great event. There will be live music performances in venues throughout Mittagong. Musicians and bands will be performing in the cafes, restaurants, bars and clubs in and around Mittagong throughout the weekend. The magic of the Cavern Club, where the Beatles played, will also be recreated. On the streets buskers will play the music of the sixties, particularly Beatles music. There is also a Beatles movie festival and archival footage from the newsreels of the sixties will transport us all back to that wonderful era. The great Beatles movies *A Hard Day's Night*, *Help!*, *Magical Mystery Tour* and *Yellow Submarine* and more will be shown during FabFest.

There will be a sixties classic British car and bike show with Mini, Jaguar, Triumph, MG, Lotus, Norton, BSA and many more brands on show. Austin Powers and the "Shaguar" may also make a guest appearance. A street market in the style of Portobello Road will be set up and a Carnaby Street array of vintage clothing will also be on sale. There will be bespoke goodies from the era and local produce available. But front and centre will be the music of the sixties and The Beatles. Bespoke, handmade vintage clothing will be sold and locally grown and handmade produce will be available for sale.

The festival originator is Steve Evans, who has Brewster's Coffee Shop in Mittagong. A visit to Steve's coffee shop will transport you back to the 1960s, with the walls covered with great music memorabilia from iconic album covers and music programs to musical instruments from the era. Steve, an ex-Pom who loves the sixties, has already started lining up performers and events. I encourage all members to let it be and take the long and winding road, or maybe Abbey Road, get onboard the yellow submarine—or possibly the FabFest steam train—and head down to Mittagong for a great sixties experience. It will seem just like yesterday.

LIFE EDUCATION AUSTRALIA

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:54:00): I was honoured to accept a recent invitation to become an ambassador for Life Education Australia. This non-profit organisation was founded in 1979 by Reverend Ted Noffs who, through his work at the Wayside Chapel, witnessed how health and social issues were impacting the lives of Australian children. His vision for Life Education was centred on the powerful concept that each and every child is a unique marvel in body, mind and spirit. He believed in motivating and empowering children to actively draw on their own knowledge and make safer and healthier choices. Ted unfortunately passed away in 1995, though his approach to education continues to inspire the development of Life Education's program today.

I recognise contributions from Verity Blackman, the CEO of Life Education Australia, Jonathon Peatfield, recently appointed CEO of Life Education NSW, and two people who, through my previous work and charitable commitments, I have the highest respect for: Paula Roden and honorary chair the Hon. Alan Cadman, OAM. Since 1979 over seven million young Australians have participated in the program. Last year it worked in over 4,200 schools and preschools and shared its program with more than 710,000 children. This year is the organisation's fortieth year of operation. I am sure many would recall either learning from or having their children learn from Healthy Harold. Healthy Harold and his friends at Life Education Australia are innovators in the health education space and have unveiled some new technology.

Life Education Australia has utilised 3D and augmented reality fly-throughs of the human body using a transparent anatomical mannequin, or TAM-e, which is designed to teach children about the workings of the body and the effects of drugs, tobacco and alcohol. Constant revisions to Life Education's program ensures that the programs remain up to date, relevant and appropriate for all students. I recognise not only the dedication to educating children but also the tireless effort in educating parents, too. Life Education provides free parent and carer information sessions, which are great forums to increase knowledge, share views and develop strategies to raise happy, healthy children. Life Education Australia adopts a system-wide approach whereby they engage the whole school community, including students, teachers and parents.

I strongly encourage all parents and school staff to welcome Life Education onto their school grounds and to make the most of its valuable service to educating our children. I thank people who donate to this wonderful organisation to ensure that its great work can continue. These donations are of great value to people who receive services from the organisation and to the community as a whole, which benefits from the growth of educated children. This same appreciation goes out to all volunteers at the organisation and others who support it in any other capacity. I congratulate everyone who is or has been involved with Life Education Australia in its 40 years of success. I have no doubt this organisation will continue to succeed for many more years. I look forward to supporting the organisation as an ambassador.

POLICE POWERS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:57:46): Police in my electorate do an important job keeping people safe and the NSW Police Force has made massive advances in gaining the community's trust after the corruption and homophobic policing scandals of the 1980s and 1990s. However, the police's relationship with a new generation is being undermined by routine, unnecessary, intimidating and humiliating strip searches, including at inner city music festivals. There has been an almost twentyfold increase in the number of strip searches carried out in New South Wales in less than 12 years, reaching 5,483 in the 2018-2019 financial year—up from 277 in 2006. This increase corresponds with growing reports of intrusive and aggressive tactics used in strip searches.

A recent report into strip searches by the University of New South Wales, commissioned by the Redfern Legal Centre, reveals disturbing trends. Over 90 per cent of strip searches are conducted because police suspect a person is carrying prohibited drugs, but only 30 per cent of strip searches in the field result in a criminal charge and only 16.5 per cent of these charges are for drug supply, while almost 82 per cent relate to drug possession. Almost half—45 per cent—of all recorded strip searches are conducted on people aged 25 years and under. This week it was revealed that seven children were strip searched at the Splendour in the Grass festival last year. All but one were conducted without a parent or guardian present, including a 16-year-old girl who was asked to squat and remove all her clothing, including her panty liner.

Another group that is over-represented in strip searches statistics is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who comprise 10 per cent of all recorded strip searches. The report found that many searches are not recorded by police. Strip searches on Indigenous people often do not result in charges and are rarely challenged in court. Alarming the report identified strip searches being carried out in public on Indigenous children as young as 10; a practice that adds to intergenerational trauma. Evidence from the New South Wales Commissioner of Police during budget estimates suggested that police key performance indicators and targets have fuelled the

rise in strip searches within the community and that the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission must investigate. Strip searches can cause significant psychosocial harm.

There are widespread reports of searches being undertaken without adequate privacy, under intimidating police directions and involving humiliating measures like being forced to squat, cough and strip naked. Constituents who have experienced strip searches tell me they feel violated and no longer trust police. Strip searches are supposed to be an option of last resort and used only when police suspect on reasonable grounds that it is necessary, serious and urgent. Suspecting on reasonable grounds that someone has something unlawful in their possession alone is not sufficient to warrant a strip search. By law, police are required to conduct the least invasive search as practicable and not search genitals or breasts unless it is necessary. The search is required to preserve the person's dignity and privacy.

Clarity in the law is needed to strengthen dignity and privacy requirements and ensure strip searches are only used in serious and urgent circumstances. Searches of genitals, breasts and on children without a court order must be banned. Constituents tell me that music festivals are now saturated with police and drug detection dogs. These social and cultural events are supposed to be fun but now have an intimidating and punitive atmosphere and people feel they are under suspicion. The increase in police presence, drug dogs and strip searches has not resulted in any safety improvements at events. Indeed, the NSW Coroner's Court is investigating six recent drug-related deaths at music festivals that all had a strong police presence. Evidence has shown heavy-handed policing encouraged some patrons to take large doses of drugs to avoid being caught.

It is difficult to determine what routine strip searches achieve but young people continue to take drugs and engage in risky behaviour. The vast majority of searches do not lead to charges, while those that do are largely for possession by otherwise law-abiding citizens. One certain outcome is that many people now feel traumatised and no longer trust police. Strip searches should be reserved for public safety risks, such as concealing a weapon to conduct a terrorist act, not to combat health concerns like drug use. The Coroner's draft report on deaths at music festivals, which was leaked to media last week, indicates it will likely recommend the decriminalisation of drugs for personal use, pill testing, a drug summit and an overhaul of strip search laws. I call on the Government to scale back strip searches and adopt a new evidence-based approach to drug use that helps build positive relationships between police and the community, as has successfully occurred with the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras festival and party.

ST GEORGE MOTOR BOAT CLUB

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:02:38): Recently I officially opened the boating season for the St George Motor Boat Club in Sans Souci. Growing up in Sans Souci, the St George Motor Boat Club has always been an important hub for my community and it has been a real privilege to see it going from strength to strength in recent years. All across Sydney we see community clubs shutting down through lack of engagement or mismanagement. Clubs succeed when they maintain the spirit in which they were established. At the St George Motor Boat Club we can see the work members put into maintaining their fleet of boats and the pride they take in the amenity of their club. Without a doubt it is one of the best locations in southern Sydney, as I am sure the Assistant Speaker would appreciate.

Part of the reason I think so many people who have lived their lives in and around Sans Souci feel such a connection to the St George Motor Boat Club is that the history of the club and of Sans Souci are intimately tied together. Just over 99 years ago a small group of locals got together to found this fantastic institution at what was then the Prince of Wales Hotel, which people of my vintage would know then became Moylan's. The first president of the club came from what was and still is Sans Souci's most famous family, the Toyers. Even 99 years later a Toyer still serves as commodore of the club.

For just as long as the St George Motor Boat Club has been part of Sans Souci, it has been at the heart of local life and politics. James Toyer, that first Toyer to lead the club, served as an alderman for the City of Rockdale and was first elected just two years before the founding of the St George Motor Boat Club. James had recently moved to Sans Souci from St Peters where he was already a successful businessman and alderman of the Municipality of St Peters. When he first stood for public office in Sans Souci, his former colleagues at St Peters published an open letter in *The St George Call* newspaper endorsing his run as a fantastic local representative. Wherever James Toyer went, he gave his all to contribute to his local community. The St George Motor Boat Club stands today as just one part of his proud legacy.

A year after its founding, James and his fellow members invited the local member of Parliament for St George, Thomas John Ley, to the opening of the clubhouse on 23 April, 1921. Thomas Ley said "today's gathering of residents on this spot will prove to be of historical value. The grandeur of the surroundings are worthy of being more widely known." Those were prophetic words. Thomas Ley was by all accounts a scoundrel. He was eventually convicted for the brutal murder of a publican he suspected was sleeping with his wife. One of his

political opponents also disappeared under mysterious circumstances after he exposed Ley's attempts to bribe him, and it is likely that Ley was responsible for several other murders. He was our first ever serial killer parliamentarian. James Toyer's Rockdale Council may no longer exist and Thomas Ley stands disgraced in the eyes of history, but the St George Motor Boat Club is powering on better than ever. By the 1970s the club appeared to be so influential in local politics that when local member for Barton and active member of this club Len Reynolds retired in 1975, he was replaced in an orderly transition by another active boating member, Jim Bradfield, a local Liberal member.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Hear, hear!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: This is an important reminder that your political colours are far less important than your involvement with the community. Having the chance to be involved in the ongoing history of great community institutions like the St George Motor Boat Club makes me feel very lucky to be a local member of Parliament. I thank the leadership of the club, including commodore David Toyer, president David Blyth, my great friend vice president Barry Barker, first female director of the club Margaret Hinds and directors Ian Bown, Leonard Cave, Leo Costa, Ross Gilholme, Christopher Hoban and Matthew Robinson for inviting me to join them for this special occasion. The St George Motor Boat Club is the oldest continuously operating racing powerboat club in Australia. While other clubs have folded, my local club has grown to a membership of more than 30,000. They should all be proud of themselves. I congratulate them on what will be another fantastic season.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I support the comments of the member for Rockdale. It is a fantastic motorboat club, and I have friends on its board.

SOUTH COAST BRANCH SURF LIFE SAVING

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (17:07:35): The South Coast is well known as having the best beaches in the country, if not the world. What is less known but still deserving of praise is the extraordinary South Coast Branch Surf Life Saving. The branch is made up of nine surf clubs, has over 3,000 members and is one of 11 branches in the State of New South Wales. It patrols beaches from Warilla-Barrack Point in the north, all the way to the Mollymook in the south. It is the aim of Surf Lifesaving South Coast Inc. to supply services that minimise danger and prevent loss of life or injury to users in a beach and aquatic environment within our area, and it does a fantastic job of fulfilling that aim.

The South Coast Branch executive, led by president Steve Jones and supported by vice president Jim Connolly, director of administration Patrice Joynson, director of member services Mathew Burazin, finance committee members Michael Janos and Peter Adlington, director of lifesaving Glenn Matthews, director of education and assessment Josh Douglas, director of surf sports Dene Herbert, director of junior activities Dean Boyton and branch members tirelessly advocate for improvements that assist them and the countless volunteers to save lives on our beaches each and every summer.

I am pleased to continue to support them. I joined with the committee, volunteers and the broader community on Monday 21 October—just this week—to handover a new Colorado dual cab four-by-four, which is also fitted with a roof light bar, a 25-watt surf lifesaving network radio, a defibrillator, oxygen resuscitation equipment and a remote area first aid kit. The vehicle will be rotated between branch duty officers in the three operational zones: zone 1 north, Lake Illawarra to Gerringong; zone 2, Gerroa to Sussex Inlet; and zone 3, Bendalong at Washerwoman's Beach to Kioloa at Merry Beach. These are all within South Coast Branch's area of operations.

The South Coast Branch Surf Life Saving will also shortly employ a branch administration officer for 2½ days per week under the enhanced funding for the South Coast Branch. This will be of extraordinary assistance to the branch in the administration, oversight and supervision of nine surf lifesaving clubs and an average of 3,500 members within the branch. The total funding package to the South Coast Branch is \$156,000, which includes fuel and maintenance costs for vehicles and rescue water craft [RWC]. South Coast Branch Surf Life Saving will now have four rescue water craft under the South Coast Branch Support Operations Group control: one RWC at Kiama Downs Surf Life Saving Club, one RWC at Nowra-Culburra Beach Surf Life Saving Club—newly issued in January 2019—two RWCs at Mollymook Surf Life Saving Club and one jet rescue boat at Kiama Surf Life Saving Club.

This builds on the \$1,113,750 this Government has invested in South Coast Branch Surf Life Saving operations since 2011, including \$148,750 to undertake further renovations to the organisation's Nowra-Culburra Beach Surf Life Saving Club clubhouse, where the Premier and I announced funding in January of this year. This investment has been warmly received by the Culburra Beach community. I thank councillor Mitchell Pakes for his continued advocacy for the Culburra Beach community. The New South Wales Government's strong economic management ensures we are in a position to invest as never before in these important local projects.

In January this year the Government announced that Surf Life Saving NSW will receive an extra \$16 million over four years. This funding is primarily to provide frontline rescue equipment and support to the 11 surf lifesaving branches in New South Wales. Without our Government's hard work to ensure long-term budget security such an investment simply would not happen. These upgrades will enable volunteers to continue to undertake their valuable work in our community. Saving lives is not easy and our role as a government is to ensure these volunteers have the facilities they need to do their jobs. Surf lifesavers have fulfilled a vital role on the South Coast for more than 40 years, keeping people safe in the water and on our beaches. We want to assist them in any way we can to continue to provide that lifesaving service.

With summer fast approaching, I encourage all members of the South Coast community and across the State to help out at their local surf life saving club. We want all Australians to live an active life, to get involved in life, to participate and to help save life. You can do this by becoming a surf lifesaver, getting your kids involved in the Nippers junior activities program—as we have done with our kids—volunteering to be an age manager or helping out with the club barbeque on the weekend. Off the beach you can help to fundraise, learn first aid or CPR so that you can help save a life one day or simply donate to keep lifesavers on our beaches.

CAMDEN HAVEN SHOW

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:12:34): I recognise an event that showcases the best of the Mid North Coast's agriculture, horticultural and community spirit: the Camden Haven Show. The seventy-first annual Camden Haven Show was a huge success, with more attractions and exhibitions displayed than ever before. The show was literally abuzz with horse events, beef cattle parades, poultry judging, wood chopping, reptile shows and a whole lot more. The president of the Camden Haven Show Society, Sean Gleeson, was excited to see the mass of people entering through the gates this year, with attendance smashing previous records by approximately 7,000 tickets sold.

Sean thanked his committee, secretary Jody Nelson-Gleeson, vice presidents Jenny Atkins and Ron Chapman and treasurer Allan Hudson for supporting him throughout the lead-up to the show—assisting in the organisation of events, writing out cards, sending out schedules, helping man pavilions, cleaning, mowing and performing all the small duties that contribute significantly to a well-run show. The Camden Haven Show is an event that I look forward to each year because I recognise what the show means to the local community and its economy. Families from all over the region take their children to see a good old-fashioned show, which includes rides, fairy floss, magic shows, an animal nursery, face painting and fireworks. Parents often tell me that the show is a fun, family event where they get to spend some quality time with their children.

At the show, I was delighted to have the opportunity to present the junior ambassador award to Jazmin Madden. This award is a new addition to the show that promotes the unique community of Camden Haven while enhancing leadership skills, public speaking and effective communication, and rewarding enthusiastic, skilful and industrious young people for their community contribution. Jazmin has shown outstanding leadership qualities at Camden Haven High School, the show society and her local pony club. The Nationals member for Lyne, Dr David Gillespie, presented the senior ambassador award to Sally Woodhouse for her exceptional work as a teacher at Camden Haven High School and her mentorship of young women through Girl Guides.

An agricultural show is nothing without its volunteer organisations who tirelessly perform routine duties across the event to ensure everything runs smoothly. The committee would like to thank the following organisations: Hastings Pipe Band, Camden Haven State Emergency Service, Camden Haven Rural Fire Brigade, Camden Haven Concert Band, Black Magic, Hastings Restoration Club, Vintage Motorbikes, Bee Keepers Association, Kendall Men's Shed, Camden Haven Pony Club, Riding for the Disabled, Trotter Automotive Group and Camden Haven Redbacks for their dedication and commitment to the show.

I take this opportunity to congratulate our local show winners who put so much time and effort into growing their produce and preparing their stock for exhibition. In the beef cattle section, local Johns River girl Jazmin Madden, who was also the junior ambassador, won first place in the Bos Taurus heifer class with Custom Miss Princess, champion pair of heifers, supreme female of the show, supreme beef exhibit and grand champion parader. She was also winner of the Ross Graeme Nelson Memorial Trophy and the 2019 Junior Agricultural Ambassador award.

In the pony club section, Macey Wilkinson from Camden Haven Pony Club impressed judges to win first place in the 90-centimetre show jump, and Brooke Atkins stood out to win first place in the 60-centimetre and 75-centimetre show jumping. The poultry section included Rachel and Mitchell Alley, who took out the Reserve Bird of Show award with a stunning silver laced Wyandotte bantam. Local man Alan O'Neill from Kendall won the Reserve Soft Feather Bantam award with a blue red leghorn bantam. The Reserve Champion Soft Feather Large award was won with a Plymouth Rock owned by local breeder Brian Alley and the Champion Brown Leghorn Bantam award was collected by Brian Crossfield from Kendall.

In the chainsaw section, Mathew Osbourne claimed the Overall Champion Chainsaw, with Brooke Atkins taking out flagbearer. The show was a huge success thanks to the exhibitors, stallholders and volunteers who always put their best into a wonderful event, which everyone eagerly anticipates each year. In closing, I thank the show society for allowing me to participate in the official opening of the show and the sashing of the junior ambassador. I could not finish without thanking president Sean Gleeson for the opportunity to once again be in the esky ride competition. Unfortunately, our team came second. I do not want to sound like a sore loser, but I think we had a dud lawnmower motor in our esky. Nevertheless, congratulations to the winners. We will make sure that we are on their tail next year.

TRIBUTE TO BOB GEOGHEGAN

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:17:03): Early last Monday morning Maitland lost one of its staunchest advocates when businessman, community activist, politician and patron of the arts Bob Geoghegan passed away following a 12-month battle with cancer. I was so sorry to hear of Bob's passing. I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Robyn, and their beautiful family, including his three wonderful daughters and grandchildren. Many people knew Bob as the owner-operator of the Hit-n-Dip Sports Centre at Greenhills, which was home to our city's first squash courts and indoor heated pool.

To countless others, Bob was Councillor Geoghegan. He served our community for 18 years on Maitland City Council, including stints as deputy mayor and acting mayor. Bob led the Maitland Liberal Party for many years. He had a tilt at State Parliament and also the mayor's chair, but it was his grassroots connection with people for which he will best be remembered. His true passion for politics resided in his passion for our community. Bob was always a fierce advocate for Maitland and a true gentleman in the political arena. In the nearly 20 years since I first met him at a Maitland Regional Art Gallery event, we only had one real barney. That was at a polling booth, but it was forgotten almost immediately.

Bob invited me to my very first Black & White Committee fundraising luncheon for Vision Australia. He was a very generous, lovely man. Despite him being a Liberal and me being a member of the Labor Party, we always enjoyed a strong friendship and agreed on most things, particularly Gough Whitlam's policy on university education. He kept reminding me of it to ensure that women in our community are well educated. He always put Maitland and our community first. He was a great champion of the arts and appreciated how important the arts were to a city, its residents and its cultural life.

Bob served as patron for many organisations, including the Maitland Repertory Theatre, Maitland Region Society of Artists and the Maitland Musical Society. He was president of the Arts Council for 16 years, a strong supporter of Maitland Regional Art Gallery, a much valued member of East Maitland Rotary and a great sponsor and participant of Maitland basketball—supporting our Mighty Mustangs. He was also known for his contributions to Maitland's home for the aged, Benhome, where he served as the Maitland Benevolent Society Chairman. Even after Bob's illness began to take hold, he continued to work for the many community organisations he supported, despite the challenges that cancer placed on him and, before that, the clot that he also experienced. I was so fortunate to experience his support and generosity of spirit firsthand. When I was ill a couple of years ago, Bob and Robyn were so kind to me and my family. They were the first people, outside of our own political party, that we told.

My husband, Robert, and I were very much touched and comforted by their support and friendship. It is a very generous thing to offer such support and optimism when you are going through your own illness, and I am so grateful to both Bob and Robyn for their support and friendship. While I have recovered, I am deeply saddened that Bob did not make it. It is so fitting that Bob, a man who gave so much to the city of Maitland and its people, will be farewelled with a service in the Town Hall on Monday. The seats will be filled with people from all over our community whose lives were in some way touched by Bob. On behalf of Robert and my family, and our community, I offer our most sincere condolences and love to Robyn and the rest of Bob's beautiful family at this sad time.

I will place on the record just some of the boards and committees on which Bob served our community to give an example of the breadth of his contribution from 1999: Tenambit Recreation Board; Cultural Advisory Panel; Heritage Advisory Group; Hunter Region Organisation of Councils; East Maitland Community Hall; Economic Development Strategy Group; the library working party; Rural Strategy Committee; 2003 World Rugby Working Group; Hunter councils, as an alternate delegate; Rural Strategy Committee; Cultural Precinct Working Party; Property Advisory Panel; Waste Management Strategy Working Group; Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study Working Group; Sixth City of the Arts Advisory Group; Area Assistance Scheme Local Ranking Committee; Social Planning Steering Group; Floodplain Management Committee; Hunter Zone Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee; Greening Plan Implementation Reference Group; Maitland Local Traffic Committee; and the Heritage Committee. He also had three stints as deputy mayor and, of course, a long time as acting mayor. Vale, Bob Geoghegan. May you rest in peace and thanks for your contribution.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (17:22:12): I thank the member for Maitland for her generous statement and for recognising somebody who was genuinely a gentleman. I knew Bob through the Liberal Party and he contributed in lots of ways. To hear the esteem in which he is held within Maitland is very gratifying for somebody who clearly spread his talents far and wide in that community. I join with the member for Maitland and am very sad on his passing.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I also join the Parliamentary Secretary and the member for Maitland in passing on my condolences to Robyn and the Geoghegan family. I met Bob many times through the Liberal Party and he certainly was an individual who put his local community—Hunter and Maitland—first. I recognise his wonderful contribution to the Maitland area, Maitland council and to the Liberal Party.

GOSFORD MUSICAL SOCIETY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:23:17): Arts and theatre are alive and well on the Central Coast. I pay tribute to the fantastic work of the Gosford Musical Society. The society is located in the electorate of The Entrance, however, there are many members, including the society's president, who live in my electorate of Terrigal. It has been my absolute pleasure to work very closely with the Gosford Musical Society over the past 4½ years. The society's current production is *Les Misérables*. My wife, Jill, and I had the pleasure of attending the opening night last Friday. *Les Misérables* is a global phenomenon. It has appeared in the most famous theatres around the world. It is symbolic and significant that *Les Misérables* has come to the Central Coast—in fact, it has come back to the Central Coast. It was first shown on the Central Coast nearly two decades ago.

When I saw *Les Mis* at Laycock Street Community Theatre last Friday, I could have been forgiven for thinking I was on Broadway. The show is running at Laycock Street Community Theatre from Friday 18 October through to Sunday 10 November and it is truly worth seeing. For the benefit of members, I will briefly outline the plot. Set during the French uprising, this musical tells the story of prisoner Jean Valjean and the police inspector, Javert, who tries to hunt him down for breaking parole. After ignoring the plight of one of his workers, Fantine, he takes in her daughter, Cosette, who has been at the mercy of the Thenadiers—two evil innkeepers. Cosette falls into a love triangle with Marius, a student, and Eponine, the Thenardiers' daughter, against the backdrop of a bloody rebellion. Based on Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Mis* reminds us that "even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise".

I take this opportunity to congratulate the dozens of people who have contributed to this fantastic production, all of whom are not paid and are involved on a volunteer basis, including director Darryl Davis, musical director Lindsay Kaul and choreographer Lauren Miller. The actors were Simon Castle—Jean Valjean; Sancia West—Fantine; Natasha Bass—Cosette; Chris Gracia—Thenardier; Isaac Ledingham—Enjolras. Javert was well played by Todd Keys. Marius was played by Addison Morley. Eponine was incredibly portrayed by Teaghan Thompson, who has the most incredible voice. Sally Loughan was Madame Thenardier. Grantaire was played by Scott Russell and The Bishop by Ian Fisher. Gavroche was played by Max Dunning and Torean Smart. Young Cosette was so well played by Charlotte Page and Ruby McManus. Young Eponine was played by Adelaide Thomson and Matilda Thomson. In the children's ensemble were Matilda Whitwell, Rose Noble, Laine Pembroke and Sarah Harrington.

In the male ensemble were Ryan Fitzpatrick, Brandon Alexander, Jarrod Francis, Tom Kelly, Robert Hickey, Anthony George, Callum Hayes, Ian McGaw, Trevor Doyle, Sam Luxford, Jamie Sturgess, Dave Ritchie, Hamish Booth, Russell Hull, Stephen Cummings, Mark Williams, Jarrod Thompson and Morgan Fardy. I am going through the whole cast; they were fantastic. In the female ensemble were Jacquie Grunden, Bee Haslam, Katie McManus, Shayne Leslie, Hannah Whitwell, Michelle Agius-Hall, Kate Thomas, Georgia Kingshott, Kasey Barnes, Katie Harding, Felicity Jackson, Zoe Thomson, Kerrie Rochford, Kylie Hinton, Jissel Toomey, Sally Sturgess, Kathryn Peterson and Sophie Booth.

I bring to the House's attention that Gosford Musical Society is the latest recipient of Stronger Communities funding from the New South Wales Liberal Government. I was so pleased to lobby on behalf of the society and to be its strong voice in government, and then to announce last week that Gosford Musical Society has received \$200,000 to upgrade facilities, purchase new equipment and improve its systems. This funding has been made possible by our strong budget position. It is in addition to the \$20 million the New South Wales Government provided to Central Coast Council when it was first amalgamated in 2016 to kickstart the delivery of community infrastructure. Gosford Musical Society has more than 450 members. Together they present three senior shows and two junior shows to a total audience of more than 20,000 every single year. I am so proud that Gosford Musical Society contributes to a significant share of live theatre on the Central Coast. The \$200,000 grant will support their fantastic work.

Some of that funding has already been used to buy percussion instruments, which is being used in the production of *Les Mis*. The funding will also upgrade computer hardware and information systems for the Gosford

Musical Society costume section; upgrade the bathroom, kitchen and shed facilities; and enable the purchase of equipment for volunteers. I could go on and on. The Gosford Musical Society has a 72-year history. Ros English and the team are so well regarded in our community. I congratulate them, especially on the \$200,000 grant they have received.

HOMELESSNESS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (17:28:48): Thursday 10 October was World Homelessness Day, a day to raise awareness of the needs of people experiencing homelessness and to provide opportunities for the community to get involved in how we respond to it. Homelessness is a spectrum. It is a serious issue in the Ballina electorate, from the pointy end of rough sleeping through to couch surfing and women living in cars. The Northern Rivers is the least affordable regional area for rental accommodation in the State. I note that the member for Lismore is present; I know that rising rents are also an issue in her electorate. Byron, Ballina, Clarence Valley and Tweed shires are the four least affordable local government areas in regional New South Wales.

The North Coast Community Housing Company estimates that we need 6,200 additional social and affordable housing dwellings by 2026 to meet community demand. I note that today the Minister said there were 800—wow. We need 6,200; that is a lot and we need to get on with it. Half of those would simply house people who are already on the waiting list. We also need more regulation of holiday letting to ensure more properties are available on the market. I am pleased to update the House that we are progressing on that. Our region has the second tightest private rental market in the State, with a vacancy rate of just 1.2 per cent. Freeing up properties for locals to live in will make a significant difference to the rate.

I am particularly concerned about the impact of homelessness on young people and older women in my electorate. In Australia, 40 per cent of homeless people are children or young people. At a formative time in their lives, they lack the security of a stable home. Homeless young people are less likely to stay engaged with school, find jobs, get access to rental housing or maintain friendships. They are more likely to experience depression, poor nutrition, substance abuse and mental health problems. In fact, without the right support, many will struggle with homelessness their entire lives. My colleague Jenny Leong, the member for Newtown, has done so much work in the area of no-grounds evictions, which is so needed, particularly as it affects young renters.

Older women are the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing homelessness in New South Wales. Women who today are in this older age group did not benefit from compulsory superannuation during their lives. They were more likely to have been paid at a lower rate than their male counterparts and were likely to have taken time out of the paid workforce to have children and fulfil caring roles. As a teacher, I saw time and again that women had taken time out to raise their children because there was no maternity leave. Women are also at greater risk of homelessness as a result of family violence. Older women often will not get access to priority social housing, as they can be homeless due to low incomes and not because of having complex needs. All of this means that older women are marginalised in the housing market. They are marginalised in the private rental market, they are marginalised in the social and affordable housing markets, and they are even marginalised in the homelessness services sector in terms of getting support.

The limited stock of good-quality, safe, secure, long-term affordable housing options creates considerable instability for marginalised older women. In my electorate I have met older women who are working, but living in their cars. Not having a home also puts people on the margins of society, where they encounter prejudice and find it difficult to access mainstream services. As I updated the House recently when I asked the Minister to extend the program that is happening from the Tweed to Byron, we have the second highest number of rough sleepers in the State. I am not at all proud of that statistic.

Despite this distressing situation, my community is taking positive steps to address homelessness in many creative ways in the absence of real action on the ground by this Government. On World Homelessness Day, a number of businesses in Byron Bay donated a proportion of the day's earnings towards the campaign to reduce homelessness in Byron Bay. During Homelessness Week in August, students at St Joseph's Primary School in Alstonville took up the challenge to "walk in the shoes" of a homeless person for an hour—sitting on a piece of cardboard and not eating, drinking or talking—to raise money for the St Vincent de Paul Society. I am very proud of the school for doing that. Older students prepared care packages for homeless people from donated toiletries. Local charity One Roof Byron hosted a fundraiser featuring art, music and spoken word poetry. The St Vincent de Paul Society is currently renovating Harmony House, which I am actively involved in, to provide transitional accommodation for homeless people. But goodwill is just not enough. We need the Government and the private sector to invest significantly more in public, social and affordable housing and we need a housing guarantee.

GEORGES RIVER LIGHT THE NIGHT WALK

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (17:33:59): Last Friday night, Kelso Park in Panania became a sea of beautiful lanterns. It was the venue for the Georges River Light the Night walk. Light the Night is the Leukaemia Foundation's evening lantern walk, in which Australians come together and transform the darkness into a sea of glowing light to give hope to all those impacted by blood cancer. Fifteen thousand people are diagnosed with blood cancer every year. That is one person every 36 minutes. A lot of research has been done but there is always more to do.

As part of Light the Night, participants help raise vital funds to support families living with blood cancer and to put towards investment in life-changing research. This year across the country more than 35,000 people gathered to walk at Light the Night events. Carrying lanterns in symbolic colours of blue, white and gold, people come together to set out on a reflective evening walk to support all Australians impacted by blood cancer. Gold lanterns are carried by people who are remembering loved ones lost to blood cancer. White lanterns are only carried by people who are on their own blood cancer journey or who have had blood cancer. Blue lanterns are carried by those who want their community support.

Lanterns were raised high in a moving ceremony to pay tribute to those facing their own blood cancer journeys and to remember loved ones lost, creating a glowing sea of support. Together the crowd then carried their lanterns along a reflective walk around Kelso Park. I walked alongside Harry Cooper who, once upon a lifetime ago, I used to play tennis with. He has been battling blood cancer for almost 20 years. Harry and his wife, Irene, were both there to shine a light, and bid on the many auction items on offer to raise funds for the cause. There were many great fundraising prizes on offer and I was very happy to give a hand to Mrs Pope and Mrs Kiddle manning the raffle ticket and prize table. We had to write quickly, as the community really got behind this event and bought lots of tickets. The Rotary club of Padstow was also there to lend a hand, and cooked a fantastic barbecue, the proceeds of which also went towards the fundraising for the night.

I congratulate and thank Joanne Tonks, Natalee Barnett, Katrina Larsen and Collette Ide for their tireless work in organising the Georges River Light the Night, as well as the masters of ceremonies, Rod Thompson and Brad Tonks, for all of their efforts. Natalee's son Ted was diagnosed with leukaemia when he was three years old. He is now a happy and healthy eight-year-old who attends St Christopher's Primary School in Panania. Natalee wanted to support other families, and started Light the Night Georges River in 2016 as there had been no local event previously. Natalee leads the general organisation of the event, liaising with council and the Leukaemia Foundation.

In 2008 Collette Ide lost her fiancé Shawn Buckley to leukaemia. He was only in his early thirties. It was devastating for her and for all his family and friends. Collette joined Natalee, as she had already helped fundraise for the foundation since losing Shawn, and was keen to start a local event. Collette leads general donations and fundraising for the event. Katrina Larsen is a local from Revesby Heights—my home town—and she has kids at St Christopher's Panania. She does a lot of community work. Katrina has had friends and family members affected by blood cancer and wanted to help out, so she joined the committee. Katrina leads all communications and marketing for the event.

Joanne Tonks is a local businesswoman from East Hills and is Natalee's neighbour. When Ted, Natalie's son, was diagnosed in 2013, Jo wanted to help her neighbours and came on board to work on business sponsorship and auction items for the event. The tireless work of Natalee, Collette, Katrina and Joanne has raised \$99,000 for the cause over the last four years. After last Friday they are hoping to raise another \$1,000 to reach their goal of \$100,000. I encourage everyone to go to the Light the Night Georges River Facebook page for information on how to donate to this very worthy cause and assist this dedicated committee in reaching the last thousand dollars of their \$100,000 goal. I thank the sponsors—of which there were many—with special note to Panania Diggers RSL Club, which contributed to the event, and of course the fantastic committee and volunteers who brought us all together to shine a light on blood cancer and Kelso Park.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:38:43): Education has been in the news quite a bit this week, with the Government announcement of a curriculum review and the revelation that people should be learning mathematics at school, but I want to talk about a particular issue that is resonating in my local area. It is an issue that impacts on people in other parts of the State as well: access to our public school system and access to education more generally.

One of the fundamentals that we need in order to create a good society is a basic, decent education system that all children have access to. It is fundamental to the idea of equal opportunity, which I think is a bipartisan view of how we should arrange society in this State. That is meaningless unless people have equal access to a

good education. I want all the children in my electorate to have equal access to a good local public school and I want them to have confidence that that local public school will provide their children with a good education. With that in mind I welcomed the seminar that was conducted in Parliament House the other night by Family Advocacy.

Family Advocacy is a great organisation. It is an independent and impartial advocacy organisation that works with families across New South Wales to promote and defend the rights and interests of people who have developmental disabilities. The organisation is managed and staffed by parents and allies of those with disability who recognise the issues families face and who can assist in strengthening the advocacy for those families. Family Advocacy seeks to help parents and families get access to the education system on an equal basis.

Access to the education system is an issue that has been raised with me by a number of parents in my electorate. There are two parents that I am working with at the moment whose children have attended East Gosford Public School in a supported class since kindergarten. Those parents have applied for the children to attend a supported class at their local high school but have been told that there is no place for them. That is an absolute failure of planning by the Department of Education under this Government. Those children have been in the system since they were in kindergarten and there is no way that they were going to move out of the public system. The parents applied to their local high school and even attended orientation there but now they have been told that the supported class there cannot accommodate them and that they will have to wait for funding from the Government to provide additional places.

This is the time of year when parents get ready to send their children to high school next year. Their children are also getting used to the idea of making the transition from primary school to high school. They are buying uniforms and equipment and attending the local high school to get used to it. But these families with disabled children are not able to participate in the system in the same way as other constituents. That is not good enough. The responses that the parents have been getting from the local Department of Education staff are not good enough. I appreciate that those staff are trying to do all they can. This Government needs to release that funding sooner rather than later. It is an absolute disgrace.

Another parent has contacted me in the last day, whose child is at a private school. She wants to go into the public system but has received the same answer. I appreciate that this is a child that was not known to the public system beforehand but, in any event, our public system needs to be open to all children. They need to be accommodated sooner rather than later. They do not need hurdles put in front of them just because their children are disabled. It is not good enough. Alongside the need for stable accommodation—a home—education is fundamental to creating a good society. Our public education system can be better. This Government is not funding it to the level it needs. I will keep working with these parents and I will keep being a thorn in the side of this Government to make sure that public education, especially on the Central Coast, is better and lives up to its promise.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:43:49): During Small Business Month I wish to emphasise the importance of small businesses and to inform the House about what this Government is doing to support them. The St George community, my local community, boasts an array of successful small businesses which contribute to a healthy local economy. As a former small business owner I understand the concerns that owners have and the pressures that they are under.

I have thoroughly enjoyed visiting small businesses across the electorate this month and sharing the stories of many passionate owners. We are blessed in the St George area with a diversity of small businesses. From mechanics to wholesalers to cafes, our local area has a wide selection of options to reflect the diverse needs of the community. This is important, as it allows members of the community to shop locally and keep their money within the local economy. Whether it be Spago in Beverly Hills, Jumbuck Meats in Oatley, Little Alley Cafe in Narwee, the Lugarno Pool Shop or Mortdale Wholesalers, our local area is blessed with exceptional service and dedicated business owners. These kinds of businesses drive local economies. Small businesses employ almost two million people across New South Wales. In the words of former Prime Minister John Howard, they are the engine room of Australia.

I am proud to say that this Government has never forgotten the importance of small businesses to New South Wales. Its support for them is reflected in our strong economic figures. Small businesses also play a large part in developing the character and atmosphere of local areas. Beautiful destinations such as Edmonds & Greer in Oatley and Jaaks in Kyle Bay provide places for residents to relax and enjoy the beauty of our local area. It is important to support small businesses for areas like ours to retain their character, relaxed atmosphere and natural setting. Often the work of small business owners and employees goes unnoticed. They are the unsung heroes of our local communities. This makes Small Business Month such a worthwhile initiative.

October is a chance for all of us to support small businesses and thank them for the positive impact they have on our society.

This Government truly recognises the importance of small businesses across New South Wales. This Government is committed to encouraging innovation and supporting small businesses at all stages of growth. This Government knows that supporting small businesses creates jobs and stimulates the economy. This Government is investing in the skills New South Wales needs to grow. The establishment of the Disability Sector Scale-Up program is improving the commercial viability of small and medium enterprises in the disability sector. We have also recently made a \$30 million investment in the TAFE NSW Skills for Business Initiative that is upskilling employees in vital business areas.

This Government is also committed to supporting regional businesses and communities. The \$110 million Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund is attracting more businesses to regional areas and helping to offset job shortages created by the drought. Coupled with this, Regional Development Australia is in partnership with the Federal Government to develop further regional projects. We also recognise the value of investment. Therefore, this Government is furthering tax relief to encourage businesses to put more money back into the economy. This includes a \$6,000 Payroll Tax Rebate Scheme, a \$2,000 small business employment initiative and further small business grants. Those measures, coupled with the WeAgree program and the Boosting Business Innovation Program, are helping to encourage prospective owners and drive new ideas for businesses.

As well as encouraging investment, innovation and skills development the Government is committed to streamlining the process for small business owners when running their business. Further to these initiatives, we are committed to ensuring the concerns of small businesses are heard and represented. The NSW Small Business Commissioner was appointed as an independent advocate for small business in New South Wales, providing advocacy and dispute resolution mediation services. I have welcomed her to my electorate to speak to many local small businesses there. The Government represents the interests of owners and ensures that we as a Parliament are never neglecting the concerns of such important people in our society. I encourage everyone to join this Government in supporting local small business during Small Business Month. I also thank small business owners and employees across New South Wales for the contribution they have made to our local communities.

Community Recognition Statements

IRAQI AUSTRALASIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:49:29): On Sunday 15 September 2019 I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the official launch of the Iraqi Australasian Medical Association of Australia and New Zealand [IAMA] with medical specialists, general practitioners and medical researchers at Lantana Hall, Bonnyrigg. The primary aim of IAMA is to work towards the promotion of employment, networking, exchanging of professional experience, promoting health in the wider community and advocating for and supporting Iraqi medical practitioners in both Australia and New Zealand.

Further to these goals, it seeks to establish a medical directory for patients to access doctors from Arabic, Armenian, Assyrian, Chaldean, Kurdish and Turkmen backgrounds in Australia and New Zealand. The association strongly believes in improving communication, care and understanding of the medical management of people so as to avoid miscommunication. On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I extend heartfelt appreciation and congratulations to the board of IAMA for the establishment of such a worthy association, which will be of tremendous benefit to our local community.

OATLEY HERITAGE AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:50:31): I acknowledge the great work of the Oatley Heritage and Historical Society as it approaches its twenty-fifth anniversary. The society was established in 1995 with its inaugural meeting held at the Oatley School of Arts. The society undertakes research in historical events and places around Oatley, with meetings held quarterly and informal coffee and chat meetings held three times a year. The society has made a valuable contribution to our local community, actively participating in the Oatley Village Festival and visiting schools in the area to discuss matters of local history. I encourage residents throughout my electorate to check their local history and get involved in the society's website.

I congratulate president Julian Sheen, secretary Bill Wright and the rest of the society on its brilliant, fantastic work. I look forward to celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2020. I thank it for keeping our community informed about local history in the local community.

HARRISON AND CONNOR RYAN

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:51:25): Hamlyn Terrace brothers Harrison and Connor Ryan, aged seven years and 16 years respectively, will be competing for a chance to claim the national title in the sport

of dirt biking. The Ryan brothers succeeded to win in Canberra and also at the Casey Stoner Cup in Kurri Kurri and pulled off the senior-junior double on the Central Coast. The Ryan brothers are some of the most decorated riders on the Central Coast, with Harrison being the reigning Central Coast Cup champion. The Ryan Brothers joined riders from Queensland and Victoria to compete at the Australian Junior Dirt Track Championship at Somersby's Allen Park Speedway on 28 and 29 September. They both should be proud to represent the Central Coast and how far they have both come in their sport of dirt bike riding.

GOPIO SYDNEY NORTH WEST

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:52:16): Over the weekend I had the pleasure of attending the tenth GOPIO Sydney North West Caring and Sharing charity gala dinner. It was fantastic to see Seven Hills constituents at Bowman Hall in Blacktown for this event, which saw a large sum of money donated for worthy charity causes and Indian-Australian cultural activities on show. GOPIO Sydney North West is a part of the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin and is a charity and community services organisation that aids local and international persons of Indian origin though assisting students, seniors, youth, small businesses, families and women in need. I commend the GOPIO Sydney North West committee for the great occasion, including president Harmohan Singh Walia, vice president Aman Singh, secretary Neeru Singh, assistant secretary Rosie Multani and treasurer Balkar Singh Kang.

LIFE EDUCATION NSW

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:53:11): Yesterday I joined with my colleagues in this place and Healthy Harold to show our support for Life Education, in particular Life Education NSW. I was delighted to again take on the role of ambassador, along with all my other colleagues, having been one when I was Federal member for Page. At that time I gave great support to Life Education NSW. The organisation is empowering Australian children through education and has been doing that remarkably well since 1979. I met up again with my friend and honorary chair Alan Cadman, OAM, and also met the new CEO, Jonathan Peatfield, the first Healthy Harold graduate CEO. I hope that I can join Healthy Harold in the Life Education van—or the pop-up, as they now have—in my local schools.

CENTRAL COAST ROOFTOP SOLAR PROGRAM

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:54:14): Low-income households on the Central Coast are now being offered a free rooftop solar system and installation worth \$4,000. The Central Coast is one of five regions to be chosen for this New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government initiative, and a total of 3,000 households will benefit. We know that buying and installing rooftop solar is expensive, which is why this trial will unlock more savings by using rooftop solar generation. It is estimated that each household will reduce its energy bills by \$300 per year through installation of these panels, which, as I said, is completely free. Anyone with a valid Pensioner Concession Card or Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card is eligible, and must opt out of the Low Income Household Rebate for 10 years. Origin Energy will be responsible for installing and supplying the solar systems across the Central Coast. I encourage any Central Coast resident to go to energysaver.nsw.gov.au to sign up or for more information.

NSW GRANDPARENT OF THE YEAR

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (17:55:10): Every grandparent is special, but there is only one NSW Grandparent of the Year. Port Stephens grandfather Chris Walker is a special man. Chris' grandsons Jordan and Logan have a rare disease, X-linked chronic intestinal pseudo obstruction. They are thought to be the only two children in Australia with this disease. Chris not only helps with their care including the 15 hours a day the boys need to be receiving nutritional products through an intravenous tube, but also advocates for their future. Last year Chris invited me on a tour of Baxter pharmaceuticals, where we were able to see the production process for the special products Jordan and Logan need for their survival. I first met Chris at a Stand by Me rally in Newcastle, protesting against this Government's cuts to disability advocacy services. Chris' advocacy work is currently focused on the NDIS where cuts to the boys funding are making life difficult for the family. Chris is one of the loveliest and most gentle men I know. I cannot think of a more worthy person to be the NSW Grandparent of the Year. Congratulations, Chris.

WINGECARRIBEE VOCAL MUSTER

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (17:56:20): On Sunday 20 October my husband, Michael, and I enjoyed a wonderful afternoon listening to the talented young performers at the Wingecarribee Vocal Muster Grand Final. The vocal muster is a not-for-profit initiative, created by Richard Lane, that assists secondary school music students in the Southern Highlands. The aim of the muster is to support and encourage emerging vocal talent from local high schools, and give them an opportunity and a platform to share their skills through open performances. This also gives students an opportunity gain vital experience and boost their self-confidence.

I extend my congratulations on their sensational singing to all this year's finalists including Olivia Jones, Cassidy Brown, Amielia Jane Lester, Duncan Reay, Abbey Johnson, Emily Sheather, Ashleigh Gallagher and Javiera Diaz. Particular well done to the overall winner, Javiera Diaz.

TRIBUTE TO MARY HORDER, OAM

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:57:15): Today I honour the life and mourn the passing of my good friend and a tireless contributor to the community across western Sydney, Mary Horder, OAM. Mary was the ninth of 12 children born to Richard and Olive in Grenfell 98 years ago and then educated at Liverpool. She married at 20 and had seven children before Merv passed away when Mary was only 40. With the help of her oldest daughters, Jennifer and Ann, she raised her large family and became more involved in the community. Mary was elected as an alderman on Fairfield City Council in 1971 and served as deputy mayor.

During this time, she was actively involved in Homecare, the Fairfield Community Centre, Fairfield City Festival and Red Cross. She was also a Catholic scripture teacher for over 20 years. After her retirement, she moved to Wentworthville and I came to know her. She remained active in the National Trust and the Wentworthville branch of the Australian Labor Party [ALP], and was a life member of the ALP. In 2013 she was honoured with a well-deserved Order of Australia Medal. Mary made a great contribution to the community. Her warmth, generosity and intelligence will be missed by her family, friends and all who knew her.

SAINT STYLIANOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, GYMEA

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (17:58:20): I congratulate the Parish of Saint Stylianos Greek Orthodox Church, GyMEA, on the consecration service held on Saturday 19 October 2019. It was an honour to attend this most sacred service conducted by the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Australia, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, with my mother, Marianna Petinos, and extended family members. On the day the Holy Altar and the church were anointed with myrrh, saints relics were cemented into the altar, and mini-epitaphs were anointed and signed by His Eminence, signalling the sanctification and baptism of Saint Stylianos Greek Orthodox Church. I thank Parish Priest Father Constantine Varipatis for his spiritual guidance and support to the parishioners from our community. I also acknowledge the committee ably led by Parish President George Gatziastras, and comprised of Helen Lakatos, George Timothy, Paul Parris, Andrew Focas, Spiro Houlakis, Peter Katos, Con Nikolaou, Leon Sidd and Peter Tsoukarellis, whose tireless efforts ensured a seamless service on the day. I recognise the efforts of all involved in such a momentous event and extend my best wishes on this special occasion.

KIRE PASOVSKI

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:59:20): I recognise Mr Kire Pasovski, who has been serving my community of Rockdale for more than 40 years. Since proudly becoming an Australian citizen in 1976, Mr Pasovski has thrown himself into supporting our community. His community work includes serving as the President and Vice President of the Macedonian Cultural, Artistic and Sporting Association Illinden for 20 years; serving on the church committee of the Macedonian Orthodox Church St Petka in Rockdale; serving on the executive of the Macedonian School Council NSW for 33 years; being involved with the Australian Macedonian Welfare Association for 31 years; being involved with the Australian Migrant Resource Centre for more than 20 years; being a justice of the peace since 1987; assisting in the establishment of the Australian Macedonian Childcare Centre Illinden at Arncliffe; and much, much more. Thank you, Kire, for all the work you do for our community.

INNER WHEEL CLUB OF HAWKESBURY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:00:10): I thank the Inner Wheel Club of Hawkesbury for demonstrating true Hawkesbury qualities through its generosity in assisting those in drought-stricken Coonabarabran. The Inner Wheel Club of Hawkesbury donated a vital care pack of items that included luxuries such as Tim Tams as well as essentials such as new socks, hand sanitiser and water. The assistance was part of the We Care Road Trip, which runs twice per year and involves businesses and individuals supporting our rural communities. The goods were driven to Newcastle where they were loaded into the trunk of the touring bus for delivery. I commend the Inner Wheel Club for its involvement, and encourage other individuals and organisations to get involved in the next We Care Road Trip.

COAST SHELTER

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (18:00:55): I acknowledge Coast Shelter, a not-for-profit provider of social services to those at risk of homelessness and those who are homeless. I was pleased to attend the million-star sleep-out organised by Vicki De Carle at Coast Shelter to raise funds and awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness on the Central Coast. To date the organisation has raised over \$46,000. I commend the

staff and volunteers who support Coast Shelter in this important effort and the work the organisation does on the Central Coast to assist those who are homeless. We know this plight is suffered by a growing number of our citizens under this Government.

BLAKE FOX

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (18:01:50): I congratulate local rider Blake Fox, who was recently crowned Australian champion at the Australian Junior Motocross Championships in Adelaide. Racing in the 15-year-old class 125cc, Blake achieved a string of podium finishes in the finals, and claimed the overall title. He backed up that incredible performance with second place overall in the 15-year-old class 250cc championship. The title caps off an amazing year for the talented young rider, which also saw him win the New South Wales championship, and represent Australia at the World Junior Motocross Championships for the second year in a row. It was great to see six juniors from the Dubbo Dirt Bike Club competing at the national level against 500 of the best from around the country over six days. Dubbo's Jack Deveson showed he is one to watch in the future with some great results in the 10- to 12-year-old classes, while older brother Brock finished with a number of top 10 results in the 13- to 15-year-old class. Justin Harrow rode really well and had some top 20 results in the 13- to 15-year-old class. Well done to all the riders and to Dubbo Dirt Bike Club.

JENNI NICHOLS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:02:50): I pay tribute to Maitland Artisan Gallery owner, former restaurateur, former President of the Maitland Business Chamber and Dry July ambassador, Jenni Nichols, who bravely shared her family's painful story to help others. Jenni is happy to say that she likes a glass of red wine and I may have shared one or two with her over the years. But during Dry July she abstained to raise money for Redkite and help families as they step through their cancer journey. Jenni knows that journey well. She has made it twice: once beside her stepson, Wes, who lost his battle with melanoma within seven months of his diagnosis, and once with her son, Jesse, who won his fight against sarcoma. Jesse is now cancer free, but Jenni can remember the times they spent at Westmead Children's Hospital and the comforts provided by Redkite. She set herself a \$3,000 fundraising target and totally smashed it, bringing in \$3,727.70 in donations. Congratulations, Jenni. You are an inspiration to our community.

COFFS COAST RAILROAD MODELLERS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:03:50): The Coffs Coast Railroad Modellers have built an enthusiastic organisation that holds a special place in my community. Its 25-strong membership is from all walks of life—some are retired, some are working and some have their own businesses—but they all share a passion for model railroads. The crew certainly was keen to pass on its knowledge at the information day on Saturday 19 October at the Coffs Harbour Showground. In fact, the Coffs Coast Railway Modellers owns the biggest travelling model railroad in Australia. It is also a men's shed and supports the CanDo Cancer Trust, raising more than \$300 for the charity on the weekend. Plans are now underway for the modellers' two-day exhibition in January. I acknowledge the leadership of president Paul Baker, vice president John Skinner, secretary Stephen Rea, treasurer Jim Sowter, public officer Col South and North Coast District Superintendent of the National Model Railroad Association, Al Harris.

BLUE KNOT DAY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (18:04:52): Today members were given a blue knot to wear in the House. The Blue Knot Foundation, which is the national centre of excellence for complex trauma, asked us to show support by posting on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using hashtags. I thought it appropriate to mark the occasion in this place and I know members will join me in doing so. Blue Knot Day is the Australian national day on which the foundation calls on all Australians to unite in support of the more than five million—that is one in four—Australian adults who have experienced complex trauma. The theme this year is "Untangle the knot of complex trauma: Empowerment, Recovery and Resilience" and will run from 8 October to 3 November. I have supported Blue Knot Day since its infancy—it is now 10 years old—in my local community and will continue to do so.

SARAH HUGHES-NARBOROUGH

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:05:55): I congratulate Sarah Hughes-Narborough of the First Hornsby Heights Scout Group on receiving her green cord and Australian Scout Medallion. The Australian Scout Medallion is the highest award a scout can receive and takes a lot of hard work and dedication. Sarah has shown great leadership skills working with a scout group to design a badge and shirt that members can buy and wear with pride. Hornsby Heights has produced some exceptional young members. It has now received 44 Australian scout medallions, the most in the Sydney North region. To receive the green cord Sarah had to complete camp craft and citizenship activities, which she demonstrated to other scout members.

She also organised a two-night, three-day hike with five scouts from Mount Victoria through the Grose Valley to Blackheath without any adult assistance. Mum, Merilyn, and dad, Richard, are exceptionally proud of her hard work and awards. I have no doubt she has a bright future ahead of her. I congratulate Sarah and look forward to watching this star continue to rise.

ANTHONY MILBURN

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:06:59): Congratulations to Anthony Milburn who has been named Maitland's 2019 Volunteer of the Year for his part in a rescue mission with a difference. For the past four years Tony has saved fresh veggies that risk going to waste because they are deemed imperfect. He collects the produce and, with the help of the volunteers of Slow Food Hunter Valley, transforms it into meals for people in need. Tony said it began with Maitland's 2016 Great Pumpkin Rescue. Since then he has collected up to 10 tonnes of food a year, which has been turned into some 5,000 meals for people in our community. A 71-year-old retiree, Tony also volunteers on his friend Matt Dennis' vegetable farm at Morpeth a few days a week. He has been with the Kiwanis for more than two decades and is a volunteer with the Salvation Army. I often throw him a gold coin or two at the Maitland Markets. I thank Tony for his great work in our community.

BARKER COLLEGE SENIOR SCHOOL BANDS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (18:07:54): I congratulate Barker College's senior school bands, which won four gold awards at the 2019 Australian School Band and Orchestra Festival at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Over 200 Barker students from the symphonic wind ensemble, senior concert band, middle school wind orchestra and middle school concert band participated in the event. This festival is the largest in Australia and over 300 school bands perform each year. Barker was the only New South Wales school to enter four bands and walk away with four gold awards, which it has achieved for the second year in a row. Director of music Mr Simon Smith said, "Each band played exceptionally and were well praised." For the third consecutive year the school's director of bands, Mr Andrew McWade, took home the Australian Band and Orchestra Directors Association Award. Again, congratulations to all participants of Barker College. This is a huge achievement and they have much to be proud of.

LAKES GRAMMAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:09:02): Lakes Grammar Junior School showcased *The Greatest Show* on 11 September, a biannual production that this year involved 483 students across the 21 classes from kindergarten to year 6. Each class performed an item under the banner "The Greatest Show". The show was compered by students Isaac Deakes from year 6 and Cleo McNeill from year 5. One of the highlights of the night was the teachers item, "This Is Me", which involved almost 30 teaching staff performing a choreographed dance. The performance concluded with Ms Bryson from year 1 leaping backwards across the stage to be caught by two male colleagues. The children were apparently thrilled by this when they watched the matinee performance. It was wonderful to see the children's self-expression, creativity and joy for creative and performing arts brought to life in this fabulous production. Well done to school students, staff members and parents involved in this year's showcase.

KOORINGAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (18:10:00): Wagga Wagga is a wonderful place to live. Like every city or region there are social issues that tarnish and tear at the seams of otherwise vibrant communities. In light of this I acknowledge the initiative and drive of Kooringal residents who have proactively sought to identify and address problems across troubled areas within the Wagga Wagga city suburb. This follows the relaunch of Mission Australia's Kooringal Community Centre and the implementation of the Tenant Participation and Community Engagement forums. I have attended two open-door meetings since June.

These forums have given individuals, families and neighbours better information, advice and opportunities as well as participation in decisions that will improve their homes and neighbourhoods. This is just one great example of how services, groups and organisations can work together to prevent crime, improve services, and identify and close social gaps in the community. I congratulate everyone involved on making the forum a success, including participants, representatives of the NSW Police Force, Housing NSW, the PCYC, Neighbourhood Watch, Mission Australia's area manager Heather Manning and forum coordinator Jenny Davis.

ELLEN GORDON SELBY

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (18:11:11): I recently visited Georges Manor Aged Care at Georges Hall with Councillor George Zakhia to celebrate the hundredth birthday of Ellen Gordon Selby. Ellen, a true local of East Hills, grew up and raised her family on Cragg Street in Condell Park. I was very happy to present to Ellen well wishes from all levels of government along with some special certificates from Premier Gladys

Berejiklian, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Her Majesty the Queen. Her birthday party was attended by fellow residents. Staff at Georges Manor did a fantastic job decorating and preparing for the celebration. Ellen's daughters, Ann and Hellen, celebrated with their mum. Ellen's granddaughter Wendy Adam and great-grandchildren Ethan and Sophie Andrews gave a great rendition of *Happy Birthday*. Congratulations to Ellen on her hundredth birthday.

FAIRFIELD RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:12:03): On Sunday 13 October 2019 I was pleased to attend Cancer Council NSW's official Fairfield Relay For Life launch. It was great to see our local community rally behind the relay and support the event. Each year attendances and collaborative works at the relay steadily increase. As patron of the Fairfield Relay For Life it is a great pleasure to announce the dunk tank at this year's relay event. This will serve as a fun motivator and driver of further participation. Members of the community can dunk their local member of Parliament, friends or family. The relay is a truly incredible cause that I am proud to get behind each and every year. This year's Relay For Life is approaching fast and will be held at the Fairfield Showground on 16 and 17 November 2019. I encourage all members to come along to show support for the Cancer Council NSW.

AUTISM COMMUNITY NETWORK

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:13:00): In August I was pleased to attend the Autism Community Network trivia fundraiser. The Autism Community Network was founded in 2011 by Steve Drakoulis, a local dad with a son on the spectrum. The network has grown vastly over the years with the support of over 60 volunteers across New South Wales. The network does not receive any recurrent funding, but relies on fundraising and donations to continue its great work. That is why fundraising events like the trivia night are vital to the network. This year's trivia was run by the network's organising committee and led by Arnie Bateup and Karen Kempe. Although my team did not win, the fundraiser was a huge success for the network, raising over \$8,000. This money will be reinvested into the organisation to assist with developing community education and awareness programs. Once again I recognise the work of the Autism Community Network. I look forward to continuing to support the network in the future.

CHARLES CASSAR

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:14:09): It was a pleasure to attend this year's justice of the peace 50 years of service ceremony in Parliament House and present individuals with a certificate recognising their contributions. Three constituents were there from the Swansea electorate, including Charles Cassar from Lake Munmorah. Charles originally became a justice of the peace for work purposes when he was employed by Mick Simmons Sporting Goods. For those who may not recall, Mick Simmons was the largest sporting goods distributor in the Southern Hemisphere. Charles was its only licensed pistol dealer and was based in the Liverpool branch. His job took him all around Australia. Charles has been living in Lake Munmorah for the past 25 years and has continued to volunteer within his community. He has served on the board of the Munmorah United Bowling Club for 18 years, including eight years as treasurer and two years as president. I was delighted to meet Charles and his daughter this week and formally congratulate him on 50 years of service to a community that he clearly loves.

BLACKTOWN AND WESTMEAD HOSPITALS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:14:55): I congratulate Blacktown and Westmead hospitals on having been acknowledged at the 2019 Quality Awards for their patient services across the Western Sydney Local Health District. I congratulate Westmead Hospital's Emergency Department on reducing non-urgent mental health presentations. The emergency department's reforms are seeing reductions in young persons with mental health re-presenting to Westmead. The reforms are seeing our young people better cared for with more effective links with general practitioners and service providers after discharge, which is leading to improvements in mental health in western Sydney. I also recognise Blacktown Hospital for its work with NSW Health and Blacktown City Council in promoting the Munch and Move program, which aims to reduce childhood obesity by 5 per cent before 2025. Western Sydney faces the long-term effects obesity on the population and health services. I am pleased to see all early childhood services across Blacktown local government area participating in this program and tackling obesity, which it is a critical issue.

MAYOR TONY BLEASDALE, OAM

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:16:05): I congratulate new Mayor of the City of Blacktown, Tony Bleasdale, OAM. For three years he was deputy mayor when I was mayor. We have had a wonderful partnership. He and his delightful wife, new mayoress Nina Bleasdale, are a perfect combination. Tony was born in Liverpool and came out to Australia about 50 years ago as part of the Big Brother program. It was then that he

met a lovely lady working behind a counter—Nina. They married and have a wonderful family. Tony has a lot of great experience as the former Assistant Secretary of the Building Workers' Industrial Union of Australia. He later worked in the private sector under Bill McNamara, started his own construction business, became Treasurer of the West Tradies Club and was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for his community service. I wish Tony Bleasdale all the best and I know Blacktown City Council will succeed under his stewardship.

WAMBERAL RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:17:07): On Saturday 9 November 600 firefighters will participate in a climb of Sydney Tower to raise money and awareness for motor neurone disease. Three of these firefighters will be from Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade, one of the outstanding brigades on the Central Coast and in my electorate. Each firefighting team will race up the 1,504 stairs or 98 floors and each will carry 20 kilograms of gear. Motor neurone disease is a progressive, terminal neurological disease. It affects the nerve cells—neurons—that control muscles and enable us to move, speak, breathe and swallow, causing them to degenerate and die. I am proud of the 600 firefighters who will participate in this fundraiser, including the three from our Central Coast region. Every dollar raised will directly support vital motor neurone disease research at Macquarie University. I congratulate Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade on its involvement in this event. Go those guys.

GLOBAL FAMILY CHURCH

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:18:08): On 15 October 2019 I joined the congregation of the Global Family Church for its Sunday morning English service. It was wonderful to be part of a devoted and faithful community. I was uplifted by Pastor Bruno Meister's heartfelt words to his congregation. I acknowledge the musicians and singers for inspiring the congregation with the wonderful gift of song. During the service Pastor Bruno Meister also announced the church's commitment to supporting the Transform Cambodia project, which aims to open a children's centre for 100 children, Centre 35, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, by March 2020. This is a selfless and caring act that will unite the congregation and benefit the children in Cambodia. I am grateful to have the Global Family Church in the Fairfield community and wish it all the very best with its ministry both within our community and throughout the world.

REIDS FLAT RECREATION RESERVE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (18:18:59): I recognise the funding recently awarded to the Reids Flat Recreation Reserve land manager. This funding, from the New South Wales Government's Crown Reserves Improvement Fund Program, will allocate \$17,900 towards the construction of a new multipurpose building at the Reids Flat Recreation Reserve. Reids Flat has a bushranging history. There was a famous shootout at William Fogg's property where Darkie Gardiner had hidden in a shanty. Prior to the affray, Fogg's wife used blankets to signal to the fugitive—white blankets for "all clear" and red blankets for "police".

On 16 July 1861 the police descended. The fight was intense, with bullets flying. Gardiner escaped, badly wounded, but Fogg was arrested for harbouring a criminal. Later, these charges were withdrawn. The remains of the shanty where the fight occurred are still visible. One of Reids Flat's more recent and law-abiding claims to fame is the annual gymkhana and rodeo on the first Saturday of November, which attracts visitors and competitors from across the State and even further afield. Regional New South Wales is in the grip of the worst drought on record. It is important that our small regional towns have places to come together as a community. Investment in facilities like the Reids Flat Recreation Reserve are crucial to these small communities, which are the lifeblood of regional New South Wales.

MANILLA ROTARY CLUB

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—I recognise the Manilla Rotary Club as it celebrates its 70th anniversary since its original charter on 19 October, 1949. This is an extraordinary effort for a community service group and I thank its members, past and present, for their service to the community and the contribution they've made to the town of Manilla and its surrounding localities. The Rotary Park Rose Garden has made a significant contribution with sales of the Fiona's Wish Rose generating \$65,000 to support the Victor Chang Foundation. The club has also been active supporting the youth of Manilla with its programs for Rotary Youth, Rotary Agriculture and public speaking competitions. Special mention must go to the ladies who have supported the members of the Rotary Club for the past 70 years. Congratulations to Manila Rotary Club and to its members for a long and distinguished record of community service.

MAITLAND TATTOO 2019

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I rise today to acknowledge another successful Maitland Tattoo event put on by the City of Maitland Pipes and Drums. There was a range of different entertainment, including

the performance of the classic song Danny Boy, Irish dancers and Indian dancers as well. I proudly attended another one of these successful events where over 250 people showed up to Maitland Town Hall on Saturday the 31st of August. Lots of time and effort was put into organising this special event and I wish to thank especially the secretary, Greg Queenan, who was one of the event key organisers. I also thank all those performers for showcasing the talent of the local community. Many audience members, like myself, also dressed in tartan clothing in honour of this event. Many of the audience members bought raffle tickets with proceeds going towards providing equipment to put on more of such events. Congratulations Maitland Pipes and Drums. I look forward to your continued creation of multicultural events throughout the next decade and am very excited for next year's Christmas in July themed event.

DAILY EXAMINER SHIELD TOUCH FOOTBALL

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to the schools who participated in the finals of the Daily Examiner Shield Touch Football tournament. For the first time, every High School was represented and the results as follows:

Junior Girls – Grafton High School defeated Maclean High School 2 – 1

Junior Boys – Maclean High School defeated McAuley Catholic College 2 – 0

Senior Girls – Maclean High School defeated Grafton High School 2 – 0

Senior Boys – McAuley Catholic College defeated Maclean High School 2 – 1

Congratulations to Maclean High School on having teams in all four of the finals. This is a wonderful event and congratulations also to the teachers for their time in ensuring the students are able to compete.

WALKING VOLUNTEERS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Walking Volunteers are a group of avid walking enthusiasts who give their time and expertise to map out continuous walking routes around Sydney for the benefit of all Sydneysiders. The Walking Volunteers aim to make Sydney the most accessible walking city in the world and encourage people from all backgrounds and walks of life to get out and see their city by foot. They have created a series of downloadable continuous walking maps to help Sydneysiders find picturesque routes throughout Sydney, including walks from Sydney Harbour to Parramatta.

The organisation also advocates for improved infrastructure for pedestrians and walkers, including street trees to give the increased shade and greener spaces we need to get people out of their cars and riding bikes or walking around Sydney. Most recently, they have established the Great West Walk, a fantastic new 65km walking track stretching from Parramatta to the foot of the Blue Mountains. I thank and congratulate Ian Napier and Bill Avery and all those involved in the Walking Volunteers. We were rained out of our last walk, but I look forward to getting out there with you soon on the Great West Walk.

BURRINGBAR PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—I wish to acknowledge Burringbar Public School who is due to celebrate its 125 year of service on October 26. The school opened in January 1864 with some children arriving to school by cart, the toilets were a box seat over a hole in the ground and the library had only 121 well-chosen books. Times have well and truly change with the students now having access to iPads and interactive televisions, and flushing toilets. The school will celebrate this special day with a fair, including stalls and rides and photos from 7 different eras will be on display. They will also be raising the time capsule planted in the grounds 25 years ago. I pass on my congratulations to the school, Principal Peter Halloran and the P & C. I hope the event is a huge success.

SAMARITANS WELLNESS WALK

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—I was delighted to be invited to join the Samaritans Foundation ARAFMI Wellness Walk last Saturday, 19th October. It was a great opportunity to meet carers and friends of people in our local community who live with mental illness, as well as many people who are living with mental health illness. The first annual Wellness Walk was held in 2005 and this year over 800 participants walked the 1.5 km route. The Wellness Walk raises awareness of the impact of mental health in our community. The day reminded me that mental illness can have a ripple effect on families, creating tension, uncertainty and significant changes in how people live their lives. There is often little training or support for families and friends, and their personal needs and mental health can be sometimes be overlooked. The good news is that there is help and support available, and I commend the work of the Samaritans Foundation and other organisations and agencies that are active in the Hunter region.

SIMON WAIT – COSPLAY AWARD

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Local businessman and movie prop maker, Simon Wait of Heroes and More, recently entered the Championships of Cosplay at the Sydney OZ Comic-Con where he was shortlisted as a finalist. Simon doesn't make his creations to enter competitions but thought he'd give it just one go with his 'Blue' Raptor costume. Blue is 100% hand crafted right down to every carved scale that covers the body. Simon decided to create his dinosaur costume many years ago but was only able to complete it recently due to many other life commitments. His major challenge in the build was to try to conceal himself inside the suit to make it look more believable. Simon and Blue took to the stage and won the FX award making it into the final 3 in the state and top 15 nationally. He was humbled to be involved in such a competition and to receive such high recognition on the first time he entered. For Simon, the greatest achievement is seeing the smiles on the faces of people when they see what he has made and the enjoyment his creations bring to many, young and old.

LEYTE GULF LANDING

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I recognise the recent commemoration held on 19 October of the 75th anniversary of the Leyte Gulf Landings that led to the liberation of the Philippines from Japanese Occupation. The naval battle that led to the landings was the largest naval battle in history. Together with Coral Sea and Midway, they had very real significance for Australia. The commemoration was held at All Saints Catholic Church Hall at Liverpool. Those present included the Philippine Consul General, Ezziden Tago, Jhun Salazar President of the Visayan Association of Australia (and MC on the night), Cora Paras of the Alliance of Philippine Community Organisations, Pet Storey from the American Legion Auxiliary and USAFFE Veterans, and Alric Bulseco from the Philippine Community Council NSW. I should also acknowledge Richard Ford who did his usual performance as General Macarthur and Mr Moises Millena both for his contribution to the event and the role he played in securing sponsorship for the event.

CHARLIE HART

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I would like to congratulate Charlie Hart from Erskine Park who was awarded the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Sky Encouragement Award for the month of June for his amazing contribution to Rugby League. Charlie has been playing Rugby League for over six years and is currently in his fourth year with the St Clair Comets. Charlie has been an outstanding player helping his team to back-to-back grand finals in 2017 and 2018. Charlie received 'Best and Fairest Award' in 2017 and 'Iron Man' Award in 2018 for the most club games played in a season. He is a determined, focused young player, but most importantly displays great sportsmanship by encouraging all his team mates throughout training and games. Charlie takes every opportunity he can get to play Rugby League in the hopes of one day fulfilling his dreams of playing at a professional level. Congratulations and well done to you, Charlie!

THE CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE TORA CELEBRATION

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—It was my absolute honour and privilege to be invited to participate in the completion of the new Seef Torah scrolls at The Central Synagogue. The source of this custom is the biblical account of King David, welcoming the Holy Ark into his capital. The scrolls were donated by Harry Triguboff AO in loving memory of Moshe and Frida Triguboff OBM. It was such a huge honour to be presented with the name Moses, who is an incredibly important figure in the Jewish faith. While I am a Gentile, the significance of Moses and more importantly, having my name marked in the Tora has not been lost on me and I am humbled by this opportunity. I would like to personally thank Rabbi Dr Dovid Slavin for inviting me part of this very special day. Rabbi Doctor Dovid Slavin and Rebbetzin Laya Slavin are the founders of My Big Kitchen. There is a Hebrew saying, "One action is better than a thousand shy's". Rabbi Dr Dovid Slavin and Rebbetzin Laya Slavin, embody this to the fullest.

WARATAH DAY

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)—The floral emblem of NSW, the waratah, is a beautiful flower and has become a symbol of hope and strength in supporting people with mental illness. Beautiful Minds, an organisation that supports mental health recovery, sells the blooms each October as part of a fundraising initiative, aptly named Waratah Day. The initiative continues to grow from strength to strength each year, supporting Macarthur's mental health inpatient facilities Gna Ka Lun, Waratah House and Birunji. An astounding 2500 flowers over 14 venues were sold this year in support of Waratah Day, with all funds raised set to go back into the community through local inpatient units, facilitating workshops and supporting carers.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone involved in Waratah Day fundraising efforts, particularly the volunteers and the dedicated Beautiful Minds team, led by President Cheryl Paradella. Waratah Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of mental health, help break down the stigma and support people living with a

mental illness. The iconic flowers bring joy and remind us all of the importance of nurturing mind and body because mental health matters.

125 YEAR ANNIVERSARY ST JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH SUTHERLAND

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—On the 22nd September I had the pleasure of attending St John's Anglican Church Sutherlands 125th anniversary. I congratulate Senior Minister Tom Hargreaves on leading the congregation. 125 years is no easy feat- it is rumoured that St John's Anglican Church was the first church established in the Sutherland Shire in 1894. I joined with fellow parishioners current and past, reminiscing on how St John's made a difference in their lives. I also met some of the missionaries who had been supported by St John's Church so they could spread the word of God in foreign lands. Congratulations St John's Sutherland on reaching the milestone of 125 years and I trust St John's will continue for another 125 years.

1ST CHERRYBROOK GIRL GUIDES

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—Girl Guides Australia is one of the fantastic organisations that keep our communities strong. And the 1st Cherrybrook Girl Guides in my electorate is a case in point. In their own words: "We provide girls with opportunities to grow, learn and have fun in relevant and meaningful ways. We provide a foundation for girls and young women to be the best that they can be and harness their individual potential to make a difference. We foster personal character based on our values of respect and collaboration to engender leadership qualities."

These are sentiments I wholeheartedly support. Girl Guides Australia has operated for more than one hundred years and in that time they have sought to bring out the best in our girls and produce quality female leaders. Cherrybrook Guides were recently successful in securing a NSW Government Community Building Partnership grant for a brand-new kitchen which will be used for expert cooking classes and event preparation. I would like to congratulate and thank everyone associated with the Guiding Movement in Cherrybrook, and in particular thanks to District Manager Cathy Yu for your hard work and determination in guiding our Girl Guides to become Australia's future leaders.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)—Founded in 2013, by Gen and Rob Jagt, the volunteers of Paying it Forward (PIF) are committed to helping people in Penrith who are homeless and facing difficulties and hardships. Every Sunday night at Jamison Park, the PIF team offer home cooked meals made by their volunteers and supported with donations from Rathas Place, The Bikers Hand and Cath's Cakes to 50 or so patrons. 2019 has seen Gen and Rob taking a step back and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their service and to also welcome the new CEO, Craig Smith and the committee, David Ryan, Linda Orchard, Tom Smith, Dale Hall, Gabrielle Sadel-Wynne and Madison Ryan. The generosity and selflessness of individuals such as these is truly inspiring and I commend them for helping those who are less fortunate in our community.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Tweed, Byron and Ballina Community Transport (TBBCT) this week received the award for the NSW Community Transport Service Provider of the Year at the NSW Community Transport Organisation conference. This award acknowledges the important work TBBCT does to support people who are isolated, vulnerable or transport disadvantaged. During 2018-19, TBBCT assisted 4,075 individuals, provided 86,624 passenger trips and travelled just over 2.5 million passenger kilometres. Volunteers who donate their time and skills contribute an estimated \$2.5 million in services that would not otherwise be available. I commend Phil Barron, TBBCT CEO and the dedicated staff and volunteers who are known in the community for being friendly, safety conscious, respectful and culturally aware. Transport is a major issue for the many people in our region. TBBCT staff and volunteers do an amazing job of providing transport for those who require it for medical treatment, shopping or social outings.

ST MARK'S SPRING FAIR

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of attending the St Mark's Church Spring Fair, hosted alongside St Mark's Preschool, which is actually the preschool I attended. This year is particularly exciting with St Mark's Church celebrating their centenary year. This year's festival featured the Connells Point Public School choir, as well as a mobile animal farm. The local Hurstville Fire Brigade were also there to have a chat with the community, and there was a wide array of colourful stalls set up. St Mark's caters to the South Hurstville, Connells Point and Kyle Bay suburbs within my electorate, but the annual Spring Fair is always successful in bringing large groups of people together. I really enjoyed walking around the Fair and having a chat to local residents. Events organised by community groups are a great way to bring local residents together.

The centenary the Church is celebrating this year is symbolic of the strong sense of community that the Church has fostered over the years and I look forward to continue supporting St Mark's in the future.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY WEST WYALONG HAVE WON VOLUNTEER TEAM OF THE YEAR IN CENTRAL WEST ZONE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Mr Speaker,

Congratulations to the St Vincent de Paul Society of West Wyalong St Mary's Conference team who have taken out the Volunteer Team of The Year Award in the Central West Zone. During a special ceremony at Bathurst, volunteers from across the Central West were recognised for their outstanding contribution to volunteering. The West Wyalong team of four volunteers including Ray Scott, Terry Schmidt, Ruth O'Reilly and Gai Hudson, were nominated for their work in providing emergency relief for people experiencing difficulties across the region. The team's work has become even more valuable over the past 18 months as a result of the drought, providing \$450,000 worth of financial assistance to 165 families across Bland, Lachlan and Weddin Shire Councils. Well done to thank you for your contribution to the community. Best of luck in the State Finals in Sydney on November 5th!

PHOEBE LITCHFIELD

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise Phoebe Litchfield of Orange whose sporting prowess has now come to the fore, aged just 16 years. I had the honour to observe Phoebe's cricketing talent when I co-managed the Under 12's Orange District Representative Cricket team, alongside her father and coach Andrew Litchfield. Her skill with the willow was clearly evident, and I knew she would be a future star. How right I was, with the trajectory of Phoebe's sporting career being both rapid and steep. Phoebe has now achieved selection in the ACT-NSW Country squad, Cricket Australia's Under 18 National Championship, Australia Under 19's, the NSW Breakers and most recently her selection for the Sydney Thunder in the Women's Big Bash League, which she debuted for last weekend, living up to the name of her team and taking the game by storm. Phoebe's phenomenal performance at the crease yielded more than 50 not out and assuring Thunder's victory, the youngest ever women to score a 50 in the WBBL. Congratulations to Phoebe on her outstanding success, and those people who have guided her into harnessing and realising her sporting potential, which I look forward to witnessing continue long into the future.

FAIRFIELD WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION WEEK CELEBRATIONS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—Fairfield West Public School enjoyed a break from their usual routine to celebrate Education Week 2019 from 5th to the 9th August 2019. This year the theme for Education week was "Every Student, Every Voice" aimed at empowering students to express themselves both throughout their educational journey and beyond. Throughout Education Week 2019, Fairfield West Public School student participated in Science experiments; the Maths Amazing Race where students solved Maths problems to gain a stamp on their passports. There was also a Concert and Art Exhibition where the artistic members of the school community were given the opportunity to shine and demonstrate their skills to their fellow students. Finally students participated in a Book Character Parade to round off a fun-filled week. Well done to the staff and students of Fairfield West Public School for expressing themselves in these unique and engaging activities, and for entering wholeheartedly into the spirit of Education Week 2019.

HEAPY FAMILY CRICKETERS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I bring to the attention of the House, the Heapy family of Oak Flats Rats Cricket Club. Earlier this month, three generations of the Heapy family played in a memorial cricket match together to honour the late Colin Heapy. Colin Heapy took his own life earlier this year aged just 17. He is remembered by his loved ones as a charming, charismatic young man and a natural sportsman. In the cricket match Tom Heapy, aged 80, played alongside his sons Terry and Brian and his grandson Greg, as well as a number of Colin's other family members and friends. Tom was a founding member of the Oak Flats Rats Cricket Club and represented the club for almost forty years before hanging up the bat and gloves 15 years ago, only to make his return for this very special match. I would like to offer my sincere condolences to the Heapy family, while also sending my best wishes to the Colin Heapy memorial side for the rest of their 2019/20 campaign.

JANE AND ALEXANDER DUDLEY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)—I recognise Coolatai-based authors Jane and Alexander Dudley on winning the 2019 Royal Zoological Society of NSW Whitley Book Award in the Young Naturalist category, for their book 'Faunaverse wildlife in poetry Tasmania'. Jane is an amateur natural historian with a passion for environmental education and Alexander is a zoologist and environmental educator. Their book contains 25 poems about Tasmania's fascinating

fauna in an effort to educate, inspire and entertain readers on the unique and often endangered native wildlife. Their latest book is the second in the Faunaverse series following on from 'Faunaverse Australian Wildlife in poetry' and they received the Whitley Book Award as an outstanding publication that profiles the unique wildlife of the Australasian region. It's wonderful seeing country-based authors recognised in such a way – congratulations Jane and Alexander!

LOCAL JP'S RECOGNISED FOR 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Iain Huntley and Mr James Mein for 50 years of service to the community as Justices of the Peace. Mr Huntley and Mr Mein are some of the longest-serving JPs in the state, who have donated countless hours to helping local people. Just about everyone needs a JP at some point in their life - such as when they buy a house or access their superannuation – and our dedicated JP's are always happy to lend a hand. JPs act as independent witnesses to documents people need for a variety of purposes, and JPs provide their services on a voluntary basis. Mr Huntley and Mr Mein are among more than 250 NSW JPs who are celebrating their Golden Jubilee of service in 2018-19 and they were both invited to a ceremony held here at Parliament House where they were presented with a commemorative certificate. I'd like to congratulate both Mr Huntley and Mr Mein again on their 50 years of service, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the 95,000 JP's serving their community across our great state.

NEW FIRE TRUCK FOR SEVEN HILLS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—Mr Speaker, I rise to speak of my recent visit to the Seven Hills Fire Station. I joined the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Honourable David Elliott MP, at the Seven Hills Fire Station to inspect their brand new, Class Three 'pumper'. The \$580,000 fire-fighting machine is truly state-of-the-art truck, featuring a high pressure pump capable of delivering four thousand litres of water per minute. The new truck is the latest of the six hundred and fifty fire trucks operational across New South Wales and Mister Speaker they are put to good use, too. In one year alone, the Seven Hills Fire Station responds to nearly fifteen hundred fire and emergency calls and participated in nearly two hundred educational activities in the local community. It is everyone's responsibility to plan and prepare as we come into fire season but after meeting the brilliant and dedicated fire and rescue team and their new truck, I know my local community is in very safe hands this summer.

MR CLAYTON COLMER

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—On October 10, 2019, Mr Clayton Colmer, the North Coast Coordinator for the Soil Conservation Service commenced his work. Mr Colmer designed the stone basins and installed the many coir logs on every pipe-crossing on the roads surrounding the Dam. Mr Terry Dodds, the Tenterfield Shire Council's Chief Executive told me that Mr Colmer is a talented and motivated gentleman. Mr Colmer supervised and delivered about ten days or more worth of work within two days. I commend and thank Mr Colmer for his extraordinary effort in supporting Tenterfield and its residents.

Mr Dodds inquiries have confirmed a potential gap in Office of Emergency management emergency recovery policy covering catchment damage; no available funding and money. This project was the result of a representation that I made to the Minister for Police and Emergency Service, the Hon. David Elliott MP on behalf of Tenterfield Shire Council to resolve an urgent problem, due to the Mount Mackenzie Road fire which torched the edge of the catchment for the Tenterfield Dam. As a response, the NSW Government Public Works Advisory sub-contracted the Soil Conservation Service to alleviate a potential problem from ash and soot entering the Dam. A great outcome for Tenterfield.

HAMMONDCARE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I would like to recognise HammondCare's opening of new dementia cottages in Hammondville. HammondCare is a charity concerned with enriching the quality of life of older persons. They are a highly regarded organisation in my community, providing quality care for the elderly, as well as those with complex health conditions. On the 13th of August, I had the privilege of being present at the opening of new purpose-built cottages specially designed for people living with dementia. The five cottages are named after original Hammondville families and will house 50 residents. Currently there are over 440,000 Australians living with dementia. 3 in 10 people over the age of 85 and almost 1 in 10 people over the age of 65 have dementia. Ensuring appropriate care for people with dementia in NSW is essential - and so I commend HammondCare's initiative in creating these dementia cottages. Once again, I would like to congratulate HammondCare on their initiative and thank everyone who participated in establishing these dementia cottages.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, I wish to acknowledge some of those outstanding organisations in my community who are providing opportunities to improve mental wellbeing and raising awareness of mental health issues. I recognise my local Mosman, North Sydney and Greenway Men's Sheds which are providing companionship, social connectedness and a support network for men in my community. This is especially important for those men who have been discouraged from talking about their feelings in the past. I thank in particular, Steve Morato, Peter Hook, and John Dansie from Mosman Men's Shed, for building a strong network for Mosman men to rely on. I acknowledge also North Sydney Council's Lost Bird Found project which is sparking a conversation about mental health in my community, by hiding handmade birds with messages attached around North Sydney. I thank North Sydney Mayor Jilly Gibson, and everyone who got involved in making the birds, including all the kids from North Sydney Council's Family Day Care, Suzette Venter and her colleagues at North Sydney business Bluleader.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—I congratulate John Adamson of Caringbah South, Eric Galbraith of Caringbah and Terrence Kearns of Caringbah for reaching 50 years of service as justices of the peace. They were among 130 JPs recognised at Parliament House this week for their golden jubilee of service - tireless volunteers who have been performing the important legal functions of a JP for the majority of their lives. JPs are part of a proud history dating back to the time of Richard the Lionheart in 1195.

BILL BRADLEY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)—Today is World Polio Day and I rise to pay tribute to Hornsby local Bill Bradley who will be launching his book 'Life After Polio....and I'm still stirring' today. Bill was left in a wheelchair after contracting polio at the age of 14 years old. But he has not let that stop him. The long term Hornsby resident has won a Gold medal for lawn bowls in 1998 and represented Australia in sailing in 2007. He was also an Olympic torch bearer at the Sydney Olympics in 2000. As well as his impressive sporting career he has been a dedicated volunteer, giving so much to our community. Recently he was announced as the winner of the Westfield Local Hero Awards for his work with Hornsby Connect. An award which was thoroughly deserved. Bill has put pen to paper to detail his life story and I know it will be a great read. What Bill has done for the Hornsby community is phenomenal and I would suggest everyone get a copy of this book to read his inspirational story. Congratulations Bill on this wonderful achievement, I know Clover, Megan and Luke along with all your grand kids are all exceptionally proud of you and everything you have done.

BARGO PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I would like to recognise the 150th Anniversary of the Bargo Public School this week. A fete and car show will be held at the school on Saturday 26 October. One of the event celebrations was a Coloured hairspray day on October 17th. The students all enjoyed that. This is one of the oldest schools in my Electorate and has seen many changes to the area over that time. Recently I attended a special celebratory assembly with students, parents and representatives of the local indigenous community. The event commenced was attended by many local dignitaries and included an unveiling of the School Bell by the School Captains Sakhari Ritchie and Jacob West. Local historian James Whitfield was able to provide glimpses of the development of the school from those early times. I congratulate School Principal Ben Green, his staff and all concerned with this very special occasion.

JESS HORDER

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Mr Speaker, Today I would like to recognise the tremendous effort by Jess Horder, who is 94 years old, in establishing Riding for the Disabled in Griffith 40 plus years ago. Jess instigated the idea of RDA and together with Sophie Bowman organised its establishment. Jess initially provided the horses and generated interest in the project resulting in the establishment of volunteers and the RDA Centre. Jess trained other people to be coaches and negotiated the use of the Pony Club's grounds until the RDA were donated their own grounds. Through Jess's dedication and hard work the local young people with intellectual and physical disabilities are able to benefit greatly, therapeutically and recreationally, from riding the horses. The community needs services like RDA to be ongoing and supported both financially and with volunteers for the well-being of those who are disadvantaged. I want to acknowledge and recognize the value of the expertise required to maintain, care and train the horses that are part of Riding for the Disabled and the many people who assist. Thank you Jess.

JEFF SUMMERS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)—I rise to congratulate football coach Jeff Summers on a highly-successful year coaching the Wallis Lake's premier league-winning first grade team. Summers took on the role of first grade coach at the club at the start of 2019 and was able to translate his considerable experience coaching junior players into success at the top level. After finishing the regular season in third position, Wallis Lake built momentum through the finals before defeating minor premiers' Port United in a nail-biting grand final.

Jeff is no stranger to coaching spending 10 years of coaching junior soccer players in the area through his business the Jeff Summers Football Academy. After a stellar 2019 season Jeff was announced Football Mid North Coast Premier League Coach of the Year. He had another reason to celebrate on the night when the Rainbow Warriors FC, a team of special needs kids he's been involved with since they formed in 2018, were awarded the team of the year. Jeff has a great passion for the game and through his academy has kicked off a pre-school program for kids aged two to five, an initiative to develop basic ball skills, social interaction and gross motor skills.

PARRAMATTA ART SOCIETY – FOUNDATION WEEK ART AWARDS

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education)—I was grateful to attend the launch of the Foundation Week Art Awards to showcase the true artistic excellence of the Parramatta Art Society Members, with almost 100 paintings on display. The aim of the Parramatta Art Society is to engage, promote and foster appreciation of arts throughout Parramatta and Surroundings. The Society provides a friendly environment and gives members the opportunity to exhibit their work. This year has seen the Society bring art classes & exhibitions to areas of note such as the Gatehouse Teahouse, Elizabeth Farm & Hambledon Cottage with success. I would like to applaud all the finalists and congratulate the following award winners Indira Fernandes, Hedar Abadi, Ruhullah Naqshbandi, David El-Melky and Natasha Junmanee. Thank you to Geoff Sellman, President and Trish Keating, Secretary for the kind invitation and all the hard work and dedication that you provide the Parramatta Art Society. I also would like to acknowledge all the dedicated committee & volunteers for all their efforts.

HAMILTON HAWKS RUGBY CLUB

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to the Hamilton Hawks Rugby Club, who have claimed a record fifth-straight Newcastle and Hunter Rugby Union 1st grade premiership. The Hawks took on Wanderers Rugby Club in the grand final and came out with a 36-7 victory, which also saw the club take a clean sweep of the minor and major premierships. It was the Hawks' dogged pursuit of the try line that wore their opposition down, with Wanderers' captain Ben Ham telling the Newcastle Herald that Hamilton were simply too strong and ground them out of the game. Dane Sherratt and Steve Lamont both scored tries while Joe Akkersdyk stormed over the line twice, and a fifth try was awarded as a penalty at the death of the game. I make special mention of Scott Coleman who has led the Premier One team to five consecutive victories. Well done to not only the players, but also the coaches, support staff, family and friends whose involvement has contributed to the Hawks' success. Congratulations Hamilton Hawks!

COMO PRESCHOOL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I rise to acknowledge the wonderful team at Como Preschool who I had the pleasure of visiting earlier this week. Led by President Rowena Dunn and Director Annette McConnell, the team are committed to providing the best possible early childhood education. The preschool incorporates school readiness into every aspect, experience and routine of the day, and educators complete a comprehensive transition to school profile for each child. Como Preschool welcomes children with additional needs and collaborates with parents, therapists and other support services to develop individual learning plans to support each child.

I am delighted that Como Preschool was successful in its application for \$9,490 through the NSW Government's Quality Learning Environments program. Through this grant, Como Preschool has further enhanced its learning environment with the renovation of the children's bathroom. I commend the entire team at Como Preschool on their dedication to early childhood learning, including Assistant Director Michelle Bone, Carol Baker, Edwina Quealy, Jane McCann, Meijun Guan, Tracey Brickwood, Nicole Davidson, Linda Pickworth, Maddie Amor, Ann Sullivan and Anne Daniels. I thank the amazing team at Como Preschool for their hospitality and tireless commitment to enriching young lives.

BANKSTOWN DISTRICT AMATEUR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION 2019 ANNUAL PRESENTATION DINNER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was pleased to attend the Bankstown District Amateur Football Association 2019 Annual Presentation Dinner on 6th September 2019 at Bankstown Sports Club, where I had the honour of presenting awards to some of the many well-deserving recipients. Congratulations to this year's winners, including all the players and volunteers whose valuable service and sporting achievements were recognised at this important annual occasion. I would like to acknowledge Bankstown District Amateur Football Association Chairman Mr Andrew Forster, Deputy Chairman Mr Dimitri Hursalas, General Manager Ms Leanne Millar, and Directors Mr Laurie Warner, Mr James Bowmaker, Mr Andrew Skaltsounis and Mr Scott Farquahson, and thank them for inviting me to be part of the presentation and their warm hospitality.

I commend the Bankstown District Amateur Football Association on their valuable contribution to local sport in Bankstown, by giving local men and women of all ages the opportunity to play football, providing great health and social benefits to themselves as well as the community at large. I wish the Bankstown District Amateur Football Association and all their staff, organisers, coaches, volunteers and players well for the upcoming season.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:20 until
Tuesday 12 November 2019 at 12:00.**